



MANAGING COMMUNICATION, KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION



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INSTANT ASSIGNMENT HELP

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INTRODUCTION

Communication is one of the most important aspects of business operations to which management of an enterprise needs to pay a lot of attention (Wong, 2005). By managing it in a proper manner, there are much better chances for the organization to survive in the market and fulfil desire of target customers.. The present report discusses about importance and ways to manage communication, knowledge and information in a newly formed retail firm and a small political activist organization as well. Furthermore, strategies through which effectiveness of such processes can be improved has also been discussed in the report.

Assignment 1

1.1 DIFFERENT DECISIONS TO BE MADE AND EXAMINATION OF INFORMATION REQUIRED

When entering into a new industry and establishing operations there are various kinds of decisions which are required to be made (Desouza and Awazu, 2006). The new retail firm's management would be required to take decisions such as financial, operational, strategic, tactical, etc. For instance the authorities will need to decide how much money they want to invest in different aspects of operations of the firm; while they would also have to take strategic decisions where they would be required to determine future course of action for the firm. There are various kinds of information which authorities would need to access to take such decisions in an effective manner (Adams, Bessant and Phelps, 2006). For instance, having information about financial strengths and capabilities of the firm would be handy while taking monetary decisions. Furthermore, the new retail organization should also have access to information pertaining to the market data and trends.

1.2 LIST OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

For taking decisions, the retail organization would need to have access to varied kinds of information which it can obtain through different internal and external sources. Data related to human resources of the firm is an internal source of information (Mutihac, 2010). It can be easily accessed through sources such as Human Resource Information System (HRIS) software. By using this system on a regular basis, management of the retail firm can obtain information related to people working in the organization. It can be a very effective source of data primarily because of it would help the company in determining whether or not it has skilled manpower in the organization and steps or measures that need to be taken to procure well trained people. Data from marketing research tools is an external source of information that would help authorities in determining trends prevailing in the target market (Robson and Tourish, 2005). In addition, it would also provide information that would help the management in understanding the precautions which they are required to take so as to effectively set up operations in the retail industry. By understanding information obtained through such sources, decisions can be taken regarding setting up operations in the retail industry (Lee and Wen-Jung, 2005).

1.3 IMPROVEMENT IN METHODS IN SELECTION AND ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION

Retail industry is one of the most competitive landscapes in UK, due to which it is very important for companies to use a wide variety of sources and methods of information so as to select and analyse information. There are many ways for the same (Bennett, 2010). For instance the new retail organization in addition to conducting a market research must also pay substantial amount of attention towards evaluating customer trends. It would help in understanding needs and demands of target customers, enabling the company to fulfil them effectively. Similarly, management of the company can also use approaches such as evaluating internal environment in terms of financial condition (Spaho, 2013). It would help the management in understanding monetary condition of the organization and thus obtaining the ability with which firm's overall performance can be enhanced substantially. This will help in prolonging company's existence in the market, as well as making its operations even more effective.

Assignment 2

2.1 LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS FOR THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Stakeholders basically are those individuals and entities which have something at stake in the firm, i.e. they get directly influenced by operations of the organization (Holtshouse, 2013). They also have a major role to play in company's decision making process. The management at new retail organization would need to involve stakeholders in this process, so as to improve its effectiveness and also satisfy them. Following are these stakeholders:

Investors and shareholders: They would be required to take decisions regarding monetary and financial aspect of operations of the organization. This means that, they would take decisions regarding how much money the firm is going to spend on what areas and facets that need to be taken into consideration in this regard (Wu and Lee, 2007). Techniques such as annual reports, balance sheets, income statements, etc. are some ways through which they can be involved in decision making process of the new retail firm.

Employees and managers: These business associates will have a critical role to play in taking decisions regarding everyday functioning of the firm. Company will need to involve them in process of decision making related to the above mentioned aspects as well as steps that can be taken so as to accomplish organizational goals and objectives (Paulraj, Lado and Chen, 2008). They can be contacted for this process through meetings, workshops, training and development sessions, etc.

2.2 DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THESE STAKEHOLDERS

It would be very important for the firm to develop effective and proper relationships with these stakeholders so that, they can be effectively involved in the decision making process. In order to develop business relations with investors and shareholders, management would have to ensure that different operations are carried out in a proper manner so that the retail organization can perform smoothly (Friedman and Shepeard, 2007). Furthermore, adequate attention will also have to be pay towards aspects such as 'Return on Investments (ROI)'.

2.3 PLAN TO INVOLVE STAKEHOLDERS IN DECISION MAKING PROCESS

There are various methods which the company can use in order to involve the above identified stakeholders in the decision making process. To involve shareholders and investors in this process, giving healthy return on investments and dividend on invested capital can be a very good and effective option. This would help in not only satisfying them, but also ensuring that they have a positive image of the firm and take appropriate decisions, so as to ease out the process of establishment in the retail industry (Alavi, Kayworth and Leidner, 2005). Further, Annual General Meetings (AGMs) can also be a very effective way to involve them in this process. On the other hand, to involve employees and managers in this process, organizing regular meetings and training workshops can be a very good option. This way they would be able to contribute in the process and take such decisions that may prove to be helpful for the firm (Ruggles, 2009).

2.4 STRATEGY FOR FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS

In the future, management at newly established retail firm can involve investors and shareholders in decision making process by way of conducting quarterly meetings. This can prove to be an effective approach primarily because it would give these stakeholders a feeling that they are valued by the organization and need their opinion to determine its future strategies (Coombs, 2014). While on the other hand, managers and employees in the future can be involved in the decision making process by dividing them into small groups and asking them to formulate strategies which may help in managing the workforce effectively and making them contribute in organizational goals and objectives.

Assignment 3

3.1 EXISTING PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION IN SMALL POLITICAL ACTIVIST'S ORGANIZATION

It is a well known fact that, communication is one of the most important aspects of operations of an organization and has substantial impact over effectiveness of working of the organization. In this sense it may not be wrong to say that, those companies which do not pay appropriate attention to it have very less chances of being able to succeed (Yates and Paquette, 2011). Over the years, numerous communication processes and systems have been developed. Currently the stated small political activist's organization used horizontal top down communication process. As the name suggests, in this model, information flows from top to bottom, i.e. from the management to lower level employees. In this context it can be said that, it is a method through which instructions, rules, regulations, etc. can be passed on to the employees (Eppler, 2006). Herein a lot of attention is paid towards the hierarchical structure. On the basis of the given case, it can be said that this communication process did not prove to be very good and effective for the organization. It can be supported through the fact that the volunteer supervisor did not delegate her work; moreover she only used to pass orders to other employees, i.e. the volunteers. Due to this reason, she was not able to give proper projects to them, because of which they became de-motivated and further became unhappy from the organization.

There are various other kinds of communication processes and systems as well. One of them is Horizontal Process. Here information flows straight from sender to the receiver. It can also be termed as one way system of communication.

Another such process is Circular communication process. Here the whole system of communication is carried out in a circular format, i.e. when it is completed, a circle is formed. In this sense a message can be considered to be delivered and understood by the intended person, only when a feedback or confirmation is received by the sender. Then it can be said that the process has been carried out completely and effectively (Unwin, 2009). It is also known as 'on-going process of communication'.

3.2 COMPARING DIFFERENT COMMUNICATION PROCESSES

There are many types of communication processes which can be used in organizations, such as horizontal process, two way interaction process.

Horizontal Process: As the name suggests, in this process message flows in a straight line. It is a one way information sharing process as information is transferred between employees who are working on the same hierarchical position in the organization (Wong and Aspinwall, 2005). The lateral interaction process focuses on coordinating information that will enable employees with similar ranks to collaborate. Through such a contacting process employees will be able to attain greater satisfaction due to freedom and independence which they will get. The process will be helpful in decreasing misunderstanding among volunteers, staff and management and thereby assist in increasing both productivity and efficiency in article writing (Turner and Makhija, 2006). Through this process, decisions and guidelines issued by top management can be implemented in the organization as it will enable employees at all levels, whether top or lower level, to coordinate and collaborate with one another.

Two way process: In such process, the sender sends message and receiver sends back some feedback. Such a process will be very beneficial for employees in a small organization, as it will enable healthy flow of information in the organization (Wu, 2008). It is the most effective; as it makes sure that the sender and receiver are in constant touch with each other and can know easily the purpose behind interacting with one another. It increases and improves mutual trust thereby leading to harmony, peace and focus in the firm. Adoption of this process will help the top management in identifying and understanding what the lower and middle level thinks about any decision or activity related to the organizational processes and working (Riege, 2005). It is evident from the case that the supervisor was not performing tasks and duties that she should consider the position she was holding in the organization. She was just delegating roles, responsibilities and tasks to the volunteers and was not taking any kind of feedback as to whether the assigned task was performed or not.

To integrate communication systems and processes, interaction strategy and plans will need to be modified, so that a habit of sharing within the organization can be developed. The top management will need to make sure that employees and superiors are in conversation with one another; and if they are not, corrective measures will need to be taken to encourage the same.

Assignment 4

4.1 APPROACHES TO COLLECTING, FORMATTING, STORAGE AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE

Currently, the measures taken by company to collect, format, store and diffusion of information and knowledge indicate that there are no guidelines to knowledge and information management (Alavi, Kayworth and Leidner, 2005). So far, top down communication methods are used in the organization, which contrary to their concept have not provided any benefits to the firm. Vertical communication is also not used and so far there has been no need of one-on-one sessions between employee and management. Since the firm is a political activist organization, professionalism lacks in attitudes of employees which has led to little or no sharing of information. Not only non-verbal forms of communication have been used to propagate knowledge and information which has not yielded any desired results (Desouza and Awazu, 2006). Volunteers have developed a feeling of frustration as there is no real time communication between them and the management. Though technology is being used to collect, evaluate and disseminate knowledge and information, but they have been least effective, as systems which are being used are outdated.

4.2 METHODS BY WHICH ORGANIZATION CAN IMPROVE ITS ACCESS TO SYSTEMS OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE

Access to systems of knowledge and information in organization can be improved if various knowledge management and information techniques are used. These techniques include many strategies and practices that can be used to manage flow of knowledge in the organization (Mutihac, 2010). Various tools such as Feedback database and shared project files can be used to enhance the way in which firm manages knowledge. In political activist organization, there may be many databases about various matters, like activities that have been performed by the group over years, etc. While in shared project files, party's employees can work in a collaborative manner on different projects. This will improve flow of access to knowledge and information in the organization (Paulraj, Lado and Chen, 2008).

4.3 PERSONAL PLAN TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Communication process adopted by an individual always has the scope for improvement. Following are the steps which I would have taken if I was a volunteer in the organization:

- By maintaining a positive attitude, I will be able to present my views and opinions easily with other volunteers and top management.
- Developing a result oriented approach will help me in conversing effectively, as I will share only that information which is relevant to the task and organization.
- Having an open minded approach will be beneficial as it will support me to receive feedbacks and suggestions and take them positively. Further it will send a message to rest of the team members that I am always available to discuss any problem or issue.
- Following up with the listeners is a very important step which I will have to perform if I have to improve my communication skills. By doing follow up activity, an action plan can be made and accountability can be established (Pinola, 2014).
- Another way in which I can develop my interactive abilities is that by gathering and confirming information that it is authentic or not. This way I will know what I have to communicate and in what ways I can interact.
- In addition, I will also pay attention in improving aspects related to communication skills like body language, cognitive abilities, and listening abilities.

This plan can further be explained with the help of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely).

- **Specific:** Improving communication skills by enhancing cognitive and listening abilities as well as body language.
- **Measurable:** Currently, I can rank my communication skills as 3 on a scale of 5. Therefore I need to improve it in such a manner that it can be ranked five out of five. For the same I would have to join different communication classes and workshops.
- **Realistic:** It is a realistic target, as I have access to all the resources which are needed to achieve the target. In the country, varieties of such classes are organized from time to time.
- **Achievable:** It can be achieved easily, as the areas that need to be worked upon to improve my communication skills are not very hard to learn.
- **Time:** Total time period of 6-7 months would be required to meet this target.

CONCLUSION

For companies, it is imperative to take steps to manage communication systems and approaches in a proper and effective manner. If proper attention is not given in managing it in a proper manner, then it can do more harm than good to the company, i.e. it can bring devastating results for the firm. During the present study it was observed that while setting up operations, the management at the new retail company would have to take decisions related to financial capabilities of the firm, and various strategic and tactical decisions. Further, the study also revealed that the small political activist's organization used horizontal top down communication which created a lot of troubles for the enterprise. Moreover, this communication system also resulted in making many volunteers de-motivated.

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