

Four specific types of communication flows article reviews examples

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



There are four specific types of communication flows that McPhee and Zaugg (2000, 2009) have described. The authors believe that the four communication flows are in fact, what organizations are all about. This is because organizations cater to four different kinds of audiences, so communicating with all of these is necessary. The first communication flow is the maintenance of relationships with members through membership related negotiations. The second communication flow is self structuring, i. e. how organizations act as formally controlled entities. The third communication flow is activity coordination. The last communication flow is institutional positioning. (McPhee & Zaugg, 2000)

An organization's relationship with its members is quite important indeed. The relationship forms and is maintained through the way an organization communicates with its members. These members are pivotal to an organization as they want to get involved and meet new people. In addition, members also develop relationships within the organization and learn leadership skills. Almost all organizations have some main purpose, and the activities of its members help organizations meet their goals. The second communication flow, self structuring, is also of paramount importance. Organizations follow a structure on which they are based, and the way they have and showcase themselves to other organizations plays a big role in defining that these organizations. Self structuring allows organizations to interact with their environment, and be recognized as an important part of society. Moreover, self structuring prevents organizations from descending into chaos as it prevents confusion. The third flow, activity co-ordination, has to do with the way members work in a particular organization. For instance,

members can co-ordinate on how not to do their work. Activity co-ordination also plays a big role in how the workers in an organization look after one another. For instance, when a worker is absent, the rest can decide how to substitute for him. Most importantly, activity co-ordination helps members within an organization understand that they are a part of a much larger social unit. The fourth communication flow, institutional positioning, has to do with the way an organization interacts with the outside world, i. e. the macro world. Competitors, customers, the government, the public, and stakeholders in general are all part of an organization's macro world. (Miller, 2014)

All of the four communication flows stated play a major role in an organization's effective communication both within itself, and with the outside world. However, it could be argued that despite the depth of the four flows, there are some points that are missing. Chief amongst these points is organizational identity. Organizational identity covers the most important aspects there to an organization, including a strong leadership, a mission, organizational values and branding. For instance, no matter how communicative an organization is without a strong leadership at its helm and without values on which the organization is based on, there is a rare chance of survival. Although there is no denying the fact that effective communication is important in the modern business landscape, it is also true that communication only comes into play when an organization has a set of values and goals guiding it. (Muller & Kieser, 2003)

The paper, on its own though, is quite enlightening in how it describes the four communication flows in such detail. While it is commonplace to hear

about upward or downward communication, the four flows deal with the complexities involved, and therefore, add a completely new dimension to communication in organizations.

References

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