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The influence of personality features and group and organizational conditionings on the effectiveness of internal communication – hierarchy and its determinants

Abstract

The members of organization differ from each other and the behaviours displayed by them can also vary despite the impact of the same group or system factors. Moreover, behaviours of individuals in the workplace affects the functioning of the entire organization, thus, it contributes, directly or indirectly, to the achievement of the established goals or makes this task more difficult. One of the form of the aforementioned behaviours are those exhibited in communication between employees. The aim of the paper is to analyse the influence of individual, group and organizational conditioning on the effectiveness of communication directed to the company personnel. Based on the results of quantitative research, the authors established the hierarchy of factors belonging to particular groups and indicated the most important determinants of the effectiveness of internal process of communication.

Key words

internal communication, communication behaviours, determinants of communication behaviours, organizational behaviours, effectiveness

Introduction and objectives

The members of organization differ from each other and the behaviours displayed by them can also vary despite the impact of the same group or system factors. Moreover, behaviours of individuals in the workplace affects the functioning of the entire organization, thus, it contributes, directly or indirectly, to the achievement of the established goals or makes this task more difficult. One of the form of the aforementioned behaviours are those exhibited in communication between employees. The aim of the paper is to analyse the influence of individual, group and organizational conditioning on the effectiveness of communication directed to the company personnel. Based on the results of quantitative research, the authors established the hierarchy of factors belonging to particular groups and indicated the most important determinants of the effectiveness of internal process of communication.

Literature Review

Communication behaviours are a specific form of organizational behaviours. They enable achieving company goals and are supposed to form the effectiveness on different levels of the organization. Therefore, they ought to be analysed on related levels: interpersonal, group and organizational.

B. Sobkowiak divides all individual conditionings of communication behaviours into biological, socio-professional and psychological factors [2005, p. 127]. The major ingredients of the first group are gender and age. Scientific research conducted by psychologists, sociologists and linguists point out that there are differences in communication between men

and women, as the representatives of both groups have varied non-linguistic experiences, perform different social functions and complete different social tasks [Nęcki 2000, p. 219]. According to the stereotype, on the communication level, women are associated with warmth, sympathy, expressiveness, sensibility and less confidence. On the other hand, men are characterized by rationality, aiming at the control over conversation and tendency for domination, mentioned before [Wood 2009, p.372]. The influence of age on communication behaviours can be considered in reference to both biological and psychological age. Older people are characterized by more detailed consideration in the choice of words, distance and rationality. The young are more extrovert, spontaneous and impulsive, besides they perceive reality more diametrically [Rosengren 2006, p. 72].

Family state, education and profession are the most significant among socio-professional factors. The impact of the first of them on the course of communication has not been a subject of detailed research so far. However, it can be assumed that family state affects the feeling of confidence or uncertainty in interpersonal relations, which may make communication easier or more difficult. Whereas education and profession shape expectations connected with the ways of communication. People with higher education are expected to have better communication skills and more extroversion, similarly with the representatives of certain professions (e.g. lawyers) and professional groups (e.g. managers) [Sobkowiak 2005, p. 130].

The last group within individual indicators of communication behaviours is psychological conditioning. This group consists of abilities (including competences), intelligence, personality, hierarchy of needs, motivation, cherished values and individual experiences of employees. Factors which are analysed most frequently are personality, motivation and communication competences. Referring to the typology of human personality by C.G. Jung based on the categories of sensitiveness and impulsiveness, we can distinguish between introverts and extroverts. Introverts have problems with expressing feelings, formulating opinions in a clear way, difficulties with establishing relationships and reluctance towards interpersonal relations. Extroverts, on the other hand, are fond of contact with people, they are talkative, sociable, expressive and they reveal emotions willingly. Not only genes but also individual experiences which are the results of interaction with environment exert influence on personality crystallization and development. Another factor – motivation – is a trigger of human activity. Taking into account the functioning of an individual in the workplace, motivation is the readiness to make an effort in order to achieve the goals of the organization. The strength of such motivation depends on the degree in which people's effort makes satisfying their needs easier. Therefore, motivation is every internal and external factor which initiates and strengthens human behaviour. The extent to which an individual is influenced depends on the value and the attractiveness of the goal and on the subjective evaluation regarding the possibility of this achievement [Hellriegel, Slocum and Woodman 2007, p. 121]. Motivation for communicating with other people rises with the increase of motivation to act. Communication competences constitute especially significant category among psychological factors. They are the basis of effective communication. In linguistic literature they are defined as skills and individual abilities to achieve goals of interaction, taking into account a contextual character of every communicative situation [Olson 2002, p. 173; Spitzberg and Cupach 1984; Spitzberg, Canary and Cupach 1994]. Thus, it is worth noticing that communication behaviour considered competent in one situation may be perceived as incompetent in a different context. Furthermore, values are everything that is crucial and desirable from a given person's point of view and what constitutes his or her major goals (existential, cognitive and aesthetic needs). These values indicate what different people perceive as good and bad, besides they are an indicator of accepted and not accepted actions. Values cherished by people are the basis to shape norms, attitudes, patterns and evaluation of behaviour [French 2011, p. 108-110].

At the group level people's communication behaviours in the organization are shaped by the style of management introduced by the superior, a kind and a character of communication network which connects all the individuals in a group. The way in which the

manager addresses subordinates determines communication in a given team. R. Lippitt and R.K. White enumerate the following styles in their classical division of management styles: autocratic, democratic and passive. In every case communication has different features [Gach and Pietruszka - Otryl 2005; p. 217-219, Penc 2011, p. 238-239]. The manager who prefers an autocratic style, maintains distance towards the employees and increases the number of barriers in communication. Communication is maximally limited then, the flow of information is mainly unidirectional, firm and formalized. Autocratic managers prefer informative communication and they usually initiate it themselves. Moreover, they often highlight their superiority in the relations with employees. On the other hand, managers with democratic styles aims at eliminating all the obstacles in communication. A group directed in a democratic way is characterized by a two-way and symmetrical process of communication, besides the manager uses communication to induce creativity and initiative of subordinates. People contact each other willingly, working atmosphere fosters open communication, mutual exchange of ideas and the growth of personnel's creativity. In contrast, in a passive (*laissez-faire*) style the flow of information related to work is occasional, formalized and forced by employees. The boss rarely initiates communication connected with work with subordinates, however, he or she is eager to communicate with them on a sociable level. In practice, according to the situational approach, managers usually link different styles of management, using various options in particular situations.

The second factor within group determinants of communication behaviours is a kind and a character of a communication network, linking individuals in a group. There are two communication channels in every organization: structured (formal) and unstructured (informal), within which a few kinds of networks can be enumerated. A communication network is a model formed by the course of announcements transferred between group members [Potocki, Winkler and Żbikowska 2003, p.48]. Formal communication networks are usually built and introduced by direct superiors.

They result from the style of management, organizational habits, regulations, the character and tasks of a group. Communication through a structured channel takes place through working meetings, documents exchange and management conferences. They are usually characterized by public knowledge and little susceptibility for changes. Informal networks, in contrast, are based on personal and emotional relations between people, taking their characteristics, attitudes and aims into account [Szymańska 2004, p.30]. They have their source in casual conversations of the personnel, gossips and rumours. They are a derivative of the attractiveness of members of the communication process and the access to important or interesting information. Unstructured communication is usually out of public knowledge, flexible and susceptible for changes. The choice of a particular kind of network results in both positive and negative consequences for the effectiveness of organization's activity.

The literature regarding human behaviours in a workplace mentions dynamics of activities both between the members of the group and between different groups among group conditionings of behaviours. Group dynamics is described as the dynamics of social interaction within those groups, while there is also an interaction between certain group members and the group as the whole. Taking into account the fact that the interests of the participants and their groups can be inconsistent, different negative occurrences which influence the effectiveness of the group as the whole may take place. D. Hellriegel, J. W. Slocum and R.W. Woodman [1992, p. 312-313] enumerate so called free rider effect, sucker effect and social laziness. The relations created between the groups are crucial both from the perspective of the functioning of an individual in the workplace and in the organization as the whole as they may significantly affect the results gained by the company.

Communication behaviours are also determined by organizational factors. They include the direction of communication (vertical – up or down, horizontal, diagonal), the kind of organizational structure and the features of organizational culture. Vertical communication is usually formalized, forced and asymmetrical. Both superiors and subordinates control and select transferred information. Horizontal communication, for a change, which takes place among people with similar or the same organizational status is spontaneous, symmetrical and

weakly formalized, and people share information openly. Whereas diagonal communication is rarely used, most often if the flow of information through vertical and horizontal channels is insufficient.

Communication process in a company is determined by organizational structure as well. In linear structures superior communication is dominant. Communication is formalized and the way of the flow of information is relatively long because of which there is a danger of distorting the message or interrupting the process. In functional structures between managers and contractors there are shorter and direct communication ways, whereas communication network is more complicated and subordinates can receive contradictory messages. It leads to problems with the flow of communication in the whole organization. In contrast staff-linear organizational structures are characterized by a theoretical communication order (staffs do not communicate directly with the subordinates of linear managers), however, the channels of the flow and processing of information are relatively long [Kraśniak 2008, p. 55-58].

Taking into consideration the scope of management and the number of management levels both flat and lean structures can be. In lean structures communication channels are prolonged on the line contractor – lower level manager because of a large number of hierarchical levels [Świetlik 2004, p. 210-211]. It leads to delays in the information transfer but also increases the probability of deformation and downgrading of the message. Nevertheless, because of the necessity of making agreements between organizational units it is natural to aim at creating functional communication system. In case of a flat structure the channel of communication and the time of transferring information are shortened, which influences significantly the topicality and precision of the information which is conveyed.

Organizational culture which has a significant impact on the way of thinking and individuals' behaviours takes up an important position among the determinants of communication behaviours. One of the essential elements of organization culture is the atmosphere of the organization understood as the quality of communication processes between individuals. The aforementioned atmosphere is influenced by the sense of respect, appreciation, trust, awareness of one's own self-esteem and the management style preferred by the superior. According to R. Adler [1986, p. 42-43] the atmosphere of communication is indicated by resulting from the culture of a given organization factor such as: autonomy, rewarding the achievements, emotional support, development opportunities, rights to take risk, make mistakes, constructive criticism and openness in expressing opinion and the acceptance of constructive conflict. Good atmosphere around communication between the members of an organization favours work satisfaction, efficiency and identification with a company and its goals. An inseparable part of every organization are conflicts which are group conditionings of organization behaviours. A conflict is considered a discord perceived as impossible to reconcile differences in views or interests or the tension between two or more sides leading to disturbances or opposition [Hellriegel, Slocum and Woodman 2007, p. 294; Martin and Fellenz 2010, p. 300; Robins and DeCenzo 2002; p. 536; Tosi, Mero and Rizzo 2001, p. 276]. The views on a conflict (traditional, the school of interpersonal human relations, interactive) shaped in literature discusses both its positive and negative effects.

Power is another aspect of communication conditionings. It is understood as the ability of an individual (coming from different sources) to influence behaviour, attitudes and decisions of other people [Furnham 2005, p. 412]. It is a kind of dependency between the affecting and the object of impact and it grows with the growth of the dependency between the object of the influence and the person in charge. An action which motivates positively or negatively to passiveness or a change of previous activities, goals, the way of proceeding or needs described as the power effect is thought to be the cause of the influence [Gros 2003, p. 178-179]. The members of the organization use their power not only to achieve goals but also to strengthen their position. The ability to affect other employees or to react to this influence is highly dependent on proper communication.

Certainly the factors determining communication behaviours discussed above are not a sufficient list. However, the authors decided that because of the research problem which had been posed, it will be more profitable to limit the discussion to the essential factors rather than

trying to analyse all the factors theoretically and empirically. Not only do the factors which were mentioned before affect an interpersonal style of communication of every employee, but it also influences their mood. The evaluation of the strength and the direction of the influence of every of the factors described, seems to be interesting from both theoretical and practical point of view. While the indicator of the effectiveness is said to the level on which differently defined goals are achieved. These aspects will be the subject of the discussion in further part of the paper.

Method

In order to solve the research problem primary research was conducted. Production and service companies were the subjects of the research. The choice of organizations in which the research was conducted was a deliberate choice based on availability. The group under scrutiny consisted of 3 small enterprises employing from 10 to 49 people, 4 middle-sized enterprises with the number of employees between 50 and 249 and two big enterprises with the staff over 250 people. Because of the research being time-consuming and its high costs which was planned, the area was limited to wielkopolskie voivodship. The surveying took place between December 2012 and March 2013 in the seats of the companies chosen on the basis on the plan prepared in advance.

Quantitative research was conducted in the form of a direct and online questionnaire among the employees of the companies who were chosen in random-quota sampling. In order to ensure the appropriate number of the representatives of all groups employed the quotes were: the represented department and the level of management. Next, the authors employed systematic sampling to choose the respondents to the research, the procedure was based on the list of employees in the enterprises. Employees equipped with a computer completed online questionnaires placed on www.limeservice.com, under the address dedicated to the employees of a particular enterprise. The rest of respondents answered the questionnaires in a traditional way. The number of respondents was representative for the total of employees in case of every enterprise. Questionnaires were completed by 1398 people, 787 were filled in in the direct form and 611 in an on-line version. Further analysis included 1354 respondents, 751 of whom took part in the traditional research and 603 took part in the on-line research.

Findings

The subject literature lacks unambiguous conclusions in terms of the effectiveness of communication processes in the workplace. It is difficult to state unequivocally what plays the most important role in the effectiveness of communication process in the workplace, it can be the features of an acquirer and a recipient, relations between people who communicate or the conditioning related to the specific character of the company. Psychologists indicate the prevailing importance of character and personality of individuals. Whereas sociologists emphasize that the relations between the participants of the process are the most significant. Furthermore, researchers who represent the field of management point out to the leading role of factors connected with an organization as the whole. Therefore, it has been decided that all the aforementioned areas should go under scrutiny. The respondents were asked for indicating which factors and to what extent affect communication in the workplace using the five stage Likert scale for the evaluation. (1 completely unimportant factor, 5- crucial factor). Based on the answers collected from the questionnaires the analysis of a variation in an intergroup scheme for indicated factors was conducted. The analysis of the variations proved that there are significant statistical differences between certain groups – $F(2, 2706) = 572,98; p < 0,001$. Whereas multi-comparisons showed that:

- the influence of organizational indicators was evaluated higher than the one of individual indicators;
- the influence of group indicators was evaluated higher than individual and organizational indicators.

The results which were obtained show that individual conditionings are less important for communication processes in the organization than group and organizational conditionings. In certain groups of indicators there could be some indicators which are irrelevant for the aspect under scrutiny and aspects which are crucial. Therefore, determining the average total estimation for each group did not allow or a full explanation of the researched aspect and further, more detailed analysis of the obtained results was necessary. Thus, it was checked how the respondents evaluated the influence of single factors on the effectiveness of communication in the workplace (table 1).

Table 1. The hierarchy of the importance of the conditioning of internal communication effectiveness

	hierarchy	average value
(G) management style of superior	1	4,12
(G) relations between employees in departments	2	4,00
(I) personality	3	3,86
(G) conflicts	4	3,78
(G) relations between employees within work groups	5	3,77
(O) organizational culture and climate	6	3,65
(I) employees experiences	7	3,64
(O) organizational change	8	3,63
(O) organizational structure	9	3,46
(O) direction of communication flow	10	3,42
(G) formal networks of communication	11	3,41
(G) informal networks of communication	12	3,38
(O) struggle over power in organization	13	3,22
(I) values	14	3,14
(I) education	15	3,00
(I) age	16	2,67
(I) profession	17	2,58
(I) gender	18	2,46
(I) family status	19	2,31

Source: own study based on conducted questionnaires (N=1354), I-individual, G-group, O-organizational.

The most important factors determining the efficiency of internal communication are the managing style of the superior, relations between employees and employees' personalities. On the other hand, the factors influencing communication the least are: education, age, profession, sex and family situation of an employee. It is worth noticing that among five most important conditionings of the effectiveness of internal communication there are four conditionings classified as group conditionings and among five least important there are five conditionings from the group of individual factors.

The general hierarchy is a good point of reference to determine the significance of factors in certain segments of respondents. Thus, the analysis of differences in the hierarchy was performed, depending on particular researched features in relation to the hierarchy generally. The level of management was taken into account in the first place (table 2). In case of certain management levels the differences can be observed especially on the highest level on which managers claim that the struggle over power in the organization (it is three positions higher than in general hierarchy), the directions of communication (two positions higher) and organizational culture are the most important factors (also two positions higher). Organizational changes and relations between employees in particular departments are less important from the perspective of top management (in both cases three positions lower in the hierarchy). This approach probably results from the specific character of work in a higher position and looking at organization functioning and therefore internal communication as well in a wider context. It should be noticed, however, that organizational changes which are treated as one of the most difficult aspects of communication management in a company gains less importance. In contrast, on the average level of management one can notice minor role of personality (3 positions lower) and more important role of relations between employees within working groups (two positions lower). There are not any significant differences among

the employees of lower levels in the hierarchies. The cause of such a situation may be a high percentage of respondents from this group in the research.

Table 2. The differences in the hierarchy of the importance of the conditioning of internal communication effectiveness with regard to the management level

	hierarchy	low	medium	high
(G) management style of superior	1	1	1	1
(G) relations between employees in departments	2	2	2	5
(I) personality	3	3	6	2
(G) conflicts	4	4	4	3
(G) relations between employees within work groups	5	5	3	6
(O) organizational culture and climate	6	8	5	4
(I) employees experiences	7	7	7	7
(O) organizational change	8	6	8	11
(O) organizational structure	9	9	10	9
(O) direction of communication flow	10	11	9	8
(G) formal networks of communication	11	10	11	12
(G) informal networks of communication	12	12	12	13
(O) struggle over power in organization	13	13	13	10
(I) values	14	14	14	14
(I) education	15	15	15	15
(I) age	16	16	17	17
(I) profession	17	17	16	16
(I) gender	18	18	18	18
(I) family status	19	19	19	19

Source: own study based on conducted questionnaires (N=1354), I-individual, G-group, O-organizational.

Furthermore, it was checked whether the sector represented by the respondents influenced their opinion on the hierarchy of the importance of the conditioning of internal communication effectiveness in the company (table 3).

Table 3. The differences in the hierarchy of the importance of the conditioning of internal communication effectiveness with regard to the branch

	hierarchy	mixed	services	retail	Manufacture
(G) management style of superior	1	1	2	3	1
(G) relations between employees in departments	2	2	3	1	2
(I) personality	3	11	1	4	10
(G) conflicts	4	4	4	2	4
(G) relations between employees within work groups	5	5	6	5	3
(O) organizational culture and climate	6	3	8	6	5
(I) employees experiences	7	10	7	7	6
(O) organizational change	8	8	5	10	7
(O) organizational structure	9	7	10	12	9
(O) direction of communication flow	10	6	14	11	8
(G) formal networks of communication	11	9	13	9	11
(G) informal networks of communication	12	12	11	8	12
(O) struggle over power in organization	13	13	15	14	13
(I) values	14	14	12	13	14
(I) education	15	16	9	15	15
(I) age	16	17	16	17	17
(I) profession	17	15	18	16	16
(I) gender	18	18	17	19	18
(I) family status	19	19	19	18	19

Source: own study based on conducted questionnaires (N=1354), I-individual, G-group, O-organizational.

The hierarchy of the importance of the conditioning of internal communication effectiveness is strongly varied in different branches. Little importance of personality for communication in a production sector and mixed activity (respectively seven and eight positions lower in

comparison with the general hierarchy). It should be noticed that this factor came two positions higher which causes as many as nine positions in the scope of the hierarchy. In services also education plays more important role (six positions higher – in this case the explanation is obvious). The sector of services gives relatively less significance to the directions of communication (four positions lower), however the same factor in mixed activity is four positions higher. It is worth pointing out to the differences within the influence of organizational culture (three positions higher in mixed activity and two positions lower in the sector of services) and organizational changes (three positions higher in services and two positions lower in trade).

Manufacturing companies and manufacturing and trading companies pay less attention to the role of employees in efficient functioning of the company, they are not treated as individuals but as a part of a bigger wholeness. Their importance is greater in case of services because of a more frequent contact with a client. Thus, paying more attention to group and organizational factors in manufacturing sector and to individual factor in services sector is not surprising. What is shocking, however, is low importance given to organizational changes.

The education of the respondents should exert a significant influence on the hierarchy of the importance of the conditioning of communication processes in the organization. But as it turns out employees' education varies the ranking of factors in a lesser degree than the expected one (table 4).

Table 4. The differences in the hierarchy of the importance of the conditioning of internal communication effectiveness with regard to education

	hierarchy	elemen- tary	occupa- tional	secon- dary	higher	full higher
(G) management style of superior	1	1	1	1	1	1
(G) relations between employees in departments	2	3	2	2	4	2
(I) personality	3	4	3	3	2	4
(G) conflicts	4	2	4	6	7	3
(G) relations between employees in work groups	5	7	5	4	5	5
(O) organizational culture and climate	6	5	8	8	3	6
(I) employees experiences	7	8	7	5	6	9
(O) organizational change	8	6	6	7	8	12
(O) organizational structure	9	9	11	9	10	8
(O) direction of communication flow	10	10	13	11	9	7
(G) formal networks of communication	11	12	9	10	12	10
(G) informal networks of communication	12	11	12	12	11	11
(O) struggle over power in organization	13	15	16	13	13	13
(I) values	14	14	14	14	14	14
(I) education	15	13	10	15	15	15
(I) age	16	17	15	16	17	17
(I) profession	17	19	18	17	16	16
(I) gender	18	18	17	18	18	18
(I) family status	19	16	19	19	19	19

Source: own study based on conducted questionnaires (N=1354), I-individual, G-group, O-organizational.

Respondents with elementary education considered family status as relatively more important (three positions higher than in general). On the other hand, those with occupational education see less relationship between the effectiveness of communication with the level of education (five positions higher than in the general hierarchy). Simultaneously, they put less importance to the directions of communication and the fight for power in the organization (three positions lower). Whereas people with secondary education considered culture and the atmosphere of the organization essential (three positions higher) and they put less significance to conflicts (three positions lower). Finally, people with full higher education see more importance in the effectiveness of communication in the directions of communication (three positions higher) and less in organizational changes (four positions lower). Based on the results discussed above, it can be concluded that people with higher education place a little more value to some organizational factors than people with elementary, occupational or secondary education.

The final aspect taken into the analysis was respondents' age. It turned out it determined the perception of the sequence of factors influencing the efficiency of internal communication (table 5).

Table 5. The differences in the hierarchy of the importance of the conditioning of internal communication effectiveness with regard to age.

	hierarchy	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
(G) management style of superior	1	1	1	1	1	1
(G) relations between employees in departments	2	3	2	2	2	3
(I) personality	3	12	3	6	3	2
(G) conflicts	4	4	4	4	4	7
(G) relations between employees in work groups	5	5	5	3	6	6
(O) organizational culture and climate	6	2	6	5	8	9
(I) employees experiences	7	13	7	7	5	5
(O) organizational change	8	6	8	9	7	4
(O) organizational structure	9	7	9	8	10	10
(O) direction of communication flow	10	8	10	10	13	13
(G) formal networks of communication	11	11	11	11	9	11
(G) informal networks of communication	12	9	12	12	12	12
(O) struggle over power in organization	13	10	13	13	15	16
(I) values	14	14	14	14	14	14
(I) education	15	15	15	15	11	8
(I) age	16	17	17	17	16	15
(I) profession	17	16	16	16	18	18
(I) gender	18	18	18	18	17	17
(I) family status	19	19	19	19	19	19

Source: own study based on conducted questionnaires (N=1354), I-individual, G-group, O-organizational.

The most visible differences are those in the two utmost groups, among the youngest and the oldest. Those employees who are under the age of twenty four give more importance to organizational culture (four positions higher than in the general hierarchy), informal communication networks and fight for power (three positions higher in both cases). In contrast, what they perceive as much less significant are personality (personality - as many as nine positions lower – the largest difference in the ranking) and individual experiences (six positions lower). On the other hand, older respondents value education more (seven positions higher) and they put more significance to organizational changes (four positions higher). According to this group of respondents a minor role is played by factors such as: conflicts, organizational culture, the directions of communication and struggle over power in the organization (three positions lower in each case). The differences in the hierarchies are caused mainly by various professional experiences of the respondents. Older people, due to their longer job seniority, have more awareness of communication difficulties which result from educational differences and changes in company functioning. Younger respondents, in contrast, emphasize the importance of informal communication networks and fight for power as they are geared for establishing relations, but also for working their way up.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the questionnaires the authors created a list of factors which significantly influence the efficiency of communication in an organization. The factors were grouped according to the theory of organizational behaviours into individual, group and organizational ones. In the light of the analysis of variations in an intergroup scheme, the influence of organizational indicators was evaluated as higher than individual indicators. Besides, the influence of group indicators was statistically considered as more important than individual and organizational indicators. The ranking of determinants with the strongest influence on the efficiency of communication in the workplace was also established. They include group indicators related to the superior's management style and relations between employees in certain departments, as well as personality, an individual factor. Conflicts, relations between those employed within working groups, culture, atmosphere, organizational

changes and individual experiences of employees can be enumerated as other crucial conditionings.

The greatest discrepancies in the evaluation of the influence of certain factors on the efficiency of internal communication was stated in case of variables related to the branch. In the following positions one can observe age and the level of education, whereas the variable connected with the management levels was characterized by the least visible differences. Taking into account the represented sector, the amount of differences, in comparison with the general hierarchy, was 96 (24 for every value of a variable on average). In case of age the differences were shaped at the level of 98 points (19,6), and at the level of 86 points (17,2) for education. Whereas for the level of management the amount of differences was 36 (12).

Based on the results gained from the research it is worth referring to the thesis about an important role of individual factors in the efficiency of internal communication. These factors (excluding personality and individual experiences) turned out to be insignificant, independently on the section. Nevertheless, the results should be with caution as in case of declarative research respondents may falsify the influence of individual factors (the influence perceived by them can be weaker than the real one) unconsciously. Thus, it would be a good solution to design research of another type to measure this kind of factors (e.g. by the method of observation).

The authors are aware that the problems presented in this paper do not fully explain the conditioning of the efficiency of internal communication process. Further research is necessary especially in the field of determining the influence of particular factors (especially the individual ones) on the efficiency of communication on the actual, not declarative level.

Managerial implications

Proper management of communication process in an organization requires the analysis of its conditioning and on the other hand, determining the factors influencing positively or negatively the efficiency of undertaken communication activities. For this reason being familiar with the catalogue of determinants of the effectiveness of internal communication is so important. The results of empirical research which was conducted can be useful for enterprises searching for the ways of increasing the effectiveness of the activities in this area. The knowledge about the hierarchy or establishing an accurate diagnosis of communication process inside the company and making proper conclusions should contribute to the improvement of organization functioning both on internal and external market.

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