

CHAPTER 7

7. RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSIONS

Effective communication has been recognised as the prime factor in facilitating change inside organisations. The process of communication takes time. Information can be transmitted and shared. To obtain the support of organisational members, management have to invest time in talking to them.

Top management must make an effort to explain the rationale for change. The results of the survey show that in general, executives support the rationale for restructuring. Top management must take this opportunity to explain and get them to be involved in the restructuring so as to create a sense of ownership and commitment from the executives. The results show that the executives are not pleased with the implementation and communication of the restructuring. One of the greatest dangers is that people may see a series of separate initiatives for change but the lack of a coherent framework to organise them meaningfully. If the leadership does not provide a coherent rationale for the big picture, people will provide their own, and it is unlikely to be a positive one (Quirke, 1996: 112) .

Top management must show sincerity in carrying out the restructuring. Trust must be established and a lack of trust can become a serious obstacle to implementing change. Top management must explain that the restructuring is

for the good of the company and it will not benefit a selected group of individuals, otherwise people may suspect the motive to change and question the hidden agenda (Quirke, 1996 :99). Top management must be honest and open in explaining the rationale for restructuring.

Communication is an ongoing process

It is important for top management to ensure that communication is an ongoing process. When communication takes place only when a change is to be implemented, people are no longer interested to know the rationale for change but rather would want to know how the change will affect them. If the change is not favourable to them, they will not lend their support needed to ensure the change is implemented successfully and achieve the intended benefits.

Maybe there is tendency among top managers to hang on to information as information is power. While accepting the need for change, the lower level executives would like some details about how things work (Quirke, 1996 :103). Top management must align their views as well as the views of those people below them. This is important to garner full support for change. Effective communication must be done at personal level and the result of the survey shows that verbal communication such as meeting can be an effective means of communicating. The management style that is most efficient is often

a task focused one, involving a high level of personal drive to get things done (Quirke, 1996: 106).

Recognise Diversity

Different functions have different priorities and different objectives. Top management must pull all these together and reconcile the conflicting objectives. It is top management's job to balance these objectives and achieve the suitable solution that will satisfy these needs.

Encourage Deliberations

Organisational members must be encouraged to air their views, opinions and suggestions. They must not be penalised for doing so and their contributions should not be dismissed out of hand. Top management must ensure that the process for change is transparent. Decisions for change shrouded in secrecy can only lead to distortions of information, distrust of organisational members and opposition to change.

Eventhough, the survey shows that the effectiveness of communication in the restructuring exercise is not satisfactory, the survey did produce some useful insights. The result of the survey shows that, in general, executives in the company are supportive of the restructuring exercise. This is a good foundation for top management to build on. What is lacking is communication. The survey identifies the regular forms of communication that respondents

used to get information. Today, business communication can be improved with modern communication technology. Top management can communicate with members of all levels in all geographical locations with e-mail. There is no good reason for members at some remote places to receive less information anymore. Closing the distance, hierarchical or physical, between senders and receivers can help reduce distortion and delay in the transmission of information.