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Organizational Communication and Workforce Diversity

Case Company: Burger King, Finland

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Organizational Communication and Workforce Diversity
Case Company: Burger King, Finland

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Tourism

Abstract

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The purpose of this Bachelor's thesis is to examine the internal work process related communication of Burger King, Finland. The main focus of this thesis is to assess the current communication flow and recognize communication weak points. Therefore, three investigative questions were formulated to understand the phenomena and provide development suggestions for further communication progress.

The theoretical framework consists of theories related to basic human communication model, organizational communication, motivation theory and theories related to multilingualism. The conducted research for the thesis was executed through qualitative research method specifically semi-structured interview and participant observation. Altogether three interviews were taken including the Restaurant Manager, a Shift Manager and a Staff Member. Along with the semi-structured interviews, author made participant's observation by being part of the workgroup. The data for the research was collected during summer 2014.

Based on collected data, the findings indicate that there is not any particular issue, rather cluster of small issues are acting as communication obstacles. Less open bottom-up communication flow, lack of interactions in and between workgroups, misunderstandings due to language differences and missing of communication guidelines are recognized as major problems. Research showed that opportunity for more interaction and open discussion has possibility to improve the current communication environment. In a nutshell, from both management and employees' perspective, overall communication flow is satisfactory, however several issues related to communication ought to be resolved.

Keywords: organizational Communication, internal communication, motivation, multilingualism, interaction

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1 Introduction

This 21st century organizations are becoming increasingly multicultural workplace for communication. As the workforce becomes even more global than ever before and culturally diverse, people in organizations are challenged to communicate more effectively interpersonally, internationally and in groups. Scholars believe that as a result of the rise of internationalized business environment and global competitiveness the managing of human diversity in workplace has become challenging for a major part of business organization today (Lauring 2011). Considering this growing trend of diversity and necessity of effective internal communication, author has chosen her research topic as 'Organizational Communication and Workforce Diversity' and a culturally diversified service organization as a case company.

This thesis is prepared for Burger King, Finland which is franchised by Restel Ltd., one of the leading organization in Finland's hospitality and restaurant sector. This fast food restaurant chain started operating in Finland since December 2013. Like all other business organizations, this organization's success significantly depends on effective communication. Although, Fast food restaurant's success depends on several factors, many of these are directly related with effective communication. This is relatively a new organization, and the current state of this company's internal communication has not been assessed yet. Therefore, the main objective of this research, is to assess the fluency of internal work process related communication and especially figuring out the problems occurring in everyday communication within organization. The purpose of the research is to find out the underlying communication weak points and provide suggestions to improve in order to make it more effective and fluent.

Nevertheless, the research problem is rather unstructured and it is not completely sure which issues cause actual problem and challenges in internal communication in this case company. For the convenience of the research process, and to focus on the exact issues, author has formulated three investigative questions to address the research problem. They are as follows;

1. What are the employees and managements feelings and views about the interactivity of communication?
2. What are the problems and challenges in internal communication?
3. What are the concrete development ideas and suggestions to improve communication flow?

The findings will benefit the management in mapping the current situation in terms of internal communication and further needed information which will benefit both management and employees to meet the level of fluency they need. This bachelor's thesis encompasses theoretical framework of communication and its related phenomena, details of research process, and re-

sults of conducted research with an in-depth analysis and recommendations for further development. Moreover, The literary review aims to support the conducted research to create a valid outcome and to assist the reader to comprehend the result.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Human Communication Model

Communication is the basic key concepts of this research study. Communication refers to exchange of meanings between two or more parties, where a sender encodes and sends a message through the selected communication channel to a receiver, who decodes it. The purpose of communication is to transmit information, to share meanings, and to create common understanding. Communication is effective and successful when the receiver decodes the message so that it is understood the way the sender intended (Huczynski and Buchanan 2007, 174).

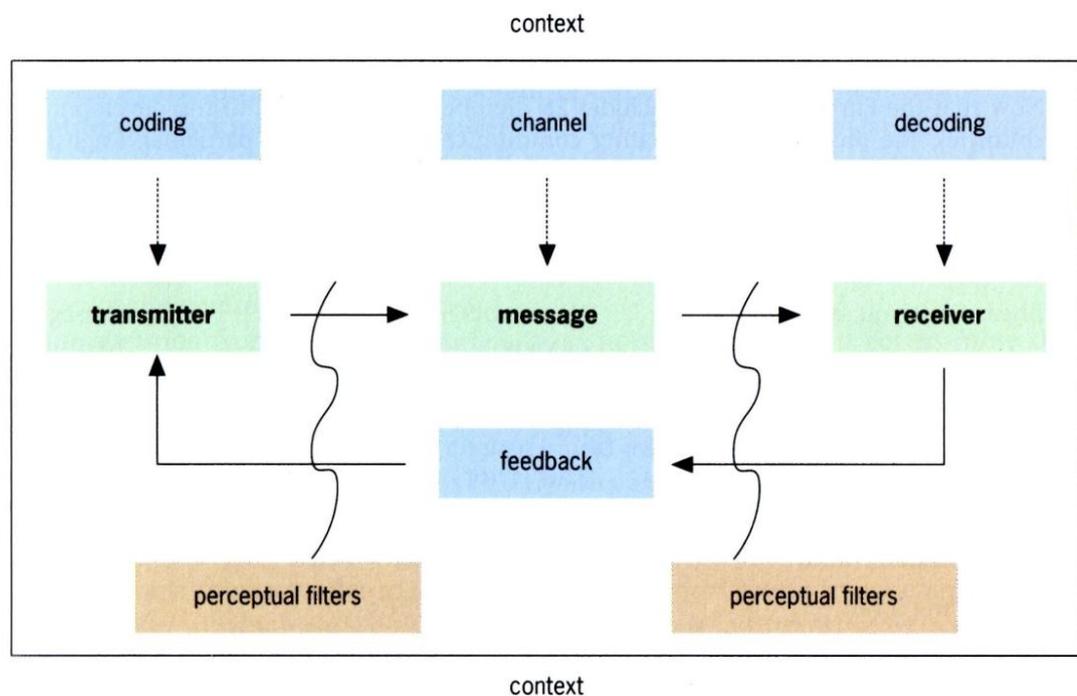


Figure 1: A model of interpersonal communication: coding and decoding (Huczynski and Buchanan 2007, 174)

Transmitter/Receiver: Each individual engaged in communication with others is both a message sender and message receiver. Generally individuals talk while monitoring non-verbal reaction of others (receiving messages), whereas individuals listen and also determine how to respond. Often message sending and message receiving occur rapidly that it seem to be happening simultaneously. Message encoding is the process of formulating messages, choosing content and

symbols to convey meaning. Message decoding is the process of conveying meaning in the role of receiver to message symbols generated by message source. Both encoding and decoding are influenced by our communicative competences for instance knowledge, language skills and values as well as intentions which includes desire for clarity, openness, manipulation and so forth. Message is the symbolic attempt to transfer meaning; the signal that serves as an incentive for a receiver (Shockley-Zalabak 2011, 10-13).

The channel is the medium through which the message is transmitted. It is the link or links between sender and receiver. Channels include five senses and any technological means used for message transmission. Usually channels are frequently used in combination of verbal and nonverbal, oral and written, face-to-face, and tele mediated conversations. Noise can be refer as the distortion or interference that contributes to inconsistencies between the meaning intended by the source and the meaning assigned by the receiver. Noise can be anything for instances physical distractions, channel interference, communicative competence, communication context, or psychological tendencies (Huczynski and Buchanan 2007, 56).

Communication Context: The communication context is the environment for the communication interaction. Context includes specific time and space of the interaction but also the roles, relationships and status of communication participants. Likewise, prior interactions among participants contribute to the construction of the current communication context. Most of us recognize we communicate differently depending on how well we know people, what their formal position is in relation to us. It seems that context is both culturally and physically influenced, and as with other elements in the communication process. The communication effect is the result, consequence, or outcome of the communication exchange. Effect of communication can be observed directly related to communication interactions. Sometimes communication effect is immediately observable, while some communication effect is delayed in time and context (Shockley-Zalabak 2011, 10-13).

2.2 Theories on Organizational Communication

Organizational Communication has been studied for at least six decades, and it has grown in importance significantly since the early years. Organizational communication is now regarded as a discipline in its own right, with its own research traditions. Everything significant that happens in an organization involves communication; hiring and training employees, providing feedback, purchasing supplies, solving problems, dealing with customers, deciding strategy and so forth. John Kotler (1982, 1999) found that most general managers spend most of their time in conversation, mainly maintain networks and relationships and in order to develop organization's goal and strategy. Organizational communication covers communication in an organization includes both outward and inward flow of communication. (Miller 2009, 46)

Zaremba (2010, 16) discusses in his book 'Organization communication' several definitions of organizational communication. Firstly Organizational communication can be refer as the study of sending and receiving messages that create and maintain a system of consciously coordinated activities or forces of two or more people. It can also be consider as the process which organizations are created. According to William (1973) the coordination of communication by number of people who are interdependently related. Furthermore, Keyton's opinion was far more reliant on communication. He believed that an organisation cannot exist without communication, and organisation emerges from communication.

Communication in an organization must occur with all stakeholder groups. This includes communication between employee and all consecutive management levels within the organization as well as communication with the current and potential clients, suppliers, partners etc. In addition to that, as discussed above, due to globalization and increasing international mobility today's organization consists of multicultural workforce, meaning that individuals will find themselves working alongside people from different culture and nationalities. Hence, effective and efficient communication in multicultural workforce plays a significant role in today's organizations (Keyton 2005, 12).

2.3 System Metaphor in Organizational Communication

Scholars has often used different metaphors to describe phenomenon. The concept of a metaphor in organizational theorizing suggests that individual can learn something about organizations by considering a disparate object that an organization 'is like' (Morgan 1997 cited in Miller 2012). Much of organizational communication relies on a system metaphor. The core of the system metaphor is a focus on the interdependence that develops whenever group of people interact with each other. Hall and Fagen (1968 cited in Miller 2009) defines system as a group of individuals who interrelate to form a whole system. Examples of systems are a family, a work group and sports team. In other words, anytime that a group of people has repeated interaction with each other, they represent a system. Systems are embedded in a hierarchy, with system existing represent a system. Miller (2012) mentioned that there are three concepts which characterizes system components; hierarchical ordering, interdependence and permeability. Amongst these three characteristics interdependence and permeability are directly connected to organizational communication (Zaremba 2010, 64-68).

The concept of interdependence indicates functioning of one components of a system relies on other components of the system. According to Miller (2012), organization in general, is highly interdependent. The word 'Permeability' derives from the word permeable refers to a sub-

stance that can be penetrated. Zaremba discusses significance of Permeability in System's operation. As stated by him, the boundaries of each system should be permeable in order to maximise organizational communication success. However, the degrees of permeability varies from system to system; some systems are relatively closed whereas others are moderately open. Permeability refers both to the system as a whole, which must be open to its environments and also to the components within the system. Metaphorically speaking, the boundaries of sub-systems must be permeable to permit information to be transmitted. System theorists refer to the information that comes into the system as input, information that is exported beyond the system is output. The processing of information within the system is called the throughput (Zaremba 2010, 64-68).

Several theories relevant to organizational communication have been based on system concepts. Cybernetic system theory, Karl Weick's theory of organizing and new science system's theory has emphasized different aspect of Systems theory and principle.

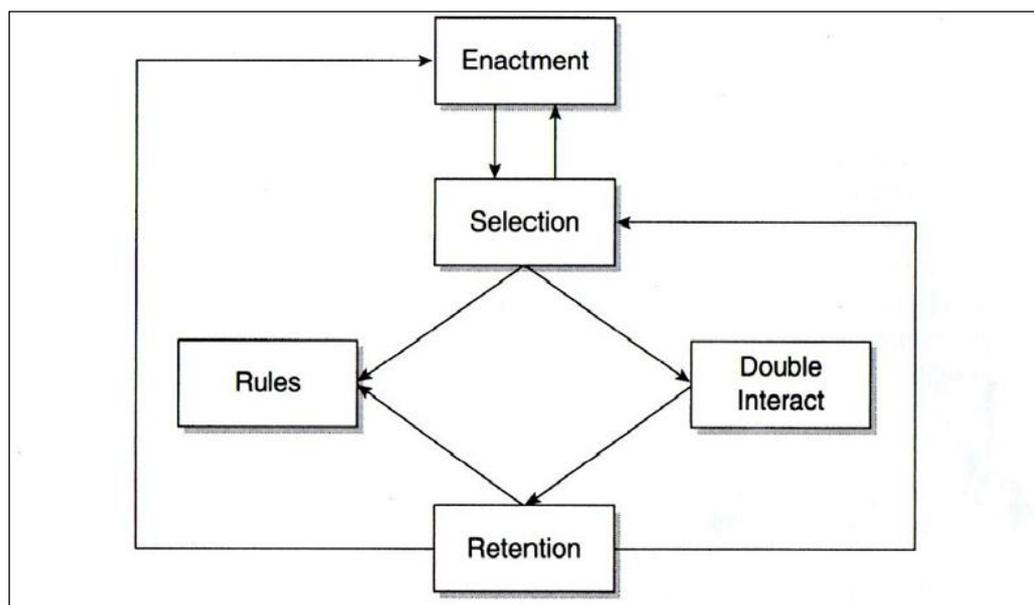


Figure 2: Karl Weick's model of organizing (Dainton and Zellely 2010, 163)

Karl Weick's model of organizing is based on system metaphor where he defines the process of organizing as the 'the resolving of equivocality in an enacted environment by means of inter-locked behaviours embedded in conditionally related processes'. His basic idea is organizations exist in an environment that refers as 'information environment'. The process of enactment suggests that different organizational members will imbue information inputs with different meanings and create a different information environment. He emphasizes the reduction of 'Equivocality' in information environment. Equivocality is the unpredictability that is inherent in the information environment of an organization. In other words 'Equivocality' can also be

refer as making sense out of available. In order to make sense of equivocal environment, Weick proposes number of processes. One way to reduce equivocality is to rely on rules. The term rules often refer to guidelines for behaviour.

Typically, organizations have rules, or guidelines for analysing both equivocality of how a message has been send and how to respond to it. As rules may not always work and there may not be rules for every situation, he suggests second way to reduce equivocality. It seeks organizational members to engage in communication cycles known as double interacts. Double interact well-matched in high-equivocality because it requires organizational members to develop interdependent relationships in communication process. A double interact consists of an act, a response and an adjustment.

An act is a communication behaviour initiated by one person or group of people. When the receiver of the message communicate in return, this is consider as response. Weick proposed effective communication requires a third step, an adjustment to the information originally received. This adjustment can take several forms for instances it might be the confirmation that the information has been understood.

Enactment is the first stage when members of an organization take note of equivocal information in their information environment. In this stage, recognizing multiple interpretations and putting into practise a mechanism for making sense of the information are the requirements. Second stage selection seeks organizational members choose how to respond. As discussed earlier, organizational members can choose either rules or double interact process in order to reach the third stage which is called retention. Retention is a form of organizational memory. In other words what has done and how it was done is stored, either formally or informally. The aim of retention is basically future reference. To sum up, according to this theory, organization exist in a complex information environment due to its equivocal nature. Therefore, organizations requires to adapt equivocality and use double interacts to resolve new forms of equivocality every now and then. In short, change is the key to organizational success and change occurs through the process of communication.

2.4 Internal Communication Theories

Internal communication refers to communication within an organisation, excluding communication with external stakeholders. As stated by Juholin (2009 35), in internal communication the direction of the communication flow can be top-down, bottom-up or horizontal. Internal communication on a daily basis occurs between management and teams or departments, within teams and between teams or departments. Here, work related communication between indi-

viduals in an organisation is taken into account, including also communication between managers and employees on an individual level. Therefore internal communication plays an important role in the competitiveness and successfulness of an organization. Employees are motivated to work towards common goals through communication and by keeping everyone informed of the state of business, objectives and so forth, the efficiency in task can be improved.

Welch and Jackson (2007,188) believes that the purpose and role of internal communication is to 'Promote commitment to the organization, a sense of belonging to it, awareness of its changing environment and understanding of its evolving aims'. Miller (2009) presents two different approaches to internal communication. In classical approaches, internal communication is seen to be focused on task related topics and usually social communication is not encouraged. Because social communication is seen counterproductive for reaching common organisational goals. The direction of communication is commonly seen as vertical and more specifically top-down and usually managers communicate with their sub-ordinates about task related topics mostly. In this approach, written mode of communication and formal style are commonly used. Nevertheless, in Human resource approach, in addition to task related communication, social and innovation-related communication is encouraged. The direction of communication is not only limited to vertical and not even to vertical and horizontal, but communication includes to all directions and between all members of the organisation is encouraged (Miller 2009 23-30, 49-51).

	Classical Approach	Human Relations Approach	Human Resources Approach
Communication Content	Task	Task and Social	Task, Social and Innovation
Communication Direction	Vertical(Downward)	Vertical and horizontal	All directions, Team-based
Communication Channel	Usually written	Often face to face	All channels
Communication Style	Formal	Informal	Both but especially informal

Figure 3: Communication in classical, human relations and human resources organization (Miller 2009, 23.)

In human resource's approach, communication is often team based and a variety of channels are used to maximise the effectiveness of communication and to optimise the free flow of

ideas. Both formal and informal communication are used, but especially informal communication plays a significant role as fulfilling of human needs is important besides enhancing organizational effectiveness

2.5 Communication and Motivation

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory humans are motivated by basic needs and those basic needs must be met before reaching higher needs. This theory emphasizes on social interaction and managerial attention in workplace.

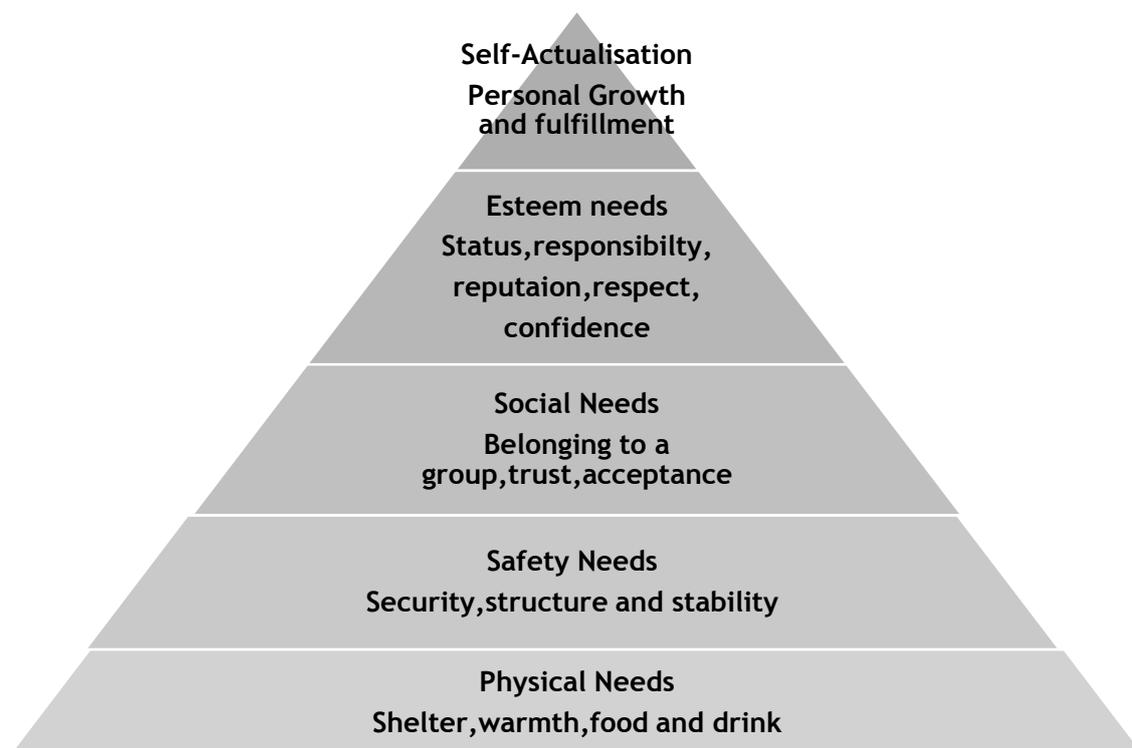


Figure 4: Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Jandt 2009, 48.)

According to this diagram, basic level of needs for instances belongingness and love, esteem needs must be met before reaching the higher level of needs such as self-actualization. In Hawthorne studies one of the major findings were employees are motivated by social interaction and belongingness in small groups. The social bonding that build up while working together has greater impact than any other factor such as money, other facilities. Pugh and Hickson (Cited in Miller 2012, 38).stated that many problems that worker-management cooperation were the results of the emotionally based attitudes of the workers rather than the objective difficulties of the situation. From Hawthorne studies in 1927 to recent studies in organizational communication includes findings of another certain type of communication played an important factor

in managerial success. Many studies over the decades has illustrated the importance of effective communication. Undoubtedly most visible outcome of effective and good communication is increased productivity and higher level of motivation, which directly contributes to organizational success.

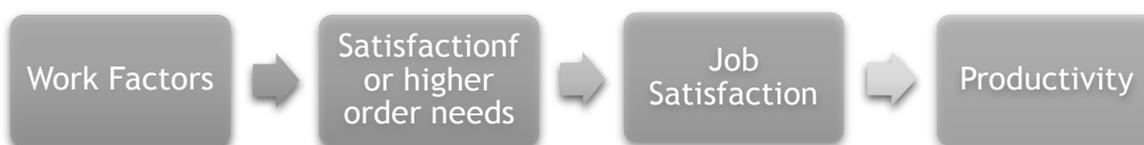


Figure 5: Human relations flow chart (Miller 2012, 45)

This findings provide the foundation for human relations theory. Human relations theory emphasizes on employee's needs of recognition, respect, good communication between employees and management. After Hawthorne studies there were several studies has been conducted and noticeably the finding included the fact that " Effective communication relationships contributed most to job satisfaction". Nevertheless, the relationship between job satisfaction and productivity is debatable, since study have shown that often satisfied employees can be less productive. In addition, studies have also shown that various job characteristics can serve as motivational factors, although aspects of the job that motivate may vary considerably by person and situation (Zaremba 2010, 44).

2.6 Organizational Communication within Diverse Workforce

Nowadays, due to globalization, organizations are becoming more multicultural. Individuals from different culture are working together to achieve same goals. Because of these changes, organizational communication has become more significant than ever before. Multicultural working environment is becoming more and more common in organizations, hence intercultural communication has become essential part of today's organizational communication .This cultural diversity in workforce indicated the importance of better understanding of intercultural communication. Intercultural communication generally refers to face to face interactions among people of diverse cultures. Above we have already discussed about the significance of context in communication. It is easily understandable the consequences where source and receiver of communication in different cultural context (Jandt 2010, 43-45).

An obvious barrier for effective communication within diverse workforce is use of common language meaning that, a Spaniard may have difficulties talking to a Finn, if the two do not speak the same language. Language issues need not only relate to use of common language, but also to the use of slang, regional expressions and terms that have high level of abstractions.

Zaremba (2010) discusses Linguistic relativity, which assumes that words affect our ability to conceptualize meaning that the way we think is dependent upon the language that we have. In academic language, 'The lexicon of a given language shapes our thought processes by providing a specific repertory of cognitive schemata' (Janis 1982 cited in Zaremba 2010, 220). Basically a cultural group may actually think in a way that is distinctive because their language is distinctive. If conceptualization is dependent on language, then language differences do not only make understanding what we say difficult, but the language differences make it difficult for people to conceptualize phenomena differently (Zaremba 2010, 220).

It can be demonstrated with a typical example of snow, if a group has multiple words for a concept, does that group conceptualize differently than a group that has fewer words for the same concept. For instance in Finnish there is no such word for English word 'Please', therefore a Finn can say 'Do it' without the word 'Please' which might sound arrogant to listener's ear. Zaremba (2010) deemed that language affects our sense of the word, and therefore, groups of people who do not share the same language will inevitably have difficulties in understanding each other's perception.

Even when the individual from same culture speak the same language, there can be vocabulary differences. Therefore, when individual speak different languages translation is always critical. Sachrest, Fay and Zaidi(1972, cited in Jandt 2015 ,135) have identified several translations problems and few of these are still valid till today. Vocabulary Equivalence occurs when individual translate on a word for word basis, Language which are different often lack words that are directly translatable. Another translation related problem is Grammatical-Syntactical Equivalence, simply means that language do not necessarily have the same grammar. Often user need to understand a language's grammar in order to get the exact meaning of words. English is relatively easy language in comparison to other difficult language, however, even in English words can be verb, noun or adjectives depending on their position in sentence.

Experiential Equivalence is another language related problem where certain object or experience does not exist in some particular language. It is difficult to translate words referring to that object or experience into that language when no words may exist for them. Conceptual Equivalence refers to abstract ideas that may not exist in the same fashion in the same languages. Most of the people have some unique meaning for the words, and that meaning is not universally shared. In this world, where anyone can translate any language with a click on, it is important to get better understanding of translated words (Zaremba 2010, 220-225 and Jandt 2015, 135-138).

3 Research Method

3.1 Research Approach

The study was conducted through qualitative research and the reason for choosing a qualitative approach and data collection method because of the nature and needs of the study. As Ghauri and Gronhaug (2005, 31) express it, when the problem is not clearly understood and the researcher aims to understand the specific phenomenon, qualitative research is usually used. On the other side, quantitative research aims to describe casual relations or disclose attitudes and opinions of the respondents. The primary data for this research is collected through qualitative method mainly participant observation and interview (Boeji 2005, 46).

3.2 Data Collection

3.2.1 Participant Observation

Participant observation has its roots in anthropological studies, where researchers would travel to distant places to study the customs and practices of less known societies. It involves participating in a situation, while, at the same time, recording what is being observed. Participant observation offers the chance to obtain unique insights into the organization or social group. However, as a data collection method participant observation gathers special data but it also presents challenges to the researcher. The main difficulty is the question of objectivity. For the sake of a valid research the researcher need to be objective. Being objective means the state of being just, unbiased and not influenced by emotions or personal prejudices (McDaniel, Porter and Samovar 2010, 43).

In this research process, author kept a diary to write the communication related events in order to follow the issue and analyse according to theories. After the interview with restaurant manager author started to observe the consequences of language differences in work shifts. As discussed above, participant observations enable researcher to obtain unique insight into the certain social group. Therefore, author was observing how communication flow was functioning when multilingual workforce were in action. Her focus of the observation was mainly to examine the problematic communication situation and see how employees are responding in that situation. The observation took place in Mannerheimintie branch of Burger King, which is author's working place as well.

3.2.2 Semi-Structured Interview

In addition to participant observation, the primary data was collected through interviews. As mentioned earlier, Participant Observation paved the way for further interview conduction. Author decided to form a freer and less structured data collection in qualitative interview to get deeper insight of the issues detected through participant observation.

Furthermore, Open-ended and unstructured questions led to reveal various perspectives and views about the current situation and challenges. However, the interviews were not completely unstructured as the author wanted to secure that all necessary and relevant information be obtained. Ghauri and Gronhaug (2005, 132) define semi-structure interviews as interview where the topics to be covered are determined and the respondents will not be chosen at random but they are determined beforehand. The author determined the topic and issues to be covered in the interviews but any sub-questions were not predetermined. The individual face to face interviews were anonymous to encourage sincere participation in the interviews. Interviews conduction took places in several places between July and August 2014.

The first interview with the Restaurant Manager was conducted in June 2014. After the first interview author made her semi structured questionnaires for further interviews based on the information and views gained after first interview. The second interview was held with one of the Staff Member, who is a full-time worker. It took place in workplace after ending of staff member's shift. Duration of the interview was almost 45 minutes. Author sent the questions to interviewee beforehand so that she could have an impression of the questions would be asked. Nevertheless, this interview conducted in an informal environment and author led interviewee to response the questions asked. The last interview was taken of a Shift Manager. Likewise previous interviewee, interviewed shift manager also works on a regular basis and aware of the existent internal communication circumstance. The interview took places in a café approximately for 40 minutes. The main challenge author faced, in all of her conducted interviews, is to remain neutral and retain herself from providing any personal opinion. (Interview questions can be found in appendixes.

4 Case Company

Burger King, often abbreviated as BK, is an American global chain of hamburgers fast food restaurants headquartered in Miami, United States. The company was established in 1953. At the end of fiscal year 2014, reportedly, it has over 13,000 outlets in 79 countries. Burger King, Finland is franchised by Restel Ltd., one of the leading company in hospitality and restaurant sector of Finland .It employs approximately 5500 employees all over Finland and owns 47 hotels and more than 230 restaurants. The first Burger King was opened in the centre of the Helsinki in December 2013. At this moment, 16 Burger King Restaurants are operating in whole Finland.

Apart from Helsinki Region, this restaurant chain is operating in some other major cities including Turku, Tampere, Pori, Jyvaskyla and Oulu (Burger King 2015 and Restel Ltd. 2015).

5 Findings

5.1 Current Situation

Like all other fast food restaurants, in Burger King the most common way of communication is face to face. Nevertheless, apart from face to face communication, there are several channels for communication existent i.e. phone, WhatsApp group, newsletter, email. When employees need to inform something instantly for instance delay of coming or sudden illness, they can usually call on the restaurant's landline to inform. Nevertheless, if landline is not picked up due to rush hour there is no other way to inform. In other circumstances, employees can send email or make phone call. Besides phone and email, WhatsApp group messaging is used in group communication between shift managers and Restaurant Manager, and mainly for sharing latest information instantly. In addition to this, there is also one Facebook group for employees, where open shifts are offered. Moreover, weekly newsletters are published in order to share the latest information. Usually weekly newsletters are written by Restaurant Manager to share the latest information about products and services. Shift Managers also participate in writing newsletters, when they have information to share with others or when they want to convey some particular message to all staff groups.

Reportedly, there is no communication model existent for internal communication. In Restaurant Manager words, 'Every manager can develop their own communication model which will work at their own restaurant'. Nevertheless, there are some general guidelines existent for front line customer service assistants. In preliminary research one issue was pointed out, and that is reachability or connection between Restaurant Manager and staff members. Below demonstrated model illustrates the existent communication flow and communication channels in BK.

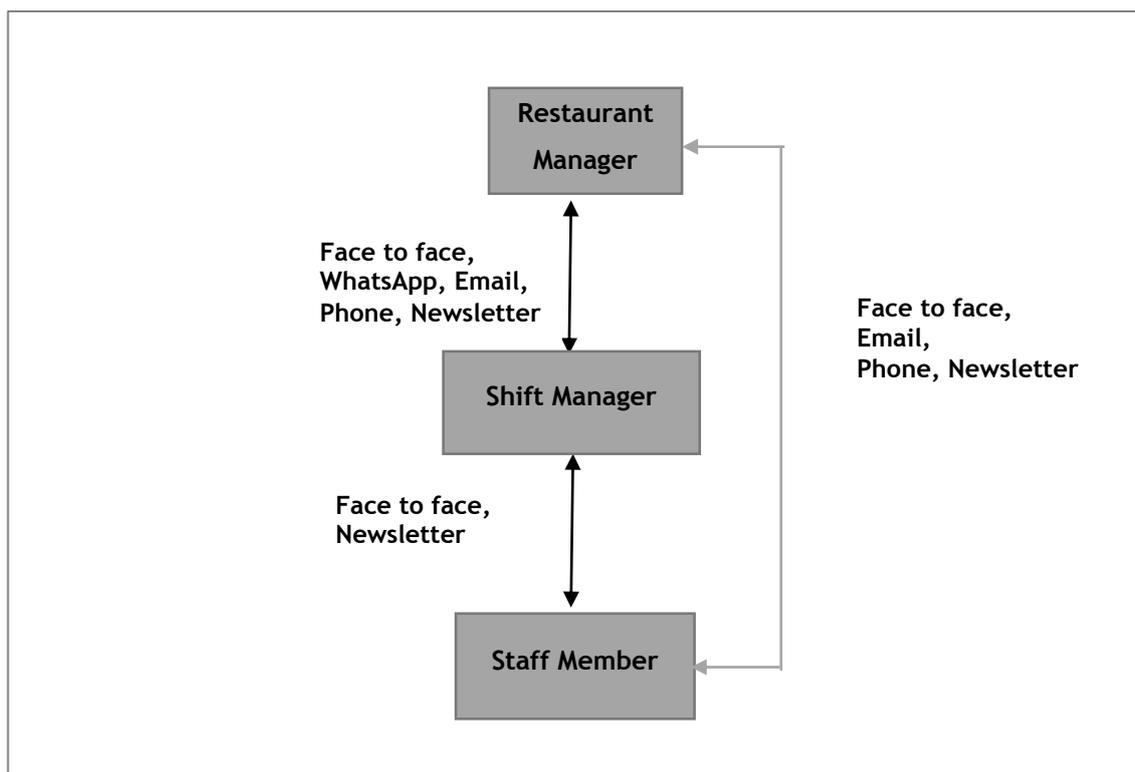


Figure 6: Internal Communication Flow (Restaurant Manager 2014)

5.2 Communication during Work Shift

During this research, Shift Manager also expresses her viewpoint in terms of communication. When two shift managers work in one shift, occasionally miscommunication is initiated due to lack of interaction between shift managers. As a result staff members become confused and because of this confusion, flow of productivity got hampered. To avoid this type of situation, simultaneous interaction between shift-managers are necessary. Furthermore, communication between Restaurant Manager and Shift Manager play significant role in internal communication flow. There are several medium of communication existent and reportedly, there is a good level of interaction existent between Restaurant Manager and shift managers. However, since there are 4-5 shift managers are working in one restaurant, there is a need for some interactive meetings and possibility for open discussion so that they can share their thoughts, experiences and development ideas concerning communication as well as other issues.

Usually, at least two workgroups specifically frontline and kitchen, function in one particular shift. Shift manager's role is to coordinate between these two workgroups. Simultaneous interaction between these two groups are needed to reach the higher level of productivity. Nevertheless, research indicates that, communication level between these two work-groups are not

satisfactory. They tend to interact less than the actual requirement, and this less interaction result as lower productivity and lack of trust.

5.3 Bottom-Up Communication Flow

During the initial interview author was aiming to explore the underlying barriers to communication. In interview, Restaurant Manager states that he wishes more transparency between employees and him, however he expressed that he feels there is a communication gap between him and employees. This communication gap is caused by several factors namely wide opening hours, large number of staff members and work-type of employees for instance most employees work part-time so there are less possibility for interaction between him and employees .He also pointed out the fact that there are no guidelines, common rules or model for communication, commonly it depends on individual.

However, employee's opinion was similar to Restaurant Manager in this issue. In addition to the facts discussed earlier, from employee perspective, Restaurant Manager has so many responsibilities and most of the time seen occupied with 'office-work' ,staff members do not want to bother him with their work related personal issues. Hence again, unknowingly, this 'small and personal' issues eventually resulting as communication impediments.

5.4 Feedback

Mixed results were found in this performance appraisal topic. Firstly, managerial viewpoint will be discussed following by employee's viewpoint on this issue. According to management opinion, feedback is given to employees on a regular basis. Although, manager also acknowledged that it depends on individual manager, how they prefer to give feedback or how often. Also, it depends on individual's personality. Some manager are skilled in terms of communication and some are not.

Employee's opinion were mixed. From their perspective, the work related feedback is not enough. Indeed, as always, people would like to listen good things at first-hand. It was expressed that employees also do expect more constructive criticism, in one interviewee's words 'We should able to discuss our weaknesses and how to overcome those weaknesses'. Then again, providing feedback about negative or lower productive tasks could be sensitive again because some people can take it 'personally instead of professionally'. It was also mentioned that 'Some managers provide feedback and some just say nothing, no matter how much effort you have put in your work on that particular day'.

5.5 Challenges within Multilingual Environment

Multilingualism issue was paid close attention to all of the interviews. In one of the interviewee's word if the 'Language is not issue towards productivity, some people's attitude is problem towards productivity' If someone is willing to work hard, language barrier can be overcome through some effort in both Finnish and non-Finnish employee's side. Nevertheless both managers and employees acknowledge that it is challenging to have efficient teamwork in this multilingual environment.

Additionally, often misunderstanding and miscommunication happens due to this language differences. According to interviewees, sometimes lack of professional vocabulary leads misunderstanding i.e. if someone does not know the exact English word for 'kylmiö' and he/she just can say 'freeze' and the other listener will not understand that she meant chiller not freezer. Taken into consideration vocabulary equivalence discussed in chapter 2 the problem is easily understandable. In addition to that, a limited user of Finnish language can easily mix up 'I am doing' or 'I will do' or 'I did' and the other person will be misled due to this Grammatical-Syntactical Equivalence discussed in chapter 2.

Apart from these translation barrier, there is another communication problem is detected within internal communication of this case company. Often it happens when a multilingual group is functioning, where two people speak same language and the other one does not understand that particular language. In this situation, if the same language users instinctively start communicating in their native language, then the other person will immediately feel isolated in the team. This issue can be interpreted from two perspective. Firstly, In same-language speaker's perspective, speaking in native language will fasten their work pace, because when someone is not fluent in particular language it takes time to build up a sentence. Therefore, it is easier to communicate in their native language. However, the other language speaker's perspective, this behaviour can be considered as bad-mannered and an attempt to build group within a group. These two contrary thoughts may result as lack of trust and as a consequence, whole working environment and level of productivity may plummeted. To overcome this situation the use of 'Common Language' would be the best solution and better understanding between co-workers will improvise the situation as well.

6 Recommendations and Development Ideas

6.1 Creating Communication Guidelines

As collected data indicated that missing of common rules or a communication model led to different communication problems such as different things are told to different people or wrong

interpretation of given information. According to Karl Weick's theory of Enactment states that one way to reduce equivocality is to rely on rules which refer to certain guidelines. Taken into consideration Weick's Model of Organizing, the first step towards a successful communication flow is the establishment of a communication model. For this, management ought to pay close attention to the problems which is causing communication obstacles. Then, the second step would be, the 'Selection' process. It seeks examine how organizational members choose to respond in particular type of problematic communication situation and how they respond or resolve it. Then the third step retention comes where what has done and how it was done will be stored. Afterwards the expertise can go through all these communication contexts and see what has functioned best in those particular situation, and, therefore, based on the result, management can create a guideline or common rules for communication. In addition to this, seeking employee participation in this process would be beneficial too.

6.2 Enhancement of Interaction

Considering management and employee's viewpoint, the bottom-up communication can be considered as less permeable. As discussed in chapter 2.2, some systems are relatively close where some systems are moderately open. To make bottom-up communication more open several suggestions from employee's and management came across in this conducted study. Restaurant Manager can possibly work with staff members on field whenever he/she get the chance. This will enable him/her to know their employee closely. Also, it has been found that face to face communication is seen more reliable than any other communication channels such as email or phone call. Therefore, a day or time can be reserved for employees who wants to have private discussion with manager to discuss their work related personal issues, perhaps on request or once in a three month. These opportunity of interaction will help to build up trust between them which will contribute in the communication fluency.

During shift, Shift Managers are responsible for stimulating communication flow. Hence, to assist smooth communication flow shift managers need to interact simultaneously with one another. Although Restaurant Manager and shift managers possesses effective communication cycle, research shows that, interactive meetings are necessary in order to share opinions and constructive thoughts within shift manager groups as well as with restaurant manager.

Moreover, enhancement of interaction amongst staff member is another prerequisite. Due to the nature of this workplace, staff members get less opportunity to know their co-worker. This less knowingness effect communication during work as well. Therefore, Team events could be arranged to improvise this current situation. Someone could be elected to be responsible for organising these events to ensure they will not be forgotten. Doing things together also outside

the workplace can increase openness and comfortableness with each other. Hence, this might develop the interactivity during work shift as well.

6.3 Overcoming Challenges Related to Language

In interviews language related issues were seen easily possible to overcome than any other barriers. Research shows that language related to problems can be overcome by taking initiatives, but transforming people's attitudes towards work is rather unmanageable. First of all, interacting with co-worker is most important. As discussed earlier in chapter 2.4 and 2.5, interaction with co-workers plays an important role, through good communication with co-workers employee's social needs of belongingness can be fulfilled as well. In addition to this, introducing small dictionary containing work related words and phrases in English and Finnish can contribute to resolve the language related misunderstandings.

6.4 Facilitating Information Flow through Newsletter

As discussed above, both management and interviewees consider newsletter a great tool for sharing information. However, participation of staff members in weekly newsletter will possibly enhance the importance of newsletter to employees even more. Also, an English version of newsletter will simplify things for non-Finnish speaker workers. A non-Finnish speaker will not need to take the hustle of translation or asking others when they do not understand what has been written. Using translator can create some other misunderstanding issues which has been discussed in translation problem chapter. In addition to that, getting newsletter through social media for instance Facebook or via email would be convenient too. Additionally, it was said that, employee would like to see more information regarding sales and perhaps comparison with other branches also.

6.5 Miscellaneous

Giving feedback to all direction are important, both to encourage and appraise and to remove inefficiencies where detected in a constructive way. Feedback can be a great way to motivate staff members and increase the level of productivity when it is given to all direction both to encourage and appraise, also to remove inefficiencies. Not getting feedback especially when employee deem that they deserve can be resulted as employee dissatisfaction. Getting and giving more feedback can led to optimisation of task performance and better work environment. Therefore, providing feedback should be encouraged and practiced on a regular basis.

Encouraging development ideas from employees would be a brilliant idea because they are the people who work on the field, knows the problems, challenges and ways to overcome. Therefore getting ideas from them would be useful for management. Giving reward for the 'best development idea' could be a motivating factor for bringing up new development ideas.

7 Conclusion

The main focus of the research was to examine the internal communication flow. To begin with, author formulated three investigative questions to address the current situation and challenges related to internal communication. This Research was conducted by using qualitative research method, which allowed author to gain depth understanding of the underlying problems. Furthermore, by using method managers and employees were able to share their opinions and suggestions related to communication weak points.

To simplify the research process, author segmented the problem on the basis of topics. This segmentation allows her to analyse in more structured way. However, research indicates overall communication flow is satisfactory. Both management and employees are willing to participate for the enhancement of overall communication flow. There are rooms for development especially in communication between manager and employee. Mainly lack of interaction triggering communication barriers. Although this is very common problem in fast-food restaurants due to the nature of the work and , and there is no guaranteed solution for this problem, but few actions for instances interactive meetings, arranging both private and open discussion initiated by management have possibility to improve the current situation. Lastly, perhaps, yearly assessment on communication could be taken place to scrutinize the effectiveness of communication.

A limitation of this study was the relatively small sample size and for this reason, these findings cannot possibly be generalized to the broader aspect. Also, the data has been collected over a year ago and since then, perhaps several changes in communication have taken place. Due to this gap, the results might be seen as outdated. Nevertheless, this Bachelor's thesis presented several suggestions focused on enhancement of communication flow and management of this organization can measure, evaluate and improvise these suggestions before integrating in real situation.

8 Self-Assessment

Author perceived this thesis work as a great learning experience for her. She has combined her academic knowledge and work related practical experience in this research conduction. In addition, author developed her theoretical knowledge on communication. The most challenging part of this thesis conduction was to be neutral in all aspects. Since author herself has been working in the same company, being impartial and neutral was challenging for her .Additionally, her adequate know-how of this sector set the challenge of being over-confident. Therefore she has to remind herself the fact that she is not allowed to presume anything on the basis of her previous knowledge. Overall she is satisfied with her effort, but in her opinion, she needs to improve her academic writing style and analytical thinking for her own further professional development.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1: Initial interview with Restaurant manager

-Is there any guideline for communication or a model existing?

No model existing in terms of internal communication. Every manager can develop their own model which suits their branch.

-What are the main objectives of internal communication process of BK?

According to restaurant manager, is to get the latest info reachable to all staff members and manager info to all managers. Also to increase transparency between manager and employees.

-Can you tell bit about the problems or challenges related to communication?

- Multilingual working environment
- Amount of staff members. They are staff members who work rarely that they are not aware of the changes taken place. Also, they are not acquainted with the managers.
- If there is dissatisfaction it does not reach to restaurant manager, so he is not able to fix the problem, even discuss about it
- Distance between manager and staff members due to lack of meeting and communication
-

-Since there are several channels of communication exists, in your opinion, which is the most effective channel of communication?

- -Whatsapp between managers
- -Weekly newsletter
- -Facebook

-Since, group communication is vital part of everyday communication and interactivity in and between group plays important role in overall productivity. In your opinion, what are the barriers or challenges in and between group communications in BK?

- If more than one manager staff members got confused who to follow
- Efficiency versus cleanliness and following BK Standards
- The dilemma between labour costs and efficiency

Appendix 2: Interview questions for employee interview

As discussed earlier, interviews were semi-structured and the questions given below were asked to get a clear view of internal communication flow of case company. Due to confidentiality reason, answers and the names of the interviewees is not been disclosed.

-Regarding weekly newsletter: In your opinion, how effective the weekly newsletter is and how can it be made even better?

-Regarding Communication between employees and managers:

-Do you think managers (both manager and shift managers during shifts) are easily reachable?

-Can you recall any incidence regarding miscommunication? If yes, please share and how it could have been avoided?

-Do managers encourage your development ideas/suggestions?

Regarding Language differences;

-Since staff in workforce sometimes does not share the same language, do you think it hampers the flow of productivity? Could you recall any incidence due to language differences?

How could it have been avoided?