

Communication in the Business Environment: Tesco UK

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Student Name: Ancuta Mirela Amariuca

Student Number: 2332548

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1. Introduction

Communication plays a fundamental role in enabling organisations to coordinate their activities and achieve organisational goals. In modern business environments characterised by high levels of competition, effective communication is essential for supporting managerial decision-making, encouraging employee engagement and improving overall organisational performance. Without effective communication, organisations may experience misunderstandings, reduced productivity and difficulties in achieving strategic objectives.

The purpose of this report is to investigate the role of communication within the business environment, using Tesco UK as an example. The report will examine the different communication methods used within the organisation and explain how these methods support organisational structure and culture. In addition, the report will identify common communication issues that may arise within Tesco and other large organisations. Finally, several practical recommendations will be provided to improve communication effectiveness and support organisational performance.

Tesco PLC is one of the largest retail organisations in the United Kingdom and

operates thousands of stores across the country as well as internationally (Tesco PLC, 2024). Due to its size and complex organisational structure, effective communication is essential for coordinating activities across departments, stores and levels of management.

2. Communication in the Business Environment

Communication in a business environment can be defined as the process through which information, ideas and instructions are exchanged between individuals and groups within an organisation (Robbins and Judge, 2022). Effective communication allows employees and managers to share information, coordinate tasks and collaborate in order to achieve organisational goals.

In large organisations such as Tesco, communication plays an essential role in ensuring that employees understand their responsibilities and organisational objectives. When communication is clear and consistent, employees are more likely to perform their roles effectively and contribute to the success of the organisation.

to perform their roles effectively and contribute to the success of the organisation. On the other hand, poor communication can lead to confusion, mistakes and reduced employee motivation.

Communication methods refer to the different ways in which information is transmitted within an organisation. These methods may include verbal communication, written communication, digital communication and informal communication. Each of these methods plays an important role in supporting coordination and collaboration within organisations.

Tesco operates using a hierarchical organisational structure that contains both functional and divisional elements. According to Mintzberg (2021), organisations with structured procedures and clearly defined roles often operate as a machine bureaucracy. In such organisations, communication is typically structured and follows formal channels.

One of the most common communication methods used within Tesco is vertical communication. Vertical communication refers to the flow of information between different levels of management. For example, senior managers may communicate

strategic decisions, company policies and performance targets to store managers. Store managers then communicate this information to team leaders and frontline employees through team briefings or internal messages.

Horizontal communication is also widely used within Tesco. Horizontal communication occurs between employees or departments at the same organisational level. For example, departments such as human resources, operations and marketing must communicate regularly in order to coordinate activities and ensure the organisation operates efficiently.

Tesco also relies heavily on digital communication tools. The organisation uses an internal intranet system and digital platforms where employees can access company updates, training materials and important information. Digital communication allows Tesco to share information quickly across multiple stores and departments.

Written communication is another important method used by Tesco. Written documents such as employee handbooks, internal reports, policies and procedural guidelines help ensure that employees understand organisational rules and expectations. Written communication also helps maintain consistency across all

Tesco stores.

Informal communication also plays an important role within the organisation. Day-to-day interactions between employees and managers help build trust and strengthen organisational culture. Managers often use face-to-face communication to provide feedback, motivate employees and support teamwork. According to Mintzberg (2021), communication is a key part of managerial work and plays an important role

in leadership and coordination within organisations.

3. Common Communication Issues

Although organisations such as Tesco use multiple communication methods to coordinate their activities, communication challenges can still arise. These issues can affect employee performance, workplace relationships and overall organisational effectiveness.

One common communication issue within large organisations such as Tesco is miscommunication. Due to the organisation's hierarchical structure, information may pass through several levels of management before reaching frontline employees. During this process, information may be misunderstood or interpreted differently. For example, when senior managers introduce new policies or operational changes, store managers may communicate these instructions differently to their teams. As a result, employees may become confused about what is expected of them.

Cultural differences can also create communication challenges within Tesco. As one of the largest employers in the United Kingdom, Tesco employs workers from many different cultural backgrounds. Employees may have different communication styles, values and expectations based on their culture. According to Schein (2020), organisational culture influences how employees interpret communication and interact with colleagues.

Language barriers may also affect communication between employees. For example, employees whose first language is not English may sometimes misunderstand instructions or company policies. This may lead to mistakes or reduced efficiency in the workplace.

Another issue related to communication within Tesco involves technological communication. While digital platforms allow information to be shared quickly across multiple locations, they can also create information overload. Employees may receive a large number of emails or digital messages during their shifts, which may result in important information being overlooked.

Furthermore, not all frontline employees have immediate access to digital

communication platforms during working hours. This may limit the effectiveness of internal communication and create gaps in information sharing.

Communication problems may also arise when managers communicate inconsistently with employees. As leaders within the organisation, managers are responsible for providing clear guidance and instructions. If managers provide unclear or inconsistent messages, employees may struggle to understand their tasks or expectations. Yukl (2020) suggests that leadership communication plays an important role in influencing employee behaviour and motivation.

Finally, time constraints may limit effective communication within Tesco stores. Retail environments are often fast-paced, and employees may not always have enough time to participate in team briefings or discussions. This lack of time may result in incomplete communication and misunderstandings between employees.

4. Recommendations

Based on the communication challenges identified above, several strategies can be implemented to improve communication within Tesco.

Firstly, Tesco should encourage two-way communication between employees and managers. Allowing employees to provide feedback and ask questions during team meetings can help reduce misunderstandings and improve clarity.

Secondly, Tesco should invest in communication training programmes for managers. Training can help managers develop stronger leadership communication skills and ensure they communicate consistently with employees from different backgrounds.

Another recommendation is to improve access to digital communication platforms for frontline employees. Providing easier access to internal communication systems would ensure that employees receive important updates and organisational information more effectively.

Tesco should also ensure that important messages are communicated through multiple channels. For example, key announcements could be shared through emails, team briefings and digital platforms to ensure that all employees receive the information.

Finally, senior leaders should promote an organisational culture that encourages open communication and transparency. When leaders demonstrate clear and honest communication, employees are more likely to feel comfortable sharing their ideas and concerns.

5. Conclusion

Communication plays a vital role in supporting coordination, collaboration and organisational performance in modern business environments. Large organisations such as Tesco rely on a variety of communication methods, including verbal, written, digital and informal communication, to ensure that employees understand organisational goals and responsibilities.

The hierarchical organisational structure used by Tesco influences the way communication flows between different levels of management and departments. When communication methods are used effectively, they help employees perform their roles more efficiently and contribute to improved organisational performance.

However, communication challenges such as miscommunication, cultural

differences, technological limitations and time constraints may affect the effectiveness of internal communication. These issues can create confusion among employees and negatively impact productivity.

By implementing strategies such as improving communication training, encouraging two-way communication and strengthening digital communication systems, Tesco can improve communication effectiveness and support long-term organisational success.

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