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# Development of internal corporate communication

## Study case: Company FIEGE

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Komárková, Kateřina

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**Laurea University of Applied Sciences**  
Laurea Lepävaara

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**Study case: Company FIEGE**

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This study purpose was to examine the internal communication in the company FIEGE. Case company's internal communication had changed in the past years due to management changes. The thesis has observed the internal communication in the case company and found the main problem in the internal communication.

Primary and secondary data has been collected in the research that has been used for further analysis. In the theoretical part are described definitions and previous findings concerning internal communication from different kind of sources. Knowledge base part includes theory that is linked to internal communication, such as communication channels and strategy. In the practical part of the research had been collected data from individual interviews with company employees. Both primary and secondary data have been analyzed in the research analysis section of the report.

Finding of the research are described in the conclusion of the report. Outcome of the research is a plan of improvements where is written the main problem in the internal communication. In the plan of improvements are described recommendations for the company management.

Key words, internal communication, communication channels, communication strategy

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## 1 Introduction

People communicate everyday with each other, at different places: school, work, shop, and at home, with different technologies and languages. As the technology develops we use it more in communication: e-mail, chat, mobile, blogs and other media to make the communications more efficient. (Denisova 2007, 6) Communication between employees and managers has developed in past years. Information that is inside the company carried by their members represents the advantage or disadvantage of the organization. Nowadays communication has become an important part of organization success. Internal communications between company's members are significant for company activities.

This thesis main focus is on internal communication in the company FIEGE. In the company management team has been changed in the past years which had effected current communication inside the company. Due to globalization, market changes and other developments, roles of employees and managers are different than before. "Today's employee is a different person in term of values and needs than his or her counterpart in earlier decades. Most of today's employees are well-educated, have higher expectations for what they will get out of their careers than their parents did, and they want to understand more about the companies they work for." (Agenti 2007, 137) Employees have to be communicating in order to motive them, support and receive good results from them. Communication has always been part of manager's role in an organization. Now with increasing speed of information transfer and larger scope of information manager's role in communication is more important than before. (Szukala & O'Conner 2000, 5) It is important that manager understands how vital communication is in his or her organization.

FIEGE, logistics company has to react faster on customer needs and market changes. Therefore internal communication is important for being competitive on the market. In FIEGE each employee has its own way of communication and they do not communicate with each other efficiently enough. Company has several brands and each brand is responsible for its activities, has its own brand manager and its own business, which they do not share with other branches. Each of the branch members is interested in their own site and do not communicate to other sites or cooperate with others. Management board has changed couple of times in past five years and that has affected communication. What is the main communication problem and how to develop the communication inside FIEGE will be presented following the thesis.

FIEGE is a family owned company which operates its business in European countries, Asia and Russia. Key business of the company is to contract logistics, which can be described as full service provider of logistics services. In this business is important that processes are synchro-

nized and everybody work together to deliver good quality services to clients. All of the processes in logistics are provided by employees who are the key factor in all processes. Effective communication leads to efficient operation that delivers good services to customers. In logistics each member has its own role in operation. Warehouse worker has to prepare goods for delivery and at the same time dispatcher has to arrange the delivery of goods. Financial department has to send an invoice to customer in order to receive payment for services that has been provided to the customer. Following thesis is going to focus on corporate internal communication, what is the main problem and how it can be improved in company FIEGE. Outcome of the thesis is going to be the plan for the company to improve corporate internal communication.

First part of the study is introduced “communication” and how it is defined. After we found out what communication is, its definition we will described the company FIEGE, its structure, activities, and development needs. The next part is about research, research questions, methodology, techniques and description of analysis. In this part is going to be explained: how the research is realized, what is the expectation of the research, how it is applied, analyzed and concluded at the end. After the research part comes knowledge base of the study where are written a theoretical findings about studied subject. At first is described what communication is, which channels and strategy in communication are.

Implementation describes stages that the research is going to take in account in this study. This part is composed of preparation, selection of participants, organization, and evaluation of the research. Possible results and description of conclusion are also part of implementation in this thesis. Research analysis and collusion is the last part of this thesis. At this stage are written what are the research questions and the answers of respondents. Conclusion represents the result of the study. Outcome of this thesis is a plan for development that answers a question, how the communication can be improved in FIEGE group.

## 1.1 The company FIEGE

FIEGE Group is a family owned logistics company and was established in 1873 by Johan Joseph Fiege in Muenster, Germany. Company’s main focus is on contract logistics, which is complex of following activities: warehousing, manipulation, transport and distribution, air & ocean services, engineering and value added services and e-commerce, e-fulfillment, and customized services. The company performance is mainly on business to business sector with focus on eight industries: fashion, healthcare, and industrial goods, fast moving consumer (e.g. food) and durables consumer goods (e.g. fridge, car), retail, media and tires.

FIEGE has 11 000 employees, 200 branches and operates in 18 countries in 2012. The company growth was double in past years and in 2010 it has reached 1.5 billion euros. ([www.fiege.com](http://www.fiege.com))

## 1.2 Description of the company structure

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is always the person responsible for all activities in the country and all chiefs of departments are reporting to country CEO. All countries have to report their activities to regional CEO and he or she controls all the organization activities and reports them to the management board. Case company has functional organization structure, on the top of the organization is CEO and under him or her are different departments. Head of departments have their own role. On the top of the department is always a responsible person for each department activities and results. (Lynch 2006, 590)

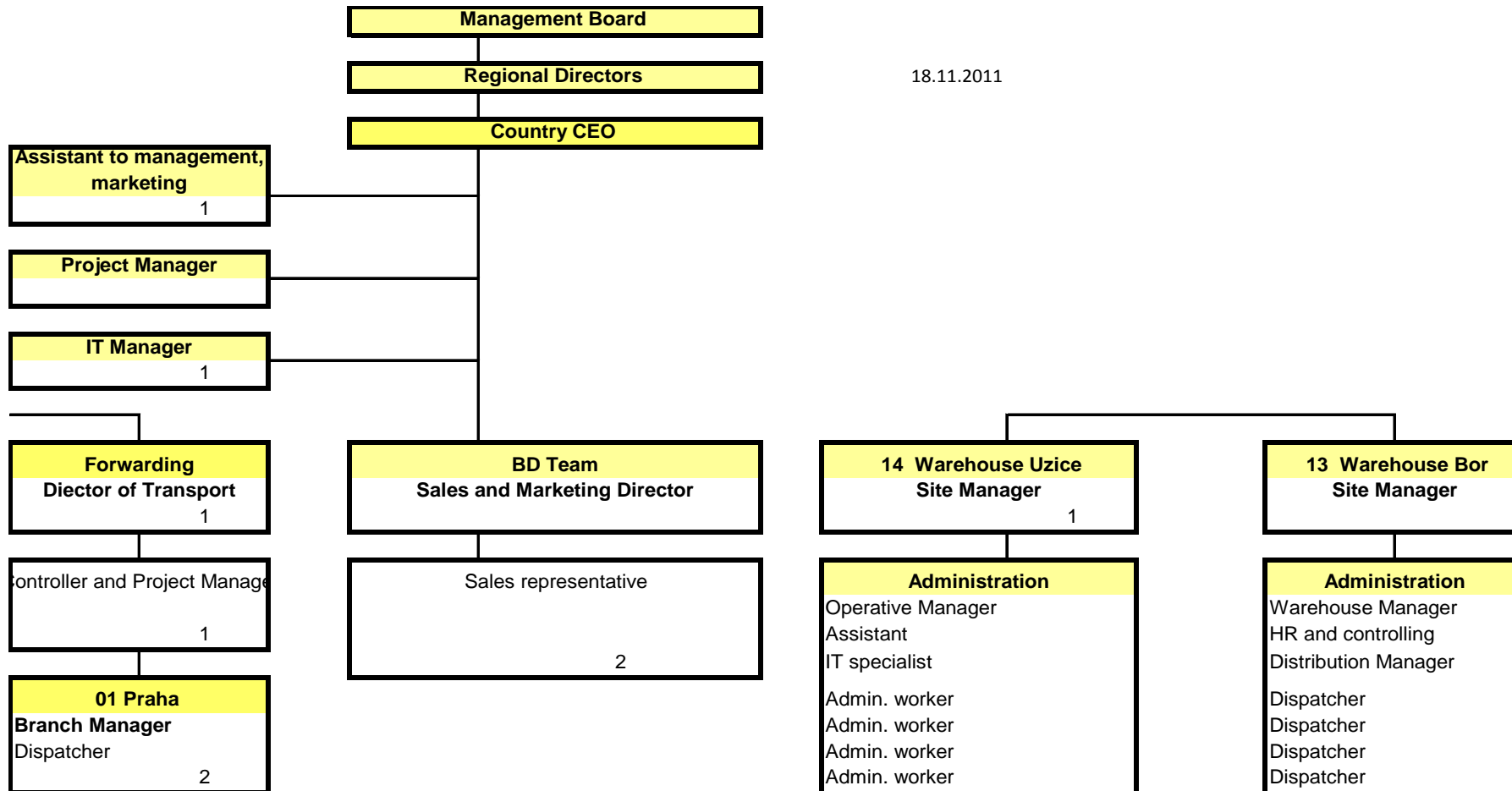
FIEGE group has the similar structure in all countries and usually have following departments: Marketing, Business Development (BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT), Human Resources (HR), Operations, Information technology (IT), Financials and Chief Executive Officer of country organization, who is responsible for activities of all departments. Communication between departments and individuals is on national and international level and English is used as main corporate language. ([www.fiege.com](http://www.fiege.com))

The Figure number 1. represents FIEGE organization structure, according to the Lynch definition (2006, 590) FIEGE has functional organization structure. FIEGE is family owned company, and in the board management is fifth generation of the Fiege family. On the top of the company is management board; below the board are directors responsible for regional activities. CEO of a country report to regional directors, each CEO is responsible for all country activities. Below CEO is his or her Assistant, and team of managers or chiefs who are in charge for different kind of activities in the organization. Usually each manager has its team of employees such as administration workers. Administration workers report to their managers or chiefs. The table below shows how the organization structure in the Czech Republic.



Figure 1: FIEGE Company structure:

18.11.2011



### 1.3 Description of current development needs

A FIEGE group operates on a worldwide level and the advantage for company can be that the company is international, its activities, branches and individuals can cooperate on same or similar projects and support each other from different countries. Currently the cooperation between countries organization is not proactive enough and FIEGE does not efficiently benefits from the improvement of the current international communication. Current communication inside the company has been affected because of several management and organization changes in past six years. Corporate communication needs to develop communication inside in country organizations and then between different countries. Country organization is composed by employees and management that is structured in branches, its departments and its heads.

Nowadays each brand has its own way of communication between colleagues, departments, management board and other countries. Employees use different tools in their communication and have different structures, strategies and form in their dialogs. Every country use communication tools such as e-mail, telephone and mobile. In some countries are implemented social media tools, Intranet, and SAP/CRM (Customer Relationship Management), Videoconferences, Telephone conferences, Skype and other tools for communication.

Internal communication is keen for development of trade processes and efficient cooperation between individuals, groups, branches and country organizations. This study researches and plans how to improve corporate internal communication and make processes and sharing knowledge more efficient than it is now. The main focus of the report is to find what the main communication problem is, and find solution for improvement of the current situation in the company.

## 2 Research

In this section of the study are described steps of the research and further information about research objective. To begin with the research, researcher has to define a research problem and objective. For better understanding of the studied subject, researcher has to classify research questions, these questions are written in the part 2.2. Researcher has to plan the process and application of the research in practice. Research design and application contain the plan of research process and its application. Data analysis and outcome contain information how researcher analyzed collected data and what is the expected outcome of the research.

## 2.1 Research problem

Argenti (2007, 139) tried to find how company can analyze if internal communications is effective or not. The key are employees, their behavior and how do they react and talk about the company. To discover what the employees think about their company helps to identify problems that occurred (Hargie & Dennis 2009, 27). Audit is an instrument how to determine, and evaluate communication efficiency in community. "Audit provides an objective picture of what is happening in the company compared with what senior manager has been told". (Hargie & Dennis 2009, 28) To find out the current status of company communication an audit can be used.

Internal communication improvement will lead to more efficient and effective processes and profitability of the organization, motivation growth and employees will get familiar with the company vision and mission statement. When employees get more familiar with company vision and understand what is the company aiming to, it will lead to staff satisfaction. (Bob & Macy 2008, 23-24)

The main objective of the thesis is an improvement of current communication between workforce and management of the company. The thesis has analyzed the main issues in internal communication, and the outcome would be the plan how to improve internal communication. Improvement of internal communication will bring several benefits to the company and develop current efficiency.

## 2.2 The main research questions

Main research question is "What is main communication problem and how it can be improved?" Below the main research question are sub questions than are linked to the main question. They will be answered in conclusion.

### **What is the main communication problem and how it can be improved?**

How can be the internal communication more efficient?

Can improvement of communication strategy rise employees' motivation?

Can development of internal communication improve cooperation between employees and management?

The thesis is going to use a qualitative research method based on existing theory and interviews. All findings will be established on the case study. The theoretical part will be based on books, published articles, electronic sources and data provided from the company.

### 2.3 Research method and difference between quantitative and qualitative methodology

To understand the difference between quantitative and qualitative research and when to use which methodology is fundamental for choosing right research methodology. When the interest of a subject is on how often or why things happen in the company then the form of research would be quantitative. But if a focus is going to be on the meaning or process, for example why people understands or are motivated then for deep understanding of the subject is going to be used qualitative technique. (Cooper & Schindler 2006, 196)

Quantitative research method focuses on a subject that can be applied on the amount or quantity. Qualitative method is linked or holds quality or kind. For example when we want to know why people think or behave, then we are talking about “motivation research”, which is a type of qualitative research. Motivation research method use interviews as a technique to study an objective in depth. Other quantitative techniques can be word association test, sentence completion test, story completion test and other techniques. (Dhawan 2010, 70)

Qualitative research can be used to study field such as communication, psychology, sociology, or economics. (Cooper & Schindler 2006, 196) The decisions area can be for instance market segmentation, advertising, product development, productivity, brand image and design. Question that can be used in quantitative research are for example “what can we do about...?” or “what employees think about implementation of new...?” and “are they going to be motivated by implementing new..?”. (Cooper & Schindler 2006, 197)

For internal communication survey is going to be used qualitative research method. Subject of the study needs to observe in deep to understand the current processes and meaning. An interview is going to be a technique for deep understanding of the subject area. Individual interview is the survey method implemented by the researcher in this study.

### 2.4 Research design

Research design describes the process of collection, measurement and analysis of data. It contains several steps and answers to the study topic. What is the purpose of the study, why, where and how it going to be complete, what is required to study the subject, how long does

it take, what techniques are going to be used and how the data are going to be analyzed. All this has to be answered in research design. (Dhawan 2010, 36) Research design has to contain at least following main information: description of the research problem, procedures and technique used for research, participants and methods used is the process of analysis data. (Dhawan 2010, 37)

Before working on research design the idea, work plan and plan how to do things and in what order has to be clear. Research design contains 1) basic idea, 2) viewpoints, 3) theoretical framework, 4) time plan, 5) method, 6) research questions, and 7) framework and data of collection. (Erikson & Kovalainen 2008, 25) “Research design is the plan of structure of investigation how to obtain answers to research question”. It includes all steps needed for accomplishing the study from theory to practical implementation and analysis. (Cooper & Schindler 2006, 138)

Research design has to consider following factors: resources for finding information, ability and skills of researcher and his stuff, in case he or she has any, studied problem, nature of the problem, time line and budget. (Dhawan 2010, 39) Research design is a plan that describes all steps needed to accomplish the survey from choice of the topic to final analysis. Research design support researcher in his or her studies and help to accomplish his or her work.

#### 2.4.1 Classification of designs

Design can be divided into three different types: (Cooper & Schindler 2006, 138)

- exploratory
- descriptive
- causal

Exploratory studies are used when the researcher does not have clear idea of the study problem and does not know what kind of issues is he or she going to meet during the research. During the study is a further development the study area, problem, concept, operational definition and final design. Exploration study can be used as testing research when is discover if the research problem is worth to explore or not.

(Cooper & Schindler 2006, 143)

Exploratory study is used to seek what is happening and understand the problem. In an exploratory study are use three methods of survey: literature sources, interview of experts in the field or group interviews. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 133)

Descriptive study is opposite of exploratory, before the research starts is clear what is the research problem, what theory and hypothesis are going to be used, and structure of the work is defined upfront. Formalized studies has questions to be answered with application on a specific group (Cooper & Schindler 2006, 151)

“Descriptive research is to portray profile of persons, events or situations”. The study can be linked to exploratory or explanatory studies and extend the study further. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 134)

Casual or explanatory studies focus affectivity on a specific subject and reaction on the subject and why it effected that way. Basic of this type is on hypothesis testing on a different kind of subject in a specific group of focus. (Cooper & Schindler 2006, 159)

Explanatory study can be used for analyzing the behavior of customers or workers.

In explanatory studies can be used quantitative or qualitative research method depended on the expected findings. The outcome of this work is related to relationships and between people in exact situations. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 134)

Following thesis is going to use explanatory type of research design. Questions regarding the subject of interest and association group are planed upfront. Before the research starts with research, researcher has to specified group and application of the idea.

#### 2.4.2 Elements of research design

Qualitative research does not follow a plan in every detail, but it needs to have established several elements in the process. Most of the qualitative research designs allow changes in the philosophical and methodological commitments, collection and data analysis.

Following elements should be planed before the research starts.

(Erikson & Kovalainen 2008, 26)

Research area and research topic, when deciding what kind of research area it is going to be is important to know if the area and topic are researchable. Research ability means that about the subject of studied interest are written some articles or books and the topic has to be attracted for the researcher to study.

Formulating of research questions, research questions can be divided to different kinds for example to descriptive or explanatory and longitudinal or cross-section. Descriptive research question are implemented on described research design and explanatory usually explore

causes. Longitudinal question focus on changes of the process over time and cross-sectional is interested in descriptive analysis (development on market, human behavior).

In qualitative research the methodology is linked to theory and design regarding the emphasis with these two parts. It is important to understand what kind of methodology it is going to be used.

Choice of theories connected to research questions and empirical study of the subject.

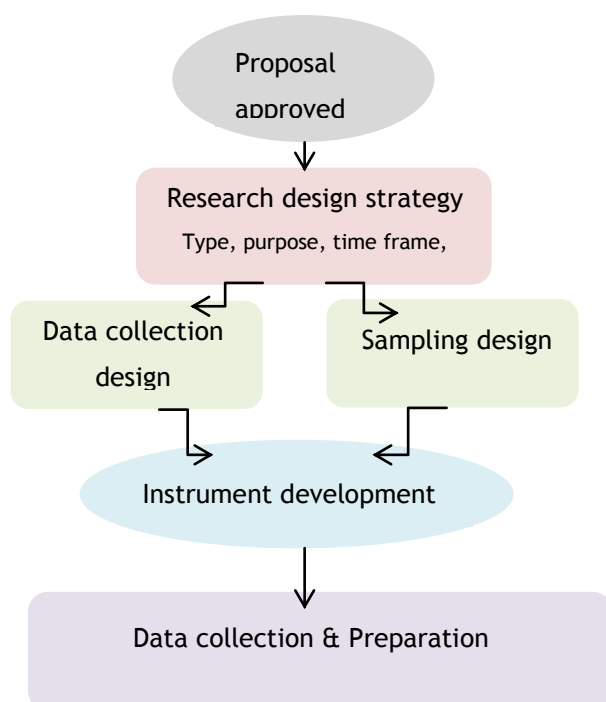
Design and data collection should be written in order or good overviews such as diaries where the data can be used in the empirical part of thesis. (Erikson & Kovalainen 2008, 26-29)

The parts of research design can be also defined in categories and their options. The first category is clarification of the research question and according to that can be chosen exploratory or formal study. Method of data collection can be monitoring or communication study. The power of the researcher that involves variables may be experimental or ex post facto. Determination of study is descriptive or casual and time frame has two types cross sectional and longitudinal. The subject of interest can research as a case study or statistical. Environment defines the scope of option such as field setting, laboratory research or simulation. Last categories in the research design are participants' perception of study activity that can be defined into actual routine or modify routine.

(Cooper & Schindler 2006, 139)

Before starting a research, it has to be clear for the researcher what kind of field his or her study contain and clear what is the main research question and how to achieve results. The basic elements of research are: specification of the research area, choice of topic, selection of the research question, choice of theories and methodology, defining environment and participants.

#### 2.4.2.1 Design in the research process, (Cooper & Schindler 2006, 138)



From the figure is clear that the research process starts after research proposal is approved and when researcher knows what is going to be his or her research topic.

Next step is design of research where is important to determinate type of the research, time line, scope and environment that is going to be in the process.

After research design come collections of information via two different methods: data collection or sampling design.

Instrument development is review of question that are going to be answered and development of content and survey technique.

Data collection and preparation is next

#### 2.4.3 Methodology

It is important to choose the right strategy for finding the right information and achievement of the right outcome. Each strategy can be applied on exploratory, descriptive or explanatory research. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 135) To use the right strategy means to use the right methodology. "Methodology is an approach to the process of the research, encompassing a body of methods". Methodology includes primary and secondary data. Primary data are data collected from surveys, experiments or other original sources. Secondary data can be used from books, journal or other existing theory. (Collis & Hussey 2009, 73)

Methodologies used in research are; experiment, survey, case study, action research, grounded theory, ethnography and archival research. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 135)

More description about each methodology is described below.



#### 2.4.3.1 Experiment

An experiment research method is for clarifying the relationship between variables. Traditionally one variable which can be a person of the group is the manipulator and other variable is the subject of studies. The independent variable is the one which reaction is examined and observed. (Collis & Hussey 2009, 74)

Experiments are mainly used in psychology or social science. In practice experiments can look for reaction of the group of people or person on new product, promotion, definition, purchasing behavior or discussion. Experiment is applicable on employees or students in selected organization, but cannot answer many practical management questions.

(Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 137-138)

#### 2.4.3.2 Survey

Surveys are implemented on deductive approaches when need to be answered what, who, where, how much and how many questions. Surveys are used for collecting a large amount of data to analyze large groups such as statistics of population. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 138) Surveys can be divided into descriptive or analytical, when descriptive provides a view on the sign in specific time or several of times (customer survey on new products). Analytical surveys express the relationships between one or more variables. Methods for collecting data when choosing a survey methodology can be questionnaires, internet questionnaires, telephone interviews or face to face interviews.

(Collis & Hussey 2009, 77)

#### 2.4.3.3 Case study

“Strategy for doing research that involves an empirical investigation of a particular phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence.” The meaning of the definition is an application of cases study or studies on primary data. Case study method can involve single case study versus multiple cases or holistic case versus embedded case.

(Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 139)

Understanding of deep knowledge on a subject or in a specific time is used this methodology case study. It may be difficult to find case study and apply it on thesis and its topic, but when it is find it explore the knowledge of the subject. Case study needs to involve society and interact with the society. (Collis & Hussey 2009, 82)

#### 2.4.3.4 Action research

Action research is used for applied research to find the most effective approach to implement change in partly controlled environment. Goal of the research method is a solution and contribution to science while cooperation between researcher and group or individuals that are involve in the research. Action research is similar to case study it's applied on the situation, that it observers the situation and result are possible improvements. This type of research is can be applied when organization needs communication improvements between staff and chief officers (Collis & Hussey 2009, 81)

Action research is mostly concentrated on changes in the organization. The process of action research is determination of context and purpose, then diagnosing, planning, and taking action and evaluation of the studied subject. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 141)

#### 2.4.3.5 Grounded theory

Grounded theory is methodology can be utilized explanation of behavior, for instance of customers or employees. This strategy starts with data collection, then continues with generation of the data and concludes by observation of current data. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 142) "Grounded theory is a reaction to positivist studies that starts with a theoretical framework, establish hypothesis and collect data than can be used to test thy hypothesis", according Glaser and Strauss. This study can be applied on demonstration of analytic framework, importance of cases, and illumination of data. (Collis & Hussey 2009, 84)

#### 2.4.3.6 Ethnography

In ethnography researcher is a part of social group in which he shares knowledge, study behavior and observes his or her findings. The goal of the study is the examination of understanding human behavior in a different kind of activities from the view of researched person or group. (Collis & Hussey 2009, 78)

Ethnography demand researcher adaptation in the social group, researcher has to build trust of the group, understand the thinking of the group and behaviors. This method takes lots of time for the researcher to explain the social group reactions and views. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 142-143)

#### 2.4.3.7 Archival research

For archival research method are used stored documents, records and other data to analyze and examine the historical changes in an organization. In this research can be problematic to find all data needed to the conclusion of observed material.

(Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 143)

#### 2.4.3.8 Conclusion

Methodology used in this thesis is going to be a case study where is going to be applied the explanatory methodology. Researcher is part of the company community and he is going to use existing theory to understand what the situation in the company is and explain the current situation of internal communication. Primary data are going to be at first interviews and then second part of primary data will be provided from the company and evaluated by the researcher. For secondary data sources is going to be used bibliography related to internal corporate communication.

The process of case study research is consisted of five stages. At first it needs to be selected case or case that is similar to the topic of thesis to show that from the topic can be generalized larger population. Preliminary investigation is a stage where is defined what is the purpose and approach of the research. Data collection is a next step in the case study research in which is specified the process of collecting data, when, where and how. Data analysis and written report are the last steps in the case study technique.

(Collis & Hussey 2009, 82-83)

#### 2.4.4 Research techniques

Qualitative research can be prepared by a different kind of techniques. The techniques are connected to questions of the research. Several types of techniques can be applied on different kind of research problems and different approaches.

(Cooper & Schindler 2006, 143-144)

Method applicable for qualitative research can be interviews, protocol analysis, repertory grid technique, diary method and others. In this survey is going to be used interview for collecting the primary data. (Collis & Hussey 2009, 143)

#### 2.4.4.1 Interviews

Interview is a technique for collection data in qualitative research methodology. Interview can be realized individually or in groups. Interviews can be divided into three types: unstructured semi structured or structured. When the interview does not have any specific questions or order of topics it is unstructured type. If it has few questions to start with and people can follow up and extend the topics to be discussed. Structure type of interview has specific questions related to a topic, in predefined order and style of questioning them. (Cooper & Schindler 2006, 204)

In this exploratory study is going be to be used semi-structured interviews, which will help to find out what is happening in the company. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 313)  
By semi-structured interviews can become to finding what kind of relationships is between participants. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 314)

Participants who are going to answer an interview are going to be employees from case company. Respondents will be asked open questions to find out what are their opinions and views on internal communication and relations to it. Respondents will be selected from different kind of business departments to understand differentiation from a professional point of view.

#### 2.4.5 Sampling: participants of the research

Sampling is basically choosing of participant for research. Sampling can be divided into three groups: purposive, snowball or convenience. Purposive sampling is selecting participants that are exceptional for their characteristics, attitude, experience or other factors. Snowball sampling is a selection for similar or different individualities. A convenience is the choice of available individuals. (Cooper & Schindler 2006, 204)  
Sampling is not going to be used in this survey to support a methodology.

#### 2.5 Application of research and data collection

Collection of primary data and secondary data is written in further analysis. Primary data are collected in the practical part of the research by researcher. Researcher observes primary data by interviewing preselected respondents and their answers to a related topic. Secondary data are expressed in the theoretical part of the thesis and partly implemented in the interviewing. Researcher has to take into consideration both primary and secondary data while preparation and analysis.

## 2.6 Data analysis

To analyze qualitative data are used several qualifying methods. For analysis of the primary data received from interviews are going to be used transcribing qualitative data. Most of the interviews are recorded and transcribing of interviews helps to analyze answer and also reaction of respondents. Important that interviewer understands the content of answers also the indication of respondents. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 475)

Check list for transcribing your interviews includes following points:

1. Think of analysis and how transcription can help you to make it easier.
2. Choose interviewer and respondents.
3. Include interviewer questions in transcription
4. Save transcribed data in different folders for each interview.
5. Name files should be anonym, but with possible recognition who was interviewed.
6. Accuracy of transcript should be checked, deleted and updated.
7. Save data to USB mass storage device to secure them.

(Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 476)

For an elaboration of the interview is going to be used following activities:

1. categorization
2. unitizing data
3. recognizing relationship and developing the categories that are used to facilitated it
4. developing and testing theories to reach conclusion

Categorization helps to keep data in an understandable order and format the will be easy to analyze after words. Categorization means labeling, coding of data that are used in the research such as literature, interviews, participants and other data.

After categorization activity comes to unitizing data that has been collected by the researcher. The meaning of this step is dividing collected data into units under a different kind of categories.

Recognizing relationship and developing the categories is a stage of analysis of data used in selecting the important notes that are related to the process of analysis and filter focus of research. Developing and testing hypotheses and proportions is a process where is recognized the relationship between categories and connection between them. In this stage is important to find hypothesis and studies that are related to findings.

## 2.7 Determinate expected outcome

The expected outcome of the research is an implementation plan for internal communication improvements. In the plan are going to be described current problems in internal communication and explanation of those problems. The plan is going to contain specific steps needed for improvement. The implementation plan is going to be written at the end of research and it will conclude all information collected.

## 2.8 Conclusion

Research part has described in details research problem and main research questions. The main focus of the research is internal communication, research aims to analyze the current situation in the company and answer main research question, which is: "What is main communication problem and how it can be improved?" After research objective is clear, researcher has selected method, techniques and design. Since subject of the research demands deep understanding of the subject, research method is qualitative. Researcher has chosen case study methodology and individual interviews as technique in the research design. Application of the research has included both primary and secondary data that are used in data analysis part. Data analysis explains how researcher prepares data for analysis, elaborates them and analyze. Expected outcome of the research is plan for improvement.

## 3 Knowledge base

In this part of thesis is explained the meaning of internal communication, history, activities, processes and channels. In the knowledge base part are presented several theories from different kind of sources to give a better understanding and different views on studied topic.

### 3.1 Internal communication

First of all is important to know what corporate communication is. Cornelissen writes the meaning of corporate communication in the following definition: "Corporate communication is a management function that offers a framework for effective coordination of all internal and external communication with the overall purpose of establishing and maintaining favorable reputations with stakeholders groups upon which the organization is dependent" (Lynch 2011, 5). In this definition corporate communication is explained as a function. For all in and out messages in organizations are responsible senior management or communication department, according to the organization structure.

Communication is a process of a receiver and sender that includes sources, encoding and decoding, messages, noise, competencies, and field of experience, context, effect and channels. The communication process purpose is based on sharing of information and social interaction between humans. (Shockley-Zalabak 2009, 10-11)

The corporate communication is divided into external and internal communication. External communication is with the external communicators such as media, customers, partners, suppliers etc. Internal communication also named as staff communication or employee communication within the company. Internal communication is between employees and management in the organization. (Cornelinssen 2011, 164)

Internal communication changed in past years and developed in many ways such as technological when employees use a different kind of tools for sharing information within the company for instance emails, Internet blogs, post casts, chat and social networking. Face to face communication is still important in every day's working life, but more and more technologies are in use for workforce. Also the way of communication within the organization changes, companies invest more effort in internal communication, because is important for them to have well-trained and motivated employees. Managers are responsible for information share in the company and for improvement of staff communication. (Cornelinssen 2011, 165)

Argenti explains in his theory how employees are a significant factor in company success more than any other constituency. According to Argenti "Internal communication became business function that drives a company's financial situation in 21<sup>st</sup> century business." Also in his theory internal corporate communication is described as a tool that leads corporate culture and potential organization change. (2007, 137)

Dolphin presents internal corporate communication as a tool to create company image inside the organization. (2005, 171) His definition of internal communication is "transaction between individuals and groups at different levels, specialization to intend to design and redesign organization to coordinate daily activities." (Dolphin 2005, 172)

Internal communication is defined in a different kind of theories. In some is definite as function, tactic, strategy and in some other ways as conversation or study. To summarize what is the internal communication definition we can say that internal communication from the practical point of view is a conversation between employer and employee; in both ways employer has to also listen to an employee and understand his or her topic, issue or interest and an

employee has to listen to employer. Internal communication is also a dialog between employees.

Organizations have to communicate to their employees; each employee is representative of the organization on the outside which displays the activities inside. For companies is important to have satisfied employees, because workforces deliver products or services to customers and also represent the company. If employees are identified with the organization then more satisfy they are. Internal communication is a discipline and responsibility of the management board. The role is to serve information to their workforce for better understanding of the vision and mission statements. Internal communication is the key element for having satisfied and well informed staff and key for organization profitability. (Cornelissen 2011, 164)

This thesis will examine internal communication in company FIEGE, at the first stage it will review the current communication situation between individuals and groups inside the organization. After reviewing the current situation in the group quantitative research method will be used by interview managers of the company and in order to understand the current situation.

### 3.2 History of internal communication, development and changes

Communication in general have changed in the past years, Szukala & O'Connor (2001, 10-11) in his book describes communication revolution, which started in 2000. Communication has been affected by technologies, people no longer sending letters to customers, but sending e-mails, use mobile phones, blogs, newsletter and other media. Globalization and Internet use had the highest impact on working life, attitudes, behavior and growth the power of influences communication for corporation.

Organization changed the format of communiqué, strategy has developed and the view in a corporation on the function has a different meaning, it is consider as important purpose in corporate activities. (Cornelissen 2011, 33)

### 3.3 Activities in internal communication

Activities can be divided into official and non-official. Official activity is usually organized activity such as meeting, video call, report etc. and the un-official could be discussion about the official action after it happened. For example official activity can be when IT (Infor-



mation Technology) department is having group meetings in the morning and in the afternoon IT director meets colleague from a business department at kitchen and tells him how did the meeting go and what was discussed, which can be consider as non-official one.

E-mail, voice mail, report, annual and quarterly report, meeting, videoconferences, newsletter, Intranet and other are activities in internal communication. (www.leehopkins.net)

### 3.4 Communication as process

Communication can be understood as a process that supports the state of delivering knowledge and social interaction between employees. In the process are described all the actions in communication and what can occur during a communication process on daily bases. Organization communication interaction between individuals can be divided into an organization as: people, messages, meaning, and purpose. (Shockley-Zalabak 2009, 16)

Another theory determinates that: „effective and efficient processes are vital to internal communication.”(Szukala & O’Connor 2008, 90) Both theories have reviewed communication in varied ways, in one is communication seen as process and in the other is influenced by processes in an organization.

From the management point of view business objectives has to be distributed to teams and individuals to achieve planned goals. Mission and vision statement has to be promoted by the team and the team has to be familiar with these statements. Budget and plans has to be a mirror of company activities. Everyone in the company should understand the direction/goals of a company and be familiar with steps needed to achieve planed goals.

(Szukala & O’Connor 2008, 80)

How the distribution process works and what is the best way of delivering information to others, is described in the communication processes. Communication processes are described below in four different areas in organization communication as: people, message, meaning and purpose.

#### 3.4.1 Organization communication as people

In organization all communication is influenced by people, their interactions, and interpersonal relationships affect their work. Communication can be also realized across borders via different kind of networks affected by cultures and languages. Organization communication

definition explains that “communication occurs across networks of people who seek to obtain a variety of objectives requiring communication interaction.”

#### 3.4.2 Organization communication as messages

Communication is a process of creation and exchange of messages via channels with different frequency, quantity and type. Thanks to technology, messages can be delivered all around the globe and involves more participants in a communication process.

#### 3.4.3 Organization communication as meaning

Meaning in an organization is created by the members of the organization and not by the organization that is an important point to remember. Individuals and groups behavior, and interaction, is a basement for perception and affect all organization activities.

#### 3.4.4 Organization communication as purpose

The purpose of each organization is to organize, plan, make decisions, control and coordinate. In the purpose, part of communication is to achieve that members involved in the communication are aiming to the organizational objectives with their environments.

Stanley Deetz (1994) suggested that communication is a social process in which meanings, identities, psychological states, social structure, environment can change, produce or reproduce the organization communication. (Shockley-Zalabak 2009, 16-17)

Communication as a process can be understood in different ways and definitions. Szukala & O'Connor have described organization communication in four different processes: people, messages, meaning and purpose. Organization communication is realized by people, and first process is named people. Secondly communication always distributes a message, so second process is message. Meaning and purpose in communication is created by individuals or groups in an organization and both influence communication. From the definition is understandable that communication is realized, created, distributed and continued by individuals and groups and influenced by their activities.

### 3.5 Communication channels

Strategic and business planning is fundamental for internal communication and channels helps to coordinate activities and bring results within an organization. Manager role is to set up the right channels for internal communication via key management processes, such as planning, delivery of the plan and objectives, mission, vision, and budget.

(Szukala & O'Connor 2008, 80)

Channels are used for delivering messages to participants involved in the communication.

“Channels can be common face-to-face interaction, group meetings, memos, letters, computer-mediated exchanges, websites, presentation and teleconferencing.” Organizations usually work with a different kind of channels for a different kind of activities.

(Shockley-Zalabak 2009, 36)

Selection of media is not the key factor for internal communication strategy plan at first it should be determinate what has to be communicated. Messages should be as simple as possible that everybody can understand and in a language that the audience feels comfortable with. Many companies use more than one media for communication, it is not recommended to relay on one tool. (Smith & Mounter 2008, 79-91)

#### 3.5.1 Face to face

Face to face is still one of the most common appreciated methodologies in communication by workforce in any sector. This technique is used in one to one person or in a group called “en masse”(French word meaning group) . One to one technique can bring misunderstandings in a corporation: If senior managers do not deliver information in the right way understandable for people on different levels and positions and assumes that information can be delivered to everybody in the same way then there can occur the misunderstanding. For managers, it is suggested to develop their skill in the face to face communication and work on their knowledge to avoid any communication gaps. Effective messages in the face to face communication should be simple, easy to understand, involve feedback and check of the right understanding of the messages. This method is used in briefings, progress checking or individual sessions.

“En masse” internal communication where is more than one person involves a need to be prepared upfront. Simplicity is keen in this kind of interaction. As support in communication can be used different kind of media and materials. In “en masse” should not be delivered the bad news such as redundancy, those problems shall be always discussed in one to one process. It is important that in group meetings is set up agenda, topics that are going to be delivered

to the group and received feedback. Mass face meeting can be implemented when is demanded to deliver a message to a large group at the same time.

(Smith & Mounter 2008, 80-82)

### 3.5.2 Print

Print vehicle is a traditional way of delivering news, but is not environmentally friendly. Companies still use a print version of documents for delivering messages: for instance BBC used both print and online media, print for reflection and online for immediate reaction. Internal corporate news or information can be published via print, but too many of them do not have efficient reaction. Print can support face to face, and “publication give time for reflection and feedback”. Format of print media can be magazines, newspapers, newsletters or board sheets. Publications can support face to face communication, reach groups for long distance, regular print reiterate messages. Print negative influence is the use of paper, which is not environmentally friendly.

(Smith & Mounter 2008, 82-83)

### 3.5.3 Broadcast and audio-visual

Broadcast and audio-visual form of communication are more efficient in involving an audience into a conversation. Moving images has a better effect than print media and this form of communication can replace face to face communication and connect communicators from different locations. Cost of technology that involves for instance audio conferences or broadcast is high. Video, DVD, audio cassettes, broadcast are a part of this type of dialog.

(Smith & Mounter 2008, 85)

### 3.5.4 Internet driven

Intranets started in the mid 1990's, and in 1999 only 65 % uses intranets. “Intranets, e-mails and other screen based media are not easy to read” such as print material. Different kind of population needs a different kind of media in use (for example old people have different demands than younger people, younger are use new technology). With new technology when information can be shared via mobile phones thanks to 3G technology, the information share

became faster and more flexible. Print media gives more time to reflect than Internet driven media. (Smith & Mounter 2008, 86)

#### 3.5.5 Corporate glue - games, etc.

Connect people with the company vision, mission, messages and their activities can support gaming and other social activities. It is a trial to meet messages and workforce activities including front line employees. Performance, creativity, networking of each employee can be developed by socializing within the team and management. Sports, quizzes, games are methods used on the corporates to build long term relationships so called "social glue". These methods are used to keep good relationships with a customer and also for internal company members. (Smith & Mounter 2008, 87-88)

#### 3.5.6 Events

Mass meetings of all employees can be determinate as event. Most of the events are organized for good news celebration or announcements. Events help to send the key message in the group and connect people from different kind of locations. (Smith & Mounter 2008, 88-89)

#### 3.5.7 Environment

Environment in what employees are working is linked to communication too. What kind of environment influence workforce communication. Job titles are also a part of the communication environment. Titles determinate what are people responsible for and specify their activities and roles in communication.

(Smith & Mounter 2008, 89)

#### 3.5.8 Corporate social responsibility

Corporate social responsibility became more important to companies to have from internal and also external point of view. Employees who are involved in charity and social support become more loyal to a company: if corporate social support is related to chairman's relatives, friends, organization or some odds school close to company residence, the effect of imple-

mentation of social responsibility is low and does not involve all employees. Organizations should select an activity or support that involves all employees and bring them together to cooperate for instance working in a specific community.

(Smith & Mounter 2008, 89-91)

### 3.6 Responsibilities in internal communication

Purpose of communication has change in the past year, large corporation realized the importance and have communication departments or external support to help them with corporate communication in both ways external and internal. In corporate communication has main role: communication technician and manager.

Writing articles, editing or rewriting, grammar, spelling, creating design and brochures and other such a practical activities are done by a technician. Technician is not the decision-maker; he is the implementer of the decision that has been made by a manager.

Plan, strategy, meeting, budget, programmers, campaigns, results etc. are activities of manager, he or she also has to present ideas to management and participate on the decision making process. (Cornelissen 2011, 86-87)

Small size companies usually do not have communication departments and the responsible for communication is rather marketing specialist or CEO in the organizations. Role of this manager has to be technician and manager at the same time. In general managing director roles in this field is a leader and also promoter of the idea, motivator and support of workforce, achiever of efficiency and an instrument as communication help to fulfill these tasks. (Szukala & O'Connor 2008, 18)

### 3.7 Knowledge management

Knowledge management (KM) is sharing knowledge and experience with others. In the store where are three cashiers and one of them serves customers faster than the other two. If this good cashier shares his or her experience with the other two cashiers, the efficiency of the workforce will increase and that is the benefit for the shop. In other words, sharing working practices and knowledge with your colleagues will help the organization to develop processes and grown profitability. (Tourisha & Hargie 2004, 97)

KM has become an important part for many organizations, to have information on the right place at right time is crucial for businesses. Changes in a different kind of sites such as econ-

omy, culture, technology involves KM and organization has to have quick access to their information. (Thierauf 1999, 4)

Expertise corporations that are focused on knowledge work such as science, consultancy, and physicians is necessary to have KM in place. (Tourisha & Hargie 2004, 100)

Why is well-organized KM a competitive advantage for an organization? It has several reasons, for creating structure and processes for groups or individuals, support of knowledge work and filter the development needs, fast reaction on customer requests, replacement of workforce became easier with database systems, management of knowledge in the organization, less overload workers, globalized networking. (Tourisha & Hargie 2004, 101) KM helps companies to be more flexible and competitive on a market, provides saving in the group, extend the information flows in the group. KM displays Internal benchmark, Transfer of the best practices and Sharing and learning from mistakes. (Szukala & O'Connor 2008, 30)

Internal communication plays an important part in KM, to share report, formats, data files, experience and working practices is a basement for good KM. Communication is the most difficult part in KM, its formats, transformation, understanding and community acceptance keen for the right approach on KM.

### 3.8 Information communication technology (ICT)

Information technology or we can say computers technology influenced the information technology and the result is Information communication technology (ICT). (Hartley & Bruckmann 2002, 90)

Impact of ICT from the historical point of view the impact of digital technology on working and social life has been very fast. From written media, printing media from the fifties to electronic media that can be send to different receivers it has influence business, social life's and politics. (Hartley & Bruckmann 2002, 91)

#### 3.8.1 Effect of ICT on management

In a corporation the ICT influence management in a different kind of ways. For instance from the volume of information distributed a manager can become overloaded from the amount of data received. (Szukala & O'Conner 2008, 43)

Hierarchy with the easy access of a workforce to managing director is less respected in the community. Security for data access is significant; protection has to be implemented against viruses, entering secret information by the non-authorized persons. Pressure in ICT is on adapting the changes on working style, rules, processes, structures, distribution of information and others. (Szukala & O'Conner 2008, 44 )

Director has to process the data in organizational way in order to work successfully. First step is a collection of data (INPUT), after the data has to be filter and bring about to format (PROCESSING). Next is to transfer information to the right person or people who can work with them (OUTPUT). Last is to evaluate the information (FEEDBACK). If a manager will follow these four steps and always follow up on an action, than the data flow will have a positive influence on the organization. (Szukala & O'Conner 2008, 47)

Working with data is daily work of each manager; to follow the mention basics steps in the data flow is crucial and affecting the workforce. For instance if a manager asks an employee to collect data on issues that arise, then manager has to transfer the data into understandable way. Two steps are done, then the data has to be delivered to the right people or department a shared and finally the feedback has to provide. If manager only collect data and wont filter them or send to the right department the issue would never be solved or discussed. (Szukala & O'Conner 2008, 47)

Managers working life style has changed thank to ICT progress, from having a secretary for typing, storing and finding information and support with other activities. Today is expected that managers manage their activities on their own, because of the influence of ICT. The impact is less overhead cost, rise of efficiency and quality of information. Downsize of the impact of ICT is a replacement of human resource and reliability of working activities on technology. (Szukala & O'Conner 2008, 44)

### 3.8.2 Types of information and communication systems

Information can be handled by a different kind of systems, and those systems represent the content, delivery and format, users and implemented technology. Starting from the top, executive information system is used by the top management and contains organization internal systems, with information needed for decision making processes and sometimes is also connected to external systems such as databases.



Financial department may use transaction processing system, that support handling of the accounting, payments, and control system. Document management system helps organized different kind of documents in the company.

Enterprise resource planning (ERP) system help control all the activities in the group and keep plans on one place and shows how changes affect the company activities. Human resource management system, networks net applications are the main systems used in corporations. (Szukala & O'Conner 2008, 80)

### 3.8.3 Forms of electronic communication

Form of electronic communication has distinctive formats, in this section emails will be the tool that is described in more details. Because this the most common tool used in working and private life. (Szukala & O'Conner 2008, 58)

Bulletin boards it is a discussion forum, where everybody can publish a message and react on the message and write their comments. Intranet is a medium for sharing information in a community such as the organization with no public access. Chat rooms are electronic meeting places, where people can share their interests and knowledge. These chat rooms are not synchronized and people can get lost in communication and topics, it is very informal way of communication. (Szukala & O'Conner 2008, 58)

Email is the most common tool; one user can communicate with another one or with a group of people. All messages can be stored in each user computer and an user can access them and review. (Szukala & O'Conner 2008, 58)

Advantages of email:

- Sometimes you never get a signal when you get a message, to not be disturbed.
  - You don't have to be online when someone sends you an email.
  - Speed transfer of documents or messages for other user who can be anywhere in the world.
  - Eliminate visual stepping, no need for face to face communication.
  - Individuals can communicate equally without hierarchy barriers.
  - Many users use it for communication that needs to be consistently.
- (Szukala & O'Conner 2008, 59)

Disadvantages of email:

- Quality and quantity, email communication can lead to overloading of people who are involved in communication and who does not concerned to that problem this can lead to slow down processes and decision making time.
- Securities, the information data that are transferred or delivered are not protected and some data can be misused.
- Expectation of a sender and receiver email communication allows democratic way of communication that can leads to several problems like overreactions, many solutions and suggestion to one problem, no respect to hierarchy levels.
- Slow down computers while sending large files of data.  
(Szukala & O'Conner 2008, 59)

The conclusion, advantages and disadvantages of email would be following like most innovations; the electronic communications discussed here have a mix of advantages and disadvantages.

For the manager, some advantages to be explored are: democratization of information can be used to faster team working speed of information exchange can increase efficiencies and save costs empowerment and delegation can be widely extended. Some of the disadvantages which require management are: information overload for all increased stress and security of information and systems is a new concern in all levels. (Szukala & O'Conner 2008, 60)

### 3.9 Communication strategy

In the room is a group of people waiting for a meeting to begin. People are talking about their activities, sports, politics, gossips from the company, movies and all of people talk to each other without any barriers. When the manager arrived to the meeting, and started with a PowerPoint presentation and all people in the room stop talking, one person is playing with his computer, one is answering emails, and one is checking his BlackBerry. When manager asked if there are any questions and if everybody understands, no one has any questions. Feedback from the meeting is that the presentation was good and clear. On this example which is written by Bos & Macy (2008, 25) is shown a practical example how the communication between manager and employees can be done. The question is why it is important for leaders to use communication strategy and develop it in their organization. If employees would have a similar discussion as it was before the meeting, with no barriers or shame to talk about a different kind of topic during the meeting then the meeting would be more interactive and efficient. Leader could introduce an issue or subject and involve all the attendees to discuss it together; outcome of this kind of discussion could be a solution or observation to the subject. Leaders write a business plans and according to them organization activi-

ties are planned, but most of people want to know what do they want them to do and what is the goal of the company. However leaders are the one who should answer these questions to workforce and explain them that everybody understands. If an employee does not know where the company is going and what he or she shall do, how the company can achieve any good results? (Bos & Macy 2008, 28)

Communication strategy performance affects company's activities in many levels. Good implementation of strategy provides multiple benefits to an organization. "Communication is the face of leadership" meaning that good communication supports leaders to present the direction of the company to employees and inspire them at the same time. Conversations bring people together and help them collaborate: "Communication is the key to collective action".

Involvement and motivation are factors that are created by communication. When managers is looking for development of a process in warehouse, he or she should ask the employee who works in the warehouse to find a solution, because the employees is the one who has the knowledge of the process and share it with a manager. (Bos & Macy 2008, 20) However by a survey is proved that when employees understand the strategy, what and when to take action, it bring good results to an organization. (Bos & Macy 2008, 22)

To implement a communication strategy in an organization have four main reasons, as it is described by Szukala & O'Conner (2008, 26). They divided them into: effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and competitive advantage. Institutes shall select their communication tools according the size and focus, that what will drive their effectiveness. Most of the companies do not have any communication strategy, but implementation of it to any organization will bring fast benefits and avoid duplicate or needlessly actions, that what presents efficiency. In house communication often involves a different kind of media or programs that are in use, but how many of them are connected or linked. Coherence of in house tools will support the collaboration in firms. Competitive advantage is depended on communication, to achieve companies goals are more affected by communication. Internally employees has to be familiar with company objectives, understand where is the company aiming to, because employees are the once who provide services or products, they are the key element of company reputation and success. (Szukala & O'Conner 2008, 27)

### 3.9.1 Action quotation

Determinates what leaders have to communicate to employees in order to deliver right message that creates an action. Knowledge and feelings are what leads employees to create an action. To deliver the right messages to employees, leaders have to think about what they

want employees to do in order to achieve results and how do they want them to do it. If managers find out what they want employees to do, then it comes to the next step and that is knowledge. Workforce has to know what to do how, and why. And why it is beneficial to them. "I'd do it even if they won't pay me" that the last part of action quotation. If an employee comes to this conclusion that he or she is happy with his or her work that it drives good results and overtime hours is not problem for them. Action quotation can be visualized as Know+ Feel = Do that what leaders has to prepare in communication.

(Bob & Macy 2008, 27-34)

### 3.9.2 People channels

In communication are always involved people they are the once who drive the communication and the most important channel. Communication is no longer depended only on leaders of an organization but also on other company members. People channel can be divided into four levels senior leader, Managers, Frontline Supervisor, Front line employees. People channel is the key for active exchange of ideas in the company from what the concern can benefit. For leaders I important to get feedback from all employees on all levels to defined problems and find a solution. Leaders can spread information via Intranets, post cats, newsletters, but the real interaction is in while conversation. Planning, budget, implementation is also required in people channel strategy. (Bob & Macy 2008, 35)

In the communication strategy eight elements play main roles: objective, audience, channels, formats, media and responsibilities, feedback and measurement and budget.

Objective determinates format and content of message that should be sending from sender to the receiver and the right approach of sending the message that is it understood correctly.

Next step is defining the audience, what kind of people are we going to tell the message, audience can be divided into small groups, but that may not be practical. After defining the objective and audience, then the channel can be selected such as face-to-face, interactive channels (e.g. mobile phones) or personal static channel (e.g. reports, letters, and memos), impersonal statistic channels (e.g. bulletins, boards, video, audio).

(Szukala & O'Conner 2008, 33)

Formats part specify what layouts, design and content is going to be used for communication. Choosing what media will be used such as traditional text, video, photographs, audio, movies, animation, games is also depended on the budget and content.

In the communication strategy media has some responsibilities.

Feedback and measurement: it is important to have feedback from the output of communication strategy, decide who will provide the feedback, when and how. What performance

should be measured in the communication activities? How can we ensure the feedback and inform about continuous improvement.

Budget- fixed budget is rare, none is impossible in many companies, the best option is fiscal budget- more specified in the planning stage (Szukala & O'Conner 2008, 35)

### 3.10 Conclusion

Knowledge part determinates secondary data that are collected by the researcher. In the first part is specified definition of internal communication, its history, activities, channels, processes and responsibilities. Knowledge management is closely linked to communication activities and therefore is mentioned in this section too. As the technology develops in communication are used technologies which are determined in section 3.8. Communication strategy is keen for development of internal communication, its definition and theoretical findings are defined in the last section of this knowledge base section.

## 4 Implementation

Research has been realized at company offices. The participants of the interviews were employees of the company that has been a part of the team and they have had different kind of experiences and focus in the group interviewed. All interviews have been individual, at first recorded and then transcribed into written document. Researcher has been prepared before the interview begun a checklist where were described possible questions and area of his or her area of interest, what should be observed by the research. After interviews have been transcribed into a written form, researcher has examined if any more interviews needs to be realized or not. If the researcher assumes that he has collected a sufficient amount of information for evaluation then analysis is the next step. When all data have been analyzed then evaluation and conclusion has to be created. The outcome of this thesis is an implementation plan.

### 4.1 Stages of the project in chronological order

First stage in the implementation part is the preparation for interviews and creating a checklist. Next step is the selection of participants, after is organization and realization of those interviews with a plan of time schedule. After the realization of interviews, then follow transcribing of interviews and evaluation of collected material and analysis.

#### 4.1.1 Interview's preparation, checklist

Checklist contains questions or areas that researcher should ask for. Researcher has prepared a checklist before all interviews are realized. Interviews should be created with open questions with focus on details. Responders shall always express their answers with whole sentences and reduce answers yes, no. Below are written several questions that researcher has asked all participants and are the basis for further analysis.

How do you feel about company meetings?

How would you evaluate company meetings?

- are they time consuming?
- are they efficient?
- do they answer all of your questions?

Are you familiar with the social media used in the group+ if yes what kind of media do use for your work? Do you find them helpful in your everyday working life?

- Intranet
- E-mails
- Websites
- Skype
- Facebook

What kind of tools do you use most at your everyday work?

- Online media (Google)
- Printed material/documents
- Video conference
- Phone/mobile phone
- others

Are you familiar with awareness of changes in the group? Are you familiar with personnel changed in the company?

- New customers
- Turnover
- Marketing and business activities

If not, are you interested to know something more about these areas?

How would you describe sharing of knowledge with different colleagues, support from management board and colleagues from different kind of departments?

What would you determine as the main problem in communication?

For an example:

- Timing- waiting too long for answers
- Language barriers- not able to communicate with all group member also from different kind of countries
- Company hierarchy

What do you think about reports that are delivered to the management board? Are they time consuming? Are they efficient? What would you suggest for improvement?

This checklist had the researcher at the interviews and used it as help to follow all areas of research. Checklist helps researcher to keep focus on the right subject and stick with all areas of interest. After checklist is created, researcher has to select participants for the interview.

#### 4.1.2 Selection of participants

Participants are selected according to their working focus and experiences. The aim is to collect data from team members who have different working experience and focus in their work. The selection of participants should give a researcher an understanding and different kind of opinions. Participants are going to be:

- Marketing specialist
- Business Development member
- Financial department member
- New employee

Researcher has expected to understand views from employees who have different communication experience and work in different fields. Researcher has selected new employee in order to get opinion from somebody who is new in the team and see the situation differently, than somebody who works in the company longer than two years. After interviewing different kind of people with different experience researcher has evaluated all interviews and got opinions from people with different working experience, who works in the company in different de-

partments. After participants are selected then has to be prepared time schedule of all interviews an arranged all meetings with selected participants.

#### 4.1.3 Organization of interviews- time line and meetings with participants

Interviews were in the company building, most of them during lunch or coffee breaks, when good opportunity for discussion was. Duration of the interviews was no longer than half an hour. Researcher has planned timing with members who were to be interviewed. With one member was planned a phone call, because the responder was not available to come to company's offices. During the phone call researcher made a notes and then transcribed all answers from the respondent. Realization of interview was planned for two weeks, when all interviews were arranged.

#### 4.1.4 Interviewing individuals

Interview has been recorded; researcher took notes during all interviews and then transcribed recorded data into written form. Transcribing of interviews has been done by the researcher after collecting of all interview's data. Researcher has to create a good atmosphere for interviewing and build trust with the responded. Researcher has to take notes during discussion and mark all reactions of employees to topics and questions. After all interviews have been transcribed, researcher has to evaluate collected data. Transcribed data and researcher note were used in further analysis. Notes form researcher reflex not only the answer, but also reaction of each respondent.

#### 4.1.5 Evaluation of interviews

Interviews are evaluated according the topic asked by the researcher as follows:

- Corporate meetings efficiency
- Use of Social media and tools used at work
- Knowledge share in the group
- Reporting
- Main communication problems in the group



Researcher analyzed answered questions and then evaluated findings. When finding has been evaluated then data has been prepared for analysis.

#### 4.1.6 Preparation for analysis

Researcher collected all the material needed for analysis: theoretical part and interviews with workforce the practical part. Based on the theoretical and practical researcher has analyzed findings. Conclusion is written at the end of each research area and it contains a form both theoretical and practical sources.

#### 4.2 Possible results and outcome

The aim of interviews is to discover how employees feel about current internal communication. What is for them time consuming and unnecessary. What workforce would suggest as possible improvements to the management board. What do they miss in communication and what needs immediate improvement. Outcome of the analysis is described in the plan of improvement 6.at the end of this report.

#### 4.3 Research analysis

In the following part is written questions or areas of the study. Each question belongs to different area that is linked to answers, understanding or meaning of each employee to each area. Under each question findings is written by the researcher and outcome to each researched part

#### 4.4 How do you feel about company meetings and how would you evaluate them?

The aim of this question was to understand during interviews, how employees on different positions, feel or think about corporate meetings. It was important for the researcher to understand how respondents see corporate meetings and what their opinions about them are.

Business Development, Marketing, Accounting, Operational specialists and new employee agreed that meetings are efficient, and face to face meetings answer their questions. All of them would like to have more meetings between their colleagues and management board.

Three answers mentioned that meetings clarify things and also avoid roomers in the team. Two members of the research highlighted that is important to have meetings, but also what is more important it to follow the outcome from the meeting in actions. From those answers was understood that not all meetings always had an outcome or were followed by actions or solutions. This information was bases on respondents' experience.

Outcome of this part of the interview is to have more meetings in the group between management, departments and colleagues on regular bases. Meetings should be prepared and follow by agenda; the result or outcome of the meeting should be in written form followed by actions. All respondents would like to have more interactions between them and management and have more information about happenings in the company and its plans. From this answer from employees from Business Development, finance, Marketing, operation and new employee can be understood that meetings should be developed in all departments. The outcome of this research area is that employees prefer to have more meetings, not only to get information but also to share and solve problems or issues. More meetings would also avoid roomers that can occur from lack of meetings.

#### 4.5 Social media at work

Use of social media at work was the next area of this study. Question was aimed to find how often and what kind of social media are used at work and if any of the participants use social media at work.

Social media are for instance Intranet, Skype, Facebook, Twitter and others online tools for communication. Personnel from the financial department answered similarly, they do not use social media at work, they only work with phone and e-mail and are not interested working with any social media. Members from Business Development and Operation department have heard about Intranet, Skype and others social media, but do not use them at work. Business Development member is interested in using more social media to get more support at work in order to become more flexible and efficient. Operational member suggested implementing chat for communication with local and foreign colleagues. Marketing member answered that is familiar with all social media that are used in the group, only Facebook and LinkedIn are not used in FIEGE, but these are more for private use.

FIEGE currently have Intranet, Websites, Skype, and at company are used e-mails. Most of the members use only e-mails on a daily basis and other media such as websites not regularly or not at all such as Skype or Intranet. For all members in all department is important to share information. From the research is also clear that Business Development, Operation and Mar-

keting department is more interested in working with other social media than email to become more efficient in their work. Finance is the only department that is satisfied to have emails and not looking forward any other form of communication such as Skype at work. Financial department also does not see any improvement in use of social media; because their work does not involve that much communication compare other departments. For example in operations most of processes are dependent on fast reaction on customer demands or changes, that's why efficiency is key for operation and faster communication can support operational activities.

#### 4.6 Are you familiar with changes/happenings in the company?

How employees are informed about internal changes, events, actions and others happenings was the focus of this part of the interview. Participants were asked what they know about this matter and if they would like to know more about it. This part is also linked to information share in the group, between colleagues, and between management and employees.

Marketing specialist answered that is informed about business and marketing activities and financial member gets information about personal changes in the company. The rest of respondents did not know anything about changes or activities in the company on national or international level. All of the respondents are interesting in knowing more from the group in Human Resources, Business Development, Financial and Marketing areas.

Opinions on sharing information from majority point of view were negative in both parties between employees and between employees and management. Most of the members are not happy with sharing of knowledge with management and colleagues, and only one member said the knowledge share is good in the group and other member said that is happy with communication between colleagues. One member said: "that communication between Business Development and Operations is zero and there is no motivation from operational side to solve problems or work on challenges that is related to some project." On the other hand operation does not see any support from the business side to get more business projects. And none of the members share information or communicate with management.

One member mentioned: "There might be some cultural differences and different ideas for working on projects, but cooperating is a very good idea for the company. We have to share the ideas and experience to work more effectively together."

Knowledge management became a competitive advantage in an organization. (Thierauf 1999, 4) Employer has to communicate to employees and employees should listen what employer is saying. If the employer in this case management of the board does not communicate to em-

employees that the corporate communication does not exist and this organization does not have a competitive advantage in this field. Szukala and O’Conor mentioned in their book that: “Success only comes to those organizations with the ability of to respond fast to changes. This means flatter structures, empowered people, and free-flowing information.”

Conclusion to this part of the research is to focus on knowledge share on every level and keep employees informed about happenings in the company. Develop knowledge management between management and employees and employees with employees. Employees are not happy with the current communication and want to develop and improve it. During the research came interesting point that operation and business members does not communicate with each other and do not see any support from each other. Business part says that operations does not cooperate and operation thinks that business people does not bring enough projects. Management should more communicate with their employees and share more knowledge with all employees.

#### 4.7 Main problem in internal communication

At the end of the research participant were asked what they see as the main communication problem. For instance such as timing, reporting, hierarchy, language barriers and others. Main goal of this question was to understand problems that are seen from the workforce on different levels and fields, how do they see the main problem in communication from their position.

Missing communication strategy in the group was one point of the conversation between researcher and marketing member. Next point was timing; employees do not have enough time for a task and on the other hand do not get responds from management on time. As next problem was mentioned having to many e-mails in communication and lack of face to face communication. Other member said that internal communication does not “exist” and to communicate with colleagues is very difficult to them or to share knowledge.

Communication strategy use to be about reports, revenues, diversification, planning and other but nowadays communication and divided into external and internal. “Internal communication energize teams, build commitment to share objectives” to achieve corporate success. (Szukala & O’Conor 1999, 27). Management should focus on communication strategy to solve above defined problems such as: knowledge management, lack of face to face communication, reduce number of e-mails, develop time management and motivate employees to communicate with each other. All members of the research agreed on lack of face to face communication, problems with time management and some are overloaded by emails. Manage-

ment of the company should take into consideration this mentioned problems in order to achieve corporate success.

## 5 Conclusion

This report main focus is on development of internal communication in the FIEGE group that is also the title of this study. In the theoretical part is mentioned several definition of internal communication, how it was developed in the past, what does it mean for companies in 21<sup>st</sup> century. For any organization is now important to communicate with employees in order to be more efficient and competitive on markets. The practical part shows an example in company FIEGE and its current situation of the internal communication.

Communication inside the company is the basement for motivated and well trained employees that creates a good atmosphere at work and develops business operations. Employees represent company on the outside and well-motivated employees create a good image, reputation, business relationships on the outside. Also well motivated employees work more efficiently and if they like their work they don't mind to stay longer at work in order to finish their task. Manager's role in the internal communication is to motivate employees, talk to them and deliver or receive information from them. Manager should be familiar with communication channels, tools and strategy that can be implemented and how it can be implemented in an organization. In large companies are usually Communications departments that are responsible for communication inside a company. In small organization communication responsible are CEO and Marketing specialist or other employees such as front line employee, supervisor, and senior managers.

Communication channels are face to face, print, Internet driven media, games, broadcast and videoconferences, events and environment, and also corporate social responsibility. Face to face is the traditional way of communication that is still used in organizations and also is still popular between employees. Print communication is all kind of printed documents. Games, events and environment are channels that can be also implemented in internal communication and support team building and loyalty of employees. Broadcast, videoconferences are new channels that developed through the time, progress and globalization. Corporate social responsibility is both internal and external, activity that is related to corporate social responsibility bring people together and develop team building and support internal communication. It is also proved that organizations that participate in corporate social responsibility are more loyal to the company. Person or groups that are responsible for communication in a company should be familiar with mentioned communication channels.

Communication strategy in companies is like the face of the company leadership. Leaders have business plans that should be followed and they have to fulfill. Leader or the management board can present all the plans to employees and explain them. But for many employees is important to know what to do and how to do it. Manager's role is to give them the right direction and motivate them to achieve company goals by collaboration and actions. Good implementation of communication strategy brings several benefits to the company, according to Szukala & O'Conner (2008, 26) those benefits are: effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and competitive advantage.

In the case study FIEGE group has been collected data from the employees with focus on internal communication. Collected data were from individual interviews that were realized by the researcher. Main areas of the research were to find out how employees see internal communication and what do they think is the main issue in internal communication. For the research were selected different kind of employees with different experience and job focus. By the research was found what employees think is the main problem in internal communication.

Outcome of the practical part has several points that's should be developed according the research result. First point was missing communication strategy, second point was timing and third point was that people are overloaded by emails and miss of face to face communication. Employees miss in FIEGE group communication strategy. For this strategy is responsible the management board of the company. Communication strategy should be implemented by the management and the main goal of the strategy is to show employees what and how to do in order to achieve company goals. Timing was the second mentioned problem and that was linked to tasks, responds, email that employees receive from the management or colleagues. FIEGE employees feel like they do not have enough time to finish their tasks or when the task is finished they do not get a feedback from their colleague or manager. Majority of respondents mentioned that they do not get responds to their email from their colleague or manager on time or sometimes not at all. Last mentioned issue was missing face to face communication; all respondents would like to have more meetings with their colleague and management on regular basis with written agenda, outcome and action that will follow up the meeting minutes. At the case company should be developed three areas which are strategy, timing and more face to face discussions.

When internal communication is developed in an organization than also process and collaboration between employees and management is going to be improved. It is important to find what main communication problem in the organization is and find a solution. In the plan of

improvement is written recommendation for case company how to develop internal communication according to findings of the research.

Trustworthiness of the thesis is proved by references used in the report and collected material for the practical part of the research. Researcher is part of the team in case company and linked together with references notes form the interviews taken at the company. In the theoretical part has been used several books from different kind of authors, electronic sources, and thesis from previous students who were study similar topic as researcher. All references are written at the end of the report and section references are written at the end of each chapter or sentence.

## 6 Plan of improvements

In the plan of improvement is described more in details the communication in the company FIEGE. In the plan are written advices, what could be developed and how in the internal communication. In the first part are described main issues in the communication according collected primary data from the researcher. In the next part of the plan is described how the communication can be improved and what could be future steps. Last part of the plan summarized all parts and suggestion for the company FIEGE.

### 6.1 Main communication issues

By collecting primary data by the researcher has been selected below mentioned problems in the internal communication in FIEGE group:

- Communication strategy
- Timing
- Face to face communication
- Internal discussions and knowledge share

Communication strategy should be developed form the leader or management team at FIEGE. Employees' feedback on the communication strategy was negative from all parts and departments. Communication strategy would support achievement of success for the company and improve current communication problems.

As it was written in the theoretical part : director has to process the information in an organizational way in order to work successfully. First step is a collection of data (INPUT), after the data has to be filter and bring about to format (PROCESSING). Next is to transfer information to the right person or people who can work with them (OUTPUT). Last is to evaluate the information (FEEDBACK). If a manager will follow these four steps and always follow up on an action, than the data flow will have a positive influence on the organization. (Szukala & O'Conner 2008, 47). FIEGE management should also follow the definition and in communication follow four steps: input, processing, output and feedback. From the research was understood that these steps are always followed at the company.

Respondent mentioned that timing, face to face communication, meetings should be developed. Timing for managers and employees should be improved by both parties. Employees complained that they don't have enough time to accomplish several task and some deadlines are too short to accomplish them properly. On the other hand employees do not get feedbacks or replay for email from the management or supervisors who gave them the tasks. Both parties should focus on timing and implement rules for giving deadlines or answer to emails.

Face to face communication in generally missing between employees and between management and employees. Meetings, briefings and other face to face communication is still required in today business and also in the case company. Internal discussion and knowledge share is partly related to face to face communication. While employees do not communicate on daily basis or have meetings, then they do not share their knowledge with their colleagues or management.

## 6.2 Improvements for communication

Main problems in communication was communication strategy according Bos & Macy (2008, 28) leader writes a business plan where are planned activities and goals of the company. Leader is the one who presents a business plans to employees. Employees for their activities need to know what leader wants them to do and what the goal of the activity is. A leader has the responsibility to present and explain to workforce what to do and what is the expected result for the company in the way that everybody understands. At the case company FIEGE strategy communication should be done the same way, leader should explain to company employees what company goal is and how to achieve it- Communication strategy performance affects company's activities in many levels. Good implementation of strategy provides multiple benefits to an organization, meaning that good communication supports leaders to present the direction of the company to employees and inspire them at the same time. Conversations bring people together and help them to collaborate: "Communication is the key to



collective action". (Bos & Macy 2008, 20) Involvement and motivation are factors that are distributed by communication. When managers is looking for development of a process in warehouse, he or she should ask the employee who works in the warehouse to find a solution, because the employees is the one who has the knowledge of the process and share it with a manager. (Bos & Macy 2008, 20) However by a survey is proved that when employees understand the strategy, what and when to do, it bring good results to an organization. (Bos & Macy 2008, 22) Management at FIEGE should take in consideration communication strategy and its implementation. Communication strategy is going to support internal communication and bring good result to company.

Action quotation determinates how to deliver the right messages to employees, leaders have to think about what they want employees to do in order to achieve results and how do they want employees to do it. If managers find out what they want employees to do, then it comes to the next step. Workforce has to know what to do and how, but also why and why it is beneficial to them. (Bob & Macy 2008, 27-34) Managers should find the right way of delivering a message to employees when they know what message should be delivered and to whom. Formats part specify what layouts, design and content is going to be used for communication. Choosing what media will be used such as traditional text, video, photographs, audio, movies, animation, games is also depended on the budget and content. Feedback and measurement; important is to have feedback from the output of communication strategy, decide who will provide the feedback, when and how. What performance should be measured in the communication activities? How can we ensure the feedback and inform about continue improvement. (Szukala & O'Conner 2008, 35) Management in the case company should think what they want to say to employees and also find the right way how to deliver it. While measure was delivered, it is important to get feedback from the communication and follow up on the communication with continuo improvements.

### 6.3 Recommendation, summary

Case company FIEGE needs to develop its internal communication. The research shows that communication strategy was the main problem that was mentioned by the respondents. Leaders at the company FIEGE should work on communication strategy, because leaders are responsible for creating and implementation of communication strategy at the company. Leader should select what message he or she wants to deliver, to whom, format, get feedback and follow up on improvements in internal communication. Directors should follow fours steps in the communication: input, processing, output and feedback. Once communication strategy is created in the company FIEGE than employees are going to be more motivated to work better which brings benefits to the company FIEGE. For success is important to have

well motivated and happy employees. Development of internal communication will be beneficial for the company in all levels.

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## Figures

Figure 1: FIEGE Company structure, 2011, source- FIEGE Human Recourses department

Figure 2: Design in the research process, Cooper, D. R. & Schindler, P. S. 2006. Business research methods, ninth edition. McGraw- Hill International edition.  
Cooper & Schindler 2006, 138

## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Notes, Marketing specialist interview:

How do you feel about company meetings?

I feel they are essential for the company to work properly. Without face to face communication it cannot be done in a proper way. Email communication, tele-conferences are very needed but people meeting directly work more efficient.

How would you evaluate company meetings?

They are time-consuming but it's worth to spend some time on it because it brings more profits. They are efficient as long as there is prepared agenda and everyone is prepared with presentations, questions and answers for the meeting.

- do they answer all of your questions?

Most of them yes, sometimes we come up with a very good solutions during the meeting.

Are you familiar with the social media used in the group+ if yes what kind of media do use for your work? Do you find them helpful in you every day working life?

Intranet - it is getting more and more popular, the only problem is with the access for our employees - as long as most of them do not have it it does not make any sense for updating it.

This is the main tool used in the group.

I am very optimistic about introducing the new web site - it would be more useful for our customers, media and future customers.

I used it couple of times.

Only in private, I would add here LinkedIn - as this is a tool that gathers people that we are interested in contacting. Not FB - we will not find there our potential customers...

What kind of tools do you use most at your everyday work?

Online media (Google)

Printed material/documents

Phone/mobile phone

Are you familiar with awareness of changes in the group? Are you familiar with personnel changed in company?

New customers

Marketing and business activities

If not are you interested to know something about these areas?

Sure! The more you know about the group the better!

How would you describe sharing of knowledge with different colleagues, support from management board and colleagues from different kind of departments?

There might be some cultural differences and different ideas for working on projects, but cooperating is a very good idea for the company. We have to share the ideas and experience to work more effectively. I would suggest we should have more support from the BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT team and make them feel we can be really helpful on their way to search for the new customers.

What would you determine as the main problem in communication?

For example:

There should be one strategy for all countries, everybody should follow some rules in order to have better communication within the countries. Being visible in 18 countries gives a lot of opportunities and my impression is we are not using it in a proper way.

What do you think about reports that are delivering to management board? Are they time consuming? Are they efficient? What would you suggest for improvement?  
There should be some reports sent to the boards as well as feedbacks and solutions for some ideas.

Appendix 2 . Notes, Operation specialist interview:

How do you feel about company meetings?

How would you evaluate company meetings?

Never answers all my questions, but that's because I have many questions and we do not have time to answer all of them. They are not time consuming and are efficient. I would like to have more meetings between management and my colleagues' like meetings with out presentation and just talk about papers or excel sheet to check numbers.

Are you familiar with the social media used in the group+ if yes what kind of media do use for your work? Do you find them helpful in you every day working life?

I heard about Intranet and I never use it and I think I do not need it to my work. Sometimes I use ICQ for communication, but that's minimum.

Email I use every day. I do not need any social medium to my work, but I think in communication Skype and chat could save time with communication with abroad.

What kind of tools do you use most at your everyday work?

I use excel the most, email and phone and couple of print media, but not that much.

Are you familiar with awareness of changes in the group? Are you familiar with personnel changed in company?

I do not know about it at all. And I would like to know more what is happening in Group in int. and national level. Also when I talked to customer I would like to know more what is happening and what is planning.

If not are you interested to know something about these areas?

Plans for future, Marketing, New customers in the group, personnel in group etc.

How would you describe sharing of knowledge with different colleagues, support from management board and colleagues from different kind of departments?

With colleagues we share information and experience on meetings and the everyday when its is needed. With management I do not get any information share.

What would you determine as the main problem in communication?

For example:

Partly I feel is hierarchy, and partly it is a problem is to get an answer from colleagues on time. The communication is very low, we do not have it regularly and the information flow is very low. Partly I think the problem it is that people are not motivated and partly many colleagues are so overloaded and do so many things that they are not able to answer my questions.

What do you think about reports that are delivering to management board? Are they time consuming? Are they efficient? What would you suggest for improvement?

There is too many reports to be delivered, too many formats, and they are not efficient. Reports should not be only for management board but also for employees who can be motivated by delivering the reports. Front line employees can be also motivated by report that could be connecting to bonus system. For example when dispatchers evaluate their result every quarter that if the report prepares some manager and not those employees who produce the service such as dispatcher that the motivation and correctness of numbers is low level. Report should be made as motivation tool to deliver the best results.