



### **Beyond Silos Promoting Interdepartmental Communication**

Dr.K. J. Sumitha<sup>1</sup>, Dr. A. Shameem<sup>2</sup>,  
Pranav Kulkarni<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, <sup>2</sup>Professor, <sup>3</sup>Second  
Year MBA Student

When you run an organization with multiple departments, getting those departments to harmoniously co-exist can be a challenge. Organizational communication is one of the many leaps a successful organization has to make perhaps, many a time. One of the more important forms of organizational communication is inter-departmental communication. Though business owners may see interdepartmental communication as a trivial matter, the flow of information within an organization carries a great deal of significance.

When communication breakdowns within a company, it can result in decreased productivity on the whole as well as result in loss at a financial level. If interdepartmental communication breaks down, many

businesses stand to lose considerable amounts of money. For instance; if an organization's sales department ramps up sales and fails to communicate the increased demand to the production department, the company can lose business as frustrated customers look elsewhere for their products. Similarly, slowdowns in actual sales or sales forecasts that do not get properly communicated within the organization can leave the business with a glut of inventory that it may end up selling at a loss. Effective interdepartmental communication ensures that all departments are on the same page as work situations change. One department may make a change that affects another department. If the first department doesn't communicate those changes to the other department, there can be confusion and tension among employees. Without effective interdepartmental communication, a company can end up in chaos, with a lack of motivation among employees and an absence of trust and respect between departments.

A common log sheet is deployed by international organizations for transparency is one of the many ways to tackle such inherent problems. This



was provided to all departments and was used as a common tool to measure the production quantitatively based on time. Every department logs their production data and their status in the log sheet which can be viewed by every employee of the organization. Physical bulletin boards, coupled with electronic versions like online forums and intranet websites, can help increase the flow of information between departments. In addition, newsletters and other routine announcements create a channel for communication between departments, and town hall meetings can help ensure employees receive and understand important messages. Much of the information should be directly available to employees in newsletters, the intranet, and so on. The quantum of work could be measured department wise and time measurement could be gauged to locate or improve departmental efficiency. A platform for inter-departmental communication and relationship could be built to upscale production and profits.

Understanding the importance of time study and work study for increasing production in an organization is a

practice which promotes a high degree of transparency and brings demarcation between departments to an absolute zero. It is a well-known fact that an organization functions at its best only when there is best coordination between departments, reflecting the motto; “United we stand, divided we fall”. The efficiency of any individual belonging to any department and holding any position could be gauged at every stage, if a transparent common log sheet is deployed.

There were a few cases of departmental conflicts, which have lowered the productivity of the entire organization. When departments are pitted against each other by company management, the result is a closed communication climate where employees withhold information from each other intentionally. If one department will receive recognition or compensation as a result of “beating out” another, it’s not realistic to expect effective cross-department communication and cooperation. Companies that encourage competition among departments are well served by reviewing their programs and policies to ensure that



they aren't set up in a manner that leads to destructive conflict. In organizations where work is highly departmentalized, workers know little about what happens outside their own areas and don't often interact with employees in other departments. This can keep a sense of teamwork from developing throughout the organization, leading to conflict because employees who work in this type of environment are much more concerned about what is in their own best interest rather than the company as a whole. While interdepartmental contact remains an essential component of any company, it gets difficult to manage between different business dynamics but there are ways to enhance and build up company relationships that lead to the success of the business like scheduling all-hands meetings, creating assembly lines and promoting file sharing. Companies can use strategies such as cross-training and interdepartmental problem-solving committees to reduce the potential for this type of conflict. Finally, it must be made certain that the employees of the organization must have access, to all of the

business activities exempting the top, private files.

Such issues were immediately corrected by the organization as it understood its importance and the magnitude of the problems that it causes or may cause in the foreseeable future. The business activities became more transparent in that every employee had some level of access to the information pertaining to other departments. Trust and efficiency form the core of any inter-departmental relationship, which on failing to do so results in a conflict and when departments engage in conflict, the productivity of the entire organization is affected. People need to know how and when

communication should happen between departments. Above all else, communication tools must be put into place so that departments can communicate with each other in an efficient manner. The importance of communication between different departments in an organization becomes most evident when that communication breaks down. Implementing policies to strengthen



inter-departmental communication helps to underscore its importance and maintain an efficient flow of information. The implementation of the policy to strengthen the inter-departmental communication will ultimately lead to high level growth in an organization