

IMPLEMENTING A MODEL OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION TO OBTAIN ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

Communication has become a skill that is needed by managers, employees and any organization that want to achieve performance and their goals in today's constantly changing environment. In order to have a good image in the market and in the minds of employees, consumers, distributors, intermediaries, government agencies and media, the organizations must hold a relevant communication strategy and leaders who are able to implement this strategy. In this article we propose to analyze two large organizations from Dâmbovița County and implement a model which helps these organizations to find out the strengths and weaknesses of the communication process and the processes which are based on communication, and to turn these weaknesses into opportunities. This article will also allow organizations to improve their communication strategy and to gain competitive advantage on the market.

KEYWORDS: First Law of Communication, strategies, efficiency

1. Introduction

“Communicate, communicate, communicate and then communicate just a bit more!” [1].

Here there are some definitions to show the importance of communication:

- Represents the art of conveying information, ideas and attitudes from a person to another [2].
- Is a basic life skill that determines the state of contentment [3] and to achieve the objectives; when an organization communicates effectively, attracts new candidates, keep them for a long period of time, it motivates them, and people develop trust in the organization.
- Is the process by which people share thoughts, ideas and feelings frequently and easily understood [4].
- Is entering in our personal and professional lives and is holding the key for positive interactions and develop/maintain favorable relations [5].
- Is considered a ubiquitous process and is perceived as a transmission of stimulus, responses or actions. In fact, it says that everything is living is communicating – people, plants and animals [6].
- As blood is important for the human body, so the communication has an important role for the organization [7].

- Is one of the fundamental needs and desires of the people [8].
- Is the basic process of information exchange. It is what people do to understand the ideas, thoughts and feelings of their own and the others [9].
- Must not only be a monologue from the transmitter or receiver to the public, but a dialogue to listen and give answers [10].
- Is one of people's basic needs and desires [11].
- Is the vital form of personal and professional relationships [12].

2. Efficiency, Importance and the Roles of Communication

The efficiency of communication is achieved when:

- It builds confidence and work as a team, because to be successful, you have to work together. For example, Michelangelo was not painted the Sistine Chapel alone, but with the help of a team – M.E. Federight & J. Gallo Winery.
- It is obtained the desired reaction and the desired response from the person who received the message. In a word, communication is a two-way process of exchanging ideas and information [13].
- The receiver understands the idea that the sender intended to transmit [14].
- Involves a transmitter and a receiver, and they assume responsibilities in achieving communication: the receiver gets the message, the receiver answers, there is a positive relationship and the organization achieve performance [15].

Management functions can not operate without effective communication. According to a study, the manager consumes 90 % of its time to communicate [16]. The need to communicate should be considered a critical success factor for the organization. It has become more difficult due to changes in the marketplace in recent years.

Communicator must play a major role in providing information such as: what happens, where the organization is headed and what role employees have.

The main challenge for the employer is [17]:

- To be sure that each stakeholder in the organization understand the direction, strategy, operational context and performance.
- To be sure that each player understands and accepts what is expected of them in this environment.
- To protect and improve the image of the organization.

The two parts of the communication process are [18]:

- Communication is the vital essence of doing business; any business cannot grow in the absence of effective communication. Employees with excellent skills of communication always enjoy good jobs/promotions.
- Communication helps to conduct functions; for organization it is the ingredient that makes work any management and execution function. Managers lead, coordinate, plan and control through communication. Basically, any activity in the organization, is preceded by communication.

For any organization, the most important resource is the people, and all the elements necessary for its operation is based on communication [19].

Optimizing communication can induce positive and lasting effects in the work [20].

To achieve performance, and overcome competitors, the organization must demonstrate that it has certain requirements: leadership qualities and communication skills [21], because communication is the key to obtain progress and advancement, through learning and efficiency [22].

3. Law of Communication no. 1 between Managers and Employees

Great communicators have common qualities that contribute to their strong communication style. Once detected, communication skills can be copied and built in the style of any person [23]. They will learn to communicate effectively when they gain confidence in the roles they hold. Like any communication skill and ability,

this will lead to success and confidence. This trust can decrease the number of conflicts by simple clarity of verbal or written communication. Leaders have the responsibility to influence employee performance through effective communication and a better way of communicating the goals to their subordinates, in order to obtain performance.

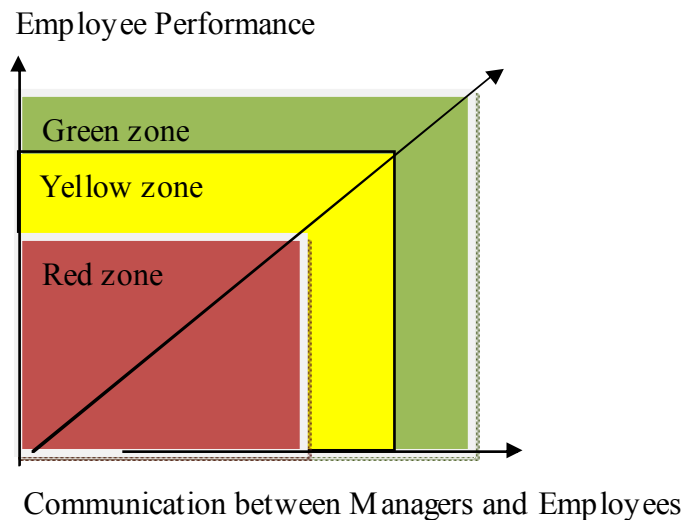


Fig. no. 1 Law of Communication

LC1 – “Red Zone” (RZ) – Danger, Failure to Stop Could Be Hazardous for All

In this area, the employees just do what they are asked, but group thinking and innovation are restricted. Managers operating in this area have short term vision, do not promote better working conditions, they lack consistency, often they are changing policies and procedures, and they are changing working methods and processes before they become routine [24].

In such a job: Leaders and employees become opponents, Productivity and morale will decrease, Talented employees are seeking jobs in other organizations, Unions receive complaints about inappropriate behavior of managers and the wick quality of services, Customers are dissatisfied, Organizational culture is not strong, Managers are not trained in human resource management processes, Communication

between management and employees is suffering, Teamwork is rejected, Employees are always late to work and often work overtime. These features are characteristic for “red zone” and are bringing very serious problems in the organization. If an organization will stay for too long in this area, hiring new employees is seen by the organization a change, and they will meet resistance. Therefore, it is necessary to change or replace management of the organization to move from the “red zone” and it is needed time to correct the mistakes and problems.

LC1 – “Yellow Zone” (YZ) – Caution, Danger; Be Prepared to Stop Suddenly

Leading the “yellow zone” announce that employees are doing better than in the “red zone”, but progress continues to be a challenging desire.

In such a job [25]: Accidents occur, there are different problems, various conflicts arise, there are still high errors rate and failures, There is competition between colleagues, The turnover is low, Is still a low productivity, Communication is still inefficient, Yet talented employees are tempted to leave the organization, Morale is still not high enough, Training takes place only in the workplace, there is a lack consistency of management style, The processes and procedures are too complex or too weak, Employees lose confidence in management, There is an ethical behavior but not so strong, Too little guidance. Such an organization will never be in the top class, and employees will still look for a better job.

LC1 – “Green Zone” (GZ) – Continue, Everything Is Fine, but Remain Aware of Potential Hazards

Driving in the “green zone” indicates that talented staff for the organization maximizes performance. Employees and managers at all levels are aligned with the overall objectives of the organization. The manner in which management communicates with employees achieves performance. Employees look to their managers for: clear guidelines, consistency, and encouragement.

4. Study Case – The Analysis of Communication in Romanian Organizations, Implementing the Law of Communication of Schuttler R. et al. (2010)

Research Methodology

Sample size: The research was made in 2 large organizations from Dâmbovița County – Otellnox and Erdemir, and discussions was made with 20 employees (12 from Otellnox and 8 from Erdemir), with different positions, different management functions and different seniority levels: 1 HR managers, 2 specialists from Control of Work Security Group, 5 specialists from HR Department, and

12 employees with execution positions from different departments: 5 from Erdemir, 7 from Otellnox. The analyzed organizations, structured upon nationality, are with their majority capital from Korea and from Turkey. The respondents were between 30-40 years old (8 persons) and between 40-55 years (12 persons).

Tools for collection of data: Questionnaire method, observation, and data, news, and media interviews analysis. The 20 persons, after they were filling the survey (25 items from 5 axis) and after the discussions with HR managers and specialists, we analysed the data and information, building a model of communication and then comparing their communication strategies. The opinions of the questioned persons were measured by using a three-point Likert-type scale, anchored on “0-0,99 = communication is ineffective”, “1-2 = communication needs improvements”, and “2-3 = communication is effective”, the agreement or disagreement with a series of statements that characterize the factors for different communication processes.

Research Objectives

In order to analyse the performance of communication strategies from the 2 large organizations from Dâmbovița County, we build a questionnaire, we analysed it and we split it into 5 axis, in order to find out if the employees are satisfied. The 12 employees from Otellnox and the 8 employees from Erdemir have answered to the 25 items according values between 0 and 3 (taking any value between 0-3). We used the weighted average method to find out the score for each item. We developed an analysis of communication between employees and managers in order to improve activities, processes, to motivate, to increase performance, starting from the First Law of Communication of Schuttler R. et al. This law, as we can see, has three zones of communication evaluation: red zone (RZ), yellow zone (YZ) and green

zone (GZ), and we accorded for each detected zone, values between 0-3, as we wrote above (follow the discussions with the personel surveyed).

First Law of Communication shows and analyzes these issues by identifying needs and problems pertaining to the function execution and communication management function, which can be solved to achieve performance. This method should not be confused with the 360 degrees assessment because there is a feedback about the skills, knowledge and attitudes. This law helps the organization to identify problems and solve them by assessing communication between managers and employees in different processes which use communication.

To analyse better the communication between employees and managers, we divided the questionnaire in 5 axis, as follows:

Axis 1 – the communication efficiency during recruitment, selection, employment and integration processes (RSEI),

Axis 2 – the communication efficiency during compensation and evaluation process,

Axis 3 – the communication efficiency with microenvironment,

Axis 4 – the communication during training and development process,

Axis 5 – the communication efficiency while performing management and execution activities.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table no. 1

Axis 1 – Communication during RSEI Processes

| Analysed Activities | Values Otellnox | | | Values Erdemir | | |
|---|-----------------|------------------|-----------|--------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| | RZ 0-0,99 | YZ 1-1,99 | GZ 2-3 | RZ 0-0,99 | YZ 1-1,99 | GZ 2-3 |
| 1.1. Recruitment advertising is clear and complies with the regulations? | | (12x3/12)=3 (GZ) | | (4x2+4x3/8)=2,5 (GZ) | | |
| 1.2. Recruitment ads are based on principles as not-discrimination, and offer equal chances to any candidate? | | (12x3/12)=3 (GZ) | | (4x2,5+4x2,7/8)=2,6 (GZ) | | |
| 1.3. Specialists team is selecting candidates using strong and valid selection criterions and not based on a-priori values? | | (12x3/12)=3 (GZ) | | (8x2/8)=2 (GZ) | | |
| 1.4. Employment and integration processes are made complying the written regulations from the Integration Manual? | | (12x3/12)=3 (GZ) | | (8x1,5/8)=1,5 (YZ) | | |
| 1.5. It was named a tutor by HR department to integrate better and faster the new employee in order to obtain performance? | | (12x3/12)=3(GZ) | | (4x1,4+4x1,6/8)=1,5 (YZ) | | |

According to the data, we obtain the following graph regarding the effectiveness of recruitment, selection, employment and

integrating from the two organizations analyzed as follows:

Table no. 2

Data Obtained for Otellnox – Axis 1

| Employee Performance (GZ) | Communication of Managers with Employees (GZ) |
|---|--|
| Solve problems efficiently, Employees are feeling valuable, They accept easily the change, They are identifying themselves with the organization, They are responsible. | Communication is clear, based on not-discrimination, Offers equal chances and encouragement, Achieve objectives on time. |

After some discussions and analyzing regulations, we see that the recruitment ads are made by specialists following the general principles of not-discrimination, presenting clearly the company, the job and the tasks. Otellnox has a Manual of Integration for new employees.

After six months of probation, the integration is made by a tutor which tests the knowledge: for execution functions the knowledge is tested orally and in writing, and they must obtain at least 7 points to show that the integration period passed well and to be engaged with a permanent

contract; for management functions is required to be done a project which consists in making proposals for improving the activity; the project will be sustained before a committee established under the regulation. Organizations use as selection criteria knowledge, experience, skills and education; another criterion used is age (being used by industrial organizations, and taking into account that people are working in hard conditions and requires physical strength, it is not seen as an act of discrimination, but a principle of bona-fide).

Table no. 3

Data obtained for Erdemir – Axis 1

| Employee Performance (GZ) | Employee Performance (YZ) | Communication between Managers and Employees (GZ) | Communication between Managers and Employees (YZ) |
|--|---|---|---|
| They solve problems efficiently, Employees are feeling valuable. | They do not accept easily the change, They are not identifying themselves with the organization, They are not so responsible. | Communication is transparent, Offers equal chances and encouragement, Achieve objectives on time. | Reglementations are not so clear, It not offering a tutor for new employees, It does not exist a Manual for integration |

Table no. 4

Communication during Compensation and Evaluation Process – Axis 2

| Analysed Activities | Values Otellnox | | | Values Erdemir | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------------------------|--------|-----|
| | RZ | YZ | GZ | RZ | YZ | GZ |
| | 0-0,99 | 1-1,99 | 2-3 | 0-0,99 | 1-1,99 | 2-3 |
| 2.1. use of the same criterions for all the analysed employees | (12x3/12)=3 (GZ) | | | (8x3/8)=3 (GZ) | | |
| 2.2. make correct analysis of all employees | (2x2,7+8x2,8+2x2,9/12)=2,8 (GZ) | | | (8x2/8)=2 (GZ) | | |
| 2.3. informing all employees about the used criterions | (2x2,7+8x2,8+2x2,9/12)=2,8 (GZ) | | | (8x2/8)=2 (GZ) | | |
| 2.4. communicating with the employees during evaluation based on principles of ethics, non-discrimination, and equal chances | (12x3/12)=3 (GZ) | | | (3x1,6+4x1,7+1x1,8/8)=1,675 (YZ) | | |
| 2.5. offering results about evaluation in the shortest period, so that all the employees may find out the analysis results and may challenge the results if they seem to incorrect | (12x3/12)=3 (GZ) | | | (4x1,5+4x2/8)=1,75 (YZ) | | |

Table no. 5

Data Obtained for Otellnox – Axis 2

| Employee performance (GZ) | Communication between managers and employees (GZ) |
|---|--|
| Solve problems efficiently, Employees are feeling valuable, They accept results communication, They can communicate if they are not agree, They are responsible | Selection is based on not-discrimination, There are offered equal chances, Inform rapidly the employees on evaluation results, Achieve objectives on time Use the same criterion for evaluation, Analyse correctly all the employees |

Table no. 6

Data Obtained for Erdemir – Axis 2

| Employee Performance (GZ) | Employee Performance (YZ) | Communication between Managers and Employees (GZ) | Communication between Managers and Employees (YZ) |
|---|--|--|---|
| Employees are not identifying themselves with the company | They are not motivated enough The problems are not solved efficiently. Employees wish to work in another company They cannot communicate freely about the evaluation results | Selection is made after the same criterion Selection is based on not-discrimination | Are not offered equal chances, Results are not offered rapidly, Feedback is not rapid Communication is not totally transparent |

Table no. 7

Communication Efficiency with Microenvironment – Axis 3

| Analysed Activities | Values Otellnox | | | Values Erdemir | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|--------|-----|-------------------------|--------|-----|
| | RZ | YZ | GZ | RZ | YZ | GZ |
| | 0-0,99 | 1-1,99 | 2-3 | 0-0,99 | 1-1,99 | 2-3 |
| 3.1. communication with employees | (12x3/12)=3 (GZ) | | | (4x2,5+4x3/8)=2,75 (GZ) | | |
| 3.2. communication with distributors and intermediaries | (12x3/12)=3 (GZ) | | | (4x2+4x3/8)=2,5 (GZ) | | |
| 3.3. communication with clients | (12x3/12)=3 (GZ) | | | (4x2+4x3/8)=2,5 (GZ) | | |
| 3.4. communication with general public (gouvernemental agencies, Media, Department of Finance, Department of Labour, or Local Labor Institute) | (6x2,8+6x3/12)=2,9 (GZ) | | | (8x2/8)=2 (GZ) | | |
| 3.5. communication with competitors | (3x2,6+3x2,7+6x2,8/12)=2,725 (GZ) | | | (2x2+6x1,8/8)=1,85(YZ) | | |

Table no. 8

Data obtained for Otellnox – Axis 3

| Employee Performance (GZ) | Communication between Managers and Employees (GZ) |
|---|--|
| Solve problems efficiently, Employees are feeling valuable, They communicate efficiently with the consumers, They create a good environment for development, They are responsible | Communicate efficiently creating value, trust, profit, Discover new methods of communication, Facilitates creation of new relationships Accept control of Labor Institute, Achieve objectives on time Create long term relationships with stakeholders Understands the needs of clients and satisfies them |

Table no. 9

Data obtained for Erdemir – Axis 3

| Employee Performance (GZ) | Employee Performance (YZ) | Communication between Managers and Employees (GZ) | Communication between Managers and Employees (YZ) |
|---|--|--|---|
| Satisfy efficiently the stakeholders problems Employee can freely communicate with customers | They are not identifying themselves with the company Employees are not enough motivated They want to work somewhere else | Communication with employees and distributors is good enough but it need improvement | Communication with competition is wicker |

Table no. 10*Communication during Training and Development Process – Axis 4*

| Analysed Activities | Values Otellnox | | | Values Erdemir | | |
|---|---|--------------|-----------|---|--------------|-----------|
| | RZ 0-0,99 | YZ 1-1,99 | GZ 2-3 | RZ 0-0,99 | YZ 1-1,99 | GZ 2-3 |
| 4.1. communication with different external agencies | $(3 \times 2,6 + 3 \times 2,7 + 6 \times 2,8 / 12) = 2,725$ (GZ) | | | $(8 \times 2,5 / 8) = 2,5$ (GZ) | | |
| 4.2. communication with mentors and tutors from inside the organization, who offer them different ways of learning: from the traditional ones to the new ways, like online learning methods, using e-mail communication or intranet communication | $(12 \times 3 / 12) = 3$ (GZ) | | | $(8 \times 3 / 8) = 3$ (GZ) | | |
| 4.3. Selecting the training needs according with thier performance. | $(12 \times 3 / 12) = 3$ (GZ) | | | $(8 \times 2 / 8) = 2$ (GZ) | | |
| 4.4. Sending employees to training according to training planning | $(6 \times 2,8 + 6 \times 3 / 12) = 2,9$ (GZ) | | | $(3 \times 1,7 + 3 \times 1,8 + 2 \times 1,9 / 8) = 1,78$ (YZ) | | |
| 4.5. Choosing a training program according to trainer experience, location, new knowledge sharing, intarcation, and cost | $(12 \times 3 / 12) = 3$ (GZ) | | | $(8 \times 2,5 / 8) = 2,5$ (GZ) | | |

Table no. 11*Data obtained for Otellnox – Axis 4*

| Employee Performance (GZ) | Communication between Managers and Employees (GZ) |
|--|--|
| Solve problems efficiently, Employees have efficient relationships with mentors, They obtain new knowledge and experiences, They develop effectively for changing environment | Communicate effectively with trainers, bringing value and profit, Discover new methods of training , Create new relationships, Training needs are filled up according to a plan, Achieve objectives on time, Understand the training needs of employees |

Table no. 12*Data obtained for Erdemir – Axis 4*

| Employee Performance (GZ) | Employee Performance (YZ) | Communication between Managers and Employees (GZ) | Communication between Managers and Employees (YZ) |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Communicates efficiently with mentors | Employees are not totally satisfied They are not motivated enough | Communicate good enough with training providers Program is chosen on experience and costs | Training needs are sometimes new knowledge according to a plan The needs are not always analysed on performance |

Table no. 13*The Communication Efficiency during Management and Execution Activities – Axis 5*

| Analysed Activities | Values Otellnox | | | Values Erdemir | | |
|--|---|--------------|-----------|--|--------------|-----------|
| | RZ 0-0,99 | YZ 1-1,99 | GZ 2-3 | RZ 0-0,99 | YZ 1-1,99 | GZ 2-3 |
| 5.1. communication is efficient in order to transmit regulations and tasks | $(12 \times 3 / 12) = 3$ (GZ) | | | $(4 \times 2,8 + 4 \times 3 / 8) = 2,9$ (GZ) | | |
| 5.2. communication is efficient in order to make decisions | $(12 \times 3 / 12) = 3$ (GZ) | | | $(4 \times 2,5 + 4 \times 3 / 8) = 2,75$ (GZ) | | |
| 5.3. communication is efficient in order to solve conflicts such as, strikes, fluctuations, absenteeism, or workplace accidents. | $(3 \times 2,6 + 3 \times 2,7 + 6 \times 2,8 / 12) = 2,725$ (GZ) | | | $(2 \times 2 + 6 \times 2,5 / 8) = 2,375$ (GZ) | | |
| 5.4. communication is efficient in order to make planning | $(12 \times 3 / 12) = 3$ (GZ) | | | $(8 \times 3 / 8) = 3$ (GZ) | | |
| 5.5. communication is efficient in order to improve activities | $(12 \times 3 / 12) = 3$ (GZ) | | | $(4 \times 2,5 + 4 \times 3 / 8) = 2,75$ (GZ) | | |

Table no. 14

Data obtained for Otellnox and Erdemir – Axis 5

| Employee Performance (GZ) | Communication of Managers with Employees (GZ) |
|--|--|
| Solve problems efficiently, Employees have efficient relationships with managers, They are let to make decisions, They improve other activities | Communicate effectively with employees, bringing value, trust and profit Discover new methods of communication, Create strong relationships, They make communication according to a plan, Achieve objectives on time, Diminish conflicts, communicating effectively |

As we can see Otellnox is obtained maximum scores, being mostly in the green zone, having an efficient communication, during recruitment, selection, employment, and integration, compensation and evaluation, an effective communication with the microenvironment components. It has an efficient training program and is transmitting efficiently the orders, tasks, and regulations, to make decisions, to solve conflicts and to improve activities, in order to obtain performance. Now is in a process of change, regarding the number of employees. It was offering compensation wages for the employees who were, in the next period, the necessary age for retirement and it wants to recruit young graduates, without any experience, but with good results in faculties, to recruit, maintain and teach in their own policy and regulations. Erdemir has obtained scores between 1,5 and 3, and it needs improvements to integration process (develop a Manual of Integration for new employees), communication during evaluation process, offering results about evaluation in a shorter

time, improve communication with competitors, and sending employees to training according to training planning, in order to obtain performance. Erdemir, if it had a better communication with its employees, it had not conducted to conflicts (the strike appeared in 2013). Labor disputes between management and the execution function ending with cases in court, and its have been won in favor of employees (measures imposed by the court: the return of employees to work, payment of lost wages, offer free bonuses and pay a few days off).

Proposals

As we can see from the above analysis, the time spent for communication is very important in solving daily problems, improving processes of recruitment, selection, employment, integration, performance evaluation, training, but a few of the many processes that can improve just by communicating effectively and transparently and based on continuous feedback.

Table no. 15

Spent Time for Daily Communication on Positions

| Function | % |
|---------------------|------|
| Managers | 49.7 |
| Technical employees | 40.7 |
| Clerk employees | 29.1 |
| Social employees | 51.6 |

Adaptation after [26].

Communication between employees and managers should aim achieving goals, whether internal or external, according to its vision [27], to obtain desired performance of employees and managers.

Internal objectives: Exchange of information, Feedback, Quality control, Influence, Solving problems, Decision-making, Facilitates change, Organisation and construction teams, Build effective

internal relationships, Effective leadership, motivation, Efficient use of resources, Performance monitoring

External objectives: Promotion of products and services, Informing customers on changing products/services, Building a clear, positive, Information society of its activities.

A research conducted by various people and organizations, revealed that between 40-60 % of the time spent by employees at work is used to talk, write, listen and read.

5. Conclusions

First Law of Communication describes the communication between employees and managers in order to obtain employees' and managers' performance according to the principle of cause and effect, depending on how management communicates with employees.

These models can be used as diagnostic tools for analysis of:

- Communication between supervisors/managers and subordinates individually.
- Communication between managers and all subordinates.

Analyzing communication processes and each major activity which is using

communication to get performance, the organizations will improve long-term relationships with employees, distributors, intermediaries, customers, media and the general public and will obtain a better control. If the organization do not measure it cannot improve a process, so that the analysis of this process will certainly lead to obtain positive results.

Organizations which are implementing such an analysis will take advantage providing:

- Behaviors and attitudes that management should possess to achieve performance.
- A new approach that provides managers the opportunity to evaluate how to communicate with employees and to determine the current position, where the organization and its processes are in the model.

To obtain high-quality products to satisfy customers, to be motivated, managers need to communicate effectively with employees. Evaluation of communication with employees must be positive and real to obtain individual and organizational performance.

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