

# Business communication case study report

[Business](#)



It highlights the issues currently being faced by the company; the need for enhanced communication between the different parts of the companies' structure, and the effects on communication caused by tensions created during the orientation of the company. A recommended course of action has also been provided, including the introduction of regular meetings with senior managers, further information being provided regarding the companies' structure and each department's role in the future of the company, and possible investigations into team reorganization and the culture within departments.

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Conclusions 4. Recommendations References Introduction 7 8 10 The purpose of this report is to analyze the communication issues facing Earthmen, and where possible, to recommend courses of action that will improve the situation. Earthmen faced a difficult situation since its inception, due to the diverse and disparate elements in its foundation.

This has resulted in a number of challenges to be faced; staff anxious about their role in the future of the company, a perceived normalization of departments, breakdowns in communication between departments, culminating in the sabotage of a run of Skies Unlimited magazines. This report refers exclusively to the situation as detailed by the Emblem report.

The issue most prominently highlighted by the Emblem report is the need for further communication between management and lower level employees. Communications between management and employees can be labeled as “downwards communication”.

It has been noted that in some situations “top-down communication attempts fail, and that failure is often not grasped by those at the top of the hierarchy” (Munson, 2008, p 556). This issue may not have been apparent until recently, but the survey commissioned shows some worrying signs. In particular, the Emblem report shows that 59% of field specialists do not understand their role in the Meany’s expanding touch, and while this percentage is lower than clerical staff and imaging specialists (35%), the survey also notes that “only 50% of staff show familiarity with the goals of the organization”.

Given the distinct origin of the separate departments, it is understandable that there is some ambiguity regarding how each division fits into the company’s vision.

However, for the field specialists and support staff outside head office, this ambiguity has been coupled with colleagues being made redundant or choosing to leave during the formation of Earthmen, and the cut to previous perks for field specialists. These factors have led to a lack of identification with the company and its goals and a sense of alienation that could adversely affect morale.

A significant proportion of those surveyed “categorize the corporate plan as of little relevance to their jobs”. Clear channels of downwards

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communication are fundamental in the management of employees. In stopping the company newsletter, one source of information about other departments and the company as a whole was removed. Another issue is the need for further communication from employees to management.

Upward communication channels are defined by (Munson, 2008) as Channels that allow the passage of information necessary to run an organization to be collected by those in the upper levels of an organization.

Munson describes lateral communication as “ communication that takes place primarily at one level of the organization”. Earthmen could benefit from increased communication between lower level employees of different departments, and also between lower level employees and management. Upward communication is especially important as feedback is the best way to gain insight into how teams or employees are progressing. “ Particularly in situations of strategic renewal and change, formal traders need to learn about how their effects are proceeding through a process of mutual engagement with employees” (Specter, 2013).

The Emblem report states that 56% of staff outside head office believe decisions which affect their Jobs are made Inroit their being consulted, and also states that “ many staff want a chance to “ ask questions and hear answers” from top management.

” Upwards communication is not only useful in supplying information that can help management, but is also necessary to avoid a “ culture of silence” where an employee may be reluctant to pass on information required by

management. A lack of a clear channel to voice dissatisfaction also contributed to an employee sabotaging the company newsletter.

Ninth no avenue to voice dissatisfaction, an employee has acted in a way that could potentially have harmed the company. There are also signs of a lack of lateral communication, as 70% of staff say they have trouble with their jobs, or miss deadlines because they did not receive information from their own or other sections. Some also felt there is not enough information sharing at a local level.

If there is a need for lateral communication, but the organizational structure does not help acclimate this, then such problems may continue.

Interdepartmental communication can sometimes be unreliable.

Cross functional teams are “ teams that span multiple organizational functions and provide a way of achieving integration. Cross functional teams address the difficulty of highly differentiated functions being pulled together into a seamless, well-integrated process. “(Specter, 2 ere formation of Earthmen from different departments has led to continued separatism under the new organization. This is especially true of field specialists, “ ho do not generally work in close proximity to other employees, and has been evidenced by animosity towards the satellite imaging department.

This separation, sometimes termed the silo effect, is described by (Munson, 2008) as “ a metaphor for over-compartmentalized and over-territorial organizations whose sections, departments or divisions stand aloof and apart from other sections”. The disregard and dismissal of field specialists for the satellite imaging part of the company is a symptom of an environment where

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collaboration is minimal. “ The symptoms of the silo effect are easy to recognize: lack of cooperation, internal competition and breakdown in communication. ” (Cŕt©, 2003).

Further information is required to ascertain the situation between departments.

If further cooperation can be encouraged, then significant gains may be made. As Cŕt©s goes on to say, resolving the interdepartmental friction could lead to “ important contributions to value creation; and it will make way for sharing services, skills and systems across units and will encourage best practices. ” The factors leading to a decreased sense of company identification from chapter 2. 1 may have negatively affected the culture amongst departments. An organization’s culture may be one of the factors which determine the nature, extent and form of its information/communication dimension, and its associated problems.

The cultural traits are all inter-related in a seamless Nub of cognitive affect, which influences and shapes the information and communication structures and processes evident in the organization” (Brown and Starkey, 1994). A culture of isolation may be undermining any efforts to increase lateral and upwards communications. This is understandable, (Allot and Sings, 2011) made similar observations regarding a firm in the years following a merger. We see that despite the acquirer’s attempt to integrate the target firm, changes in OTOH cross-firm communication and workers’ positions in their communication networks developed very slowly and were not entirely enduring. ” It is important to recognize the problem and attempt to address

it if possible. Communication from upper management to lower level employees is insufficient, especially with regard to the roles of departments within the company as a whole.

3. 2 Lateral communication needs to be improved and may lead to significant gains.

Improving upwards communication will provide more information regarding the operation of a department, and information that may make it easier to disarm attention problems in the future. 3. 3 ere culture within some departments may be having a negative effect on lateral and upwards communication. Or improve downwards communication, it is important to use a channel that is appropriate to the message being delivered.

In this case, the roles and importance of each department in the company's ambition and plan for the future needs to be made clear to everyone in the company.

It may be beneficial to create a booklet to detail the structure of the company, with special attention being paid to assure all departments of their worth to the company. This booklet should be accompanied by visit from yourself as the chief executive, as personally explaining the vision of the company is the most effective way to proceed. It would also be beneficial to set up routine visits from senior management at appropriate intervals and to re-establish an internal newsletter, to ensure timely updates regarding the situation of the company as a whole.

For field specialists, the routine visits may not be practicable, but routine phone conferences should be scheduled. For the satellite imaging specialists, the importance of the meetings should be underlined, and meetings would be scheduled at a frequency that is not too great an imposition on their time.

4. 2 During the initial visit by the CEO and any visits by senior management as part of the recommendations in 4. 1, upwards communication should be encouraged, and the value of employee feedback should be underlined. Time should be expressly set aside to be devoted to feedback.

Additionally, further research is required into the liability of cross functional teams.

If possible, establishing teams that are more diverse and flexible would leave units in a better position to utilize the relevant skills and experience for the situation. This would also ensure a much higher level of inter specialization communication. If cross functional teams are not viable, then inter departmental communication should be encouraged by senior management, and an attitude of cooperation between departments should be instilled.

This could be accomplished by highlighting exemplary cooperation between departments in the company newsletter, and by ensuring the satellite imaging department is aware of the context regarding field specialists' animosity towards them. 4. 3 are steps outlined in recommendations 4.

1 and 4. 2 would also lead to significant progress regarding this issue.

Establishing cross functional teams would reduce departmental isolation. A better understanding of departmental role within the Manhole organization



would lead to a greater feeling of security and identification with the company.