

Chapter IX

The role of communication in the practice of implementing development policy

9.1. Convergence of the areas of internal communication

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National, regional and local economic ties become ever more closely intertwined into a global bond. The ship getting stuck in the Suez Canal causes downtime in a plant in Września. The change in export regulations for pork in China causes a price jump on the commodity exchange in Sochaczew, and the development of cryptocurrency mining technology in the Silicon Valley causes lack of graphics cards in a Media Markt store in Poznań. It is a macroeconomic picture of the economies themselves, which are increasingly interconnected and therefore exposed as never before to global shocks and disturbances. On the other hand, putting emphasis on services, and especially innovation, increases the importance of employees, and thus – communication with them. This overlaps with the technological area, with the rapid and unpredictable growth of new media. The technical basis is the development of infrastructure for data collection and transmission, the miniaturization of devices and lowering their prices, as well as the development of the mobile network and, consequently, the Internet. The result is the democratization of the media, the possibility of mass and fast transmission of images, films and texts.

It is also the development of new media, especially social media. The advancement of technology has created unprecedented opportunities to collect and use data on individual users, and consequently brought changes in marketing, management and HR affecting internal communication. These processes that were already dynamic were overlapped by the COVID pandemic and the related lockdown. Its effects will be analyzed by scientists for years to come. However, one thing is certain. In the context of internal communication, it is a gigantic catalyst that significantly accelerates the ongoing processes and makes the role of this communication increase immeasurably. While earlier it was possible to observe how the four approaches to this communication (management, HR, marketing and PR) start resembling each other – how they had been converging – lockdown has accelerated these changes as well. Importantly from the point of view of development economics, those economies, in which the aforementioned processes accelerated under the influence of COVID, have a greater chance of joining the global economic circuit with all the benefits that come from it. Those in which – for various reasons – this revolution did not take place, deepen their peripheral character.

9.1.1. The essence of internal communication

The definition of internal communication seems clear in terms of the type of communication situation and the specificity of the communicating entities. It is an act of communication that takes place inside the organization, which means that both the sender and the target receiver operate within the same organizational structures. Problems with unambiguous definition of the area of internal communication may stem from dynamic changes and be related to the issues of time or structure. When it comes to time, it is about the issue of communication that the organization (plant, company, institution) addresses to people who either used to be or will be its employees. Therefore, the question arises how to treat communication with potential employees (employer branding) or ties with former employees. Its influence on employees includes this type of communication in internal communication, although formally it does

not apply to current employees. As for structure, the problem is related to the issue of changes in labor relations. Fewer and fewer employers are bound by employment contracts. Therefore, internal communication should also be understood as communication with temporary employees who perform activities on the basis of a contract of mandate or who are self-employed. A legal bond based on an employment contract is no longer necessary to count communication as internal.

9.1.2. Internal communication in the context of development economics

Internal communication is often analyzed in broader contexts, resulting from the perspectives distinguished due to the level of considerations:

- individual (psychological) – it focuses on the level of the individual and processes running in the human psyche. It also analyzes the changes that occur in the psyche under the influence of communication. It is important because each employee is an individual, autonomous unit, and what happens among the staff, and more broadly – in the entire economy of the country, is the sum of activities of these individual people. The communication specialist is interested in the effect of this influence also at the individual level of each recipient. At this level, the very process of information perception can be analyzed, consisting of selection, interpretation, organization, and negotiation (Adler, Rosenfeld, & Proctor, 2006). The timeliness of this model results from the fact that contemporary theories begin to focus on the individual approach to an employee and perceive internal communication precisely through the prism of individual needs and emotions. In turn, these individual needs result largely from local conditions and culture, influencing the level of commitment, mobility and creativity.
- group – it considers communication at the level of small teams of people. In this perspective, communication within said teams is important, as well as the decision-making mechanisms, the crystallization of group structures, the role of leaders, cohesion

mechanisms, etc. Similarly to the psychological perspective, it is important due to the fact that even the largest team of employees is made up of small teams. It is also in small teams that trends affecting the entire organization arise. Here the role of culture becomes more important. Elements such as individualism versus collectivism, women's cultures versus men's cultures or even forms of exercising and manifesting power (Erdman 2018) not only shape communication behavior, but also influence the potential of a given economy.

- sociological – the analysis is carried out at the level of larger teams and focuses on finding out how communication affects the interaction, knowledge, beliefs and behavior of people. Being an extension of the psychological approach, it expands it to the level of entire social groups.

This approach is particularly important from the point of view of eliminating economic underdevelopment in developing countries. It is confirmed not only in the practice of the economic life of these countries, but also in theoretical terms, e.g. in the socio-psychological theory by D. Lerner, or in formulation by G. Myrdal the concept of the “soft state” syndrome (Deszczyński, 2011a, p. 20; Deszczyński, 2001c, pp. 48–49).

According to Grudzewski and Hajduk, the information era forces competition with the use of flexibility, innovation and adaptability and leads to new organizational forms, such as virtual organizations, intelligent (learning) organizations or network organizations (Grudzewski & Hejduk, 2000). The success of each of them depends on internal relations that influence the attitudes of employees and are correlated with the communication efficiency of the organization. Nogalski and Surawski emphasize the necessity of using information. This skill becomes the basic social competence, and information – a desired good of economic importance (Nogalski & Surawski, 2003, p. 204). The influence of globalization and computerization is indicated by Malara and Rzęchowski, according to whom “information in the enterprise management process has become a driving force that sets the direction of success” (Malara & Rzęchowski, 2004, p. 58).

9.1.3. Areas of internal communication

Despite different research goals, methodologies and respondents, the authors of research projects jointly point to the following centers able to conduct internal communication in the organization at a strategic level: Management Board (but also the owner, director), Marketing Department, Public Relations Department and HR Department. Existing studies also describe communication from the point of view of management (Scholes, 1997; Sudoł, 2002; Stoner, Freeman, & Gilbert, 2001), human resource management (Gall, 2010; Armstrong, 2008; Scholz & Böhm, 2008), marketing (Olsztyńska, 2005; Kotler, 2005) and PR (Smith & Mounter, 2008; Wojcik, 2009; Grunig, 2001). A review of these sources makes it possible to distinguish the specificity as well as advantages and disadvantages of individual approaches.

Situations in which internal communication is dealt with directly by management are due to three possible reasons. In organizations with a low number of employees, it is pointless to create separate structures, and entrusting communication responsibilities to departments such as marketing or human resources would overload them. The second reason, especially in private companies with high centralization, is the desire to keep as many prerogatives as possible and to keep the owner in close contact with the crew. The third reason is the special importance of the relationship with the crew. It may result both from the high value and price of employees, e.g. doctors in a medical clinic, lawyers in a law office, and from previous experiences that highlight the value of relationships, e.g. as a result of spectacular strike actions.

The natural goal of the activities would be to shape communication relations in such a way as to support management functions: planning, organizing, motivating and controlling (Sudoł, 2002, p. 215). Peter Drucker stated that management is about mutual communication between members of the organization (Drucker, 1988).

This approach is related to the very concept of marketing as a function – as postulated by, for example, Philip Kotler – controlling and integrating all processes in the company (Kotler, 2005), including the involvement of the marketing department in internal communication processes, so that employees understand and implement the company's marketing philosophy.

Human Resources Management (Griffin, 1999; Stoner, Freeman, & Gilbert, 2001; Mathis & Jackson, 2008) is understood as a function of providing an organization with suitably prepared employees (Torrington, Hall, & Taylor, 2008).

The concept of Human Resource Management assumes close cooperation with employees, considerable individualization of activities and adapting them to the needs of individual categories of employees, and even to the individual needs and preferences of each of them.

Narrowing down this concept even more and referring to the definition of Cutlip, Center, & Broom (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 2000), public relations can be defined as the function of managing the communication of an individual with the environment – in this case both the individual and the environment are one entity.

What is important in internal communication carried out by the PR department is the evolution from a very one-sided communication model, assuming a one-way message to employees, effect-oriented rather than designed for meeting ethical standards, to an extensive model of two-way symmetrical communication, assuming attempts to achieve equality of the subjects of communication.

Therefore, at the theoretical level, we can talk about the convergence of internal communication and pursuing symmetrical, two-sided, permanent communication based on the involvement of the parties in all areas.

Empirical research is less clear-cut. One of the basic observations which, paradoxically, strengthens the theory of convergence is the observation that it is impossible to entrust all communication tasks to only one area. Even in companies with a flat management structure, where the management board has communication powers, it is forced to simultaneously act as a communicator of information on HR (OHS, employee duties, etc.), marketing (customers, product, market situation) and PR (mission and company vision, history, management, etc.). In other cases, the communication functions are divided among individual departments.

This means that regardless of the specifics of the department coordinating communication (although communication competences are still scattered among many other centers), employees indicate similar areas of satisfaction and dissatisfaction in communication.

It seems, however, that the convergence of individual areas makes it worth going beyond the framework of individual research areas, all the more so because the importance of internal communication will undoubtedly increase. The measure of this convergence is also a measure of communication efficiency affecting management efficiency, organizational culture, motivation and creativity. And these are one of the main factors of the competitive advantage of a given economy, influencing its development.

9.2. Communication in a crisis situation in developing countries

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The globalization of economic processes, digitization and media convergence have increased the role of information in the modern economy, at the same time influencing the emergence of a new global audience that can be called a “network society”. The most important feature of this society is the unification and massification of social and economic behavior patterns that occur through the global media system. In a society operating in this way, access to information is an important factor that allows building a competitive advantage not only locally, but also on international markets. The dominance of information produced and distributed by the media from developed countries, with the simultaneous disappearance of the geographic barrier and the globalization of the media market, may contribute to an increase in inequality between developed and developing countries. The instrumental treatment of developing countries by the West was not without significance (Deszczyński, 2015).

According to Manuel Castells, a Spanish sociologist and professor at Berkeley University, the new network society, governed by the dominant model of economic development, threatens the traditional institutions of developing countries, negatively affecting their economy, culture and identity (Castells, 2005). Unable to develop their own information and communication infrastructure and not having sufficient potential to conduct an equal dialogue on the Internet and through the international