

Managers' Change Communication Competence Links with the Success of the Organisational Change

Asta Pundzienė, Raimonda Alonderienė, Solveiga Buožiūtė

ISM Vadybos ir ekonomikos universitetas
E. Ožėškienės g. 18, LT-44254, Kaunas

The paper seeks to explore how to enhance managers' communication competence required for successful change management within enterprises. The main goal of the survey is to find out the links between change communication competence and change management success. Also the paper reveals what communication competencies are needed during the organizational change and what are the most effective ways to acquire them.

The change management literature emphasizes the importance of the communication during the organizational change. The paper identifies managers' communication competence required during the change as well as the ways of learning. The empirical research carried out in more than 40 Lithuanian fast-growing enterprises, reveals how Lithuanian managers develop communication competence and which form of learning is most common.

Analysis of the literature confirms that the success of the organizational change highly depends on internal communication. The survey reveals the content and the process of managers' learning, as well as that informal learning or in other words – learning by doing is common among Lithuanian managers.

Some research limitations can be defined. First, the scope of the research was limited – it would be interesting to investigate relationships of the managers' communication competence and resistance to change. Second, the results of the empirical research could be proved in the cross-cultural context.

The findings of the paper contribute to the further research on management development and change management. The information on how managers learn to communicate before and during the change will help to improve the services of management training providers.

The paper identifies what kind of communication competence is required to lead the change and in what way they are acquired. Also the relationship between formal, non-formal and informal management learning in the change process is defined.

Keywords: *change management success, communication competence, managers' learning, Lithuania.*

Introduction

Present organizational environment is described by "idea of the non-existence of environmental stability" (Breu, Benwell, 1999). Organizational change and change management are discussed in great number of sources: the change process is described, change types are defined,

and the guidelines for leading and managing change are identified. Nonetheless, up to 70 percent of change programs fail (Senge et al., 1999; Patterson, 2000; Beer, Nohria, 2000), and the failure in most cases is caused by poor communication (Murdoch, 1999; Gilsdorf, 1998).

Communication is described as indistinguishable part of the organisational change efforts and is considered as the crucial factor in planning, implementing and managing change by the change experts (DiFonzo, Bordia, 1998; Lewis, Seibold, 1998; Schweiger, Denisi, 1991) and practitioners (Lewis, 1999). The authors agree that a number of negative change aspects (resistance to change also) are influenced by poor communication (DiFonzo et al., 1994; Smelzer, Zener, 1992).

The change management literature indicates the relationship between organizational change success and communication, the communication goals organizations have during organizational change (Elving, 2005), describes media, used in communicating change (Lewis, 1999) and strategies the managers use during change communication (Clampitt et al., 2000). The suggestions for effective communication are provided (Smith, 2006), communication teaching methods described, yet only few sources describe how managers actually *learn* to communicate? How does their communication competence affect the success of the organizational change? Does it have any impact on organizational change success?

The paper seeks to explore **how to enhance managers' communication competence needed for successful change management within the enterprises**. Objectives of the paper are stated as follows:

- Assess the significance of communication competencies.
- Evaluate the acquisition of communication competencies.
- Identify the relation between communication competencies and change success.

The paper is comprised of several main parts: at first the literature is reviewed regarding organizational change communication competencies and management development during the organizational change. Thereafter empirical research is conducted based on theoretical model described in order to verify three hypotheses. Also conclusions and guidelines for further research are drawn.

Conceptual framework

Communication Competencies needed during the change. The continuous nature of contemporary change

highlights several difficulties for managing the process of change and in particular managers need to develop competencies in change management that accommodate continuous change efforts (Buchanan et al., 1999). Findings of existing literature show that communication is seen as one of the key factors for a successful change. There is no common definition explaining the communication during change, but in the literature (Bourke, Bechervaise, 2002).

According to Frahm (2005), the frequent failure of organizational change (Weick, Quinn, 1999) results in part from ill considered or misused organizational communication strategies and tactics. Daft (1997) defines organizational communication as “The process by which information is exchanged and understood by two or more people, usually with the intent to motivate or influence behaviour”. Communication is the process on which the initiation and maintenance of organisational change depends. Ultimately the success of any change effort depends on how effectively the strategy for and the substance of the change is communicated to those who are the targets of change (Witherspoon, Wohlert, 1996). As Zairi (1992) puts it “communication of the technology idea should not be a process of telling or informing, but a mutual process of exchanging ideas, thoughts and sharing of anxieties, fears and reservations”.

Bourke and Bechervaise (2002) explain change communication as the instrument used to construct, deconstruct and reconstruct existing realities in order to effect change. The implications for today’s managers are that to develop communicative competencies they need shift change communication as communication during change, rather than to communicate the change (Frahm, 2005).

Frahm (2005) concludes that development of “soft skills” remains of paramount importance in the management development literature. Accordingly, managers are urged to develop communication skills to minimize occurrences of workplace sabotage and develop competences in inspirational communication. Unfortunately, not many managers comprehend it and even less of them actually learn how to communicate effectively. The process of learning to communicate primarily starts with managers realizing that communication is a key-element to the successful change implementation.

Various authors describe different competences needed for successful communication during the change. Required skills for both monologue and dialogic communication (Kent, Taylor, 2002; Bokeno, Gantt, 2000, Senge 1990, Isaacs 1999) are described. The authors analyse leadership style and communication dependency (Dulewicz, Giggs, 2004; Beaulieu, 1992; Spinks, Wells, 1995) as well as the role of communication strategy on change success (Vecchio, Appelbaum (1995). By summarising the findings and considering the steps of the change (Kotter, 1997), some key competences for communicating during the change might be revealed:

- usage of appropriate language – speaking comprehensively;
- active listening;
- encouragement of feedback;
- development of a climate of trust.

- influencing of others.
- understanding of communication channels.

Besides, the communication effectiveness depends on personal characteristics like empathy, self-attitude, coerciveness, and values.

Considering communications strategy in the change process, it should coincide with the phases of the organisational change and the relevant associated information requirements. For the purposes of this analysis the Kurt Lewin model was chosen, which incorporates three general phases of change: unfreezing, changing or moving, and refreezing (French and Bell, 1984; Kirkpatrick, 1985).

During the unfreezing phase, there are identified these communications needs:

- explaining issues, needs, rationale;
- identifying and explaining directives;
- identifying and explaining first few steps;
- reassuring people;
- informing management cradle.

During the change implementation phase, there are identified these communications needs:

- informing employees of progress
- getting input as to effect of the progress;
- developing sophisticated knowledge among all supervisory management personnel;
- challenging misconceptions;
- continual reassurance of personnel;
- delineating and clarifying role relationships and expectations.

During the refreezing phase, there are identified these communications needs:

- publicizing the success of the change;
- spreading the word to employees.

Change is hard in most of the cases. It seems that a well-planned communication process can be the most helpful in easing the way to more effective process.

Wells, Spinks (1992) also distinguish different communication functions in relation whether the leader is a part of upper, middle, or lower level management. **Upper level managers** must make sure they are receiving an adequate and accurate flow of upward communication, so that they see the organization’s operations as a whole and make plans and decisions accordingly. The first communication imperative for upper level leadership is to develop sound policies, describe and carry out plans, and make decisions. The second imperative is to make sure that quality communication networks are functioning properly. An imperative less commonly discussed is to consider the non-verbal communicators that will accompany messages. The final imperative of an effective leader is to evaluate the communication, to assess its effectiveness, and to make any necessary changes a base for further decisions. **Middle level managers** must represent upper level administration by instituting, communicating, and carrying out policies, while keeping the best interests of lower level employees in mind. Middle level leaders gather information from lower level leaders and communicate this information upward. The gathering of

good, valid information from below depends on a climate of trust and openness conducive to developing quality communication networks. **Lower level managers** also have a duty to carry out policies, strategies, orders, and instructions from above. Meanwhile, they have responsibilities to work for the best interests of the employees beneath them. Communication at this level, however, consists more of giving instructions and issuing orders than that at upper levels. A unique feature of lower level leaders is that they truly comprise the front lines of management in creating an effective workplace. They deal with workers, workers' organizations, customers, and clients. Lower level leaders even see the public on a day-to-day basis. Therefore, quality communication at this leadership level is crucial, as results of quality communication should deliver delighted customers and empowered employees to management's bottom line. To accomplish this lasting change, trust must be established between leaders and employees, and quality communication plays an important role in initiating and maintaining this trust. Quality leadership can be exercised only through quality communication at all levels – upper, middle, lower – in organizations.

Management development and communication during organizational change. After describing the importance of communication competencies in the organizational change, we will define the possible ways of acquiring them during management development process.

“The term management development was mentioned for the first time” after the World War, as Vloeberghs (1998) notes, and has changed its definition so far. Although, according to the previously mentioned author, “management development is often defined as a system to help the company fill the higher and highest executive functions”, in this paper we consider management development as a program to train, teach, educate and coach all level managers in the organization in order to improve their present and future performance. Later we will focus on development of change management and communication skills in particular.

As Burnes (2003) states, development of leaders as well as management development and “the management of change are usually treated as separate issues”. However a number of authors (Kotter, 1996; Huczynski, Buchanan, 2001) identified a clear link between the two, showing how failure of change is influenced by failure of management.

A number of sources argue that specific competencies required to lead change in organization are necessary, however, “during periods of large scale organizational change the greatest challenge many organizations face is the rapid and effective development of their managers” (Drucker, 1999 in Longenecker, Fink, 2001). Again it proves Burnes (2003) idea of close relationship between management of change and management development and reasoned suggestion to “link management development programmes and change management programmes (...) where the opportunity exists”.

Another issue related to organizational change and management development is still underemphasized link between management development and requirements of

organization (Longenecker, Fink, 2001; O'Hara, Sayers, 1996). According to Longenecker and Fink (2001) organizations implementing changes in response to competitive environments require “effective managerial performance”. The competencies, necessary for effective performance are acquired during management development activities. However the necessary competencies are determined by demand of “organization at a particular time” (Longenecker, Fink, 2001). The requirements of organization and management development objectives cannot be separated; the trained manager regardless organizational context does not make any sense during organizational change.

Although, as Breu, Benwell (1999) state, “learning for change is a critical success factor both for managers and organisations alike”, managers still underestimate the importance of learning in the change. The authors argue, that for some reason the managers tend to stay attached to the idea of environmental stability, or as Nortier (Breu, Benwell 1999) states, “in practice, managers do continue to cling to the notion of end-state equilibrium as the context and basis of their actions”. Therefore the change itself might not become a prerequisite for learning unless managers and organizations realize the need. According to Notier (1995) transition theory, individual (manager in our case) has to pass the stage of crisis to realize the instability of environment and perceive internal capability of learning “to operate in new and effective ways”. The emerged internal drive becomes the prerequisite for effective management development.

After internal demand to learn and acquire change management and communication skills and knowledge in particular emerges the actual learning process can start and be effective. Competencies necessary to lead, manage change and communicate it properly might be acquired in different ways. According to Eurostat (2001) or ISCED97, basic forms of education and learning are identified as follows:

Formal education/learning. Defined as intentionally organized learning events, with regular fixed duration and schedule, structured hierarchically with chronological succession of levels and grades, admission requirements and formal registration, held within established educational institutions and using pre-determined pedagogical organization, contents, methods and teaching/learning materials.

Non-formal education/learning refers again to intentionally organized learning events, which take place in an institutional setting but do not fulfil one or more of the conditions (hierarchy level-grade structure, admission requirements, registration, predetermined/not flexible teaching/learning methods, duration and scheduling).

Informal learning is natural every-day process, intentional as well as unintentional. It is less organized and less structured learning and may include for example learning events (activities) that occur in the family, in the workplace, and in the daily life of every person. Therefore it might not be recognized by the learner himself/herself.

Management development programs are heavily

based on solely formal and non-formal learning activities that might work in stable environment but usually fail during organizational change. The results of research conducted in 59 US organizations and described by Longenecker and Fink (2001) provide information on management development methods used and methods wanted by managers during rapid change (see table 1). Few points should be underlined: first, activities attributed to formal and non-formal education (e.g. additional college education, outside or in-house seminars and workshops) are considered as least effective during large scale change while the most effective activities include communication and guidance from superiors in clarifying their roles, being coached and mentored as well as being assigned to challenging job assignments, problem-solving teams, getting feedback and communicating with external/internal customers. Although some of the listed most important activities belong to non-formal education the tendency to rate informal side of learning activities in the continuum of formal learning – informal learning is clear.

Table 1

Rankings of management development methods for improving management performance (Longenecker and Fink, 2001)

Rank	Management development methods	Percentage
1.	Clarifying roles, goals and performance expectations	85
2.	Ongoing performance measurements and coaching	77
3.	Being mentored by senior managers	75
4.	Formal career planning discussions	64
5.	Challenging/ difficult job assignments	62
6.	Purposeful cross-training experiences	61
7.	Formal performance reviews and appraisals	60
8.	Visiting other facilities/ departments	56
9.	Increased contact with external/internal customers	54
10.	Special assignments to task forces, problem-solving teams	49
11.	360° feedback systems	49
12.	Mentoring junior managers/ supervisors	46
13.	Computer technology and networks	42
14.	Involvement with professional associations	40
15.	Pursuing additional college education	39
16.	Outside seminars and workshops	35
17.	Career development 'buddy systems'/ peer mentoring	29
18.	In-house seminars and workshops	27
19.	Serving as an internal trainer/ facilitator	26
20.	Outside reading assignments, videos and audio tapes	17
Note: n = 433 managers		

Second, managers do not receive development they desire. In 17 (out of 20) identified management development methods managers receive less than they desire, their development needs are not satisfied.

As Longenecker, Fink (2001) and O'Hara, Sayers (1996) argue formal and non-formal education might not serve the purpose during rapid changes. As it is stated in the article of Burnes (2003): "it is recognized that many management development initiatives, particularly those seen as classroom-based, fail to deliver the managerial improvements promised (Lessem, 1998; Mumford et al. 2000; Yukl, 2002)".

Development programs fail partially because they "focus on past problems not the future, provide information that is too general to apply", partially because they are not tailored to the specific need of individual manager (Longenecker and Fink, 2001).

The advocates of formal training underemphasize the importance of experiential learning. Learning from experience is a part of informal learning that occurs in the right place at the right time, the manager is not compelled to learn, he/she chooses suitable informal learning method and voluntarily seeks necessary knowledge and skills. The other methods of management development to acquire communication competencies in particular are cited as follows (Frahm, Brown, 2006): action training (Frese et al., 2003), coaching (Wales, 2003), and concentrating on "in context" practice (Doyle et al., 2000).

On the other hand formal and informal learning might be considered as complementary rather than opposed to each other (Svensson et al., 2004): "most often a formal education improves the ability to assimilate informal learning at the workplace". The authors argue that informal learning although being important is not sufficient and needs to be reinforced by formal one. Svensson et al. (2004) state, that competence can only be developed in the synthesis of formal and informal learning alike. Therefore "formal education needs to be backed up by informal learning in order to be effective" (Barnett, 1999; Ellstrom, 2001). This notion is also elaborated in the paper of Atkinson (1999) who notices that "despite having invested significant amounts of money and time, many organisations do not provide support for managers on their return to the workplace". As O'Hara and Sayers (1996) argue, the support and challenge when learner returns to the workplace after workshops and seminars is crucial. Also management (senior management as well) commitment and support is needed to maintain and improve acquired competencies. These cases suggest that non-formal learning must be followed up by informal learning.

The form of learning also depends on the phase of organizational change (Figure 1). Figure 1 presents formal – informal learning continuum in K. Lewin's change model phases.

As it has been stated before, different communication and change competencies are required depending on the change stage. While the change is in the planning stage, more general skills and knowledge are needed. The formal and non-formal education on change management might be the right one. During the change the general information should be complemented with more specific

one, required in the particular change situation. That kind of competencies might be hard (or even impossible) to acquire in formal learning activities therefore managers are forced to look for additional ways. In implementation and post-implementation stages informal learning takes bigger place, because the managers have to search for particular knowledge and skills by themselves: to analyse similar cases, talk to colleges and supervisors, communicate with clients, read books, reflect and so on. Post-implementation stage serves for summarizing acquired competencies. The manager learns if he/she uses the knowledge gained after the previous change practices.

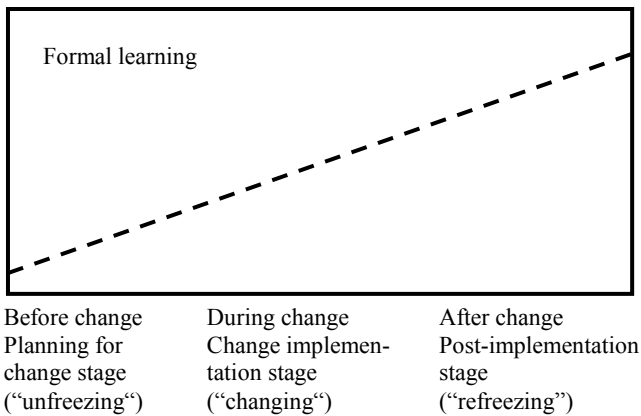


Figure 1. The Relationship between the Learning Form and Change Phase

Research Methodology

The empirical research was conducted to define what communication competencies are needed during the change and what are the most effective ways to acquire them. Also the relationship between change communication competencies and change success is drawn.

The research was based on the theoretical model presented in Figure 2. The model encompasses an identification of change communication competencies and their significance during the change. Afterwards, the ways of competencies' acquisition are defined, taking into account the existing HR development system, as a context of competencies' acquisition. Thereafter the link between communication competencies and their acquisition and change success is to be identified.

The following three general hypotheses have been formulated:

- H1: communication competencies correlate with change success.
- H2: communication competencies are acquired through non-formal learning
- H3: communication competencies correlate with HRD system existence

As it has been stated before (Murdoch, 1999; Gilsdorf, 1998), communication during the change is considered as prerequisite to successful change implementation in the enterprise. Therefore it was important to look if communication competencies and change success within fast growing organizations are interdependent variables.

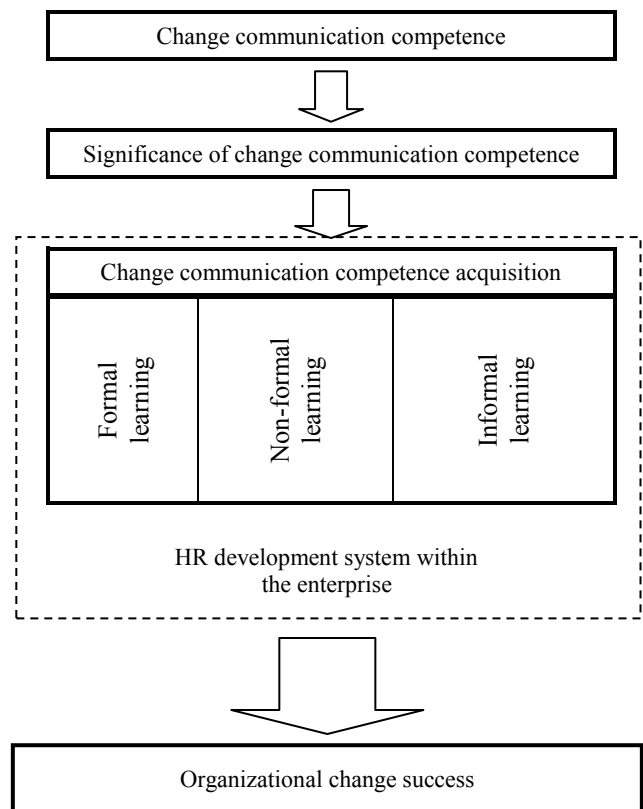


Figure 2. Theoretical Research Model

The importance of communication in the change is clearly defined and the guidelines how to improve it are identified in literature sources. Also a number of change management as well as communication improvement courses and trainings are offered for managers. Therefore we assume that communication competencies are acquired in trainings, i.e. through non-formal learning.

Trainings might not be the only way to acquire communication competencies – we stress the importance of learning at workplace and significant support of existing HR development system in the organization.

Sample and research method. According to our aim and objectives, the empirical research was conducted in the fast-growing Lithuanian organizations and distributed to managers of all levels within the companies. Authors of the paper consider fast-growing organisations as organisations living through specific type of change described by Greiner, 1992, Adizes, 2004 and other researchers as one of the stages of the organizational life-cycle. The questionnaire was sent to the 106 organizations and the return percentage was 37,7 %. In total 52 completed questionnaires were received from 40 organizations, i.e. some organizations provided more than 1 completed questionnaire. The data was analysed using SPSS software.

The questionnaire was developed according to the research model, where 3 sections were incorporated:

- identification of required change competences and identification of communication competence significance during the organizational change;
- identification of communication competence acquisition;

- identification of HRD program role in competence acquisition process.

At the end of the questionnaire demographical questions were provided.

Research results

The surveyed organizations were spread all over Lithuania in various sectors: manufacturing, food industry, transport, real estate, financial services etc. 92% of respondents claim to belong to small and medium sized enterprises and 8% of respondents were from large enterprises. The size of organizations is presented in Figure 3. 8% of respondents belonged to organizations with less than 10 employees, 25% – organizations with 10-49 employees and 59% - organizations with 50-249 employees and 8% - organizations with more than 250 employees. The majority of organizations were based on Lithuanian capital (67%), 17% – on foreign capital, and 16% – on joint Lithuanian and foreign capital.

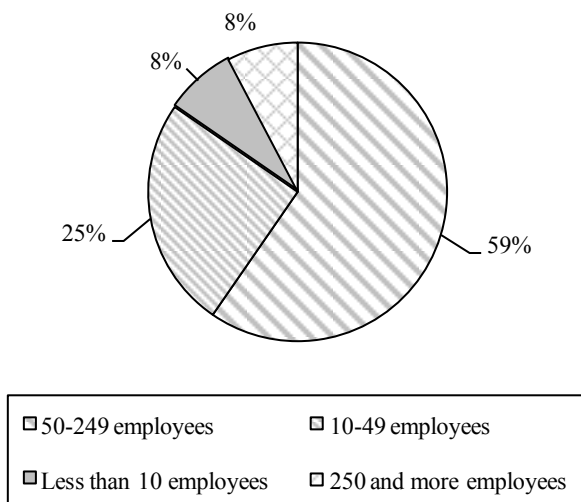


Figure 3. Size of Organizations

The respondents were distributed equally according to the gender: half women (26 respondents) and half men (26 respondents). The majority of them have identified themselves as middle-level and lower-level managers: 35% and 36% respectively. 19% of respondents were top-level managers. The majority of respondents fall into the age group of 23-30 years old (65%) and 31-40 years old (21%)

According to the results, the most of the surveyed organizations faced introduction of new technologies (38%) and restructuring (28%), while merger and acquisition was mentioned least. The data is presented in Figure 4.

Although 67% of managers were not involved in any learning/education program at the moment, all of them have received some kind of diploma before. Mostly all the managers had university degree (92%), some of them had college or high school diploma (8%).

Moreover, 75% of the respondents who have been involved in any education or training program received full financial support for their studies from the organization (Figure 5).

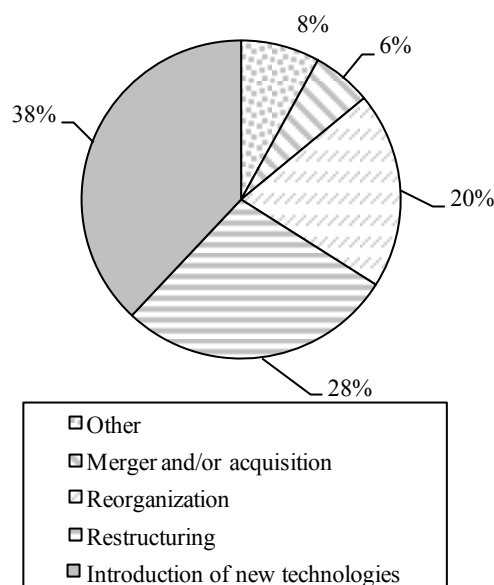


Figure 4. Changes Taking Place in Organizations

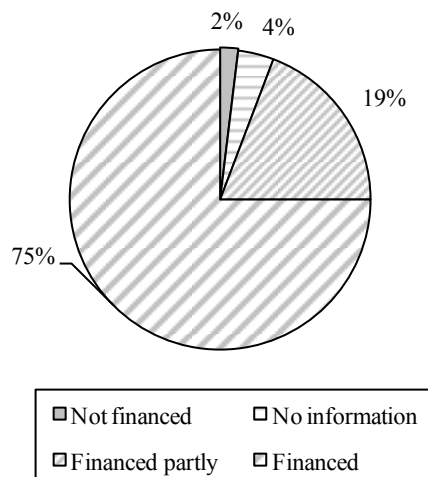


Figure 5. Competence Development Financed by Organization

Verification of hypotheses. Aiming to identify the required change competences and in particularly to explore the communication competences significance during the change, a list of 25 change competences were provided to the respondents.

Despite the factor, those respondents evaluated significance of each change competence, the data of the survey showed that communication competences were not recognized as the most significant ones comparing to other change competences. Contrary, the communication competences were positioned as least significant during the change. The most and least significant competences are presented in Table 2.

According to the survey results, communication competencies were acquired through all learning ways: formal, non-formal and informal learning. The evaluation of the gained competence acquired through informal learning were evaluated the best comparing to non-formal and formal learning. Though in general, the self-evaluation of competences acquisition was very low. The communica-

tion competences gained through informal learning received 5.7 points out of 10, thus is considerable low.

Table 2

Competences during the organizational change

Top five significant competences	Top five least significant competences
1. Empowerment and motivation of employees.	1. Providing information using various communication forms (meetings, e-mails, discussions).
2. Operative decision-making.	2. Active listening.
3. Organizational change strategy development.	3. Communicating change-using metaphors, life situations.
4. SWOT analysis.	4. Repeating information on change.
5. Selection of key people.	5. Communicating change without slang.

The results of the survey indicate that both the significance of communication competencies during the change and the level of acquisition of these competences are weak in Lithuanian organizations.

According to the results, the second hypothesis, stating that communication competencies are acquired through non-formal learning is rejected. Communication competencies are acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning. Though, the best level of competence acquisition is gained through informal learning.

The relationship between communication competencies and success of the change was not significant. According to the survey results, communication competences do not influence the success of the organizational change. Variable of successful change in the organization correlates with HR development system existence, knowledge acquisition through informal learning, manager's experience and gained knowledge application (Table 3).

Table 3

Correlation of Successful Change and Other Variables

	Presence of HRD system	Competence acquisition through Informal Learning	Knowledge application gained during the Informal training
Changes success	p .330* Sig .018	p .369* Sig .019	p .367** Sig .008

According to the results, the first hypothesis, stating that communication competencies correlate with organizational change success is rejected. There was no direct relationship found between organizational change success and communication competencies. However, further analysis of the survey data showed that existence of HR Development system within the organization is related to the level of communication competencies acquisition

through non-formal learning (Table 4).

Table 4

Correlation of HRD System and Other Variables

	Changes are successful in organizations	Level of CC acquisition through NFL
HR development system existence	p .328* Sig .019	p .374* Sig .024

The results of the survey also indicate that HR Development system existence correlates with successful changes in organizations.

According to the results, the third hypothesis predicting that communication competencies correlate with HRD system existence is confirmed.

Conclusions and discussion

The paper examined the communication competencies significance during the change, their forms of acquisition and relation to organizational change success. The authors of the paper assumed that communication competencies play a key role in organizational change process and though there is a need to enhance managers' communication competencies.

The results of the survey showed that Lithuanian managers do not assume communication competencies as being significant during the change and therefore the results of the survey are contradictory to the research conducted by Western European as well as American researchers. Lithuanian managers' attitudes to the communication during the change may not coincide to the opinion of the employees and also it may be one of the reasons why most of the changes fail.

According to the Lithuanian managers, the most significant competencies during the change are: empowerment and motivation of the employees, decision making, change strategy development, SWOT analysis, and key people selection.

The results showed that communication competencies were acquired through all learning forms: formal, informal, and non-formal. The existence of HR development programs or systems in organizations has a positive impact to organizational change success and also on the level of communication competence acquisition through informal learning.

The study showed that there is a contradiction of communication competence role in organizational change process. **The results of the study suggest some other implications for further research:**

- to identify the level of acquired **change competencies** through informal, non-formal and formal learning;
- to explore the relation among **resistance to change, change success** and **change competencies**;
- to explore the relation among **management style, follower reaction, resistance to change** and **change success**.

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Asta Pundzienė, Raimonda Alonderienė, Solveiga Buožiūtė

Vadovų komunikavimo kompetencijos ir organizacijos pokyčių sėkmingumo sąsajos

Santrauka

Pokyčių valdymo literatūroje analizuojamas ryšys tarp organizacijos pokyčių sėkmingumo ir komunikacijos proceso, komunikacijai keliamų tikslų pokyčių metu (Elving, 2005), komunikacijos kanalų, naudojamų informuoti organizacijos darbuotojams apie vykstančius pokyčius organizacijoje (Lewis, 1999), taip pat komunikacijos strategijų (Clappitt et al., 2000). Atlikta nemažai tyrimų, atskleidžiančių, kokia yra efektyvi komunikacija pokyčių metu, komunikacijos mokymo-mokymosi metodai, tačiau mažai tyrėjų analizuoja, kaip vadovai mokosi komunikuoti. Taip pat kyla klausimas, kaip vadovų komunikacijos kompetencijos veikia organizacijos pokyčių sėkmingumą? Koks komunikacijos kompetencijos vaidmuo organizacijos pokyčių sėkmingumui?

Straipsnyje sprendžiama problema – kaip tobulinti vadovų komunikacijos kompetencijas, reikalingas norint sėkmingai įmonėje vykdyti organizacijos pokyčius. Straipsniui keliami tokie uždaviniai:

- Ištirti komunikacijos kompetencijos reikšmę organizacijos pokyčių valdymo sėkmingumui.
- Ištirti, kaip yra įgyjamos pokyčių komunikacijos kompetencijos.
- Įvertinti komunikacijos kompetencijos ir organizacijos pokyčių valdymo sėkmingumo ryšį.

Straipsnyje pateikiama pokyčių valdymo, pokyčių komunikacijos kompetencijos bei jos įgijimo literatūros analizė, taip pat atskleidžiami empirinio tyrimo rezultatai. Mokslinės literatūros analizė parodo ir patvirtina komunikacijos kompetencijos pokyčių metu svarbą pokyčių sėkmei, taip pat įvardija, kokios komunikacijos kompetencijos būtinos įvairiais pokyčių etapais.

Empirinis tyrimas tikrina teorinį modelį, sudarytą po mokslinės literatūros analizės. Teorinis modelis vaizduojamas 2 paveiksle. Modelis susideda iš pokyčių komunikacijos kompetencijos vaidmens įvertinimo pokyčių sėkmingumui, taip pat įvertinimo, koku būdu vadovai įgyja šią kompetenciją, atsižvelgiant į organizacijos sudaromas mokymosi galimybes kuriant mokymuisi palankią aplinką. Šioje dalyje įvertinamas personalo skyriaus veiklos vaidmuo. Vėliau įvertinamas ryšys tarp komunikacijos kompetencijos ir organizacijos poky-

čių valdymo sėkmingumo. Straipsnyje formuluojamos 3 hipotezės:

- H1: Vadovų komunikacijos kompetencija koreliuoja su pokyčių valdymo sėkmingumu.
- H2: Vadovų komunikacijos kompetencija yra įgyjama savaiminio mokymosi metu.
- H3: Vadovų komunikacijos kompetencija koreliuoja su personalo skyriaus veikla kuriant mokymuisi palankią aplinką.

Siekiant įgyvendinti straipsniui keliamus uždavinius, empiriniam tyrimui pasirinktos sparčiai augančios Lietuvos įmonės (greitai augančios įmonės atrinktos pagal Verslo Žinių skelbiamą sparčiai augančių Lietuvos įmonių sąrašą). Spartus įmonės augimas yra viena organizacijos pokyčių rūšių, atitinkančių vieną iš organizacijos gyvavimo ciklo etapų. Augimo etapui priskiriama nemaža šiam etapui būdingų organizacijos pokyčių, kuriuos išsamiai aprašė Greiner, 1992, taip pat Adizes, 2004. Respondentais pasirinkti aukščiausio ir vidurinio lygio vadovai. Klausimynai išsiųsti į 106 įmones. Anketas užpildė 52 vadovai iš 40 Lietuvos sparčiai augančių įmonių. Duomenys buvo apdorojami SPSS programa.

Klausimyną sudaro trys skalės, visiškai atitinkančios straipsnio analitinėje dalyje siūlomą teorinį modelį:

- Skalė, leidžianti įvertinti, kokios pokyčių komunikavimo kompetencijos yra reikalingos ir svarbios, vadovų nuomone, organizacijos pokyčių valdymo metu;
- Skalė, leidžianti įvertinti, kaip, kokių būdu, yra įgyjamos pokyčių komunikacijos kompetencijos;
- Skalė, leidžianti įvertinti personalo skyriaus veiklos vaidmenį įgyjant pokyčių komunikacijos kompetencijas.

Klausimyno pabaigoje pateikiami demografiniai klausimai.

Išanalizavus tyrimo rezultatus, matyti, kad mokslinės literatūros šaltiniai įvardija pokyčių komunikavimo kompetenciją kaip esminę kompetenciją, lemiančią organizacijos pokyčių valdymo sėkmingumą. Be to, pat analizuojant literatūros šaltinius yra matyti, kad, siekiant pokyčių valdymo efektyvumo, būtina tobulinti pokyčių komunikacijos kompetenciją, o visų pirma įmonių vadovams, atsakingiems už pokyčių inicijavimą ir valdymą.

Lietuvos įmonėse atlikto empirinio tyrimo rezultatai parodė, kad Lietuvos vadovai nevertina pokyčių komunikacijos kompetencijos

kaip svarbios pokyčių valdymo sėkmingumui, o tai iš esmės prieštarauja mokslinėje literatūroje pateiktoms mintims ir kitų Vakarų Europos bei Amerikos mokslininkų atliktų tyrimų rezultatams. Galima daryti prielaidą, kad šis Lietuvos vadovų komunikacijos kompetencijos svarbos (kaip ir pačios komunikacijos) nuvertinimas ir yra daugumos pokyčių iniciatyvų nesėkmių priežastis.

Analizuojant tyrimo rezultatus, matyti, kad tyrimo metu tirtose organizacijose dažniausiai vyko pokyčiai, susiję su naujų technologijų įvedimu (38%). Taip pat 28% respondentų nurodė restruktūrizavimą, 20% reorganizavimą ir 6% įsigijimus ir susijungimus kaip jų organizacijose vykstančius pokyčius.

Lietuvos vadovams penkios svarbiausios kompetencijos pokyčių metu yra: darbuotojų įgalinimas ir motyvavimas, sprendimų priėmimas, organizacijos pokyčių strategijos parengimas, SSGG analizės parengimas, esminių darbuotojų atranka. Lietuvos vadovai nurodo ir penkias nereikšmingiausias kompetencijas pokyčių metu: informacijos sklaida naudojant įvairias priemones (susirinkimai, el. paštas, diskusijos, etc.), aktyvus klausymasis, pokyčių pristatymas naudojant metaforas bei gyvenimiškus pavyzdžius, nuolatinis informacijos apie pokyčius kartojimas, žargonų, taip pat profesinio, vengimas pristatant pokyčius.

Vadovai nurodo, kad pokyčių komunikacijos kompetenciją įgyja tiek formalaus, tiek neformalaus bei savaiminio mokymosi metu. Tačiau, kaip rodo tyrimo rezultatai, vadovai, vertinantys savo komunikacijos kompetenciją kaip nepakankamą, savaiminį mokymąsi vertina kaip tinkamesnį joms tobulinti. Pažymėtina, kad empirinis tyrimas yra paremtas vadovų savianalize, todėl kompetencijų lygio bei jų reikšmės vertinimas gali turėti paklaidą.

Vienas svarbiausių tyrimo rezultatų yra tai, kad personalo skyriaus veikla statistiškai patikimai koreliuoja su organizacijos pokyčių valdymo sėkmingumu bei komunikacijos kompetencijos tobulinimu savaiminio mokymosi būdu.

Gali būti įvardyti tokie straipsnio apribojimai: patikslinti pokyčių sėkmės techninį apibrėžimą, matuojant jį kaip ketinimą palaikyti pokyčius arba jiems priešintis. Tyrimas gali būti jautrus kultūriniais skirtumams – būtų prasminga tyrimą atlikti įvairiose šalyse.

Tyrimo rezultatai prisideda tiek prie vadovų mokymo, tiek prie pokyčių valdymo tobulinimo.

Raktažodžiai: *pokyčių valdymo sėkmingumas, komunikacijos kompetencija, vadovų mokymas, Lietuva.*

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