

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AS STRATEGIC PLANNING TOOL: A STUDY IN AN ALTO TIETE

A COMUNICAÇÃO INTERNA COMO FERRAMENTA DE PLANEJAMENTO ESTRATÉGICO: UM ESTUDO NO ALTO TIETÊ

LA COMUNICACIÓN INTERNA COMO HERRAMIENTA DE PLANIFICACIÓN ESTRATÉGICA: UN ESTUDIO EN ALTO TIETE

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ABSTRACT

The article aims to explore a relevant topic in the current business context, as well as to identify the factors that influence the internal communication coordination process in the administrative management of the Higher Education Institution of Alto Tietê. It is known that, internal communication has a fundamental role to achieve the objectives proposed by the company, and currently there are great difficulties in the interaction and exchange of information between sectors. The methodology used was carried out through descriptive research and quantitative field research, composed of questionnaires and interviews to ascertain the results. According to the analysis, it was possible to identify as a result that the lack of communication between sectors in administrative management is caused by the absence of interaction between employees and by the lack of internal procedures that facilitate the exchange of information. Therefore, it is evident that internal communication when not used correctly can cause losses to the institution. However, it is known that in an increasingly competitive scenario, internal communication is a tool that, if used strategically, brings important benefits to the organization.

Keywords: Internal communication. Communication channels. Strategic Planning.

RESUMO

O artigo objetiva explorar um tema relevante no atual contexto empresarial, como também identificar os fatores que influenciam no processo da coordenação da comunicação interna na gestão administrativa da Instituição de Ensino Superior do Alto Tietê. Sabe-se que, a comunicação interna tem um papel fundamental para atingir os objetivos propostos pela empresa, e atualmente tem-se observado grandes dificuldades na interação e troca de informações entre os setores. A metodologia utilizada se deu por meio de pesquisa descritiva e pesquisa de campo quantitativa, compostas por

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questionários e entrevistas para averiguação dos resultados. De acordo com a análise, foi possível identificar como resultado que a falta de comunicação entre os setores na gestão administrativa é provocada pela ausência de interação entre os funcionários e pela inexistência de procedimentos internos que facilitem a troca de informações. Portanto, evidencia-se que a comunicação interna quando não utilizada corretamente pode acarretar prejuízos à instituição. Contudo, sabe-se que em um cenário cada vez mais competitivo, a comunicação interna é uma ferramenta que, se utilizada estrategicamente traz importantes benefícios para a organização.

Palavras-chave: Comunicação interna. Canais de comunicação. Planejamento estratégico.

RESUMEN

El artículo tiene como objetivo explorar un tema relevante en el contexto empresarial actual, así como identificar los factores que influyen en el proceso de coordinación de la comunicación interna en la gestión administrativa de la Institución de Educación Superior de Alto Tietê. Se sabe que la comunicación interna tiene un papel fundamental para lograr los objetivos propuestos por la empresa, y actualmente existen grandes dificultades en la interacción e intercambio de información entre sectores. La metodología utilizada se llevó a cabo mediante investigación descriptiva e investigación de campo cuantitativa, compuesta por cuestionarios y entrevistas para conocer los resultados. Según el análisis, se pudo identificar como resultado que la falta de comunicación entre sectores en la gestión administrativa se debe a la ausencia de interacción entre los empleados y a la falta de procedimientos internos que faciliten el intercambio de información. Por tanto, es evidente que la comunicación interna cuando no se utiliza correctamente puede ocasionar pérdidas a la institución. Sin embargo, se sabe que en un escenario cada vez más competitivo, la comunicación interna es una herramienta que, si se utiliza estratégicamente, aporta importantes beneficios a la organización.

Palabras clave: Comunicación interna. Canales de comunicación. Planificación estratégica.

1 INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly competitive scenario, it is clear that, in recent years, due to efforts to increase productivity and quality, internal communication has been valued in companies, this is due to the need for interaction between people and people and companies, as a primary factor to establish a good internal relationship that can contribute to achieve the proposed objectives.

It is possible to define internal communication as a series of strategic tools for interaction and the exchange of information, therefore, internal communication when used correctly brings great benefits to organizations, avoiding possible conflicts between the differences in its objectives.

Despite the fact that there are many ways to obtain information, it does not always mean that we are communicating, however, there is a big difference between communication and information. It can be said that, a lot of information is produced and has an impact on the lives of employees because it is not disseminated correctly, and other information does not even reach the real recipients, all because a single manager does not identify the communicative essence of a given situation.

This article aims to better understand how internal communication is and analyze how communication can be effective so that it reaches the proposed objectives and benefits the Higher Education Institution of Alto Tietê with a focus on administrative management.

Therefore, this study discusses internal communication from a different perspective, and based on previous studies by authors in the field of business communication, we sought to analyze alternatives to have an effective communication with a focus on administrative management, so that it can promote internal communication channels, working on employee interaction with the intention of generating satisfactory results within the organization.

In order to achieve this objective, this work was divided into this introduction, followed by the theoretical framework on the subject, to later compare the data obtained in the field research with this theoretical framework, and finally, considerations about the research results were made.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Business communication was approached in its various aspects and the strategic role of internal communication in the revision of the theoretical framework.

2.1 Business communication

To better reflect on the theme, it is important to conceptualize business communication, for some authors business communication is the process - a set of methods, techniques, resources, means, etc. - for which the company addresses the internal public, represented by its employees, and the external public in the figure of its consumers (BAHIA, 1995; CHINEM, 2010; OLIVEIRA, 2018). According to the author, business communication is seen as a process that involves both internal and external audiences. For other authors, communication is any form of verbal (oral and written), symbolic or gestural and electronic manifestation with an expanded audience, in order to socialize information (MOTOI, 2017).

Tavares (2007) conceptualizes that, business communication happens when there is an interaction of dialogue between the organization (private, public companies, institutions) with its stakeholders (internal customer, employee, suppliers, media and society as a whole). According to the author, business communication is an important factor to support the objectives proposed by the company, and through it it is possible to integrate any and all information as the basis of its existence involving all stakeholders. Nassar (2006) defines business communication as a sum of all the company's communication activities.

Also according to Nassar (2006), business communication is so fundamental that it should also involve all top management of companies and should be elaborated in a multidisciplinary way based on techniques and methods of public relations, journalism and marketing. The author also describes that this multidisciplinary communication should be "aimed at society, opinion makers, consumers and employees, including workers, suppliers and partners" (NASSAR, 2006, P.19).

It is noted that the authors believe in the importance of business communication because it is possible to involve all communication activities related to the company so that it can integrate all hierarchical levels. Thus, it is evident that communication within organizations is essential, because through this tool it is possible to integrate information for a good planning, evaluation of activities and, above all, for the development process at any time that the organization is going through its organizational cycle.

As for Chiavenato (CHIAVENATO, 2000, p. 42), “communication is the exchange of information between individuals”, that is, making a message or information common, constituting itself as a fundamental process of human experience and social organization. Still for the author, “communication requires a code to formulate the message and send it in the form of a signal, through a channel, to a message receiver that decodes it and interprets its meaning” (Idem).

Organizational or business communication is understood as the exchange of information that varies according to the elements and the type of communication to be used, however, it can be said that communication is divided into two types: verbal communication and communication non-verbal. In this perspective, it is believed that verbal communication involves participation, transmission and exchange of knowledge, which can be internal, when the process takes place within the company and external when it exceeds the company's limits (BORCA; BAESU, 2014).

Regarding the transmission of the message, communication occurs in two ways: oral and written. In Gasnier's (2008) arguments, communication occurs through the process of transmitting and understanding information, be it ideas, concepts, data, instructions; the process is transmitted using symbols whose meanings are common to those involved. In addition to this concept, the author highlights the difference in information and communication, where both have different meanings. The author explains that the information is transmitted in a single direction, that is, from the sender to the receiver, whereas communication, it can be said that it is the process in which exchanges occur in which the sender sends a message to the receiver.

Therefore, it can be seen that the coordination of communication is important, because through its understanding and through good management it will be possible to avoid relationship problems between the sectors (BORCA; BAESU, 2014; TKALAC VERČIČ; POLOŠKI VOKIĆ, 2017) . Gasnier (2008) points out communication as a challenge of human relations in any group of people, for him, a process of transmitting a message with two or more people may be at risk of misunderstanding the information.

Considering the vision of Gasnier (2008), it is clear that the probability of failures in communication, due to this challenge of human relations, is countless. However, Matos (2009) reports the importance of this interaction, stating that “communication is the guiding thread of all human activities and relationships”. In this perspective, it is noted that the importance of communication for the conduct of all company activities, and that both through verbal and non-verbal communication, information is indispensable to employees, through it, it is possible to evaluate individual and collective performances. making necessary adjustments so that the effectiveness and efficiency in the organization are achieved (WIDYANTI, 2020).

It can be said that internal communication in companies must be valued as vitally important for the development and survival of these organizations. According to Ruggiero (2002), having a highly motivated team of great talents is not enough. If it is not well informed, if its members do not communicate properly, it will not be possible to enhance the company's human strength (KARANGES et al., 2014; BRANDÃO, 2018; WIDYANTI, 2020).

There is a need to make employees integrated and informed of what happens in the company, in fact that they can feel part of it, making it possible, through internal communication, to establish channels that enable the good relationship of information about the company. direction of the organization with its internal public (KARANGES et al., 2014).

The great challenge for organizations is to understand the importance of internal communication in all hierarchical media, as an instrument of strategic management in order to achieve organizational effectiveness, therefore, it is necessary to identify such importance so that efficiently and at the right time the proposed objective is achieved with the tools of internal communication (BRANDÃO, 2018).

According to Nassar (2006), using internal communication as a tool, it will be possible to make common messages destined to motivate, stimulate, promote and group the members of an organization. In this sense, it is understood that through this method it will be possible to establish forms of communication that will be able to promote the relationship and interaction in all parameters of the organization.

For Chiavenato (2004), communication in organizations also encounters obstacles to its spread and its perfect understanding. It is common to detect operational, structural and even human relationship problems, precisely because of an ineffective communication. This inefficiency in the communicative process is not restricted to a certain type of organization. It can be found in bureaucratic, informal, large, small, industrial, commercial or service providers. It can be seen that an efficient organization usually has good internal communication, capable of guaranteeing the exchange of reliable information at all hierarchical levels.

Communication channels are also a means of sending messages including newsletters, newspapers, meetings, memos and more. Administrative communication involves the chain of command and coordinates the internal information flow within the organization. Vertical communications are expressed by internal orders (downward communication) and reports (upward communication). Horizontals can be done by printed documents, reports, requests, memos, etc. (TORQUATO, 2002).

In this context, it is noted that the vertical channels (from top to bottom), refer to the communication between the superior and subordinates, transmitting orders or instructions, and can be ascending (from bottom to top) referring to the communication between the subordinate and the supervisor, conveying information about the work performed.

Through communication channels in administrative management, it is possible to develop partnerships and obtain greater emotional involvement, in other words, it can be said that, in a professional environment, a good relationship will favor interaction, generating commitment to all employees. In this context, for Brum (BRUM, 1994, p. 31) “internal communication is capable of establishing integrated relationships between employees”, through participatory programs, capable of generating greater commitment at all, resulting in higher quality and productivity indexes, corroborating with other authors (KARANGES et al., 2014; MOTOI, 2017; TKALAC VERČIČ; POLOŠKI VOKIĆ, 2017; WIDYANTI, 2020). However, for the author, it will be possible only through the real adaptation of the internal communication channels, thus eliminating conflicts and dissatisfactions (BRUM, 1994).

Thus, it is evident that, through internal or administrative communication, it is that agents have the possibility to lead their group effectively, developing the communication process between departments involving all agents of the organization (REIS et al., 2018).

2.2 Strategic Planning of the Internal Communication

In his article, Endo (2015), draws attention to the frequent misalignment of business communication with the organization's strategy, and that it should be linked to strategic planning and in line with management and organizational culture, which corroborates with the

Brandão's vision (2018). In addition, in modern administration, sharing information is essential and in the new internal communication it is not enough to inform, it is necessary to use internal communication to “train the professional and make space for him, too, to be a content producer” (SIQUEIRA FILHO; ZACCARIA ; GIULIANI, 2014, p. 51).

Another strategic issue refers to the company's image, which becomes a competitive differential, the “aura that exudes its values, its principles and its philosophy” (SILVA; SALCEDO, 2018). This image, built with internal and external communication, is amalgamated with the institutional identity and becomes a single body that represents its strategy.

The alignment of communication with business strategy becomes a guide for all actions developed both outside and inside the organization, with different stakeholders, “continually reinforcing the human and social dimension of its guiding purpose” (BRANDÃO, 2018 , p.93). Thinking strategically and planning internal communication are fundamental requirements for achieving the objectives of a company.

For Bueno (2009, p. 39), the planning of internal communications is part of a communication policy that must take into account several factors that influence organizational communication. Kunsch (2003) has twelve planning phases, namely: (a) Identification of the situational reality; (b) Collection of information; (c) Data analysis and construction of a diagnosis; (d) Identification of the stakeholders involved; (f) Determination of objectives and goals; (g) Adoption of strategies; (h) Provision of alternative forms of action; (i) Establishment of necessary actions; (j) Definition of resources to be allocated; (k) Fixing control techniques; (l) Implementation of the planning; and (m) Evaluation of results.

As pointed out, planning plays roles and strategies, so that the internal communication process happens with assertiveness, the establishment of this strategy must act at all hierarchical levels, outlining the objectives and goals of the organization, promoting interaction between sectors, acting breaking barriers of progress and failures in communication and seek the best results thus ensuring that departments are connected.

3 METHOD

This article is a study in the field of applied social sciences. This is a quantitative as well as a descriptive research. For Diehl and Tatim (2004, p. 51), "quantitative research is characterized by the use of quantification, both in the collection and treatment of information through statistical techniques". The same authors also explain that descriptive research has the primary objective of describing the characteristics of a given population or phenomenon.

The company analyzed through this research is a Higher Education Institution in Alto Tietê. The research is descriptive in order to describe how the studied institution performs communication between sectors and what are its practices in view of these achievements, and is quantitative in the collection and analysis of data. For this purpose, the questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. Also according to DIEHL and TATIM (2004, p. 68) the questionnaire consists of an ordered series of questions, which must be answered in writing and without the presence of the interviewer. According to the authors, this type of research follows a sequence of questions that can be answered individually.

Thus, the questionnaire was structured in an attempt to understand whether the Educational Institution promotes internal communication management and, how employees evaluate communication between departments, as well as the importance of having communication management between administrative sectors. The questionnaire was constructed with closed questions with multiple-choice answers, based on the Likert scale on five levels in order to measure the degree of agreement of the statement, the assessment of the problem exposed and the importance of the hypotheses presented.

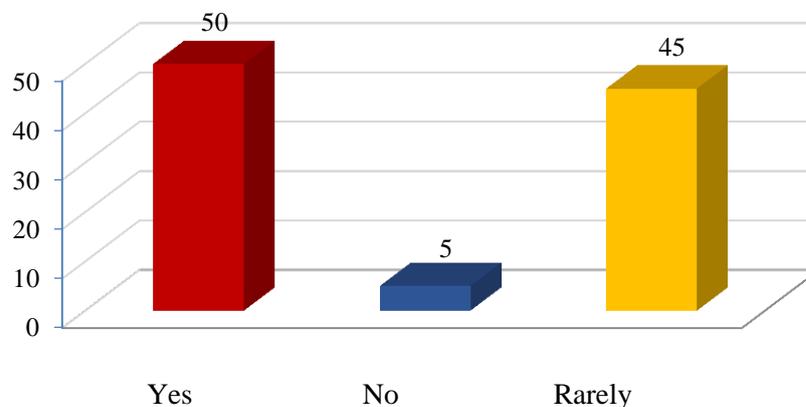
The printed questionnaire was delivered to ten employees, four of them from the administrative department, three from the academic secretariat, one from the library and two academic coordinators. The research subjects received the Free and Informed Consent Term, in which they were informed about the confidentiality and anonymity of the information provided and that the answers would be used for academic purposes.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Internal communication is still a major challenge for organizations, but by analyzing the data on the assessment of communication between departments, it can be seen that around 70% of employees positively assessed communication between sectors, which demonstrates a level of interaction between departments and which proves the arguments of Tavares (2007) who conceptualizes business communication as the communication existing between internal clients.

The vertical channels of communication, in which the message occurs between hierarchical levels, such as, between the superior and subordinates, conveying orders and instructions as pointed out by Torquato (2002), has occurred in HEI for 60% of the respondents. However, attention should be paid to the process of transmitting this information, as argued by Gasnier (2008), the author states that communication has the process of transmission and understanding, that is, the organization as a whole receives the information in a clear and objective, however, 40% of employees do not understand that the HEI has such internal communication management.

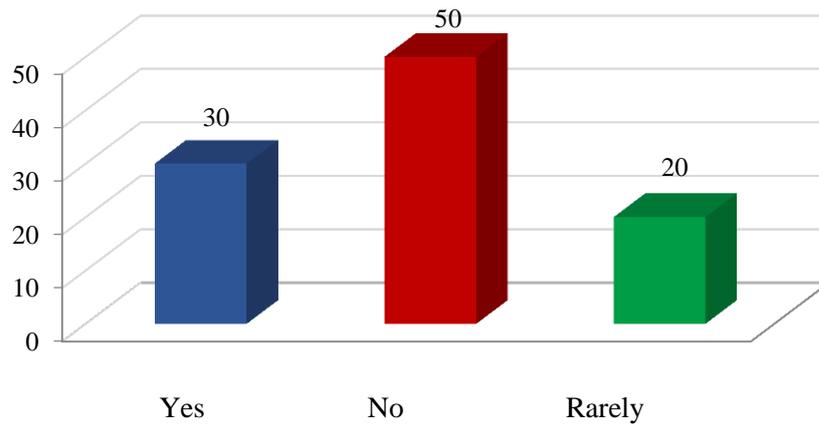
Figure 1 – Does communication circulate at all hierarchical levels? (%)



Source: the authors

Regarding the results presented of the circulation of communication between the various levels of the organization, it can be said that the current flow of communication from the HEI may not involve all the activities of the organization, as only 40% perceive this circulation. Nassar and Figueiredo (2006) state that business communication is the sum of all the company's activities and that this communication must directly involve the presidents of the institution, therefore, this communication must circulate at all hierarchical levels constantly, which is not perceived by 60% of the respondents.

Figure 2 – Is there interaction between departments? (%)



Source: the authors

Given what is shown in Figure 2, it is observed that the majority of employees do not feel integrated about the main information of the HEI. Chiavenato (2000) points out that communication is the exchange of information between individuals, and that it is one of the fundamental processes of human experience and social organization. The result presented indicates that there may be noise because there is no interaction between departments.

Virtually all employees, except one, agree that good communication can influence the increase in productivity, in the arguments of Brum (1995), Karanges et al. (2014) and Widnyanti (2020), this internal communication is able to establish integrated relationships between employees and using participatory programs it is possible to awaken a commitment from everyone in order to generate higher levels of quality and productivity.

The employees that make up the HEI administrative management feel the need for an internal communication management. In Nassar's (2006) arguments, internal communication as a management tool can motivate, stimulate, promote and group team members. In view of the result obtained, it is understood that the team is aware of the importance of the management mentioned above, which indicates a possible implementation of tools and techniques so that communication is at all levels of the company.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is understood that internal communication is a determining factor for the success of organizations, as it becomes fundamental to the results of the business and acts as a humanizing agent of labor relations, as well as assists in the performance of activities by identifying possible failures that prevent the progress of the company. as a whole.

It is recommended that HEIs can adopt strategies and plan internal communication. This communication can be done by sending messages through weekly newsletters, periodic meetings so that, through these mechanisms, there is exchange and transmission of information. Speaking of strategy, the Institution can adhere to this interdepartmental communication management to stimulate the increase in the organization's productivity. The HEI could implement the communication channels as mentioned previously, so that there is no noise or a lack of dialogue between departments. Since employees are always informed, they get a better direction for decision making, thus avoiding mistakes and rework in their tasks.

Presenting solutions, seeking to facilitate communication between departments, it is understood that the proposal is feasible for the Institution, because with an internal communication coordination, the information transmitted to the departments will bring results, and will be the process by which the administrators will be carrying out its planning, organization, leadership and control functions.

Avoiding the loss of time to reverse critical situations, arising from rumors created within the organization, which can compromise productivity and generate conflicts, the management of administrative communication will be of great importance to avoid such problems and obstacles. It is evident that communication will still be an essential activity for the relationship, interaction, development and commitment of the internal public.

This work does not intend to exhaust the theme, even due to its limitations limited to a single institution, but by shedding light on the theme, it allows the problematization of a subject that is often treated as something secondary. As discussed in our literature review, communication is increasingly treated as strategic and generates competitive differential for organizations.

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