

Internal communication as a motivation tool in the continuous improvement environment: case DHL Express

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<p>Motivation is the key issue in the working society. The motivation of employees is connected with good internal communication. However, this kind of connection is not easily explained. Author of the thesis looking through internal communication definitions and motivation materials to introduce both topics. Then research questions are leading in the way to connect internal communication and the research team's motivational level.</p> <p>The accent is made on the implementation of social media to improve team motivation and increase team engagement in the continuous improvement environment of the DHL Express (Finland) company. As the thesis is part of the company's First Choice strategy, the thesis collects information useful for future communicational projects inside the research team also.</p> <p>The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the need for implementation of new internal communication tools into the existing internal communication system of the company, finding a way if there is a need for improvements.</p> <p>The research was held in the 2019 year. The target group is the team members of the Operational shift Terminal department in Vantaa headquarters. The specific of the Terminal's communication system is having limited access to digital communicational technologies.</p> <p>The outcome is a mild connection of internal communication with motivation in the research group, as to how the motivational level changes depending on the quality and reliability of the provided information. Therefore, to improve the situation in the researched department some recommendations are provided at the end of the thesis.</p>	
Keywords internal communication, motivation, social media, communicational tool, DHL	

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1 Introduction

The importance of communication cannot be undervalued. It happened that many kinds of miscommunication lead to fights and in the bigger picture, to wars. Therefore, to avoid unnecessary conflicts, ways of communication are developing since ancient times and going on nowadays. The issue of conflicts on the high level has developed from fighting for territories to fighting for a considerable amount of influence on them. As the goals are changing, the ways of achieving them are doing the same.

Modern means of exchanging information varies in many shapes. But to be mentioned the most important channel is social media. People use social media in their private time to increase the quality of the outgoing message and people create Social Media presence at the same time. And this is done to engage in conversations and make everyday life more fun. To sum up, online interaction became a valuable asset to personal communication.

Communication concerns everything surrounding people throughout the day on every step of their way. As there are many situations where communication is needed, there is a need for quality communication systems as well. One of the factors for quality in the communication context can be the security of transferred information. That is why most of the businesses prefer to use their chosen internal communication systems.

The thesis is about the internal communication happening inside of the DHL Express headquarters and branches around Finland. To introduce improvements in the existing communication systems, there should be held preparation work with employees. The idea is motivating workers to use new communication tools recommended for certain situations. As well as accessing the current situation with internal communications usage.

1.1 Thesis objective

The thesis objective is

- To research the connection between the quality of internal communication and employees' motivational level
- To identify the concept of the commissioner's internal communication system in relation to social media channels and the researched department
- To understand the need for internal communication improvements in the survey group

1.2 Commissioner

When more firms are shutting down their offline premises, they do not stop existing. Businesses do trade online. This global trend gives logistic enterprises a lot of opportunities to advance. They can do all sorts of services or concentrate on one. The commissioning company of this thesis is DHL Express (Finland). It focuses on the express delivery of small weighted parcels (less 30 kg). Products displayed by the company cover many types of shipments. From the delivery of documents, packages, and freights to dangerous goods in excepted quantities along with contract logistics.

DHL Express (Finland) Oy is the branch of international company Deutsche Post DHL. When Deutsch Post was established in 1947 it was known as Deutsche Bundespost. It was a governmental post service that was privatised in 1995. Since that time the company began to acquire other logistic and related business units. The emergence with American-German Company DHL was processed through 1998-2002 years. To conclude, since the end of 2002 the company exists in the current version DPDHL with the brand name DHL.

Its subsidiaries located in over 220 countries around the world and it has around 550 000 personnel. DHL divisions presented by Post & Parcel Germany, DHL Express, DHL Global Forwarding, DHL Freight, DHL Supply Chain, and eCommerce Solutions. However, DHL presented in Finland consists of four divisions: DHL Express, DHL Freight, DHL Global Forwarding and DHL Supply Chain. Finnish DHL Express service points are located in Vantaa, Turku, and Pirkkala (Tampere).

The volume of traffic is constantly increasing. It is essential to keep and increase the number of regular customers. It is worth to be mentioned that regular customers are leading production and reselling companies in Finland. However, there are a certain number of international competitors at the local market, such as FedEx/TNT, PostNord, DPD.

DHL is the global leader in express delivery. Besides, it is the biggest global market player in Europe. The logistic hub located in Leipzig, Germany makes a major influence on European success. Its existence ensures that delivery operations to EU countries are processed in the fastest way. The second transportation hub was built in Brussels, Belgium in 2018. Such movement points to the growth of DHL Express and increases in international trading.

The strategy of DHL is aiming at continuous improvements. It can be seen with the number of awards the company is acquiring on the international level. For instance, DHL Express is ranked number 4 in the top world's best employers. Moreover, DHL Express is even one of 14 companies being Top Employer Global. Such a title has been granted to the company already for the sixth time in a row. All the more DHL is certified in 63 countries of the world as a leader in express logistics.

The Top Employer title was designed to acknowledge companies that put the most effort into developing their employees and their working environment. Such conditions help workers to improve and develop in professional and personal ways. The Top Employer Institute is the organization that holds and certifies employers for more than two decades. (dpdhl.com, 2020)

1.2.1 Focus group. Department of the research

The research group is the Terminal staff of Vantaa headquarters. The terminal is the place that connects the airline flight operation and the collection and distribution of goods on the ground. It provides with a wide range of services (some or all):

1. Warehousing
2. Documentation
3. Handling of dangerous goods and other special freight
4. Transport to and from aircraft
5. Airfreight trucking services

The IATA standard ground handling agreement states the variety of tasks that can be provided, such as general cargo and mail handling, document handling, customs control, the handling of irregularities and ramp services (Morrell, Peter S. & Klein T., 2019, 169-191)

However, the department consists of various teams and shifts. Shifts depend on the time frame when the sent goods are processed. Teams are divided according to their functions. The research is conducted with the Operations team. They are the group that checks and process outbound parcels before going to the plane to their next destination. Those are logistics hubs in Germany or Belgium. At the same time in the department are present the other 4 groups: couriers, security team, local parcels (they accept parcels that go to the Operations team without going through couriers) and the team that provides transportation to the plane.

1.2.2 First choice strategy

The name of DHL Group's continuous improvement practice is the First Choice. The aim is to provide customers with service excellence to become their first choice among service providers. That is a big step in becoming the "Quality Leader" in the industry.

On the other side, First Choice is about being the "first choice" for employees as well. The Group's employees are encouraged to become part of the process. They are receiving the support and tools they need to introduce continuous improvements directly into their work environments. That helps to raise the quality of the working process. Some pluses can be decreasing of needed working time for finishing tasks, finding joy in the work that is done, etc. Such an attitude sharpens employees' customer focus.

The First Choice makes use of various tools of continuous improvements system. Commonly, it is anything that a company can use to collect data for the use in the define, measure, analyze, improve, control process (DMAIC cycle). However, there are different methodologies to specify improvement processes. Another applied logical chain can be a problem, root cause, solution. Other terms applied in the best practice system are Performance Dialogs, Gemba, Problem Solving Techniques, etc. Using all these methods and techniques, service performance improves significantly in a highly structured and systematic way.

1.3 Thesis plan

The current version of the timeline illustrates the actual schedule of the thesis. As at first the original timeline was shorter and had fewer attributes. Some parts were deleted, as persona prototype update, etc.

Table 1. Timeline

Communication system research in the commissioner company	January 2019
Communication channels research	February 2019
Questionnaire	End of February 2019
Persona prototype creation	Beginning of March 2019
Theories research	March – July 2019
Interviewing	June - July 2019
Finishing theory part	September - October 2019
Editing the recommendations part	November 2019

Research part interpretation	January – February 2020
Editing	February – May 2020
Feedback	May 2020

As the thesis research was beginning, the alternative idealistic vision of what can be done existed. The expectations were big as there was the part about the implementation of the demo version of an application to the DHL working system.

Thus, the research began from going through what kinds of system DHL is using in their communication system. As for me, communication systems were social media that is mostly it. However, it was a good point to get to know that the company having a big communication system and identifying it in many ways. For example, Communication channels in DHL are:

- Email
- Intranet
- Journal (monthly and weekly)
- TV info screen
- Information boards
- Performance dialog boards
- Common meetings
- The whole company meeting
- SimsMe (application with self-destroying messages)
- Facebook, WhatsApp (in certain cases)

Therefore, the first quarter of 2019 was about getting to know the company and its communication systems better. That was more important in the beginning as the initial topic of the thesis was creating a new communicational channel. Other timeline events are specified in table 1.

2 Internal communication and motivation in work

The theoretical part includes internal communication as an umbrella term and social media in specific. Also, there are highlighted some terms that help the reader to understand the influencers inside the commissioner's party. Motivation discussion is the part that explains the second term used in the thesis headline. After opening up both themes of internal communication and motivation importance in the company life, focus switches to their interaction. Such preparation material gives the reader a better understanding of the actual research (Chapter 3) held inside the commissioner's company.

2.1 Internal communication

Internal communication is one of the most essential team management tools. It corresponds to relations between all groups of stakeholders inside organizations. According to Whitworth (2011, 195), internal communication is perceived to include three major parts: hierarchical communication, mass media communication, and social networks.

Hierarchical communication refers to communication from the top management to the employees. The second part is about using various mass media channels: magazines, newsletters, intranet, e-mail, social media, etc. The third part is about informal networks, where messages flow horizontally and often among employees of a similar level in the organization. Although such information may be inaccurate at times, but more authentic as formal communication channels are more restricted in the way.

Berry (1981, in Men and Bowen, 2017) notices that satisfying the needs and wants of internal customers is deemed important beyond achieving the objectives of the organization. It means that if employees are satisfied with the company's approach, they are more engaged in attracting and providing a satisfying approach for customers. Thus, in the idea of internal communication management, employees are referred to in the same way as clients of the company.

Moreover, one of the factors to work with employees is the right communication system. Under the influence of the communication system quality within the company, it can change the outcomes of the work to some degree and lead to opposite directions. Deficient communication can be uncomfortable at first, but then the trend of disturbing the project influence the outcomes. To avoid miscommunication bugs, the well-designed structure should support and ease user success in the internal application of communications. In this case, the project work is estimated to be successful.

2.1.1 Internal public: frontline workers

Frontline workers include both service employees, who are behind the counter, on the phone, or answering questions in social media, and blue-collar workers who do manual tasks, such as manufacturing, processing, packing, technical maintenance or installations. Frontline workers present the most workforce of the company. They also have close contact with the customers and the products they receive. Therefore, they are playing an important role in positive customer feedback. It performs in the company's success, as when the customer is happy - the profit increase.

It is true but often the systems used in the office and the industrial area are totally different. Geolocation can play its role when the connection with managers seems distant. But our case is that most of the systems are used in the office cannot be used in the terminal.

Edelman's report released a couple of years ago (Raywood, 2015):

- Get to know frontline workers and fully understand their needs and work environment
- Design a select and limited set of channels, particularly tailored for frontline workers needs and routines
- Limit the volume of information to deliver more focused, actionable, and relevant messages
- Integrate new technology to foster dialog, gather feedback, increase engagement and build a community
- Involve frontline managers, provide them with communication training, and prepare them with messages and toolkits
- Have patience and take the time and effort to make frontline workers live easily

2.1.2 Internal public: line managers

Line managers are located in the middle of the hierarchy. It means that they connect frontline employees and top management. They share information with the frontline and collect information from the frontline to reach top managers. Therefore, line managers have such skill as being an attentive listener and grasp important signs of information, which should go to the top. Additionally, they go through appropriate training to know communication strategies, tools, and have skills to show effective communicational role.

Line managers interact with employees daily. A significant amount of research shows that line managers' treatment of their employees directly affects employees' satisfaction and the overall attitude toward the organization (Men and Stacks, 2014).

2.1.3 Social Media significance

One of the recent academic researches has proposed that 'workers who are encouraged to tweet, chat, like, and Skype on the job are among the most productive' (Warner, 2013).

Research firm Future Workplace (Meister, 2013) conducted a survey of over 1000 employees from a range of different companies. They highlighted that 60 percent of Millennials and almost 80 percent of Generation Z (the youngest working generation) said that by 2020, social media literacy will be required of all employees in the workspace. Therefore, the increase of the generation Z in the workforce leads to the need to keep up with the changing working preferences. That would help companies to benefit from current communication trends (MacRae & Furnham, 2018, 18).

2.1.4 Social Messengers

Many recent kinds of research note that the content shared on the social messaging app tends to be perceived as more credible and trustworthy. It, thus, offers an unparalleled tool for companies to improve and make more personal communication with employees. It helps to build a close one-to-one connection with the targeted internal auditory. Especially for companies dominated by millennial workers, social messaging is a must-have as they are its mainstream users, leading the growth of social messaging apps (IPG Media Lab, 2014, 9).

Similar to traditional computer-based programs in the workspace, social messengers, such as Slack, are less intrusive than a phone and face-to-face conversations, more immediate than e-mail (Men and Bowen, 2017). The ability to communicate quickly, privately, and in real-time in an informal, casual manner makes it an advantageous tool for employees to connect in the workspace.

Despite the potential for social media to improve productivity in the workspace, 72 percent of companies that are using social media aren't utilizing it to its fullest potential (McKinsey Global Institute, 2012). In other words, social media is a prospective channel for working communication.

Huy and Shipilov (2012, in Men and Bowen 2017, 86) highlight that effectively using social media tools internally requires careful planning.

1. Focus on developing emotional capital, a sense of goodwill toward the organization, and the way it operates.

2. Build a positive feeling of authenticity, pride, attachment, and fun. To that end, identify trusted leaders and provide them training on social media strategies, tactics, and skills.
3. Policies and rules should be present to create a secure and positive internal “social” communication environment.

2.2 Discussions about motivation

The Hawthorne studies (1927-1933) came with the results that there are two aspects of workers’ functioning. They are fatigue and boredom. From that time such things as lunch and bathroom breaks, shift work, different timetables began to exist in the working places. To conclude, the fatigue is the issue, which is easier to find solutions, while boredom is the case that exists till nowadays. Questions regarding boredom lead to different approaches to motivate employees.

In Herzberg’s famous article ‘One More Time: How Do You Motivate Employees?’ which was republished in 2008, Herzberg commences with the remark: ‘Forget praise. Forget punishment. Forget cash. You need to make their jobs more interesting.’ (Herzberg, 2008). That leads to intrinsic motivational methodology to accept the work process and to find enjoyable moments in it. From the thesis author’s view, it is the most magnificent motivational idea.

2.3 Maslow’s pyramid

American psychologist Abram Maslow published the hierarchy of needs in the 1943 year. Since that time Maslow’s pyramid is the most fundamental and popular motivational theory.

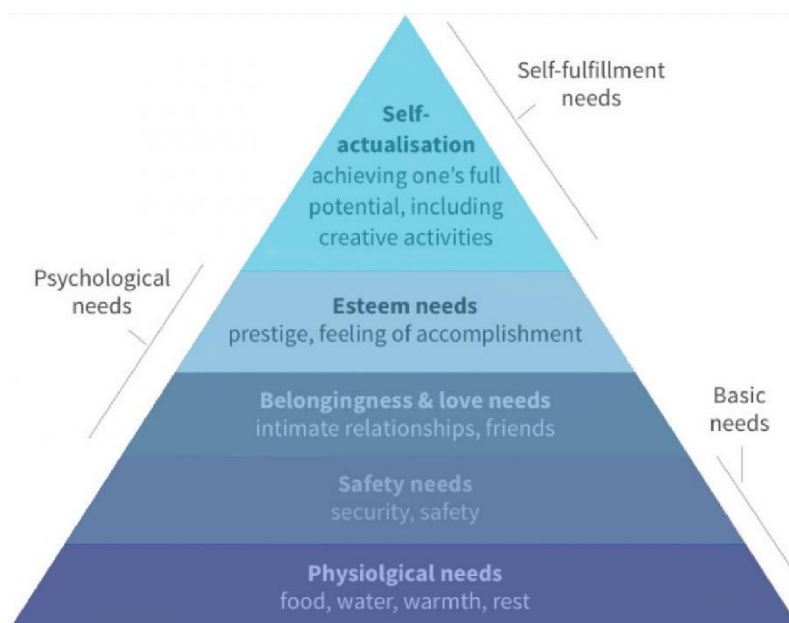


Figure 1. Maslow's hierarchy of needs

The idea is simple, factors that motivate people can be defined according to their level of importance:

- The lowest level is physiological need – the basic survival requirement. If the worker feels tired or hungry, its issues can disturb and decrease overall productivity.
- Safety needs. It is more about how secure and how financially secure the worker feels. As an example, it can be a work contract that secures an employee's future, his confidence in getting a salary every month.
- Belonging needs is the level above basic needs. People are social beings, therefore they want to have a feeling of being part of the team. When a person feels lonely it decreases his motivational level as well.
- Esteem needs. When the job is well done a worker wants to feel acknowledged. It means feeling respect from other team members, and that your performances are getting noticed.
- Self-actualization is located on the top of the hierarchy need. When the project is well done, but next job tasks do not show any difficulty for an employee. Then there is no place for self-improvement. In such cases, the worker can change the company to find another job position that can open up his potential.

2.4 Spectrum of motivation

In the book of Susan Fowler, she looks at the factors that motivate people. But she doesn't do it to invent something unusual, but to look at usual things from an exceptional angle.

The theory is called the Spectrum of motivation. It is the system according to which people are motivated constantly but in different ways. It can happen that they are motivated because of fear, the absence of choice, and other negative factors, or on the contrary, they can be motivated because they enjoy the things which they should do. People are always motivated because of different reasons.

The spectrum of motivation divides motivation into 6 types. There is "good" motivation, which is referred to as optimal motivation, and "bad" – suboptimal motivation. In reality, there is no bad or good motivation, because that is just a tool to perform an action. And if there are have results it means that no matter what helped to achieve the goal it is a good thing.

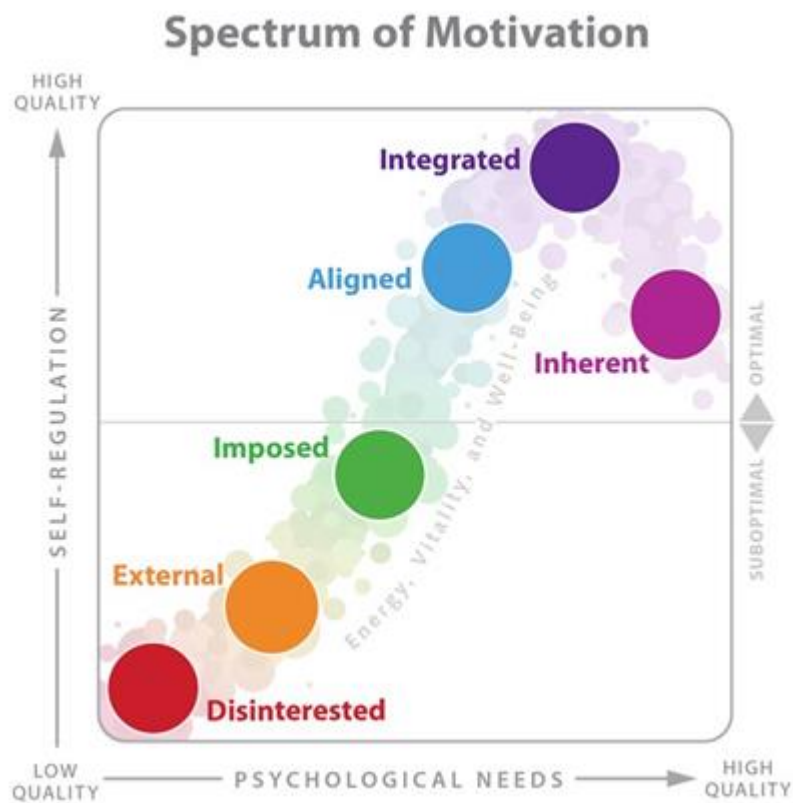


Figure 2. Spectrum of motivation model. Fowler S. (2017)

The spectrum shows that the quality of motivation depends on self-regulation on the vertical axes and psychological needs on the horizontal axes.

Firstly, there goes an understanding that psychological needs are something that everyone should take care of. Without fulfilling basic needs such as eating and sleeping, people cannot do work. However, in the spectrum, let us look at other sides of psychological needs. And it is Autonomy, Relatedness, and Competence (ARC).

Autonomy is the need that employees are striving for. It is the situation when employees can show their qualities: when supervisors trust them with the given task by virtue of believing that the appointed person can execute the task without much external help

Relatedness is the feeling that people around are not strangers. People get bored when they do not see any signs of empathy for some period. Employees are also social beings and if they do not feel the connection with other company persons surrounding them – they quit the job.

Competence. Sometimes it is complicated to describe feelings that come from inside. But that is the feeling that a person, as an employee is on the right path, in the correct place and time. There comes the confidence that the person has qualities suitable for the appointed position or the task.

The ARC is essential in all motives, in everything people do. If one of these factors is limited or absent, then the quality of motivation is already dropping. It is hard to accept but that means that ARC is fragile. Any damage to one of the factors and boom, we have damage to the whole system. Such a connection is called ARC Domino Effect.

However, in order to strengthen the ARC system every person has Self-Regulation quality. It is the second side of the motivational spectrum. "Self-regulation is mindfully managing feelings, thoughts, values, and purpose for immediate and sustained positive effort." (Fowler, 2017, 54). Nonetheless, it is an abstract concept. To understand, it is better to look at the following components.

Mindfulness. It is a skill of noticing details of the case. The ability to stop and look at the situation from different sides. When the person is under pressure or time is limited, it is essential to be mindful. Also, it is the skill that constantly can be going through development. As inconsistencies that were not noticed a couple of years ago, could not be ignored nowadays, because people learn how to think and what to do in the right way.

Values. They are persons' beliefs of what is good and bad in working life. When a worker understands his values connected to work, he can do much better, then working without identified values. Therefore, when a person's values correlate with the company's values, that is boosting the motivation and productivity of a project overall. Because then a person can fulfil his psychological need by working in this company.

Purpose. It is the link between a person's actions and the social significance of his actions. It is not an easy term as it corresponds to the inner understanding of what the person wants to do, what he or she is doing, and how to make your needed actions be connected with your wishes. As the person can be working and imagining that he saves a planet. Then his work becomes more purposeful.

To sum up, there are 6 factors that identify the level of worker's motivation. They are ARC (Ability, Relatedness, Competence) and MVP (Mindfulness, Values, Purpose). The spectrum of motivation (Figure 2) is illustrated as the XY system, where X is ARC and Y is

MVP. It is made in order to visualize the motivation level. As it was mentioned earlier, the spectrum is divided into 2 parts: suboptimal and optimal motivations.

It works in the way that before working with a team's motivation a manager is going through measuring his level of motivation according to Table 1. As an example, it can be his motivation level to lead the project. Firstly, it is identifying ARC and MVP points, then adjusting it to the motivation position on XY graphics. After such pointing the motivation situation, the manager can see whether his motivation level is on the suboptimal or optimal part. If the situation is in the suboptimal part, then there is a need to work with self-regulation MVP factors. As improving self-regulation leads to shifting from "bad" to "good" level of motivation.

After the manager is experiencing the Spectrum of motivation himself, he is accredited to work with personnel to help them understand their points and influences connected to the motivation map. The system goes through the same steps:

- identifying ARC and MVP points
- finding the location on the spectrum: suboptimal or optimal zone
- making a plan to improve MVP points

3 Research implementation

The way of carrying out the thesis begins with the creation of the theoretical framework with communication and motivation theories. After deepening the understanding of theoretical information, the thesis proceeds to more applied part of the research. It takes place by collecting information from the focus group of the commissioner's employees.

Information that is being collected in the thesis research part is aimed to be a part of First Choice program tools. More information about First choice strategy is in the section 1.2.2

3.1 Research methods

In the thesis, the research part consists of the qualitative and quantitative methods mix. The first phase is the questionnaire. It is a quantitative method to access the situation in the team in common, find points, and struggles inside shift operations. That helps to begin the research and to get acquainted with the research group. After the connection points with the research topic are found, it is the turn of qualitative methods. In the current research, it is the team interviewing. Questions used for personal discussions narrow the process to the core of the inquiry and adding details to the previous phase of the analysis.

3.2 Research questions

The primary research question is "How internal professional communication boosts motivation in employees?"

To increase the quality of the research results, some side questions are added.

- What are the communicational tools used in the Terminal department? Do employees realize the whole variety of communications in the department?
- Would social media channels be a proper alternative for the existing communicational channels?
- Will employees' motivation improve with the introduction of new communication channels?
- What is the current level of motivation in the terminal team?
- How well team members are engaged with the current communicational channels?
- Is there a need to increase the delivery information level in the researched group?

3.3 Limitations

The research is limited to DHL Express Vantaa headquarters. For deeper research results, the emphasis was taken to concentrate on the OPS shift in the Terminal department. The research questions and recommendations are limited by security policies.

Additionally, it was difficult to collect interviewing material as the research should have been held during the shift working hours. The usage of the voice recorder was not allowed. Therefore, the interview material was collected using notes and pauses between questions.

3.4 Reliability

The thesis's research part was held in the 2019 year. Research team variability has changed. Therefore, some information needs updates. It can be, for instance, motivational level, gender variability, communicational, social media preferences, and other significant information for possible future research.

Even though the research was held in the DHL Terminal department, it is not universal. For more precise results, the questionnaire could be repeated several times. Also interviewing is useful to apply before, after, and some period later after the communicational project integration. As the emotions, distractions during work time can affect interviewing answers.

3.5 First phase. Questionnaire

During the research of communication systems implemented in DHL Express (Finland) in January 2019 was risen a proposal to find out how active employees are with the internal communicational system. That became the main purpose of the survey. On the other side, it was proper to find more about basic employees' motivation and their readiness to implement online sources to the existing working process.

The questionnaire was held during the monthly team meeting in February 2019. The test group consisted of 10 permanent terminal workers. They can be referred to as a main part of the team. The whole team includes many changeable workers. However, during the shift, there are around 14-16 people. Mostly employees who did not take part in the research are contract workers. They have a flexible work schedule.

3.6 First phase. Questionnaire. Results

The truth is organizations are changing. The way people work is changing. There are no significant generational differences in the workplace and there are far better factors to measure people on, such as personality, intelligence, individual motivation, skills, and experience. (Macrae & Furnham, 2018, 136) However, in the research results, there are mentioning of age, but it is used for the easiness of reading and a better understanding of the interviewed group's image.

Let us take a look at the demography of the research. Team members who took part in the research are males. However, the difference between them is their age. As we can see from the diagram pie, they (10 people) are in the age between 25 and 39 years. It is the age interval of the Y generation.

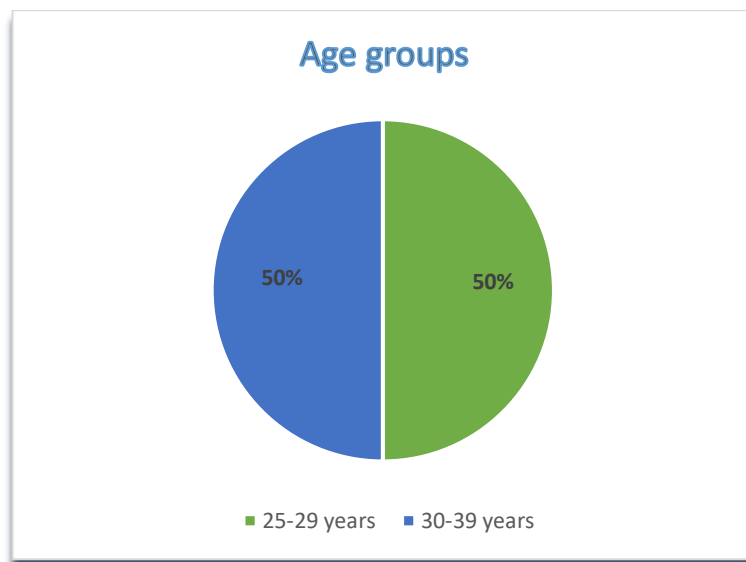


Figure 3. Age groups. n=10

Although the whole team can be regarded as the Y generation (figure 3), there are differences in the experiences among all people. Additionally, the Y generation can be divided into 2 groups. Younger ones we can call Y.1 (25-29 years, 5 workers) and older group Y.2 (30-39 years, 5 workers). Thus, half-half the presence of people. They vary concerning family state and capital. For example, the Y.2 is more financially stable, can have toddlers. Group Y.1 is at the beginning of their working life. Therefore, both groups have different priorities in their lives.

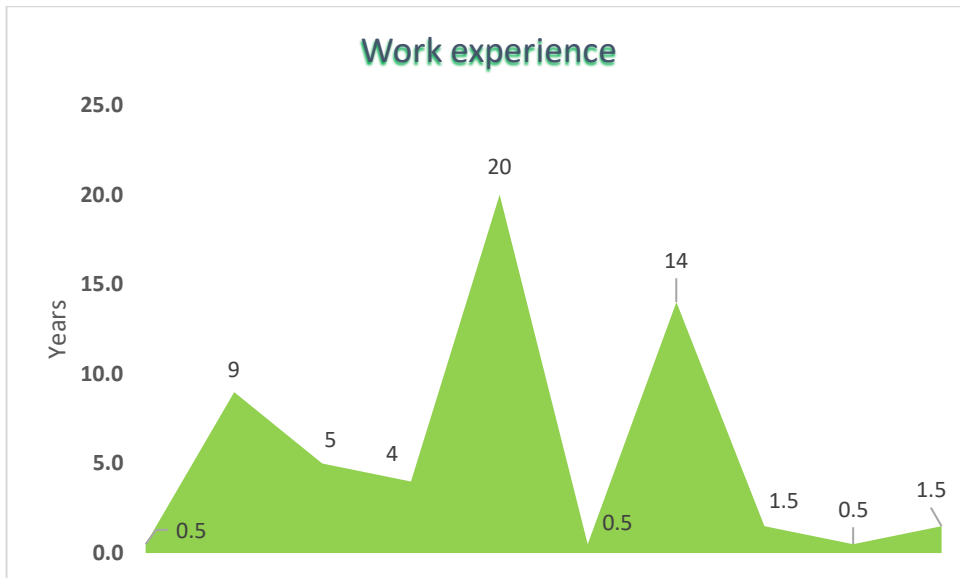


Figure 4. Each person's working experience in years in DHL Express (OPS team, n=10).

Figure 4 shows the diversity of the working force according to their presence in the DHL company group. There are people, who are staying there for many years and can guide novice workers if needed. At the same time, it is seen that not all employees in the main group are working in the Terminal for a long time. Therefore, there is a lot of variability in the main team.

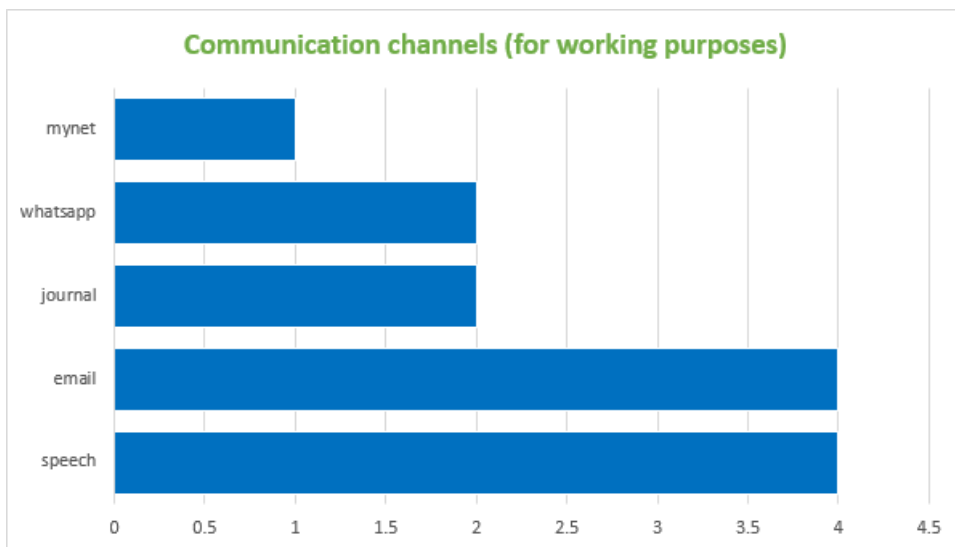


Figure 5. Communication channels for working purposes in the Terminal's use. n=9

Communication for working purposes is mostly commuted by direct speech or email (figure 5). However, all responses with speech as an option were narrowed to direct conversation as the only usable channel. It indicates limited access to other communicational tools during work time. On the contrary, respondents that answered emailing as an option

had been using other communications as well. Thus, it shows that email is not enough as the only contact tool and needs other supporting channels.

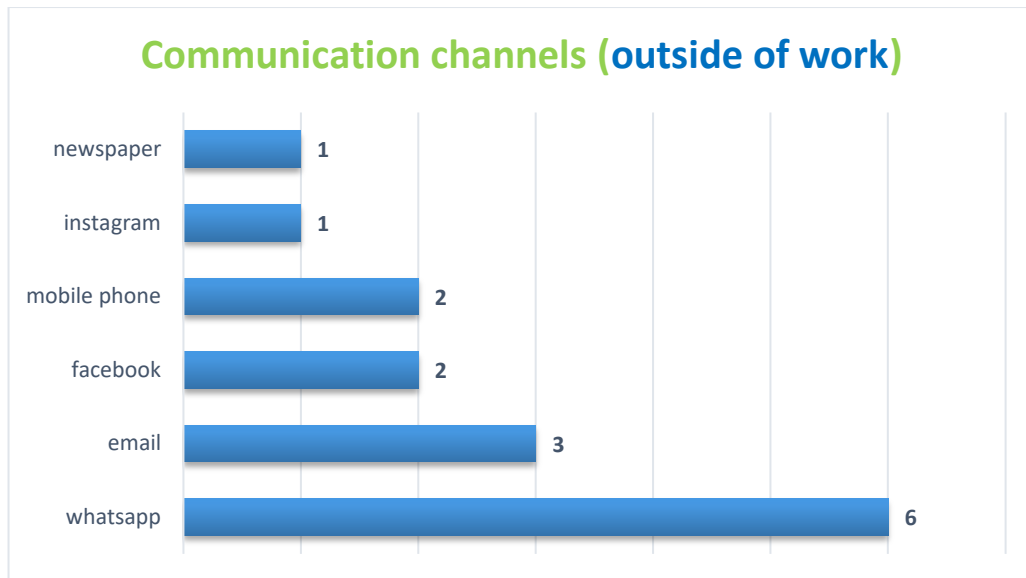


Figure 6. Preferred communication channels for personal use. n=8

Employees are using various means of communication in their spare time. Figure 6 illustrates the popularity of social media channels inside of the research team. The leader of the chart is WhatsApp. What is more, there can be made some research about the WhatsApp features which can improve the connection among employees. To sum up, workers are active with digital communication tools and could adapt to new means of communication.

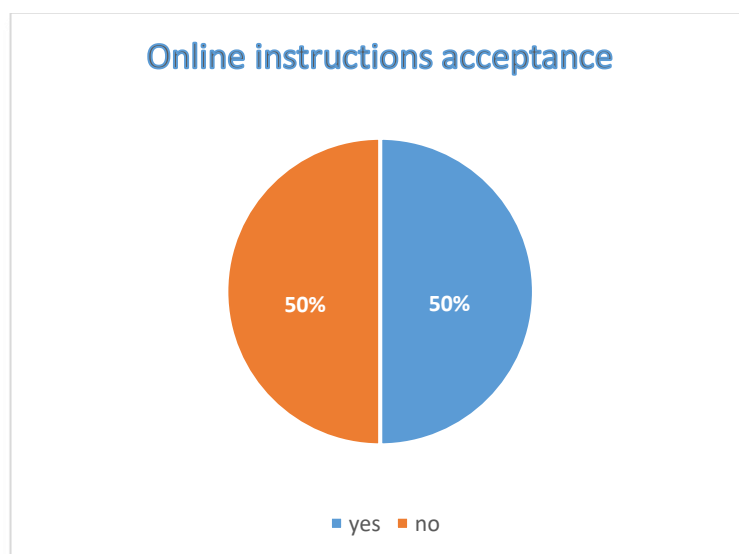


Figure 7. Acceptance of online instructions. n=10

Online social acceptability is a challenge that could be applied as groundwork for new projects. Nonetheless, the next question was “*Do you think there should be work instructions in an online format?*” Replies divided 50:50 as illustrated in figure 7.

To go deeper into results, there is a connection between the length of the working time in the company to a positive answer. In the case people began to work there 0.5 - 2 years ago, they most likely answer that online instruction would be useful. It is a progressive view, as workers usually experience situations that need specification or guidance especially in the new position. Thus, the value of the positive answer is more considerable even with the same numbers. However, people who are holding a job in the department longer do not see online instructions as a lot of help.

The question options about milestones in the work consisted of selections: timetables and connection with other departments. Besides, there was an open answer. And then research group members mentioned such issues as the team itself and safety training. However, that can be topics for consequent team meeting discussions. It does not go into thesis research specifications. Even though such topics can be applied for launching a communication channel.

In the next discussion for the level of motivation in the team according to the Maslow pyramid, the most common answer was salary. Logically, people need to first satisfy their physical needs. According to the previous statement, we can conclude that in order to reach the highest motivational value we need to satisfy all previous levels of needs.

Table 2. Motivational factors as Maslow Pyramid in the questionnaire. n=10

Respondent	Physiological needs	Safety need	Belonging need	Esteem needs	Self-actualization
1	money	stability	team spirit	prestige of the company	opportunity for professional growth
2	money	stability	team spirit	prestige of the company	opportunity for professional growth
3	money				opportunity for professional growth
4	money	stability	team spirit		

5	money		team spirit		
6	money		team spirit		
7	money	other: family			
8	money	stability			
9	money				
10	money				

However, in table 2 there are empty spaces between needs categories in the participants' answers. It is a good learning point of applying the theory to practice. That means for the satisfaction of the higher needs people do not always need to comply with lower-level needs as well.

Team motivation is versatile as is seen in table 2. However, the biggest part of the team sees the Terminal as not only a place to earn a salary but as opportunities for supplementary advances. It includes Safety, Belonging, Esteem, and Self-actualization.

The next questions are connected to the journal used internally in Finnish branches. That is one of the most diversified internal communication channels. Journal is an essential source of company-related information. It tells the news of all DHL divisions in Finland. It shows the info about projects between and inside of departments and units. There is the material about the employer's fulfillment of the strategy and promises related to the TOP employer system, ecological improvements, company's marketing, organized events, competitions, celebrations, etc.

It is essential to review the involvement of the journal auditory. The reason is simple. If there are strong communication lines inside of the company, then there is no need to think about new channels or improvements in the current system.

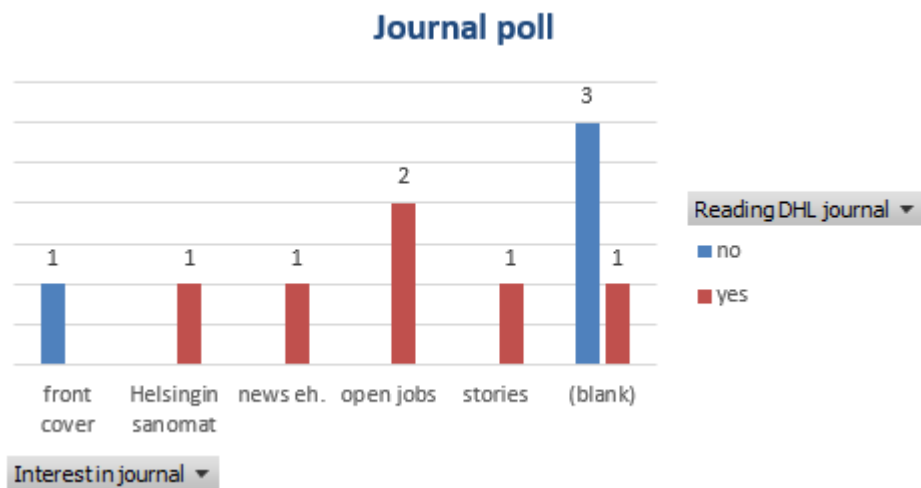


Figure 8. Journal poll. n=10

However, figure 8 shows little interaction of the terminal team with information from the journal. More than half of the team answered positively about reading the suggested material. Though, only half of the participants were able to specify what catches their attention if they are reading journals. Answer “front cover” can be transferred to the column with blank replies.

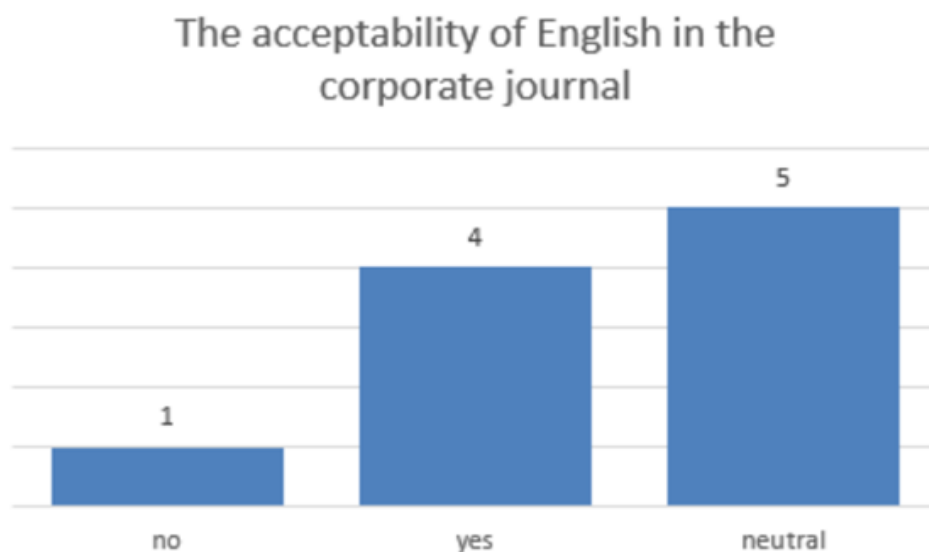


Figure 9. English acceptability in the corporate journal. n=10

The company’s official language is Finnish. However, the Uusimaa area where located headquarters is the most popular area among immigrants. They are the prospective workers who speak many languages, usually one of them is English. Besides, most locals speak English as well. Thus, there was risen the poll about the usability of the English language in the Terminal department, as the current research group.

In figure 9, half of the answers are neutral. That is a positive insight. However, only 40% of participants agreed they would be interested in reading the information in English. That information result is unclear and could be researched in more detail.

In the last inquiry, employees were asked to complete the sentence “I like to work in DHL because of its... brand image”.

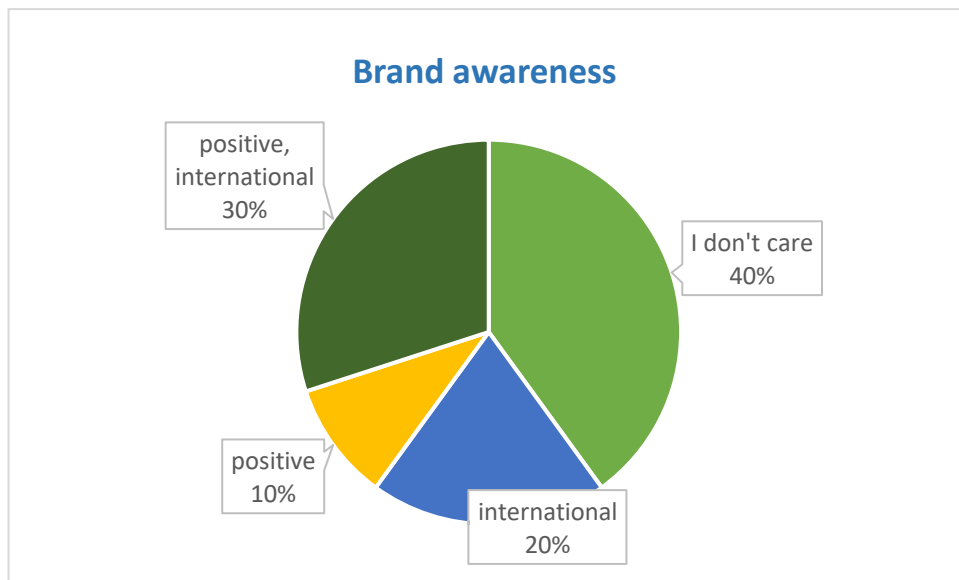


Figure 10. DHL brand awareness. n=10

The last question intended on the emotional part of the analysis. How do people feel about the company? Are they aware of the positive influences and efforts the company is taking? There could be even bigger assumptions made about the nature of the answer, of that choice or another. Perhaps, it depends on the received information for analysis.

40% of the participants answered neutrally. It can be that the company's brand and its activities do not play an important role for some employees. Although, it is also possible that people simply do not have enough provided information.

The 30% of replies contained both answer options. That is the most prospect group. Contrarily, groups with answers “I do not care”, “international”, “positive” are the target groups for further work.

Ideally, the communicational channels can help to educate and influence those groups about DHL's brand image.

To sum up the results of the brand image question (figure 10):

- 40% do not have any understanding of DHL's brand image
- 70% do not have enough understanding of DHL's brand image
- 60% do not believe in DHL's positive brand image
- 50% do not believe or not care about DHL's international brand image

Therefore, the company's branding depends on internal and external information. That kind of communication sources could be provided in internal channels. At this point, there is a need for improvement.

3.7 Second phase. Interviewing

The next step in understanding the situation and finding the link between motivation and communication was interviewing the research group. The research group this time consisted of 7 workers in the Operations department in the Terminal. The interviewing was going during a time when workers had free time. For instance, during the break time, during preparation time, when work volume was down. Because of security reasons the interview recordings were not allowed.

The discussion included 10 questions that could be mini topics themselves. The conversations started from the broad theme, continued with supportive points that lead to the main question, and finished with extra info inquiry. The interview type was chosen as then people are more open to express their opinion and not limited to giving short answers. Therefore, there is a place for details that can enrich the outcome of the whole research.

1. How Social Media is important for you?

1.....10

Social Media is an essential part of people's lives. However, the importance of Social Media can be different for everybody. Thus, people who share the same qualities, features can have similar needs and values for social media interaction. So why not ask how big the influence of such a significant trend is for interviewees?

2. Would you mind using Social Media for working purposes?

The question is opening the topic of the whole situation.

3. Could you give more feedback if working questions would be discussed online?

One of the young generation's features is being comfortable speaking and sharing thoughts online. At the same time, it can lead to an unwillingness to speak up in public or live interactions.

4. Is there a need to duplicate info from team meetings to social media channels?

Duplicating and magnifying information from team meetings can be useful in many ways. However, it depends on the acceptability of adding online topics at work as a whole. Thus, the question intends to deepen the interview conversation with department workers.

5. What time is the best for using social media? What about professional social media?

The idea is to create the time slots in work shifts for corporate internet access. As the terminal is a mindful area in the sense that the process should keep moving. Therefore, it is not always allowed to use some related sources, especially at peak times. However, as there are low presser time slots, there could be possibilities for improvements in HR-related tasks. Corporate Social Media presence can be one of the projects for future work with timetables.

6. What do you like to see more in your personal account newsfeed?

Identifying what types of material would be easier to get used to for the interviewed group.

7. Can you relate that working social media account should be similar to the personal one?

Comparison, relatedness, any notes about the origins of the question can be considered for further research on Social media topics.

8. Would you feel more inspired about your job if you got to know more about the working process? For example, about the work of other departments? What would you like to know about it?

The question is working with ideas for the communicational online platform creation. Knowing more about the work of other departments and connections between the researched department and others could be an interesting topic to catch the attention of the employee and engage in the discussion.

9. How much do you feel your motivation will improve if you will have access to the news and working discussions online? (You can imagine terminal newsfeed with events, courses, etc. happening around)

1.....10

That is the main question of the interview. Considering it asks about the connection between the internal communication and motivation of individuals. All previously answered questions were leading to this main point. For the reason that they were digging deeper into the aspects of the possible project and were showing versatile sides of social media usage in actual work and working process.

10. Can you take a look at the main points of Yammer, Slack, and WhatsApp? Which one is the best? What do you think which app would be useful in your work (in the Terminal)?

Side question that helps to vote for the options that could be applicable in the company's units. The usability of social media platforms was presented with the use of the thesis author's mobile phone. The presentation was supported by showing the previous author's study and volunteer experience material. Therefore, to illustrate the advantages of Slack was used Slush Buddies 2017 communication thread. The author's Haaga-Helia student account was presented to show the usage of the Yammer application. WhatsApp has a simple structure that all research team members aware of.

The logical chain connects questions number 1 and 9. It is shown even in the way the question is asked. The research team was asked to measure the importance of subjects in the numeric system. Even though it is not easy to connect the numbers and value of our feeling of importance, but it guides in the right direction. As numbers are fundamental knowledge that eventually is present everywhere.

3.8 Second phase. Results

Shortly about interview answers according to questions' numbers:

1. Average, mild significance. Just part of life, somebody cares more, somebody – less.
2. Most people can use Social Media for work
3. Mostly expected to create fewer discussions online as they will stay recorded.
4. Yes/No, but the point is that there should be a person responsible for logging in information into the Social Media system.
5. No preferences, but before, after an increase in the work volume during the shift time.
6. Everybody has different interests and preferences.
7. Working and personal accounts are used for different goals.
8. People are interested to know how other departments are operating, however answers about specific departments differed. There is no universal department that all team members would like to get to know about. However, as every position is responsible for different tasks, they have interests in the departments that can influence their job.
9. Mild expectations depend on the quality and usability of online content.
10. Slack could be a good option, but not everybody is familiar with the app.

As a start, I would like to say social media is significantly important. There wasn't any answer that would provide opposite information about social media at all. Nonetheless, people still a little bit shy about discussing work-related matters in social media as it stays in social media and other people can read it later. Even though it could be a good source of information for HR managers.

Secondly, if we choose a platform for communication discussions that could be Slack. It has divisions according to topics of discussion. That is one of the points that help to structure the info and discussions according to topics. One of the first materials for presenting and developing is the connections with other departments. It is an engaging topic that would make people understand the kind of responsibility their work actions lead to.

The most important part was the chain of significance between motivation and social media for work purposes. Even though the importance was categorized as mild, it did not go to insignificant. Therefore, it makes an influence on the motivation of employees. Although it is not the strongest motivational factor. But the link is there and that is the conclusion found through the interviewing part of the research.

To highlight, I would like to say the phrase that I heard during interviewing personnel. "Finnish people do not talk" (DHL employee, 2019). I see it as the point in understanding

the situation. People prefer to judge by actions, not by words. It can lead to that employees need a platform for improving socializing and motivational part, but with the point of limited online discussions.

4 Discussion

The recent research findings indicate there is always the need for daily communication between positions of different levels of responsibility in the companies. As well as there is a need for regular information exchange between employees and top managers. Top management delivers a vision of the organization to all employees. When workers understand company values and can act correspondingly, they are motivated to attain company goals (Chitrao, 2014, 1550).

One of the thesis objectives is to research the connection between the quality of internal communication and employees' motivational level. Therefore, there is a connection. During the interviewing of the focus group, people were agreeing that there is a link between two topics. However, the accent was made on online communication. When it was coming to the point of giving a grade for such a connection, then the scores were average, less than average, and little more than average. From the author's point of view, younger workers were saying about the bigger importance of social media in their lives. Thus, they saw a bigger importance in social media for possible improvements in the motivation at work.

The research included an analysis of the current communicational channels' usage in the Terminal department. In common, there are around 10 communicational tools applicable, but employees could specify a maximum of 3 of them. That shows that employees are not acquainted with DHL communicational system. It may be that there is no merit for employees to know internal communication tools. But then team members giving less attention to the sources of the company's related info. That leads to limited access to corporate values and understanding.

A deeper analysis of the internal communication channel went to the company's journal. It exists in two versions: weekly and monthly. It is one of the most diversified internal communication channels. Journal is an essential source of company-related information. It tells the news of all DHL divisions in Finland. It shows the info about projects between and inside of departments and units. Therefore, it is the most versatile information source that is connected to First Choice strategy information.

Part of the research's first phase was oriented on figuring out the engagement of the department auditory with the journal. 60% of the research group was reading journal but had difficulties to specify the actual topics they found interesting. The only topic that is possible to highlight is open jobs. That can show as interest in other departments, professional opportunities as the clearest topic in the journal's structure. Therefore, employees are not

well aware of the journal content. That means the existence of the need to improve the journal's content or structure. However, firstly there is a need to plan the structure and then the content. As an alternative journal can be driven to the online platforms. However, it already exists in online and paper versions.

The level of motivation in the team was accessed according to Maslow's pyramid hierarchy. The motivational theory part was represented also by Fowler's spectrum of motivation. The minus of Fowler's theory for the current research is that it needs a more detailed approach than Maslow's pyramid. Accordingly, it could take more time to create a motivational analysis of the team. But it is the bachelor's thesis and the timeframe for the research part is less than in a master's thesis.

Nonetheless, according to the conducted survey, the team's level of motivation is adequate, as people see their work from different prospects. For one group of employees, it is only about the salary, but other research group members feel the team spirit and see career opportunities.

However, based on the theory part, money has little power to motivate people. Money is the most effective tool to attract talents, but it should be supplied with intrinsic motivators which drive people to find enjoyment in the work process. Motivators like Autonomy, Relatedness, and Competence increase the qualitative level of motivation (MacRae & Furnham, 2018, 136). That can lead to constant changes in the team structure.

The versatility in working positions leads to the next point. During working hours, the author came up with the idea for future continuous improvements. That is the creation of online instructions for new employees. The author was working in the Terminal during several seasons. Each season there were new seasonal workers. In the beginning, there is not always enough time to explain working tasks and especially, details for them. Thus, the possibility of online instructions could save the working time of the employees that are assigned to train. As an attachment, the creation of the list of noticeable tasks or mistakes available online could increase the quality of the new employees' work.

In the first phase of the research, employees were asked about online acceptability on the example of online working instructions. The answers were divided equally into positive and negative insights. That gives the idea that removing work instructions during the first working days is impossible as the Terminal is a place where manual work is present. However, because there are workers who agree with such online introductions, there is a place for implementation too. As was mentioned before, during the working process some

details are not always clear from first sight and need time to get used to and be remembered.

5 Reflection on self-learning

The thesis author has deepened her knowledge of motivational theories. However, even though the author had a theory of motivation in her pocket, it was not easy to apply. The process of writing was stopping at some important moments, not because of the motivational level. Mostly, it was because of additional material or experiences need. Therefore, even though the person can be motivated, some milestones are still coming. Even if according to Fowler's theory, a person is having an optimal level of motivation, it can switch to suboptimal and vice versa.

The thesis author has deepened her understanding of internal communicational systems in logistics companies on the example of DHL's Vantaa branch. The communicational tools used in every branch vary from department to department. As different work-related matters do need to be shared with specific departments. However, email and Skype are used in most teams. Information is transferred and collected through different levels of managers as well.

To highlight, the most valuable part of the author's learning experience is a practical part of the research:

- Creation of the points, valuable for the research phases
- Censorship of some questions that can show the point, but are not professional to ask
- Arrangement of the times that allow to held research in the agreed department
- Interviewing the research group, not giving up when employees disagree with the author's point of view about possible improvements inside of the team

The first phase questionnaire was easier to organize and collect. However, the second phase of interviewing did not go smoothly. The author needed to organize interviewing between peak timing in the department. The shift timetable is complicated. If the research group would be Morning shift, the timing could be very early in the morning. Nevertheless, the research group had evening shifts, therefore interviewing was possible either late in the afternoon or in the evening close to midnight. Such a schedule increased the number of days the author was obliged to come to the research department. It is a great learning experience as well, even though it relates to the author's timetable managing skills. Besides, the work processes in the Terminal department should not stop as there are specific production deadlines present.

During the interviewing process, the thesis author has learnt that in order to get answers, there is a need to ask direct questions. When the conversation is going on, there are spaces for improvising as the idea of the research can be not clear from the first explanation. Also, when part of the team becomes more active and engaged in the research, other team members become more relaxed and engaged as well.

6 Recommendations

The thesis is aiming to be part of the First Choice DHL strategy tools. It fulfills one of its most important tasks – a collection of information that can be useful for future analysis or decisions making. To be more specific, the information is related to social media as the solution for updating the Vantaa branch's internal communication system.

The main research question was about the connection between motivation and social media (internal communication) for work purposes. Even though the importance was categorized as mild, it did not go to insignificant. Therefore, the quality of communication tools affects motivational levels.

One of the research questions was based on the suggestion of social media channels that can be used for professional purposes: Slack, Yammer, and WhatsApp. Most participants of the research group agreed on the Slack option. The application gives the opportunity to discuss the working situation or project based on a hashtag... Isn't it the technology that the current generation of workers would adore? However, it is only an option and can be researched further as there are many alternatives.

However, before the introduction of the new communicational channel, it is recommended to make a research about interesting and useful topics for the department. That will give the feeling of autonomy to employees, as they could make an impact. Other communicational improvements are suggested to implement in cooperation with team members.

The topic of the future newsfeed is supposed to be about the company's constant improvements in the work processes. Such developments can include, but not to limited with themes as communication with new employees, inside team communication, constant improvements.

From the worker perspective, it takes time to begin noticing issues that could be improved, things that could change the working process. Therefore, the existence of improvements idea is the starting point for further ideas generation. To be more precise, to get the feeling to share you need to feel the need.

Nevertheless, the topic with continuous improvement ideas collection is more complicated than it can be seen before learning the thesis research. The research is based on social media importance, but it is a possible solution for specific data collection and sharing as well.

The research identified the need for journal improvements and increasing interaction with employees. By reason of not enough interest, it does not matter the content of the journal. Although, the content opens up about many company's sides and projects aimed at the enhancement of working conditions.

An additional question for journal improvements was about English usability. That is a questionable feature with no strong employee interest in reading DHL related articles in other languages except Finnish. Despite the results of the study, it is suggested to apply the theme of English usability in other project researches.

One of the ideas that were studied during the research is the creation of online instructions for new employees. Each season there were new seasonal workers. In the beginning, there is not always enough time to explain working tasks and especially, details for them.

Thus, the possibility of online instructions could save the working time of the employees that are assigned to train. As an attachment, it is recommended to create the list of noticeable tasks, abbreviations meanings available online. It can improve the quality of new employees' work. It would give more a reliable source of information than instructions in workers' minds.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Questionnaire

1. *How old are you?*

2. *How long have you been working in the current department?*

3. *What kinds of communication channels do you use for work purposes?*

4. *What kinds of communicational channels do you use for personal purposes?*

5. *How often do you work in DHL?*

- 1-3 shifts/week
- 3-5 shifts/week
- 1-5 shifts/week
- Full-time
- Other

6. *Do you think there should be work instructions in an online format?*

- Yes
- No

Why:

7. *What could be improved in your work?*

- Timetable
- Connection with other departments
- Other, specify:

8. *What does motivate you to work?*

- Opportunity for professional growth
- Prestige of the company
- Co-workers/ team spirit
- Money
- Stability
- Other, specify:

9. *Do you read the DHL journal?*

- Yes
- No

10. *If you read DHL journal, then which one?*

- Viikkari
- Kuukkari
- Both

11. *What info is the most interesting in the journal?*

12. *Would you like to read articles in English?*

- Yes
- No
- I do not care

13. *Can you agree with the statement "I like to work in DHL because of its ... brand image"?*

- Positive
- International
- I do not care
- Other, specify:

Appendix 2. Interview questions

1. How Social Media is important for you?

1.....10

2. Would you mind using Social Media for working purposes?

3. Could you give more feedback if working questions would be discussed online?

4. Is there a need to duplicate info from team meetings to social media channels?

5. What time is the best for using social media? What about professional social media?

6. What do you like to see more in your personal account newsfeed?

7. Can you relate that working social media account should be similar to the personal one?

8. Would you feel more inspired about your job if you got to know more about the working process? For example, about the work of other departments? What would you like to know about it?

9. How much do you feel your motivation will improve if you will have access to the news and working discussions online? (You can imagine terminal newsfeed with events, courses, etc. happening around)

1.....10

10. Can you take a look at the main points of Yammer, Slack, and WhatsApp? Which one is the best? What do you think which app would be useful in your work (in the Terminal)?