

UNIT 9: MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Objectives

At the end of the lesson, you should be able to:

- 1) Understand the internal PR media and techniques
- 2) Explain the objectives of employee communications

Learning outcomes

In this chapter, students need to know that this is also called internal PR and has advanced for three reasons: a greater requirement for companies to inform employees, increasing democratisation and the availability of new communication technology. This need for employee relations is to enhance upward, horizontal & downward communication. Some of the methods employed for this purpose are readers' letters, house journals, staff news and annual reports. Some organisations even use quality circles to improve productivity.

Notes

1) Internal PR

- Can be of THREE kinds:
 - (i) Downward → employers to employees
 - (ii) Upward → employees to employers
 - (iii) Sideways → amongst employees

2) The effectiveness of internal PR calls for a combination of:

- Candid management
- Recognition by management of the value and importance of employee communication
- A communication manager who is skilled & experienced, is supported by modern technical resources such as house journals and audio-visuals.

3) The range of media & techniques of internal PR

- (i) House journals
- (ii) Noticeboard
 - placed at strategic places that all the employees are exposed to the message at the same time.
- (iii) Videotapes and CCTV – The TV screen as a medium for personalised messages.
- (iv) Radio station
 - Loudspeakers are fixed at points where the radio could be heard by very small groups of readers.
- (i) Phone-in news service & ideas
 - Employees can call a number to hear the latest bulletin or any information of the organisation.
- (ii) Ideas box
 - Staff are invited to place ideas, complaints or comments in ideas/ suggestion boxes located at strategic points.
- (vii) Speak up schemes
 - The right to telephone the CEO directly
 - Managerial 'open door' technique
 - Writing letters to management
 - Printed 'speak up' forms with a collection box
- (viii) PA broadcasts
 - In large factories, messages can be conveyed while everyone is working.
- (ix) Shop-floor-talks
 - Eye-to-eye talks: Employees can ask questions and express views.
- (x) Staff events
 - Parties, anniversary dinners, outing, sports tournaments (which include

families & friends) help to cement good relations.

4) Face-to-face & upward communication

- The modern employee newspaper is no longer one-way downward communication.
- Now, it invites readers' opinions & is prepared to publish criticism of the organisation.

5) Tasks & objectives which call for efficient employee communications

- (i) Explaining company policy & how management is managing
- (ii) Explaining the annual report & accounts
- (iii) Integrating staff following an acquisition
- (iv) Explaining new technology
- (v) Safety
- (vi) News about staff
- (vii) Management structure
- (viii) Employee benefits
- (ix) International marketing
- (x) Feedback & results

6) Conclusion

- Good employee communications can increase productivity.
- Lead to less quality control rejects, less customer complaints & product recalls, greater customer satisfaction, recommendations, better business & fuller employment.

Basic Reading

Jefkins, F. & Yadin, D. (1998). **Frameworks: Public Relations (5th Edition)**. Bell & Bain Ltd.: Glasgow, Pg. 134-142 (please refer to Chapter 14)

Additional Reading

Kitchen, P.J. (1999). **Public Relations: Principles and Practice**. International Thomson Business Press: Croatia

Seitel, F.P. (1998). **The Practice of Public Relations (International Edition)**. Prentice-Hall: New Jersey

Essay Questions

- 1) What three requirements are called for if internal PR is to be effective?
- 2) In what way are shop-floor talks superior to other forms of internal communication?

Past years' Questions

- Dec 2003 (Question 2): (a) Explain why a company should strive to have good employee relations in the organisation.
- (b) State 5 methods of fostering good employee