

## **DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGY – THE PREMISE OF LAUNCHING AND IMPLEMENTING A PROJECT IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT**

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**ABSTRACT:** *The paper presents the main aspects that underlie the development of an effective communication strategy in the situation where it is desired to launch and implement a new project in the school environment, a project that is intended to be known both by the school staff directly involved in its development, as well as by the students who will participate in its successful development and last but not least in the entire community of which the school unit is part. Starting from the 12 dimensions of an effective communication, the paper presents the way in which the communication strategy from the project team should be thought and realized, aiming to implement in extracurricular activities of a school unit an original project, this is one on the ways of selective waste collection and recycling in order to prepare students for a topic of high relevance, namely that of a clean environment at present and in the future.*

**KEY-WORDS:** *Communication strategy, communication dimensions, educational project, school unit, clean environment, recycling, selective waste collection.*

**JEL CLASSIFICATION:** *M10, M16.*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

*Strategic communication* in an organization is the way in which it integrates communication into the sphere of its specific problems. Strategic communication enhances the ability of employees to participate in meeting the organization's goals. It creates a relationship in which management finds greater credibility among employees. This openness contributes to ensuring job satisfaction, improving the model of receiving communication and improving attitudes and capacity. Communication is necessary in the organization to express needs, where the form and starting point of communication is very important.

Although there are several direct and indirect approaches to the communication process and to establish a coherent and effective communication strategy, the most

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appropriate is the one that combines the purpose of the message transmission with the audience analysis. Thus, in this context, a direct psychology, the presentation of a main idea followed by explanations, or an indirect psychology, first the explanations and then the main idea. The organizational culture of the developed countries of the European Union mainly applies indirect psychology. Once the message is sent, the communication process cannot be completed without feedback. If this is not satisfactory, further messages will be sent if necessary.

## 2. DIMENSIONS OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

According to the opinions expressed by some authors in the literature, strategic communication should have 12 dimensions or characteristics. Often, however, not all dimensions are reached due to lack of interest, lack of money, or other shortcomings. These dimensions of strategic communication are as follows:

**1. Strategic orientation of the organization** – communication is the essence of the life of the organization. It trains employees in the organization in strategic activity. They must have the ability to quickly identify, send, receive and understand strategic information, to distinguish credible and relevant information from the mass of information received, according to the firm's strategic intentions. Decisions on strategy and policy must take into account communication, and the means used and the communication itself will be oriented toward strategic priorities.

**2. Integrity and integration** – the communication within an organization must be credible, based on integrity, which in turn represents constancy and total responsibility between communication and leadership. In building credibility, official, semi-official and informal communication channels are integrated. The impact of communication is the same as the impact of decisions and actions of the organization.

**3. Dignity and respect** – strengthening relationships of trust and responsibility requires dignity and mutual respect between the communicating parties. The organization that takes this into account benefits from a very high level of commitment from its members. Communication built on this basis contributes to the success of the organization.

**4. Flow of strategic information** – fast, constant flows of strategic information contribute to the well-being of the organization. It will support and maintain the systematic flows of relevant information, which circulate vertically (top-down, bottom-up) so that there are all the resources to achieve the strategic objectives. This is achieved through the total commitment of the management of the organization, through the application of the appropriate technologies and the support of the employees. Strategic information flows within an organization are a barometer of competitive capacity.

**5. Clarity and force of messages** – lack of clarity of messages leads to chaos. Clear messages have consistency, consistency and reason for use.

**6. Internal perspective** – communication within an organization requires orientation and perspective toward the external environment. The strategy of how the organization cooperates with its external environment – customers, competitors, communities, members of the organization must be aware that not only the strategy, but also the reasons for its implementation, must be understood, in order to ensure the

success of the organization. Overall, external-oriented information needs to be balanced, strategic and credible.

**7. Roles and responsibilities** – the communication system and its performance depend on the training, participation capacity of employees, who have one or more roles in communication. Each employee will have clear responsibilities for vertical (ascending/descending) communication, for lateral communication, depending on their position: Will receive and transmit information, will create relationships that lead to fast, strategic communication. It will be determined what information to be communicated to whom, when, how and why, mentioning also the consequences of not respecting these established things.

**8. Listening** – good communication requires balance and consistency, so listening, when involved, will represent a real reception and inclination to react following the message. Listening is not just a polite silence, but the capacity to realize that listening to others is a good investment of time in learning from the experience of others.

**9. Practice and training** - all employees must receive training and practice: They will ensure the ability to communicate quickly and competently. Supporting elements in achieving this objective are technologies and resources in ordinary communication, the influx of information, communication channels

**10. Structure and process** – Communication is not a goal, but a means, its objective being to increase the performance of business in the organization. The success of communication is measured by the level at which it drives employees to align tasks with the strategic activities of the organization.

**11. Evaluation systems** – everything that is important in the organization can also be measured: Teamwork, speed, perseverance, etc. The value of strategic communication is precisely the value of the strategy, the changes, the objectives for which it is used. A measurement of the communication will focus on its effectiveness related to the strategy, so as to be adaptable to changes in situation, to establish responsibilities and to highlight the progress made. The evaluation of the communication shall take into account the official, semi-official and informal communication.

**12. Continuous improvement** – the effort to achieve ever-better results is a commitment both individually and organizationally to support progress, change, development, to avoid stagnation leading to a cessation of growth. Importance will be given to continuing training programs, resources allocated and their implementation.

### **3. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

#### **3.1. Prerequisites for project development**

**Preparing the conditions for the project development** involves: Setting up and strengthening the project team, ensuring the partnership with the community of which the school is part, preparing the project team members in the field of elaboration, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects.

**The project team of the school will focus:** On the elaboration and implementation of projects that must ensure the transposition into a standard format of a unique content provided by the particular problem/ need of the school identified and mentioned in the school development plan to which the project relates.

**Tasks of the project team:**

- Selection of one or more priority issues included in the school development plan;
- Elaboration of the project proposal/proposals and completion of the “application form”; closing collaboration protocols with community partners;
- implementation of approved projects;
- promoting the project results at the local community level.

**Profile of project team members:** Beliefs related to the need for the development of schools and communities; correct perceptions of school and community issues; ability to solve problems and identify solutions; the ability to build and implement projects adapted to local specificities; knowledge and skills for translating projects into a standardized format; a spirit of initiative and participation; motivation for local capacity development and school improvement; communication skills, cooperation, teamwork and sharing experiences; skills for gathering, interpreting and presenting information; openness to innovation, change and development; available for self-improvement.

**Communication – meeting** these general requirements requires knowledge, skills, skills and permanent exercise in the field of interpersonal communication. The success of any project depends largely on how communication takes place at each stage and activity.

The requirements related to this problem are all the more important as the strategy of implementing a project requires constant communication within the project teams and between these teams and the school and local communities in all the stages involved in the project.

### 3.2. Preparation of design

Projects of educational units in the local, county, national educational context. Like any project, an educational project must provide an opportunity for schools to ensure innovation, change and development; to comply with the requirements formulated by the provisions of the School Development Plan and the specificity of the regional and local context in which the project will be carried out; fit into a standardized MODEL, imposed by MEN/ISJ, which contains a mandatory set of key elements.

**Originality of a school educational project:**

- ◆ The project that a school implement is a set of activities that: Provide a pertinent solution to an identified problem; it takes place within a certain period of time; use material, financial and human resources; it produces measurable results.
- ◆ The team that develops the project must ensure the balance between rigor and creativity, answering some questions arising from the standard form to be followed: , What are the characteristics of the school and its partners? What options will the school make in the project? What will be the goals to achieve? What activities will be carried out to achieve the objectives? Which target groups will be selected? Who

will be the school's partners? What results will be achieved? Who will be the beneficiaries of the project? How will the assessment be done? What impact will the project have? How will sustainability be ensured? How will the project be promoted? What will the action plan include? How will the "time resource" be used? What budget will be needed and how will it be made up?"

- ◆ In order to build an original and realistic project, answering this set of questions it is necessary for the project team to know: General principles and rules in the field of design; methods of analysis of the school and community context; Milestones of the school development plan to which it is a part; The requirements contained in the application form.

**A successful project must be:**

- innovative, through the unique elements it contains;
- coherent, through the logical connection between all its elements/components; feasible, through the realism of the activities and deadlines it provides;
- relevant, by the significance of the problems he wants to solve;
- courageous, through the goals he wants to achieve;
- clear, logical, rigorous in the way he explains what he proposes.

In this context, the members of the project team of the school must capitalize on the entire experience they have in the field of projects and focus on their permanent development in this field.

### **3.3. Project example: "A clean environment through selective waste collection"**

Recycling is a great benefit to the environment that we must leave clean for future generations. In the past, people used to repair and reuse everything they could. The population was smaller and people lived in less concentrated groups. In addition, the packaging used was made of easily decomposed materials and thus the return of raw materials to nature was much faster and simpler. The industrial revolution has allowed the large-scale manufacture of lightweight, durable packaging that keeps the various food products under suitable conditions for longer. In this way, comfort and access to increasingly varied products is automatically much higher. Evolution is for the benefit of mankind, but what is the tribute we have to pay? The world's population has grown greatly, while resources are becoming less and less accessible. In this way, in a short time, we risk not having the raw materials from which to make the products necessary for our daily life.

Waste has always existed. They are even a way for historians to learn about the way of life of a missing population. Nowadays, waste has become a problem. We throw away much more than in the past. To produce consumer goods, which sooner or later become waste, we use increasing amounts of raw materials and natural resources, energy and water. In addition, the types of waste have diversified, many of them being difficult to assimilate by the environment, and the space allocated to the waste has been widening. The waste we produce has ended up affecting our health and the environment. However, we continue to consume and throw away. The causes of this phenomenon are multiple: The evolution of lifestyle and eating habits, demographic growth, excessive industrialization.

In order to stop the waste inflation, the system of selective waste collection was introduced, which involves temporary storage of waste by category, in specially arranged places, after which their recycling follows. Recycling is one of the easiest ways to protect the planet from pollution. Recycling means the separate collection of waste (glass, plastic, paper), cleaning and processing into similar or different usable goods. Waste is part of raw materials or materials that are left behind and can no longer be used. Recovery and reuse of recyclable resources are means of resolving the contradiction between the requirements of the economic growth process and the restrictive nature of resources. Recycling is a concept of the 20th century and has emerged as one of the possibilities to limit waste and use resources more efficiently. It has become increasingly clear that industrialization and sustained population growth have led to the consumption of increasing amounts of resources.

**Benefits of the project.** The key to real change with long-term impact is education. If we want to change behaviors and approaches in the future, it is very important to educate children with respect for resources and nature. Environmental care must be an essential component of the moral, spiritual, social and cultural development of present-day generations. Today, more than ever, it is necessary to educate all citizens in an ecological spirit, especially the young generation, because it will be both the beneficiary of tomorrow and the decision-maker

At school age, ecological education is as important as intellectual, moral and aesthetic education because it conveys to children knowledge about the environment, forms skills to protect and protect nature, attitudes and behaviors that are fair to the environment. The school has at its disposal multiple possibilities of achieving a good ecological preparation of children, which will then materialize in the formation of an ecological behavior and culture.

A real success in education is the complementarity of activities, but also of sectors. Thus, creative recycling activities must be complemented by an open attitude from the school, as well as an involvement from the parents.

**The project's purpose.** The project aims to cause students to reconsider their way of living in relation to nature, to protect it, to be able to benefit from the vital gifts that they offer us so generously and the formation of appropriate ecological behavior by taking concrete actions to protect the environment; warning the school public about the consequences of inappropriate behavior on the environment and students' understanding that life is only possible in an unpolluted environment.

**The project's objectives:** developing the skills to keep nature clean; cultivating feelings of respect and valuing the environment; acquiring appropriate social behaviors; increasing students' attention to the degree of pollution in their locality; involvement in activities aimed at preventing pollution; training children to carry out ECO works with PRO NATURE messages; the formation of good ecological behavior in children in such a way as to vibrate more the intimate chord of their love for nature.

**The project's coordinators:**

- School management representatives: Principal, deputy principals
- Educational advisor for primary and preschool education:
- Teaching staff: Primary and preschool teachers
- Representatives of the local authority and other institutions and organizations:

- Representatives of the school administration: chief accountant, administrator
- Other persons: librarian, laboratory technician

**Target group:** preschool, school, middle school, high school students of the school.

**Collaborators:** representatives of the school administration; the students' parents; representatives of the local community and other institutions and organizations

**Activities:**

1. Informing students about the purpose, objectives of the project and the activities to be carried out.
2. "The detectives of cleaning: the school, the castle of cleaning": for a healthy life and environment - general cleaning in each classroom, then maintaining the cleanliness and ventilation of the classrooms; setting up a green corner in each classroom; the installation of trash cans drawn and inscribed with ecological messages in each class; the collection of paper by the students of each class; Contest: "ECO class!" – the class that will perform all the specified activities.
3. Paper collection campaign.
4. "Beauty...out of nothing": practical activity of making decorative items, ornaments, greeting cards, toys, eco-creations using recyclable materials (paper, cardboard, aluminum cans, plastic, etc...); making an exhibition with these beauties in the school hall.
5. "Today's students - tomorrow's responsible adults": documentation activities about selective collection and recycling; the drafting by the students of a regulation regarding keeping the school and its surroundings clean.
6. Pet collection campaign.
7. "Green days": days dedicated to selective collection; greening activities of some areas of the town together with representatives of the local community.
8. How do you feel, earth?: "On your birthday we want to make you smile!"; competition-making posters dedicated to Earth Day on the theme of protecting life on earth and the fight against pollution; organization of a green corner in the unit with the posters made by the students; adopting and displaying an ECO-COD and the week of the little ecologist, distributing ECO flyers.
9. "We should care!": the involvement of some institutions, local companies in selective collection activities by placing collection boxes, posters, flyers at their headquarters; the presentation by the students of a documentary drawn up by them, but also of the regulation drawn up by them.
10. "I create and recycle": activity – competition of literary creations; activity – general culture contest on the topic of selective collection and recycling; organization of a raffle.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

The results obtained in each campaign will be monitored and displayed in each class. After each collection campaign, waste recovery follows. The amounts that will be obtained will constitute a prize pool for each class, in proportion to the amount collected.

By implementing this program in the school, we will ensure that during its implementation, we involve all the teaching staff in the students' ecological education activities, both through class hours and extracurricular activities. Thus, in the long term, they will aim to successfully carry out the following activities:

- Activities will be organized on ecological themes as diverse as possible, with a predominantly practical character, and we will follow the trans and interdisciplinary approach of ecology classes.
- The involvement of parents and the local community in the school's activities will be considered, organizing collection campaigns, greening, population awareness through marches, etc.
- Establishing a permanent column either in a school magazine or on the Facebook page to inform readers about the status of the project, but also to present some useful information, of public interest, about greening / selective waste collection.
- Articles about the activities related to the development of the project will be periodically sent to the local newspapers.
- A photo album will be made containing images from all the activities carried out.
- The students will be involved in the design of some environmental mini-projects (signaling some local environmental problems and proposing ways to solve them).
- The activity of collecting paper, glass, plastic and aluminum waste will become permanent in the household (students' families) and school activities.
- The formation of ecological waste collection behavior by categories and the development of the practical spirit by valorizing the collected waste.
- During the project, an ecological space will be created in the school.
- Students, parents and teachers will be involved in the activities of arranging the garden and the school yard.
- Saplings will be planted and flower beds will be arranged in the school garden and yard.

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