

Change communication in office space renewal

Case Ministry of the Interior of Finland:

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<p>Nowadays office space renewals are more relevant than ever before. Many organizations are transferring to this modern trend of open space offices by giving up individual offices. The motives behind a change like this are usually economic and social.</p> <p>The Ministry of the Interior of Finland went through an office space renewal in 2017 when their individual offices were transferred into an open space office. This change was one of the biggest changes the organization has gone through.</p> <p>In this research oriented thesis, theory of change management and change communication is introduced and later assessed against the main results. By using quantitative and qualitative research methods, the author could collect a richer and stronger array of evidence for the research.</p> <p>The author, working in the organization's International Affairs Unit before the change took place, planned and conducted two surveys: one in February 2017, second in September 2017. The results of the two surveys were then compared to each other to reveal how the change communication was before and after the change. In addition, six individual interviews were made and the results were analyzed together with the results of the surveys to examine how the communication can be improved.</p> <p>The objective of this thesis is to explore and analyze change communication during an office space renewal from the International Affairs Unit's point of view. And then to evaluate the findings and make a research that will benefit the organization to improve communication.</p> <p>Based on the comments and data received from the two surveys and interviews, the overall experience of the communication was better before than after. Areas for improvement in communication are coordination, channels of communication, consistency and timing. This thesis provides valuable information for the case organization to help them improve not only change communication but other communication as well in the future.</p>	
Keywords change communication, change management, internal communication, office space renewal, change, communication	

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1 Introduction

The objective of this thesis is to describe and analyze communication in an office space renewal. People have a way of resisting change, which is why communication plays a very important role. This research helps the commissioning party to hopefully change their ways of communicating and establish new ways of communication for it to work even better and successfully in possible future changes.

A research by Albert Mehrabian proves that it's more important how we communicate (93%) than what we say (7%). During a change, it's an important matter how we communicate and express certain things to other people. It's crucial to maintain people's trust during a time of change because people react to it very differently. (Mehrabian 1981.)

1.1 Background

I did my work placement in the Ministry of the Interior of Finland, in the International Affairs Unit in the autumn 2016. While working there, I got an idea from my supervisor that I could do my thesis for them because they are moving from an office to an open space office.

As I'm specializing in organizational communication I decided to combine communication with their upcoming change. So, I'm analyzing communication during the change. I'm observing this change from the International Affairs Unit's point of view.

I find this topic very important because changes happen every day and they have become a part of our life. Especially since these office space renewals are very common today. Communication is the key element in change management and it needs to work for the change to happen successfully, which is why I find my topic very interesting.

The Ministry of the Interior's move from an office to an open space office happened during a weekend in the beginning of June 2017. Monday 5th of June was their first day at the new office. However, informing the employees about the upcoming move had started long before that. The original location of the Ministry of the Interior of Finland is Kirkkokatu 12, Helsinki. That is where they were located and people had their own offices before they moved to Erottajankatu 2, Helsinki. Erottajankatu was only a temporary location for them because the premises at Kirkkokatu went under a renovation. This renovation changed the office to an open space office. The employees had been aware of the change years before it happened and information about it had been given ever since.

The reason why this change needed to happen was simply economic. The government wants to save money and therefore is willing to change the ordinary office spaces to open space offices. This should cut some expenses. The Ministry of the Interior isn't the first ministry to go through this change. Other ministries have already gone through it as well and for some the change is still ahead. Take Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and Ministry of the Environment for an example. They were the first ones to move from offices to open space offices.

1.2 Commissioning party: Ministry of the Interior of Finland

The Ministry of the Interior consists of five departments: the Administration and Development Department, the Police Department, the Department for Rescue Services, the Migration Department and the Border Guard Department. In addition, there are also three units, who report directly to the Permanent Secretary. Those units are Internal Audit Unit, Press and Communications Services and International Affairs Unit, for who I'm doing this research for. (Ministry of the Interior of Finland 2017.)

Paula Risikko, the Minister of the Interior, oversees the Ministry of the Interior. Päivi Nerg, the Permanent Secretary, is the highest official at the Ministry of the Interior. She assists the Minister in monitoring and directing the actions and activities of the Ministry and the agencies and offices within its mandate. Permanent Secretary coordinates issues related to the European Union as well as other international issues. (Ministry of the Interior of Finland 2017.)

The Ministry of the Interior oversees the operational, financial and the performance plan and the draft budget for its branch of government. The Ministry has responsibility for their implementation and application. It is also liable for the reporting and supervision of activities in its branch. The operational, financial and the performance plan bring out the Ministry's view of the key changes in the operating environment, the strategic priorities for the work in the Ministry's branch, the social impact and the operational performance. (Ministry of the Interior of Finland 2017.)

The aim of the Ministry and its agencies within its mandate is for Finland to be the safest country in Europe. To achieve this, the Ministry and its agencies will work to make sure that people living in Finland are safe and secured, the society is built to be competitive and equal treatment is ensured. (Ministry of the Interior of Finland 2017.)

The Ministry of the Interior cooperates with other countries and international organizations constantly. All international activities inside the Ministry are coordinated by the International Affairs Unit. The Ministry also develops and coordinates domestic capacity building for civilian crisis management and manages the European Union's Home Affairs Funds in Finland. (Ministry of the Interior of Finland 2017.)

Director General Laura Yli-Vakkuri oversees the International Affairs Unit's actions. The Unit is divided into three divisions: Coordination of International and EU Affairs, Finland's National Capacity for Civilian Crisis Management and European Union Home Affairs Funds. (Ministry of the Interior of Finland 2017.)

The International Affairs Unit consist of a little less than 20 people. All minister's international activity is coordinated by the International Affairs Unit. For example, minister meetings in Finland and abroad. The Unit also gives support with writing speeches for the minister that concern their substance area.

1.3 Objectives

One objective for my research is to assess change communication and change management in the International Affairs Unit before and after an office space renewal. I'm going to explore and analyze the change communication and then evaluate my findings. Second objective for my thesis is to find solutions to improve the communication in the Unit and between the Unit and other internal parties. Third objective is to make a research that will benefit the International Affairs Unit in the future.

My research questions were: how was the communication before and after the office space renewal and how to improve communication? To analyze these questions, I conducted surveys and interviews to get data. I will explain more about my findings in sub-chapters 4.4.1, 4.4.3 and 4.4.4.

1.4 Process description

This thesis consists of five main chapters. In addition to introduction, this thesis consists of theoretical part, empirical part and discussion part. The chapter 1 is introduction, where I'm introducing my topic, background, objectives, process description and demarcation.

In the theoretical part I will consider previous studies of the topic and gather existing information of my topic. I have divided the theoretical part into two chapters: chapter 2 is change management and chapter 3 change communication. I'm also going to introduce some strategies of change communication and present Kotter's 8-step process for leading change and apply those steps into my research case. I have put in some charts to demonstrate the information.

The empirical part is going to focus on my way of working. For example, why I used certain methodologies, how I collected data and implemented my research. This is my research part of the thesis, chapter 4, where I'm discussing my findings and analyzing the data I got from surveys and interviews. I'm clarifying how I conducted my research and what were my working methods while doing this thesis.

The last chapter 5 is discussion, where I will conclude and make a summary of the research and evaluate my own learning during this process. This part also includes the evaluation of trustworthiness and thesis process. I'm also going to introduce some improvements and solutions for the problem.

I started to write my thesis in June 2017. Before that I had conducted a survey in February 2017 and collected some data on my own while I was working in the ministry. The first part I wrote was the introduction and the next theoretical part. After I got those done, I slowly started to write my empirical part in August 2017. I also conducted my second survey and interviews in September 2017. The discussion part was naturally the last part I wrote because it includes a lot evaluating and discussing of the results. I finished my thesis in November 2017.

1.5 Demarcation

The aim of this thesis is not creating specific guidelines for change communication nor establishing approaches for change management. The objective is, like mentioned before, to explore and analyze change communication during an office space renewal from the International Affairs Unit's point of view. And then to evaluate my findings and make a research that will benefit the Unit in the future to improve not only change communication but other communication as well.

Even though the office space renewal, in this case move from an office to an open space office, is mentioned a lot together with change communication, this thesis will not focus on that theme. I'm using that change to observe the communication happening at the time.

This thesis will have some comparisons of the beginning and ending scenes of the change through the lens of communication.

The time frame for my thesis is the office space renewal process, which was mostly happening during spring 2017 but I will also include data after the move in autumn 2017. Even though the move happened over the weekend, preparing people for the change and informing them had already begun way before. Based on the results I will make my conclusion and create solutions and suggestions.

2 Change

In this chapter, I'm introducing the theme of change. This chapter includes theory of leading change, change management and resistance of change. In addition, the 8-step process for leading change by John Kotter is introduced and applied to my case. The reason, why I'm introducing Kotter's 8-step process for leading change, is because it gives clear directions for an organization that's going through a change to manage that change process. It's a good example and easy to execute. In a change context, it's one of the most popular change management methods that many researchers and authors have used in their work.

2.1 Definition of change

Change is transferring from a space or a situation to another. In working life there are always different goals that are included in the change. Change requires adapting to new ways of working and letting go of the old thinking habits. (Juholin 2009, 320.) Like many other organizations, the Ministry of the Interior of Finland went through an office space renewal. For those changes to happen successfully, the organizations need two things: excellent communication and management skills.

2.2 Leading change

The classic image of leaders is often one of "born-to-lead". Leaders have natural features and skills for example courage and charisma, which are often "given". According to this, it would seem like only some individuals are able to lead effectively and motivate others. Another perspective is that leadership skills can be learned and developed along with communication skills in a leadership role. This self-development perspective focuses on the individuals' ability to communicate and influence others and simultaneously being influenced by others in the implementation of a change. (Cornelissen 2014, 220.)

Organizations need teams of people to work together and effective leaders, who can guide the teams towards a common goal and support individuals to work together. It's a fact that when leading, individual managers have an influence on the interpretations of others in the organization and they also shape others' opinions. Ideal leaders are also ones that are sensible enough not to burden the change process with an overlarge ego. (Cornelissen 2014, 220.)

2.3 Resistance to change

One of the common challenges that management faces during a time of change is resistance. Resistance to change is not necessarily a problem in organizations because it is to be expected. Resistance can appear in different forms, for example decrease in output, increase of arguments and expression of reasons why the change will not work. (Rick 2011.)

Recognizing behaviors that show possible resistance will bring up the need to address the concerns. The Change Curve by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross shows the emotional stages that most people go through during changes. This is introduced more in specific in subchapter 3.8. (Rick 2011.)

Understanding the most common reasons for people to resist change gives management the opportunity to address these factors. It's not possible to be aware of all kinds of forms of resistance but expecting that there will be resistance and being prepared for it is a good start. As Torben Rick (2011) lists in his article, the 12 most typical reasons why people resist change are:

1. Misunderstanding the need for change

When the employees don't fully understand the need for change and the positive outcomes the change will bring along, resistance can be expected. Especially, if people feel that things are working fine now as they are. People's perceptions of the change can also be a factor for resisting change.

2. Fear of unknown

This is one of the most common reasons for resistance. People need to genuinely believe and feel that the change will benefit them and the risks of standing still are bigger than moving forward to a new direction to take steps towards the unknown.

3. Lack of competence

This is a fear that many won't easily admit. It's only natural that when changes happen in organizations, people feel that their abilities won't meet with the organization's expectations anymore, which makes the change even harder for them to adjust.

4. Connection to the old way
People who have worked in that organization for many years have gotten used to do things in a certain way. But when suddenly someone asks them to start doing things differently, creating new ways of working, can trigger hard feelings. Adapting to new things takes time and for persons who need to change their way of doing things it can cause negative feelings towards the whole process.
5. Low trust
The employees need to trust the organization's management completely and believe that the organization can manage the change successfully. Without trust in the process, resistance is more likely to appear.
6. Temporary trend
If people think that the upcoming change is just temporary and will not be beneficial anymore after two years, it will create resistance and frustration.
7. Poor participation
People need to be let to be a part of the change and given the chance to have an influence. This decreases resistance and gives people a safe feeling when they know that their opinions have been taken into consideration.
8. Lack of communication
It's natural that during a time of change people want to know what's going on. Informed employees are more likely to have a higher job satisfaction rate than uninformed employees.
9. Routine change
Everyone has their own comfort zones. Comfort zones can also mean routines and everyone loves the routines they've created for themselves. Routines make us feel safe and secure. Whenever change requires us to do things that differ from our routines, resistance is bound exist.
10. Exhaustion
The management shouldn't mistake compliance for acceptance. People who are overwhelmed of change submit themselves to it and just go with the flow. At this point you have their physical presence but not emotional presence. Motivation at this stage is very low.

11. Change in status quo

Change can change the dynamics at the work place. If people feel that their situation will be worse after the change, they won't give their full support to it. Also, if people feel that the change favors another group/person/department, there will more likely be resentment, anger and resistance towards the change.

12. Rewards

People need to see that the outcomes after the change will somehow benefit them and the organization. Otherwise they will get a feeling that the change wasn't worth their trouble and that will create negativity.

2.4 Change management

Management of change is one important area, where good leadership is required. Change is a phase for many organizations.

Change can be major or radical or more minor and convergent. Radical change involves a complete reorientation of an organization, whereas convergent change consists of fine-tuning the existing orientation and ways of working" (Cornelissen 2014, 221).

In this case, the change I'm researching would go into the category of convergent change. The structure of the organization didn't change but the location and ways of working changed notably.

"Change can also be defined in terms of its time-frame: evolutionary changes occur slowly and gradually whereas revolutionary changes happen swiftly and affect virtually all of the organization" (Cornelissen 2014, 221). The change in the Ministry of the Interior was evolutionary, because the change happened slowly over the time. People working there were aware of the change well before.

Changes in organizations can be classified in terms of the primary focus of the change. They may involve the adoption of updated technology to accomplish work; a restructuring and change in policies and routine ways of working; change in the products or services or a change in the organizational identity and culture. (Cornelissen 2014, 221.)

One way to think about changes is in terms of additive versus substitutive changes. Like Joep Cornelissen writes in his book *Corporate Communication: A Guide to Theory and Practice* (2014):

Changes can be seen as either a departure from the old organization (a substitution) or as an addition to, or update of, the old organization (an addition). Substitutive change is a major strategic change that often involves a redefinition of the organization's mission and purpose or a substantial restructuring of the organization. Additive changes are less drastic and may involve, for example, improvements to ways of working.

Obviously, the substitutive changes are harder to sell to employees and it's more difficult to get support for them than for additive changes. Substitutive changes break down the current situation in the organizations, which is why they require effective leadership communication. (Cornelissen 2014, 222.)

2.5 8-step process for leading change



Figure 1: 8-step process for leading change by John Kotter (Kotter 1996.)

A good way to examine change management is the 8-step process for leading change by John Kotter. He explains the process step by step in a way that really helps leaders to lead their organizations successfully through change.

2.5.1 Create a sense of urgency

First step is about creating a sense of urgency. This is a powerful tool for any leader who wants to success in a world that will only continue to move faster. It's the action required to present the need for change. A sense of urgency identifies that whatever it is that needs to change is no longer the best option for the organization. (Doseck 2015.)

Establishing a sense of urgency is crucial to gaining needed cooperation. With complacency high, transformations usually go nowhere because few people are even interested in working on the change problem. With urgency low, it's difficult to put together a group with enough power and credibility to guide the effort or to convince key individuals to spend the time necessary to create and communicate change vision. (Kotter 1996, 36.)

Creating a sense of urgency can be difficult at times. For example, in this case people were aware of the upcoming change for a long time before it happened so the management had a hard time to explain why such a change was needed. In addition, the employees had a hard time understanding why that change was needed.

2.5.2 Build a guiding coalition

Second step: build a guiding coalition. When a new threat or a big opportunity emerges, leaders need to create strategic initiative in response and appoint their best people to make change happen. The objective of this step is to establish buy-in toward the change initiatives. The idea behind this is to have a great respect for the change. (Doseck 2015.)

A strong guiding coalition is always needs – one with the right composition, level of trust, and shared objective. Building such a team an essential part of the early stages of any effort to restructure, reengineer, or retool a set of strategies. (Kotter 1996, 52.)

The Ministry of the Interior invested in this. They had formed a group of representatives from all departments to get together on almost weekly basis to discuss about the move.

These representatives would then share the information forward inside their own departments. The International Affairs Unit also had a representative taking part in these meetings. That person was one of the key sources of information, a linkage between the employees and decision makers.

2.5.3 Form a strategic vision and initiatives

Third step is to form a strategic vision and initiatives. Every successful management project has a clear change vision. Leaders are experts in bringing teams together and challenging them to think and communicate. "A change vision is simply what the organization, department, product or service will look like after the specific changes have occurred" (Doseck 2015). A change vision is an image of the wanted outcome of the change. The change initiatives are the actions required to get from one point to another. They need to be in an alignment with the change vision.

"Vision refers to a picture of the future with some implicit or explicit commentary on why people should strive to create that future" (Kotter 1996, 68). There are three purposes that a good vision serves in a change process. First, by clarifying the direction for change it makes detailed decisions easier. Second, it motivates people to step towards the right direction, even if the early steps are painful. Third, it helps to manage and coordinate the actions of people in an efficient way. (Kotter 1996, 68-69.)

The vision was somewhat quite well formed in a way that people got to see the floor plans of the new office space and some of the rules were established beforehand. The main vision was that the move would go as smooth as possible and I think that was accomplished based on the interviews conducted afterwards. People also got a change to visit the office before the move to see how the spaces looked like.

2.5.4 Enlist a volunteer army

Fourth step is to enlist a volunteer army meaning that large-scale change can only occur when massive numbers of people gather around a common opportunity. A volunteer army is a group of people across different levels in the organization who want to be a part of the initiatives to get other employees in the organization to see the value and acts upon the urgency. (Doseck 2015.)

Major internal transformation rarely happens unless many people assist. Yet employees generally won't help, or can't help, if they feel relatively powerless. (Kotter 1996, 102.)

In this case a volunteer army wasn't enlisted. There were people who took part in planning and discussing about the move only for the sake of communication. There wasn't a specific group to convince other people in the ministry and departments of the value of the change.

2.5.5 Enable action by removing barriers

Fifth step: enable action by removing barriers like inefficient processes and hierarchies that provides the freedom necessary to work across faults and achieve real impact. In every change, there are internal and/or external resistors. Identifying these resistors is important. The base for removing resistors is to acknowledge the barriers and their impact. (Doseck 2015.)

Change creates resistance. Also in this case some people were more resistant than others, however, everyone had their doubts about the change. Most of the doubts were created when questions weren't answered. The management tried their best to decrease resistance by providing answers to all questions.

2.5.6 Generate short-term wins

Sixth step is to generate short-term wins. This means recognizing, collecting and communicating wins because they are proof of results. This gives people energy to persist. This is important because people need to be rewarded and see the results of their actions to keep or get a positive attitude towards the change. (Doseck 2015.) "Running a transformation effort without serious attention to short-term wins is extremely risky. Sometimes you get lucky; visible results just happen" (Kotter 1996, 119).

This is something that wasn't very visible in the International Affairs Unit or in the whole ministry before the move. It was difficult to generate short-term wins because many people were against the change even the management so I think that's the reason why it was hard for anyone to recognize the wins. Also, because the change was so radical and people had to change their ways of working the atmosphere wasn't the best possible. Afterwards people got some recognition for the cooperation and how smoothly things went.

2.5.7 Sustain acceleration

Seventh step is to sustain acceleration meaning pressing hard after the first successes. This is the stage where the assumption is that managers have gone through all the previous steps and are implementing change. Achieving this step means that initiatives are implemented, actions are enabled, possible barriers are removed and short-term wins are being celebrated. The objective is to keep this process going on. This means maintaining the balanced situation accomplished so far. When all the previous stages have been achieved, the goal is to sustain that. (Doseck 2015.)

Now after the move, people are trying hard to maintain that positive energy and learn new ways of doing things. A great thing is that the Permanent Secretary has taken on this policy “leading by example”, which shows that they’re all in the same boat. No one is treated differently because of their position in the organization (except for the minister). This is something that people have been praising positively.

2.5.8 Institute changes

The final step is to institute change. Introduce the connections between the new behaviors and organizational success and make sure that they continue until they become strong enough to replace old habits. This stage wraps up all the previous steps into the final stage of connecting change initiatives, systems and environments that align with the change vision. (Doseck 2015.)

When it comes to an office space renewal especially a change from an office to an open space office, the ways of working need to change as well. In this case people don’t have their own desks. They have lockers where they keep all their stuff including calendars, pens, notebooks and keyboards that they need to bring with them in the morning when they start working and take with them when they finish. This also means that printing needs to decrease because there is no longer space for storing paper. This is a lot for a person to get used to but it’s also something that people were told to start getting used to while still working in the old office.

3 Change communication

This chapter is focused on change communication and its strategies. Change communication includes many themes like the importance of change communication, content, failed communication and internal communication and change curve, which are all introduced in this chapter.

Phillip Clappitt's change communication strategies is introduced because it gives a good understanding of the strategies that give out the most information and the ones that don't. It explains the strategies well so that organizations can recognize, which strategy reminds their own the best and see what other options there are for change communication.

A function that I'm also introducing in this chapter is the Change Curve by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross that show the emotional changes most people feel during a change. This is linked to change resistance that was introduced in subchapter 2.3 but I chose to combine the Change Curve with internal communication, which is why it's introduced later in this chapter. I wanted to incorporate the Change Curve in my theory because it's an important part of a change process. It gives an insight of most people's emotions during change, which is important because those emotions might not be easily recognized.

3.1 Definition of change communication

Change communication involves communicating to employees before, during and after a change, which is an important area of this type of communication. All changes affect employees somehow and their successfulness in their job depends often crucially on communication. Poorly managed change communication can cause resistance to change.

Communication and change are related in a number of different ways. Communication is central to how a change is formulated, announced and explained to employees, and also contributes to a successful implementation and institutionalization of the change. (Cornelissen 2014, 224.)

3.2 Communicating change

When it comes to change communication, the organization will have to figure out an effective way of communicating the change to employees. This, of course, depends on the focus and nature of the change. When a change is substitutive or radical and concerns the entire organization, managers must communicate with employees across all levels of

the organization to start the desired renewal in thinking. When the change is more additive let's say updating of technology, communication can, in this case, consist of informing the employees about it and organizing training for them to show how to use it. (Cornelissen 2014, 227.)

There are two typical ways of change communication. One is "looking for the best route" for the organization, which is usually straightforward, analytic and coming from the top. The other way intends to "renew rigidly formed organizations", which means flexibility, openness and fluentness. (Juholin 2009, 320.)

People has started to perceive change communication as its own type of communication even though it is a part of strategic communication and leadership. Change communication is about the depth and rigor of managing things. (Juholin 2009, 320.)

Change communication has many kinds of tasks. It should describe in words and maybe even in pictures, what kind of change is in question and create understanding, explain reasons and goals, process achieved results and upcoming challenges and in this way, create requirements for change. In changes, the need for information increases remarkably as well as the desire to discuss its reasons, goals and achievements. (Juholin 2009, 320.)

It's important how the organization decides to express the change for example, the words and images it chooses to represent changes is important. "What is said about change is one thing, how it is said is another, but just as important" (Hodges 2016, 195). Managers must form their communication carefully and consider how the words will affect their audience. Change communication must be formed in the name of sincerity and honesty. (Hodges 2016, 196).

Management scholar Phillip Clampitt together with his colleagues has observed five communication strategies that managers use in change communication. (Cornelissen 2014, 228.)

1. *Withhold and uphold*: This strategy consists of managers withholding information until they can no longer do so. Managers using this strategy think that information is power and don't trust their employees enough to tell them or simply think that the employees don't need to know. (Cornelissen 2014, 228.)

2. *Identify and reply*: This strategy is about the employees' concerns. The employees set the agenda, to which the managers reply. The assumption in this strategy is that the employees are in the best position to know the critical issues. The danger is that they don't see the big picture of the organization and that managers use this strategy as a defense meaning that it seems like they want their employees' opinions but don't really use the information. (Cornelissen 2014, 228.)

3. *Underscore and explore*: This strategy involves managers focusing on the fundamental issues and allowing employees the creative freedom to explore change in a disciplined way. In this strategy, managers assume that communication is not complete until they know how the employees react to the ideas behind the change. (Cornelissen 2014, 228.)

4. *Tell and sell*: This is about managers with limited messages that they believe are enough to address the core issues about the change. First managers tell employees the key issues and then try to sell them a particular approach. (Cornelissen 2014, 228.)

5. *Spray and spray*: This strategy means that managers are spraying employees with too much information. The idea behind this is that information is given to employees in a large amount, who then hopefully will sort out independently the significant information from the insignificant information and figure out what the change means for their job. (Cornelissen 2014, 227.)

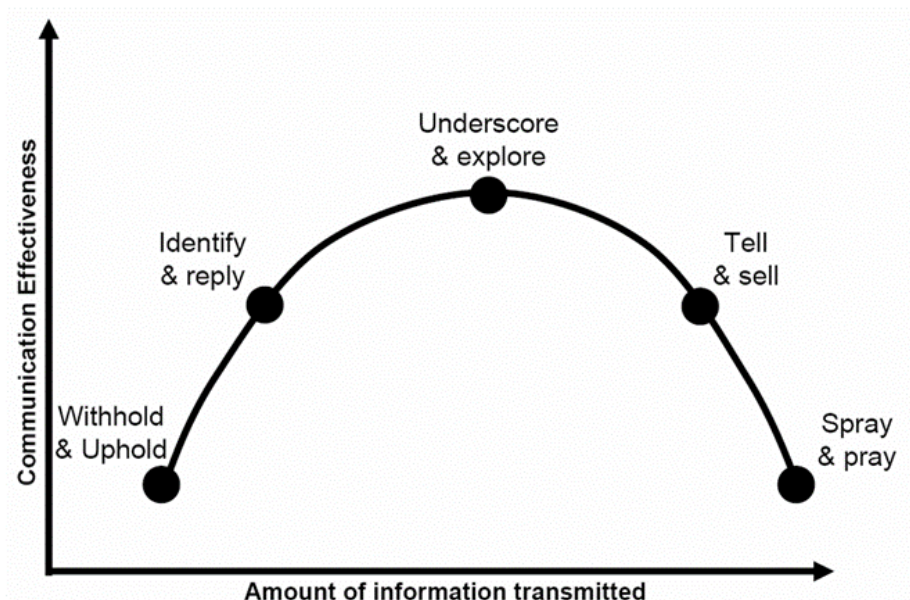


Figure 2: Change communication strategies by Phillip Clampitt (Cornelissen 2014, 229)

3.3 Effective communication

Communication is an area that is most frequently complained about amongst employees during a change. Susan M. Heathfield (2017) has established four components to create meaning for communication to be effective:

1. The sender of the message must present the message clearly and specifically. Details of the upcoming change are always appreciated. The message must be formatted in a way that it exudes authenticity.
2. The receiver of the message must have the ability to listen and possibly to ask questions to clarify the message to themselves. Trust towards the sender must be established for the message to be assimilated and believed in.
3. The channel of communication must be chosen carefully to meet the sender's and receiver's needs. The circumstances must be taken into consideration when choosing a channel, what channel supports the message the best.
4. The content is one of the main things in effective communication, especially in change communication. The goal for the content is to answer the recipient's questions. It must include all necessary information about the change. The importance of content is introduced as its own entirety in chapter 3.7.

3.4 The importance of communication in change

Managers are not often willing to give employees all the information needed to make sense of difficult managerial decisions. "-- crafting and providing a change message that is high in quality is essential for reducing uncertainty and stress reactions, and increasing engagement" (Hodges 2016, 197).

Repeating key messages in a way that they are understood is important. It's crucial to start communicating from the very beginning of a change. Sometimes management is reluctant to provide any information at the early stages, because they don't have answers for everything and the information might still change. Not giving information in the beginning avoids the risk of people becoming concerned about possible issues. (Hodges 2016, 197.)

3.5 Communication plan

Communication plan is a tool used for everyday communication. Creating a communication plan can help the organization to act systematically when planning to communicate about a certain issue. Communication planning means deciding on how to make the key message reach the target audience. The main elements of a communication plan are target audience, message and communication channel. Timing is also something that should be taken into consideration. It's important that the communication plan keeps adapting to the changing needs of the target audience and the changes in environment. (MBA Skool 2017; Opetushallitus 2017.)

The six basic questions that are answered in a communication plan are who, what, when, why, how and by whom. First the target audience for the message needs to be decided and then the key points of the message. After that the timing or the time frame of the message needs to be established meaning deciding the best time to deliver the message and when to stop delivering. Deciding a desired outcome, which is to be achieved by delivering the message is the fourth step of creating a communication plan. The fifth step: how, means deciding the channel for communication. The final step: by whom is to decide who gives out the message. (MBA Skool 2017; Opetushallitus 2017.)

3.6 Strategies

In a change situation, the need of information and communication is constant. In these situations, the communication has usually been reactive meaning commenting and explaining of things that have already happened. Reactive communication is often written or formal and it can't respond to people's need of information as it is. (Juholin 2009, 331.)

An option for reactive communication is proactive communication, which prepares for situations beforehand and exploits communication to make the change real. Proactive communication is a process not a single function. It is interactive, face-to-face communication. (Juholin 2009, 332)

Reactive communication gives an answer to what -questions not to why. Answering to why -questions is easily perceived as arrogance that can feed suspicions and cynicism towards the motives of the management. It can also add more fear and increase the resistance towards the change. (Juholin 2009, 332.)

The aim of proactive communication is to achieve a common understanding in the organization of what are the factors behind the change and what are the goals that the organization is trying to achieve. The role of communication is to create and maintain discussion and give everybody the chance to understand their role. (Juholin 2009, 332.)

Even though the models mentioned above are different, there is a sense of a role that persuades to communicate and goal to get people to think and act in a certain way. The from the top to the bottom -model simply doesn't work in change situations because people question things that they don't completely understand and thing that they can't have an influence on. (Juholin 2009, 332.)

3.7 Content

In change situations, it's important to recognize the most critical, most interesting questions. They vary in different point of time. First everyone is only interested in what is going to happen to me and how the change is going to affect my work. The organization level visions are not interesting at this point unless they have something significant to do with people's everyday lives and their work. The individual questions are the hardest ones to answer in the beginning. (Juholin 2009, 333.)

There are a lot of things that need to be taken into consideration when planning change communication. Here below are some of them:

- justify simply and clearly why the change is inevitable
- discuss about the impact of the change and try to make current policies better
- make sure that information about the progress of the move and its success or failure is always available (Juholin 2009, 334.)

3.8 Internal communication and change curve

Internal communication plays a critical part during organizational change. The organizational change can't happen successfully without right communication. "It's much harder to over-communicate than it is to under-communicate - and the consequences of under-communicating are much more dangerous to organizations" (Eisenhauer 2016).

"Internal communication builds bridges between employees and leaders" (Eisenhauer 2016).

Many times, management fails to connect with employees on an emotional level. As a result, employees are left with a feeling that "change" isn't a positive thing. Change at work can be compared to grief because it also involves an emotional journey. The Change Curve shows the emotional stages that most people go through during changes. (Eisenhauer 2016.)

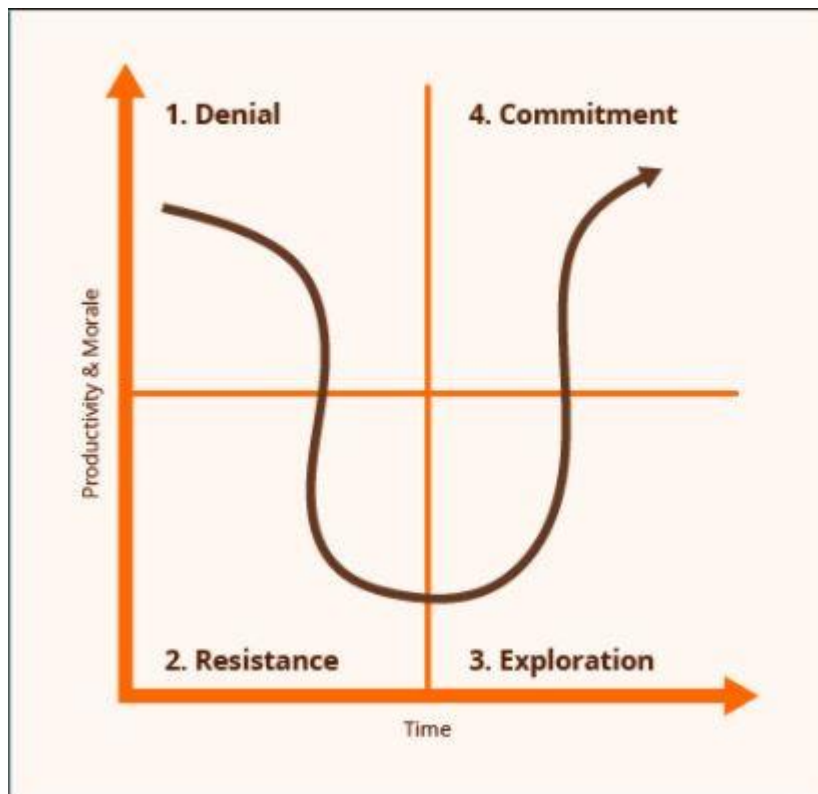


Figure 3: Change Curve by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross (Eisenhauer 2016.)

Employees often feel shocked or go into denial when change is announced. At this point they need information of the following: what the change entails, what are the goals, how their roles may be affected, what is the time frame and where to get help. This is where the management should really pay attention to. Because if the management can't understand why the change is happening, how can the employees? The answer is they can't. (Eisenhauer 2016.)

Solutions for this are for example posting communications and announcements on organizations intranet homepages and two-way online discussion forums. Intranet is a useful tool for internal communications. Posting information there will make it easy for employees to receive the necessary information and find it again later. Discussion forums are very powerful during change. It helps a lot when employees can talk about their doubts, feel-

ings and experiences publicly. It gives them an opportunity to have an influence on the change. (Eisenhauer 2016.)

In resistance phase, employees are recovering from their shock and starting to react. This is where employees start to feel anger and fear. When it comes to internal communication, this is the one that managers should prepare carefully for. They should encourage employees to contact them through instant messages for example chats. Managers should think together about the feedback, questions and objections that employees might bring up and prepare answers for them. This coordinated effort leads to more consistent communication and better support for employees. (Eisenhauer, 2016.)

In exploration phase employees are beginning to accept the upcoming change, because they have gone through the negative emotions. This is often the positive turning point for organizations. Employees need to examine what the change means for them personally. One very important thing it that employees understand how their roles at the work place will change and how they fit into the organization after the change. In this phase employees need clear direction and training. (Eisenhauer 2016.)

Commitment phase is all about excitement and productivity. At this point the change has been accepted and it has become a part of everyday work-life. Ways of working has been changed and the benefits are starting come forth. In this phase, managers still need to communicate openly about their commitment to and belief in the change the organization just went through. It's important for the employees to hear that there was a good reason why they went through that specific change. (Eisenhauer 2016.)

One extremely important thing to remember is that employees can sense insecurity. After a change, messages coming from the managers should be supportive and celebratory to emphasize the success and achievements of the employees. To get the message out, managers could publish inspirational photos, videos and even blog posts because even though emails are a common way to get messages out it's not the most effective. People don't necessarily have time to open every email so the message won't reach everyone. Therefore, it's important to also use the organization's intranet. (Eisenhauer 2016.)

3.9 Failed communication

Basic assumption for a failed change is lack of communication. During a change, many mistakes can happen when it comes to communication. The most common mistakes are: managers having a hard time delivering messages, messages aren't delivered at the right

time and in the right formats so employees miss them entirely, inconsistent messages and messages not delivered by the right people. "Clear communication is the only way to keep everyone on the same page" (Eisenhauer 2016). To avoid mistakes in communication, managers should pay attention to those four stages of change curve.

Untreated or poorly informed change can lead to a crisis after which the ways of crisis communication are needed. When people don't get enough information, they will create it themselves. This information is most likely at least partially incorrect. (Eisenhauer 2016.)

It's easily assumed that every time there is a change there needs to be a lot of communication. That's partly true but it's important not to have too much. In these situations, people are easily drowned to information. When the amount of information is experienced to be excessive, focusing on the most important things gets a lot more difficult. Giving out too much uncontrolled information creates chaos and confuses people making them not wanting to receive and assimilate the information.

4 Research

This is the empirical part of my thesis, where I'm introducing the target of research, objectives and problems, methodologies and concluding the results. I'm justifying my methodology choices in their own subchapters. This chapter contains statistics from the surveys and interviews. The statistics are included to visualize the results. I'm comparing the results from the two surveys and interviews with each other to reveal possible changes in communication before and after the change process.

4.1 Target of research

My target of research is change communication in an office space renewal in the International Affairs Unit of the Ministry of the Interior of Finland. My research is about how the communication has changed during the change process meaning that I'm going to compare the before and after thoughts of the amount, sufficiency and quality of communication. Like mentioned in the beginning I chose my research questions to be how was the communication before and after and how to improve communication.

This research is conducted from the point of view of the International Affairs Unit.

4.2 Objective, problems and development task

Objective for my research is, like mentioned before, to explore and analyze communication during the change process. I want to know how was the communication before and after and how can it be improved. One thing that I'm also going to pay attention to is how the communication was experienced.

The problem in my research is the sufficiency, amount and quality of communication, which are also the factors for development. After finding out the positive and negative factors in communication, I will try to find solutions and suggestions for improving those elements that came across as inadequate.

4.3 Methodologies

When doing a research, it's important to think about the methods when you collect data. You need to think about what will serve you and your research the best and how you will get enough information, especially trustworthy information. There is a great variety of

methods when it comes to collecting data and you need to be able to figure out the best ones for your research. For my thesis, I used a lot of different methods together, combining them with each other. I believe that this gives me the opportunity to analyze the data better and more concise.

4.3.1 Quantitative and qualitative methods

I collected data before and after the move. The method I used was quantitative because the point of view is the whole Unit so I wanted to know the opinion of as many people as possible since I'm doing the research from their perspective. "Quantitative research enables you to describe and interpret your object statistically with numbers" (Jyväskylän yliopisto 2010).

I also used qualitative research method when I interviewed six people of the Unit individually. "Qualitative research enables you to increase the overall understanding of the quality, characteristics and meanings of your research object or topic" (Jyväskylän yliopisto 2010).

Using these two methods together is called mixed methods research. In this case: surveys for the whole Unit and personal interviews. This way I got a lot of data from the surveys but also specific data from the interviews giving me the opportunity to collect a richer and stronger array of evidence for my research.

4.3.2 Notes and observations

Recording ideas and bibliographic information is, quite simply, efficient...Notetaking has other advantages as well. Through writing about a text, the reader becomes more engaged than when reading passively. The act of taking notes facilitates critical reading; it demands that you understand and evaluate, continually seeking content and argument relevant to a particular focus" (Trent University 2017).

I used my notes of the current situation in the Unit that I had already made while still working there and my colleagues' opinions. I participated in a meeting that was about the move. My role in the meeting was to serve as an employee in an organizational setting. There was also a lot of discussion about the move and communication in the Unit meetings every week.

While working there I got to discuss about the communication with other people freely. This gave me good material for my thesis that I wouldn't otherwise have if I hadn't had this

opportunity. The comments were honest because the discussions weren't formal but just between coworkers.

I wanted to incorporate my own observations to my research because to my mind personal experiences strengthen the trustworthiness. Also, it was easier for me to research this topic when I already had gotten a glimpse of it myself.

4.3.3 Survey

"A series of written questions a participant answers. This method gathers responses to questions that are essay or agree/neutral/disagree style" (Study.com 2017). Survey is usually a quantitative method. I collected data from people in their everyday situations at their work place. I made a survey in the spring for the whole Unit. In the survey, I asked them to answer some questions just to get an insight of their thoughts and a starting point for my research. Following this I made another survey in the autumn that was about after the move. For this last one I had made some more specific questions of the topic: change communication.

4.3.4 Interviews

Interviews are normally recognized as qualitative methods for research. In my research, I made interviews to get more precise and high-quality information. I interviewed six people individually. The reason why I decided to interview people individually rather than in a group is because this is a sensitive topic for some people and I know for sure that some people also have very strong opinions about this topic.

So, that the interviewees' answers wouldn't be affected by other interviewees' answers it's also better to have individual interviews. This way the interviewees can be more relaxed and honest because they don't have to worry about other people's opinions and reactions.

4.4 Data and analysis

In this section, I will specify and analyze the data I collected from the people working in the International Affairs Unit. First, I'm going to start with the survey I carried out in February 2017. This was a preliminary survey, whereby I wanted to examine the current situation before the move. I also made a survey after the move in September 2017 that I'm

analyzing after the first survey. In addition, I'm analyzing my own observations and the interviews I made in September 2017.

4.4.1 Survey spring 2017

I conducted the first survey in February 2017. The questions were presented in Finnish. The English and Finnish versions of the questions are listed in appendix 1. The people working in the International Affairs Unit had two weeks time to answer the survey. This survey was conducted because I wanted to get an insight of the current situation including the thoughts and opinions about the communication. I thought that conducting a survey would serve me best in this case because I wanted to get as many answers as possible to get the best perception of the situation.

The age range among the people, who answered, was from 25 to 65. There were women and men among the respondents. There are more women in the Unit than men, which is the reason why there were more answers from women than from men.

43 % of the people, who answered, thought that communication had been meaningless and not sufficient because at that point there wasn't an opportunity to have an influence on things regarding the move, and that the information had been unclear and contradictory. The rest 57 % thought that communication had been sufficient. However, many felt that quality of the information is something that should be invested in. The division of the amount of information is illustrated in the figure below.

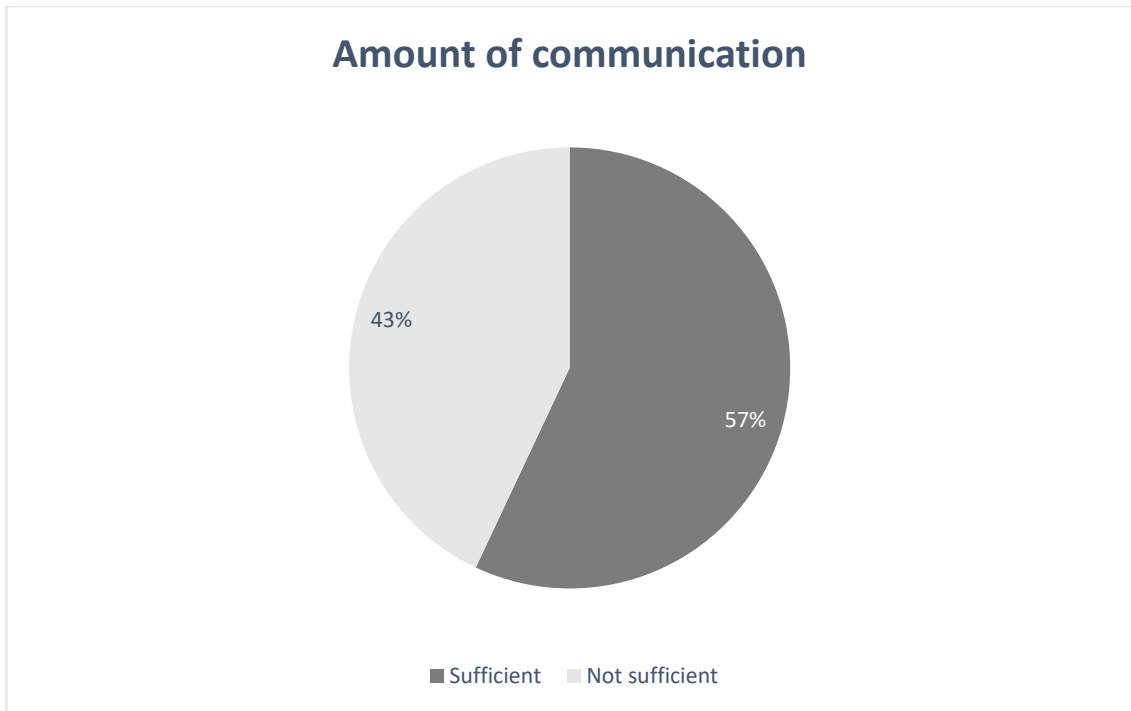


Figure 3: Amount of communication spring 2017

In their opinion, ingredients for successful communication are arranging workshops, getting the information when you also have an opportunity to influence, giving information in appropriate doses, giving realistic and timely information, honest information and getting the information out before it's old.

Many felt that communication was a one-way tunnel meaning that they were just told what is going to happen and when, instead of letting them have an influence. People in the Unit thought that communication was more of a monolog then a dialog. In their opinion, their voices weren't heard.

4.4.2 Observations

To give support for the results of my survey conducted in the spring 2017, I got some straight feedback of communication while still working in the ministry. I worked at the Ministry of the Interior of Finland from August 2016 until February 2017 during which I gathered information based on my own and my co-workers' experiences.

Regarding the move, there was one person from the Unit who represented them in the meetings between all the departments, where matters concerning the move were discussed. I got to participate in one of the meetings and truth to be told there were so many questions that didn't get an answer. It seemed like the heads of the ministry weren't even

aware of all the stuff about the move, which, of course, was concerning to me. Because the heads of the ministry didn't have answers the representative of the Unit couldn't have those either to share forward in the Unit. This caused a lot of irritation and resistance because people don't like to live in uncertainty.

I noticed that people didn't seem to be too interested in the information about the move before because it was too much and they didn't feel like they had any chances to have an influence on things. At times people were very annoyed because the information was weak or didn't come to their attention early enough. Sometimes the information was given out too early and later changed. Because of this people didn't know what to believe and it caused suspicions. There were lots of stumbling blocks that came up also in the surveys and interviews.

4.4.3 Survey autumn 2017

I conducted a survey in September 2017 as well that had a resemblance to the first one. The questions were presented in Finnish. The English and Finnish versions of the questions are listed in appendix 2. This time the time limit for answering was one week because the questions were simpler. The questions were about the communication after the move and the move process itself. I also wanted to know if the communication had developed and how. The age range was the same as in the first one. In this survey, there were also male and female respondents.

After the move 45 % thought that there was too much information. The amount was described as a flood of information and people couldn't keep up with it. 35 % thought that there was enough information to get by and 20 % still felt that there wasn't enough. This division is illustrated in the figure below.

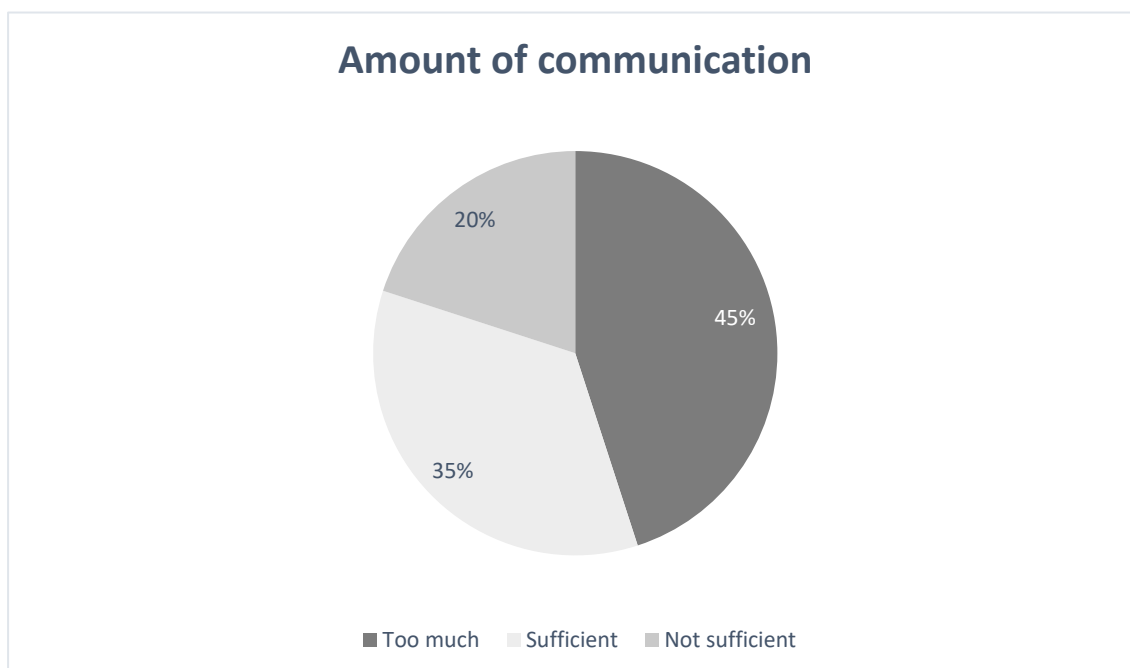


Figure 4: Amount of communication autumn 2017

Majority thought that communication inside the Unit was sufficient after the move. Some thought that it still wasn't enough. On ministry level, communication was encompassing and extensive.

However, almost everyone thought that communication coming from the management was poor. Communication on management's behalf was very minimalized. There were no messages from them. This is something that people hoped to have more to keep up the positive spirit and to get a feeling of going through the change together.

In terms of satisfaction, people seemed to be more satisfied of the communication before than after. The average grade for satisfaction of communication before was 3,7 and after 3,3. There are, of course, many reasons why people are or aren't satisfied because everyone experienced communication differently, some need more and others are content with less.

4.4.4 Individual interviews

I interviewed six people out of the Unit individually. These interviews were made in September 2017. The interview language was Finnish. The questions are listed in English in appendix 3. The interviewees were all different age, there were women and men interviewees from different field of work. I had fifteen questions concerning the change com-

munication and the change itself. By interviewing six people individually I got very precise and honest information.

The biggest problem that came up was the quality of information. Many of the interviewees said that there were too many different channels for communication and that communication was inconsistent because it came from many directions.

Other problem was the amount of information. Even though some thought that there weren't enough information others thought that there was way too much. Some even used the word cacophony because the amount of information was just too much for them to assimilate. "The quality suffers if the there's too much information." (Interviewee)

One thing related to the huge amount of information is that communication was mainly vertical. It only came one way from the top to the bottom. People were told that they have a chance to influence but no one knew if their opinions and suggestions were considered. This was frustrating. The communication was mainly about what is going to happen instead of letting people have an input.

Comparing the before and after scene of the change, people's opinions about communication varied a bit. Some said they didn't notice any difference between before and after. Some said that communication has become better afterwards and some thought that it was better before than now. Here below is a figure to concretize my findings in this matter.

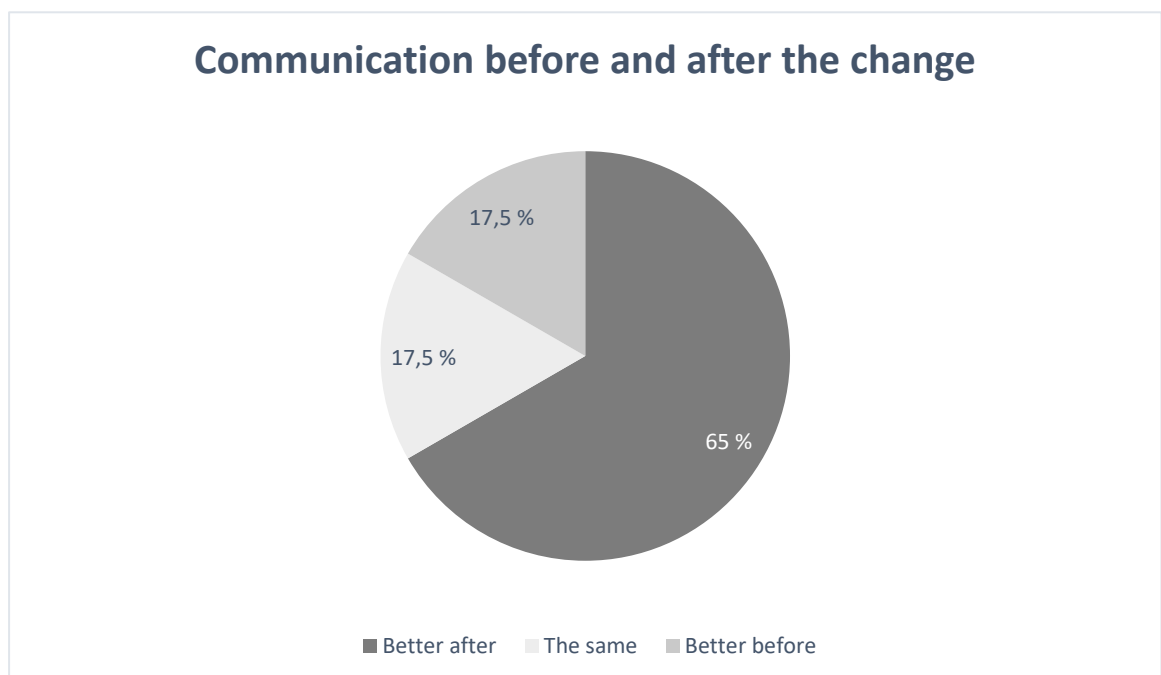


Figure 5: Change of communication (interviews)

As seen in the figure above, 65 % of people thought that the communication was better after. 17,5 % thought that it was better before and the rest 17,5 % thought that it has stayed the same throughout the whole process.

The reasons for people saying communication was better before are as follows:

1. amount of communication has decreased afterwards
2. communication after the change didn't reach everyone

The reasons for people saying communication is better now than before are as follows:

1. communication is more active and better now that there's no so called own departments
2. communication is clearer
3. co-workers are more aware of what other people are doing
4. lower threshold to ask for help
5. communication is more present
6. communication is focused on the right things
7. questions are answered

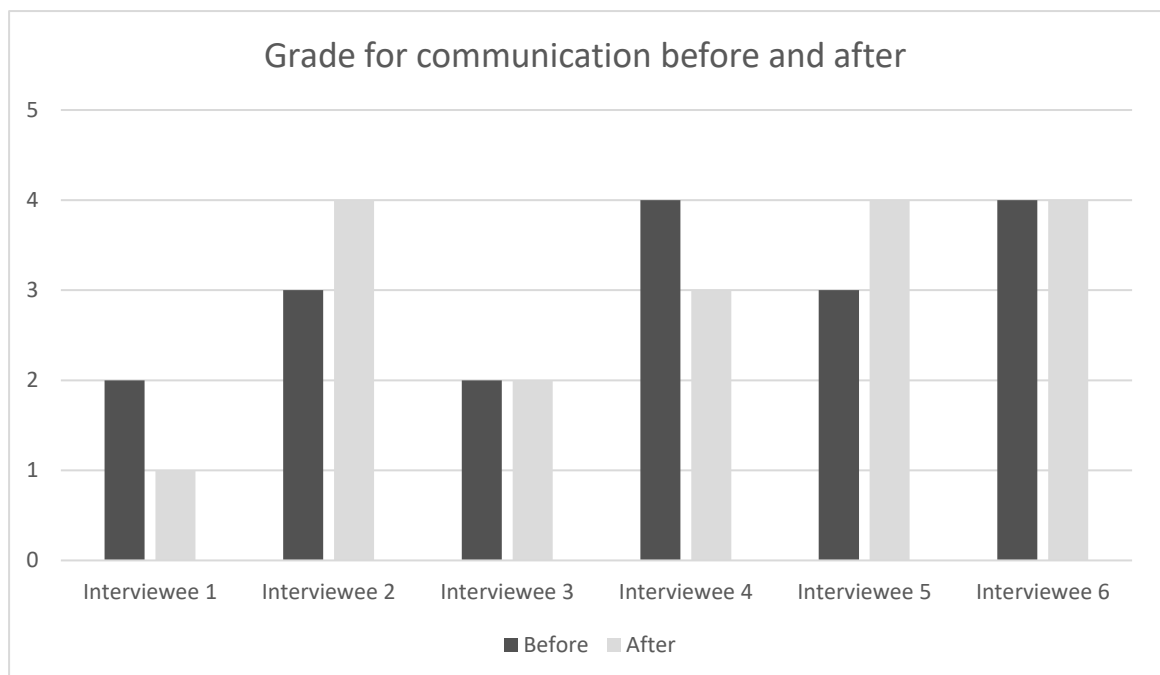


Figure 6: Grade for communication before and after on a scale 1-5 (1=best, 5=worst)

In this table, the individual answers for grades can be seen. The average grade given for communication in general before was 3. The average grade given for communication after on the same scale was also 3.

When asked about the best channels for communications, the interviewees had very different opinions, what works the best. Few people said that email works the best for them because that way it's ensured that everyone gets the information. Some thought that email isn't a good channel because emails can get lost and if a person is on a holiday the emails just keep piling up and that person won't eventually see that message.

Ministry or the Interior's intranet Virta was mentioned to be a functional channel for information gathering purposes. However, few people found it too hard to find information there and said it to be too complicated and time consuming to find what they needed to know. One so called channel that everyone found useful was the Unit's representative person who took part in meetings concerning the move and then afterwards informed other employees in the unit's weekly meetings.

4.5 Results

Based on the material, it can be stated that the amount of communication has generally been high during the process. Results from the surveys show that majority felt that they had enough or even too much information. In the first survey 57 % thought they had enough communication and in the second one 35 % thought that the amount of communication was sufficient. In addition, 45 % said the amount was too high.

When comparing these two surveys with each other, the results show that the communication had changed into quantitatively higher direction after the change. The average grade given for satisfaction of communication was 3,7 before and 3,3 after. One possible reason for this can be the high amount after the move. This indicates the communication to have been better in general before then after and answers to my research question of how was the communication before and after. The problems in communication that appeared in the surveys were its monolog nature and inconsistency.

The results of the interviews show that communication is experienced to be better after the change than it was before according to the majority (65 %) of the interviewees. At this point it needs to be taken into consideration that there were only six interviewees whereas for the surveys the target group was the whole Unit. Some of the problems that came up in the surveys also came up during the interviews but one new was the number of channels used to communicate. According to the interviewees, it was overwhelming and one of the reasons why communication was inconsistent.

The results from the interviews show that the average grade for communication stayed the same before and after. Individually, two people gave the same grade for before and after, two people gave a better grade for before than after and two people gave a better grade for after than before. The consideration of results is included in subchapter 5.1, where I will discuss about the results answering my research questions and my own thoughts and expectations.

During the research, some problems and areas for development came up in the surveys and interviews. I'm discussing about the solutions of how to improve communication in subchapter 5.3.

5 Discussion

The discussion part of my thesis consists of consideration of results and evaluation of trustworthiness, thesis process and my own learning. In addition, I'm explaining the conclusions and pointing out suggestions and solutions to improve not only change communication but communication in general.

5.1 Consideration of results

The importance of change (subchapter 3.4) was well recognized in the ministry and in the Unit. As the results show, the amount of information was high before and after the change, which leads to a conclusion that management knew it's important to inform employees about the change. The fact that they knew the importance of communication doesn't mean they knew the importance of timing and content of communication. The results from interviews revealed that some information was contradictory and kept changing rapidly, which is not considered as good communication.

Based on my own observations, the Change Curve (subchapter 3.8) was also recognizable. First, people lived in denial because they didn't want to believe in the change. Second, some started to resist the change for different reasons. Third, people finally started to accept the change. It was going to happen no matter what they did or said. And fourth, people have already accepted the change and it has become a part of their life. Also, they are beginning to see some benefits of the change. This I noticed, when I visited the Unit to make the interviews.

The results surprised me because I assumed the amount of communication to have been too little but clearly the amount increased towards the move and eventually was too much even. What was also surprising is that in the survey, I conducted this autumn, the grade was better for communication before than after. Also, the average grade for communication from the interviews didn't vary from before to after, they stayed the same. This, of course, is natural because people experience and react to things differently so their opinions can vary a lot from each other.

The surveys and interviews conducted for this research provided answers for my research questions. The first question was how was the communication before and after? The results show that in general, the communication was better before than after. Quantitatively, the amount of communication was higher after than before. However, poor coordination

and inconsistency of communication was shown throughout the change. To conclude this, the amount of information was sufficient before and after but the quality of it was weak.

This leads to my other research question how can the communication be improved? Once again, the results have strong evidence of the development areas for change communication. The biggest challenge seemed to be the coordination of communication. There were too many senders and channels to inform people, which led to inconsistent communication. The time frame of communication seemed to be unbalanced because the amount of information was significantly higher after than before. Suggestions for improvement of communication are listed and explained in subchapter 5.3.

5.2 Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness and quality of a research need to be confirmed. (Kananen 2010, 68.) When making a research, it is important that the information used is honest and truthful. Trustworthiness can be observed from two points of views: validity and reliability.

5.2.1 Validity

Validity meaning the accuracy of the research results, the conclusions must be in line with reality. The origin of validity is that the research is scientific. Scientific means that data collection and analyzing methods used in the research are scientific. The basic requirement for validity in research is sufficient precise documentation. Also justifying the methods used increases the validity of a research. (Kananen 2010, 144.)

Sufficient material is one of the backbones of validity. There needs to be enough material so that the results can be concluded reliably. The quality of the material is crucial not the amount. (Kananen 2010, 144.) In this case I had a lot of material to analyze. All the material that I got, came from the people that experienced the change. For this reason, I can say that the quality is respectable.

The conclusions I've made are based on the information I got from the interviews and surveys, which makes the information trustworthy. I justify my data collection methods, which gives my research more validity.

5.2.2 Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency, preciseness and accuracy of a research. (Kajaanin Ammattikorkeakoulu 2017.) These three are the basic criteria based on which I have made my research. The timeline and the progress of my research are consistent. I tried to use the most precise information I could find and get to make the research easy to understand so that it would meet its purpose. When it comes to accuracy, I really thought through everything I wrote. Every piece of information available in this research was carefully considered.

In this research, I used only reliable sources to get information. The books I used as sources are all written by experts in that field. Whenever I used an online source, I checked the information from other web pages as well not only relying on one. I marked the sources to the text whenever I'm referring to someone else's work.

The surveys and interviews are trustworthy because the answers were given to me by the people who went through that change and those opinions are certainly honest. The fact that I did the interviews anonymously helped me to get the most honest answers I could ever get. Also, the surveys were all done anonymously, which gave people the opportunity to tell the whole truth instead of having to be afraid of what they can say. This way, there wasn't a danger to have people's answers and opinions be affected by someone else's.

Information based on my own observations is also trustworthy because it's something that I experienced while working in the Unit. The observations are based on everyday situations at the work place, what I heard and what I saw.

5.2.3 Triangulation

In addition to validity and reliability, triangulation is one way to measure trustworthiness. Triangulation means combining several research methods with one another in the same research for example quantitative and qualitative. In this way, verification for the results from different aspects is possible. Use of several research methods can be justified in situations, where one method leaves holes in data collection that can be completed with other methods. (Kananen 2010, 72.)

In my thesis, I used quantitative and qualitative methods together. The reason for that is the same as mentioned above: verification for the results from different aspects. I got the quantitative information from surveys that I made for the whole Unit and qualitative infor-

mation when I interviewed six people individually. After the survey, I felt like I needed more specific information, which I got from the interviews eventually.

5.3 Conclusions and suggestions for development

In general, communication was experienced as vertical “just do as we tell you” kind of communication that came from many different channels and was therefore inconsistent. However, the amount of communication seemed to meet the employees needs in most cases even though a word cacophony came up in the interviews during the research.

The factors that affected communication and should be developed are channels of communication, consistency, coordination and timing.

One option of developing the area of communication is better coordination. The information needs to be summarized and given out through one channel. There was information from Senaatti, Prime Minister’s Office, Government ICT Centre and from the ministry itself. The Ministry of the Interior needs to filter the information that comes from all these directions and then give it out using one channel. The ministry could conduct an internal survey where they would ask what channel do the employees think is the best for communication. In the International Affairs Unit, the best channels for communication was the representative person, who attended the meeting concerning the move and informed others afterwards.

Other suggestion for development just to make communication more fun would be to put up digital info screens or televisions in the lobbies and other common areas, where information about upcoming events or reminders could be shown. This would have a positive impact on organizational culture and it would be a more relaxed way of communication. In this way, people would get notified about things without them even realizing it.

One important matter that came up is that people need to speak out for themselves and let others know what things don’t work and what needs to be improved. If there are any faults, those need to be expressed because otherwise those can’t be solved.

Communication on managers’ behalf also came up. People felt that there wasn’t enough communication on their part. So, that could also be something to focus on in future changes. Managers play such an important role when it comes to change because people need a leader in these situations. They need someone to show them the way, be positive and supportive, give out information and lead with example.

Timing is a critical area for development. As it was mentioned before, timing is an important factor when planning change communication. Like shown in the survey results (September 2017), the amount of communication was experienced to be too high after the move. The people in charge of communication should plan better when to give out information, how often and till when. This way people don't feel like their drowning into too much information and the messages are easier to remember if everything is not delivered at the same time.

5.4 Evaluation of the thesis process

This is the biggest research I've ever conducted and it has taken a lot of time to get it done. It's important to have a plan, which you will follow throughout the process. I started by getting an idea for my topic. Like mentioned before I got mine when I was working in the Ministry of the Interior. I thought it was a great idea and something that I could work with. First, I did a survey by using Webropol. I conducted this survey in February 2017.

After I conducted the survey I moved forward to the introduction part of the thesis, where I introduce my topic, commissioning party and my objectives. This part was the easiest one because I had all the information in my head already and I just had to write it down. The next step was to write the theoretical part. I used quite a lot of literature as my sources. The theoretical part wasn't too difficult either because there was a lot of information available about this topic.

Before starting to write the empirical part I did six interviews individually, which was fun because I've never really interviewed anyone before. The interviews went well. I had prepared some questions that I had sent the interviewees in advance. I got answers to all my questions. Quite at the same time a conducted the second survey in September 2017.

I found the empirical part to be the most difficult one, even though you might not think so. I felt like I had so much information from the surveys, interviews and observations that it was hard to analyze all of it. My head was so full of ideas and things I wanted to write about that in the end I didn't know what to write anymore.

The empirical part was the part that took most of my time as it should because it's the most important part of the research. I spent many hours just looking at my computer screen thinking of what to do now. At one point, I felt like I was too caught up in the head-

lines that I didn't know what to write and where. Eventually I just started writing all things down that came to my mind and then put all the pieces together.

The discussion part was quite easy because all I needed to do was to analyze my thesis; trustworthiness, ethical viewpoints, conclusion, my own learning. This part almost wrote itself. Had I still worked in the ministry while the change happened, I would've been able to analyze the data and see the areas for development better.

To conclude, this process was very time consuming and quite challenging at times. But I had the best feeling when I got it done. This is the largest project I've ever had so far and I'm very proud of myself for doing this.

I would like to thank the International Affairs Unit of the Ministry of the Interior of Finland for their cooperation during this process and for giving me the idea of my thesis.

5.5 My own learning

During this process, I feel that I have learned a lot of doing researches and the methods that can be used. Time management is definitely important when doing a research this big with a deadline. I don't usually create schedules for school work but for my thesis it was essential. Even more important was to follow the schedule and stay in schedule. That was sometimes difficult because I had other things going on as well for example work, school and hobbies.

At times, I didn't have the motivation to start writing because I was so tempted to meet friends or do something totally different than staying home and write my thesis. But this has really taught me to follow the plan otherwise you'll notice that time is running out and that only causes panic and stress.

When I made the surveys, I learned to use a new online survey tool called Webropol. I had only used it once in my job but now I got a better sense of how it works and how to create surveys with it. Regarding the empirical part, I feel that it would've turned out better if it had had a better linkage to the theoretical part. For example, I could've formed some of the interview questions based on the 8-step process for leading change.

When it comes to my topic, I learned a lot when I was doing the research. I read many books and visited different web pages. When I was writing my theoretical part, I needed to process the information in my head and that helped me to learn.

This whole process also taught me how to work with different kinds of people. I had a contact person in the International Affairs Unit who arranged the interviews for me and with whom I stayed very much in touch throughout this process. I'm happy that I got to interview six different people. I knew them already but it was still nice to be there and have that one-on-one time at the interview.

I know that everyone works differently when making their thesis but I realized that I wanted guidance. For me it was important to have the support of the thesis instructor to give me comments about my work and guiding me into the right direction. I was doing my exchange studies when our school arranged the info sessions for writing thesis and all courses that were supposed to prepare me for this were independent online courses so when I came back and was supposed to start the process I had no idea what I needed to do. Fortunately, I had the opportunity to meet with my thesis instructor a few times and I could build my work around the right frames.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Survey 1, spring 2017

1. Sex
2. Age
3. Has the communication concerning the move been enough?
4. How could the communication be improved?
5. What is successful communication to you?
6. Have you been given a chance to have an influence on thing concerning the move?
How?
7. How do you feel about the change?

1. Sukupuoli

- Nainen
 Mies

2. Ikä

- 25-35
 36-45
 46-55
 56-65
 yli 65

Muutto

3. Miten suhtaudut muuttoon ja sen tuomiin muutoksiin?

11. Onko sinulle annettu mahdollisuutta vaikuttaa monitoimitiloihin liittyviin asioihin? Miten?

Viestintä

13. Onko viestintä ollut mielestäsi riittävää? Perustele.

14. Miten viestintää voisi mielestäsi parantaa?

15. Mitä on mielestäsi onnistunut viestintä?

Appendix 2. Survey 2, autumn 2017

1. Sex
2. Age
3. Was change communication sufficient?
4. Was communication on management's behalf enough?
5. How was the internal communication in the ministry before and after the move?
6. What about the internal communication in your Unit?
7. How satisfied were you for the communication you received before the move? (grade)
8. How satisfied were you for the communication you received after the move? (grade)
9. What grade would you give for the communication before the move?
10. What grade would you give for the communication after the move?
11. What grade would you give for the communication happening right now?

1. Sukupuoli

- Nainen
- Mies

2. Ikä

- 25-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-65
- yli 65

3. Oliko muutosviestintä mielestäsi riittävää? Perustele.

4. Oliko johtotasolta tuleva viestintä riittävää? Perustele.

5. Millaista oli ministeriön sisäinen viestintä ennen ja jälkeen muuton?

6. Entä yksikön sisäinen viestintä? Perustele.

7. Asteikolla 1-5 (1=huonoin, 5=paras), kuinka tyytyväinen olit saamaasi informaation määrään ja laatuun ennen muuttoa?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

8. Asteikolla 1-5 (1=huonoin, 5=paras), kuinka tyytyväinen olit saamaasi informaation määrään ja laatuun muuton jälkeen?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

9. Minkä arvosanan antaisit viestinnälle ennen muuttoa? (1=huonoin, 5=paras)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

10. Minkä arvosanan antaisit viestinnälle muuton jälkeen? (1=huonoin, 5=paras)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

11. Minkä arvosanan antaisit viestinnälle tällä hetkellä? (1=huonoin, 5=paras)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Appendix 3. Interview questions

How successful was the communication during the change?

What do you think was the biggest problem in communication?

Was the communication enough (before/after)?

How was the quality of the communication?

Have you noticed any differences in the communication before and after the change? If yes, what?

What do you think were the pros and cons of change communication in your organization?

Did the move go well?

How is the communication now?

What would you improve in communication and how?

Was the change management and leadership fluent?

How do you feel after this organizational change?

How did the communication effect on you during the change? (did it give you certainty for success or did it create suspicions)

Are you happy with the way things are now in your organization?

In scale 1-5 (1=worst, 5=the best), what grade would you give to communication before and after the move?

What were the channels of change communication? Which one worked the best for you?