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Improving organizational communication: Hotel Haikko Manor & Spa

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This is a research-oriented thesis for Hotel Haikko Manor & Spa that is located in Porvoo. The hotel occupies a niche of exceptionally versatile holiday and business hotel in Finland. Mercuri International and VIA Group awarded the manor with the title of Finland's best business hotel ten times.

Communication is an important part of the organizational life and has a huge impact on the individuals and groups. The effective communication is needed at all stages of the working process and in all parts of the organization to achieve its goals.

The thesis investigates forcefulness of the organizational communication in the hotel. The core idea of the study is to underline the importance of well-organized communication process in Haikko Manor & Spa. The theoretical framework concerning the organizational communication concepts, the features and the essence was structured and applied for creating the research questions and their further analyzing. At the planning stage of the questionnaire design process, the author detected a significant need to focus on the internal communication in the hotel. Therefore, the survey questions aimed at identifying and examining possible gaps in the internal communication process among the employees and their superiors.

In order to understand the values and the perceptions that emphasize and influence decision-making behavior, the primary data was collected by using the combination of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies The survey results were further analyzed by using Webropol software tool.

The survey findings pointed out the most important issues and aspects for the future commissioner's development. Such as employee engagement, feedback system and interpersonal communication between the managers and their subordinates.All the research findings and the proposals for improvement were summarised in the recommendation part of this thesis.

Keywords
Haikko Manor & Spa, Hotel, Organizational Communication, Internal communication, Quantitative research, Qualitative research, Tourism

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1 Introduction

Currently, tourism is one of the leading and fastest growing industries in the world economy. According to the forecasts by the World Tourism Organization (WTO), the growth of the tourism industry will be irreversible in XXI century, and by 2020, the number of international tourist arrivals will be 1.6 billion units. In an increasingly competitive circumstance, hotels will be forced to look for new ways of increasing the attractiveness and accessibility of their services. (Weaver, 2009)

The customer requirements for the quality of the hotel service are becoming more stringent. The service needs to be fast and unobtrusive - these are the main criteria that guide potential guests when choosing a hotel. Guest's opinion about the hotel in general, depends on how internal and external communication are organized. Therefore, a hotel has to have the right organizational structure and debugged way of information transfer from one level to another, i.e. effective communication process. (Weaver, 2009)

Organizational communication - is the process by which managers develop a system for providing information to lots of people within the organization and the individuals and institutions abroad. It is an essential tool in the coordination units of the organization, which allows obtaining the necessary information to all levels of management. (Miller, 2008)

Communication, in an organizational context, includes the interaction between people. Internal communication plays a special role in-group dynamics. There is no information sharing without the communication. Thus, the communication is a defining condition for the formation of the group and its functioning. (Duncan, 1969)

All kinds of the hotel activities are based on the exchange of information, the communication and therefore called the bonding process. An executive has to make a sense of the large amounts of information, among which there is information that does not affect the management process. Therefore, the work focuses on the effectiveness of communication (an exchange of information, which has a direct impact on the hotel management). (Pender, 2005)

The thesis is commissioned by Hotel Haikko Manor & Spa. The hotel is a private family hotel, founded in 1913 in a preserved manor - built in the early last century. Location of the hotel is ideal for both business and leisure trips. The ancient manor is located in the middle of a park by the sea, only half an hour's drive from Finland's capital Helsinki. The old town of Porvoo is located within five kilometers from the hotel. Haikko Manor provides

the quality service, meeting facilities and different kinds of SPA treatments. Haikko Manor has also one of the best conference and banquets centers in Finland.

The thesis consists of the introduction part, five chapters and conclusion. The first part is a brief description of the organization of the study. In the third and fourth chapters, the paper examines the theoretical material on the stages and the elements of the communication process, the types of the communication networks. The research results and analysis of the communication process in the Hotel Haikko Manor as well as measures for improving the communication process in the hotel are presented in the last part of the thesis.

The research subject of the study presents the elements and the processes of the hotel professional communication. The research purpose is to:

- Analyse the effectiveness of the internal communication;
- Emphasize the importance of well-organized communication process in the hotel;
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses in the communication process;
- Provide useful recommendations and suggestions for the commissioner.

The subject has a great importance because the communication provides the means to develop and implement the decisions of the feedback and adjust the objectives and the procedures of the organization in accordance with the requirements of the situation.

Therefore, the managers should understand the basic concepts and the methods of using communication technologies and be able to make important decisions regarding their use. The purpose of the thesis is the study of the communication, and their use in the hotel management, the development of the effective communication in today's conditions as an example of Hotel Haikko Manor in Porvoo.

The methods intended for achieving the aim of the thesis are following:

- The study of the theoretical foundations of contemporary trends and concepts, and the essence of the communication in the organization;
- Analyzing the activity of Hotel Haikko Manor by examining internal communication system of the enterprise and the development of the measures to improve communication in the hotel.

The hypothesis of the thesis is to prove that the internal communication is essential for normal development and functioning of the organization (the hotel, in this case). The limitations of this research are that just the only one hotel was studied in the light of the problem. Nevertheless, the findings can be applied for other similar hotels in Finland. Theoretical and practical significance of the work is that scientific propositions and conclusions relating to the management of the internal communication can be applied to other organizations or enterprises.

2   Hotel Haikko Manor & Spa

Hotel Haikko Manor & Spa has been recognized as an organizer of the successful meetings. Mercuri International and VIA Group awarded the manor with the title of Finland's best hotel for meetings ten times. The Manor has a great and long history background. This place is known and praised by many people not only in Porvoo, but also all over Finland.

2.1   History

The first known reference of Haikko Manor dates back to the year 1362. The Dominican priory of Vyborg then owned the Manor. Jöns Olofsson bought the manor later and it remained in the ownership of the Stenbock family for the next four hundred years.

In 1871, General Sebastian von Etter who then became distinguished in the Turkish war purchased the Manor. His family kept the Manor for almost a century. In 1917, after the outbreak of the Russian revolution Grand Duke Kiril Vladimirovits escaped to Finland with his wife and daughter. They settled down at Haikko and a son was born to the family in the same year. (Hotel Haikko Manor, History)

He was given the name Vladimir and christened at Haikko. He became the head of the Romanov family spread all over the world. Among the distinguished guests was Albert Edelfelt, artist who spent 24 summers working in his studio close to Haikko Manor. He was greatly inspired by the beautiful archipelago and its inhabitants. (Hotel Haikko Manor, History)

The present Manor House was built in 1913 and Professor Armas Lindgren made the original drawings. Satu and Leo Vuoristo purchased the Manor House in 1965 and the Manor House was opened as the first manor hotel in Finland in 1966. The Spa Hotel was built in 1974. The Conference Center was opened in 1983 and extended in 1989. Japanese-style Yorokobi pool department was opened in 1999 to provide spa services for adult taste. (Hotel Haikko Manor, History)

Villa Haikko, a special house for the banquets and the meetings, was opened in 2007. A versatile outdoor activity area Haikko Arena was built in the following year 2008. Hotel rooms were renovated and 46 stylish Superior Rooms were completed in 2009.

Haikko Manor is today an exceptionally versatile holiday and business hotel with the following services (Hotel Haikko Manor, History):

- Historic Manor House
- Pampering Spa
- Conference Center
- Villa Haikko by the sea
- 14 hectare's beautiful park area by the sea

All of the 24 completely renovated Manor rooms offer perfect settings for the getaways and the environment for the international business travelers (Hotel Haikko Manor, History).

2.2 Mission Statement and Business Idea

Haikko's mission and goal are to provide the high-quality hotels, restaurants, convention, meeting and spa services in a profitable way. This objective can be achieved only by the support of the professional staff.

The hotel has traditionally given a great value to the skilled and knowledgeable staff responsibilities. This is a crucial and valuable thing. Haikko Manor is quite famous hotel in Finland. Over the years Haikko has earned its reputation and nowadays it is really important to keep such a great level of the service. The business idea is to achieve the mutual objectives by working together. (Perehdyttämisopas, 2014)

Each new employee gets a plastic card with the following rules, which he/she must adhere (Haikko Vuoristo Veikko, 2014):

- Greet every customer quickly and kindly before the customer greets you;
- Always ask the question: "How can I help you?"
- Actively present and tell about the basic services and Haikko's history;
- Take the initiative of the marketing services and products. Refer to an excellent service!
- If a customer complains about something: "Apologize -listen-repair-replace";
- Never blame others;
- Ensure satisfaction of the visit / service and always say goodbye.

(Haikko Vuoristo Veikko, 2014)

Moreover, Hotel Haikko Manor is eco-friendly and non-smoking hotel. The main target is to minimize wastage. The hotel has its own enviromental programme concerning the energy consumption, air conditioning, lighting and water consumption, as well as cleaning and housekeeping department (they use enviromental friendly cleanears and detergens).

Hotel Haikko Manor is a real estate and 100% family-owned by Vuoristo Yhtiöt Oy. Vuoristo-yhtiöt Oy is a member of the following organizations (Perehdyttämisopas, 2014):

- − Finnish Hotel and Restaurant Association
- − Helsinki Chamber of Commerce
- − Finland Rehabilitation Centers

Hotel Haikko Manor & Spa owns 226 rooms, more than 20 meeting rooms (maximum 440 persons), 150 full-time employees and temporary workers by leveling seasons. The hotel has a great network relationship with more than 20 major companies in Finland such as Stockmann, Mercuri International, Group Vision Into Action etc. (Information about Haikko, 2014)

Haikko Manor & Spa is the hotel with a rich 61-years history. Year 2006 was Haikko's 40th anniversary in the ownership of the Vuoristo family. For the first time non-family person has been appointed as a Managing Director. The previous Managing director Veikko Vuoristo has moved to the position of Chairman and new CEO from 1st March 2012 is Juha Mähonen.

3 Theoretical Background

The following chapter discusses the organizational communication in general as well as provides a detailed description of the communication process and the main problems that may occur during it. The relevant theoretical approaches and the methods will be introduced and implemented while presenting the findings and the conclusion of the research.

3.1 Organizational Communication

In the first place, a human behaviour is taken to be any performance of a person. Further, to qualify as an instance of the behaviour, a specific performance must engage one or more integrators consequentially. (Schiffer, 1999) According to the concept of cognitive behaviour, this definition leaves out that other investigators would regard as the behaviour. Indeed, problem-solving, deciding, dreaming, contemplating, rehearsing tactile interactions, fantasizing, hoping, praying, and other cognitive processes fall within the scope of many definitions of the behaviour.

Taking into consideration all of the above processes, we can create a second and much more expansive definition: the human behaviour consists of all interactions in a given behavioural system. (Schiffer, 1999) During the second half of twentieth century, students of communication learned that people secure the infromation from each other's facial expressionss, gestures, gait and so on.

The communication modes beyond the language are often termed as a group, nonverbal communication. (Ruffner,1978) Communication - is an interaction between people, which is manifested in the exchange of information, mutual influence and understanding based on the psychological contact. (Duncan, 1969) In other words, it is an exchange of the information, ideas, opinions and feelings during some activity.

There are four sequential stages in the communication process (Ruffner, 1978):

1. Inscription – the sender imparts infromation by modifying the emitters properties (formal, locational, relational or quantitative).
2. Emission - the emitters perform in one or more modes; these performances are termed "emissions"
3. Reception – the receiver, registering the emissions of an activity and platial interactors, contsructs inference(s) and forecast(s) employing correlons.

4. Response – on the basis of the infromation yielded by the inference(s) and forecast(s), the receiver responds. The response is itself a performance often in many modes.

At each stage, there are losses of the information and its distortion. The magnitude of these losses depends on the general imperfection of a human speech, the inability of implement the ideas in a verbal form, the presence or lack of the trust in the other party, the personal goals and aspirations, and the match or mismatch of the vocabulary, and many others.

Before giving a definition of the communication process, it is necessary to give the concept of information. Information means a complex of signals about the processes and phenomena occurring in the external environment and the human body itself. All human behavior is due to information that a human being has received, assimilated and processed.

Whereas, managerial information is a collection of the information about the state and the processes taking place inside and outside the organization. (Boddy, 2002) Communication is vital to the success of the businesses and represent one of the most difficult management problems. The role of the communication is evident in small firms, as well as in powerful companies and corporations.

According to the book "Effective Organizational Communication": Organizational Communication is a wide-ranging field of the study that spreads across academic disciplines (e.g. psychology, anthropology, organization studies) and professional specialisms (e.g. marketing, public relations, human resources management) and makes use of many contrasting theoretical and methodological approaches. If we describe the managerial work, from 50 to 90% of time a worker spent on communication. (Blundel, 2013)

It seems incredible, but the leader is doing this in order to realize his/her role in the interpersonal relations (exchanging of information and decision-making processes, the managerial functions of planning, organization, motivation and control). The quality of the information exchange can directly effect on the realization of their goals. Communication in an organizational context includes the interaction between people. This communication process is all about exchanging and transferring of information between the individuals or groups of individuals.

Organizational communication - is the process by which managers develop a system for providing the information to lots of people within the organization. It is an essential tool in

the coordination units of the organization. It allows obtaining the necessary information to all levels of management. (Putnam, 2006)

3.2 Communication Process

Let us consider a simple linear model of the communication process.
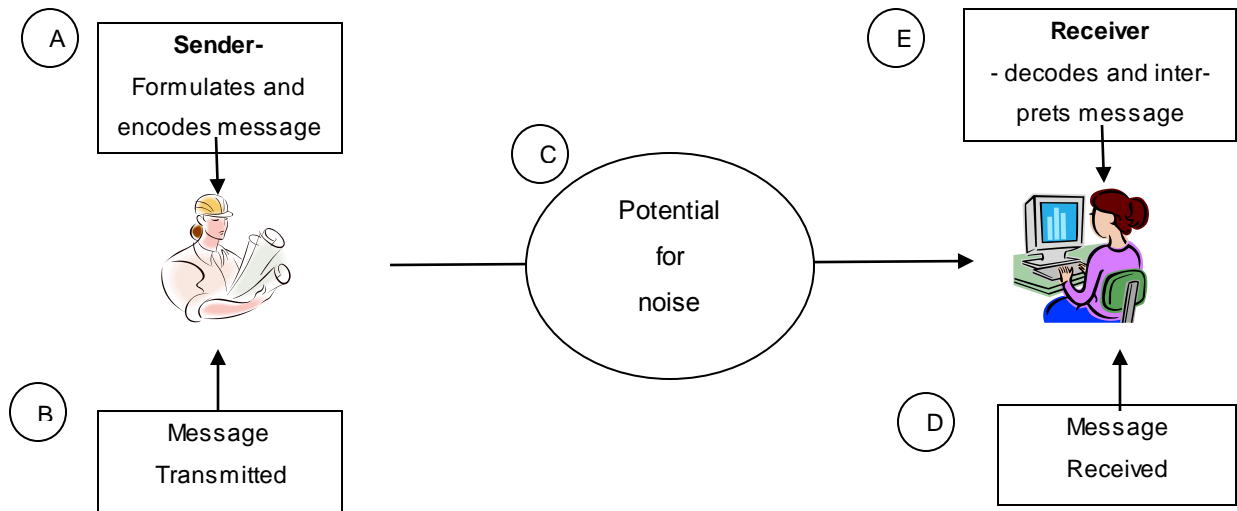

Figure 1. A simple linear model of the communication process
Adopted from (Blundel, 2013)

This model was developed in the 1940s as a part of a now largerly-forgotten research project in the United States, which investigated tha ways that technical information was communicated through telecommunication systems. (Blundel, 2013) According to this model we can see, that communication process includes four core elements.

The first one is a sender. A sender - is a person who transmits the information. The sources of the information may be internal and external. The internal include: accounting and statistical reporting, billing clients, the current observation, special studies. The external sources are more numerous and varied. First of all, there is a need to identify the staff with their ideas, intentions, information and communication purpose (partners, media, etc).

Oral information is the most complicated part. A person doesn't not perceive all the information available to him. It depends on many factors of a subjective nature: the person who is transmitting the information and the identity of its perceiver, the physical capabilities, traits of their characters and a number of other reasons. Listening to a person, you should

carefully observe his behavior - gestures, facial expressions, posture, gaze, his clothes and shoes, manners and other forms of external expression of individuality.

The next element of the communication process is a message (in other words – information). There are several data channels that organizations use as a mean for transmitting information. The most commonly used are: couriers, mail, telephone, radio, e-mail, local network, and, finally, an oral discussion.

A receiver - is a person whom the information is intended for. In the communication process, the sender and the receiver are constantly changing the places.

In addition , organizational communication includes: (Heath & Bryant, 2000)

- Coding - a translation of the ideas in a systematic set of signs for language expressing the goals of the source;
- Signal transmission - the purpose of the communication source signal expressed in a form; the form depends largely on the used channel ;
- Decoding - in order to complete the communication process correctly, a signal should be decoded ;
- Feedback - communication source hopes that its signal will have a high degree of precision . Since the accuracy of the signal is rarely perfect, it is desirable to provide feedback in the communication process.

3.3   Principles of Communication

The most important factor that violate community in the communication between the source and the destination are the changes that occur in its coding and decoding. The most efficient communication is established in the case where the encoding and decoding processes are homogeneous. When they become heterogeneous communication is destroyed. This trend occurs when people in an organization have different experiences, vocabulary, knowledge, interests, etc. (Putnam, 2006)

As a result, there are barriers to effective communication, resulting in inaccurate accordance encoding and decoding. Frequently, the result of ineffective communication or lack of organizational communication is low efficiency of the whole enterprise. For example, team is working on a project, but they do not know what other division of the company is working on the same or similar project. What if a similar project was carried out a few years ago, and the problem has already been solved?

"If only Hewlett-Packard knew what Hewlett-Packard knows, we would be three times more productive" – Lew Platt, CEO, Hewlett-Packard. (Hagel, 2008)

These words are relevant for any company, organization or firm. Technology and information can and should be used to increase the effectiveness of an organization and eliminate duplication of the effort. Efficiency - is the ability to quickly and easily use your previous experience and the experience of other people. (Putnam, 2006)

The communication process largely depends on the existence of well-functioning feedback. The quality of the feedback is determined by the message (how it has been heard and understood). The sender expects that the receiver somehow will confirm the receipt of the message, the level of understanding or misunderstanding of its meaning. In other words, set the feedback. Ideally this should be done without a delay (possibly to negotiate in advance).

The receiver also should consider the possibility of the perception. The feedback signals in oral transmission of information are clarifying and summarizing expression feelings. The communication process can be considered effective if the recipient understood the idea and produced the actions which the sender was waiting from him.

There are several communication principles that can easily facilitate the information exchange:

- Brevity, clarity, unambiguous information;
- Constant control over the content, processes, transmission and reception;
- Coordination of information processing, etc.

Lack of the feedback leads to the fact that the leader is unable to assess how effectively the employees communicate and how to improve the accuracy of the signals in the future communication.

3.4 Internal Communication

Internal communication - is any communication within an organization. It may be either oral or written, direct or virtual, personal or group interaction. (Gillis, 2006) Effective internal communication in all directions (up-bottom, bottom-up and horizontally) - this is the one of the main objectives of any organization. Effective internal communication allows

you to set role-interaction and allocate responsibility of the employees. Communication is often defined as the exchange of information. It is always a dialogue. It can engage a large number of people.

In the structure of the organization, two-way communication requirement refers to the ability of the management to listen to the employees and the right to interpret the messages sent to them. This allows you to identify the strengths and the weaknesses of the working process, and adjust the management decisions. The internal communication should help employees understand the corporate culture, goals and values. All employees should be aware of the events and the decisions that affect the work of all the departments.

Effective internal communication is especially important in times of the crisis. It is necessary that each employee does not simply follow the instructions, but he/she can act independently, keeping in mind the overall situation and the benefit of the whole company. Internal communication links all the departments of the company together, through all the levels, and generates a sense of the community.

The internal communication process must be constantly maintained and modified in accordance with the development of the company. Essence, channels, and even a form of the information are important components of the internal communication. A form greatly affects the message. The same message can be reported differently. It will be perceived in a negative or positive way. It can leave people indifferent or, on the contrary, will grab the attention. The hardest part is to find the right balance between up-bottom and bottom-up communication.

Below the author consider the basic types of the internal communication (Mescon, 1981):

- Communication between levels.

The information moves through the vertical communication between the organizational levels of an organization. They can be descending - when the information is transmitted from a higher level to a lower, and ascending (vertical communication). The quality of the ascending communication greatly affects the performance of the company. The ascending communication helps the managers to get the information from the lower levels. Thanks to them, the managers learn about the current and potential problems, and propose the corrective measures.

Recently, the managers started to use a new form of the ascending communication - workshops on a regular basis. The purpose of the meetings is to discuss and to resolve the production and service problems. The ascending communication is usually carried out in the form of the reports, proposals and explanatory notes.

- Communication between departments (divisions).

In order to coordinate the tasks and activities of the units and departments of any organizations, communication is required. To achieve the movement of the organization in the desired direction, the managers should work together to ensure joint collaboration of all its parts. Horizontal communication also stimulates the formation of the relationships at the same organizational level, which is an important element in the work satisfaction.

- Communication between the manager and their subordinates.

Perhaps, the most obvious element of the communication in an organization is communication between the managers and their subordinates. Although they belong to the vertical communication, we consider them separately, since they make up the lion's share of the managerial communication.

There are many forms of such communication: an explanation of the problem, an explanation of the priorities and expectations; the involvement of the employees in the decision-making process; the discussion of the efficiency problems; the improvement and development of the subordinates; gathering information about the potential or actual problems; warning people about the upcoming changes, etc.

- Communication between the manager and the working group.

There is also communication between the manager and his working group, which is aimed at improving organization's efficiency. This process involves all the members of the group. Everyone has the opportunity to share the thoughts on new challenges and priorities of the department, on how to work together on the forthcoming changes and their possible implications for the group, another unit's problems, achievements and innovative ideas.

(Mescon, 1981)

3.5 Communication Barriers

Studies show that communication barriers reduce the effectiveness of the communication of an employee. The most significant interpersonal communication barriers at the organizational level are: (Debasish, 2009)

–   Barriers caused by perception

The manager must understand the nature of the perception. People react and perceive things differently. Sorting out the factors influencing the perception, and considering them in the process of the communication, a manager can overcome many of the barriers caused by that factor.

One of these barriers rises because of the conflict between the areas of the activity of the sender and the recipient. People can interpret the same information in different ways depending on their experience. Due to the sphere of the activity, discrepancies often lead to selective perception of information (according to their interests, needs, emotional state or environmental conditions).

Information, which is contrary to our own experience or previously established concepts, could be perceived differently. It is often either completely rejected or perceived in a distorted way. Likewise, if we have a bad experience of interaction with certain employees or departments, then, in all likelihood, it will affect the efficiency of our further communication with them.

–   Semantic barriers

The purpose of any communication is to understand the message. We try to share the information by using symbols, words, gestures and intonation. In the process of communication, we share it with symbols: verbal and nonverbal. It is necessary to discuss the problems associated with the use of verbal symbols - words. Semantic - the study of relationships between signs and symbols and what they represent (Free Dictionary, 2014).

Semantic variations often lead to misunderstanding. In many cases, it is difficult to understand what the value was exactly assigned to the symbol by the sender. Semantic barriers often become a problem for the companies operating in a multinational environment. For example, when General Motors launched the model Chevi Nova into Latin American market, the company did not get the expected level of sales. After

some investigation, the company found out that the word «Nova» in Spanish means "does not go» (no va)! (Friedman, 2012)

– Non-verbal barriers

Nonverbal communication includes any characters except the words. Often, nonverbal transmission is carried simultaneously with verbal signs and may enhance or alter the meaning of the words. Eye contact, smile or frown, tense facial expression, gestures - all of them represent non-verbal communication. In the book "Nonverbal communication", A. Mehrabian claims that 55% of people perceive messages through facial expression, posture and gestures, and 38% - through intonation and voice modulation. (Mehrabian, 1977)

– Ineffective feedback

Another barrier is the lack of interpersonal communication feedback. Feedback is extremely important, because it allows determining whether the recipient understood your message in the sense that you have invested in it. As it could be seen, there are many reasons that a message can be understood differently then you wanted.

– Poor hearing

Effective communication requires that a person carefully sends and receives the message. To do that, we must be able to listen. Unfortunately, only few people know how to perform the process effectively. When you are getting the information about the job, new priorities, the changes in operating procedures or new ideas about improving the efficiency of the department, it is very important to hear a concrete information. However, you should not only listen to the facts, but also to the emotions.

(Debasish, 2009)

There are some useful ways to prevent communication barriers: (Putnam, 2000)

– Regulation of information flows (taking into account their quantitative and qualitative characteristics and needs of the recipients);
– The establishment of regular contacts between the users of information (meetings, discussions, debates etc.);
– Providing effective feedback system;
– Implementation of systems for the collection of proposals (anonymous mail, telephone line, workshops, newsletters, publications, videos, etc.);

- Electronic communication and telecommunication;
- Improving the incentive system of personnel;
- Improving the quality of management;
- The formation of a healthy business environment in the organization.

Eliminating communication barriers allows managers to create productive atmosphere that contribute to achieving the organization's objectives.

4   Features of Organizational Communication in Tourism Industry

In the present study, the author found out that the organizational communication is a complex, multi-functional system that requires careful attention to all of its components. Steadily increasing the complexity and the scale of production processes in tourism enterprises causes a proportional increase of communication functions and enhances their interaction. Among the most important communication functions should be allocated the planning, motivation and control.

Effective communication functions require the distribution of the rights and responsibilities between the departments and the employees in the provision of the services. Communication flows in the organizations of tourism industry, as well as in any other industry, can move in horizontal or vertical directions.

Vertical direction, in turn, is divided into descending and ascending flows. Descending direction is used for setting goals, informing subordinates, providing feedback on the results. Ascending flow is used to inform the subordinate leaders on the progress of current issues, bringing to the leader's attention the opinions of the employees. The horizontal direction of the communicative flow occurs when the communication is carried out between workers of the same level. (Daft, 2004)

There are many options of communication models in the organizations of tourism industry. For example, the authors of "Ethics in Tourism Management" book identify the following types of communicators as:

- Watchman - an employee who controls the transmission of the information to other employees. Usually this role is played by secretaries, managers, telephone operators etc.;
- Messenger - the one who serves as a link between two or more groups;
- Border guard - a person who has a high connection with the organizational environment. (Goodwin, H. & Pender, L. 2005)

The structure of business communication in such organizations includes needs caused by the need for the communication, the goal of the communication, the form of the communication (messages), the topic (content) and the code or the language of the message. (Weaver, 2009)

When analyzing the business communication within the organization, it should be remembered that the backbone is its need and purpose. They are the basis of the activity of the senders and the receivers of the messages who have their individual psychological characteristics. The main task of any hotel is to create a reputation of an organization that provides a high quality service. The role of the Front Office & Desk department is key and decisive. A high quality service is provided by the:

- − Effort of all the hotel departments;
- − Permanent and effective administration control;
- − Continuous improvement of forms and methods of the service;
- − Studying and implementation of the best practices and new technology;
- − Expansion of the hotel services.

This department is responsible for the registration of arriving guests and their placement in the rooms. The structure of this service is assumed to be divided into two divisions: Front Desk (reception desk) and Front Office (staff of the reception). The main functions of the reception are checking in and out, booking, accommodation of the guests, payments and providing the necessary information. For the efficient operation of the booking service is necessary to have (Swarbrooke, 1999):

- − Well organized workspace by using of quality equipment (telephone, computer, fax, etc.) - Personal laptops and other gadgets allow HR manager to automate the processes such as collection, storage, processing and accumulation of different information (digital data, audio and video, graphics), database development, creation and printing of various documents. The use of personal computers in the hotel greatly simplifies the whole process.

- − New reservation systems - any hotel needs a computer reservation system, which allows to book and reserve rooms at the hotel, depending on the needs and wants of the guests and the hotel features. Modern reservation systems can increase the speed of the information processing, which, in turn, attracts more customers. (Swarbrooke, 1999)

The hotel should have an internal computer and telephone networks in order to provide a connection between the departments. Talking about the phone networks, the following new opportunities of the integration of the telephone and computer networks should be noted:

- It allows the hotel to improve their telephone connection and use it as efficiently as possible;
- It provides the contemporary service, without requiring any special telephones;
- Call forwarding;
- Conference call (more than one person);
- Intervention to a busy station;
- Redial;
- Receiving and sending of documents to a fax machine;
- In case of the absence, it will directly call other users until it finds the one who answers the call.

Likewise, all of the workstations in a hotel are usually combined into one local computer network having a common database, which facilitates the interaction between the departments, reducing the amount of time for the communication, and allows organizing the work of the entire hotel more efficiently.

5 Data and Methods

The combination of qualitative and quantitative research techniques was chosen as a research methodology in order to be able to measure the prevalence of various views and opinions in the chosen sample. The following chapter will discuss the target audience of the research and the survey instrument in some detail, including how the survey was administered.

5.1 Approaches to Study Organizational Communication

As it was explained earlier, any communication process can be subjected to the so-called noise or barrier. Among the communication barriers, the most important are organizational and individual barriers.

There are the following organizational barriers (Miller, 2008):

- − Lack of communication coordination management;
- − Different status of employees (unequal amount of power);
- − Different needs of structural units;
- − Issues concerning system of formal and informal organizational communication.

To prevent these barriers, organization needs to create an atmosphere of openness and trust by improving the interpersonal relationships. Particular attention should be given to the feedback system. Another important area is the features of the corporate culture.

Individual barriers mainly occur due to the differences in the level of education and competence of the employees, discrepancies of their income, age and other socio-demographic indicators. Nevertheless, individual barriers may increase the level of communicative competence of the employees. Communicative competence - a certain level of personal characteristics, knowledge, personal and professional experience of the individual communication that allows achieving successful communication. (Leydesdorff, 2000)

The most important characteristics that define communication competence include:

- − Communication skills;
- − Understanding and use of nonverbal communication language;
- − Knowledge of the rules and regulations of communication;
- − Ability to behave properly in a communicative situation.

All of the above features, along with the motivation and experience, form the communicative personality of a sphere of activity. (Putnam, 2006)

For studying and improving communication systems, organizations can apply different research approaches: (Spence, 2007)

- Systematic approach - based on the analysis of the system in general, associated with the environment, taking into account all possible horizontal, vertical and diagonal communication;

- Situational approach - according to which it is necessary to take into account the specific internal and external factors that characterize the system at the moment and affect it in a certain way;

- Integrated approach - typically investigates limited number of levels of communication.

Communication in the organizations is united in a complex system, covering all interrelated and interdependent elements of the organization. Therefore, the most preferred way is definitely the systematic approach in conjunction with the situational approach. For further development of the communication systems organizations can also apply a range of the methods, such as observation, sociometry, communication studies and socio-psychological qualities of the employees, modeling techniques, as well as qualitative methods.

The first major tradition in the organizational communication is the social-scientific/quantitative method to organizational communication. The bulk of the early work in organizational communication either focused on prescriptive methods for business speaking or came from outside the field of the communication studies until the 1960s. (Spence, 2007)

Survey is the common type of social scientific method utilized in organizational communication is probably the most common in communication research as a whole. Surveys involve a series of questions designed to measure individuals' personality/communication traits, attitudes, beliefs, and/or knowledge on a given subject. (Wrench, 2008)

Surveys are as popular as they are because you can get massive amounts of information from a wide array of people very quickly. However, one always has to question whether, or not, a survey is adequately using the right types of participants for a specific study.

Approaches and methods for the study of communication systems were selected based on the current state of information and technical and technological support for communication systems. Information occupies a special place in communication system upon

which management decisions are made. It must have the properties of clarity, timeliness, reliability, adequacy and value.

5.2 Survey Development and Design

There are different views about the role of the internal communication in a company. Experts in the field of the organizational psychology (David Rock, Fred Luthans, Victor Vroom etc.) and most of the managers believe that internal communication are the element of the motivational system. It provides the appropriate level of the employee engagement and effects on the performance. According to the psychological research, the impact on productivity depends on (Roberts & O'Reilly, 1974):

- Increasing subordinate's self-esteem;
- Formation of achievement motivation;
- Leadership recognition of employee's services or rendering organizational pressure on the execution of corporate standards of work.

(Roberts & O'Reilly, 1974)

In addition, it was found that the poor quality of the internal communication leads to the poor performance of the duties. Moreover, the lack of the information does not allow making the right decisions and properly organize the implementation. All this leads constantly work in conditions of uncertainty. (Roberts & O'Reilly, 1974)

However, the substantial effect of the internal communication on the employee performance is not fully proven. The doubt is related to the fact that information - it is a necessary but not a sufficient condition to stimulate the staff and improve the quality of the labor. In order to determine what role the internal communication plays and how effective it is in the particular company, a special research or communication audit will help.

Roberts and O'Reilly identified seven criteria by which this assessment is implemented: (Roberts & O'Reilly, 1974)

- Credibility of the immediate supervisor;
- Level of the influence on his/her decisions;
- Willingness to cooperate;
- Satisfaction with the communication process;
- Accuracy of the information provided;
- Level of the information load (under loading / congestion);

- Direction communication (ascending, descending or horizontal).

(Roberts & O'Reilly, 1974)

One of the methods of the communication audit is an employee survey. Typically, they welcome the opportunity to participate in such surveys. From their perspective, this shows attentiveness to their opinion and influences on some work aspects. On the other hand, openness of people heavily depends on how the process is organized. In this case, anonymity is the best way out.

According to Robert and O'Reilly study, the chosen research methodology was implemented in the form of an online survey, using Webropol software. The survey instrument was designed around the six primary objectives:

- To get feedback from the employees about the content of the information and its distribution channels;
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the impact of different means of internal communication for different workgroups;
- To describe the image of the company, which is created by means of internal communication;
- To rate the quality of internal communication between the company and the employees;
- To get a description of the atmosphere in the company;
- To evaluate the effectiveness of feedback channels.

The online survey was created according to the theory considered in the previous chapter. The questions are based on the seven criteria and covering all the necessary aspects. In order to attract more people and to keep the anonymity, it was decided to build a cover letter for the survey as well. The commissioner requested to translate the questionnaire and the cover letter to Finnish. The survey and the cover letter are presented in Appendixes 1-4.

There are four basic blocks of the questions in the survey. Each of them assesses the certain element of the communication process:

- Level of awareness of the company's affairs (questions 1-3)
- Information sources (questions 4-6)

- Management openness (question 7)
- Feedback channels (questions 8-10)

5.3 Description of Sample and Data Collection

The chosen research methods are due to the nature of the research object, the nature of the target population and the available resources. The main advantage of the online research is that the process of gathering information (the number of successful interviews, compliance with quotas, etc.) can be controlled via a web interface. If necessary, the researcher can get the answers to some key questions before the completion stage of gathering information.

The online survey allows the researcher to make regular measurements, monitoring and online tracking of the research. The author selected the online survey as a research method because it enables to create the multi-level profiles with user-friendly interface. The respondent can choose the most convenient time and comfortable place to answer the questions. In conjunction with the easy flow of technical answers, it creates the conditions for easy, quick, interesting and responsible filling in of the questionnaire.

Since, the respondents use the self-priming method to complete the online survey, they tend to give honest, thoughtful, and not socially expected answers. While responding to questions, the respondent feels equal participation in the dialogue.

The survey was aimed at gaining responses from the various management levels in order to get better understanding how the information flow goes up and down in the hierarchy. Based on the goals and objectives of the study the target universe of the research was selected as following:

- Top managers of the company;
- Middle-level managers;
- Production workers: different groups of staff;
- Merchandisers, external company representatives.

This distribution of the sample enables the author to obtain the average scores for each selected group of the employees and the possibility of further comparative analysis of the studied population.

The sample was stratified by the branch of service, occupational specialty and management level. Currently, in Hotel Haikko Manor & Spa working around 100 employees. Despite that fact, after the meeting with the commissioner, it was found that the preliminary sampling can reach maximum 35 persons.

Therefore, the survey link was forwarded to 35 persons. The manager of the hotel distributed the link and the cover letter among his colleagues by email on 05.10.2014. The survey was active until 15.10.2014. The preliminary sampling comprised 35 members, but it was anticipated that in most of the cases the questionnaire might not be completed due to the member's refusal to participate in the survey, absence from the city or other reason. In total, 24 responses were collected for the research.

5.4 Analyses of Responses

The findings clearly show that most likely half of the respondents are not satisfied with the information flow in the hotel. Employees choose options Poor and Fair quite often.

Table 1. How much information do you get on the following topics?

	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Average
Happening and Events	0	2	4	14	4	24	3.83
Company Executives	1	4	8	9	1	23	3.22
Plans and Strategic Objectives	3	2	11	5	3	24	3.13
Working Process	1	4	6	11	2	24	3.38
HR Policy	1	5	10	6	2	24	3.13
Activities for the Staff	0	1	8	10	5	24	3.79
Total	6	18	47	55	17	143	3.41

From Table 1, we can see that the employees define Happenings and Events and Working Process as the most informative sources, while HR Policy and Plans and Strategic Objectives are ranked as good, even though they play an important role in any organization. Despite the decent amount of the responses under options 1 and 2, many employees gave a good estimate of the most of the working aspects.

The responses that were gained from the first open-ended question raise a real concern regarding the awareness of the economic situation and the long term plans of Haikko

Manor hotel. If we compare the answers with the previous question, we can define an absolute lack of informing staff about the plans and the strategic objectives of the hotel. This is an important part in the collaboration between the managers/supervisors and their subordinates.
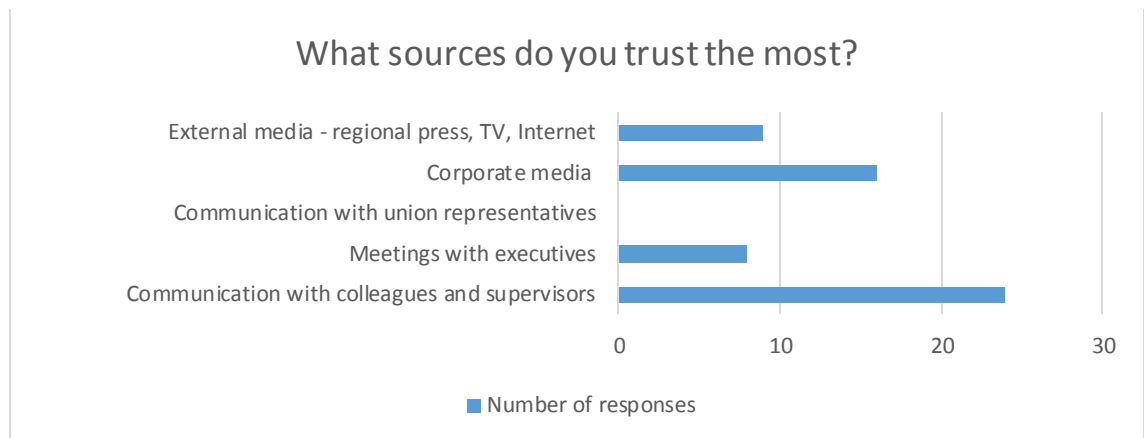

Figure 2. What sources do you trust the most?

The most popular source of the information is Communication with Colleagues and Immediate Supervisor. This is a good sign. The relations inside the community play a significant role in overall organizational communication. Building good work relationships gives the several benefits. Our work is more enjoyable when we have good relationships with those who are around us. The Corporate Media option also got a sufficient number of the responses.

In contrast, Meetings with Union Representatives did not get a single response. According to the results of the survey, the colleagues easily trust each other as well as their immediate supervisors and the managers. In addition, it seems that people prefer to use corporate media a lot. Even though from the previous question, we can define that Communication with the Colleagues and Meetings with Supervisors are the most truthful information sources in the hotel, there is still a lack of information.

Table 2. How much do you agree with the following statements?

	Totally agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total	Average
"The management's behavior towards to employees is open and honest."	5	12	7	0	24	2.08
"Superiors (company director, head of the unit) explain clearly and understandably the meaning of the changes and developments in the hotel".	3	15	6	0	24	2.13
"I have the opportunity to pose questions and get answers".	9	12	3	0	24	1.75
"I can freely express my points of view and I am confident that they will be heard by leadership".	4	11	8	1	24	2.25
"My immediate supervisor always finds the time to answer my questions".	7	9	7	1	24	2.08
"Manager often meets with employees to answer their questions".	3	6	14	1	24	2.54
Total	31	65	45	3	144	2.14

The table above shows that most of the employees agree with the provided statements (65 replies out of 144). However, also a big amount of the respondents disagrees (45 out of 144). The last statement and the number of the replies clarify the reason of misunderstanding and lacking of information in the vertical communication.

What kind of opportunities do you have to give and receive feedback?

- Internet
- Direct telephone line
- Information meetings (with ability to ask a question in person or in writing)
- Personal meetings
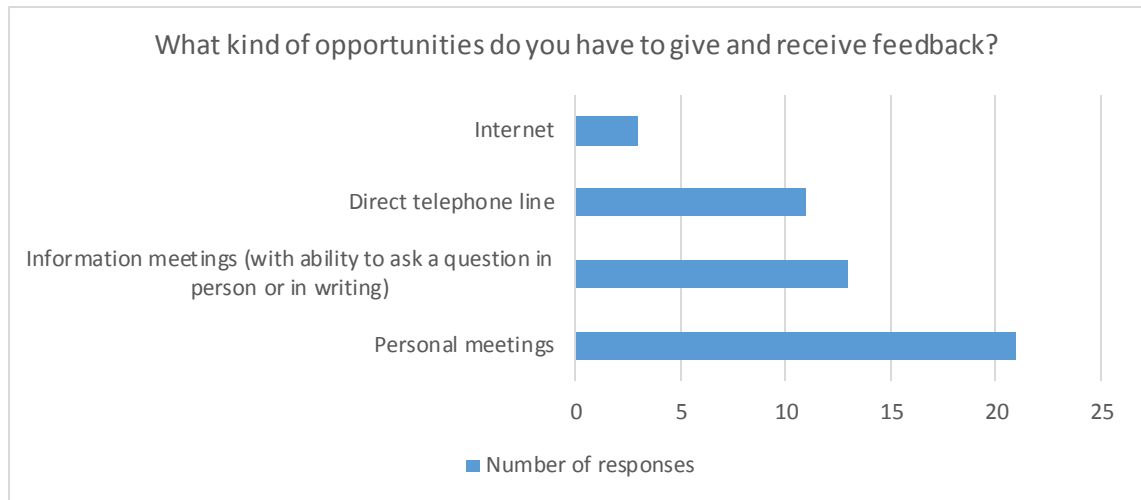
■ Number of responses

Figure 3. What kind of opportunities do you have to give and receive feedback?

The employees choose Personal Meeting as the most popular way of giving and receiving the feedback in the hotel. Notwithstanding, according to the information that was gained from the second open-ended question, they still request for more personal meetings with their immediate supervisors or the managers. Perhaps, the employees need personal meetings on the regular basis.

Most of the responses point out that people would prefer to get different kind of the information at the personal meetings or via the informational letter. The research results illustrate the potential blind spots in the hotel and highlight the gaps in the communication process. It is important that the leader discusses with their subordinates the final results.

The flaws in the communication system cannot be removed without the direct dialogue. Properly conducted meeting with the employees can significantly influence on the situation and increase subordinate's trust to his superior.

According to the data, the author can identify the gap between the sender and receiver in the communication process in Haikko Manor & Spa. The author believes that the reason behind that is predominance of the oral information in delegation of the powers and team working. There is also a deficiency of the personal meetings and the lack of the feedback.

According to the literature review, oral information is difficult to grasp and to perform in general. Moreover, oral information is also easily exposed by the noise that which may lead to the loss or change in the communication process. Therefore, most of the respondents describe the levels and ways of receiving information as neutral.

To conclude, the horizontal communication in the hotel Haikko Manor & Spa mainly occur informally, directly through the communication between the employees. If one department requires any information from another department, then the request and response transmitted by the information passes through the head. Descending and ascending vertical communication should be implemented at weekly meetings of the personnel.

The informal communication takes place mainly on the celebrations or company events. This is a good way to build the strong interpersonal relationships between subordinates and their superiors. According to the author's opinion, the staff work as one team and always help each other.

The work is proceeding smoothly. Informal, friendly or competitive relationships can either slow down the implementation of the organization's objectives or contribute to their implementation. The informal communication plays a vital role in the crisis and conflict situations, because the informal channels often act more quickly than the formal ones. The communicants trust to the informal sources of the information more than the formal ones.

Of course, there are some differences and misunderstandings, but they are extremely rare and occur in the situations where the staff are required attention and concentration, such as during the workshop or special events. However, everyone understands that there is no time for the conflicts, and thus quickly find the right way out of the difficult situation.

As for the vertical communication, descending communication flow is prevailed. The senior management is targeted at the department heads, and they transmit the information to their subordinates. If it is necessary to clarify some points, they will turn to the head of the department, who, in turn, refers to the next level. It sometimes happens that the information should be specified more than one occasion.

Most likely, the problem is a poor explanation of the task. Therefore, the subordinates and the managers have to spend more time to understand the essence of what needs to be done. With a regard to the communication channels, the most commonly used are the personal communication and telephone connection, because it is quickly and efficient.

6 Discussion

This chapter explains the essence and the meaning of the scientific results obtained by the author personally. Furthermore, it contains a brief but comprehensive information about the results of the research and the recommendations for the commissioner.

6.1 Reliability and Validity

The research approaches should be assessed in the terms of the quality of the measurement procedure used to collect data for the thesis. Any type of the research is generally checked for its reliability and validity.

In research, validity has two essential parts: internal and external. Internal validity encompasses whether the results of the study (e.g. mean difference between treatment and control groups) are legitimate because of the way the groups were selected, data was recorded or analysis performed. External validity, often called "generalizability", involves whether the results given by the study are transferable to other groups (i.e. populations) of interest. (Handey, 2014)

An important point to remember when discussing the validity is that without internal validity, you cannot have external validity. A common threat to internal validity is reliability. Assuming the same initial conditions for a test assessment or process the test must provide the same result every time it is performed for it to be deemed reliable. (Handey, 2014)

Reliable results are those that do not distort and accurately reflect the objective reality. The reliability and validity of the results of the study are provided by the:

- Methodological soundness and consistency of its original theoretical positions:
- Internal logic of the study;
- Use of the reliable and proven methods;
- Adequate essence of the studied phenomenon;
- Qualitative interpretation and quantitative analysis of the obtained data.

Theoretical and practical significance of the research results is reinforcement of the provisions and methods used in the communication studies in general, particularly in the organizational communication management in tourism industry. The practical significance of the findings consist in the fact that their use enhances the effectiveness of the particular object of study - Haikko Manor & Spa hotel. Nevertheless, the results and recommendations can be applied for other similar hotels or organizations in Finland.

The following can support the validity and reliability of the results, obtained in the thesis:

- All the main provisions and influencing factors were taken into account when conducting the research (different types of the questions were used in the survey – multiple-choice, open-ended; gathered data show the most important and actual needs of the respondents);
- Strong theoretical proof;
- The hypothesis matched with the results obtained by empirical methods;
- Coherence of the theoretical conclusions with the results of the study;
- Analytical approach is the basis of the proposed recommendations.

In the thesis, the effectiveness of the implementation of the research results into practice is defined by the elaboration of theoretical and methodological provisions that are brought to the specific recommendations in the following subchapter.

6.2 Recommendations

One of the main problems in the communication process is the problem of the quality of the information. The formal and informal communication are obeyed to certain general laws:

- Before establishing the communication, the both parties should fairly and accurately determine its purpose;
- Strong communication arises when the both parties are trying to achieve the results immediately and in full;
- Physical and psychological environment play the great importance for the efficiency of the communication, as well as the ability to quickly adapt to the specific conditions;
- Communication is more effective in the case of non-verbal means of the communication (intonation, gestures, posture, etc.).

- Valuable and useful information for the recipient increases the effectiveness of the communication, even during the fragmentary contacts;
- Feedback is essential to control the quality and content of the information;
- Communication within the organization should be based on the long-term interests and goals. This enhances the stability and flexibility in its daily work;
- Practice of active listening, which involves primarily the termination of a speech, the benevolent attention to the other person can improve the internal communication.

In order to create an effective system of the internal communication the author suggests implementing of the following terms:

Table 3. Terms of building an effective system of internal communication

Provide a technical base:

− Technical equipment and informational channels
   − Information security
   − High transfer speed of information

Ensure the exchange of information required for working process:

− Timely provide employees with the necessary information, set up feedback channels, articulate the tasks
   − Create a regulatory framework of the hotel
   − Eliminate loss and distortion of the information

Develop internal information sources:

− Corporate media - newspapers, magazines, stands
   − Online- conferences
   − Leaflets, movies

Create a corporate culture:

− Inform the employees about the corporate values of the hotel
   − Publish corporate information using corporate slang
   − Provide feedback channels in the form of questionnaires and surveys

Create a positive image of the hotel in the eyes of the employees:

− Inform the employees about the current situation, achievements and failures
   − Inform the employees about the promising development trends, new projects and aims
   − Manage internal corporate rumors

Attract talented employees:

− Inform the employees about the personnel changes in the hotel
   − Place advertisements with open vacancies
   − Develop an adaptation program for new employees
   − Advanced training and skills development activities
   − Reward system

Create a corporate knowledge base:

− E-library
   − Programs for distance learning
   − Internal corporate workshops
   − Inform the employees about the upcoming seminars, trainings, courses etc.

> **Periodically assess the effectiveness of internal organizational communication:**
> Systematic evaluation of the quality of internal organizational communication contributes to the regulation of inefficient processes that prevents conflicts and increases efficiency of the work

The supervisor can practice a quick meeting with one or more subordinates to discuss the upcoming changes, new priorities, allocation of the work, etc. The manager can also have discretion to prefer option periodic meetings with the participation of all the subordinates to consider the same issues. The following activities can help HR manager to improve the internal communication in the hotel:

- Duplication of the information at the organizational level in the corporate media and holding different kinds of corporate events - it plays an important role in HR managers work. A training for the personnel can be arranged as a part of the corporate activities (an additional motivational factor), as well as HR manager can introduce the ideas of the organization, strategic plans and objectives.

- Training for the managers and key employees - in this process, HR-manager also can solve some problems as well as the problem of the internal communication. The main one - leadership training, where the effective management tools are introduced (formation of leader's personal efficiency).

  Largely, middle managers "delay" the information in both directions because of the lack of the management tools. In addition, the training can lead to the development of the corporate culture elements.

- Feedback channels - personnel evaluation. The evaluation of the staff is one of the processes of duplication of the internal communication in the hotel or any other organization. The process of regular and formal personnel evaluation, as well as the open door policy, allows to form and to obtain additional feedback from and about the employees.

  It makes decision-making process more transparent, adequate and understandable. The evaluation helps to judge personnel performance, to structure the business process itself, ie assign tasks, delegate authority and control the quality of the result.

- Choose the right time for the information. At the beginning of the working day, the employee usually is in a good mood, happy to discern his fellow council or to fulfill

his request. The closer to the end of the day, the employee is more tired, and, consequently, the desire to respond to the colleagues request decreases. Moreover, if the work requires more attention, the employee will not be distracted by something else.

- HR department can greatly improve the efficiency of the ascending communication flow. The managers can use opinion poll or interviews with employees, who retired.

- Wage supplements for length of the work in this hotel;

- Identification of the employee of the month (quarter of the season) according to the hotel guests feedback;

- Conducting trainings and seminars (eg, "Psychology and work practices for employees in the reception" etc.), which will improve the quality and professionalism of the staff;

- Time limits for customer service. For example, for 3 minutes to serve VIP guests; 8 minutes to serve individual customers; 15 minutes for groups up to 30 people; 30 minutes serving groups of from 30 to 100.

The feedback systems are part of the control and management information systems in the hotel. One of the options of the feedback systems is the movement of people from one department of the hotel to another to discuss certain issues. The effective leader overcomes the gap between him and his subordinates by creating elaborative communication system that ensures receiving of the messages and the perception of them.

The polls for the employees is another option of the feedback system. Such surveys are to be carried out with the purpose of obtaining the information from the managers and workers. It may cover hundreds of the questions (What are the potential or actual problems they face or may face; Whether they receive accurate and timely information they need to work; Whether their supervisor is open to suggestions; Are they informed about the future changes that will affect their work etc.)

The following aspects contribute to increase confidence of the internal communication:

- Timely and regular communication (most of the mistakes in business processes occur because there are no right information at the right time and place);

- Demonstration of the confidence in the staff (distribution of both good and bad news);
- Engaging the staff in resolving the situation, ascertaining their opinions.

Another option is a collection system. It is designed in order to facilitate the information flow in the hotel. All the employees receive the ability to generate the ideas for improving every aspect of the work. The purpose of this system is a reduction of ignoring ideas on the bottom-up way in hierarchy. Most often, such systems are implemented in the form of the idea boxes where the employees can anonymously submit their proposals and ideas.

Newsletters, publications and organizations videos are effective ways to improve the communication process. Monthly bulletins may include the articles reviewing the proposals regarding the hotel management, the employee's wellbeing, a new product or service that is planned to offer to the customers in a short time, the selection of the employee of the month, the leader's responses to the questions of the ordinary employees.

Thus, the communication includes different kinds of the contacts for exchanging ideas, opinions and information orally or in writing by means of the symbols or actions. The purpose of the communication is to achieve the precise understanding of the message from the receiver. The closer the decoded message is to the intention expressed by the sender, the more effective communication you will get.

6.3 Commissioner's Feedback and Suggestions for Future Research

The author got a positive feedback on the research results and the work itself. The commissioner noted the large amount of the theoretical material handled by the author. The studied methods and the features of the internal communication in the hotel were implemented on the high theoretical and methodological level. The findings and the recommendations are presented in the compliance with the internal logic and well written.

From the commissioner's point of view, the author of the thesis did a thorough work on each section of the topic - the topic of the thesis was disclosed, the goals were achieved and the significant results for the future of Haikko Manor & Spa were obtained. Moreover, the commissioner considers that the practical material in the study is authentic and valid conclusions and recommendations have a practical significance for their work.

The commissioner believes that the thesis has a theoretical value for the leadership of the hotel because the author developed the quality technique to improve the efficiency of the

internal communication taking into account features of the hotel business. Likewise, the results of the study can be applied in the working process with the partners.

The commissioner agrees with the author that the chosen method of the online survey was not the best option for gathering the responses among Haikko's employees. Nevertheless, the author was able to gain the sufficient number of the responses and to provide the valuable proposals for the future improvement of the internal communication in the hotel. The commissioning party feedback is presented in Appendix 6.

For the future research, the author suggests to examine the organizational structure and the type of the existing communication more deeply. Development of the internal communication programs should start with a general assessment of the management environment in the hotel. To assess the current state of the team and the degree of the employees' satisfaction, it is necessary to conduct a small internal research and determine which forms of the communication the employees consider most appropriate and effective.

The test results will show whether it is possible to enter new forms of the communication, or to identify some difficulties or tension in the team. The further development of the research would need the following actions:

- To divide the employees into the social and professional groups;
- To define the average duration of the work-life cycle of the employees in the hotel;
- To establish the effective communication with the partner organizations.

Based on these findings, HR manager can start developing a communication strategy. It is important to understand what business goals the hotel supports, how the chosen strategy meets these goals, what groups of the employees lack the information and how it should be provided. Finally, the leadership of the hotel should decide what means they are going to use in order to achieve this.

To test the effectiveness of the communication is possible by the means of the focus groups. The difficulty of such assessment is observing the problems in real life. HR manager needs to capture and measure the changes in the behavior of the employees. For instance, to determine more or less the effort people begin to make to perform the job and what has changed in their perception of the hotel for the selected period.

The author also proposes to pay more attention to the emotional component of the internal communication. It is not limited to the scheme "mission - strategy - goal - actions - performance evaluation." In addition, it is important for the employees to know what is behind the chosen strategy, what are its prerequisites. People follow the mission by performing the tasks, but you can expect a completely different result if HR manager has a talent to inspire the employees.

7   Conclusion

Communication is one of the most complex and controversial issues of the organizational behavior. Communication refers to the exchanging of the ideas, opinions and information orally and in writing, by means of the symbols or the actions. The communication process is an exchange of the information between two or more people. In this case, the transmitted information should be meaningful to the participants of the communication.

The communication process involves a number of stages: sending a message, its transmission and receiving feedback. The most important elements of the communication process are the sender (communicator), the message transmission channels, the receiver and the feedback system. Information is one of the most important management tools. By analyzing, transmitting the information and getting the feedback signals HR manager plans, organizes, coordinates, supervises and motivates his subordinates.

The managers due to the specifics of their activities must be fluent in the art of communication. The internal communication has a huge impact on the organization. Malfunctioning of the internal communication channels reduces the efficiency, timeliness and adequacy of the management decisions, and ultimately the business suffers. The main problem of the internal communication occurs at the level of middle management, where the bulk of the information is settled.

In order to solve this problem the company needs to provide an additional training for the managers. Along the way, another aspect of this problem can be solved - personal effectiveness of the managers. As soon as the managers possess the instrument of effectively managing of subordinates, they can defuse the tension in the internal communication and establish the strong partnerships between the employees, departments, etc.

It can become as one of the elements of the company's corporate culture. When the internal communication problems arise, the main task lies on the shoulders of HR manager. He solves all the problems related to the communication channel in the organization. HR manager should organize a system of the internal communication, which would fulfill two important processes: transmitting the information about the development of the organization and providing the feedback opportunities to the employees.

The formation of the feedback occurs mostly during the corporate meetings (conferences, sporting events, etc.). HR manager should consider the particular character of his subordinates (interests, hobbies and ambition). In addition, a policy of open doors can be used to form the feedback. In this case, the issue of misrepresentation can partly be solved, the employee himself can report about his ideas, suggestions and difficulties to his boss.

Based on the opinion of the experts in the field of the internal communication, the author has proved that an effective system of internal organizational communication is the key to business success. Therefore, starting the development of the internal communication HR manager has to remember that:

- Organizational culture and internal communication are inseparable concepts;
- It is important for the employees to recognize that there is an organizational culture within the company;
- Organizational communication and organizational culture must be continually re-formed and developed;
- He/she should pay more attention to the trainings and workshops for the employees, during which they will be able to feel like a single mechanism.

Thus, achieving the goals and success of the hotel as a whole depends on the efficiency of the internal communication within it. The analysis revealed that the internal communication in the hotel is represented in all forms - orders, requests, instructions etc. The main methods of the communication at the hotel are meetings, conferences, negotiations, discussions and dialogues.

In this thesis, the author identified the main conditions for the successful communication in the organization and the ways for improving communication processes. The author studied the theoretical basis and the essence of the internal communication. The communication methods and the elements were described as well as the factors - barriers that prevent productive communication process.

In the practical part of the thesis, the communication at Hotel Haikko Manor & Spa were discussed. This hotel is aimed at attracting the business clients but the leisure tourists also occupy sufficiently large niche among the hotel's clientage. The consumers are well informed about the hotel and speak of it positively, and that is why, in spite of the tough competition, the hotel holds a strong position in the market.

It has been noted that HR manager makes the certain mistakes that reduce the effectiveness of the communication process and based on that the certain obstacles were identified. These include misrepresentation of the information. The reasons of the existed communication barriers in the hotel are distortion of the information and congestion of the communication channels.

In the consequence of the conducted research, the author proposed the recommendations for refining communication process in the hotel. The author recommends HR Manager to pay attention to the suggested techniques and methods and apply all of them together in order to improve the exchange of the information. Their implementation takes a lot of time. This process requires a lot of patience and dedication. However, the results justify the effort. Any organization with a well-established communicative process is much more efficient among others.

The results may be implemented either in the learning process or in the working environment in the hotel. The highlighted theory and methodologies clearly show the author's own learning in the detailed review of the concepts and types of the organizational communication process as well as of its influence on the successful business administration.

According to the research results, a set of the communication tools was formed and expressed in Table 3. The author was able to identify their specific configuration and then to propose possible ways for the implementation.

The most difficult part during the thesis writing process was gathering the survey responses. From the author's point of view, online survey is not the best choice for conducting a research in such small organizations. Even though, the researcher was able to get the biggest part of the responses (out of the expected amount), personal interviews might work better in this case.

Notwithstanding, for achieving greater results in the future, the author proposes to find the best combination of the existing research methodologies that will fit all the research needs and the requirements

Summing up, the author can claim that for the operational functioning of all the hotel departments it is necessary to organize an effective system of the internal communication. The customer's opinion of the hotel depends on how quickly and efficient the communication process is. Without the mutual assistance and cooperation of the management and

staff is not possible to provide the quality customer service. Therefore, it is very important to ensure the efficient operation of the internal communications of the hotel.

Sometimes the malfunctions arise in the hotels because the managers do not pay enough attention to the internal communication process: the information is not properly understood, or, in general, does not reach the recipient. As a result, the quality of the service reduces. Consequently, the guests faced with the difficulties or inconvenience will not stay in this hotel again.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1. Survey template, English Version

Block 1: Assessing the level of awareness of the company's affairs

1. Please evaluate your general awareness of the changes and the main events taking place in the hotel

    Scale 1-5: (1) poor, (2) fair, (3) good, (4) very good, (5) excellent.

2. How much information do you get on the following topics?

    Scale 1-5: (1) poor, (2) fair, (3) good, (4) very good, (5) excellent.

- Happenings and events
- Company executives
- Plans and strategic objectives
- Working process
- HR policy
- Activities for the staff

3. Please specify which aspects of the work should be informed more.

_____

Block 2: Assessing the information sources

4. Where do you get information about the company activities? Please select all that apply

- Communication with colleagues and immediate supervisor
- Meetings with executives
- Communication with union representatives
- Corporate media - newspaper, intranet, and information stands
- External media - regional press, TV, Internet

5. What sources do you trust the most? Please select all that apply

- Communication with colleagues and immediate supervisor
- Meetings with executives
- Communication with union representatives

- Corporate media - newspaper, intranet, and information stands
- External media - regional press, TV, Internet

6. From what sources would you prefer to receive information about events that take place in the hotel? Please select all that apply

- Communication with colleagues and immediate supervisor
- Meetings with executives
- Communication with union representatives
- Corporate media - intranet and information stands
- External media - regional press, TV, Internet

Block 3: Assessing of management openness

7. How much do you agree with the following statements?

    Scale: Strongly Agree—Agree—Disagree—Strongly Disagree

- "The management's behavior towards to employees is open and honest."
- "Superiors (company director, head of the unit) explain clearly and understandably the meaning of the changes and developments in the hotel".
- "I have the opportunity to pose questions and get answers".
- "I can freely express my points of view and I am confident that they will be heard by leadership".
- "My immediate supervisor always finds the time to answer my questions".
- "Manager often meets with employees to answer their questions".

Block 4: Assessing opportunities for feedback

8. What kind of opportunities do you have to give and receive feedback? Please select all that apply

- Personal meetings
- Information meetings (with the ability to ask a question in person or in writing)
- Direct telephone line
- Internet
- Other, please specify
9. What kind of feedback channels are most appropriate for you?
_____

10. Is there a need for creating additional feedback channels? If yes, please specify new feedback channels you would like to have.
_____

Appendix 2. Survey Template, Finnish Version

1. Arvioi, miten hyvät tiedot sinulla on hotellin yleisestä tilanteesta tai tapahtumista, joita siellä järjestetään.

    Asteikko: (1) huono, (2) välttävä , (3) hyvä, (4) erittäin hyvä, (5) erinomainen.

2. Kuinka paljon tietoa saat seuraavista aiheista?

    Asteikko: (1) huono, (2) , (3) hyvä, (4) erittäin hyvä, (5) erinomainen.

-   Tapahtumat
-   Esimiehet
-   Suunnitelmat ja strategiset tavoitteet
-   Työprosessi
-   Henkilöstöpolitiikka
-   Henkilöstön aktiviteetit

3. Mistä osa-alueesta haluaisit saada enemmän tietoa?

_____

4. Mistä saat tietoa yhtiön toiminnasta? Valitse kaikki soveltuvat

-   Viestintä esimiehen ja kollegoiden kanssa
-   Avainhenkilöiden tapaamiset
-   Yhteydenpito liiton edustajiin.
-   Sisäiset viestintäkanavat: lehdet, intranet, informaatiotaulut -
-   Ulkoinen media - alueellinen lehdistö, tv, internet

5. Mihin lähteisiin luotat eniten? Valitse kaikki soveltuvat

-   Viestintä esimiehen ja kollegoiden kanssa
-   Avainhenkilöiden tapaamiset
-   Yhteydenpito liiton edustajiin.
-   Sisäiset viestintäkanavat: lehdet, intranet, informaatiotaulut
-   Ulkoinen media - alueellinen lehdistö, tv, internet

6. Mistä lähteistä haluaisit saada tietoa hotellin tapahtumista? Valitse kaikki soveltuvat

- Viestintä esimiehen ja kollegoiden kanssa
- Avainhenkilöiden tapaamiset
- Yhteydenpito liiton edustajiin.
- Sisäiset viestintäkanavat: lehdet, intranet, informaatiotaulut
- Ulkoinen media - alueellinen lehdistö, tv, internet

7. Kuinka paljon olet samaa mieltä seuraavien väittämien kanssa:

Asteikko : Täysin samaa mieltä-samaa mieltä-eri mieltä-Täysin eri mieltä

- "Johdon toiminta työntekijöitä kohtaan on avointa ja rehellistä. "
- "Esimiehet (yrityksen johtaja, yksikön päällikkö) selittävät selkeästi ja ymmärrettävästi muutoksista ja uudistuksista hotellissa. ".
- "Minulla on mahdollisuus esittää kysymyksiä ja saada vastauksia".
- "Voin vapaasti ilmaista mielipiteeni ja olen varma, että se tulee johtajien tietoon. ".
- "Oma esimies löytää aina aikaa vastata kysymyksiini".
- "Johtaja tapaa usein työntekijöitä vastatakseen heidän kysymyksiinsä".

8. Millaisia mahdollisuuksia sinulla on antaa ja vastaanottaa palautetta? Valitse kaikki soveltuvat

- Henkilökohtaisia tapaamisia
- Tiedotustilaisuuksia (joissa on mahdollisuus kysyä suullisesti tai kirjallisesti)
- Puhelimitse annettavat palautteet
- Internet
- Muu, mikä?

9. Millaiset palautekanavat sopivat sinulle parhaiten?

_____

10. Onko tarpeen luoda uusia palautekanavia? Jos kyllä, niin kerro, millaisia uusia palautekanavia haluaisit?

_____

Appendix 3. Cover Letter, English Version

Dear colleagues,

Here is a link https://www.webropolsurveys.com/S/469BD7786A6685B7.par.

_____

_____

The topic of the survey is «Improving organizational communication in the hotel business».

The Organizational Communication Survey examines employee opinions about the effectiveness of internal communication, communication flow, and preferences concerning communication media.

These survey results can be used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of your organization's communication network. This will help to make improvements to the existing situation and develop new opportunities. The survey will only take 5 minutes, and your responses are completely anonymous.

You can only take the survey once, but you can edit your responses until the survey is closed on **November 20, 2014**. Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are required.

If you have any questions about the survey, please do not hesitate to contact the survey's developer: ksenia.kurik@gmail.com

We really appreciate your input!

Appendix 4. Cover Letter, Finnish Version

Hyvät kollegat,

Parantaaksemme hotellimme toimintaa olemme tekemässä sisäistä kyselytutkimusta organisaatiomme viestinnästä. Löydät linkin tähän kyselyyn tästä

https://www.webropolsurveys.com/S/B766B5C1E03C4A9D.par.

_____

_____

Kyselyn tarkoituksena on selvittää työntekijöiden mielipiteitä sisäinen viestinnän tehokkuudesta, tiedonkulusta ja suosituimmista viestintävälineistä.
Tutkimuksen tuloksia käytetään tunnistamaan vahvuudet ja heikkoudet yhteisöviestinnässämme. Tämä auttaa tekemään parannuksia nykytilanteeseen ja kehittämään uusia mahdollisuuksia.

Tutkimukseen vastaaminen kestää vain 5 minuuttia, ja vastaukset ovat täysin anonyymejä. Voit vastata kyselyyn ja myös muokata vastauksiasi 20. marraskuuta saakka. Tähdellä merkityt (*) kysymykset ovat pakollisia.

Kyselyn vastuuhenkilö on restonomiopiskelija Ksenia Kurik. Jos sinulla on kysyttävää tutkimuksesta, älä epäröi ottaa häneen yhteyttä: ksenia.kurik@gmail.com

Me todella arvostamme mielipidettäsi!

Appendix 5. Survey Results

1. Arvioi tietämystäsi hotellin yleistilanteesta ja tärkeimmistä hotellissa tapahtuvista toiminnoista. (Please evaluate your general awareness of the changes and the main events taking place in the hotel)

	1	2	3	4	5		Total	Average
huono (poor)	0	5	6	6	7	erinomainen (excellent)	24	3.63

2. Kuinka paljon tietoa saat seuraavista aiheista? (How much information do you get on the following topics?)

	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Average
Tapahtumat (Happening and events)	0	2	4	14	4	24	3.83
Yritysjohtajat (Company executives)	1	4	8	9	1	23	3.22
Suunnitelmat ja strategiset tavoitteet (Plans and strategic objectives)	3	2	11	5	3	24	3.13
Työprosessi (Working process)	1	4	6	11	2	24	3.38
Henkilöstöpolitiikka (HR policy)	1	5	10	6	2	24	3.13
Henkilöstön aktiviteetit (Activities for the staff)	0	1	8	10	5	24	3.79
Total	6	18	47	55	17	143	3.41

3. Mistä ylläolevista asioista haluaisit saada enemmän tietoa? (Please specify which aspects of the work should be informed more)

- henkilöstöpolitiikka ja tavoitteet (Personnel policy and objectives)
- Yritysjohtajat Haikossa (Business Leaders in Haikko)
- Pitkän tähtäimen suunnitelmista (Long-term plans)
- Taloudellinen tilanne. Henkilökunta vaihto, jos uusia kollegoja tulossa ja milloin ym. (Economic conditions. Staff exchange, when new colleague comes , etc.)
- Suunnitelmat ja strategiset tavoitteet(plans and strategic objectives)
- Strategia (Strategy)
- kohta 3 (section 3)
- Suunnitelma ja strateegiset tavoitteet (Plans and strategic objectives)

4. Mistä saat tietoa yhtiön toiminnasta? (Where do you get information about the company activities?)

- Communication with colleagues and immediate supervisor
- Meetings with executives
- Communication with union representatives
- Corporate media - newspaper, intranet, and information stands
- External media - regional press, TV, Internet
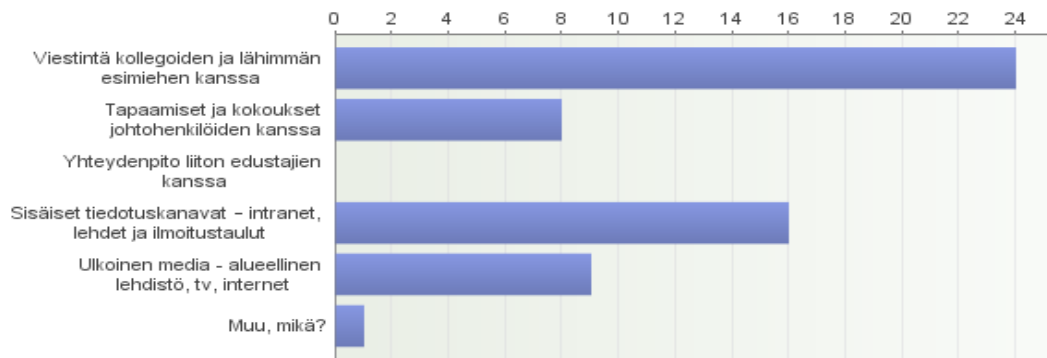
Open text answers: Muu, mikä? Other, please specify

- uutiskirje (newsletter)

5. Mitkä lähteistä ovat mielestäsi luotettavia? (What sources do you trust the most?)

- Communication with colleagues and immediate supervisor
- Meetings with executives
- Communication with union representatives
- Corporate media - newspaper, intranet, and information stands
- External media - regional press, TV, Internet
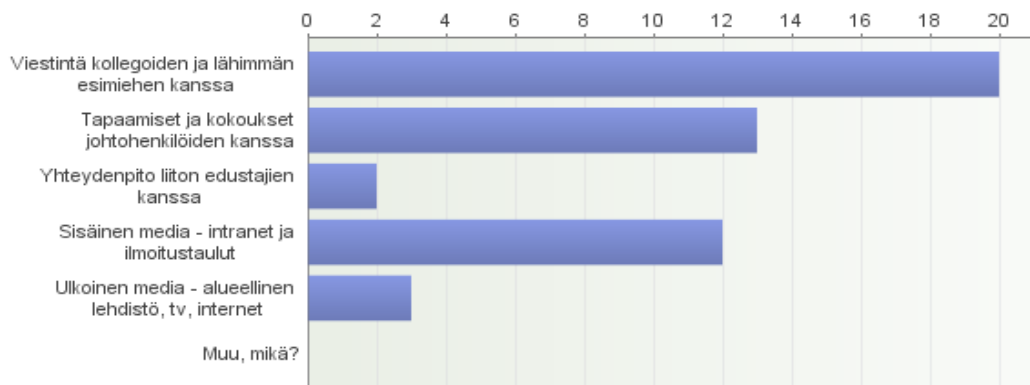
6. Mistä lähteistä haluaisit saada tietoa hotellin tapahtumista? (From what sources would you prefer to receive information about events that take place in the hotel?)

- Communication with colleagues and immediate supervisor
- Meetings with executives
- Communication with union representatives
- Corporate media - newspaper, intranet, and information stands
- External media - regional press, TV, Internet
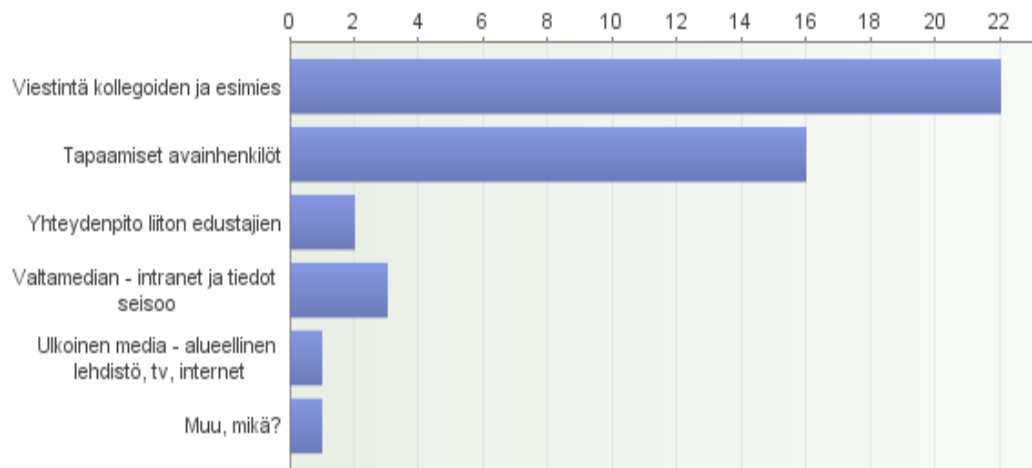
7. Kuinka paljon seuraavat väittämät pitävät mielestäsi paikkaa (How much do you agree with the following statements?):

	Täysin samaa mieltä	Samaa mieltä	Eri mieltä	Täysin eri mieltä	Total	Average
"Johdon käyttäytyminen työntekijöitä kohtaan on avointa ja rehellistä" "The management's behavior towards to employees is open and honest."	5	12	7	0	24	2.08
"Esimiehet (yrityksen johtaja, yksikön johtaja) selittävät selkeästi ja ymmärrettävästi hotellissa tapahtuvat muutoksen ja kehityksen." "Superiors (company director, head of the unit) explain clearly and understandably the meaning of the changes and developments in the hotel".	3	15	6	0	24	2.13
"Minulla on mahdollisuus esittää kysymyksiä ja saada vastauksia". "I have the opportunity to pose questions and get answers".	9	12	3	0	24	1.75

"Voin vapaasti ilmaista näkökulmiani ja koen että ne huomioidaan johtotasolla". "I can freely express my points of view and I am confident that they will be heard by leadership".	4	11	8	1	24	2.25
"Oma esimieheni löytää aina aikaa vastata kysymyksiini". "My immediate supervisor always finds the time to answer my questions".	7	9	7	1	24	2.08
"Johtaja usein tapaa työntekijöitään vastatakseen heidän kysymyksiinsä". "Manager often meets with employees to answer their questions".	3	6	14	1	24	2.54
Total	31	65	45	3	144	2.14

8. Millaisia mahdollisuuksia sinulla on antaa ja vastaanottaa palautetta? (What kind of opportunities do you have to give and receive feedback?)

- Personal meetings
- Information meetings (with the ability to ask a question in person or in writing)
- Direct telephone line
- Internet
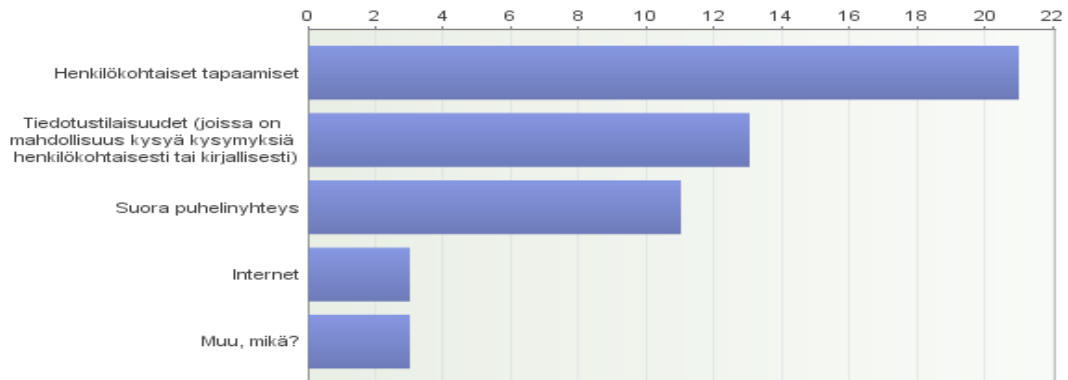
Open text answers: Muu, mikä? Other, please specify
- sähköposti (e-mail)
- sähköposti (e-mail)
- ideaboksi (idea-box)

9. Mitkä edellä mainituista kanavista ovat mielestäsi sinulle sopivimpia? (What kind of feedback channels are most appropriate for you?)

- Henkilökohtaiset tapaamiset (Personal meetings)
- Henkilökohtainen tapaaminen (Personal meeting)

- oma esimies (own boss)
- sähköposti ja henk.kohtainen tapaaminen (e-mail and personal meeting)
- henkilökohtaiset tapaamiset (personal meetings)
- Yhteiset tapaamiset (joint meetings)
- Henkilökohtaiset tapaamiset (personal meetings)
- Henkilökohtaiset tapaamiset (personal meetings)
- Henkilökohtainen tapaaminen (personal meeting)
- Henkilökohtainen kanava (personal channel)
- Tapaamiset (meetings)
- esimiehen tiedotteet (superior's press-releases)
- Henkilökohtainen tapaaminen (personal meeting)
- Henkilökohtaiset tapamiset (personal meetings)

10. Onko mielestäsi tarpeellista luoda uusia palautekanavia? Jos kyllä, kerro millaisen pa-lautekanavan haluaisit. (Is there a need for creating additional feedback channels? If yes, please specify new feedback channels you would like to have):

- ei (no)
- Idea-box tai vastaava tehokkaampaan käyttöön. Olkoon se vaikka lappunen aa-mulla pöydälläni, jossa myös ehdotuksen/kysymyksen antajan nimi. Ei pyöriteltäisi kysy-myksiä henkilöstön keskuudessa, vaan haettaisiin niihin myös itse aktiivisesti vastauksia ilman mittavia palavereja
- Sähköinen palautekanava henkilökunnalle (electronic feedback channel for the staff)
- Anonyymi palautelaatikkko (anonymous feedback)
- ei (no)
- netti on hyvin käytössä ja sitä kautta tuleekin suurin osa tiedoista (the internet is the most usable source (biggest part of the information is there)

Appendix 6. Commissioning Party Feedback Form

HAAGA-HELIA
University of Applied Sciences

Commissioning party feedback form

Degree Programme in Tourism
Porvoo Campus

Thesis author/s	Ksenia Kurik
Thesis title	Improving organizational communication: Hotel Haikko Manor & Spa
Commissioning company or organisation	Hotel Haikko Manor & Spa
Commissioning party's contact person and contact information	Juha Peltonen juha.peltonen@haikko.fi
Thesis advisor at HAAGA-HELIA	Ivan Berazhny
Adviser's e-mail address	ivan.berazhny@haaga-helia.fi

1. Have you made use of the thesis results in some way? If yes, how?

Yes, it shows that we have quite a good roadmap in improving our information between Managers and employees in their vertical communication.

2. How do you plan to make use of the thesis results in your future operations?

> We have to consider new ways to communicate and also receive the feedback, as in this Thesis was recommended.

3. Please estimate how useful the thesis is for you:

Not useful at all ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☑ Very useful

Place an x in the relevant box

4. Please estimate how useful the thesis is for your field of business (e.g. it generated an innovation, operating practice, product or new information):

Not useful at all ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☑ Very useful

Place an x in the relevant box

5. Please give free feedback about the thesis process:

> As it was found in this thesis, personal interview could have been perhaps better way of collecting data for this survey. It took long time to get enough material to this survey. Now days, we get so many surveys through email that you have to delete most of them, just because of lack of time. It was hard to convince our staff that this is important for our organization.

6. Other feedback to the student or HAAGA-HELIA:

> It is easy to agree to this result, but I would underline that information flow in hotel, that operates in three shifts is a bit different than in normal organization. There must be more person to person information that gives the wright accurate picture about the customer situation at the same day. This thesis also found that out.

Please return this form via e-mail to the thesis adviser.

The e-mail format is firstname.lastname@haaga-helia.fi

HAAGA-HELIA University of Applied Sciences, tel. (09) 229 611,

www.haaga-helia.fi