COMMUNICATION NEEDS TOWARDS DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

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I dedicate this dissertation to the Almighty God who has given me the talents and grace to complete this study.

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SUMMARY

The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry’s (DWAF) Directorate Waste Discharge and Disposal, as well as personnel in its Regional Offices, has identified a need to communicate with various target audiences with regard to water quality and the management thereof in South Africa. As a sub-directorate of the directorate Waste Discharge and Disposal, Mining has to develop a sub-strategy for Mining as part of the Framework Communication Strategy for Waste Discharge and Disposal as a whole.

A communication strategy is a framework document that clearly outlines the rationale for, and desired outcomes of, the organisation’s information campaign (Government Communications Unit, undated).

The primary objective of the research is to do an in-depth literature study regarding communication and communication needs towards developing an effective communication strategy.

Secondary objectives include the following:

- Providing a reference document for officials tasked with developing a communication strategy within the Directorate Waste Discharge and Disposal; and
- Presenting a document that outlines the theory of communication in organisation, thereby assisting with the development of an effective communication strategy.
The communication strategy should define very specific objectives to provide a clear framework within which to formulate strategies, and against which to evaluate outcomes. Currently a Framework Communication Strategy for Waste Discharge and Disposal exists. Each sub-directorate has to develop its own sector-specific communication strategy. The sub-directorate Mining has various stakeholders.

The sub-directorate Mining do not know what the stakeholders' needs are regarding communication with DWAF on Mining and water quality. This lack of communication leads to misunderstandings with regard to policy and regulations.

Erasmus-Kritzinger (2004:12) points out that communicating effectively with clients and employees has the following advantages for an organisation:

- Better employee and customer relationships
- Saving time and money
- More effective decision-making
- Successful problem-solving
- Increased productivity

The Government Communication Unit of Australia states that all communication campaigns must be based on thorough research. While this research can certainly
contribute to the development of the communication strategy, and can often provide some valuable insights into the target audience’s attitudes to the program, it is unlikely to be able to provide information about specific communication issues that are needed to write up a communication strategy. As such, it is likely that some developmental communication research is required to fill gaps in existing knowledge. The findings of this research will assist the development of the communication strategy.

The method of research used with this dissertation is that of a literature study. A literature survey will be conducted on the latest trends in the fields of communication and communication strategies. The main source of information will be journal articles as well as recently published books.

The information collected will be described, analysed, interpreted and evaluated on a qualitative basis to develop a communication strategy taking into account communication theory and communication needs.

It is hoped that the conclusions drawn and propositions made at the end of this research will constitute a meaningful contribution towards the ultimate development of a communication strategy for the sub-directorate Mining within DWAF’s Directorate Waste Discharge and Disposal.
OPSOMMING

Die Departement van Waterwese en Bosbou se Watergehaltebestuur Direktoraat en die onderskeie Streekskantore, het 'n behoefte geïdentifiseer om met verskillende teikengroeoe te kommunikeer aangaande watergehalte en die bestuur daarvan in Suid-Afrika. Mynbou, as 'n sub-direktoraat van die Direktoraat Watergehaltebestuur, moet 'n sub-strategie vir Mynbou ontwikkels wat deel sal uitmaak van die raamwerkstrategie vir kommunikasie in die Direktoraat as 'n geheel.

'n Kommunikasiestrategie is 'n raamwerk dokument wat die grondrede en beoogde uitkomste van die onderneming duidelik uitspel.

Die hoofdoelwit van hierdie navorsing is om 'n in-diepe literatuurstudie rakende kommunikasie en kommunikasie behoeftes te doen, met die einddoel om 'n effektiewe kommunikasiestrategie te ontwikkel vir die Sub-direktoraat Mynbou.

Ander doelwitte sluit die volgende in:

- om 'n verwysingsdokument daar te stel om amptenare wat 'n kommunikasiestrategie binne die Watergehaltebestuur Direktoraat moet ontwikkel tot hulp te wees.

- om 'n dokument daar te stel wat die teorie aangaande kommunikasie binne 'n instansie saamvat om sodoende die ontwikkeling van 'n effektiewe kommunikasie strategie aan te help.
Die kommunikasiestrategie moet spesifieke doelwitte definieer om sodoende 'n duidelike raamwerk, waarbinne strategieë geformuleer moet word, daar te stel. Die uitkomste moet ook teen hierdie raamwerk ge-evalueer word. Die Direktaat Watergehaltebestuur is tans in besit van 'n raamwerk kommunikasie strategie vir die hele direktoraat. Elke sub-direktaat moet sy eie sektor-spesifieke kommunikasie strategie ontwikkel. Die Sub-direktaat Mynbou het verskeie insethouers.

Die Subdirektaat Mynbou weet nie wat die insethouers se behoeftes aangaande kommunikasie met die Departement van Waterwese en Bosbou en spesifiek aangaande watergehalte en mynbou is nie. Die kommunikasiegaping wat as gevolg hiervan ontstaan lei tot misverstande wat betref beleidsake en regulasies.

Erasmus-Kritzinger in Van Staden, Marx, and Erasmus-Kritzinger, (2004:12) wys daarop dat kommunikasie wat effektief toegepas word met kliënte en werknemers die volgende voordele vir die onderneming inhou:

- beter verhoudinge met werknemers en kliënte
- dit bespaar geld en tyd
- dit gee aanleiding tot meer effektiewe besluitneming
- dit lei tot suksesvolle probleemoplossing
- dit verhoog produktriwiteit
Die Government Communication Unit van Australië noem dat alle kommunikasie veldtogte gebasseer moet word op deeglike navorsing. Alhoewel dié in-diepte navorsing kan bydrae tot ontwikkeling van 'n kommunikasiestrategie en dikwels waardevolle insigte ten opsigte van die teikengroep se houding tot die program kan voorsien, is dit onwaarskynlik dat dit inligting ten opsigte van spesifieke kommunikasie behoeftes wat nodig is om 'n kommunikasiestrategie te ontwikkel sal voortbring. Daarom is dit waarskynlik dat 'n mate van ontwikkelingskommunikasie-navorsing nodig is om die gapings te vul in die bestaande inligting. Die bevindings van hierdie navorsing sal bydra tot die ontwikkeling van die kommunikasiestrategie.

Die metodiek wat gevolg is vir hierdie skripsie is die van 'n literatuurstudie. 'n Literatuur oorsig rakende die nuutste ontwikkelings en navorsing in die veld van kommunikasie en kommunikasiestrategieë is uitgevoer. Die hoofbron van inligting was artikels uit joernale asook boeke wat onlangs gepubliseer is.

Die inligting wat ingesamel is, is op 'n kwalitatiewe wyse beskryf, ge-interpreteer en ge-evalueer om by te dra tot die ontwikkeling van 'n kommunikasiestrategie met die inagneming van kommunikasieteorie en kommunikasiebehoeftes.

Die hoop is dat die gevolgtrekkings en voorstelle wat aan die einde van hierdie navorsing gemaak word, 'n betekenisvolle bydra sal lewer tot die uiteindelike ontwikkeling van 'n kommunikasiestrategie vir die Subdirektoraat Mynbou in die Departement Waterwese en Bosbou se Direktoraat Watergehaltebestuur.
1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Communication is such a fundamental part of managing today that without it, virtually nothing can be accomplished.”

— Smith (1991) —

Massie and Anderson (2003:1) state that the intense and competitive nature of business in today’s society has made it imperative for organisations to communicate effectively.

The argument is that internal communication in the organisational context can be used as a means to create a more democratic, harmony-oriented organisation. The central idea is that employees must be fully informed if they are to participate effectively in the organisation. Employees need to understand fully where they fit into an organisation’s
strategy and how they contribute to the fulfilment of the organisation’s goals and objectives (Massie and Anderson. 2003:1)

Massie and Anderson (2003:1) emphasize that internal communications is a matter of creating trust, thereby developing a climate in which open communication can take place. They view internal communication as a two-way process that is most valuable in organisations with a more flexible structure, i.e. a matrix structure.

Massie and Anderson (2003:3) postulates that the widespread use of terms like corporate communication stresses the increasing importance of the relationship between internal and external communication. Authors in corporate communication such as Van Riel (1992) and Horton (1995) talk in detail about the need for an integration of internal and external communication.

According to Massie and Anderson (2003:3) an increasing number of organisations are now realizing the sum of their internal and external communications can create a fragmented image and are therefore making efforts to improve the coordination of their communication. Massie and Anderson (2003:3) further postulate that all communication activities within the organisation must be integrated in order to support the achievement of the organisation’s aims and goals.

Aberg in Massie and Anderson (1990:3) identifies four functions of communication within an organisation:

• supporting internal and external core operations (to regulate)
- organisation and product oriented profiling (to persuade)

- informing internal and external audiences (to inform)

- socializing individuals into a good organisational citizen (to integrate)

If communication is to make an effective contribution to realizing an organisation's goals, then all of the above-mentioned functions must be coordinated.

The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry's (DWAF) Directorate Waste Discharge and Disposal, as well as personnel in its Regional Offices, has identified a need to communicate with various target audiences with regard to water quality and the management thereof in South Africa. As a sub-directorate of the directorate Waste Discharge and Disposal, Mining has to develop a sub-strategy for Mining as part of the Framework Communication Strategy for Waste Discharge and Disposal as a whole.

If an organisation is credible, then it will be more persuasive when it communicates. Additionally, if the public is involved with the consequences of what an organisation does, then the public will communicate more freely with the organisation. Finally, if an organisation is socially responsible, then it will have less interference from government (Grunig, 1992:7).
Communication is "the exchange of information between a sender and receiver, and the inference (perception) of meaning between the individuals involved" (Kreitner and Kinicki, 2001:479).

The official DWAF website states the following. In terms of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1196 (Act No. 108 of 1996) the management of water resources is an exclusive National competency.

As the custodian of South Africa's water resources, the Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, has the mandate [according to the National Water Act, 1998 (Act 36 of 1998)] to ensure that water is protected, used, developed, conserved, managed and controlled in a sustainable and equitable manner for the benefit of all people.

The Directorate Waste Discharge and Disposal and its various Regional Offices, within the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, are jointly responsible for the governance of water quality in South Africa.

DWAF's Water Quality Management's main objectives are:

- Planning and developing, remediation and resource directed integrated water quality management policies, strategies, procedures, guidelines, methodologies, regulations and criteria

- Building capacity both externally and internally
• Providing specialist technical and strategic support

• Considering authorisations

• Monitoring and auditing the implementation of the said policy

• Managing Water Quality Management related information

• Promoting transparent decision-making through co-operative governance and participative management

• Ensuring the integrated sustainable management of the water quality of the water resources of South Africa

• Ensuring fitness for use of South Africa's surface water, groundwater and estuarine water for all user sectors, which include: agriculture, domestic, industry (which include Mining), recreation, as well as aquatic ecosystems

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

A communication strategy is a framework document that clearly outlines the rationale for, and desired outcomes of, the organisation's information campaign (Government Communications Unit, undated).
The communication strategy should define very specific objectives to provide a clear framework within which to formulate strategies, and against which to evaluate outcomes. Currently a Framework Communication Strategy for Waste Discharge and Disposal exists. Each sub-directorate has to develop its own sector-specific communication strategy. The sub-directorate Mining has various stakeholders.

The Sub-directorate Mining do not know what the stakeholders' needs are regarding communication with DWAF on Mining and water quality. This lack of communication leads to misunderstandings with regard to policy and regulations. In order to fulfil their regulatory role more effectively and efficiently, the Directorate Waste Discharge and Disposal has identified communication as an area that needs urgent attention.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The Government Communication Unit of Australia states that all communication campaigns must be based on thorough research. While this research can certainly contribute to the development of the communication strategy, and can often provide some valuable insights into the target audience's attitudes to the program, it is unlikely to be able to provide information about specific communication issues that are needed to write up a communication strategy. As such, it is likely that some developmental communication research is required to fill gaps in existing knowledge.
The Government Communication Unit of Australia continue stating that developmental communication research allow for the needs of the target groups to be assessed, develops and refines key message, and can assist in the identification of appropriate strategies to effectively communicate with the target audience. The research is often explanatory in nature, with the prime objective to establish current knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of the group/groups to be targeted by the campaign and determine any barriers/motivations to communicating.

The findings of this research will assist the development of the communication strategy (Government Communications Unit, undated).

The Government Communications Unit of Australia identified the following issues, which are critical for developing an effective communication strategy:

- whether an information campaign is needed at all

- what the campaign can realistically achieve

- who the people are you are trying to reach (i.e. the target audience) and where they are

- the existing knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of the target audience

- what are the appropriate messages that can be delivered
• how the messages can best be delivered

• the motivators and barriers to the topic, or desired attitudes and behaviours

The primary objective of the research is to do an in-depth literature study regarding communication and communication needs towards developing an effective communication strategy.

Secondary objectives include the following:

• Providing a reference document for officials tasked with developing a communication strategy within the Directorate Waste Discharge and Disposal.

• Presenting a document that outlines the theory of communication in organisation, thereby assisting with the development of an effective communication strategy.

Out of this research will flow propositions on how to best conduct research to explore and determine what the needs of various stakeholders are with respect to communication messages.

These inputs from all of DWAF's stakeholders will ultimately assist in developing a communication strategy for Mining.
1.4 METHODOLOGY

The method of research used with this dissertation is that of a literature study. A literature survey will be conducted on the latest trends in the fields of communication and communication strategies. The main source of information will be journal articles as well as recently published books.

The information collected will be described, analysed, interpreted and evaluated on a qualitative basis to develop a communication strategy taking into account communication theory and communication needs.

It is hoped that the conclusions drawn and propositions made at the end of this research will constitute a meaningful contribution towards the ultimate development of a communication strategy for the sub-directorate Mining within DWAF's Directorate Waste Discharge and Disposal.

1.5 DIVISION OF THE STUDY

In chapter 2 the theory of communication is introduced. An extensive introduction to corporate communication in particular, is presented.

Chapter 3 investigates communication in an organisation. Firstly the manner with which South African organisations communicate is presented and then contrasted with the global context. Symmetrical and asymmetrical worldviews are described due to their relevance and importance in corporate communication.
In **chapter 4** the different elements of a communication strategy is described and explained. The value and principles of effective communication is outlined.

**Chapter 5**, the final chapter, contains a summary with conclusions and propositions for future research.

### 1.6 CONCLUSION

The theme of this dissertation is: *Communication needs towards developing a communication strategy in the public sector*. This chapter (**chapter 1**) provided an introduction and background to the theme and explained the problem that led to the theme, the objectives of the study, as well as the research method that will be followed.

The next chapter introduces the theory of communication. Organisational communication is presented in more detail as it forms the focal point of this study. Barriers to effective communication and ways to overcome these barriers are also discussed.
CHAPTER 2

THE THEORY OF COMMUNICATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

"Think like a wise man but communicate in the language of the people."
— William Butler Yeats (1865 –1939 ) —

The main purpose of this chapter is to provide a fairly extensive introduction to communication as a science and to corporate communication in particular.

Basic communication theory is covered under a definition of communication, the context of communication, different types of communication, advantages of effective communication and a communication model. The barriers to effective communication, as well as ways to overcome these barriers, are described in detail due to the important role they play in getting the message across successfully or failing to do so.

Organisational/corporate communication is described further in terms of external communication, internal communication and organisational structure.
The remainder of the chapter is utilized to point out the importance of communicating effectively and emphasizes listening as a key skill in communication.

2.2 COMMUNICATION

2.2.1 A definition of communication
Blundel (1998:2) defines “to communicate” as follow:
Blundel starts his search with exploring what the meaning of the Latin word “communicate” is. Its roots in the Latin language are “com” and “munis”, which translates literally as “with the people”. “Communion” and “community”, two closely related words, emphasise that key idea of bringing people together.

Erasmus-Kritzinger in Van Staden, Marx and Erasmus-Kritzinger (2004:12) argues that communication may be defined as a two-way process whereby information (the message) is sent from one person (the sender) through a channel to another person (the receiver) who in turn reacts by providing feedback. Kreitner and Kinicki (2001:479) defines communication as “the exchange of information between a sender and receiver, and the inference (perception) of meaning between the individuals involved.”

Blundel (1998:10) states that business communication is, in the first instance, about our relationships with other people. To be effective, we need to make some effort to understand ourselves and those with whom we do business. Messages can be usefully distinguished from the media in which they are encoded/packaged and the channels through which they are conveyed. Use of multimedia and channels can reinforce the message, but any inconsistencies may result in confusion. It is always the receiver’s
understanding of the message that determines its success or failure. Therefore, communicators need to take the receivers of their messages seriously. With practice and commitment everybody can become a successful business communicator.

The Allenby Campus Business Communication course (2004: 59) states that the main aim of communication is to create understanding and therefore a good understanding of the communication process can aid all participants in the process to reach this objective.

2.2.2 Context of communication
Communication takes place in a number of different settings or contexts. Each context has its own communication challenges and therefore it is important to have an understanding of these contexts:

- **Dyadic/Two Person Communication**
  Dyadic/Two Person communication takes place between two people only and tends to be very dynamic with a constant flow of information taking place between the two parties involved in the communication process. There is a lot of opportunity for feedback in a two-person setting.

- **Small Group Communication**
  Small Group communication takes place between three or more people. There is no limitation as to how many people make up a small group and groups can range in size from 3 to 35 people. The average small group consists of between 3 and 9 people. This communication setting is also very dynamic as there is a constant interchange of information among the members of the group. Small
group communication also allows for feedback. One of the main characteristics of small group communication is the emergence of "group roles", i.e. the leader, the joker, etc.

- **Public Communication**
  Public communication takes place in a more organised, "public" setting, i.e. a classroom or a lecture hall. Public communication is characterized by one person that tends to dominate the communication. There is, however, still sufficient opportunity for feedback.

- **Mass Communication**
  Mass communication takes place with a mass audience. The various mass media, i.e. television, newspapers, radio and magazines are used as communication tools to communicate with a mass audience. One of the main characteristics of mass communication is the delayed feedback, if there is any feedback at all. This aspect makes mass communication a very one-sided communication process.

- **Organisational Communication**
  Organisational communication takes place within an organisation or company (Allenby Campus, 2004:60).

People at work constantly communicate. They talk on the telephone, write letters and reports, meet in the corridor to chat or exchange ideas and transmit information by
computer. Information can be sent to America as easily and instantly as to the next town. Wherever you work, and whatever you do, you are likely to be surrounded by documents and messages. Additionally, you will be expected to communicate regularly with colleagues, customers, and your counterparts in other organizations (Carysforth, 2000:4).

2.3 DIFFERENT TYPES OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Carysforth (2000:4) classifies the different types of communication in an organisation as being the following:

2.3.1 By method
There are two primary categories of communication, namely:

- Spoken communication (usually called oral). Oral communication includes face to face or a telephone conversation.

- Written. Written communications include messages sent through the post or transmitted electronically. These messages may contain photographs or graphics, as well as text.

According to Carysforth (2000:4) the method of communication will depend on the speed and priority of the particular situation.

2.3.2 By recipient
There are some documents that are only meant to be read by people who work for an organisation, in which case they are known as *internal*. These include staff meetings
and newsletters, a telephone call to a colleague and a conversation with someone within
your organisation. Other documents are prepared for people outside the organisation,
such as customers, suppliers and other organizations. These documents are known as
external. These include business letters, advertisements, telephone calls, fax
messages, invoices, face-to-face meetings with customers who call and other visitors.

2.3.3 By formality
Some methods of communicating are formal and others are informal.
Formal methods are used for important or serious matters, when you do not know the
recipient well, or when you want to keep a record of something.
Informal methods of communication are used between people who communicate often,
both internally and externally.

On a daily basis, members of an organisation at all levels are involved in formal and
informal, internal and external communication with business colleagues, customers,
shareholders, the media and members of the public. To function properly and reach
organizational goals, no organisation can therefore function without a good system of
communication. The fact that people in business often do not communicate effectively,
leads to low productivity and poor interpersonal relationships. With good and effective
communication this could be avoided (Van Staden et al., 2004:12).

2.4 ADVANTAGES OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Erasmus-Kritzinger as in Van Staden et al. (2004:12) points out that communicating
effectively with clients and employees has the following advantages for an organisation:
• Better employee and customer relationships

• Saving time and money

• More effective decision-making

• Successful problem-solving

• Increased productivity

Effective communication is central to all organisations. A great deal of this communication depends on the people in the organisation. It is important to understand the communication process if you want to improve your communication skills, that is, to understand:

• What communication is

• What happens when we communicate

2.5 A COMMUNICATION MODEL

Since earliest times, men and women have been speculating on the basic mysteries of human existence, i.e.

• Where did I come from?

• Where am I going?
• Why — in the meantime — am I so misunderstood?

Over the years, great thinkers have done their best to answer these questions, but it is only during the last century that the mysteries of human communication and understanding have been investigated systematically. Scientific research has provided important insights (Blundel, 1998:3).

Communication may be defined as a two-way process whereby information (the message) is sent from one person (the sender) through a channel to another person (the receiver) who in turn reacts by providing feedback. Van Staden et al. (2004:13) offer the following model to illustrate the communication process graphically in Figure 1 below:
Figure 1: The communication process

The sender (also referred to as the communicator, addressor, transmitter, source or encoder) is the person who initiates the communication activity and formulates the
message. The sender usually sends a message because of a need to convey information, express feelings, obtain feedback or satisfy needs. The success of the communication depends mainly on the sender’s ability to speak, write, reason and listen competently. The sender formulates thoughts into a message, using a code that the receiver can understand. This code could be any set of symbols such as language, figures, pictures or sign language that both the sender and receiver understand.

The message is the information that is conveyed during the process of communication.

The receiver (also referred to as the addressee, respondent, destination or decoder) is the person to whom the sender directs the message. The receiver takes part actively in the communication process. The receiver is responsible for making sense of, interpreting and reacting to the message. The receiver interprets or decodes the code (language, pictures, signs) in order to understand it.

The channel is the way in which the message is sent from sender to receiver and feedback is sent from receiver to sender. There is a wide range of channels to choose from, including verbal channels of communication (voice, intercom, telephone, interview, meeting, fax, letter, advertisement, memorandum, report, radio or television). Non-verbal channels of communication include body language, pictures, music or graphs.

Feedback (also referred to as reaction or response) is the message the receiver sends in response to the sender’s message. It is the receiver’s reaction. Feedback can be verbal or non-verbal and is often an indication that communication has taken place.
successfully. It also helps the sender to establish whether the message was understood correctly.

A communication barrier (also referred to as “noise” or interference) may prevent communication from taking place successfully during the communication process. These barriers could be anything that causes a communication breakdown or prevents the receiver from receiving the message.

Noise represents anything that interferes with the transmission and understanding of a message. It affects all linkages of the communication process. Noise includes factors such as speech impairment, poor telephone connections, illegible handwriting, inaccurate statistics in a memo or report, poor hearing and eyesight, and physical distance between sender and receiver. Managers can improve communication by reducing noise (Kreitner and Kinicki, 2001:482). In the pursuit of the goals an organisation has set for itself, its members need to communicate with each other (internally) and with non-members or the outside world (externally). Organisational communication can thus be external or internal communication (Van Staden et al., 2004:13).
2.6 BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

The Allenby Campus Business Communication Course (2004:65) identifies the following barriers to effective communication:

2.6.1 Environmental Barriers
A person's environment can include anything that externally impacts on a person. External noise, an unpleasant atmosphere and one's physical surroundings are all examples of environmental barriers that affect the communication process.

2.6.2 Organisational Barriers
The business environment can in itself present barriers to communication. A manager that is not prepared to listen to a sub-ordinate or red tape is both examples of organisational barriers.

2.6.3 Barriers caused by differences in perception
A perception is a person's way of seeing and recognizing abstract qualities such as truth, beauty and status. If people have different ways of looking at these abstract qualities this will ultimately lead to disagreements and thus a barrier to communication.

2.6.4 Language Barriers
South Africa has 11 official languages. English is most widely used in a business environment. Within the English language itself problems arise, amongst others the following:
• Words meaning different things to different people

• Jargon

• Slang

• Using ambiguous words

• Insensitive use of words

2.6.5 Barriers as a result of filtering
A person is only paying attention to or listening to portions of the message and not the whole message.

2.6.6 Barriers which arise from emotions
If a person is cross, angry or sad, these emotions can have a negative effect on the communication process.

2.6.7 Not analysing needs of the receiver
It is crucial to be aware of the needs of the receiver when directing a message to him/her.
2.6.8 Poor listening

One of the biggest mistakes one can make in the communication process is being an ineffective listener. If one does not listen to a message properly, how can one know exactly what was meant by the message and be able to respond in the correct manner (Allenby Campus Business Communication Course, 2004:65)?

2.6.9 Assuming that receivers know more than what they do

The sender of the message does not cover all the necessary information and this could leave the receiver unable to respond correctly or the receiver may not get the right amount or type of information for his/her needs.

2.6.10 Insensitive behaviour

Not respecting a person’s culture, beliefs or attitude can lead to insensitive behaviour, which can prove offensive to the receiver of the message.

2.6.11 Different cultural backgrounds

Being aware of different cultural backgrounds will lead to more effective communication.

2.6.12 Too many people to pass on the message

A message can become distorted if passed on from one person to another.
2.6.13 Poor feedback

It is the responsibility of the receiver of the message to deliver feedback, as it is feedback that helps the sender of the message determine if the message was communicated effectively.

2.6.14 Insufficient or unclear information

If the sender sends insufficient or unclear information this could lead to confusion in the decoding process. Effective communication relies on the receiver getting all of the relevant information (Allenby Campus Business Communication Course, 2004:66).

2.6.15 Poor encoding or decoding of the message

The message needs to be formulated and interpreted carefully in order to avoid misunderstandings from arising.

2.6.16 Using the wrong channel

It is critical that the sender of the message use the correct channel to communicate the message.

2.6.17 Poor planning

Effective planning of communication messages reduces the chance of misunderstandings occurring.
2.6.18 Communication overload

Providing too much information can be a barrier to effective communication. If a person receives more information than he/she can process, the inevitable result will be filtering.

2.7 OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

The Allenby Campus Business Communication Course (2004:67) suggests the following to help overcome communication barriers and improve business communication:

- Face-to-face communication is the most effective and should be used whenever possible (Allenby Campus Business Communication Course, 2004:66).

- Try to communicate in a positive environment that is conducive to effective communication.

- Organisations should strive to create a positive environment in which employees can communicate more effectively.

- One should always be aware that people have different perceptions and factor this into communication.

- Always avoid using slang, jargon and offensive language when dealing with others, as well as aim to use simple, easy to understand language and vocabulary.
• Filtering should be avoided and one should listen to and evaluate the whole message.

• One should be aware of how emotions can effect communication and be careful of what one says or does to another person if they are feeling emotional.

• It is important that the sender of the message analyse the needs of the receiver and communicate accordingly.

• All communicators should practice effective listening habits.

• The sender of a message should never make assumptions about how much the receiver knows about a subject. It is important that the sender test the "level of knowledge" first.

• Always avoid insensitive behaviour when communicating with others.

• One needs to be aware of the effect of different cultural backgrounds and strive to be accepting and understanding of people from different cultures.

• Try to avoid the practice of passing a message from one person to another.

• It is the responsibility of the receiver to deliver timeous feedback to avoid the communication process either being delayed or breaking down.

• The sender has the responsibility to communicate sufficient information in a clear and simple form.

• It is critical that the correct channel is used to communicate a message.

• The sender needs to plan his/her message in order for the communication to be successful.

• The sender should provide only as much information as the receiver can handle.

• Use plain and direct language that is easily understood.

• Repeat the message as often as may be necessary.

• Be supportive if there is resistance to the message.

• Ask questions to determine how much has been understood (Allenby Campus Business Communication Course, 2004:67).
2.8 EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Erasmus-Kritzinger as in (Van Staden et al., 2004:14) describes external communication as communication that takes place verbally (orally and in writing) and non-verbally (through attitude, appearance, gestures or facial expressions) between the organisation and the outside world, which are clients, suppliers, shareholders, the media and the public.

The main aims of external communication are to maintain sound public relations and marketing. External communication examples include press releases, press conferences, interviews with clients, advertising, business correspondence, presentations and consultations. The external communication undertaken by each of the members of the organisation conveys a particular image of the organisation to the outside world. An effective external communication system is therefore very important for the general growth and success of any organisation.

External communication methods include oral, written, and non-verbal communication, interpersonally and in the mass media. You can choose any method for a specific communication situation. Your communication must always be polite and professional.

External communication methods are described by Van Staden et al. (2004:15) in Table 1 below:
Table 1: External communication methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ORAL</td>
<td>face-to-face conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Telephone conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRITTEN</td>
<td>Business letter, e-mail or fax message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advertisement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Press release</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Company website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NON-VERBAL</td>
<td>Attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gestures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expressions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tone of voice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Van Staden et al. (2004:15)

Table 1 lists examples of oral, written and non-verbal communication methods. This is referred to as external communication methods. Non-verbal communication is described in more detail in paragraph 2.20 on page 51.
Oral communication methods include face-to-face communication, telephone conversation, business meeting and interview. It is clear that all of the afore-mentioned messages are conveyed through physically speaking.

Written communication methods include business letter, e-mail or fax message, advertisement, press release and company website.

2.9 INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Internal communication is communication between management and staff at various levels of the organisation in order to reach organisational goals. An important factor in employees’ job performance and subsequently organisational success is the extent to which employees find communication within the organisation satisfactory (Erasmus-Kritzinger as in Van Staden et al., 2004:15). Van Staden et al. (2004:15) summarizes Employees’ internal communication needs and how to meet them in Table 2 below:
Table 2: Employees’ internal communication needs and how to meet them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employees' needs</th>
<th>Possible strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct personal contact with supervisors</td>
<td>Try an open-door policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An understanding of the job and the company</td>
<td>Implement effective induction, coaching and mentoring programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An atmosphere of trust and mutual respect</td>
<td>Employ a workforce that is representative of SA society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being kept informed about issues related to the job at all times</td>
<td>Use a public address system, regular circulars, newsletters, notices on notice boards, internal mail or email and meetings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Adapted from Van Staden et al. (2004:15)*

Table 2 indicates what employees' internal communication needs is and how management can strive to meet them. Possible strategies in this regard are listed in the second column of Table 2.

In response to these general needs of employees with regard to communication within the organisation, internal communication has a very specific function. These functions can be divided into three categories:

- The command function (giving and obeying of instructions)
• The relation function (creating good interpersonal relationships)

• The ambiguity-management function (getting the job done while showing concern for the needs and feelings of employees)

Table 3 illustrates internal communication methods (Van Staden et al., 2004:16).

Table 3: Internal communication methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ORAL</td>
<td>Meetings, Interviews, Conversations (personal or telephonic), Announcements (personal or over the intercom system)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRITTEN</td>
<td>Internal mail, e-mail or memoranda, Newsletters, Telephone message slips, Reports, Minutes, Notices on the notice boards and in staff magazines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NON-VERBAL</td>
<td>Appearance, Attitude, Facial expression, Gestures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Van Staden et al. (2004:16)
Table 3 lists examples of oral, written and non-verbal internal communication methods. Non-verbal communication is described in more detail in paragraph 2.20 on page 51.

2.10 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

To achieve organisational goals, all organisations have to be structured in a certain way. Management and employees are usually deployed according to the different functions they perform in the organisation.

We distinguish between two types of organisational structure:
- bureaucratic organisational structures
- matrix organisational structures

2.10.1 Bureaucratic organisational structures
German sociologist, Max Weber, proposed this classic organisational structure. Figure 2 below illustrates the traditional bureaucratic organisational structure. The authority lies in the position rather than in the people who occupy it.
The bureaucratic organisational structure in Figure 2 is described as the "ideal type" of rational and efficient organisation. Positions are arranged in a pyramidal hierarchy, with authority increasing from one level to the other as one moves up the organisation. An organisational pyramid gives employees an indication of what they have to do in their organisation, as well as their responsibilities, level of authority and decision-making powers, and how many subordinates report to him or her.

2.10.2 Matrix organisational structures
This organisational structure design breaks the unity of command concept, which requires every employee to have one boss to whom he/she reports. Specialists from specific departments are assigned to work together in a team led by project leaders. Therefore project managers usually have authority over project employees relative only to the project’s goals. This structure allows for greater flexibility and involvement, which
leads to greater motivation and teamwork. It also creates cost-effective employment of key personnel, obvious duplication of effort, and as a decentralized structure, frees top management to concentrate on strategic planning.

Organisational structures help to make the flow of information or organisational communication more effective. An employee knows to whom to report and take orders from, and who will help to solve problems. The supervisors/managers know to whom to give instructions, from whom to take instructions and who should be held accountable for work done (Van Staden et al., 2004:17).

Figure 3 below illustrates an organisational chart:

**Figure 3: Organisational chart**

Source: Adapted from Van Staden et al. (2004:19)
The organisational structure can also be represented graphically in the form of an organisational chart or organogram. These graphical representations should be made available to employees on a regular basis.

2.11 THE SEVEN Cs OF COMMUNICATION

The seven Cs of communication according to the Allenby Campus Business Communication Course (2004:70) are:

2.11.1 Credibility
This refers to how reliable a source of information the sender is.

2.11.2 Context
Context refers to the situation in which the communication takes place.

2.11.3 Content
The content of the message is important to the success of the message.

2.11.4 Clarity
Clarity refers to how clearly the message is communicated by the sender.

2.11.5 Continuity and consistency
Ongoing communication of the same message will go a long way in creating understanding of the message.
2.11.6 Channels
Channels or media are the physical means used to communicate a message. It is critical for the sender of a message to use the correct channel to communicate the message.

2.11.7 Capability of the audience
Determine how much and what information the audience is capable of receiving and processing effectively.

2.12 EFFECTIVE LISTENING
The Allenby Campus Business Communication Course (2004:75) stresses that ineffective listening can be a barrier to communication and that it is essential that one strive to become a better listener. Listening is an active process that requires concentration. The potential barriers to effective listening are described below:

2.12.1 Cultural barriers
If the receiver of the message has a problem with the senders' culture or cultural background, the receiver may be less inclined to listen to the message from the sender.

2.12.2 Credibility and role of the sender
If the receiver does not see the sender as credible source of information, there is a good chance that the receiver may not listen to the message being sent or possibly not take what has been said seriously.
2.12.3 Insensitive use of language
If the sender uses insensitive language whilst communicating the message, the chance exists that the receiver will “cut off” as he/she may be offended by the language used by the sender.

2.12.4 Selective perception
This refers to the receiver selecting only bits and pieces of the message and evaluating only the information selected and not the whole message.

2.12.5 Non-verbal behaviour
If the sender uses non-verbal behaviour in an incorrect manner this could result in the receiver not paying full attention to the message being communicated.

2.12.6 Location
If the communication takes place in a noisy or unsuitable setting, this could impact on the ability of the receiver to hear the message.

2.12.7 Emotions
If the receiver is feeling emotional for any reason i.e. sad, angry or even very happy, this could impact on the receiver’s ability to listen to the message properly Allenby Campus Business Communication Course (2004:67).

2.12.8 Technical language
If the sender uses excessive technical language or jargon without explaining what is meant this could cause the receiver to become confused or bored, which would negatively affect the listening process.
2.12.9 Mental criticism of the speaker’s delivery and appearance
If the receiver is mentally analysing the way the speaker is dressed or delivering the message, then it is impossible to listen effectively as one’s thought processes are involved with an activity other than listening effectively or attentively.

The above-mentioned barriers to effective listening can be overcome by applying the Allenby Campus Business Communication Course (2004:76) suggestions mentioned below:

**What can one do to become a better listener?**

- Motivate yourself to listen.
- Regard listening as a physical and mental process.
- Show you are listening by using some form of body language.
- Listen until you have heard the whole message and then respond.
- Do not jump to conclusions.
- Assure that you have evaluated the whole message after the speaker/sender has finished.
- Try to understand the message from the speaker’s/sender’s point of view.
• Check the meanings of words with the speaker/sender.

• Make a summary of the key points during the course of the communication.

• Try to establish how the speaker/sender feels about the topic he/she is discussing.

• Be aware of your own preferences and inclinations.

• Ask questions to clarify points that you do not fully understand.

• Reflect the message back to the speaker/sender to check that you have understood it clearly.

• Provide clear and meaningful feedback.

• Try to analyse your listening shortcomings and correct them.

2.13 ACTIVE LISTENING

According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2001:491) some communication experts contend that listening is the most important communication skill for employees involved in sales, customer service, or management. In support of this conclusion, listening effectiveness was positively associated with success in sales and obtaining managerial promotions.
Listening skills are particularly important for current and future managers because they spend a great deal of time listening to others.

Kreitner and Kinicki (2001:491) continue by stating that managers typically spend about 9% of a working day reading, 16% writing, 30% talking, and 45% listening. Unfortunately, research evidence suggests that most people are not very good at listening. Communication experts estimate that people generally comprehend about 25% of a typical verbal message. It is interesting to note that this problem is partly due to the fact that we can process information faster than most people talk. The average speaker communicates 125 words per minute. We can process 500 words per minute. Poor listeners use this information-processing gap to daydream and think about other things. Hence they miss important parts of what is being communicated.

Table 4 for summarizes the keys to effective listening. Kreitner and Kinicki (2001:493) offers Table 4 as a tool to improve listening skills by avoiding the habits of bad listeners while cultivating the good listening habits.

**Table 4: The Keys to Effective Listening**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keys to effective listening</th>
<th>The Bad Listener</th>
<th>The Good Listener</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Capitalize on thought speed</td>
<td>Tends to daydream</td>
<td>Stays with the speaker, mentally summarizes the speaker, weighs evidence, and listens between the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4 provides a useful summary of how one can strive to become a good listener and practice the art of effective listening. Kreitner and Kinicki (2001:493) emphasizes that listening is not a skill that will improve on its own.

2.14 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

The Allenby Campus Business Communication Course defines culture as a system of beliefs, assumptions and values that people share. These rules act as a set of rules that keep a group together. This group shares a view of themselves and of the world and in most cases they will use a shared symbolic code such as language.
South Africa is a country that houses people from a large variety of cultures. Although spending time with and getting to know people from different cultures to your own can be a rewarding experience, there are many people that are ineffective intercultural communicators. In a country such as South Africa, it is of the utmost importance that one strives to achieve effective intercultural communication. The Allenby Campus Business Communication course further identify the following barriers to effective intercultural communication:

2.14.1 Cultural stereotyping
Cultural stereotyping refers to "seeing" people of another culture in a specific way as a result of the way they look or because of the culture from which they come.

2.14.2 Ethnocentrism
Ethnocentrism refers to a person using his/her own culture as a basis on which to judge another culture.

2.14.3 Defensiveness
There are times that certain cultures are criticised if they are not the dominant culture in a specific country or environment. This could ultimately lead to defensive behaviour stemming from people that belong to the less dominant culture.

2.14.4 Different languages
It is obvious that if people were not able to communicate effectively because they speak different languages that this would present itself as a barrier in intercultural communication. Allenby Campus Business Communication Course (2004:79).
2.14.5 Different ways of using and interpreting non-verbal behaviour
Different cultures use different "types" of non-verbal behaviour.

2.14.6 Different ways of interacting
Different cultures have different ways of interacting in a social situation.

2.14.7 Different values and beliefs
What is valued and believed by cultures is going to differ from culture to culture and this could lead to problems between cultures.

2.14.8 Prejudices
Many people hold prejudices towards people from different cultures, not giving people a chance to prove themselves as individuals.

2.14.9 Assumptions
Some people immediately "assume" that someone is going to behave in a specific way because of the culture that person belongs to.

2.14.10 Failure to allow for individual differences within a culture and not accepting diversity
Many people are intolerant towards differences in people from other cultures.

2.14.11 One culture being dominant
Whereas people from a less dominant culture can be defensive, the same applies to some people who take an aggressive and superior attitude towards people from a less dominant culture. Allenby Campus Business Communication Course (2004:80).
2.14.12 Taking a patronising attitude
Sometimes people consider others from different cultures as "less fortunate", uglier or less intelligent than what they are and it is this thinking that can result in a patronizing attitude towards someone from other cultures.

2.14.13 Insensitivity
Many people are insensitive towards people who look different, dress different, have different beliefs, etc. The Allenby Campus Business Communication Course (2004:80) suggest the following ways to improve intercultural communication:

- Most importantly, people need to be aware of how and why cultural communication can break down and attempt to modify their personal attitudes and behaviour towards people from other cultures.

- Organisations should attempt to create an atmosphere of trust, to allow for better intercultural communication to develop.

- Individuals should strive to accept differences between cultures.

- It is important to consider people as individuals and not as part of a group, i.e. not to generalize or stereotype.

- Education and learning is key, and people should strive to learn as much as possible about other cultures.
• Not only is this helpful to you, but also try to help others to understand the values of a culture and why it is important to show tolerance and understanding to other cultures.

• A positive attitude towards intercultural communication is essential for improved intercultural relations.

• No one culture is superior to another and everyone should strive to avoid assumptions of superiority.

2.15 THE JOHARI WINDOW

Blundel (1998:12) states that managers often encounter problems dealing with other people. Psychologists, Joseph Luft and Harry Ingram designed a simple matrix, which can be used to consider how we deal with other people. It also illustrates how relationships or trust develop over time.

Table 5 summarizes the four types of communication involved in our relationships with other people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>They are aware</th>
<th>I am aware</th>
<th>I am not aware</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OPEN</td>
<td></td>
<td>BLIND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIDDEN</td>
<td></td>
<td>UNKNOWN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Blundel (1998:12)
All relationships begin in the "unknown" area. When you first meet another person, they know little or nothing about you. In order to communicate, you begin to disclose things about yourself. They also begin to collect their own impressions, which may include some factors of which you are unaware. The position you have reached in the matrix affects the quality and effectiveness of your communication.

The OPEN can be expanded by:

- Reducing "hidden" areas through disclosure (i.e. sending additional messages)
- Reducing "blind" areas through feedback (i.e. receiving additional messages)

In business, there is often a fine line between holding back and disclosure. Clearly there are many situations where feelings are better kept to oneself.

2.16 MESSAGES IN COMMUNICATION

Blundel (1998:7) states that whatever media and channels are used, human communication comprises a vast number of different messages. These messages are often transmitted simultaneously and may contain one or more of the following types of material:

2.16.1 Facts
Facts are presented in a concrete and objective manner.

2.16.2 Ideas
Ideas are abstract and, arguably, objective in nature. It differs from facts in that different people may have different ideas.
2.16.3 Opinions
Opinions are concrete or abstract and subjective.

2.16.4 Beliefs
Beliefs are more strongly held opinions, which are usually linked to an individual's sense of identity and influence their daily behaviour.

2.16.5 Emotions
Emotions are felt and expressed by the sender and will be communicated differently by different people.

2.16.6 Motivation
Motivation is in the form of transmitted "energy", affecting the receiver.

2.17 REINFORCING THE MESSAGE
Blundel (1998:8) explains that all messages are vulnerable to noise and errors in decoding. According to him one of the most effective ways of guarding against costly communication breakdowns is to reinforce the message. The two main types of reinforcement are:

- Encode using multiple media in one channel (i.e. put words and pictures in a brochure or newspaper article).
- Transmit using multiple channels (i.e. give your audience a verbal presentation and provide a written report).
Reinforcement must always be consistent. If one medium or channel is delivering a different message from the others, your receiver may be confused, and probably annoyed.

2.18 THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

Hill (1997:94) describes culture as that complex whole that includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and other capabilities acquired by people as members of a society. He elaborates further by stating that values and norms are the central components of a culture. Values are abstract ideas about what a society believes to be good, right, and desirable. Norms are social rules and guidelines that prescribe appropriate behaviour in particular situations. Values and norms are influenced by political and economical philosophy, social structure, religion, language, and education.

2.19 THE INTERNET AND THE WORLD WIDE WEB

According to Hill (1997:10), the phenomenal growth of the Internet and the associated World Wide Web (WWW) (which utilizes the Internet to communicate between World Wide Web sites) is the latest expression of technological development. Hill (1997:10) goes on stating the following statistics:

- In 1990 fewer than 1 million users were connected to the Internet.

- By mid-1995 the Internet had about 40 million users, connecting more than 40,000 individual networks within organizations and almost 5 million host computers.
• By the year 2000 there will be well over 100 million users of the Internet.

• As of 1995 over half of all U.S. publicly traded companies with sales in excess of $1.5 billion had a presence on the Internet, and new commercial sites were being added at a rate of over 100% per annum.

The Internet and the WWW promise to develop into the information backbone of tomorrow's global economy. By the year 2000 it is likely that not only will voice, data, and real-time video communication such as videoconferencing be transmitted through the WWW, but also a wide array of commercial transactions will be executed through the WWW.

2.20 SOURCES OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Kreitner and Kinicki (2001:485) define nonverbal communication as "messages sent outside of the written and spoken word". It includes such factors as use of time and space, distance between persons when communicating, use of colour, dress, walking behaviour, standing, positioning, seating arrangement, office locations, and furnishing. According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2001:485) communications experts estimate that nonverbal communication is responsible for up to 60% of a message being communicated.

Kreitner and Kinicki (2001:489) continue to describe the sources of nonverbal communication:
2.20.1 Body movements and gestures
Body movements, such as leaning forward or backward, and gestures, such as pointing, provide additional nonverbal information that can either enhance or detract from the communication process.

2.20.2 Touch
Touching is another powerful nonverbal cue. People tend to touch those they like. Women do more touching during conversations than men.

2.20.3 Facial expressions
Facial expressions convey a wealth of information, i.e. smiling typically represents warmth, happiness, or friendship, and frowning conveys anger or dissatisfaction.

2.20.4 Eye contact
Eye contact is a strong nonverbal cue and serves four functions in communications:

- it regulates the flow of communication by signaling the beginning and end of conversation.

- it facilitates monitors feedback because it reflects interest and attention.

- it conveys emotion.

- it relates the type of relationship between communicators (Kreitner and Kinicki, 2001:489).
2.21 CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to introduce the reader to the theory of communication, thereby providing an invaluable building block for the study. A definition of communication was provided as starting point for the discussion.

Subsequently the contexts of communication, different types of organisational communication, advantages of effective communication, a communication model, barriers to effective communication, overcoming barriers to communication, external communication, internal communication, organisational structure, the seven Cs of communication, effective listening, active listening, intercultural communication, the Johari Window, messages in communication, reinforcing the message, the role of culture in corporate communication, the Internet and the WWW and sources of non-verbal communication were discussed in order to provide an extensive overview of the theory of communication and corporate communication in particular.

Chapter 3 will outline a global perspective of communication. Firstly communication in South African organisations is discussed. Organisational Communication (OC) is explained as well as the symmetrical versus asymmetrical worldviews. Finally the role of technology in corporate communications is discussed.
CHAPTER 3

A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ON CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

"I wish people who have trouble communicating would just shut up."
— Tom Lehrer (1928 –) —

This chapter explores the role and importance of corporate communication in an organisation globally. Firstly corporate communication in South African organisations is outlined. Subsequently the manner in which other countries deal with corporate communication is discussed.

Symmetrical vs. asymmetrical worldviews are described due to the important role they play in corporate communication.

The importance of communication in both management and strategic decision-making is stressed. Finally, the role technology can play in enhancing communication within an organisation, is mentioned and discussed.
3.2 A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ON CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

3.2.1 The South African Context

Grobler, Wärnich, Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield, (2002:14) state that all business organisations depend on communication. Communication is the glue that binds various elements, coordinates activities, allows people to work together and ultimately produces results. Because of the fact that companies are larger than ever and more mergers and acquisitions are on the way, communication in organisations is of the utmost importance today. Departments within an organisation may be spread throughout the country or even throughout the world. The trend in management style, away from the strictly authoritarian towards the more participative management style, also adds to corporate communication’s increased importance.

Grobler et al., (2002:14) continue by saying that it is often the public relations personnel who play a pivotal role in the design and maintenance of good organisation-wide communication flows to and from all employees. Public relations communication efforts can occur in a variety of ways.

(i) Downward communication methods

Downward communication methods, from management to employees, include:

- orientation sessions
- bulletin boards
- newsletters
• employee handbooks,

(ii) **Upward communication methods**

Upward communication methods usually include:

• suggestion programmes

• complaint procedures

• electronic mail

• attitude surveys

• open-door meetings

(iii) **Communication methods used in a South African context**

Grobler *et al.*, (2002:15) continues to describe each of the communication methods often used in a South Africa below:

• **New employee orientation**

  The impression made on new employees during their first few days and weeks in a new organisation, is of the utmost importance. This first introduction to the new workplace can set the tone for encouraging future participation and involvement.
• **Bulletin boards**

Communications of a general nature, i.e. official notices of policy changes, and personal employee news such as marriages or births may be posted on an employee bulletin board. Electronic bulletin boards are increasingly becoming more popular than traditional boards. (Grobler et al., 2002:15).

• **Communication meetings**

This is the ideal venue for employees to raise questions of interest to them to top management. It usually takes place as open meetings with a small group of employees at a time. These meetings can be held regularly and used to present special issues such as a new health insurance programme for instance. If such meetings can be held regularly and employees develop a sense that management has a sincere interest in their concerns, they can provide an excellent source of upward communication.

• **Newsletters**

The widespread use of computers and newsletter software programmes has made the employee newsletter a popular communication technique. An organisation can use the organisation newsletter to explain and promote organisational and industry-wide changes. News of a general nature, such as the beginning of a new medical plan or the announcement of employees' civic accomplishments, can be easily and effectively communicated in an informal style. A further application of organizational newsletters is to mail them to
retirees, laid-off employees and others who would usually not be up-to-date on organisation and employee events.

- **Employee handbooks**
  A well-written, up-to-date handbook can address important policies, procedures and rules that apply to employees, such as wages and benefit information, general personnel policies concerning holidays, sick leave, insurance, etc. In addition, other relevant information like the organisation's history, philosophy, mission and vision can be included.

- **Suggestion programmes**
  According to Grobler *et al.*, (2002:15) the suggestion box has existed in the South African workplace for some years now. Unfortunately, due to the scepticism workers viewed it with, it had been considered a joke. Workers did not always view management's interest as genuine. Up to the 1980's, employees were often conditioned to let management do all of the thinking and problem solving. Workers were not expected to think either independently or creatively. In today's globally competitive environment these qualities, i.e. creative and independent problem solving by employees, are crucial to an organisation's success.

- **Complaint procedures**
  From employees' point of view, a critical communication need is to provide them with a comfortable and effective means for bridging problems or complaints to management. Organisations are becoming more sensitive to employees'
complaints about supervisors and jobs. A couple of organisations have developed whistle-blowing procedures for addressing illegal or unethical acts before they reach the point where outside investigators are brought in.

- **Electronic mail**
  Electronic mail is quickly becoming the method of choice for rapid, informal and accessible inter-organisational communication. Employees can be linked together either through a local electronic mail system or connected to outside systems such as the Internet for communicating over great distances.

- **Surveys**
  The employee survey is the most widely used research technique among HR professionals.

- **Open-door meetings**
  A popular management practice and an excellent upward communication technique is the open-door policy. If over time the manager makes employees feel comfortable using the process, this technique can effectively open lines of communication between management and employees.

### 3.2.2 The global context
The manner in which other countries outside South Africa deal with corporate communication is discussed in this section.
Organisational Communication (OC)

Table 6 provides a summary of the most important characteristics of OC. Schonfelder (1998:52) defines OC "as kind of a cross between internal communication, human resources, and facilitator."

Table 6: Characteristics of organisational communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Real, exciting and very different from traditional internal or employee communication.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>OC is becoming an area of expertise, like public relations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC is not a fad on its way in or out.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC is an area of expertise that is evolving as a consequence of the rapid cultural changes taking place in most organisations and the society as a whole.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>OC is a holistic approach to communication within an organisation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>OC assumes that everyone is involved in, and responsible for, communication.</td>
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<tr>
<td>OC's focus is on the behaviours and processes needed to create an effective &quot;communication culture&quot; in an organisation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In OC theory you might look at ways to measure communication skills and performance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is then followed up by providing training, measuring again and subsequently rewarding improvements.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the most difficult issues to contend with in OC is that the solutions to communications problems are quite often not perceived as communication solutions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where OC will reside in an organisation's structure depends on the direction an organisation wants to go in terms of its culture and behaviours, as well as where it is now.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where OC will reside in an organisation's structure will also depend on the experience and resources available.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC cannot work without direct support from executive management, HR and the</td>
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</table>
communication departments.

OC is not intended to replace internal communication activities.

Many activities may still need to be implemented, although what is done may change depending on the organisation's needs.

OC is not intended to replace an organisation's HR function, even if it has resources specifically responsible for organisational development.

OC does require very difficult skills those held by most communication or HR specialists.

Currently, for many people learning OC it is a self-help process.

OC requires a whole new way to approach communication.

OC is not an easy discipline to integrate into your organisation.

OC is one of the few, sustainable, competitive advantages around.

Source: Adapted from Schonfelder (1995:52)

Schonfelder warns organisations not to miss the train because it is difficult to understand how different it is. She says the good news is, that it is not too late. Most organisations don’t have the direction decided, the tracks laid, the train put on them, nor the drivers. She argues that organisations have the chance to be there from the very beginning, and that OC is an opportunity to alter your organisation's behaviour and culture (Schonfelder, 1998:52).

An effective communication culture will ensure the proactive exchange of knowledge, opinions, and ideas, by everyone in an organisation. The effect should include faster decision making increased productivity and allow that old buzzword, empowerment, to actually happen. Several studies have shown that managers spend 70 – 80 % of their time communicating. Communication time include meetings, writing, telephone
conversations, chatting in the corridors, doing performance appraisals, etc. Imagine, being able to have an influence on that much of a person’s day.

(ii) **Symmetrical versus asymmetrical worldviews**

Grunig and White as in Grunig (1992:42) are of the opinion that public relations units (communication departments) do not exist in isolation in organisations. The presuppositions guiding their activities are a part of the social structure and culture that integrates the organisation. No one public relations practitioner or even a single public relations department is accountable for the approach that an organisation takes to communication.

Grunig and White as in Grunig (1992:42) point out that people see themselves as distinct from the environment. Some cultures see the relationship between themselves and the environment as one of interdependence and harmony. Others, in contrast, see it as one of sub ordination and dominance.

In the first worldview, people see an “ecological relationship”, in which they see themselves as intimately connected with the environment and other people. Therefore they see their well being as dependent on the environment and other people’s well being. In contrast to this view, other cultures see the relationship as one of individualism or a struggle for existence in which the fittest survive.
Grunig (1992:43) spelled out several presuppositions that he believes explain the asymmetrical and symmetrical worldviews, worldviews that characterize this difference in assumptions about the relationship between self and the environment.

- **Characteristics of the asymmetrical worldview**
  He characterizes the asymmetrical worldview by the following:

  - **Internal orientation**
    Members of the organisation look out from the organisation and not into it.

  - **Closed system**
    Information flows out from the organisation and not into it.

  - **Efficiency**
    Efficiency and control of costs are more important than innovation.

  - **Elitism**
    Leaders of the organisation know best. They have more knowledge than members of the public. Wisdom is not the product of a "free marketplace of ideas".

  - **Conservatism**
    Change is undesirable. Outside efforts to change the organisation should be resisted. Pressure for change should be considered subversive.
Tradition

Tradition provides an organisation with stability and helps it to maintain its culture.

Central authority

Power should be concentrated in the hands of a few top managers. Employees should have little authority. Organisations should be managed as autocracies.

Characteristics of the symmetrical worldview

In contrast to these asymmetrical presuppositions, Grunig (1992:44) indicate that organizations with a symmetrical worldview typically have the following characteristics in their culture:

Interdependence

Organisations cannot isolate themselves from their environment. Although organisations have boundaries that separate them from their environment, the public and other organisations in that environment interpenetrates the organisation.

Open system

The organisation is open to interpenetrating systems and freely exchanges information with those systems.

Moving equilibrium

Organisations as systems strive towards an equilibrium with other systems. This equilibrium state constantly moves as the environment changes. Systems may
attempt to establish equilibrium by controlling other systems; by adapting themselves to symmetrical worldview prefers cooperative and mutual adjustment to control and adaptation.

- **Equity**
  People should be given equal opportunity and should be respected as fellow human beings. Anyone, regardless of education or background may provide valuable input into an organisation.

- **Autonomy**
  People are more innovative, constructive, and self-fulfilled when they have the autonomy to influence their own behaviour, rather than having it controlled by others. Autonomy maximises employee satisfaction inside the organisation and cooperation outside the organisation.

- **Innovation**
  New ideas and flexibility in thinking rather than tradition and efficiency should be stressed.

- **Decentralisation of management**
  Management should be collective. Managers should coordinate rather than dictate. Decentralization increases autonomy, employee satisfaction, and innovation.
• **Responsibility**

People and organisations must be concerned with the consequences of their behaviour on others and attempt to eliminate adverse consequences.

• **Conflict resolution**

Conflict should be resolved through negotiation, communication, and compromise and not through force, manipulation, coercion, or violence.

• **Interest-group liberalism**

The political system is viewed as a mechanism for open negotiation among interest issue groups. Interest-group liberalism looks to citizen groups to “champion interests of ordinary people against unresponsive government and corporate structures”.

Some critics of the symmetrical worldview, which include, amongst others, Rakow, Mallison and Puvlik claim that the approach is both unrealistic and idealistic. They argue that organisations have public relations people as advocates to advance their interests and not as “do-gooders” who “give in” to outsiders with an agenda different than that of the organisation. Thus, these critics believe that an organisation would not hire a public relations person who does not practice asymmetrically. (Grunig and White as in Grunig, 1998:47).

In fact, organisations do want public relations people to work in their interest. They do not want to give in to all outside demands on the organisation when they
believe the organisation's position is right. "Do unto others you would have them do unto you." In short, excellent organisations realize that they can get more of what they want by giving the public some of what they want (Grunig and White as in Grunig, 1998:46).

Grunig and White go on to conclude that reciprocity means that the public too, will be willing to give up some of what they want to the organisation. This logic of reciprocity breaks down, however, when an organisation has more power than the public. According to Gouldner, (1960:174) "egoistic motivations may seek to get benefits without returning them."

Rakow as in Grunig (1992:47) proposed that a generalised norm of reciprocity would solve the above-mentioned dilemma of unequal power. Most moral codes contain a norm that reciprocity is good or necessary. This holds true even if people or organisations can get what they want by exerting their power. Organisations that do not adhere to this general norm lose the trust and credibility of the larger society of which they are a part. Because of this fact, excellent organisations would seem likely to incorporate the norm into their business or organisational ethics. The norm of reciprocity is the essence of what is generally called social responsibility.

Grunig and White as in Grunig (1992:55) declares that public relations, and thus corporate communication, cannot be excellent if organisations have a culture that is authoritarian, manipulative, and controlling of others. Therefore, organisations
that want to engage in excellent corporate communication cannot have an
asymmetrical worldview of relationships with others. Grunig and White as in
Grunig (1992:55) add that public relations also cannot be excellent if the schema
for public relations in the organisations conceives of public relations as
asymmetrical, in a neutral or advocacy role, and solely technical in nature.
Instead the argue that excellent public relations is based on the worldview that
public relations is symmetrical, idealistic in its social role, and managerial.

According to Grunig and White as in Grunig (1992:56), worldviews can be
evaluated on the following criteria:

- Their internal logic and coherence

- Their external effectiveness in allowing people and organisations to solve
  problems originating in their environments

- Their ethical ability to provide good or social harmony

Grunig, Grunig and Ehling as in Grunig (1992:65) postulate that, if the budget
makers of a large government agency told the agency's public relations manager
that he have to show how successful communication programs contribute to
organisational effectiveness or the public relations department would suffer
"negative budget adjustments".

Several answers would immediately come to the public relations manager's mind:
• Public relations increases profit.

• Public relations gains support in the community or in government.

• Public relations increases employee morale and productivity.

None of the above-mentioned answers can be supported by research or theory. The contribution of public relations to the bottom line requires a logical, theoretical argument to connect communication objectives to broader organisational goals. There is no single empirical measure that can indicate "the" contribution of public relations to meeting organisational goals.

3.3 COMMUNICATION IN MANAGEMENT

Kreitner and Kinicki (2001:478) state that management is communication. The reason being that every managerial function and activity involves some form of direct or indirect communication. Whether planning or organising, directing and leading, managers find themselves communicating with and through others. Managerial decisions and organisational policies are ineffective unless they are understood by those responsible for executing them.

Management experts also agree that effective communication is a cornerstone of ethical organisational behaviour. They go on stating that communication by top executives keep the organisation on its ethical course, and top executives must ensure that the
ethical climate is consistent with the organisation’s overall mission and vision. Communication is important in providing guidance for ethical standards and activities that provide integration between the functional areas of the organisation. Top corporate executives must also communicate with managers at the operations level and enforce overall ethical standards within the organisation. Effective communication is critical for both managerial and organisational success.

Kreitner and Kinicki (2001:455) argue that the quality of interpersonal communication within an organisation is critical. Employees with good communication skills helped groups make better decisions and were promoted more frequently than individuals with less developed abilities.

Kreitner and Kinicki (2001:485) define communication competence as “the ability to effectively use communication behaviours in a given context.”

Kreitner and Kinicki (2001:486) postulate that communication competence is determined by three components:

- Communication abilities and traits
  Communication abilities and traits include cross-cultural awareness, assertiveness, aggressiveness, defensiveness and active listening.

- Situational factors
  Situational factors include company philosophy on openness, company policy and procedures, organisational climate and geographic location of the organisation.
• The individuals involved in the interaction

Individuals involved can include a friend, someone you do not trust, a superior and a subordinate.

Figure 4 below illustrates how communication competence affects upward mobility:

Figure 4: Communication competence affects upward mobility

Source: Adapted from Kreitner and Kinicki (2001:486)

Figure 4 illustrates that communication competence is determined by three components: communication abilities and traits, situational factors and the individuals involved in the
interaction. Cross-cultural awareness, for example is an important communication ability or trait (Kreitner and Kinicki, 2001:485).

3.4. HOW TECHNOLOGY CAN SUPPORT CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS GLOBALLY

3.4.1 Digital dashboards
Gualda (2004:55) explains how the “digital dashboard” has been adapted to meet the challenges of providing timely and accurate data to clients and customers.

He states that according to Microsoft, a digital dashboard is a customized Microsoft-based solution for workers that consolidate personal, team, corporate, and external information with single-click access to analytical and collaborative tools.

In essence it brings an integrated view of an organisation’s knowledge sources to an individual desktop. In return this leads to better decision making by providing immediate access to key business information. Gualda (2004:55) mentions that, until recently, many employees had a difficult time getting crucial, up-to-date information about their office, their industries, and even within their teams.

Digital dashboards are designed specifically to solve the problem of information overload by pulling together key information sources into a consolidated view. The fact that a digital dashboard is built with Microsoft-based solution, also provides the tools to further analyse data.

A digital dashboard enable employees to be more productive because it:
- Helps them to focus on business priorities
- Extends how work is done today
- Delivers information, in the office or even on the move

Creating a digital dashboard provides a powerful tool that can be used to view daily activities, collaborate with co-workers, and gain insight into the performance of the office. Through information centralization, it saves time by not having to gather the information from many different systems. It ensures that users have the expertise and information they need to properly assess and act upon business opportunities.

Gualda (2004:56) concludes by stating that the dashboard application was designed for the management of remote office operations. This includes, amongst other operations, management reports, tools for management and sales operations, e-mail and the Internet. The dashboard works well, but it is still a work in progress.

3.4.2 Blogs (Web logs)
Leonard (2003:30) states that blogs begin to make their mark in corporate communications. The popularity of weblogs, or “blogs” got a tremendous boost in early 2003 when reporters covering the war in Iraq began to post their personal experiences. He states that blogs have been around for a few years, but their value as a communication tool is just starting to grab the attention of employers. Jason Shellen, the associate programme manager of Blogger, the web log division of Google Inc., said that employer interest is currently the highest that he have ever seen it, and it seems to be growing on a daily basis.
The focus of interest is developing blogs as external communication tools with customers and clients, although some employers are beginning to consider ways they can use blogs internally. Blogs can be a very flexible way to communicate daily with clients and customers about product releases and new services. In addition, Leonard (2003:30) argues that blogs may also help to forge better working relationships among staff. He warns that there is, however, as much potential for misuse of blogs as there is for any other form of electronic communication.

According to White and Dozier as in Grunig (1992:91) excellent public relations requires that the top practitioner in an organisation participate in management decision taking. Communication departments cannot make organisations more effective unless public relations functions are an integral part of management.

3.5. COMMUNICATION AND STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING IN ORGANISATIONS

White and Dozier as in Grunig (1992:98) describe strategic decisions as those that profoundly affect the future success and destiny of the organisation. Strategic decisions are important ones, in terms of the actions to be taken, resources to be committed, and consequences for the organisation and those who make such decisions. Strategic decisions typically involve a significant change of direction for the organisation.

Additionally, strategic decisions are those that contribute to effective use of organisational resources to deal with the competition in the environment. Strategic decisions affect the survival and growth of an organisation. Such decisions require
adequate perceptions of the organisation's environment upon which to base actions. Such representations become more ambiguous and difficult to construct as decision levels increase.

Radford as in Grunig (1992:98) described such problems as "complex" or "wicked". Wicked problems have the following characteristics:

- Inadequate information is available to decision makers.
- Multiple and conflicting objectives are involved.
- Several decision makers are involved.
- The problem environment is dynamic and turbulent.
- Several such problems are linked together.
- Resolution may involve costly, irreversible commitments.

White and Dozier as in Grunig (1992:98) argue that despite of the above-mentioned complications, wicked problems must be structured for resolution. Such structuring becomes more difficult as the level of the abstraction, both cognitive and organisational, increases. High-level strategic level problems require abstract thinking and, because they are strategic, such decision problems are dealt with by those high in the organisational structure.
The challenge for communicators and public relations personnel is to understand and respect the qualitative differences between concrete organisational decisions that they relatively make as technicians and abstract strategic decisions that they make as managers. According to White and Dozier as in Grunig (1992:99) some decisions require constructions of new meanings about the organisation in relation to its environment. Such construction of meaning typically involves action to change existing meanings. In such situations, boundary spanners, such as communication managers, have an important role to play.

Decision problems requiring changes in organisational meanings also require an understanding of the organisation from the outside. Organisations have cultures with implicit, unstated, and often invisible assumptions about the organisation and its relation to its environment.

Only when one leaves one's native land does one confront the somewhat arbitrary constructions of one's own culture. When viewed from the outside, meaning is seen as a cultural artifact because it is placed close together (juxtaposed) against an alternative construction.

White and Dozier as in Grunig (1992:99) is of the opinion that within organisations, boundary spanners are uniquely equipped to structure new meanings regarding organisation and environment. When abstract decision problems are detected, decision makers must resort to their imaginations to construct scenarios so that decision making can proceed. Such scenarios are not precisely defined. At least they are simplified
models of possible futures that help focus attention on crucial variables and decision points. Such scenarios are absolutely essential when they provide a sufficient basis for solving particular problems through an appropriate decision.

Requisite/absolutely essential scenarios are:

- Social constructions

- Fashioned through communication among decision makers

- Developed using an iterative manner (White & Dozier as in Grunig (1992:100)

3.6 CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to introduce a global perspective on corporate communication. The South African context was introduced first. The different communication methods used in organisations in South Africa was explained subsequently. Then corporate communication in the global context was discussed. The concept of Organisational Communication (OC) was explained intensively due to its relevance in ultimately developing a communication strategy. The symmetrical and asymmetrical worldviews were also introduced. Finally, the role of technology in corporate communications globally was discussed.

Chapter 4 aim to identify and explain the elements in a communication strategy.
4.1 INTRODUCTION

"A thousand voices without a common message and single purpose will in the end just make an indistinct noise that few will hear."
— Government Communicators' Handbook —

The Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:xii) states that without communication, no message or information can be conveyed and no change in attitudes, perceptions of behaviour can be expected. Communication is a means to an end, and not a goal in itself. (Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:xii) The communication process comprises a triad:

(i) A communicator;

(ii) A message; and

(iii) A receiver/target audience/target recipients.

Communication will be successful if the message being transmitted has relevance to the receiver. Successful communication also depends on processing effort, i.e. the degree of effort the receiver has to comprehend the message (Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:xii).
4.2 PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

The Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:xii) indicates that the principles upon which effective communication is based are credibility; context; clarity; continuity and consistency; countering value fears and expectations. Each of the above-mentioned principles of communication is described briefly below:

- **Credibility**
  
  Effective communication requires a climate of belief. For the target audience to receive and internalise messages, it should have confidence in and a high regard for the communicator's competence on the subject.

- **Context**
  
  The message must have meaning for the receiver. In general, people select those items of information that provide them with the greatest contextual rewards.

- **Clarity**
  
  The further the message gas to travel, the simpler it must be. Messages must be conveyed in simple terms. Words must mean the same to the sender and the receiver. Never assume that everyone will understand everything.

- **Continuity and consistency**
  
  Communication is a never-ending process. It requires repetition to achieve penetration. The message must be consistent. An organisation must speak with one voice, not many.
• **Channels**

Established channels or mediums of communication should be used – channels used and respected by the target audience. Different channels have different effects and effective in different stages of the communication process.

• **Capability of the audience**

Communication must take into account the capability of the audience to process a message. Communication is most effective when it requires the least processing effort on the part of the recipient.

• **Countering undue fears and expectations**

It is often easy to reduce fears simply by providing target audiences with sufficient information. Fears and mistrust are often the result of past perceptions, and can only be reduced with consistent and ongoing communication that outlines successes and progress.

Figure 5 below illustrates the two scenarios pertaining to information provision to stakeholders according to the (Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:7)).
Figure 5: Information provision to stakeholders: two scenarios

Source: Adapted from Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:7)

Figure 5 graphically explains the effects of not providing target audiences with sufficient information, versus providing them with sufficient information. Fears and mistrust are often the result of past perceptions, and can only be avoided through consistent and ongoing communication that outlines successes and progress.
4.3 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COMMUNICATION FOR AWARENESS CREATION AND COMMUNICATION FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:7) postulates that it is important to note that communication is a tool to achieve a specific goal. It is the tool to give effect to the objectives of both awareness creation and public participation. The objectives of awareness creation and public participation are different and so are their outcomes. The main differences are outlined in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Differences between communication for awareness creation and public participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication for awareness creation</th>
<th>Communication for public participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aimed primarily at transfer of information. Ultimate goal is to change perceptions, attitudes, and behaviour.</td>
<td>Information is communicated with the ultimate goal of receiving meaningful contributions from interested and affected parties, and to empower and educate parties in order to do so. (The process may result in changed perceptions, attitudes and behaviour, or may not).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication is often promotional in nature (&quot;see what we have achieved&quot;)</td>
<td>Communication is under no circumstances promotional (by law in certain situations).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication materials carry the identity of the organisation.</td>
<td>Communication materials usually carry the identity of the independent agency, either with or without the identity of the organisation involved in the project or actively being subjected to public participation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication materials are often in colour and fairly costly to produce. Communication materials usually have a fairly long life span (six months to some years)</td>
<td>Materials are in the form of discussion documents for comment, usually superceded within a few weeks by another document. Therefore, communication materials have a short life span, (usually between four weeks and three months) and are inexpensively produced.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Conducted by an organisation itself, or by an agency appointed by the organisation, on the understanding that the agency would give explicit effect to the wishes of the organisation. | Conducted by an independent agency (guided by law and international best-practice principles). The agency must act independently and therefore would not necessarily give effect to the wishes of the organisation, but would rather be guided by regulatory requirements and best-
practice principles.

| Ongoing, for the life of the organisation. | Finite life span, with clear start and finish dates, usually around 6 – 12 months, depending on the subject. |
| Focuses on all aspects of the organisation (management, financial affairs, social responsibility, environmental compliance, human resources, achievements, successes, etc). | Focuses on a particular project (e.g. a new industrial development) or an activity (e.g. a process to develop a new policy). |
| Usually about existing activities/projects. | Usually about a proposed project/activity. |

**Source:** Adapted from Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:8)

From Table 7 above it is clear that there is a significant difference between communication for awareness creation and communication for public participation. It is therefore critical that the person responsible for communication determine beforehand in what way communication messages will be presented and utilised.

It is also important to note that public participation, or consultation with stakeholders, cannot take place without awareness creation. Stakeholders, for example, need to be made aware of the opportunity to participate. The stakeholders need to be made aware of the issues at hand on which comment is required. The end goal of communication during public participation is, however, empowerment and capacity building in order to provide feedback and comment, and not merely to create awareness.

In essence, the differences are as follows:

(i) **Communication for awareness creation** aims to create understanding and win support and buy-in in order to change perceptions, attitudes and behaviour.

(ii) **Communication for public participation** is usually focused on a project or activity about which a decision needs to be made (Water Quality Management Communication Strategy, 2001:7).
4.4 DESIGNING A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

A communication strategy consists of seven important elements [Skinner and Von Essen as in Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:11)]:

1. Defining the situation (Situational analysis);
2. Setting objectives;
3. Determining the target audience;
4. Developing the message;
5. Activities;
6. Budget; and
7. Review and evaluation.

Each of the above-mentioned elements is outlined below, explaining the rationale behind each and how it can be developed.

4.4.1 Defining the situation
According to the Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:11) a situation analysis is conducted as a first step to designing a communication strategy. The situation analysis determines the nature of the “problem” that needs to be communicated. This “problem” which will change from time to time, is why any communication strategy is dynamic and needs to be reviewed on a regular basis, no less than annually.
The following questions are useful in conducting a situation analysis:

- Why does the organisation want to communicate more about the “problem?” What is the “problem”?

- Does the organisation have the necessary capacity and budget/resources to undertake the activities of a communication strategy?

- What communication activities were undertaken over the past two or three years?

List these activities and evaluate them in terms of:

(a) How many people were reached internally within the organisation? Does this number represent a substantial proportion of the total number, i.e. 80 – 90%?

(b) How many people were reached externally and does this number represent a substantial proportion of the total number?

(c) Did the target audience provide feedback?

(d) Was there a noticeable change in behaviour?

4.4.2 Setting objectives

A communication strategy contains clear objectives of what must be achieved by communication, as well as time frames. These objectives must be realistic, and must keep capacity and budgetary constraints in mind. Additionally, objectives should be measurable wherever possible in order to be evaluated. Two kinds of objectives can be set (Water Quality Management Communication Strategy, 2001:11):
• **Informational objectives**

These are objectives *that inform*. They are less ambitious than motivational objectives, and are typified by phrases such as: "create awareness of ...", "educate stakeholders about ...", "inform the target audience about ...", "create understanding of ...".

• **Motivational objectives**

These are objectives *that motivate*. They are more ambitious than informational objectives, and more difficult to achieve. They usually contain phrases such as: "change the attitudes of stakeholders towards XXX by the year XXXX".

Useful questions to ask in setting objectives are the following:

- What "problems" did the situational analysis or other evidence show that should be connected?

- What is it that the organisation must achieve?

- How can target audiences assist in achieving this?

- What must target audiences change before the objectives of the organisation will be achieved?
4.4.3 Identifying target audiences
Communication objectives are achieved by influencing someone either to take action or not to take action. The person, persons or groups become the target audiences (Water Quality Management Communication Strategy, 2001:13).

The Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:13) argues that target audiences include both an internal target audience (personnel of the organisation) and external target audiences (various stakeholders outside the organisation). It is important to realize that there is no one “public” that needs to be communicated with. The “public” consists of various “publics”, usually termed “sectors of society”.

4.4.4 Deciding on messages to be transmitted to target audiences
The Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:14) states that the message is what is communicated to the target audience. Communication strategies usually have one overarching message, as well as different underlying messages, not all at which are always communicated to all target audiences.

There may be several target audiences who receive the same message, as well as different underlying messages to suit each audience. Useful questions to ask in order to determine the messages are the following:

- What are the overarching and priority message(s) that all target audiences should receive?

- What is the “promise” that will be conveyed to target audiences?
• What messages should be targeted at specific target audiences?

• What message(s) will assist to identify the problem(s) identified during the situational analysis?

• What messages should be conveyed to give effect to the organisation's overall communication objectives?

4.4.5 Activities

Communication activities are the communication media or channels to transmit the appropriate message to target audiences. Mediums of communication could, for example, consist of newsletters, radio, television, posters, face-to-face communication and memorandums (Water Quality Management Communication Strategy, 2001:15).

A list of possible activities, the costs associated with each activity, and the benefits/disadvantages of each are outlined in Table 8:

Table 8: Communication activities: a range of media, their benefits and disadvantages, and cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Benefits and/or disadvantages</th>
<th>Cost indication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper/magazine/</td>
<td>Definite coverage, full control of published material.</td>
<td>Fairly expensive, especially in newspapers or magazines with high circulation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advertisements</td>
<td>Good for informational and image building purpose, not always successful for educational purposes. Targeted at literate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

88
<p>| <strong>Newspaper/magazine editorial or articles</strong> | Coverage nor definite. Editor has full control. Recommended for educational and information purposes. Targeted at literate people. | Very affordable. |
| <strong>Press releases</strong> | Should the press release be newsworthy, coverage can be expected. Good method to disseminate important information. Targeted at literate people. | Very affordable. |
| <strong>Articles in house journals, organizational newsletters or bulletins</strong> | Coverage fairly good since many organisations' house journals is always looking for something to publish. Chances that photos might be published are good. Targeted at literate people. | Very affordable. |
| <strong>Newsletter produced specifically for campaign/organisation</strong> | Full editorial and production control. Ideal method to communicate corporate identity and specific messages. Tool to create trust and confidence. Highly informative and educational. Poses a challenge to meet target audience needs. Distribution list is important and will determine number of people reached. Targeted at literate people. | Costs vary considerably depending on production; however, it can be a very cost effective method of communication. |
| <strong>Electronic news (articles or newspapers distributed electronically)</strong> | Easy access to those who have computers. Good communication tool for internal use on intranet. Targeted at literate people. | Very affordable. |
| <strong>Posters</strong> | Eye-catching method to communicate message. Can be educational and informative. Can be used for literate and illiterate people. | Costs vary considerably depending on production. |
| <strong>Pamphlets</strong> | Short and easy-to-read material, which can be distributed as an insert in other publications. Can be theme-specific to address certain issues and concerns. Targeted at literate people, however, cartoon pictures and simple wording can make it accessible to semi-literate people, | Very affordable |
| <strong>Ad hoc educational brochures</strong> | Effective for communicating specific topics. Not to be used as a general communication | Fairly expensive |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promotional Materials</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stickers and other promotional articles such as t-shirts, printed pencil boxes, key rings, etc.</td>
<td>Effective for awareness creation and image building. Not intended to change behaviour or to educate.</td>
<td>Costs vary considerably</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television advertisements</td>
<td>Effective for mass awareness creation and promotion. Not the ideal method to educate.</td>
<td>Very expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio advertisements</td>
<td>Effective for mass communication, promotion and awareness creation. Reaches the illiterate masses very effectively – especially through community radio stations.</td>
<td>Fairly expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television documentaries or inserts (e.g. on 50/50 or breakfast shows)</td>
<td>Effective for specific audiences.</td>
<td>Could be free of charge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio programme inserts</td>
<td>Effective for specific audiences.</td>
<td>Could be free of charge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual meetings</td>
<td>Reaches limited number of people. However, very effective if targeted at the right persons.</td>
<td>Cost effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group sessions (public meetings, conferences, seminars)</td>
<td>Reaches many specific people. Speaker has full control of message. Could be highly informative and educational.</td>
<td>Fairly cost effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open days, special events, launches, and visits.</td>
<td>Very effective hands on method to show role-players specific products, methods, etc. These kinds of events tend to attract media attention, which is always a bonus.</td>
<td>Fairly cost effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition material</td>
<td>&quot;A picture pants a thousand words&quot;. Very effective medium of communication to literate and illiterate people alike. A well-planned exhibition could be used at various events to convey the messages.</td>
<td>Fairly cost effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-images presentation</td>
<td>Effective for specific audiences. The eye is able to absorb large amounts of visual information at once and this medium can be taken anywhere once the necessary equipment has been acquired.</td>
<td>Initially very expensive to buy necessary equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fact sheets</td>
<td>This medium is effective in communicating simple messages to schoolchildren and semi-literate people. Highly educational and informative.</td>
<td>Very cost effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation material (slides and overhead transparencies)</td>
<td>Effective for certain audiences, very educational if well presented.</td>
<td>Cost effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>Effective for specific literate target audiences. Very informative and educational.</td>
<td>Very cost effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video</td>
<td>This is an effective medium to use, especially for illiterate people. Very good training medium if supported by a training manual.</td>
<td>Very expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training courses, educational talks</td>
<td>Very effective in reaching specific audiences with specific information.</td>
<td>Fairly cost effective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Adapted from Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:15).

Table 8 lists the media, their benefits and disadvantages, as well as the cost of each. A list such as Table 8 can be extremely useful if the budget is fixed and one has to determine which medium will be affordable for a particular campaign.

Communication activities could be oral, written or visual, and should be accessible to both highly educated audiences and to illiterates. No single activity will carry the message and have it understood and acted upon by the entire target audience. The message must be repeated many times and in many different forms in order to have an impact on the audience.

### 4.4.6 Budgeting

The Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:16) argues that determining a budget to give effect to a communication strategy is always difficult. Two basic considerations in the preparation of a budget are:

- The activities planned for the campaign
- The costs involved in executing the activities included in the campaign
The direct expense costs for the activities planned — for example, the costs involved in the production of a newsletter or for a television commercial — should be determined. The cost of executing the activity — for example, administration costs, overheads and fees — should also be calculated.

Once all the costs for the various activities planned have been estimated/calculated, a budget can be finalized.

4.4.7 Review and evaluation
There are essentially two kinds of results:

- Qualitative
- Quantitative

Many of the results of a communication campaign will be qualitative, i.e. they will not be measured statistically but by experience and self-evident qualities. In contrast, quantitative results show, for example, a percentage increase in awareness, increased media exposure, etc. No one measure can reflect the real effectiveness of a communication campaign, thus a number of measurement tools are generally used to evaluate a campaign. Some of these tools include:

- General feedback
  The general feedback received from people is a very good indication of success.
• **Publicity received in the printed media**
  The value of publicity received can be calculated in monetary terms and is usually a good evaluation method.

• **Exposure on radio and television**
  The value of exposure received is a good indication of the success of the campaign.

• **Opinion polls or surveys**
  Specific opinion polls and surveys can be conducted to evaluate the success of the campaign.

• **Complaints, criticism and praise**
  Feedback received by way of comment sheet – asking specific questions – present a good indication of the effectiveness of a communication campaign (Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:17). Feedback received by way of comment sheets is compiled into an evaluation report.

• **Awards and prizes**
  Awards and prizes received for a communication campaign are a clear indication of recognition and of the success of the campaign.

According to the Government Communicators’ Handbook (DWAF. 2001:9), a thousand voices without a common message and single purpose will in the end just make an
indistinct noise that few will hear. In other words, the Government Communicators' Handbook stress that government must strategise for communication, translating their ideas into a concrete programme of action that promotes their objectives. The Government Communicators' Handbook goes on formulating a communication strategy in nine steps. They emphasize that this is not a mechanical process that yields automatic results. It requires hard thought and a lot of thought.

Each step is of critical importance, and interlinked. There is, however, a logical order. The communication strategising process entails the following core elements (Government Communicators' Handbook, 2001:9):

- **Background**

  This element outlines what has led to the need for the communication strategy in order to ensure that the organisation is conducting the right battle and engaging in the right terrain.

- **Objectives**

  Setting objectives clarifies the intended outcomes. In this step the organisation need to broadly clarify what they are communicating and what they are trying to do. The objective may be to educate, to reassure people, or to receive or provide feedback about an organizational programme, change perception, etc.
• **Environmental analysis/communication environment**
  This step will define the environment in which the organisation chooses to communicate. It is critical to understand the environment before implementing the communication strategy.

• **Communication challenges**
  After the organisation has considered broad objectives in the context of a defined environment, this will lead to identifying specific communication challenges which have to be met successfully in order to achieve the objectives. Challenges could include both developments, which we must expect and take full advantage of, and obstacles, which we need to overcome. Once challenges are clarified, it will be possible to know exactly what it is we must communicate and how that should be done (Government Communicator’s Handbook, 2001:10).

• **Messages and themes**
  It is critical to indicate the themes and concepts that are associated with the communication effort being undertaken. A distinction can be made between central themes and sub-themes. Once this has been done effectively, it will be possible to formulate a core message.

• **Messengers, Audience and Channels, Types of Event**
  A campaign should always have its own voice. This requires a detailed breakdown of the audiences it is aimed at. The organisation must distinguish between the person who will speak and play the role in communication and
supports messengers. This leads to the types of events that need to be planned or are already on the calendar but which can be used for the specific campaign.

- **Phased Communication Programme**
  
  This step consists of two parts:
  
  (i) phasing of a campaign
  
  (ii) the broad outline of a communications programme

  Then the organisation can begin, and it may be no more than beginning, to map out a broad communication programme.

- **Structures and Processes**
  
  Implementing the communication strategy requires consultation with various structures. It has to be well articulated who the partners in the programme are and what their role will be.

- **Strategy document and action plan**
  
  A well-written communication strategy document is a critical instrument for a good campaign. This document will be the guide for all the future action, the standard against which the success or failure of communication is measured and the most critical means for keeping the campaign on track. It is a communication tool in itself. It helps managers and colleagues to understand what the issues are and how they will be managed in terms of communication. It needs to be clear and concise and well written in a form that is easily understood and persuasive. It
should not be written as a series of bullet-points but as a logical presentation of
the thinking behind the strategizing session. Thus, it must crisply articulate the
core message and the themes. An action plan is required to put the ideas
resulting from strategizing into practice. This action plan should spell out in detail
what is to be done for each event on the programme; who should do it; what its
specific targets and objectives are; budgets; etc. This will also serve as an
instrument of strategic management and coordination to make sure the objectives
are met. The action plan is best set out in table format. A critical part of an action
plan is to identify other supporting plans needed (Government Communicator’s

4.5 FOCUS-GROUP INTERVIEWS

Dozier and Repper as in Grunig (1992:190) notes that focus-group research is a
qualitative research technique that enjoys increasing popularity among public relations
practitioners.

Mariampolski as in Grunig (1992:191) divided the focus-group discussion into six
components, guided by the facilitator:

1. The rapport-building phase

This phase is used to establish a good communication between participants and
facilitator and to clarify the task of the group.
2. The exploratory phase
This phase allows the participants to define the nature of the dialogue through their responses to very broad questions.

3. The probing phase
During this phase dialogue is guided towards more narrow topics of interest to the researcher.

4. The task phase
During this phase participants might wrote a slogan or use other projective techniques.

5. The evaluation phase
Stimuli are often used during this phase of the discussion.

6. The closing phase
The participants are asked if there is anything they would like to add to the dialogue, allowing the facilitator to gather any remaining, untapped information.

According to Dozier and Repper as in Grunig (1992:193), focus groups are a useful scanning tool and focus groups drawn from key public participants can comment on their current perceptions of the organisation or they can react to actions being contemplated by the organisation.
One of the elements in the development of a communication strategy is environmental scanning. Focus groups can also help in the identification of emerging problems or opportunities. In the communication context this applies to identifying communication challenges. Dozier and Repper as in Grunig (1992:193) also state that focus groups are powerful formative evaluation tools during the preparation phase of evaluation.

From the above information regarding focus-group interviews, it is proposed that this qualitative technique be used to identify needs towards developing the communication strategy. This technique is also proposed for the environmental scanning and ultimately the review and evaluation phases.

The Literature review in this study clearly indicates that corporate communication is very important for the effective and efficient functioning of an organisation.

4.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the reader to the various elements a communication strategy should have to be effective. Firstly the principles of effective communication were discussed as an introduction to the chapter. The importance of stakeholders in the development of a communication strategy was subsequently highlighted. The difference between communication for awareness creation and communication for public participation was discussed. Finally the important elements a communication strategy consists of were presented and discussed.
The following chapter contains the summary, conclusion and recommendations of this study. Propositions are also made.
5.1 SUMMARY

In this research, the approach followed was exploratory, in the sense that it was aimed at exploring the literature to investigate means and ways to determine the communication needs of an organisation towards developing a communication strategy.

To achieve this, it was necessary to explain organisational/corporate communication in order to understand the way employees need to communicate both internally and externally. Communication will only be successful if the message being transmitted has relevance to the receiver (Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:xii). The principles of communication include:

- Credibility;
- Context;
- Clarity;
- Continuity and consistency;
- Channels;
- Capability of the audience; and
- Countering undue fears and expectations.
Skinner and Von Essen as in Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:17) point out that a communication strategy consists of seven important elements:

1. **Defining the situation (Situational analysis)**

   According to the Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:11) a situation analysis is conducted as a first step to designing a communication strategy. The situation analysis determines the nature of the "problem" that needs to be communicated. This "problem" which will change from time to time, is why any communication strategy is dynamic and needs to be reviewed on a regular basis, no less than annually.

2. **Setting objectives**

   A communication strategy contains clear objectives of what must be achieved by communication, as well as time frames. These objectives must be realistic, and must keep capacity and budgetary constraints in mind. Additionally, objectives should be measurable wherever possible in order to be evaluated. Two kinds of objectives can be set:

3. **Determining the target audience**

   Communication objectives are achieved by influencing someone either to take action or not to take action. The person, persons or groups become the target audiences (Water Quality Management Communication Strategy, 2001:13).
The Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:13) argues that target audiences include both an internal target audience (personnel of the organisation) and external target audiences (various stakeholders outside the organisation). It is important to realize that there is no one "public" that needs to be communicated with. The "public" consists of various "publics", usually termed "sectors of society".

4. Developing the message
The Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:14) states that the message is what is communicated to the target audience. Communication strategies usually have one overarching message, as well as different underlying messages, not all of which are always communicated to all target audiences.

5. Activities
Communication activities are the communication media or channels to transmit the appropriate message to target audiences. Mediums of communication could, for example, consist of newsletters, radio, television, posters, face-to-face communication and memorandums (Water Quality Management Communication Strategy, 2001:15).

6. Budget
The Water Quality Management Communication Strategy (2001:16) argues that determining a budget to give effect to a communication strategy is always difficult. Two basic considerations in the preparation of a budget are:

- The activities planned for the campaign
The costs involved in executing the activities included in the campaign

7. Review and evaluation

There are essentially two kinds of results:

- Qualitative
- Quantitative

Many of the results of a communication campaign will be qualitative, i.e. they will not be measured statistically but by experience and self-evident qualities. In contrast, quantitative results show, for example, a percentage increase in awareness, increased media exposure, etc. No one measure can reflect the real effectiveness of a communication campaign, thus a number of measurement tools are generally used to evaluate a campaign.

According to the Government Communicator’s Handbook (DWAF. 2001:9) in paragraph 4.4, a communication strategy is formulated using the following nine steps:

1. Background
2. Objectives
3. Environmental analysis/communication environment
4. Communication challenges
5. Messages and themes
6. Messengers, audience and channels, types of event
7. Phased communication programme
8. Structures and processes
9. Strategy document and action plan

It is apparent, when studying the elements of a communication strategy, that research is required to develop and implement a communication strategy successfully.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

Grobler, et al., (2002:14) furthermore states that all business organisations depend on communication. From the literature study it became clear that the symmetrical worldview as described by Grunig (1992:42), makes the most sense in a society where negotiation and compromise are favoured above conflict and disagreement.

An organisation adopting the symmetrical worldview has the following characteristics in its culture:

- Interdependence;
- Open system
- Moving equilibrium;
- Equity;
- Autonomy;
- Innovation;
- Decentralisation of management;
- Responsibility;
- Conflict resolution; and
- Interest group Liberalism.

The above-mentioned characteristics have been discussed in paragraph 3.2.
The primary objective of this research was to conduct an in-depth literature study regarding communication and communication needs towards developing an effective communication strategy for the Sub-directorate Mining. Clearly the reader of this study should have a far netter understanding of communication and the process involved for the development of a communication strategy. Grunig and White as in Grunig (1992:58) postulate that corporate/organisational communication cannot be excellent if organisations do not adapt a symmetrical worldview in their organisational culture.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The literature study in chapters one to four provided the basis for further research regarding the actual development of a communication strategy for the Sub-directorate Mining. Based on the literature the following propositions were formulated:

PROPOSITION 1:

The research technique proposed to conduct the qualitative research in order to identify the communication needs of the target audiences is focus-group research. Dozier and Repper as in Grunig (1992:190) noted that this technique enjoys increasing popularity among public relations practitioners. Focus groups are a useful scanning tool and focus groups drawn from key public participants can be very useful during the execution of the following elements of a communication strategy:

- Situational analysis
- Developing the message
- Review and evaluation
It is recommended that focus-group interviews be used throughout the development of the communication strategy if and when needed.

PROPOSITION 2:

It is evident from the literature that thorough research and planning need to be done in order to develop an effective communication strategy in practice.

Therefore it is proposed that first of all, a steering committee be formed to assist in this critical phase consisting of:

- Situation analysis
- Setting objectives
- Determining the target audience

The proposed steering committee must consist of representatives from:

- DWAF Head office
- a regional office, i.e, the Gauteng regional office
- the mining sector
- environmental consultants
- an official from the Directorate Communications at DWAF

The above-mentioned combination of people on the steering committee can collectively provide valuable inputs to address the above-mentioned elements of a communication strategy as described in paragraph 4.4.

When deciding on messages to be transmitted to target audiences, the following have to be taken into account in addition to the questions mentioned in paragraph 4.4.4:
- policy and legislative context
- water quality management
- the Directorate Water Quality Management and personnel giving effect to the Department's water quality management function.

PROPOSITION 3:

Officials responsible for the development of a communication strategy within the Waste Discharge and Disposal Directorate can use the literature in this study as a reference to assist them with:

- Identifying the necessary elements of a communication strategy as set out in paragraph 4.4.
- Evaluating various options when communication activities are considered as depicted in Table 8.
- Utilising the theory of communication as an important part in providing background information on the subject of communication in general.
- Understanding that organisational communication is key to the development of a communication strategy and is described in chapter 3.
- Realising that technology is fast becoming a very important component in corporate communication and should be noted in paragraph 3.4.
- Identifying the fact that communication and strategic decision-making in organisations should be considered. Focus-group interviews have been discussed in detail in paragraph 4.5.
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