AN INTERNAL COMMUNICATION MODEL FOR THE CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE AS A MULTI-CAMPUS INSTITUTION

By

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work which is submitted here is the result of my own independent investigation. Where help was sought, it was acknowledged. I further declare that the work is submitted for the first time at this university/faculty towards the Philosophiae Doctor degree in Higher Education Studies and that it has never been submitted to any other university/faculty for the purpose of obtaining a degree.

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DEDICATION

...to my dear and wonderful parents, Daan and Ria Delport.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to gratefully acknowledge the contribution of the following persons who made the study possible:

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ABSTRACT

Effective internal communication is important to the success of any organisation, whether it be a corporate company or an organisation that does not function in a corporate environment, such as an institution of higher education. Although many corporate organisations realise the importance of investing in their internal communication strategies in order to address external competitiveness, the researcher regards internal communication and its optimal use a neglected feature in the higher education environment.

Higher education institutions are often referred to as "professional bureaucracies"; "leave us alone" and "ivory-tower" institutions. Some authors even mention that higher education institutions do not enjoy a reputation for good management of resources and that they are seen as extravagant and "unbusinesslike". Research has confirmed that alliances, lack of motivation, high individualism, inadequate exchange of scientific knowledge, competition, and criticism are seen as factors negatively influencing communication at the university.

Higher education institutions are academic institutions with a complex and bureaucratic nature. They are not only large in structure, but consist of complex and diverse systems and multiple operations where the organisational structure and extensive vertical hierarchy consist of numerous staff members. These institutions are governed by law and have numerous policies and procedures that need to be followed in the execution of operations. The new higher education dispensation brought on by the mergers and incorporations a few years ago challenges South African higher education institutions to revisit their internal communication practices to communicate effectively with a more diverse internal community. Many of these institutions are diverse in terms of post levels, organisational hierarchy, qualifications, language and culture. They also vary in nature and now have different identities, for example "technikons" that changed to "universities of technology". Many of these institutions transformed into multi-campus universities which comprise different campuses, some of which are located in geographical areas removed from the main campus.

The aim of the study was to undertake research that would direct the development of an effective internal communication model for the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) as a multi-campus institution (with possible application to other multi-campus universities in South Africa).

Thus, aspects such as the academic and bureaucratic nature of universities are discussed, whilst the importance of internal communication in a higher education environment is spelt out. In proposing an effective internal communication model for the CUT, theoretical models, such as the early linear models, as well as various recent internal communication models are outlined.

The type of research carried out in this study is of an applied nature and it fits the description of evaluation research. The investigation can be categorised as an improvement-oriented evaluation, which is formative in nature (in other words, dealing with a concern of improving a programme or practice). The particular practice in question refers to internal communication at multi-campus universities in South Africa.

The empirical investigation entailed three phases, namely a questionnaire survey regarding internal communication at the CUT; an interview-type survey regarding internal communication at seven multi-campus universities in South Africa; and an inter-institutional evaluation and refinement of the draft communication framework that was developed to improve the effectiveness of internal communication at the CUT. Through the use of combined qualitative and quantitative research methods, the aim of the study was achieved.

The model is based on various internal practices following national and international communication tendencies and corporate communication models that have successfully been employed by corporate companies in South Africa. The model also boasts features which are based on the recommendations of communication executives from seven multi-campus universities in South Africa. An action plan for improving upward, downward and horizontal communication at the CUT is included.

SAMEVATTING

Effektiewe interne kommunikasie is belangrik vir die sukses van enige organisasie –
korporatiewe maatskappye sowel as organisasies wat nie in 'n korporatiewe
omgewing funksioneer nie, soos byvoorbeeld 'n hoëronderwysinstelling. Alhoewel
baie korporatiewe organisasies besef hoe belangrik dit is om in hul interne
kommunikasiestrategieë te belê om sodoende ekstern kompeterend te wees, beskou
die navorser interne kommunikasie as 'n faset wat nie tot sy volle potensiaal in die
hoëronderwysomgewing ontgin word nie.

Daar word dikwels na hoëronderwysinstellings as "professionele burokrasieë"; "laat
ons alleen" en "ivoortoring"-instellings verwys. Sommige skrywers maak selfs
melding daarvan dat hoëronderwysinstellings nie 'n goeie reputasie vir die effektiewe
bestuur van hulpbronne geniet nie en dat hulle as buitensporig of "nie-
besigheidsgeöriënteerd" beskou word. Navorsing bevestig dat 'n verskeidenheid
faktore kommunikasie aan 'n universiteit negatief kan beïnvloed, soos byvoorbeeld
vennootskappe, 'n gebrek aan motivering, individualistiese neigings, onvoldoende
uitruil van wetenskaplike kennis, kompetisie en kritiek.

Hoëronderwysinstellings is akademiese instellings met 'n komplekse en burokratiese
karakter. Nie alleenlik is hulle groot met betrekking tot hulle struktuur nie, maar hulle
bestaan ook uit komplekse en diverse sisteme en veelvuldige bedrywighede met 'n
organisatoriese struktuur en uitgebreide vertikale hiërargieë met baie personeellede.
Hierdie tipe instellings word deur die reg beheer en talle beleide en prosedures moet
gevolg word in die uitvoering van aktiwiteite. Die nuwe hoëronderwyslandskap wat
deur die samesmeltings en inkorporerings 'n paar jaar gelede teweeggebring is, bied
'n uitdaging aan Suid-Afrikaanse hoëronderwysinstellings om weer te kyk na hul
interne kommunikasiepraktyke en om uiteindelik meer effektief binne 'n meer diverse
interne gemeenskap te kommunikeer. Baie van hierdie instellings het uiteenlopende
posvlakke, organisatoriese hiërargieë, kwalifikasies, taal en kulture. Hulle verskil ook
in aard en het nou nuwe identiteite, byvoorbeeld "technikons" wat verander het na
"universiteite vir tegnologie". Baie van hierdie instellings het verander na multi-
kampusuniversiteite wat uit 'n verskeidenheid kampusse, waarvan sommige in
geografiese gebiede ver van die hoofkampus geleë is, bestaan.

Die doel van die studie was om navorsing te onderneem wat sou aanleiding gee tot die ontwikkeling van 'n effektiewe interne kommunikasiemodel vir die Sentrale Universiteit vir Tegnologie, Vrystaat (SUT) as 'n multi-kampusinstelling (met moontlike toepassing op ander multi-kampusuniversiteite in Suid-Afrika).

Aspekte soos die akademiese en burokratiese aard van universiteite word bespreek, terwyl die belangrikheid van interne kommunikasie in 'n hoëronderwysomgewing uitgelig word. Ten einde 'n effektiewe interne kommunikasiemodel vir die SUT voor te lê, word teoretiese modelle, soos die vroeë lineêre modelle, sowel as verskeie hedendaagse interne kommunikasiemodelle bespreek.

Die tipe navorsing wat in die studie onderneem word, is van 'n toegepaste aard en val binne die kader van evalueringsnavorsing. Die ondersoek kan geklassifiseer word as 'n verbeterings-geöriënteerde evaluering van 'n formatiewe aard. Met ander woorde, dit het te make met 'n aangeleentheid om 'n bepaalde gebruik te verbeter. Die spesifieke gebruik in die studie verwys na interne kommunikasie aan multi-kampusuniversiteite in Suid-Afrika.

Die empiriese ondersoek het drie fases behels, naamlik 'n vraelysopname oor interne kommunikasie aan die SUT; 'n onderhoud-tipe opname oor interne kommunikasie aan sewe multi-kampusuniversiteite in Suid-Afrika; en 'n inter-institusionele evaluering en verfyning van die voorlopige kommunikasieraamwerk wat ontwikkel is om die effektiwiteit van interne kommunikasie aan die SUT te verbeter. Deur die gebruik van gekombineerde kwalitatiewe en kwantitatiewe navorsingsmetodes, is die doel van die studie bereik.

Die model is gebaseer op verskeie interne gebruike wat gegrond is op nasionale en internasionale kommunikasietendense, asook korporatiewe modelle wat suksesvol deur korporatiewe maatskappye in Suid-Afrika geïmplementeer is. Die model inkorporeer die eienskappe wat gebaseer is op die aanbevelings van kommunikasiekundiges van sewe multi-kampusuniversiteite in Suid-Afrika. 'n Aksieplan om opwaartse, afwaartse en horisontale kommunikasie aan die SUT te verbeter, is ingesluit.

Kernwoorde: organisatoriese kommunikasie, interne kommunikasie, hoëronderwys, universiteit vir tegnologie, Suid-Afrika, gemengde-metode-ontwerp, kommunikasieraamwerk, kommunikasiemodel

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AUT	University and Technikons Advisory Council
ANC	African National Congress
CATE	College of Advanced Technical Education
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
CSQ	Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire
CTP	Committee of Technikon Principals
CUP	Committee of University Principals
CUT	Central University of Technology, Free State
DUT	Durban University of Technology
DoE	Department of Education
DACST	Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurer
HEB	Higher Education Board
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HR	Human Resources
IEASA	International Education Association of South Africa
KPAs	Key Performance Areas
MANCOM	Management Committee
METU	Middle East Technical University
MBWA	Management by Wandering Around
NCHE	National Commission on Higher Education
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NEPI	National Education Policy Investigation
NPHE	National Plan for Higher Education
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NRF	National Research Foundation
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
NWG	National Working Group
NWU	North-West University

SAUVCA	South African Universities' Vice-Chancellors' Association
THRIP	Technology and Human Resources for Industry Programme
TOCOM	Twente Organisational Communication Model
TUT	Tshwane University of Technology
UDUSA	Union of Democratic University Staff Unions
UFS	University of the Free State
UJ	University of Johannesburg
UNISA	University of South Africa
UW	University of Washington
VC	Vice-Chancellor
VUT	Vaal University of Technology

Cross-table 5.1 shows statistical calculations to determine the relationship between capacity of employees and employees' opinion about "Employees are the first to be informed of important organisational information before it becomes general news". Note that five staff members from the academic services strongly agreed with the statement as opposed to 23 administrative support staff members.

Cross-table 5.1:   **Relationship of "Employees are the first to be informed of important organisational information before it becomes general news" per employment capacity level**

Employees are the first to be informed of important organisational information before it becomes general news		Employment capacity				
		Academic (Teaching/ Research)	Administrative (Management)	Administrative (Support)	Service Worker	Total
	Strongly agree	5	2	23	1	31
	Agree	8	2	6	3	19
	Neutral	8	1	3	0	12
	Disagree	28	6	15	1	50
	Strongly disagree	10	8	25	0	43
Total		59	19	72	5	155

Chi-square tests

	Value	df	Asymp. sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-square	38.459(a)	12	.000
Likelihood ratio	36.102	12	.000
Linear-by-linear Association	3.321	1	.068
N of valid cases	155		

a 9 cells (45.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.39.

Symmetric measures

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error(a)	Approx. T(b)	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by nominal	Contingency coefficient	.446			.000
Ordinal by ordinal	Kendall's tau-b	-.064	.067	-.955	.340
N of valid cases		155			

a Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Source: Analysis of survey data

Since the p-value = 0.000 (<0.05), the researcher concludes that there is a relationship between capacity of employees and employees' opinion about "Employees are the first to be informed of important organisational information before it becomes general news".

It is therefore clear that employment capacity plays a role in staff members' opinion on being the first to be informed of important organisational news before it becomes general news. Staff members employed in an administrative support capacity in particular had very strong opinions about NOT being the first to be informed of important organisational news before it becomes general news. This is an important element to be incorporated in the proposed internal communication model for the CUT.

(b)   Supervisory communication

Questions 17 to 20 focused on supervisory communication. Figure 5.12 summarises the respondents' answers.
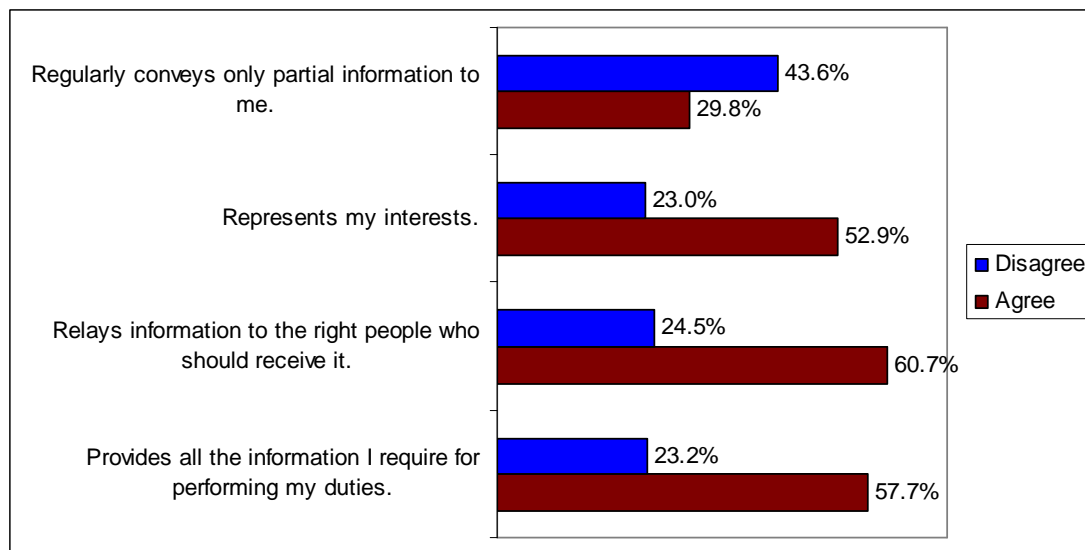
Figure 5.12:   Percentage distribution of respondents' rating of supervisory communication

Source: Analysis of survey data

- More than half of the respondents felt that their supervisors represented their interests (52.9%), relayed information to the right people who should receive it (60.7%), and provided all the information they required for performing their duties (57.7%). However, between 23% and 43% of the respondents disagreed with each of the four statements – thereby indicating that supervisory communication is not all that satisfactory at the CUT.

(c)   Upward communication

Figure 5.13 illustrates the responses to **Questions 21 to 24**, which entailed information about upward communication at the CUT.
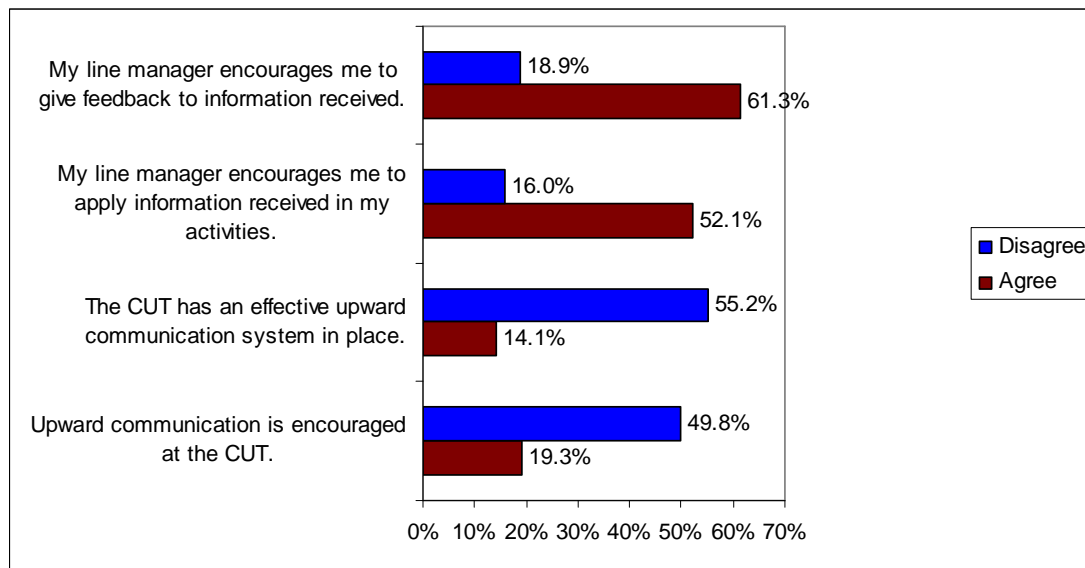
Figure 5.13:   Percentage distribution of respondents' rating of upward communication

Source: Analysis of survey data

- Almost half of the respondents (49.8%) chose a negative ("Disagree" or "Strongly disagree") response to the statement "Upward communication is encouraged at the CUT".

- More than half (55.2%) of the respondents indicated that the CUT did not have an effective upward communication system in place.
- More than half of the respondents (52.1%) were positive about their line managers encouraging them to apply information received in their activities.
- More than 60% felt that their line managers encouraged them to provide feedback.

It seems as if upward communication at the CUT has to be encouraged, but seemingly not to the same extent at line manager level than at other levels.

(d)   Horizontal communication

Questions 25 to 27 contain information about horizontal communication as it also comprises an important form of communication among employees. The most significant responses are contained in Figure 5.14.
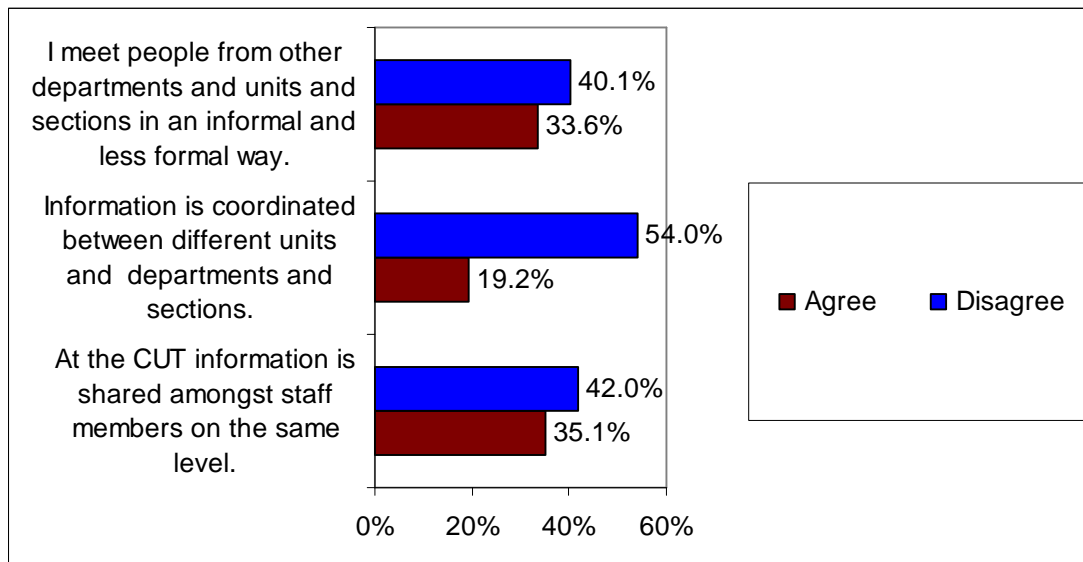
Figure 5.14:   Percentage distribution of respondents' rating of horizontal communication

Source: Analysis of survey data

- 42% of the respondents indicated that information was not shared among staff members on the same level.

- More than half of the respondents (54%) felt that information was not coordinated among different units and departments and sections.

- The majority of the respondents (40.1%) also indicated that they did not meet people from other departments or units and sections in an informal way.

The overall impression is that horizontal communication at the CUT is not satisfactory and needs to be improved.

(e)   Communication from MANCOM

Communication from MANCOM (**Questions 13 and 28 to 35**) needs to be improved, as the majority of the respondents chose negative ratings for a variety of statements related to communication from MANCOM (see Figure 5.15).
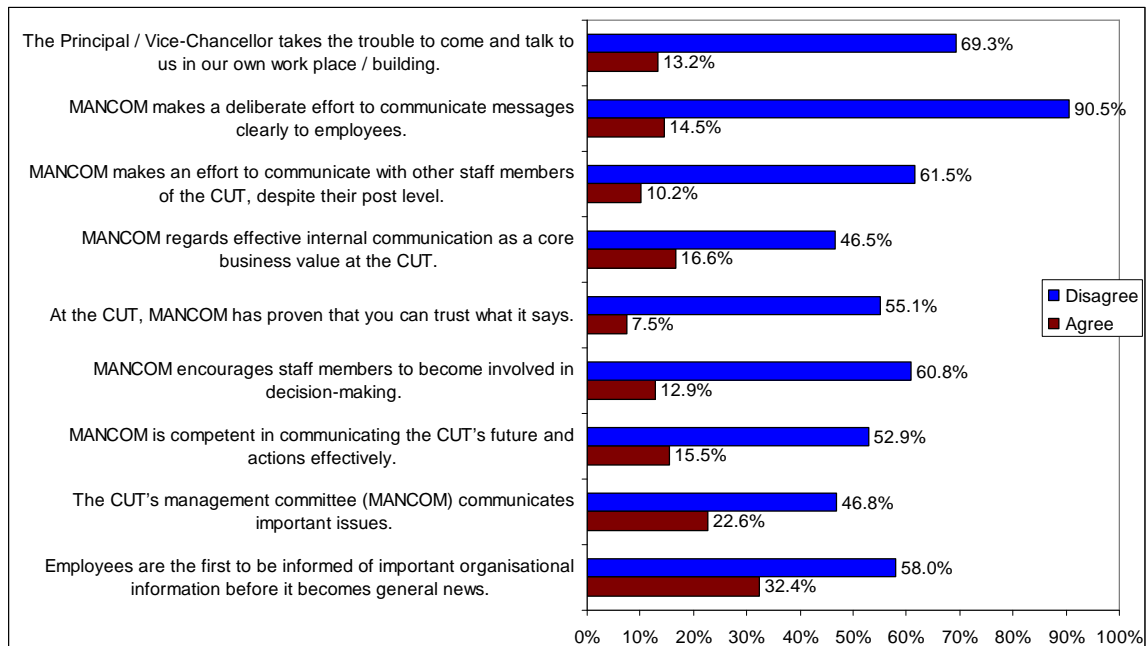
Figure 5.15:   Percentage distribution of respondents' rating of communication from MANCOM

Source: Analysis of survey data

- More than half of the respondents (58%) were of the opinion that employees were not the first to be informed of important information before it became general news.

- Almost 50% felt that MANCOM did not communicate important issues.

- 52.9% also felt that MANCOM was incompetent in communicating the CUT's future.

- More than 60% felt that MANCOM did not encourage staff members to become involved in decision-making.

- 55.1% did not agree with the statement "At the CUT MANCOM has proven that you can trust what it says".

- 46.5% of the respondents indicated that MANCOM did not regard effective internal communication as a core business value at the CUT.

- More than two-thirds of the respondents (61.5%) chose a negative ("Disagree" or "Strongly disagree") response to the statement "MANCOM makes an effort to communicate with other staff members of the CUT, despite their post level".

- More than 90% of the respondents felt that MANCOM did not make a deliberate effort to communicate messages clearly to employees.

- More than two-thirds of the respondents (69.3%) were of the opinion that the Principal/VC did not take the trouble to come and talk to them in their own work environment.

The message is clear that communication from MANCOM needs to be improved in various aspects. Messages need to be communicated to employees clearly, personally and honestly. By accounting for MANCOM's seemingly poor communication practices, the proposed model will have to focus on managerial communication so as to improve MANCOM's communication skills.

Cross-table 5.2 shows statistical calculations to determine the relationship between "At the CUT, MANCOM has proven that you can trust what it says" and employment capacity level.

It is interesting to note that a large proportion of the respondents (51 out of 74) in the administrative support services chose a negative response ("Disagreed" or "Strongly disagreed") to the statement "At the CUT, MANCOM has proven that you can trust what it says".

Cross-table 5.2:   Relationship between "At the CUT, MANCOM has proven that you can trust what it says" and employment capacity level

At the CUT, MANCOM has proven that you can trust what it says.		Employment capacity				Total
		Academic (Teaching/Re search)	Administrative (Management)	Administrative (Support)	Service Worker	
	Strongly agree	1	0	1	0	2
	Agree	1	3	5	1	10
	Neutral	37	2	17	1	57
	Disagree	9	5	**19**	1	34
	Strongly disagree	9	9	**32**	2	52
Total		57	19	74	5	155

Chi-square tests

	Value	df	Asymp. sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-square	36.608(a)	12	.000
Likelihood ratio	37.324	12	.000
Linear-by-linear association	9.653	1	.002
N of valid cases	155		

a 12 cells (60.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .06.

Symmetric measures

		Value	Asymp. std. error(a)	Approx. T(b)	Approx. sig.
Nominal by nominal	Contingency coefficient	.437			.000
Ordinal by ordinal	Kendall's tau-b	.235	.068	3.504	.000
N of valid cases		155			

a Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Source: Analysis of survey data

The relationship between groups of employees and trust in MANCOM is significant, as p = 0.000 (<0.05). The researcher concludes that there is a relationship between the statement "At the CUT, MANCOM has proven that you can trust what it says" and employment capacity level. Especially staff in the administrative services have very strong feelings about statements made by MANCOM, namely that MANCOM cannot be trusted.

Cross-table 5.3 shows statistical calculations to determine the relationship between "MANCOM regards effective internal communication as a core business value" and employment capacity level. From the administration services (management and support services combined), 53 staff members disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

Cross-table 5.3: **Relationship between "MANCOM regards effective internal communication as a core business value at the CUT" per employment capacity level**

MANCOM regards effective internal communication as a core business value at the CUT.		Employment capacity				Total
		Academic (Teaching/ Research)	Administrative (Management)	Administrative (Support)	Service Worker	
	Strongly agree	2	0	0	0	2
	Agree	7	7	10	1	25
	Neutral	32	1	22	3	58
	Disagree	**13**	**8**	**19**	**0**	40
	Strongly disagree	**3**	**4**	**22**	**1**	30
Total		57	20	73	5	155

Chi-square tests

	Value	df	Asymp. sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-square	34.654(a)	12	.001
Likelihood ratio	39.564	12	.000
Linear-by-linear Association	8.113	1	.004
N of valid cases	155		

a 10 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .06.

Symmetric measures

		Value	Asymp. std. error(a)	Approx. T(b)	Approx. sig.
Nominal by nominal	Contingency coefficient	.427			.001
Ordinal by ordinal	Kendall's tau-b	.190	.064	3.003	.003
N of valid cases		155			

a Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Source: Analysis of survey data

Since the p-value = 0.001 (<0.05), the researcher concludes that there is a relationship between the respondents' employment capacity and their opinion about "MANCOM regards effective internal communication as a core business value at the CUT". From the above-mentioned statistics it is clear that mostly administrative services staff chose negative ratings and thus felt that MANCOM did not regard internal communication as a core business value at the CUT.

(f)   Communication understandable or incomplete

Questions 37 to 38 focused on information that is understandable and information that is incomplete. The results are displayed in Figure 5.16.
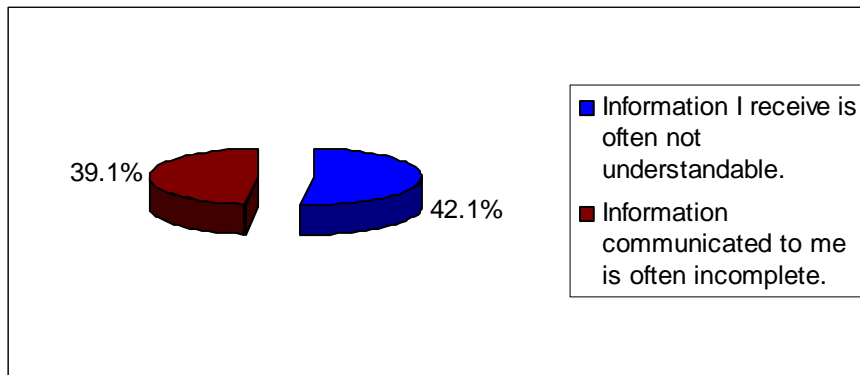
Figure 5.16:   Percentage distribution of respondents' rating of communication content/message

Source: Analysis of survey data

Relatively high percentages of the respondents (39.1% and 42.1% respectively) felt that information communicated to them was often neither understandable nor complete. This serves as an indication that communication needs to contain information that is specific in terms of what is expected from employees. The purpose of communication therefore needs to be clearly specified, whilst the content of the information needs to be clear, complete and easy to understand.

5.2.1.7 *Preference of communication channels*

For **Questions 40 to 48** the participants had to rank communication channels from the most preferable communication channel to the least preferable channel. Table 5.6 shows a frequency distribution of the respondents' rating of their preference of various communication channels. In presenting the results, the researcher decided to calculate the average rating of each particular medium.

According to Table 5.6, the average rating of respondents' preference of communication channels is as follows:

Most preferable	Electronic
2	Word of mouth (face-to-face)
3	Oral and written combined
4	Telephone
5	Written only
6	Faxes
7	Internal audiovisual material
8	Bulletin and notice boards
Least preferable	The grapevine.

Table 5.6: Frequency distribution of respondents' rating of communication channel preference

Preference ratings for:	Most preferable #	ratio	2 #	ratio	3 #	Ratio	4 #	ratio	5 #	ratio	6 #	ratio	7 #	ratio	8 #	ratio	Least preferable #	ratio
Electronic media (Internet, Intranet and e-mail)	123	0.65	23	0.12	12	0.06	7	0.04	5	0.03	3	0.02	4	0.02	4	0.02	7	0.04
Word of mouth (face-to-face)	63	0.33	29	0.15	24	0.13	13	0.07	22	0.12	12	0.06	12	0.06	7	0.04	7	0.04
Oral and written combined	49	0.26	28	0.15	27	0.15	24	0.13	30	0.16	10	0.05	8	0.04	4	0.02	6	0.03
Telephone	48	0.25	31	0.16	21	0.11	18	0.10	16	0.09	16	0.09	10	0.05	13	0.07	16	0.09
Written only (memos, letters)	30	0.16	25	0.13	33	0.18	20	0.11	32	0.17	16	0.09	8	0.04	12	0.06	13	0.07
Faxes	27	0.14	22	0.12	20	0.11	13	0.07	26	0.14	19	0.10	13	0.07	14	0.07	35	0.19
Internal audiovisual material (video clips, films)	22	0.12	20	0.11	13	0.07	15	0.08	36	0.19	17	0.09	16	0.09	17	0.09	30	0.16
Bulletin and notice board	19	0.10	4	0.02	6	0.03	14	0.08	22	0.12	12	0.06	18	0.10	17	0.09	75	0.40
The grapevine	14	0.08	5	0.03	3	0.02	6	0.03	7	0.04	8	0.04	16	0.09	16	0.09	109	0.59

Source: Analysis of survey data

5.2.1.8 *Ease of use, efficiency and timeousness of communication mediums*

For each medium, the participants also had to evaluate the medium in terms of its ease of use, efficiency and timeousness (**Question 49**).

The results of all three aspects the respondents had to evaluate, namely ease of use of communication channels, efficiency of communication channels, and timeousness of communication channels are outlined.

(a)   Ease of use of communication channels

Figure 5.17 contains the results of respondents' rating of ease of use of communication channels.
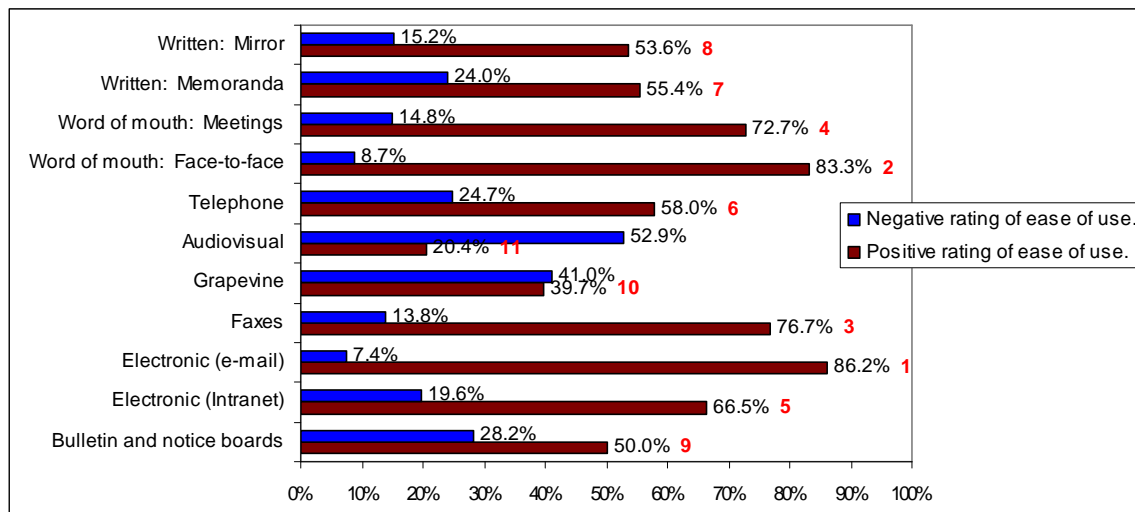
Figure 5.17:   Percentage distribution of respondents' rating of ease of use of communication channels

Source: Analysis of survey data

- Electronic (e-mail) communication received the highest rating.
- Word of mouth communication (face-to-face and meetings) received the second and fourth highest rating (83.3% for face-to-face communication and 72.7% for

meetings).   This is a clear indication that respondents regarded electronic communication and word of mouth communication as easier to use than the other media. This is an important aspect to take note of in the drafting of the proposed communication model.

- It clearly emerged that the sequence of the most easy to use medium/media to the least easy to use is as follows:
  1. Electronic: E-mail (86.2%)
  2. Word of mouth: Face-to-face (83.3%)
  3. Faxes (76.7%)
  4. Word of mouth: Meetings (72.7%)
  5. Electronic: Intranet (66.5%)
  6. Telephone (58%)
  7. Written: Memoranda (55.4%)
  8. Written: *Mirror* (53.6%)
  9. Bulletin and notice boards (50%)
  10. Grapevine (39.7%)
  11. Audiovisual (20.4%).

(b)   Efficiency of communication channels

In rating the efficiency of communication channels, electronic communication (e-mail) received the highest rating (93.4%) and the grapevine the lowest (8.4%) (see Figure 5.18).
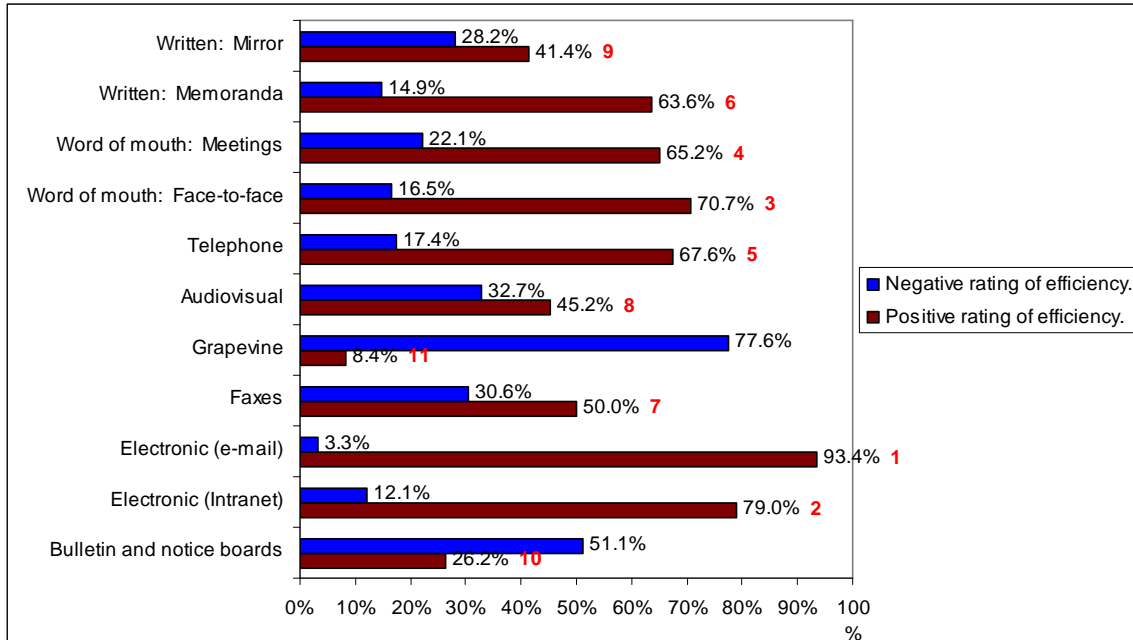
Figure 5.18: **Percentage distribution of respondents' rating of efficiency of communication channels**

Source: Analysis of survey data

- With regard to efficiency of communication channels, electronic communication once again received the highest rating.

- Face-to-face communication received a percentage of 70.7%.

- The grapevine received a low 8.4% - a clear indication that it is not regarded an efficient communication channel.

- From the most efficient to the least efficient communication channels are:
  1. Electronic: E-mail (93.4%)
  2. Electronic: Intranet (79%)
  3. Word of mouth: Face-to-face (70.7%)
  4. Telephone (67.6%)
  5. Word of mouth: Meetings (65.2%)
  6. Written: Memoranda (63.6%)
  7. Faxes (50%)
  8. Audiovisual (45.2%)
  9. Written: *Mirror* (41.4%)

10. Bulletin and notice boards (26.2%)

11. Grapevine (8.4%).

(c)　　　Timeousness of communication channels

In rating the timeousness of communication channels, the majority of the respondents (92.8%) felt that electronic (e-mail) communication was quick and timely. The grapevine once again received the lowest rating (15.7%). The findings are displayed in Figure 5.19.
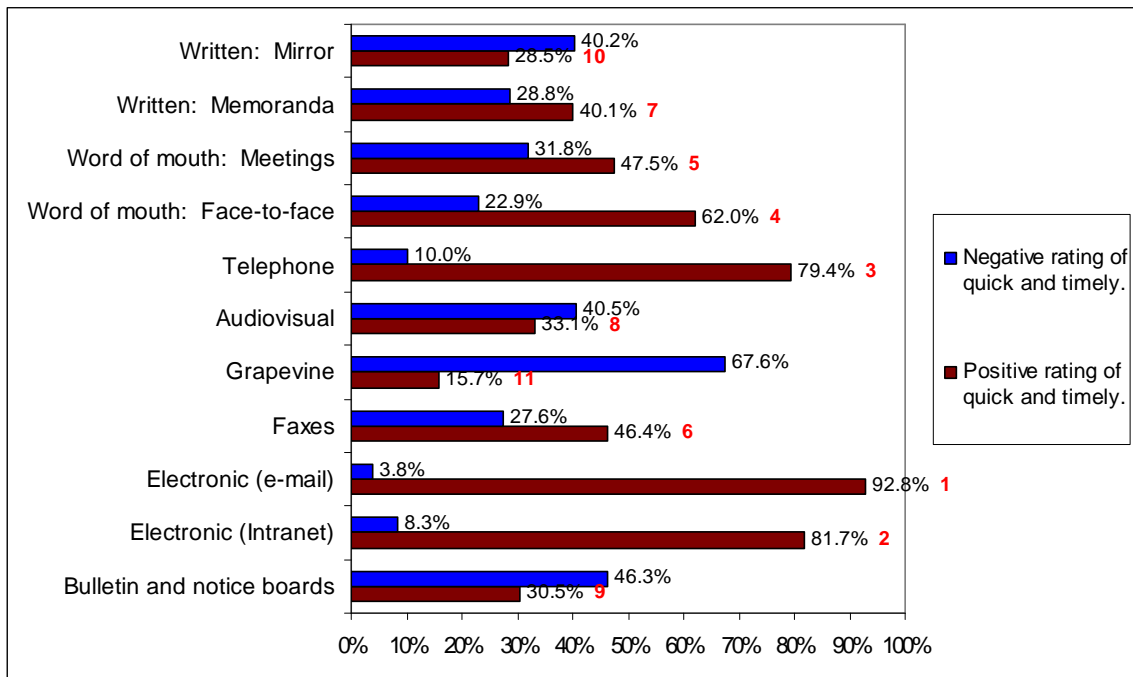
Figure 5.19:　Percentage distribution of all respondents' rating of timeousness of communication channels

Source: Analysis of survey data

From the fastest to the slowest communication channels are:

1. Electronic: E-mail (92.8%)

2. Electronic: Intranet (81.7%)

3. Telephone (79.4%)

4. Word of mouth: Face-to-face (62%)

5. Word of mouth: Meetings (47.5%)

6. Faxes (46.4%)

7. Written: Memoranda (40.1%)

8. Audiovisual (33.1%)

9. Bulletin and notice boards (30.5%)

10. Written: *Mirror* (28.5%)

11. Grapevine (15.7%).

From the above-mentioned three sets of figures presented above [see (a), (b) and (c)], it thus becomes clear that electronic communication should be utilised continuously as a communication tool at the CUT, as it was rated the easiest communication channel to use, the most efficient communication channel, and the quickest communication channel.

5.2.1.9   *Interpersonal communication skills*

Questions 50 to 56 dealt with interpersonal communication skills. The researcher is of the opinion that certain personal attributes might contribute to a more enriching communication experience, for example: Raising sensitive issues in public forums may encourage staff members to do the same. It would bring certain issues to the attention of those who should know about them, thus improving upward, downward or horizontal communication. Discussing job-related problems may also contribute to staff members' understanding of what is expected from them in performing their jobs. The results are summarised in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7:   Frequency distribution of respondents' communication skills

	Yes		No	
Respondents' communication skills	Count	%	Count	%
Should the discussion of job-related problems be encouraged?	181	95.8%	8	4.2%
Can you listen to others adequately?	165	87.8%	23	12.2%
Can you deal with an unpleasant situation without becoming unpleasant yourself?	160	85.1%	28	14.9%
Do you raise sensitive issues in public forums?	51	27.6%	134	72.4%
Do you find it easy to share your thoughts and feelings with others?	131	69.7%	57	30.3%
Are you able to remain calm and objective when a colleague is upset?	168	88.9%	21	11.1%
Do you like change in general?	114	60.3%	75	39.7%

Source: Analysis of survey data

- According to the data presented above, a very high percentage of the respondents (95.8%) indicated that the discussion of job-related problems needed to be encouraged.

- One should take note of the finding that almost three-quarters (72.4%) of the respondents did not raise sensitive issues in public forums and also that the majority (60.3%) of the respondents indicated that they liked change in general.

As mentioned in Chapter 2 (see paragraph 2.7.1), systems need to adapt to changes caused by the environment in order to be seen as living, open systems. The model proposed for the CUT could therefore view communication from the systems perspective, encouraging constant interaction between the various parts constituting the system. Change and adaptation are therefore inevitable.

Although the questionnaire was predominantly quantitative in nature, it "embedded" a qualitative element in the form of open-ended questions. The inclusion of this element brought some important qualitative enhancement to the findings of the CUT survey (see paragraph 4.2.1). The qualitative approach enabled the researcher to uncover some of the participants' feelings, perceptions and attitudes regarding the effectiveness of internal communication at the CUT. In many instances the findings from the structured part of the questionnaire were confirmed and strengthened.

5.2.2   Results of qualitative data analysis

Questions 57 to 60 deal with four open-ended questions.

5.2.2.1   *The best aspect of communication at the CUT*

From the qualitative survey results, electronic communication is regarded as the best aspect of communication at the CUT. A total of 25 staff members indicated that "e-mail" is the best aspect of communication at the CUT. It is also regarded as a fast and efficient

medium. Some of the responses are listed here: "E-mail is fast"; "E-mail is efficient"; "E-mail is the best aspect, as everybody has access to it". These responses confirm the findings from the structured questions in the survey (see paragraph 5.2.1.8).

Besides electronic communication, meetings (face-to-face communication) and telephonic communication were also mentioned as best aspects of communication.

However, not all responses were so positive. One of the respondents remarked: "Communication at the CUT has no 'best aspect'. It is limited and preferential and in most cases can't be trusted." Seven respondents indicated that: "There is no communication", whereas seven respondents stated that there was no best aspect of communication at the CUT.

Some of the respondents also remarked that communication at the CUT needed to improve, although there were various mediums available and the infrastructure for communication was provided.

Responses such as "CUT staff is not informed and that creates uncertainty"; "People still talk and listen at peer level"; "Hearing things that happen in the news"; and "Some of the important issues are not communicated through" indicate that a need exists among CUT staff members to be timeously and effectively informed of important organisational news.

Some of the respondents commented on the quality of the content communicated at the CUT. Responses such as "The *Mirror* and *Gratia* keep you updated"; "Clear and timely in writing"; and "Editorial quality of what is communicated" were included. The proposed model could thus include aspects/elements for maintaining the editorial quality of written communication.

5.2.2.2   *The worst aspect of communication at the CUT*

According to the results of the questionnaire survey, communication by MANCOM and

Council is regarded the worst aspect of communication at the CUT. The results of the quantitative part of the questionnaire (see paragraph 5.2.1) are confirmed in the results obtained from the open-ended questions (qualitative part of the questionnaire). Some of the comments are listed here.

Quite a number of the respondents indicated that MANCOM was not transparent, not interested in informing staff about the future of the organisation, did not listen to staff members' input, and decided on issues without consulting the stakeholders. Comments such as "Failure to inform employees of the future status of the institution and serious problem of not being transparent"; "Not frequent and thorough enough, too many hush-hush and secrets"; "People should be open with the information"; and "The fact that management does not seem to care that the staff of the CUT is properly informed" are listed in Appendix E.

Written communication (memoranda and newsletters), notice boards and long meetings were also regarded worst aspects of communication. 15 respondents indicated that the "grapevine" was the worst aspect of communication, whilst four staff members mentioned "gossip" to be the worst aspect of communication at the CUT. Where electronic communication was regarded as the best aspect of communication, it was also - to a very small extent - regarded the worst aspect of communication, as not all staff members had access to it. Staff members furthermore complained that they were bombarded with e-mails with deadlines not always communicated to them.

According to some of the responses, information was incorrect, not comprehensive, not always understandable, and not communicated on time. As such, 11 respondents indicated that information was "late/not on time".

Worrying statements include those indicating that a perception of "no communication at the CUT" existed. 16 of the respondents indicated that there was "no communication". Other responses include: "Very little communication to employees exists at CUT" and "There is little communication with personnel".

There also seems to be a concern regarding horizontal communication and communication from the main campus to the distance campuses. Some responses include: "No co-ordination in integration of different departments": "Poor communication to Welkom Campus. Bloemfontein Campus not used to a campus scenario"; and "To reach all employees" (see Appendix E). By reading these remarks it becomes clear that the model the researcher proposes will have to make provision for clear and distinct communication lines to the various campuses situated geographically apart.

There seems to be a serious lack of upward communication, since some of the respondents indicated that: "There is no communication from the bottom upwards"; and "A feeling of communication from top-down exists regardless of how many times bottom-up communication is tried".

5.2.2.3 *Suggestions to improve internal communication at the CUT*

There were quite a number of responses suggesting that the CUT Management could contribute in improving internal communication at the institution. Some of the respondents' opinions include the following:

- "Management to be trained on proper communication channels and be evaluated from time to time."
- "Management must start talking to their staff on important messages and not leave it to supervisors only."
- "Management should give out the correct information to staff."
- "Management should be more active in communicating with other staff at a personal level and HR should be more involved with internal communication and marketing."

- "Sharing must start among first-line managers so that important information can filter through to the staff who share common (work-related) interests with staff in their sections."

- "Management must be visible to all ranks at the CUT."

- "MANCOM must listen to what people have to say. The members should familiarise themselves with what is happening on the ground level and get out of their ivory towers where they exist in isolation and obviously to the real world."

10 respondents suggested that e-mail should be used to forward important messages, whereas others indicated that all staff should have access to e-mail. Another suggestion was that e-mail communication should be followed up by telephonic communication.

Whereas some respondents indicated that meetings or meeting time should be reduced, others suggested that more meetings should be held, with the focus on participation and decision-making. As such, one of the response stated that meetings should sometimes be informal, which would result in getting staff to participate, share ideas or come up with better proposals.

Some of the respondents indicated that they would like to receive more written communication. Responses such as: "Perhaps need anonymous questionnaires and other internal memos to be printed out and posted in mailboxes to accommodate the many part-time staff who are not on e-mail"; "Memos as to what is happening, especially the restructuring"; "Monthly newspaper"; and "Distribute a weekly pamphlet written in English, Afrikaans and Sesotho" are listed in Appendix E.

Three of the respondents indicated that all forms of communication should be used. In this regard video conferencing, SMSs and bulletin boards were suggested. Vertical communication was especially encouraged, as respondents mentioned that vertical communication should be made more "accessible" and "user-friendly". They also suggested more open communication channels, especially upwards.

Open and honest communication was suggested by 11 of the respondents. As such, one of the remark states: "Talk the truth", whilst six responses read: "Transparency".

Regular and timely communication was suggested. Some of the responses are listed here: "Always communicate, information is not on time"; "Decisions taken should be communicated more often to staff members"; and "First-line managers must communicate better to subordinates (timeously)". Two of the respondents suggested less paperwork and more direct communication. Five staff members suggested more verbal communication.

With respect to the language of communication, three of the respondents suggested that the CUT should make use of more than one language in communicating with staff. It was suggested that Afrikaans and English should be used to the same extent.

5.2.2.4   *Views on previous attempts to improve internal communication at the CUT*

From the responses it becomes clear that management is to blame for the failure of attempts to improve internal communication at the CUT. Responses include: "Management is simply not prepared to improve on the aspect"; "Because management cannot manage"; and "Lack of management support – they honour an outcome – not the process. They need to learn to talk so that all can understand, and seriously need to learn how to listen". Five staff members indicated that "communication from top levels to lower levels is very poor, don't consider those on the ground level".

Some of the respondents put the blame on people's resistance to change: "People are resistant to change"; and "People involved were not serious to bring about change".

Reading skills need to be addressed. Some of the responses read: "People do not read"; "People are lazy to read and too scared to take action"; and "Illiteracy".

Another possible reason why previous attempts to improve internal communication at the CUT failed might be that "Communication is not followed by action". In other words, "The CUT needs to be clear on what needs to be done, by whom it should be done and, lastly, when it should be carried out." Another answer reads: "Less paperwork – more personal communication on the ground with employees."

Once again, staff members voiced their concern about the extent of clear, timeous and open communication. Some responses include: "Information is still late"; "Information is shared selectively and is only there for the privileged few"; "Very important issues are partly communicated or not communicated at all"; and "Everything is kept a secret – even a resignation".

5.2.3 Overview of internal communication shortfalls at the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT)

The responses of the qualitative section confirm the results of the quantitative component of the survey. In the next section the researcher summarises internal communication shortfalls at the CUT to arrive at a clear understanding of those aspects the proposed internal communication model should incorporate. The conclusion is drawn from the research results of the questionnaire survey conducted at the CUT in 2006 (see paragraph 5.2), as well as from remarks by Management after a climate study was conducted in 2005.

- Communication to part-time staff and service workers needs to be improved, as only a small number of these employees participated in the survey.
- The quality of communication training sessions needs to be improved.
- Staff members employed in an administrative support capacity in particular had very strong opinions on NOT being the first to be informed of important organisational information before it became general news.

- The further the recipient is located from the communicator and the more hierarchical lines there are which need to be followed, the more difficult communication becomes.
- Important information is received too late.
- The CUT does not have an effective upward communication system in place.
- The CUT does not have an effective horizontal communication system in place.
  - Information is not shared among staff members on the same level.
  - Information is not coordinated among different units, departments, sections and campuses.
- The discussion of job-related problems needs to be encouraged.
- Communication by MANCOM and Council is regarded as the worst aspect of communication at the CUT.
  - Administrative staff felt that MANCOM did not regard internal communication as a core business value at the CUT.
  - Administrative staff felt that MANCOM could not be trusted.
  - MANCOM does not communicate important issues.
  - Management does not spend time with their staff to verbally inform them about issues.
  - MANCOM does not encourage staff members to become involved in decision-making.
  - MANCOM does not make an effort to communicate with other staff members of the CUT, despite their post level.
  - The VC and Principal do not take the trouble to come and talk to staff members in their own work environment.
- Written communication and grapevine communication are also regarded the worst aspects of communication.
- Information is incorrect, not comprehensive, and not always understandable.
- Information is not communicated timeously by first-line managers, Council and MANCOM.
- Electronic communication is regarded the best aspect of communication at the CUT in terms of its speed, ease of use and efficiency.

- Electronic communication is the most preferred communication channel.
- It is the most easy to use communication channel.
- It is the most efficient communication channel.
- It is the quickest communication channel.

- Multi-campus communication is a concern as some of the respondents felt that there was no co-ordination in the integration of the different campuses.

As mentioned in paragraph 5.2, the aim of the CUT survey was to investigate staff members' practices, preferences and perceptions regarding internal communication at the CUT. The researcher furthermore wanted to determine the perceived effectiveness and efficiency of communication at the CUT. The results obtained from the CUT survey, as outlined in this chapter, will subsequently contribute to the development of a model for improving the effectiveness of communication at the CUT as multi-campus university. However, in making the model applicable to other multi-campus universities in South Africa, one would need to take a closer look at internal communication practices at these institutions. For these purposes an institutional survey regarding internal communication was carried out.

5.3   INSTITUTIONAL   SURVEY   AT   VARIOUS   MULTI-CAMPUS UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

As indicated in the mixed methods design employed in the study (see Figure 4.2), phase 2, resembling the qualitative "leg" of the convergence model, consisted of two sub-phases, namely an institutional survey involving seven multi-campus institutions.

The next section entails a discussion of internal communication at seven multi-campus universities in South Africa. The researcher contacted communication executives from these universities to gain insight into their internal communication practices (sub-phase 1 of phase 2 of the research project).

Since this section deals with personal communications – which are taken up in the List of References - the names of the participants and the year will be indicated the first time fully. To prevent unnecessary repetition, however, "personal communication" will be indicated the first time only, whereafter it will be omitted.

5.3.1 Findings of telephonic interviews

The researcher conducted telephonic interviews with communication executives from the University of the Free State (UFS), Vaal University of Technology (VUT), University of Johannesburg (UJ), North-West University (NWU), Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and Durban University of Technology (DUT). The issues of internal communication and the applications thereof at these institutions of higher learning are set out in the following discussion.

5.3.1.1   *University of Johannesburg (UJ)*

According to the UJ's webpage, the Advancement Division promotes and supports the key strategic objectives of the university (UJ 2008:10 of 12) via units such as Marketing and Communications. One would expect a large, premier African city university such as the UJ to boast a well-established, well-understood and effective internal communication plan. Surprisingly, however, the university does not have a formal internal communication plan. According to Bentley-Steyn (2008: personal communication), the Marketing and Communication Department of the UJ was in a restructuring phase until September 2007. The appointed Communication Manager had in the meanwhile left the employment of the institution, which left a void "… and no spare hands to get the plan compiled".

5.3.1.2   *North-West University (NWU)*

The NWU's Division of Corporate Affairs and Relations is accountable for facilitating effective communication through the integrated use of internal, external and electronic communication channels (NWU 2008:4 of 24).

According to Engelbrecht, Corporate Writer/Editor for the NWU (2008: personal communication), *Eish!* is distributed to staff members at all campuses to convey institutional news and management communication. *Eish!* is printed in three languages, namely Afrikaans, English and Setswana. It is issued four times a year.

Another well-established internal Afrikaans newsletter is *Kampusnuus*, which is distributed electronically to staff members at the Potchefstroom Campus (Engelbrecht 2008). Engelbrecht (2008) remarks that the university's Mafikeng Campus also has a printed newsletter. The Vaal Triangle Campus, however, does not have its own internal newsletter, because the language policy in this regard has not yet been finalised.

Apart from the internal newsletters the NWU also makes use of electronic communication to convey important information. As such, Santana, Online Information Officer (2008: personal communication), posts all notices on the university's Intranet, but also e-mails new notifications in the form of a short summary accompanied by a link to the full notification on the Intranet to staff members. Santana (2008) explains that staff members become lazy about reading new notices on the Intranet. "They don't want to view new notices on the Intranet, so we decided to assist them." In addition, she mentions that the VC also has his own newsletter, *VC's Newsletter*, which is distributed to staff members on a quarterly basis. It comes in handy in crisis communication situations (Santana 2008).

5.3.1.3   *Durban University of Technology (DUT)*

Internal and external communication is a top priority for the DUT. As such, "the main function of a Communication Department is to ensure effective and focused communication, both within and outside the university community" (DUT 2008:1 of 4). The DUT's Communication Department strives to establish understanding, to persuade, to inform, to influence attitude and to bring about action (DUT 2008:1 of 4).

With respect to internal communication the university is committed to keeping employees and students informed about the institution. "This can only be achieved by facilitating two-way communication between management, students and all employees, to ensure that everyone feels part of the institution and its decision making [*sic*], is well informed, understands the direction in which the institution is going and is informed about his/her future and the future of the institution. This will ensure that the messages conveyed will be consistent and in accordance with the goals and mission of the DUT" (DUT 2008:1 of 4).

In ensuring effective internal communication, the Communication Department communicates to internal audiences about the DUT's programmes, research, and activities of faculties, staff and students via media such as the notice board, the *Conduit* (which is distributed to staff members, students, alumni and the university's friends every three weeks), the website, the annual report and other relevant media (Captain-Hasthibeer 2008: personal communication). The Communication Department also helps to ensure that all staff understand and share the vision and mission of the DUT through its internal communication activities (DUT 2008:1 of 4).

Recognising the important strategic role of internal communication, the Communication Department works closely with the university's Executive Management in planning the release of news and information to the DUT community. As such, the Executive Director: Public Affairs and Communications, is involved in crisis management (Captain-Hasthibeer 2008).

Captain-Hasthibeer (2008) is, however, concerned about management's involvement in and commitment to internal communication. "The DUT has five campuses spread over three cities. Sometimes e-mail doesn't help in terms of notifications. Management should communicate more with Public Affairs and Communications" (Captain-Hasthibeer 2008).

5.3.1.4 *Tshwane University of Technology (TUT)*

Communication is seen as forming an integral part of the university's daily operations. Although the TUT does not follow a formal approach to internal communication, the university has learned that an integrated internal and external communication approach bears more fruit. According to De Ruyter, Acting Head: Corporate Affairs and Marketing (2008: personal communication), the university decided to combine its external and internal communication efforts "because people did not want to read news about their institution in the newspapers".

As such, the TUT has implemented a variety of methods to inform staff members about important and relevant news. *E-tutor* is an electronic daily newsletter which communicates important decisions, news and information to TUT staff members. Management communication forms an integral part of the newsletter, whilst it also makes provision for feedback/commentary at the bottom of a page. Staff members' comments are then posted in the newsletter of the following day. A daily e-mail is sent to all staff, presenting the headlines of that particular day's *E-tutor*. Besides the electronic newsletter, staff members can also post comments or obtain important information from the online staff portal on the TUT's Intranet. *Tutor*, the university's internal newsletter, is issued on a monthly basis.

De Ruyter (2008) speaks with great respect of the TUT Management, because "they value the importance of communication". As such, the Director: Corporate Affairs and Marketing forms part of the university's management committee. In addition, De Ruyter

(2008) states that all internal communication efforts are overseen by the Department of Corporate Affairs and Marketing, although some activities are facilitated by Human Resources. All the faculty-related newsletters or publications by academic faculties were stopped to hand sole ownership of internal communication to Corporate Affairs and Marketing.

As is the case with other multi-campus universities in South Africa, the TUT experiences a lack in its internal communication resources – both financial and human resources. "We attribute this to the fact that many universities' institutional budgets do not make provision for internal communication and the effective practicing thereof" (De Ruyter 2008). The TUT, however, has staff members in other departments who assist staff members from Corporate Affairs and Marketing. "We have a News Desk Meeting with faculty marketers on a weekly basis to obtain news from our academic faculties" (De Ruyter 2008). According to De Ruyter (2008), one half of the faculty members' salaries are paid by Corporate Affairs and Marketing and the other half by the respective faculties. She remarks that these staff members are familiar with the concept of news and boast excellent writing skills and a thorough communication background.

5.3.1.5 *Vaal University of Technology (VUT)*

According to Maneli, Head of Communications (2008: personal communication), the VUT does not make use of a particular internal communication model in the execution of internal communication functions. This university of technology, however, strongly relies on publications and electronic communication to inform staff about important news, decisions and events. The university's internal newsletter, *VUT News*, is distributed once a fortnight and contains news pertaining to university matters. Staff and HR issues, as well as functions and events that happen on campus, are reported on in the newsletter.

Maneli (2008) describes his department as a "one person department" and remarks that the Communication Department at the VUT is "the most under-resourced department at

the VUT, and although there seems to be a growing understanding of the central role that communication should be playing, the challenge is to get the necessary resources to practice [*sic*] effective internal communication."

5.3.1.6   *Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT)*

The CPUT has no formal internal communication model, but has policies and procedures in place that govern the way the Internal Communication Department operates (Adams 2008: personal communication).

Adams, the CPUT's Communications Officer, (2008: personal communication) states that the university's Communications Office has revised its Internal Communication Plan in 2007 to encourage two-way communication between the Communications Office and the CPUT community. As such, "staff are encouraged to be part of the development of internal media by contributing ideas, stories and pictures to be published in our internal newsletter (*Moja*) and other internal media. The idea is to build morale, keep staff updated about CPUT news, educate staff about the CPUT and new developments, and build a CPUT community where staff members feel motivated and involved" (Adams 2008). Besides the bi-monthly newsletter, *Moja*, and an electronic internal communication system called *Newsflash*, the university also employs *ad hoc* communication drives and events (Adams 2008).

According to Adams (2008), many members of management at the CPUT do value the importance of internal communication, whilst the Communications Office is generally afforded the necessary human and financial resources it needs.

5.3.1.7   *University of the Free State (UFS)*

The Division: Strategic Communication at the UFS in Bloemfontein "renders a news and information service to on- and off-campus constituencies, which helps to position the university as a place of excellence, equity and innovation" (UFS 2008:1 of 1).

According to Bolleurs, Chief Officer: Strategic Communication (2008: personal communication), the UFS does not use a specific internal communication model, but rather implements certain communication vehicles, such as publications, to convey relevant and important information. The UFS boasts an internal newsletter, *Dumela*, with seven editions per annum. An electronic newsletter is distributed to all staff every second week, whilst the *UV Blitsnuus/UFS News Flash*, another electronic newsletter, is distributed on an *ad hoc* basis should staff members be expected to take note of important news immediately. *Quick mail*/*Snelpos* is an electronic bilingual newsletter initiated by one of the university unions, UVPERSU. The newsletter is distributed via e-mail to all union members and contains general news relating to the day-to-day functioning of the university, academic news and union news. The *UFS Digest/UV Digest* is the official information channel for staff of the UFS and is published on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The *Digest* is compiled by the Division: Strategic Communication and contains important information staff members in the academic and support services should know about. News snippets and general information are received from staff members across the campus and then compiled into the *Digest*, which is sent electronically to all staff.

Bolleurs (2008) says that, in the past, the university had identified various people from other units and departments with whom the Strategic Communication Department had quarterly meetings to discuss any communication problems, suggestions, and so forth. However, the person responsible for this function left the employ of the university and this activity does not take place any longer. Bolleurs (2008) adds that internal communication at the UFS is not an extensive function and she ascribes this to the fact that they do not have sufficient human resources to fulfil all the internal communication functions. She does, however, remark that a strong need exists for more face-to-face communication.

5.3.1.8   *Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT)*

In the paragraphs to follow, the researcher elucidates current internal communication practices at the CUT. This is done to familiarise the reader(s) with all current internal communication actions and also to serve as a backdrop against which the proposed internal communication model should be read.

Currently various forms of communication media are used to enhance communication both internally and externally. Publications, brochures, videos, advertisements, news reports and press releases all form part of institutional communication at the CUT.

Memoranda and letters are used to communicate information to staff. *Memoranda* are sent from management to staff (downward communication), from staff to management (upward communication) and are also distributed among staff members (horizontal communication). Council resolutions and important matters discussed at meetings of MANCOM are examples of communication to staff in the form of *Memoranda*. *Letters* might be one of the oldest forms of communication, but still seem to be one of the most common ways of communication between people. At the CUT letters are used to a lesser extent, due to the popularity of electronic communication such as e-mails. However, they are still used by staff members who do not have computer facilities available.

Electronic media (such as the Intranet, Internet and e-mail) are popular among CUT staff members (see paragraph 5.2.2.1). The CUT's website became a very important tool for marketing communication purposes. In order to use the website as a communication tool, news items and events are put on the CUT's website on a regular basis. Not only is this a good way of keeping staff members and students informed about what is happening on campus, but many people from all over the globe can visit the CUT's website and read about the institution's activities and achievements. The Intranet as communication channel provides staff members with the relevant information they need for doing their jobs. Each staff member is assigned a password to log onto the Intranet and obtain the information required.

Telephone calls are used for quick communication. The CUT boasts an internal telephone system that is operated effectively.

Face-to-face communication is normally used by employees in informal communication situations or where staff members from the same department/unit/section/faculty want to discuss a particular issue. It is also used in meetings, salary negotiations with the two unions, appointments with other staff members, or where the VC conducts a public address. Small group discussions, however, seem to be more effective and are used quite often. On the other hand, public addresses where the VC addresses the rest of the CUT community are limited (see paragraph 5.2.2.1). Public addresses are used at the Opening of the Academic Year, the First Year's Welcoming Party and the Year End Function.

Meetings are a popular form of communication, not only to discuss important issues within the various faculties/departments/units and sections, but also for issues relating to the CUT"s development, future, activities and finances. Meetings are held among members of the same faculty/department/unit/section or among members of different faculties/departments/units and sections. A meeting is normally assigned to each task team within the university and employees meet on a regular basis to discuss the task at hand. Meetings seem to be a popular way of informing colleagues of important decisions and actions that need to be taken (see paragraph 5.2.2.1), as well as to discuss matters that need the input from every staff member in a given department or section.

The internal newsletter, *Mirror*, has 10 editions per year and is used to communicate with staff members. Articles on important issues, interviews with employees, hard news stories, human-interest stories and photos are used to communicate important information to staff. Not only does the *Mirror* serve as a source of information, but it also strives to be a link between staff members. By means of the *Mirror,* staff members become familiar with one another. First-line managers also use the *Mirror* to communicate important issues to staff members. In accordance with the CUT's language policy,

articles are published primarily in English (as the primary language), but also in Afrikaans and, to a very small extent, in Sesotho.

The *Gratia* is the external liaison journal of the CUT and is published twice a year, namely June and December. The *Gratia* is distributed to donors, alumni, staff members and several stakeholders and representatives of the media. The aim of the *Gratia* is to keep the outside world informed of the CUT's activities and involvement in community projects. Readers of *Gratia* can also expect stories on achievements, research matters and human-interest stories.

According to the results of the climate survey conducted at the CUT in 2005 the *grapevine* is considered an important communication channel at the CUT (refer to the results of the climate survey conducted in 2005). Almost 40% (39.6%) of the employees indicated that they received information via the "grapevine".

Bulletin/Notice boards are used to portray important information to employees. *Posters* are used to communicate important information like functions, meetings, and the institutional vision, mission and core values to members of staff. They are put up at strategic points and venues on the campus, including boardrooms, notice boards, the cafeteria, Library and Information Centre, and the Lapeng Student Centre to attract personnel's attention.

Internal audiovisual material (videotapes, films) is used less frequently than the other communication channels. At the CUT *videos* are used to communicate important information to staff, but instead of just sending out a memorandum, the message is communicated in a more attracting way, combining the message with strong and attractive visual elements. Text is limited and visual elements are predominantly used to convey the message.

The *Smalls* is an electronic advertising newsletter through which employees can advertise goods and services or sell or purchase products. The *Smalls* is sent out to all staff members on a weekly basis, namely on Fridays.

Faxes are used (to a lesser extent than e-mail) to communicate information to one another. Although the fax machine is still used as communication medium, it is argued that the text on the written/typed fax is not always clear to read. In many instances e-mails have replaced faxes.

Summatively, from the responses it has become clear that these multi-campus universities primarily follow a functionalistic approach to communication with the focus on process rather than a strategic approach with the focus on structure.

Although most of these institutions do not have formal internal communication plans and models in place, they do have mechanisms in place for conveying important organisational news. Printed and electronic communication is used extensively, whilst some universities' VCs also produce their own newsletters, which is said to come in handy in crisis communication situations.

Some of the universities realise the important strategic role of internal communication and even include the internal communication function in their management structure; others do not value internal communication as a core business value.

An important aspect indicated by a communication specialist from the TUT is that of combining internal and external communication efforts so as to prevent employees from reading news about their institution in the external media.

It is a pity that many institutions experience a lack in their internal communication resources and do not have the adequate finances and human resources to utilise the internal communication function to its fullest extent/capacity.

To determine if the same problems regarding internal communication are experienced at other multi-campus universities, as well as to determine if employees from other institutions of higher learning share the same type of perceptions of internal communication and how communication is executed, the researcher conducted e-mail interviews (sub-phase 2 of phase 2 of the research project) with communication executives from seven multi-campus universities in South Africa. The next section sets out the responses received from the individuals. To ensure the confidentiality of their responses, neither the individuals' names nor the names of the institutions are mentioned.

5.3.2   The e-mail survey

In the e-mail survey eight participants from seven multi-campus universities in South Africa responded to a list of questions regarding internal communication at their higher education institutions. Five questions were asked, namely:

1. How do you (as communication specialist) view the role of internal communication at your specific higher education institution?
2. Do you think that your university regards internal communications as a core business value? Please explain.
3. Does your university have an effective upward, downward and horizontal communication system in place? Please elaborate.
4. What do you think needs to be done to improve possible shortcomings in internal communication at your institution?
5. Do you think the fact that your university boasts of multi-campuses hampers communication? Please explain your response.

Subsequently the respondents' answers are summarised in the following paragraphs.

5.3.2.1 *Views on the role of internal communication at a specific higher education institution*

The majority of the respondents stressed the important role of internal communication in an organisational setting. The role of internal communication is seen as "keeping staff up to date on what is happening on campus". One of the respondents remarked that the role of internal communication is very important, but has been neglected due to the fact that there has never been a focused internal communication portfolio … Having a staff newsletter cannot be seen as effective internal communication – it is merely one of the tools. When employees are informed, "transparency is promoted and a sense of belonging and unity is fostered". With respect to communication in a multi-campus scenario, one of the respondents remarked that "You now have to establish a sense of belonging and pride towards a new and unique own identity whilst also not losing sight of the institution as a whole". From the various comments received, it becomes evident that communication "is central to generating employee commitment and the establishment of a competitive edge".

5.3.2.2 *Attitude of universities regarding status of internal communication as a core business value*

Two of the respondents remarked that their institutions were not committed to treating internal communication as a core business value. One of the respondents remarked that, although management realised the importance of internal communication, more money should be allocated for internal communication, whilst "more manpower to do the job will always be welcomed". One of the responses read: "Internal communication is still viewed as a one-office-function … there is no sense of shared ownership."

From the responses it became clear that the overall perception is that, although management realise the important role of internal communication at their institutions, they do not value it as a core business value. It is perceived that they rather viewed it as "a nice to have, rather than as an essential part of an institution's building blocks".

5.3.2.3 *Views on communication systems in place*

Whilst one of the respondents indicated that there were no systems in place, two of the participants mentioned that there were effective downward communication systems in place. However, they expressed a dire need for improved upward and horizontal communication systems. One of the respondents explained: "I think that downward communication is well underway, but we still have problems with communication from the staff upwards." Another respondent remarked: "The effective and timely dissemination of information, especially from management, is still a problem."

5.3.2.4 *Views on improving internal communication*

The respondents made various suggestions for improving internal communication at their institutions. One of the respondents stated that "competent staff should be appointed as communication practitioners."

Besides the human resources aspect, one of the respondents mentioned that a strategy needed to be developed to guide the way forward. More effective two-way communication between management and staff and the facilitation of communication among staff members were also stressed.

5.3.2.5 *Views on multi-campus communication*

Most of the respondents indicated that the fact that their universities consisted of multiple campuses hampered communication. One of the respondents remarked that "the geographical location of the different campuses makes it difficult to communicate to staff at once, for example when the VC personally needs to address staff on a urgent matter, it has to take place on different occasions." Another response read: "Because of the great distances between the campuses, internal communication via meetings (for example information meetings with staff/faculties by the VC) is also a challenge."

Besides the geographical issue, certain campuses had their own preferences regarding the format and language of internal newsletters. Some of the comments are listed here: "Another challenge is the fact that electronic media is accepted and used with more ease at certain campuses than others. Some still prefer hard copy communication, while others prefer electronic media/messages. The language preferences of staff on the three campuses also differ".

5.3.3   Overview of internal communication shortfalls at multi-campus universities

The telephonic and e-mail interviews (phase 2 of the empirical investigation) brought valuable insights and suggestions with regard to internal communication practices at multi-campus universities in South Africa. Some universities, such as the NWU, regard printed and electronic communication as an effective way to communicate with employees (see paragraph 5.3.1.2). Others, like the DUT, recognise the important strategic role of internal communication (see paragraph 5.3.1.3). Great lessons can be learned from the TUT's approach to communication: their integrated approach to both internal and external communication (see paragraph 5.3.1.4) and the fact that their management values the importance of internal communication are significant aspects. The CPUT also values the importance of internal communication and their Communication Office is afforded the necessary human and financial resources (see paragraph 5.3.1.6).

Despite the positive comments made by the respondents regarding internal communication at their institutions, they also tabled a number of concerns. The conclusions are drawn from the institutional survey (see paragraph 5.3):

- Many institutions do not have any formal internal communication model in place.
- There seems to be limited shared ownership with regard to internal communication.
- Internal communication is not regarded as a core business value.
- Internal communication is not regarded as a strategic management function.

- Internal communication is viewed as a "nice to have", rather than as an essential part of an institution's building blocks.

- Downward communication seems to be more prevalent than upward and horizontal communication.

- There seems to be a lack of two-way communication between management and staff members.

- Internal communication is viewed as internal newsletters only.

- Internal communication is viewed as a one-office function.

- Internal communication is lacking in terms of human resources (the necessary staff).

- Internal communication is lacking in terms of financial resources.

- Staff members need to be familiarised with new internal communication media.

- E-mail communication is the most preferred communication medium (at those campuses where staff members do have access to electronic mail).

- E-mail communication seems to be most in demand during crisis times.

- There is a dire need for more technological communication, for example SMSs need to be sent to students on their cellular phones during crisis situations.

- Not all higher education institutions have a crisis communication strategy and action plan in place.

- The language preferences of staff members hamper internal communication in the sense that it creates more work, as publications have to be produced in more than one language.

- The fact that institutions have to communicate information to staff members situated at other campuses hampers the internal communication process.

- Internal communication via meetings (especially information sessions by the VC) is challenged, since the campuses are spread geographically far apart from one another. Those staff members who are not situated on the main campus where the VC is situated become marginalised, as they do not have direct contact (face-to-face communication) with the VC.

- Distance campuses are viewed as microcosms.

- The communication function is not fully aligned on all the campuses and the Institutional Office.
- The effective and timely dissemination of information, especially from management, is regarded a problem.

The intended model therefore has to incorporate those aspects considered by the respondents to effectively improve internal communication, whilst it simultaneously has to address the shortfalls and concerns tabled by the internal communication practitioners.

According to the mixed methods design and convergence model employed in this study (see Figure 4.2), quantitative and qualitative data are collected separately and then the results from both phases are eventually compared, contrasted and interpreted. The next paragraph contains a summary of the integration of the findings.

5.4   INTEGRATION OF FINDINGS

Chapter 5 presents the results of phases 1 and 2 of the empirical investigation and analyses them for their relevance to the study.

The questionnaire survey has, to a large extent, served to confirm the comments picked up among staff at the CUT over a number of years. It is encouraging to note that most staff have embraced the electronic media as an effective means of communication. At the same time, the researcher is concerned about the lack of major decisions being shared with all staff that see themselves as part of the CUT community, yet feel left out.

The results of the questionnaire survey revealed some shortcomings in both the structure and process of internal communication practices at the CUT. The fact that the majority of the respondents voiced their concern over the timely communication of information, as well as the fact that important information is not always communicated to employees first, might serve as an indicator that the CUT needs to revise its internal communication

strategy in terms of its organisational function and how it is aligned with other (strategic) functions within the organisation.

Although downward communication seems most prevalent, the majority of the respondents voiced their concern with regard to horizontal and upward communication. Therefore, organisational structures and hierarchies need to be revisited to put mechanisms in place that could contribute to a more enriching communication experience in terms of effective communication processes.

Unfortunately, MANCOM is blamed for many communication failures. In fact, it was regarded as "the worst aspect of communication" by some of the respondents participating in the questionnaire survey conducted at the CUT in 2006. The importance of managerial communication in an organisation has already been mentioned (see paragraph 3.7). In fact, the researcher views communication by management in such a serious light that she proposes that managers should be evaluated on their communication skills during their performance appraisals. This is discussed in greater depth in Chapter 6.

From the results obtained it becomes clear that information is often incorrect, not comprehensive, and not always understandable. Therefore the proposed communication model will have to focus on communication content – in other words the type of message to be communicated as well as the aim of communication.

Despite some negative comments regarding internal communication at the CUT, electronic communication is regarded the best aspect of communication at the CUT, especially in terms of its timeousness, ease of use and efficiency. This aspect will most definitely be incorporated into the proposed model for the CUT. It is imperative that all staff members be given access to e-communication, especially service workers and part-time staff, as not many of them participated in the CUT survey.

With regard to the institutional survey performed at the seven multi-campus universities, specific issues regarding structure and process were raised. None of the institutions seems to have a formal internal communication model in place. Some of the respondents also indicated that there was no shared ownership with regard to internal communication. In addition, it is evident from the responses that internal communication is neither regarded as a core business value, nor as a strategic management function.

Although downward communication seems to be more prevalent than upward and horizontal communication, some of these institutions seemingly experienced a lack of two-way communication between management and staff members.

In accordance with the questionnaire survey at the CUT, the results of the institutional survey revealed that e-mail communication is deemed the most preferred communication medium (only at those campuses where staff members do have access to electronic mail), whilst e-mail communication seems to be in greatest demand during crisis times.

Internal communication seems to be a problem at universities with multi-campuses, as many of these campuses do not have clarity in terms of their communication language policy. Some publications need to be produced in more than one language. Additionally, staff members not situated on the main campus become marginalised, since they are not afforded the same opportunities main campus staff do, for example meeting the VC or attending meetings and/or information sessions. Distance campuses are therefore viewed as microcosms. Furthermore, the communication function is not fully aligned on all the campuses and the institutional communication offices. It seems that the effective and timely dissemination of information, especially from management, presents a problem.

5.5   CONCLUSION

In Chapter 5 the interpretations of the findings from the empirical section are presented, reported and discussed. The findings are also integrated (see paragraph 5.4). The low

response rate of 17.9% of the questionnaire survey at the CUT is a serious limitation to the study. However, this is ameliorated by the use of additional surveys for validation.

From the findings of the research project it becomes clear that the CUT and other multi-campus universities experience shortcomings in their internal communication practices. From these shortcomings a model can be developed that is aimed at improving the effectiveness of internal communication at the CUT as a multi-campus institution with possible application to other multi-campus universities in South Africa.

Chapter 6 centres on the features and characteristics of the proposed model.

CHAPTER 6: A FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROPOSED COMMUNICATION MODEL

6.1   INTRODUCTION

Whilst the previous chapters pertain to the rationale and background of the study, this particular chapter describes the theoretical model or framework for improving internal communication at multi-campus universities in South Africa, with specific reference to the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT).   As such, Chapter 6 is concerned with the fifth research question, namely "What should the features of an internal communication model for the CUT as multi-campus university be?"   The proposed framework is based on various national and international communication trends and practices and corporate communication models that have been successfully employed by the South African business sector, together with directives from the empirical investigation.

The chapter is presented as follows: In paragraph 6.2 the proposed model is presented by bringing together the challenges, concerns and issues identified in the empirical investigation and the perspectives gained in the literature review, with a theoretical model (framework) that holds the potential of addressing the specific communication problem. The special features of the proposed model are also discussed. In paragraph 6.3 the evaluation of the proposed framework by a team of communication experts and the implications of the results are discussed.

In this chapter, the researcher refers to various personal communications arising from her attendance of the Internal and Crisis Communication Seminar held at the Hilton Hotel in Sandton at the beginning of 2008. Some other aspects discussed in this chapter pertain to a document received by Prof. Talvin Schultz, executive director to the Vice-Chancellor's (VC) Office, CUT.

6.2   FRAMEWORK FOR PROPOSED COMMUNICATION MODEL

Traditional models of communication have concentrated on the transmissional nature of communication (Carey in Cameron & McCollum 1993:218). However, the complexity of internal interactions makes it difficult to apply these hierarchical communication models to an intra-organisational setting like the CUT (Asif & Sargeant 2000:314).

Additionally, Asif and Sargeant (2000:303) mention that historically, internal communication tended to be unidirectional and seen as a process where information was disseminated from top-level organisational members to bottom-level employees. In recent times, however, organisations have learned that managers can tap into the expertise of their staff by allowing communication from the bottom upwards by utilising communication tools such as questionnaires and suggestion boxes, thereby encouraging the all-important aspect of feedback.

The model is directed at the CUT's internal publics, consisting of full-time and part-time academic and support services staff members of the Bloemfontein and Welkom Campuses. The model is applicable to the CUT as a whole (system), as well as to its various parts (subsystems), including departments, sections, units, faculties, centres, campuses, and so forth.

The framework is presented and discussed in terms of the five key problems or issues identified in the empirical investigation, namely:
- The bureaucratic nature of higher education institutions.
- The academic nature of higher education institutions.
- The organisational structure of higher education institutions.
- The communication process.
- Communication from Management.

6.2.1   Bureaucratic nature of higher education institutions

Table 6.1 presents a summary of the concerns related to the bureaucratic nature of higher education institutions, the recommended approach to addressing the various concerns, as well as the applicable features that will characterise the proposed model.

Table 6.1:   Addressing concerns related to the bureaucratic nature of higher education institutions

Related concerns	Approach: How to address concerns	Features
Lack of a formal communication policy.	A policy needs to be drafted incorporating the principles of the proposed model.	All the features as presented in the proposed framework.
Content of communication is task-related (see paragraph 1.2.5).	Communicate more personal matters and interesting facts, for example congratulatory messages.	Staff members are motivated, whilst social communication is encouraged.
Social communication and innovation is discouraged (see paragraph 1.2.5).	Communicate more personal matters and interesting news.	Social communication as well as innovation is encouraged.
Communication is not regarded as a core business value.	TOCOM Model (see paragraph 3.13.3).	Communication is depicted as a management tool. Internal and external.
Communication is not integrated.	TOCOM Model.	Follows an integrated approach to communication.
	Integrated Communication Management Model (see paragraph 3.13.4).	Characterised by open system communication and places Communication Manager in perspective to other subsystems.

During the institutional survey many respondents from the seven multi-campus universities indicated that they did not have a formal communication model, policy or plan in place. At the CUT various policies are in place regarding certain aspects related to communication, such as publications and advertisements, but there is no policy to be

found on internal communication. The researcher proposes that a policy needs to be drafted incorporating the principles of the proposed model.

As mentioned in Chapter 1 (paragraph 1.2.5), higher education institutions tend to be bureaucratic. Therefore, the content of communication is task-related, whilst social communication as well as innovation is discouraged (Miller in Holtzhausen 2002:324). In addressing this issue, the researcher suggests that not only task-related information should be communicated to employees, but also personal matters and interesting facts (see Table 6.1). In this regard social communication among staff members of different cultural backgrounds and different departments is also encouraged. The researcher believes that, by communicating more personal matters, staff members are motivated to do their jobs.

Another concern which was tabled during the institutional survey among the seven multi-campus universities in South Africa, is that communication is not regarded as a core business value. In the CUT survey administrative staff in particular felt that MANCOM did not regard internal communication as a core business value. The TOCOM Model (see paragraph 3.13.3) may address this concern as the model depicts communication as an essential management tool (Van Gemert & Woudstra 1999:74). Special efforts should be made to establish communication as a core business value, for example by adding it as a new value to the five existing values of the CUT, namely customer service, integrity, diversity, innovation and excellence.

Some of the respondents also indicated that communication was not integrated. Once again, the TOCOM Model may be applied, since it regards internal and external communication as a coherent whole. The Integrated Communication Management Model (see paragraph 3.13.4) also follows an integrated approach to communication. This particular model is characterised by open systems communication and places the Communication Manager in perspective to other subsystems (Claassen & Verwey 1998:75). It is proposed that a Communication Manager be appointed on managerial level.

6.2.2   Academic nature of higher education institutions

The summary in Table 6.2 focuses on concerns related to the academic nature of higher education institutions, the recommended approach to addressing the various concerns, as well as the applicable features of the proposed model. It is followed by a discussion of these aspects.

Table 6.2:   Addressing concerns related to the academic nature of higher education institutions

Related concerns	Approach: How to address concerns	Features
Academics are not always familiar with how to communicate effectively (see paragraph 1.2.5).	Training for all staff.	Interpersonal communication training, meeting management and facilitation skills.
Limited shared ownership with regard to internal communication.	Every staff member to take ownership of internal communication.	Internal communication to be incorporated into every staff member's Key Performance Areas (KPAs).
Internal communication is not regarded as a strategic management tool.	TOCOM Model.	Communication is depicted as a management tool.
	Strategic Employee Communication Model (see paragraph 3.13.5).	Employee communication is strategically positioned to facilitate change.
Lack of human and financial resources.	Provision of adequate human and financial resources.	The necessary human and financial support will enable the institution to optimise and enhance its internal communication function.

In paragraph 1.2.5 it was mentioned that higher education institutions are discipline-orientated (Becher in Gizir & Simsek 2005:198) and do not have a good track record regarding effective organisational communication due to their academic nature. In most cases higher education institutions are managed by academics who are not always familiar with how to communicate effectively on a managerial level. Gizir and Simsek's

(2005:215) qualitative case study indicated that alliances, lack of motivation, high individualism, inadequate exchange of scientific knowledge, competition and criticism were seen as factors negatively influencing communication at the university. Most higher education institutions offer training opportunities for staff to equip them with the necessary and relevant skills for addressing certain issues related to personal development. Training in interpersonal communication training, meeting management and facilitation skills are recommended. Taking the results of the CUT survey into account, the CUT should take note that the quality of communication training sessions needs to be investigated and possible shortcomings need to be identified.

During the institutional survey most of the respondents indicated that limited shared ownership existed with regard to internal communication at their institutions. Steps should be put in place to increase ownership of internal communication. Internal communication could be incorporated into every staff member's job description or KPAs. Communication effectiveness should then be evaluated as part of each employee's individual performance appraisal with the appropriate recognition for exemplary performance.

At many higher education institutions internal communication is not regarded as a strategic management tool. Both the TOCOM and the Strategic Employee Communication Model can effectively address this issue. In the TOCOM Model communication is depicted as a management tool – implying that communication can be directed and controlled (Van Gemert & Woudstra 1999:74), whilst in the Strategic Employee Communication Model employee communication is strategically positioned to facilitate change/transformation (Barrett 2002:219).

One would assume that higher education institutions, being academically orientated, invest or allocate most of their human and financial resources to academic matters. During the institutional survey many of the respondents indicated that their universities lacked adequate human and financial resources regarding internal communication. It is suggested that universities revisit their internal communication function and make

changes where needed, as adequate human and financial support will enable these institutions to optimise and enhance their internal communication function. Staff members should be trained to use new technologies for communicating with one another. The use of multimedia should be encouraged, for example sending a personal message accompanied by a photo. Communication with other campuses should in particular be encouraged by making use of various communication media, such as tele-conferencing, video-conferencing, Skype, video camps, and so forth.

6.2.3 Organisational structure of higher education institutions

In Table 6.3 a summary is presented of the concerns related to the organisational structure of higher education institutions, the recommended approach to addressing the various concerns, as well as the applicable features that will characterise the proposed model.

Table 6.3:   Addressing concerns related to the organisational structure of higher education institutions

Related concerns	Approach: How to address concerns	Features
Multidimensional flow of information through an extensive vertical hierarchy (see paragraph 1.2.5).	Decentralisation.	Authority is dispersed downward in the hierarchy. Narrow span of control.
Multi-campus communication – there seems to be no coordination in the integration of the different campuses.	Strategically position communication function.	Communication function is aligned on all the campuses and the institutional office.

With regard to organisational structure, higher education institutions are not only large organisations, but consist of complex and diverse systems and multiple operations where the organisational structure and extensive vertical hierarchy comprise many staff members (academic and support services staff) who have to communicate with one another on a regular basis. The results from the CUT survey indicated that the further the

recipient is located from the communicator and the more hierarchical lines need to be followed, the more difficult communication becomes. Decentralisation, which is characterised by a narrow span of control, may effectively address this issue. When decentralised networks are applied, authority is dispersed downward in the hierarchy (Holtzhausen 2002:326). As mentioned in paragraph 3.10, decentralisation is beneficial in most complex organisations where executives are often quite distant from actual organisational operations such as higher education institutions. According to Holtzhausen (2002:335), the most positive communication effect of decentralisation is improved information flow, thus effectively enhancing the multidimensional flow of information at higher education institutions. Furthermore, decentralisation improves face-to-face communication and decreases the power distance between managers and employees – both issues that were raised by the participants in the CUT survey.

Multi-campus communication is a concern, as many of the respondents in the institutional survey indicated that the communication function is not aligned between all the campuses and the institutional office. Some of the respondents felt that there was no coordination in the integration of the campuses. One of the respondents in the institutional survey remarked that staff at campuses situated away from the VC's office could continuously be marginalised. She said that: "the solution up till now has been to either shuttle staff between campuses, or to have meetings on different campuses. The next step is to broadcast the speeches via tele-conferencing." Another respondent from a multi-campus university remarked that the scattered campuses posed a threat to effective and timely communication. She suggested more face-to-face communication and added that the effectiveness of the institution's communication needed to be measured (audited) campus-wide formally and frequently against clearly defined goals. Yet another challenge/concern was that the medium and language preferences of staff on the various campuses differed. This could entail producing different forms of media in different languages to convey the same message – resulting in more work for the communication department. One way of addressing this issue would be to decide on a lingua franca for communication, where all communication to staff is written in one particular language, for example English. The researcher recommends the following actions for aligning the

communication function on all the campuses so that multi-campus communication can be improved:

- A communication coordinator should be appointed at each campus.
- Special attempts should be made to make staff at distant campuses feel part of the functioning of the main campus.
- Special channels for feedback from distance campuses should be created.
- Regular monitoring of the effectiveness and satisfaction of communication at the main and satellite campuses should take place.

Multi-campus universities should explore the creative use of technology. Examples of advanced technologies include teleconferencing, video-conferencing, Skype and video camps.

6.2.4   Communication process

The summary in Table 6.4 focuses on concerns related to the communication process, the recommended approach to addressing the various concerns, as well as the applicable features of the proposed model. These aspects are discussed in the paragraphs to follow.

Table 6.4: Addressing concerns related to the communication process at the CUT

Related concerns	Approach: How to address concerns	Features
Internal communication is viewed as one-dimensional only, for example. internal newsletters only.	Strategic Employee Communication Model.	More than one medium should be explored to communicate important information.
Employees are not always the first to be informed of important organisational information before it becomes general news.	VC Communiqué.	Important information is communicated without delay in applicable languages.
	Asif and Sargeant's (2000) internal communication model (see paragraph 3.13.6).	Formal and informal communication tools are directed at informing employees of important organisational news and encouraging them to provide the organisation with feedback.
Downward communication seems to be more prevalent than upward and horizontal communication.	Communication action plan (see Chapter 7).	Actions to improve upward and horizontal communication.
Meetings, rumours, gossip and co-workers are the key informants in the communication process (see paragraph 1.3).	VC's Communiqué.	Important information is communicated without delay from the VC.
Important information is received too late.	Deadlines/timeframes.	Timeous communication of information.
Feedback is not always encouraged.	5M-Communication Model (see paragraph 3.14.3).	Emphasises two-way flow of messages and stresses the importance of feedback in a communication situation.
	Communication channels for feedback should be established.	
Information is incorrect, not comprehensive, and not always understandable.	5M-Communication Model.	Process elements: Message, motive, market, media and monitoring.
	Strategic Employee Communication Model.	Targeted messages. Messages are simplistic, relevant, meaningful and

		consistent.
	Filtering technique to channel messages to employees.	What employees NEED to know (job-related information), WANT to know (motivational information) and HAVE to know (organisational information).
There is a dire need for more technological communication, for example SMSs.	Strategic Management Communication Model (more technological communication and new media should be introduced, for example SMSs).	Various forms of media.
There seems to be a need for more interpersonal (face-to-face) communication.	Strategic Employee Communication Model.	Use face-to-face communication to inform employees.

Another concern raised by the participants in the institutional survey is that internal communication is viewed by some as one-dimensional, for example internal newsletters only. Although newsletters may be a vital tool in informing employees of important organisational news, it is not the only means of doing so. The Strategic Employee Communication Model with its emphasis on various forms of media may be applied so as to create a communication function which makes use of various forms of media for communicating important news. Communication tools and channels should be explored for more effective communication with part-time staff and service workers at the CUT, as very few of them participated in the CUT survey. As mentioned in paragraph 3.13.5, Barrett (2002:221) recommends that interpersonal communication, of which face-to-face communication seems to be the most effective, be used to inform employees.

Participants in both the CUT survey and the institutional survey indicated that employees were not always the first to be informed of important organisational information before it became general news. Staff members employed in an Administrative Support capacity in particular had very strong opinions on NOT being the first to be informed of important organisational news before it becomes general news. In this regard it is suggested that the VC or Principal communicate directly and immediately to staff members by means of an electronic communiqué. Important organisational news in particular should be communicated without delay in all applicable languages before news starts reaching

employees through the "grapevine". Service workers, for example, may need communication in a language that they are familiar with. In their communication model Asif and Sargeant (2000:308) mention that formal and informal communication tools should be used to inform employees of important organisational news and encourage them to provide the organisation with feedback (see paragraph 3.13.6).

From the results of both the CUT survey and the institutional survey it became evident that downward communication seemed to be more prevalent than upward and horizontal communication. The communication action plan described in Chapter 7 provides practical solutions and activities for addressing this concern.

According to the respondents, meetings, rumours, gossip and co-workers were the key informants in the communication process. Once again the VC's communiqué can play a vital role in informing staff members timeously of important organisational news. Linked to this is the notion that important information is received too late. Landes (2002:23) compares an organisation in which information is communicated quickly to a hand on a hot stove. "As for speed, we should think about how most organisations operate. If someone in your organisation figuratively 'put her hand on a hot stove,' how long would it take for the information to get to the brain, then back down to the hand with the instruction to remove it? If your organisation is like most, the hand would be burnt to a crisp before the information made the rounds." Van Gemert and Woudstra (1999:85) state that information should be available at the moment the target group needs to use it. It is therefore imperative to communicate information to employees in the shortest possible period of time. Without the timeous communication of information, the consequences could be harmful, not only to staff morale, but also to the entire organisation.

Most of the respondents in the CUT survey and institutional survey felt that feedback was not always encouraged. The 5M-Communication Model could effectively address this concern with its emphasis on the two-way or bi-directional flow of messages (Landes in Ferreira 2003:61), thereby stressing the importance of feedback in a communication

situation (see paragraph 3.14.3). Communication channels for feedback should be established, especially for feedback from part-time staff and service workers. One of the respondents in the institutional survey remarked that staff were encouraged to be part of the development of internal media by contributing ideas, stories and pictures to be published in their internal newsletter and other internal media. She said that the idea was to build morale, keep staff updated about news, educate staff about the university and new developments, and build a community where staff members feel motivated and involved. By encouraging feedback, upward communication is addressed.

Another concern is that information is incorrect, not comprehensive, and not always understandable. A variety of models can be applied to effectively address this issue. The process elements of the 5M-Communication Model (Coetzee in Ferreira 2003:61), namely message, motive, market, media and monitoring (see paragraph 3.14.3) may be applied to ensure that the correct information is communicated – comprehensive and in an understandable fashion. One of the best practice definitions of the Strategic Employee Communication Model (see paragraph 3.13.5) is targeted messages – highlighting the importance of drafting messages in such a way that employees can understand and act upon them (Barrett 2002:221). In this regard messages should be simple, relevant, meaningful and consistent in nature. Barrett (2002:221) also suggests that managers create messages in different words for different people when necessary. In other words, when communicating information to ground workers or Group C workers as they are known at the CUT, the conveyers of that particular message should take factors such as these workers' background, culture and educational level into consideration when formulating their message(s). Information needs to be communicated in a language they understand, whilst terms and concepts they are familiar with should be used. Academic jargon and terminology will definitely not add to making the communication experience an enriching one. Another tool which can be used to ensure that information is channelled correctly and comprehensively, is to make use of a filleting technique. The clarification and explanation of Mara (1982:27) seems most suitable for the model the researcher proposes. "Most organisations today have found that a useful filtering technique is to consider messages in terms of what employees *need, want* or *have* to

know. That is, they restrict the messages communicated to those an employee *needs* to know to do their jobs, *wants* to know as a thoughtful, interested member of the organisation's public, and *has* to know as a result of government regulation" (Mara 1982:27).

Whereas the TOCOM Model (see paragraph 3.13.3) distinguishes between organisational information (such as policies, objectives, core business values) and job-related information, the researcher adds another category, namely motivational information. The researcher holds the opinion that, although organisational information and job-related information are essential in the overall performance of an organisation, organisations can achieve greater heights and revenue by encouraging performance through investing in their people.   It is suggested that information about the organisation (CUT) is communicated by executive management so as to attach more credibility to it, whilst information about employees' jobs is communicated by their direct managers/supervisors. Motivational information should be communicated from across the organisation, whether by subordinates, supervisors or the VC and Principal.

Table 6.5 summarises the categories of information as indicated previously.

Table 6.5:   Filtering technique in channelling messages to employees

Information employees NEED to know	Information employees WANT to know	Information employees HAVE to know
Job-related information • Task information • Management information	• Motivational information • Information that staff members are interested in	Organisational information • Policy and procedures • Objectives • Core business values • Mission • Vision

Source: Mara (1982:27), as adapted by the researcher.

Respondents in the CUT survey had very strong opinions about the fact that electronic communication (e-mail) should be made available to all staff. E-mail communication was after all not only regarded as the best aspect of communication at the CUT, but also received the highest score with regard to communication channel preference, because of its timeousness, ease of use and efficiency. E-mail communication therefore should be extended – especially to part-time staff and service workers where possible, whilst limitations should be kept in mind and provision made for alternative communication tools.

"Electronic communication provides many exciting opportunities for communication with staff" (Anon. 2002:32). The CUT could develop new staff address lists segmenting audiences to allow more targeted messaging. In addition, the CUT could look into the possibility of sending out colour-specific e-mails. Currently, urgent mail is sent out in red. Faculty-related or purpose-related information can be sent out in different colours, thereby immediately focusing the reader's attention on the purpose of the particular e-mail. E-mails about the institution, for example, can be titled "CommuniCUT", so that the reader will immediately know that the e-mail contains information about the CUT/institution.

There is a dire need for more technological communication, for example SMSs, blogs and podcasts. The Strategic Management Communication Model with its emphasis on various forms of media (Barrett 2002:221) may be an effective tool for addressing this issue. During a Crisis Communication Seminar held in Sandton, Johannesburg, Mokhema (2008) encouraged organisations to make use of social media mechanisms such as blogs, wikis, podcasts, social networking, online videos and virtual worlds. The researcher therefore suggests that more technological communication and new media should be introduced, such as SMSs, blogs and podcasts, thereby reinforcing the CUT's positioning statement of "Thinking beyond". Management, for example, could have a blog, but "if you encourage feedback, you should be mature enough to deal with it" (Mokhema 2008).

Respondents in the CUT survey as well as the institutional survey indicated a need for more interpersonal (face-to-face) communication. Once again, the Strategic Employee Communication Model may be applied as it encourages the application of various forms of media. As such, Barrett (2002:221) recommends that interpersonal communication, of which face-to-face communication seems to be the most effective, be used to inform employees. Golightly (1973:49) views personal visits to employees as the most effective and unbeatable communication method for learning what employees are thinking, what their needs are, and what their problems are that relate to the company's product. The researcher suggests that CUT staff members proactively look for more opportunities for face-to-face communication. In the CUT survey it was indicated that the discussion of job-related problems needed to be encouraged.

6.2.5   Communication from the Management Committee (MANCOM)

Table 6.6 provides a summary of concerns related to communication from MANCOM, the recommended approach to addressing the various concerns, and the applicable features of the proposed model.

Table 6.6:   Addressing concerns related to communication from MANCOM

Related concerns	Approach: How to address concerns	Features
MANCOM does not communicate important issues.	Quality assurance system.	Incorporated in management's KPAs and given reasonable weight in total performance evaluation.
Management does not spend time with its staff to inform them verbally about issues.	Strategic Employee Communication Model.	Use face-to-face communication to inform employees.
MANCOM does not encourage staff to become involved in decision-making.	INVOCOM approach (see paragraph 3.14.4).	High premium on staff involvement in problem-solving and decision-making.
MANCOM does not make an effort to communicate with other staff members of the CUT, regardless of their post	Reward and recognition system.	Recognises management communication performance, based on staff evaluations.

level.		
The VC and Principal does not take the trouble to come and talk to staff members in their own work environment.	Management (VC and other top management) must be encouraged to visibly communicate with staff via all communication media.	Visible communication with staff members.
The effective and timely dissemination of information, especially from management, is a problem.	Timelines to be attached to communication between different managerial levels.	Deadlines will ensure that information is communicated timeously downward through the hierarchy to all staff.
There seems to be a lack of two-way communication between management and staff members.	Open Systems Model.	Allows for two-way symmetrical communication; could enhance management-employee relationships.
	Conglomerate Communication Model (see paragraph 3.13.1).	Business units are loosely coupled.
		Characterised by distinctiveness and responsiveness, yet retaining the synergies of collaboration with other businesses.
		The model advocates collaboration between businesses units, but also makes provision for symmetrical two-way communication between business units and the VC.
		The model allows for two-way communication, therefore enhances management-employee relationships.
	Top Management Communication Outcomes Model (see paragraph 3.13.2).	Employees receive information about the organisation such as policies and future plans from top-level management, but information about their jobs from their immediate supervisors.

During the CUT survey the respondents indicated that communication by MANCOM was not satisfactory at all. The next few paragraphs highlight those issues raised as concerns as well as the recommendations proposed to address them.

First, the respondents indicated that MANCOM did not communicate important issues. Another concern was that MANCOM did not spend time with its staff to inform them verbally about issues. One of the methods to address both these concerns is to implement

a quality assurance system where internal communication is incorporated in management's KPAs and given reasonable weight in total performance evaluation. Special efforts should be made to communicate to staff members at distant/satellite campuses.

Another concern is that MANCOM does not encourage staff to become involved in decision-making. The INVOCOM approach (see paragraph 3.14.4) may be applied, as it places a high premium on staff involvement in problem-solving and decision-making. Expanding on this is Levitz's (in Mosia 2000:1) notion that students and staff should be represented at every level of decision-making within a university. Human relations theorists suggest that organisational leaders should try to involve their workers as much as possible in the operation of their organisations (Kreps 1990:87). These theorists hypothesise that the more workers participate in organisational decision-making, the more likely they are to develop an understanding and appreciation of the problems of the organisation and the role of management.

Some staff members in the CUT survey indicated that MANCOM did not make an effort to communicate with lower-level staff members of the CUT, regardless of their post level. The researcher is of the opinion that a reward and recognition system which recognises management communication performance based on staff evaluations, may effectively address the issue. Linked to this issue is the concern that the VC and Principal does not take the trouble to come and talk to staff members in their own work environment. Management (VC and other top management members) must be encouraged to communicate visibly with staff via all communication media. Messages should range from social communication such as special congratulatory messages to key information. According to Gray and Robertson (2005:26), the chief executive officer (CEO) has a communication challenge and a very important role to play in the internal communication process. They argue that research reveals that improving your CEO's communication, is likely to provide the most cost-effective way to improve internal communication.

The effective and timely dissemination of information, especially from management, is a problem. A situation that crops up repeatedly is where a particular message is communicated to a first-line manager on a specific date. Two weeks later the message is communicated to the applicable second-line manager and one week later the message reaches the third-line manager. It is then expected of the third-line manager to provide feedback on a particular issue or to execute a certain task within a day, because the first- and second-line managers took three weeks to communicate the information. Late communication of important information puts unnecessary and unfair pressure on the subordinates responsible for carrying out their tasks. Therefore, the researcher suggests that when important task-related information is communicated to first-line managers, they should be provided with a timeframe or deadline for communicating the information to the second-line managers. They, in turn, also have to be given a deadline for communicating the information to their subordinates. Currently, information is communicated with only the date of completion of the task indicated. In essence, this creates a loophole for managers (first and second line) to be negligent about communicating information to their subordinates in time. Conversely, providing appropriate and reasonable timeframes for communicating information from the top to the lowest levels of the organisational hierarchy establishes a quality assurance system that will, to some extent, ensure the timeous communication of information. In an e-mail Schultz (2008: personal communication) suggests that, with respect to downward and upward communication, a quality assurance system could include the following: "System record of instructions given and proposals made as well as timelines between different management levels". First- and second-line managers should thus be provided with timeframes for communicating messages downward. In essence this means that every line manager is given a certain timeframe in which a certain task should be completed/message should be delegated (if necessary). This would subsequently ensure that deadlines are met and that each first-line manager is given a fair and reasonable timeframe for completing a certain communication task. This will enhance the timeous communication of information.

There seems to be a lack of two-way communication between management and the rest of the CUT staff community. The Open Systems Model (Gizir & Simsek 2005:199), which allows for two-way symmetrical communication, could enhance management-employee relationships. Another model that can be applied to addressing this issue is the Conglomerate Communication Model (see paragraph 3.13.1). This particular model boasts the following characteristics:

- Business units are loosely coupled.
- The model is characterised by distinctiveness and responsiveness, yet retains the synergies of collaboration with other businesses (Power & Rienstra 1999:502).
- The model also advocates collaboration among business units, but also makes provision for symmetrical two-way communication between business units and the VC.

Another means to improve two-way communication between management and staff members is the Top Management Communication Outcomes Model (see paragraph 3.13.2). The model allows for two-way communication, therefore enhances management-employee relationships (Pincus & Rayfield in Pincus *et al.* 1991:8). Employees receive information about the organisation such as policies and future plans from top-level management, but information about their jobs from their immediate supervisors.

The unfolding of the framework up to this point was informed by a variety of perspectives, including the literature and the opinions of CUT staff and communication specialists from other South African universities. In a final effort towards refinement it was decided to expose the proposed framework to further scrutiny and evaluation – as explained in the next section.

6.3   EVALUATION OF THE PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

Once the framework had been developed, it was evaluated by a team of communication experts from seven multi-campus universities in South Africa. As such, the third phase

of the research project entailed an inter-institutional evaluation and subsequent refinement of the theoretical model (framework) that the researcher developed to improve the effectiveness of internal communication at the CUT (see paragraph 4.2). The evaluation of the framework made use of an embedded design (a quantitative survey which included open-ended questions). The researcher deemed this phase of the research project not only necessary for the adaptation and refinement of the proposed internal communication model, but also for enhancement of its external validity and thus generalisability to other South African universities with a multi-campus organisational structure.

More detail about the objectives of the evaluation was provided in Chapter 4 (see paragraph 4.5.1).

As indicated in paragraph 4.5.3, the sample for this phase of the research project consisted of communication experts from seven multi-campus universities. The individuals had to be knowledgeable regarding internal communication practices at higher education institutions in South Africa. 14 people were requested to evaluate the framework.

The researcher sent an e-mail, explaining the purpose of the study and the aim of this particular phase of the research project. Participants' confidentiality was guaranteed. The e-mail was accompanied by three documents (see Appendix D), namely:

1. A one-page document summarising the key features of the framework.
2. A Power Point presentation illustrating the five main communication issues and various suggestions on how to address these issues.
3. A questionnaire requiring participants to evaluate certain aspects of the proposed framework.

The questionnaire consists of five short sections, each of which pertains to a particular issue regarding internal communication at multi-campus universities in South Africa.

The participants had to rate each question in accordance to its applicability (Essential feature = 1; Useful feature = 2; Not necessary = 3). Besides the structured questions, each section also included an open-ended question to add some qualitative enhancement to the study. The open-ended questions would indicate the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed framework and furthermore provide the researcher with suggestions as to how the framework, and eventually the model, could be adjusted or improved.

6.3.1 Results of the evaluation

In the inter-institutional evaluation, the electronic questionnaire was sent to 14 communication practitioners at the seven multi-campus universities. Nine of the respondents completed the questionnaire. Their responses are summarised in the following paragraphs.

6.3.1.1 *The bureaucratic nature of higher education institutions*

In Table 6.7 the views of the respondents on the suggestions regarding the bureaucratic nature of higher education institutions are reflected. The ratings provide an indication of the perceived suitability of the various suggested features in the proposed framework and the intended model.

Table 6.7: **Rating of suggestions on the bureaucratic nature of higher education institutions (N=9)**

Suggested features	Essential 1	Useful 2	Not necessary 3
1. A policy needs to be drafted, incorporating the principles of this model.	8	1	0
2. Personal matters, such as congratulatory messages, messages of support, and so forth should also be communicated.	6	3	0

Suggested features	Essential 1	Useful 2	Not necessary 3
3. Social communication and innovation should be encouraged.	6	3	0
4. Communication should be established as a core business value.	7	2	0
5. Internal communication should be advocated on all levels.	9	0	0
6. An open systems approach to communication should be followed.	8	1	0
7. A Communication Manager should be appointed on managerial level.	8	1	0

Table 6.7 provides evidence of full agreement among all nine respondents on advocating internal communication on all levels (Question 5). One of the respondents remarked that: "Communication on all levels is core business."

The development and implementation of a communication policy seem important (Question 1), since comments such as "very important" and "only way to enforce buy-in" were received. With regard to the appointment of a Communication Manager (Question 7), the researcher takes note of a suggestion made by one of the respondents for possible inclusion in the proposed model, namely "the Communication Manager should preferably report directly to the VC's office for optimal effectiveness".

It should be borne in mind that when communicating social and personal communication (Questions 2 and 3), "clear guidelines must be set or this will get out of control very easily". This is an important comment which should be reflected in the model as a quality assurance mechanism. One of the respondents remarked that: "because of the nature of business of tertiary institutions support services do not receive attention in this regard." This notion corresponds with the results of the CUT survey where staff members from the support services indicated that management did not regard internal communication at the CUT as a core business value.

The conclusion here is that all the suggestions in this category were rated essential or at least useful by the majority of the respondents. However, some caution is needed when messages of a social or personal nature are communicated.

6.3.1.2   *The academic nature of higher education institutions*

Table 6.8 portrays the respondents' ratings of the suggested features of a possible model that addresses the academic nature of higher education institutions.

Table 6.8:   **Rating of suggestions with regard to the academic nature of higher education institutions (N=9)**

Suggested features	Essential 1	Useful 2	Not necessary 3
1. Interpersonal communication training should be offered for all staff.	6	2	0
2. Measurements should be put in place to increase ownership of internal communication.	2	7	0
3. Communication effectiveness should be evaluated as part of each employee's individual performance appraisal with the appropriate recognition for exemplary performance.	2	7	0
4. Employee communication should be strategically positioned to facilitate change.	7	2	0
5. Provision of adequate human and financial resources to fully optimise the internal communication function.	8	1	0

When studying Table 6.8, it becomes clear that the proposed model needs to be adjusted, since most of the respondents deemed the measurements for increasing ownership of internal communication (Question 2) and the evaluation of communication effectiveness as part of each employee's individual performance appraisal (Question 3) useful rather than essential features. Two of the respondents, however, indicated that management in particular needed to be evaluated on their communication effectiveness.

The responses to Question 1 provide a strong directive, as seven of the nine respondents indicated that interpersonal communication training for all staff should be regarded as an essential feature of the proposed model. One of the respondents remarked: "Practical stuff – not theoretical communication 101…please!" This comment made the researcher realise that higher education institutions in particular should focus more on the content of communication and training sessions than on academic or theoretical plans. This specific comment also inspired the researcher to not only propose a model for the CUT which is aimed at improving the effectiveness of internal communication, but also to include an action plan with concrete and practical actions on how to improve upward, downward and horizontal communication at the CUT (see paragraph 7.4).

The researcher takes note of another respondent's comments, namely: "I think it would be an ideal situation to get the buy-in of staff about the importance of internal communication. It is, however not always so feasible. You need to spend money to make money. We cannot tell people about our academic programmes and what the university offers if they don't want to PAY for advertising (communicating to the world out there)". This comment emphasises that effective communication costs money and that universities should be provided with the necessary financial support to optimise their internal communication function. The responses to Question 5 bear testimony to this.

Overall the responses to suggestions in this section correspond with the suggestions made by the researcher. Implications for the model are that it may be useful, but is not necessary, to put measurements in place to increase ownership of internal communication. It is also not essential to evaluate communication effectiveness as part of each employee's individual performance appraisal. However, it may be essential that management should be evaluated on their communication skills. With regard to interpersonal communication training the CUT (and other multi-campus universities) should take cognisance of the fact that staff members want to engage in practical activities and not theoretical lessons. Additionally, the researcher suggests that the need, nature and presentation of communication training sessions need to be further explored.

6.3.1.3 *Views on the organisational structure of higher education institutions*

Table 6.9 bears evidence of a large emphasis on the "essential" rating for most of the suggested features related to the organisational structure of higher education institutions.

Table 6.9: **Rating of suggestions with regard to the organisational structure of higher education institutions (N=9)**

Suggested features	Essential 1	Useful 2	Not necessary 3
1. Decentralisation should be applied (authority should be dispersed downward in the hierarchy).	7	2	0
2. A communication coordinator should be appointed on each campus.	6	2	1
3. Special attempts should be made to make staff on distance campuses feel part of the main campus's functioning.	8	1	0
4. Special channels for feedback from distance campuses should be created.	8	1	0
5. Regular monitoring of effectiveness and satisfaction of communication at main AND other campuses.	7	2	0
6. The communication function should be aligned on all the campuses and the institutional office.	8	1	0
7. Creative use of technology should be encouraged.	7	1	0

Although the majority of the respondents indicated the suggestions as either being essential or useful, it is interesting to note that they had particularly strong feelings about multi-campus communication (Questions 2 to 6). The specific respondent who indicated that it was not necessary to appoint a communication coordinator on each campus (Question 2) commented: "No – staff should communicate with the Corporate Communication Manager and his staff only; otherwise they talk at cross purposes". Although an important notion, the researcher deems the appointment of a communication coordinator on each campus necessary, as it is just not possible for one person alone to

execute communication functions on the main campus and the distance campus simultaneously. A communication coordinator situated at the CUT's Welkom Campus, for example, will just have more direct contact with staff members situated there, as well as knowledge and insight into happenings at that campus.

With regard to monitoring the effectiveness and satisfaction of communication at main and other campuses (Question 5), one can take note of comments such as "monitor and implement corrective measures continually. Often monitoring stops just there and is not used to adjust what we do".

As a whole, when it comes to the handling of communication within the distinctive organisational structure of higher education institutions, it is important to communicate as much and as extensively to staff members not situated on the main campus. Except for appointing communication coordinators at multi-campuses, special efforts should be made to make staff at these campuses feel part of the university community, to encourage feedback from them and to create communication channels that will best convey messages to them. Some of the activities contained in the action plan attempt to address these issues (see paragraph 7.4).

6.3.1.4 *Views with regard to the communication process*

The opinions of the group of nine communication experts with regard to suggestions related to the communication process are reflected in Table 6.10.

Table 6.10:   Rating of suggestions on the communication process (N=9)

Suggested features	Essential 1	Useful 2	Not necessary 3
1. More than one medium should be explored to communicate important information.	8	1	0
2. Implement SMSs to communicate relevant information to part-time staff and service workers.	5	4	0
3. More than one language should be used.	3	4	2
4. Information from top management, for example the VC, should be communicated as soon as possible.	9	0	0
5. Communication channels for feedback from all staff, especially support services staff and service workers should be established.	9	0	0
6. Messages should be considered in terms of what employees NEED to know (job-related information), WANT to know (motivational information), and HAVE to know (organisational information).	8	1	0
7. E-mail communication should be extended, especially to part-time staff and service workers.	4	5	0
8. More technological communication and new media should be introduced.	6	3	0
9. More opportunities for face-to-face communication should be explored.	6	3	0
10. Regular evaluation (campus-wide) of effectiveness of the communication process.	8	1	0

Table 6.10 makes it abundantly clear that the nine respondents regarded most of the suggested features as essential. Especially the immediate communication of information by the VC (Question 4) and communication channels for feedback (Question 5) were regarded as essential features by all nine the respondents. However, there are some differences of opinion with regard to aspects such as the language of communication (Question 3), technological communication (Questions 2 and 8), and e-mail communication (Question 7).

As such, two of the nine respondents indicated that it was not necessary to use more than one language when communicating with staff. One of the respondents commented: "Either one language or all official university languages - depending on the budget and staff to do the work." The researcher is of the opinion that, as the model is aimed at improving internal communication effectiveness at the CUT, more than one language should be used. The results of the CUT survey indicated that CUT staff have language proficiency in English, Sesotho and Afrikaans. In paragraph 5.2.2.3 it was mentioned that staff members at the CUT would like to receive communication in more than one language.

From the above-mentioned results it becomes evident that technology and the creative use thereof need to play a more significant and visible role in the communication process. One of the respondents remarked, however, that communication practitioners needed to be "beware of information overload". Great caution should therefore be exercised when communicating information to staff members. Although not essential, SMSs may be useful, but, as one of the respondents remarked: "Ensure limited use and only really important messages – irritation factor". The researcher, however, would like to see SMSs implemented at the CUT to increase awareness of communication to especially service workers and part-time workers, since very few of them had participated in the CUT survey of 2006. Furthermore, SMSs may be the (only) effective way of reaching them, as they do not have access to e-mail. The suggestion on the limited use of SMSs is nevertheless important.

With regard to e-mail communication, more respondents evaluated the extension of e-mail communication to service workers and part-time staff as a useful rather than an essential feature (Question 7). The researcher takes cognisance of the following remark: "Very important, but the problem is information overload – particularly with regard to e-mails. Lots of information gets deleted, without them even opening it. Communication will therefore have to be on target every time so that they want to open it and expect to receive valuable information." In the CUT survey of 2006, service workers and part-time

staff expressed a need for more e-mail communication (see paragraph 5.2.2.3). The relevance and content of e-mail communication, however, are very important so as to prevent information overload.

6.3.1.5 *Views on communication from Management*

The final evaluation of the suggested features of a possible model took place according to the structure of Table 6.11. In this section possible features related to the handling of communication from management had to be rated for their suitability in the intended model.

Table 6.11:   Rating of suggestions on the communication from Management (N=9)

Suggested features	Essential 1	Useful 2	Not necessary 3
1. Internal communication should be incorporated in Management's KPAs and be given reasonable weight in total performance evaluation.	9	0	0
2. Seek all staff involvement and problem-solving via the communication media efforts.	3	5	1
3. Reward and recognition system which recognises Management communication performance – based on staff evaluations.	5	4	0
4. Management (VC and other top management) should be encouraged to visibly communicate with staff via all communication media.	9	0	0
5. Timelines should be attached to communication between different managerial levels.	7	2	0
6. Opportunities for two-way symmetrical communication should be encouraged, stressing the importance of feedback.	8	1	0

In studying Table 6.11 it becomes clear that all the respondents deemed the incorporation of internal communication in Management's KPAs essential (Question 1). Some of the responses include: "This is especially important as management do not value communication, in fact, administrative staff appears to be a poor cousin of the academic

sector"; "Fantastic suggestion. Then everybody will at least know what is going on". Also worth mentioning are the responses to Question 5. Seven of the nine respondents indicated that it was essential to attach timelines to communication between different managerial levels. One of the respondents commented: "This would ensure that time is not wasted in meetings; all too often there is no action after meetings (no follow through)."

Another essential feature of the proposed framework is that Management (VC and other top management members) should be encouraged to visibly communicate with staff via all communication media (Question 4). In this regard the researcher welcomes one of the respondents' comments, namely: "Training of managers in effective communication is however essential if this is to work."

Although the majority (five out of the nine respondents) indicated that it was essential to implement a reward and recognition system which recognised Management communication performance based on staff evaluations, four respondents rated it only a useful feature. During the CUT survey, however, communication from Management was regarded the worst aspect of communication at the CUT (see paragraph 5.2.2.2). Therefore, the researcher deems it necessary and essential to include this feature in the proposed model. Two of the respondents rightfully remarked: "Workshops regarding these issues should be organised and decisions should be adhered to" and "Staff would welcome this!"

The majority of the respondents (five of the nine) indicated that it was useful rather than essential to seek all staff involvement and problem-solving via the communication media efforts. However, during the CUT survey, more than 60% (see paragraph 5.2.1.6) indicated that MANCOM did not encourage staff members to become involved in decision-making. The researcher therefore includes this particular aspect as an essential feature in the proposed model.

6.3.1.6 *Conclusions from the inter-institutional evaluation*

By studying the respondents' answers it became evident that most of the features of the proposed model were regarded as either essential or useful.

Besides the fact that an internal communication policy needs to be drafted, communication should be established as a core business value and be advocated on all levels. An open systems approach to communication should be followed and a Communication Manager should be appointed on managerial level. Although social and personal communication should be encouraged, clear guidelines must be set to control communication of a personal and social nature.

Interpersonal communication training should be offered to all staff, with a specific focus on hands-on and practical training. Adequate human and financial resources should be provided to fully optimise the internal communication function. It is interesting to note that it is not regarded essential to evaluate communication effectiveness as part of each employee's performance appraisal, but that it is regarded as essential that Management should be evaluated on their communication skills.

With regard to organisational structure, decentralisation should be applied. Multi-campus communication is especially important and the following aspects need to be incorporated into the proposed model:

- A communication coordinator should be appointed on each campus.
- Special attempts should be made to make staff on distant or other campuses feel part of the functioning of the main campus.
- Special channels for feedback from distance campuses should be created.
- The communication function should be aligned among all the campuses and the institutional office.

The communication process is important in the sense that more than one medium and language should be used, whilst the creative use of technology should be encouraged

(including SMSs and e-mail), especially to part-time staff and service workers. Information from the VC needs to be communicated as soon as possible. Messages need to be considered in terms of what employees NEED to know (job-related information), WANT to know (motivational information), and HAVE to know (organisational information). Feedback should be encouraged, whilst the effectiveness of the communication process should be measured or evaluated constantly. However, great caution has to be exercised to prevent information overload and the irritation factor.

Management communication could be enhanced by means of two-way symmetrical communication, by attaching timelines between different managerial levels, by offering communication training for them and by implementing a reward and recognition system which recognises management communication performance.

In the light of the above-mentioned discussion, it becomes clear that the proposed framework contains features that are regarded as essential by the participants in the inter-institutional evaluation. Their evaluation of the proposed framework together with their comments/feedback and suggestions provided valuable insights into the final refinement of the framework and subsequently the development of a model aimed at improving the effectiveness of internal communication at the CUT. The following are some of the key aspects of the framework that need to be adjusted:

- Clear guidelines must be set when messages of a social or personal nature are communicated.
- It is not essential, but nevertheless useful, to put measurements in place to increase ownership of internal communication.
- It is not essential, but nevertheless useful, to evaluate communication effectiveness as part of each employee's individual performance appraisal.
- Management need to be evaluated on their communication effectiveness.
- The effectiveness and satisfaction of communication at the main and other campuses should be monitored regularly and enhanced by implementing corrective measures.

- When communicating via SMS to part-time staff and service workers, aspects such as information overload and the irritation factor need to be taken into consideration.

- It may not be essential that more than one language should be used; however, at the CUT a need exists for communication in more than one language.

- E-mail communication should be extended, especially to part-time staff and service workers, but once again relevance and sensitivity to information overload should be taken into consideration. In cases where it is not possible to provide service workers or part-time staff members with e-mail facilities, alternatives need to be explored, such as notice boards, electronic notice boards in the BhPBilliton Building, or a decentralised system where the supervisors or line managers of these people will inform them of important organisational news.

- It may be useful, but not essential, to seek all staff involvement and problem-solving via the communication media efforts. At the CUT, however, there is a dire need for more staff involvement in decision-making.

- It may generally speaking be useful, but not essential, to establish a reward and recognition system which recognises management communication performance. At the CUT this is nevertheless essential.

The inter-institutional evaluation provided insight into the perception of communication executives from other multi-campus universities of the proposed communication framework. Their feedback, comments and suggestions were particularly valuable in the refinement of the proposed framework and, eventually, the drafting of the internal communication model.

6.4   CONCLUSION

As mentioned in paragraph 6.1, this particular chapter focuses on the actual features of an internal communication model for the CUT as multi-campus university. The features are based on the results of the first two phases of the research project, namely the CUT survey and the institutional survey among seven-multi-campus universities in South

Africa. Some best practices from perspectives gained in the literature review and by studying communication models employed by companies in the private sector have also been included.

The five main issues identified by the researcher; the main concerns related to each particular issue; the recommended approach addressing the various concerns; as well as the applicable features that characterise the proposed model are outlined in a communication framework. It is important to note here that, although there may be more issues relating to the academic nature of universities (such as research, inquiry, discourse, learning facilitation and community service), the researcher only makes mention of those she considers essential from a communication point of view. Researcher who are interested in further exploring this topic may consider indicating how the complexity of a university, its complex organisational structure and the complexities of academic work and life come together to provide challenges to a communication framework.

This chapter has been concluded by a brief discussion of the third and final stage of the research project, namely the inter-institutional evaluation of the proposed framework. Additionally, the results have also been presented.

In Chapter 7 the actual internal communication model as well as an action plan for internal communication at the CUT is proposed. The action plan serves as a practical application of the framework and the model.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1   INTRODUCTION

In this study the researcher made use of a review of the relevant literature (Chapters 2 and 3) and a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods (Chapters 4 to 6), to propose a model aimed at improving the effectiveness of internal communication at the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) as a multi-campus university.

In Chapter 6 the features of an internal communication model were discussed by means of a framework addressing each of the five internal communication issues. The framework is based on various practices following national and international communication tendencies and corporate communication models that have been successfully employed by the South African corporate business sector as well as directives from the empirical investigation. The chapter was concluded by presenting some of the most significant findings or results of the third phase of the study, namely the inter-institutional evaluation among communication experts from seven multi-campus universities in South Africa.

Chapter 7 is presented as follows: It commences with an overview of the study, referring to the specific research questions and aim and how the researcher went about addressing each question. This is followed by a discussion of the actual model, once adjusted and refined from the feedback received from communication executives at the following seven multi-campus universities, namely the University of the Free State (UFS), Vaal University of Technology (VUT), University of Johannesburg (UJ), North-West University (NWU), Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and Durban University of Technology (DUT). The researcher includes a communication action plan, outlining how the proposed model can be implemented. The significance of the study is outlined, the limitations are presented and the need for further studies/research is also explained.

7.2   AN OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

In paragraph 1.4 of Chapter 1 the five specific research questions that had to be asked in order to address the research problem are outlined. Eventually a viable internal communication model for the CUT as multi-campus university was proposed. In the following paragraphs each research question is presented, whilst the researcher explains how she addressed each question with reference to the various phases of the empirical investigation. This section subsequently provides a brief overview of the study.

7.2.1   Research question 1

The first research question which needs to be addressed is the following:

- **What are the characteristics and unique nature of higher education institutions worldwide and in South Africa and how do they impact on communication?**

In addressing this particular research question the researcher conducted a thorough literature study on the context and nature of universities (see Chapter 2) to gain a better understanding of how the characteristics and unique nature of higher education institutions relate to and impact on communication.

Chapter 2 provides a discussion of the organisational structure of higher education institutions, whilst the history of higher education institutions is also provided (see paragraph 2.4). The South African higher education setting is broadly outlined (see paragraph 2.5), since the purpose of this study is to propose an internal communication model for a South African multi-campus university. Various internal and external factors impacting on internal communication are stressed (see paragraph 2.6). The systems theory of organisational communication and its implications for higher education institutions are discussed. The academic and bureaucratic nature of higher education institutions plays a critical role in the internal communication efforts of these institutions.

Miller (in Holtzhausen 2002:324) outlines a number of characteristics of communication in bureaucracies such as higher education institutions (see paragraph 2.8). The content of communication is normally task-related, while social communication and innovation are discouraged. The direction of communication is routed up and down the organisation chart, while horizontal communication is encouraged among employees of the same level. Venter (2006:18) goes as far as referring to higher education institutions as "leave us alone" and "ivory-tower" institutions (see paragraphs 1.2.5 and 2.8). Also, in most cases higher education institutions are managed by academics who are not always familiar with effective communication on a managerial level (see paragraph 1.2.5 and the results of the inter-institutional evaluation in paragraphs 6.3.1.5 and 6.3.1.6). Considering these notions, one would assume that communication, especially in higher education institutions, would have to be approached differently due to the academic and bureaucratic nature of these institutions. As the rest of the study unfolds, it becomes evident why internal communication and practising it effectively are imperative.

7.2.2 Research question 2

The second research question which needs to be addressed is the following:

- **How can effective internal communication models used by the corporate world be utilised?**

The achievement and refinement of the objectives of this study necessitated the use of a descriptive literature study involving current and relevant literature on internal communication in the corporate environment and higher education sector. Chapter 3 is concerned with the second research question, namely: "How can effective internal communication models used by the corporate world be utilised?"

This chapter provides a broad perspective on organisational communication – from the history of organisations (paragraph 3.2), a definition of organisational communication, the importance of communication in an organisational setting, formal and informal

organisational communication (see paragraph 3.8), to communication satisfaction (see paragraph 3.11), being defined as: "the personal satisfaction inherent in successfully communicating to someone or in successfully being communicated with" (Thayler in Meintjies & Steyn 2006:159).

The theoretical overview of communication models in Chapter 3 aims to provide a clear understanding of why these models are important and how they can assist the researcher to develop a viable internal communication model for the CUT. Although many of these models differ in nature, size and complexity, they all illustrate the dynamic process of communication and the relationship between the various components inherent to each model. Some of the models represent a linear (technical) view of communication, such as the Classical Communication Models (see paragraph 3.12.2), whilst others represent a circular (see Schramm's Interactive Model in paragraph 3.12.3.3) or transactional view of communication (see Transactional Communication Model in paragraph 3.12.5.2).

The researcher was particularly impressed by the Ecological Model (see paragraph 3.12.5.3) with the interrelated elements Media, Language and Medium; the Conglomerate Communication Model (see paragraph 3.13.1) focusing on loosely-coupled businesses; the TOCOM Model (see paragraph 3.13.3) which is based on the characteristics of an open-systems model; and the Integrated Communication Management Model (see paragraph 3.13.4), which depicts integrated communication management as one of the most valuable tools in organisational communication. Asif and Sargeant's (2000:315) internal communication model (see paragraph 3.13.6) contributed to the researcher's depth of understanding of the communication process, since these authors consider internal communication as a non-hierarchical process and an ongoing activity where a variety of different variables - such as communication style, management style, and status of the sender - influence and determine the outcome of any communication effort (Asif & Sargeant 2000:315).

In an attempt to discover what communication models have been successfully employed by corporate companies in South Africa, the researcher approached four well-established

and well-known organisations in trying to gain a better understanding of their internal communication practices. The researcher had telephonic discussions with communication executives of Vodacom, Standard Bank, Absa and Sanlam, whereafter an e-mail was sent to explain the nature of the study and to obtain permission from the companies to discuss their internal communication models and/or systems. Only Absa consented to share its internal communication practices. Valuable insights were gained from Mr Ntokozo Gwamanda, Head of Channels: Group Communication and Public Relations (Gwamanda 2008: personal communication) (see paragraph 3.14.2).

7.2.3   Research question 3

The third research question which needs a closer examination is the following:

- **What internal communication models are used by institutions of higher learning – specifically multi-campus universities – and what are possible shortcomings?**

In addressing the third research question the researcher studied internal communication models and practices at two well-known international universities, namely the University of Washington (UW) and the University of Sheffield (see paragraph 3.15).

The UW expressed a need to significantly improve their internal communication efforts. A communication audit was conducted in July 1999, whereafter some recommendations were made including the establishment of a Marketing and Communication Unit, the implementation of a strategic internal communication plan, and the creation and subsequent implementation of a communication plan (see paragraph 3.15.1).

The University of Sheffield conducted a communication audit in 2004/2005 to assess the effectiveness of current internal communication practices and to develop a baseline for future assessment (see paragraph 3.15.2). A combination of research techniques was used, including a staff survey, focus groups, in-depth interviews and benchmarking with other universities (University of Sheffield 2005:2 of 5).

The results of the audit showed specific areas of concerns from staff, such as the following:

- Downward communication from senior management to their subordinates.
- The cascade of information by heads of departments to their direct reports and then on to all staff across their departments.
- Lateral communication across departments.
- The interface for staff members who wish to communicate internally or seek advice on internal communication.
- Information-sharing across the entire organisation.
- The communication skills and practices of managers and key communicators.

Resulting from the report, a communication strategy as well as an action plan was developed, incorporating the key recommendations from the audit findings. At this stage it is interesting to mention that there seems to be a correlation between communication concerns at universities abroad and in South Africa. Staff members who participated in the questionnaire survey at the CUT and communication executives from the seven multi-campus universities experienced the same problems with regard to internal communication as mentioned above (see paragraphs 5.2.3 and 5.3.3).

7.2.4   Research question 4

The fourth research question which needs to be addressed is the following:

- **What are the practices, concerns and issues regarding internal communication at the CUT and other multi-campus universities in South Africa?**

As stated above, Chapter 4 is concerned with the fourth research question. This chapter describes the design and methodology employed in the empirical investigation undertaken as a means of providing the necessary perspectives and understanding needed in the formulation of the envisaged communication model. The researcher furthermore

explains the rationale for employing both qualitative and quantitative approaches in the mixed methods research.

In the remainder of the chapter each of the three phases of the research project is discussed. The three phases include the following:

1. A questionnaire survey regarding internal communication at the CUT.
2. An interview-type survey regarding internal communication at seven multi-campus universities in South Africa, including the UFS, VUT, UJ, NWU, TUT, CPUT and DUT.
3. An inter-institutional evaluation and subsequent refinement of the draft communication framework by communication executives from other universities.

The questionnaire survey regarding internal communication at the CUT provided insights into staff members' perception of internal communication at the CUT. As the findings of this study alone could not enable the researcher to develop an internal communication model for the CUT as multi-campus university, an interview-type survey regarding internal communication was carried out among seven multi-campus universities so as to come to a better understanding of how internal communication was executed at these institutions, and to gain insight into the participants' perception of internal communication at their respective institutions. The evaluation of the proposed framework by other multi-campus universities served as a tool for refining the framework and subsequently the model. Besides benchmarking purposes, the aim of testing the framework at other institutions of higher learning was to determine whether it could be used at other multi-campus universities and could thus contribute to the possible generalisability.

In Chapter 5 the results of the first two phases of the empirical investigation (a questionnaire survey regarding internal communication at the CUT; and an interview-type survey regarding internal communication at seven multi-campus universities in South Africa) are presented and discussed. Phase 2 included two sub-phases, namely

telephonic interviews with communication executives as well as a qualitative e-mail survey to determine the concerns, issues and perceptions of the effectiveness of internal communication at the seven identified multi-campus universities.

The practices, concerns and issues of internal communication were studied by means of well-substantiated and validated data. The researcher makes use of tables and figures, together with more advanced statistics in a few instances, to illustrate the findings. The concerns include: Communication to part-time staff and service workers; horizontal communication; and communication from Management. Multi-campus communication is a concern, as some of the respondents of the questionnaire survey at the CUT felt that there was no coordination in the integration of the different campuses (see paragraph 5.2.3).

7.2.5   Research question 5

The fifth research question which has to be addressed is the following:

- **What should the features of an effective internal communication model for the CUT as multi-campus university be?**

The unfolding of the proposed model is presented in Chapter 6 by bringing together the challenges, concerns and issues identified in the empirical investigation, in addition to the perspectives gained in the literature review with a framework that holds the potential of addressing the specific communication problem. The special features of the proposed model are outlined, thereby addressing the fifth research question as presented above. The features are based on the results of the first two phases of the research project, namely the CUT survey and the institutional survey among seven multi-campus universities in South Africa. The evaluation of the proposed framework by a team of communication experts (phase 3 of the empirical investigation) and the implications of the results are discussed.

A summary of the main features of the framework is presented in paragraph 6.3.1.6. The features include the drafting of an internal communication policy, the appointment of a Communication Manager at managerial level, internal communication training with a strong focus on practical aspects, the provision of adequate human and financial resources, creating special channels for communication to multi-campuses, the appointment of a communication coordinator on each distance campus, and special channels for feedback from distance campuses.

7.3 A MODEL FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AT THE CUT

The proposed model (see Figure 7.1) is mainly based on the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 6 (see Tables 6.1 to 6.6), as it was refined by means of the feedback of the inter-institutional survey (see paragraph 6.3.1.6).
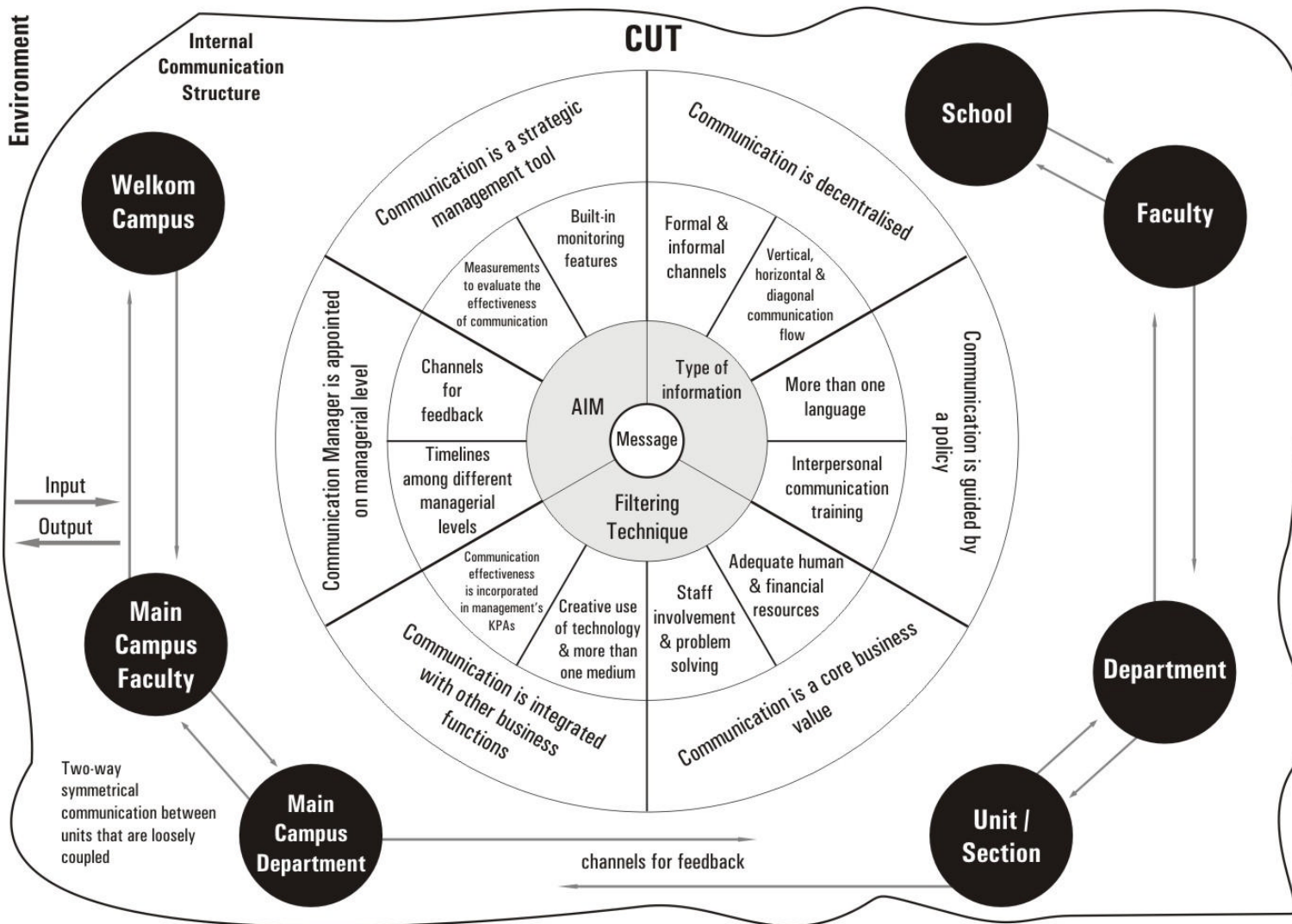
Figure 7.1:   An internal communication model for the CUT

In the proposed model communication is defined in terms of distinctive structural and process attributes (see Figure 7.1). With regard to structure, the model boasts strong features of the open systems theory, whilst communication is depicted as a strategic management tool. The model accounts for the extensive vertical hierarchy of higher education institutions by following a decentralised approach to internal communication. Organisational communication is thus characterised by narrow span of control. Business units are loosely coupled. Furthermore, communication is guided by a policy; internal communication is depicted as a core business value; and the communication function is integrated with other managerial functions with a Communication Manager appointed at managerial level.

The communication process is central to the model, where communication is depicted as a non-linear, circular, interactive, non-hierarchical process, including vertical, horizontal and diagonal communication flow. The communication action plan included towards the end of this chapter practically demonstrates how vertical, horizontal and diagonal communication at the CUT can be improved. Formal and informal channels are used to communicate information to staff members. With regard to informal communication, clear guidelines are set for communicating messages of a social or personal nature. In the model the creative use of technology as well as more than one medium is portrayed, especially for reaching part-time staff and service workers more effectively. Some of these technologies include the extension of e-mail communication as well as SMSs. When communicating via SMSs, aspects such as information overload and the irritation factor need to be considered.

Internal communication effectiveness is incorporated in Management's KPAs and given reasonable weight in total performance evaluation. In this regard interpersonal communication guidance and capacity building for all staff, and in particular Management, are vital. The focus is on hands-on, practical activities. Timelines are recommended for communication from management to ensure the timely dissemination of information to other line managers or subordinates. Channels for feedback form an

essential part of the communication process, thereby stressing the importance of upward communication.

Messages are relevant, simplistic, meaningful, consistent and timeous. The researcher distinguishes between information employees *need* to know (job-related information), information employees *want* to know (motivational information) and information employees *have* to know (organisational information). Messages are communicated in more than one language, namely English, Sesotho and Afrikaans.

The model has built-in monitoring features, which form the basis for a quality assurance system. In this regard a reward and recognition system that recognises management communication performance is regarded as essential. The effectiveness of the communication process should constantly be measured or evaluated. The presentation of the model is followed by the presentation of a communication action plan as an illustration of how the model can be effectively realised at the CUT as multi-campus institution by addressing shortcomings in downward, horizontal and upward communication.

Table 7.1:   Internal communication action plan

Strategic goal 1: Improve downward communication at the CUT				
Action	**How?**	**Who?**	**When?**	**Quality impact measurement**
Develop and implement a policy incorporating the principles of the proposed model (see paragraph 6.2.1).	Draft a policy by following all relevant procedures and guidelines.	Human Resources (HR) Employee Relations in conjunction with Executive Director to the Vice-Chancellor (VC).	As soon as the model is adopted/accepted.	An approved internal communication policy.
Monitor the effectiveness of internal communication by means of periodic internal communication surveys.	Distribute questionnaires on campus.	HR Employee Relations in conjunction with Executive Director to the VC and Senior Director: Institutional Research Unit.	Once a year.	Evidence of implementation, feedback and improvement of communication.
Explore more than one medium, and especially the creative use of technology, for communicating important information (see paragraph 6.2.4).	When communicating information to staff, not only memoranda, letters, publications and e-mail should be used. The media used could be extended to the following: SMSs, blogs and podcasts.	Line managers in conjunction with Media and Communications.	Continuously.	Expansion of media used for communication with staff members. Feedback from staff.
Arrange a platform for staff members to address questions they may have to the VC.	These can be titled "In Dialogue" sessions[1] where staff members and the VC engage in discussion.	VC, Executive Director to the VC in conjunction with Media and Communications.	Once a month in the Boet Troskie Hall.	Number of staff members attending these sessions. Staff feedback.

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[1] During the inter-institutional evaluation of the communication framework (phase 3 of the empirical investigation) one of the respondents remarked that they had "In Dialogue" sessions with the VC, which allowed him to speak to the university and answer any questions which might arise.

Strategic goal 2: Improve horizontal communication at the CUT				
Action	**How?**	**Who?**	**When?**	**Quality impact measurement**
Extend communication channels to part-time staff and service workers – electronically and otherwise.	Supply part-time staff and service workers with an e-mail address. In cases where e-mail is not available, communicate the information via electronic boards at central places, also printed material, an announcement system and within departments/offices.	ICOMTEC, HR, Employee Relations and Advancement and Marketing.	Continuously.	Improvement of communication to part-time staff and service workers. Participation and feedback from these workers.
Implement effective ways of communication guidance and capacity training, especially for Management, to improve interpersonal communication skills.	All staff to be invited to engage in communication guidance and capacity building. The guidance/capacity building could be presented in the form of workshops, and by regular guidelines/tips via e-mail, the distribution of pamphlets with guidelines, and even a web page with information on effective communication which can be regularly updated and be brought to staff members' attention.	HR Employee Relations in conjunction with communication consultants.	Every semester.	Staff feedback during evaluation of training sessions. Number of staff who received training.
Appoint communication coordinators on distance campuses, thereby illustrating the integration of the different campuses.	Posts to be advertised internally by HR and staff members with experience in or an interest in internal communication to apply.	HR.	As soon as the model is adopted.	Appointment of communication coordinator on distance campuses. Improvement of communication to distance campuses.

Strategic goal 2: Improve horizontal communication at the CUT				
Action	**How?**	**Who?**	**When?**	**Quality impact measurement**
Create special channels for feedback from distance campuses.	A link should be placed on the Intranet where staff members from the Welkom Campus can post their questions/concerns.	ICOMTEC.	Continuously.	Questions/feedback placed on Intranet by staff from distance campuses.
Explore the creative use of technology to communicate with staff at distance campuses.	Implement tele-conferencing, video-conferencing and Skype to communicate with staff members at distance campuses, for example the Welkom Campus.	Centre for E-learning and Welkom Campus.	Continuously.	Feedback from staff members at Welkom Campus. Improved participation in activities hosted by the main campus.
Undertake special measures to make staff on distance campuses feel part of the main campus's functioning.	Always communicate all relevant information simultaneously to staff members at the main campus and distant campuses. Involve them in events via video-conferencing. Encourage them to provide feedback.	All staff that communicate with the Welkom Campus.	Continuously.	Feedback from staff members at Welkom Campus. Improved communication to and from staff members at Welkom Campus.
Encourage staff to become involved in practising effective horizontal communication.	Launch a competition in the *Mirror* – encouraging staff to propose new channels to improve horizontal communication.	Executive Director to the VC in conjunction with Media and Communications.	Every edition of the *Mirror*.	Number of staff members who provided feedback.

Strategic goal 3: Improve upward communication at the CUT				
Action	**How?**	**Who?**	**When?**	**Quality impact measurement**
Encourage face-to-face communication between senior staff and their employees.	Encourage regular open-door sessions between line managers and staff members. The sessions should be scheduled weekly or at any other time that suits all staff involved.	All line managers.	Preferably weekly or at least once every fortnight.	Number of staff meetings held per unit.
Practise decentralisation by appointing communication champions[2].	Develop a network of communication champions to improve upward communication.	HR and Registrar.	Once per annum.	Number of communication champions appointed. Staff feedback. Improvement of upward communication.
Establish communication channels for feedback; ESPECIALLY from part-time staff and service workers.	Supervisors/line managers to conduct weekly question/answer sessions with these groups of workers.	Applicable supervisors and/or first-line managers.	Continuously.	Number of part-time staff and service workers attending these sessions. Feedback from these workers. Involvement/participation by these workers.

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[2] It is suggested that a network of communication champions (Holtzhausen 2002:337) be developed. She conducted research in a big South African company to assess the effects of a divisionalised and decentralised organisational structure on a formal internal communication function. As a result of her research, more than 800 communication champions have been appointed. The researcher is of the opinion that the same successes can be achieved at the CUT. The champions, who should be appointed after a selection process, should serve as a link between staff members and senior managers, thereby improving upward communication at the CUT. The role of the champions is to improve face-to-face communication through actions such as workplace forums, representation at management meetings, facilitation of higher visibility of managers, and facilitation of communication skills training courses.

Strategic goal 3: Improve upward communication at the CUT				
Action	**How?**	**Who?**	**When?**	**Quality impact measurement**
Encourage staff to be part of the development of internal media.	Staff to be invited via e-mail, pamphlets or electronic boards/SMSs to contribute ideas, stories and photos in internal newsletters and other internal media. Staff to be invited to suggest new media of communication.	Executive Assistant to the VC and Media and Communications.	Continuously.	Feedback from staff. Suggestions by staff. Contributions by staff.

Notes:

1. Specific people should be identified and their names entered in the *Who? column*.
2. First-line managers should supply these names in every section/unit.
3. A coordinator for the whole project should be appointed, for example an Employee Relations staff member at Human Resources (HR).

With respect to the communication action plan, it is important to note that a quality assurance system has to be put in place to drive the process of improvement. Once the CUT has implemented the proposed internal communication model, the effectiveness thereof needs to be measured against clearly defined goals. A communication audit (including personal interviews, group meetings, and written surveys) or qualitative survey (like the one conducted at the CUT in 2006) could be included as part of the CUT's internal communication.

The communication action plan contains only a few actions on how the proposed model can be implemented. Aspects such as negotiating with Management to gain its support for implementing the model in addition to incorporating the principles of the model in their day-to-day functioning, as well as diplomatically involving employees are of the utmost importance.

7.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of the study lies in the development of a model aimed at improving the effectiveness of internal communication at the CUT as multi-campus university. The model not only consists of features which are regarded best practice by companies in the corporate sector, but also features which are the recommendations and suggestions of communication executives from seven multi-campus universities in South Africa. As such, the proposed model is significant in the sense that it moves from the theoretical perspectives gained in many communication textbooks to a more practical approach to internal communication.

The study is not only applicable to the CUT as multi-campus university, but also to other multi-campus institutions across South Africa – thereby indicating the possible generalisability of the proposed model. The communication action plan serves as a directive for implementing visible and feasible action plans to address shortcomings in upward, downward and horizontal communication.

7.5 LIMITATIONS

Besides the limitations set out in paragraph 4.6.4, the following aspects are indicators of the limitations of the study:

1. The CUT was treated as the only unit of analysis for the questionnaire survey, whilst other South African multi-campus universities were not subjected to the same extensive internal communication survey.

2. Semi-structured qualitative interviews (the institutional survey) were conducted with communication executives from the UFS, VUT, UJ, NWU, TUT, CPUT and DUT. Although these interviews might serve as a directive in providing the researcher with a better understanding of the internal communication practices of these institutions, this sample could not provide the researcher with a framework/detailed picture as to how the rest of the personnel at these institutions view the efficiency of their internal communication processes. However, for the purposes of this study with its focus on the CUT, this data collection technique served its purpose in broadening the perspectives of the researcher regarding practices, concerns and issues relating to internal communication at other multi-campus universities in South Africa.

3. Although the proposed model is primarily aimed at improving the effectiveness of internal communication at multi-campus universities in South Africa, it contains sufficient features for possible enhancement of internal communication at other institutions of higher learning.

4. The researcher could have made much more use of international examples on the one hand while pointing out the unique characteristics of South African higher education institutions. Issues such as language, culture and institutional maturity are examples.

7.6 FURTHER STUDIES/RESEARCH NEEDED

It is clear that the CUT has a vast capacity for the exchange of information and communication internally, which can lead to excellent brand and image building opportunities. By applying the model proposed in this study, the CUT can aim to consolidate its efforts so that the communication can flow in an efficient, cost-effective and timeous manner.

In addition to the proposed model, the researcher suggests that communication audits be carried out periodically to serve as an evaluation platform to gauge whether the university's current communication channels are up to standard and what needs to be

improved on. To ensure that the CUT stays on the right track, sample research among target publics could also be performed periodically. The formal and informal data collection methods can include:

- Informal conversations with line Management.
- Focus groups which include a member from each of the sectors at the CUT.

Within a reasonable time following the internal communication model's implementation, distribution of a follow-up questionnaire on the survey that was conducted in 2006 can be undertaken to track changes in opinion. The survey results could serve as a directive for refining the model and initiating new activities.

An in-depth study could be conducted to explore the communication preferences of part-time staff and service workers, as these groups of employees had very specific ideas about communication at the CUT. The fact that a relatively small percentage of them participated in the CUT survey is a clear indication that communication does not reach them or that they might not be interested in communication. Extensive research may serve as a directive to indicate what their specific perceptions of internal communication are and what communication mechanisms need to be explored to communicate with them more effectively.

7.7   CONCLUSION

In this study the researcher attempted to develop and propose a model for the CUT as multi-campus university, aimed at improving the effectiveness of internal communication. It is hoped that the CUT, as well as other multi-campus universities in South Africa, will be able to adopt the model and make it an integral part of its daily communication practices.

The researcher would like to see this model progress from the academic to a tactical and practical level, with staff members and Management taking full ownership and

responsibility, as well as accountability, for the communication process. In an article on employee communications Schuitema (1995:16) wrote that: "internal communication must be seen as a developmental tool, not a manipulative or a good 'PR' tool. It demands rigorous honesty and commitment." Schuitema's (1995:17) views on communication are confirmed in the results of all three phases of the empirical investigation.

The researcher believes that the CUT has the capacity to explore and intellectually invest in its internal communication practices. With the necessary commitment from staff, students and especially Management, as well as the provision of adequate human and financial resources, the university will be able to bring a dazzling new dimension to its internal communication function. While this institution may not be the biggest in the higher education arena in terms of student intake, graduation figures, research outputs and third-stream income, the CUT might just decide to explore other ventures, such as practising effective internal communication. By capitalising on its staff morale and productivity, it could set the pace for communicating effectively with staff in the higher education environment, and eventually become a CUT above the rest. This will also be reflected in the university's positioning statement of "Thinking beyond".

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Personal communications

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Bolleurs, L. 2008. Telephonic discussion on 10 January with Ms Leonie Bolleurs, Chief Officer: Strategic Communication at the UFS, regarding their internal communication.

Captain-Hasthibeer, R. 2008. Telephonic discussion on 10 January with Ms Raylene Captain-Hasthibeer, Communications Manager at DUT, regarding their internal communication.

De Ruyter, W. 2008. Telephonic discussion on 14 January with Ms Willa de Ruyter, Acting Head: Corporate Affairs and Marketing at TUT, regarding their internal communication.

Engelbrecht, N. 2008. Telephonic discussion on 10 January with Ms Nelia Engelbrecht, Corporate Writer/Editor of NWU, regarding their internal communication.

Gwamanda, N. 2008. Telephonic discussion on 12 February with Mr Ntokozo Gwamanda, Head of Channels: Group Communication and Public Relations at ABSA, regarding their internal communication.

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APPENDIX A: COMMUNICATION SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE
SENTRALE UNIVERSITEIT VIR TEGNOLOGIE, VRYSTAAT
YUNIVESITHI E BOHARENG YA THEKENOLOJI, FOREISTATA

Advancement and Marketing
Media and Communications

Central University of
Technology, Free State

May 2006

Dear colleague,

We are investigating various aspects of internal communication at the CUT. In order
to assess the quality of communication at the Central University of Technology, Free
State (CUT), we ask your cooperation in completing the attached questionnaire. We
hope to learn from your responses, apply your ideas and so improve the quality of
communication at the CUT and create a more trusting environment. The outcome of
the communication survey and feedback will be communicated to CUT staff.

Your anonymity is guaranteed and all information will be treated as confidential.

For your contribution to be counted, it must be completed and returned to:

Ms Mardi Delport
Room 100
First Floor
Advancement and Marketing Building

not later than 31 May 2006.

Thank you for your willingness to complete the questionnaire!

Kind regards,

_____

Mardi Delport
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Organisational Communication Survey, May 2006

Instructions: For each question darken the circle next to your chosen answer.

Darken the circle completely : Incorrect   ⊗ ⊙ ⊘   Correct   ●

Q1. At which CUT campus are you working?

Bloemfontein ◯   Welkom / Virginia ◯   Kimberley ◯

Q2. Gender: Male ◯   Female ◯

Q3. What is your level of proficiency? (Use the following levels)

Language	Writing				Speaking			
	Fluent	Good	Basic	None	Fluent	Good	Basic	None
Afrikaans	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
English	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
IsiNdebele	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
IsiXhosa	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
isiZulu	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Sepedi	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Sesotho	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Setswana	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
SiSwati	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Tshivenda	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Xitsonga	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Q4. What is your population group?

African ◯   Asian ◯
Coloured ◯   White ◯

Q5. Please state your age in years as on 30 April 2006 marking two circles to indicate your age underneath.

e.g. **2 9**

(columns showing digits 0–9; example shows 2 and 9 darkened)

Q6. What is your current appointment?

◯ Permanent
◯ Fixed-term contract full time
◯ Temporary full time
◯ Temporary part time

Q7. In which capacity are you employed?

◯ Academic (Teaching / Research)
◯ Administrative (Management)
◯ Administrative (Support)
◯ Service workers

Q8. What is your highest educational level?

◯ No formal education
◯ Some primary school
◯ Some secondary school
◯ Grade 12
◯ Diploma/certificate
◯ Bachelor's degree
◯ Honour's degree
◯ Master's degree
◯ Doctoral degree

Q9. How many training sessions did you attend (out of seven sessions on communication skills offered by the CUT over the past two years) to improve your communication skills?

◯ None   ◯ 1 or 2
◯ 3 to 5   ◯ 6 or more

Q10. How good were the training sessions?

◯ Very good   ◯ Good   ◯ Average
◯ Poor   ◯ Very poor   ◯ Not applicable

Q11. I adapt to information overload by:

	Yes	No
Failing to handle all the information.	◯	◯
Ignoring or failing to correct errors when made by others.	◯	◯
Queueing (letting things pile up).	◯	◯
Dealing with input in categories ranked according to my priority system.	◯	◯
Approximating (lowering standards of precision).	◯	◯
Escaping (refusal to handle information at all).	◯	◯
Delegating (passing the buck).	◯	◯
Procrastinating / Delaying.	◯	◯

Q12. Indicate the extent to which information from the following sources is timely.

	Always late	Seldom on time	Sometimes on time	Always on time	Not applicable
From my subordinates.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
From my co-workers and colleagues.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
From my supervisor.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
From the head of my division.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
From MANCOM.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
From the first-line manager.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
From the CUT Council.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13. Employees are the first to be informed of important organisational information or happenings, before it becomes general news.	○	○	○	○	○
14. I normally hear what's going on at the CUT from co-workers.	○	○	○	○	○
15. I normally hear what's going on at the CUT from people outside the organisation.	○	○	○	○	○
16. I normally hear what's going on at the CUT from the external media.	○	○	○	○	○
17. My direct line manager (supervisor) provides all the information I require for performing my duties.	○	○	○	○	○
18. My supervisor relays information to the right people who should receive it.	○	○	○	○	○
19. My supervisor represents my interests.	○	○	○	○	○
20. My supervisor regularly conveys only partial information to me.	○	○	○	○	○
21. Upward communication is encouraged at the CUT.	○	○	○	○	○
22. The CUT has an effective upward communication system in place.	○	○	○	○	○
23. My line manager encourages me to apply information received in my activities.	○	○	○	○	○
24. My line manager encourages me to give feedback to information received.	○	○	○	○	○
25. At the CUT, information is shared amongst staff members on the same level.	○	○	○	○	○
26. Information is coordinated between different units / departments / sections.	○	○	○	○	○
27. I meet people from other departments / units / sections in an informal / less formal way.	○	○	○	○	○
28. The CUT's Management Committee (MANCOM) communicates important issues.	○	○	○	○	○
29. MANCOM is competent in communicating the CUT's future and actions effectively.	○	○	○	○	○
30. MANCOM encourages staff members to become involved in decision-making.	○	○	○	○	○
31. At the CUT, MANCOM has proven that you can trust what they say.	○	○	○	○	○
32. MANCOM regards effective internal communication as a core business value at the CUT.	○	○	○	○	○
33. MANCOM makes an effort to communicate with other staff members of the CUT, despite their post level, job title or status within the organisation.	○	○	○	○	○
34. MANCOM makes a deliberate effort to communicate messages clearly to employees, so that everyone can understand the content and purpose of the messages.	○	○	○	○	○
35. The Principal / Vice-Chancellor takes the trouble to come and talk to us in our own work place / building.	○	○	○	○	○
36. I often receive important information too late.	○	○	○	○	○
37. Information I receive is often not understandable.	○	○	○	○	○
38. Information communicated to me is often incomplete.	○	○	○	○	○
39. Information that is important to me does not always reach me.	○	○	○	○	○

Please rank all the following communication channels according to your order of preference (1 = most preferable communication channel to 9 = least preferable channel).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
40. Bulletin / Notice Boards	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
41. Combination of oral and written	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
42. Electronic media (internet, intranet, e-mail)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
43. Faxes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
44. Grapevine	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
45. Internal audiovisual material (videoclips, films)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
46. Telephone	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
47. Word of mouth (face-to-face, meetings)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
48. Written only (memos, letters, Mirror and other internal publications)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

49. Please rank the following aspects for each communication medium.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Bulletin / Notice Boards	Easy to use	○	○	○	○	○
	Efficient	○	○	○	○	○
	Quick / Timely	○	○	○	○	○
Electronic (intranet)	Easy to use	○	○	○	○	○
	Efficient	○	○	○	○	○
	Quick / Timely	○	○	○	○	○
Electronic (e-mail)	Easy to use	○	○	○	○	○
	Efficient	○	○	○	○	○
	Quick / Timely	○	○	○	○	○
Faxes	Easy to use	○	○	○	○	○
	Efficient	○	○	○	○	○
	Quick / Timely	○	○	○	○	○
Grapevine	Easy to use	○	○	○	○	○
	Efficient	○	○	○	○	○
	Quick / Timely	○	○	○	○	○
Audiovisual	Easy to use	○	○	○	○	○
	Efficient	○	○	○	○	○
	Quick / Timely	○	○	○	○	○
Telephone	Easy to use	○	○	○	○	○
	Efficient	○	○	○	○	○
	Quick / Timely	○	○	○	○	○
Word of mouth: Face to face	Easy to use	○	○	○	○	○
	Efficient	○	○	○	○	○
	Quick / Timely	○	○	○	○	○
Word of mouth: Meetings	Easy to use	○	○	○	○	○
	Efficient	○	○	○	○	○
	Quick / Timely	○	○	○	○	○
Written: Memoranda	Easy to use	○	○	○	○	○
	Efficient	○	○	○	○	○
	Quick / Timely	○	○	○	○	○
Written: Mirror	Easy to use	○	○	○	○	○
	Efficient	○	○	○	○	○
	Quick / Timely	○	○	○	○	○

Answer the following questions by darkening the relevant circle

		Yes	No
50.	Should the discussion of job related problems be encouraged?	○	○
51.	Can you listen to others adequately?	○	○
52.	Can you deal with an unpleasant situation without becoming unpleasant yourself?	○	○
53.	Do you raise sensitive issues in public forums?	○	○
54.	Do you find it easy to share your thoughts and feelings with others?	○	○
55.	Are you able to remain calm and objective when a colleague is upset?	○	○
56.	Do you like change in general?	○	○

Communication from a personal point of view. Please print your reply.

57.   What is the best aspect of communication at the CUT?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

58.   What is the worst aspect of communication at the CUT?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

59.   Do you have any suggestions to improve internal communication at the CUT?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

60.   Previous attempts to improve internal communication at the CUT failed. Why do you think this happened?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you for your co-operation.
Return the completed questionnaire, no later than 31 May 2006, to:

Ms Mardi Delport
Room 100
First floor
Advancement and Marketing Building
Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT)

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Please answer the following questions as honestly as possible. Please explain,
substantiate, motivate where possible.

1. Do you have any formal internal communication model at your institution? If
   yes, please give details. If not, how/what media/mediums do you use to
   communicate internally to staff members (for example, internal newsletter,
   name of newsletter, frequency, and so forth)?
2. What strategic importance is assigned to internal communication in your
   institution?
3. Do you have the necessary resources (financial and human resources) in your
   Communication Department?

APPENDIX C: E-MAIL QUESTIONS

Dear…………….

Hope you are doing well? You will recall that I phoned you a couple of weeks ago to discuss some aspects relating to internal communication with you for my Ph.D. studies. I'm now entering the stage where I have to do a study with information rich participants from various multi-campus universities in South Africa.   I would therefore like to ask you to answer the following questions as honest and as comprehensive as possible. It will only take a few minutes to complete as it's only five questions. Please note that your confidentiality is guaranteed and that your names will not be mentioned in this particular section regarding the study at higher education institutions. Thank you very much for your time.

Please reply to this e-mail and provide me with the necessary answers no later than Friday, 29 February 2008.

1. How do you (as communication specialist) view the role of internal communication at your specific higher education institution?
2. Do you think that your university regards internal communications as a core business value? Please explain.
3. Does your university have an effective upward, downward and horizontal communication system in place? Please elaborate.
4. What do you think needs to be done to improve possible shortcomings in internal communication at your institution?
5. Do you think the fact that your university boasts of multi-campuses hampers communication? Please explain your response.

Yours sincerely,

Mardi
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APPENDIX D: E-MAIL QUESTIONS FOR INTER-INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION

Dear ……………….

I am entering the final stage of my research project for my Ph.D.studies where I wish to propose an internal communication model for the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) as a multi-campus institution with possible application to other multi-campus universities in South Africa. The problem statement thus centres on the challenge of addressing shortcomings in internal communication at multi-campus universities.

The first two phases of the empirical investigation consisted of a questionnaire survey regarding internal communication at the CUT and an interview-type survey regarding internal communication at seven multi-campus universities in South Africa respectively. The third and final phase of the study entails an inter-institutional evaluation and subsequent refinement of the draft communication model that the researcher developed to improve the effectiveness of internal communication at multi-campus universities in South Africa.

The model was developed by bringing together the challenges, concerns and issues identified in the empirical investigation (CUT survey and institutional survey amongst seven multi-campus universities in South Africa) and the perspectives gained in the literature review.

Attached you will find three documents to assist you in the evaluation of the proposed model:

1.   A one-page document summarising the key features of the model.
2.   A Power Point presentation illustrating the five main communication issues and various suggestions on how to address these issues. Some slides contain background information in the notes page – please look at these.
3.   A questionnaire requiring you to evaluate certain aspects of the proposed model.

Please take note that your anonymity and confidentiality are assured.

Thank you for your willingness and time to participate in the survey. **Return the completed questionnaire, no later than Friday, 24 October 2008, to:**

Ms Mardi Delport
E-mail: mdelport@cut.ac.za

Kindest regards,

Mardi Delport

An internal communication model for the Central University of Technology, Free State as a multi-campus institution

FEATURES OF THE MODEL

The proposed model is based on **various practices** following **national and international communication tendencies** and **corporate communication models** that have been successfully employed by the South African corporate business sector.

Communication is defined in terms of distinctive **structural** as well as **process attributes**. With regard to structure the model boasts strong features of the *open systems theory*, whilst communication is depicted as a *strategic management tool*. The model accounts for the extensive vertical hierarchy of higher education institutions by following a *decentralised approach* to internal communication. The model is thus characterised by narrow span of control. *Business units are loosely coupled*. Furthermore, the model places a high premium on *staff engagement, problem solving and decision making*.

From a functionalistic approach communication is depicted as a *non-linear, circular, interactive, non-hierarchical process* where there exists *never-ending dynamic interaction between communicator and recipient*. The process includes *vertical, horisontal and diagonal communication* with a strong focus on the *feedback* component, thereby stressing the importance of upward communication.

The **message** stands central to the model. Messages are **relevant, simplistic, meaningful, consistent and timeous**. The researcher distinguishes between information employees **need** to know (job-related information), information employees **want** to know (motivational information) and information employees **have** to know (organisational information).

The model has **built-in monitoring features**, which form the basis for the **quality assurance system**. In this regard the researcher suggests that first- and second-line managers should be provided with timeframes as to when communicate messages downward. The proposed model therefore puts an **emphasis on leadership communication** and **encourages face-to-face communication** between top management and the rest of the staff community. The researcher suggests that a **reward and recognition system** be put in place that **recognises leadership communication performance**. In fact, it should be incorporated in management's key performance areas and be given reasonable weight in total performance evaluation.

A COMMUNICATION MODEL FOR THE CUT WITH POSSIBLE APPLICATION TO OTHER MULTI-CAMPUS UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Please complete this questionnaire after you have studied the features of the proposed model presented to you in the summaries attached. This will not take you more than 10 minutes.

Your answers will be completely confidential.
Please answer each question as honestly as possible. Feel free to make comments and suggestions, because only then we can address the real problems (and can the model be adapted accordingly).

The questionnaire consists of five short sections, each of which pertains to a particular issue regarding internal communication at multi-campus universities in South Africa.
Each statement refers to a possible feature of the proposed model.
Please answer all the questions by marking the applicable box with an X.
Rate each question in accordance to its applicability (Essential feature = 1; Useful feature = 2; Not necessary = 3).
Please type when asked for an opinion.
You may use the spaces provided to make comments or suggestions.

Proposed internal communication model

By Mardi Delport

ISSUE 1: Bureaucratic nature of higher education institutions.

ISSUE 2: Academic nature of higher education institutions.

ISSUE 3: Organisational structure of higher education institutions.

ISSUE 4: Communication process.

ISSUE 5: Communication from Management.

ISSUE 1

Bureaucratic nature of higher education institutions

CONCERN 1.1

Lack of a formal communication policy.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. A policy needs to be drafted incorporating the principles of this model.

CONCERN 1.2

Content of communication is task-related.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Content of communication should not be only task-related. Personal matters and interesting facts should also be communicated to employees.

2. Staff members should be motivated to do their jobs.

CONCERN 1.3

Social communication and innovation is discouraged.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Social communication and innovation should be encouraged.

CONCERN 1.4

Communication is not regarded as a core business value. (Administrative staff at the CUT had very strong feelings about this.)

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Special efforts should be made to establish communication as a core business value, e.g. as an additional value to the five existing values of the CUT, namely customer service, integrity, diversity, innovation & excellence (see Notes Page).

CONCERN 1.5

Communication is not integrated.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Internal communication is regarded an integrated part of business operations and is advocated on all levels.
2. Internal and external communication is in many ways interdependent on each other.
3. An open systems approach to communication is followed where changes from the environment is constantly monitored.
4. A Communication Manager is appointed on managerial level (see Notes Page).

ISSUE 2

Academic nature of higher education institutions

CONCERN 2.1

Academics are not always familiar with how to communicate effectively.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Interpersonal communication training should be offered for all staff.

2. Quality of communication training sessions at the CUT needs to be investigated and possible shortcomings need to be identified (see Notes Page).

CONCERN 2.2

Limited shared ownership with regard to internal communication.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Measurements to be put in place to increase ownership of internal communication.

2. Communication effectiveness should be evaluated as part of each employee's individual performance appraisal with the appropriate recognition for exemplary performance (see Notes Page).

CONCERN 2.3

Internal communication is not regarded as a strategic management tool.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Employee communication is strategically positioned to facilitate transformation (see Notes Page).

CONCERN 2.4

Lack of human and financial resources.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Provision of adequate human and financial resources, e.g. access to technologies (see Notes Page).

ISSUE 3

Organisational structure of higher education institutions

CONCERN 3.1

Multidimensional flow of information through an extensive vertical hierarchy.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Decentralisation – authority is dispersed downward in the hierarchy (see Notes Page).

CONCERN 3.2

Multi-campus communication – There seems to be no coordination in the integration of the different campuses.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. A communication coordinator should be appointed on each campus.
2. Special attempts should be made to make staff on distance campuses feel part of the main campus's functioning.
3. Special channels for feedback from distance campuses should be created.
4. Regular monitoring of effectiveness and satisfaction of communication at main AND other campuses.
5. The communication function should be aligned on all the campuses and the institutional office.
6. Creative use of technology (see Notes Page).

ISSUE 4

Communication process

CONCERN 4.1

Internal communication is viewed by some as one-dimensional, e.g. internal newsletters only.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. More than one medium should be explored to communicate important information (see Notes Page).

CONCERN 4.2

Employees are not always the first to be informed of important organisational information before it becomes general news. (Administrative staff at the CUT had very strong feelings about this.)

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Important information is communicated without delay.
2. More than one language is used.
3. Formal as well as informal communication tools are directed at informing employees of important organisational news (see Notes Page).

CONCERN 4.3

Meetings, rumours, gossip and co-workers are the key informants in the communication process.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Information from top management, e.g. the Vice-Chancellor is communicated as soon as possible (see Notes Page).

CONCERN 4.4

Important information is received too late.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. The timeous communication of information is a guiding principle (see Notes Page).

CONCERN 4.5

Feedback is not always encouraged.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Communication channels for feedback should be established; especially ALSO from part-time staff and service workers (see Notes Page).

CONCERN 4.6

Information is incorrect, not comprehensive, and not always understandable.

PROPOSED APPROACH

Principles to be adhered to (as emphasised in a communications policy):

1. Information is correct, comprehensive and understandable.

2. Messages are simplistic, relevant, meaningful and consistent.

3. Messages are considered in terms of what employees NEED to know (job-related information), WANT to know (motivational information) and HAVE to know (organisational information) (see Notes Page).

CONCERN 4.7

The availability of electronic communication.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. E-mail communication to be extended (**also to** part-time staff & service workers where possible).

2. Always keep limitations in mind and make provision for alternative communication tools (see Notes Page).

CONCERN 4.8

There is a dire need for more technological communication, e.g. SMSs, blogs and podcasts.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. More technological communication and new media should be introduced, such as SMSs, blogs and podcasts, thereby reinforcing the CUT's positioning statement of "Thinking beyond".

CONCERN 4.9

There seems to be a need for more interpersonal (face-to-face) communication.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Pro-actively look for more opportunities for face-to-face communication.
2. The discussion of job-related problems need to be encouraged (see Notes Page).

CONCERN 5.1

1. MANCOM does not communicate important issues.
2. MANCOM does not spend time with their staff to verbally inform them about issues.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Internal communication effectiveness is incorporated in management's KPAs and be given reasonable weight in total performance evaluation (see Notes Page).

CONCERN 5.2

MANCOM does not encourage staff to become involved in decision-making.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Seek staff involvement & problem solving via the communication media efforts.

CONCERN 5.3

MANCOM does not make an effort to communicate with lower-level staff members of the CUT, despite their post level.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Reward and recognition system which recognises management communication performance, based on staff evaluations.

CONCERN 5.4

The Vice-Chancellor does not take the trouble to come and talk to staff members in their own work environment.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Management (VC and other top management) must be encouraged to visibly communicate with staff via all communication media (see Notes Page).

CONCERN 5.5

The effective and timely dissemination of information, especially from management, is a problem.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1.   Timelines to be attached to communication between different managerial levels (see Notes Page).

CONCERN 5.6

There seems to be a lack of two-way communication between management and staff members.

PROPOSED APPROACH

1. Opportunities for two-way symmetrical communication to be encouraged, stressing the importance of feedback.

Thank you!

ISSUE 1: BUREAUCRATIC NATURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

1 = essential feature
2 = useful feature
3 = not necessary

	1	2	3	Comments / suggestions
1. A policy needs to be drafted incorporating the principles of this model.				
2. Personal matters should also be communicated, such as congratulatory messages, messages of support, etc.				
3. Social communication and innovation should be encouraged.				
4. Communication should be established as a core business value.				
5. Internal communication should be advocated on all levels.				
6. An open systems approach to communication should be followed.				
7. A Communications Manager should be appointed on managerial level.				

8. Do you have any comments or other suggestions (as those mentioned) on how to address the bureaucratic nature of higher education institutions?

ISSUE 2: ACADEMIC NATURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

1 = essential feature
2 = useful feature
3 = not necessary

	1	2	3	Comments / suggestions
1. Interpersonal communication training should be offered for all staff.				
2. Measurements (such as the incorporation of internal communication in every staff member's job description) should be put in place to increase ownership of internal communication.				
3. Communication effectiveness should be evaluated as part of each employee's individual performance appraisal with the appropriate recognition for exemplary performance.				
4. Employee communication should be strategically positioned to facilitate transformation.				
5. Provision of adequate human and financial resources to fully optimise the internal communication function.				

6. Do you have any comments on the above or other suggestions (as those mentioned) on how to acknowledge the academic nature of higher education institutions in communication?

ISSUE 3: ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

1 = essential feature
2 = useful feature
3 = not necessary

	1	2	3	Comments / suggestions
1. Decentralisation should be applied (authority should be dispersed downward in the hierarchy).				
2. A communication coordinator should be appointed on each campus.				
3. Special attempts should be made to make staff on distance campuses feel part of the main campus's functioning.				
4. Special channels for feedback from distance campuses should be created.				
5. Regular monitoring of effectiveness and satisfaction of communication at main AND other campuses.				
6. The communication function should be aligned on all the campuses and the institutional office.				
7. Creative use of technology should be encouraged.				

8. Do you have any other suggestions (as those mentioned) on how to address the organisational structure of higher education institutions?

ISSUE 4: COMMUNICATION PROCESS

1 = essential feature
2 = useful feature
3 = not necessary

	1	2	3	Comments / suggestions
1. More than one medium should be explored to communicate important information.				
2. Implement SMSes to communicate relevant information to part-time staff and Service Workers.				
3. More than one language should be used.				
4. Information from top management, e.g. the Vice-Chancellor should be communicated as soon as possible.				
5. Communication channels for feedback from all staff, especially support services staff and Service Workers, should be established.				
6. Messages should be considered in terms of what employees NEED to know (job-related information), WANT to know (motivational information) and HAVE to know (organisational information).				
7. E-mail communication should be extended, especially to part-time staff and Service Workers.				
8. More technological communication and new media should be introduced.				

	1	2	3	
9. More opportunities for face-to-face communication should be explored.				
10. Regular evaluation (campus-wide) of effectiveness of the communication process.				

11. Do you have any other comments or suggestions (as those mentioned) on how to address the issues pertaining to the communication process?

ISSUE 5: COMMUNICATION FROM MANAGEMENT
1 = essential feature
2 = useful feature
3 = not necessary

	1	2	3	Comments / suggestions
1. Internal communication should be incorporated in management's KPA's and be given reasonable weight in total performance evaluation.				
2. Seek all staff involvement & problem solving via the communication media efforts.				
3. Reward and recognition system which recognises management communication performance - based on staff evaluations.				
4. Management (VC and other top management) should be encouraged to visibly communicate with staff via all communication media.				
5. Timelines should be attached to communication between different managerial levels.				

6. Opportunities for two-way symmetrical communication should be encouraged, stressing the importance of feedback.				

7. Do you have any other suggestions (as those mentioned) on how to address the issues pertaining to communication from Management?

<div align="center">

Thank you

Thank you very much for your participation.

Please be assured that your responses will remain anonymous and confidential.

Please return the completed questionnaire, within one week if possible, to:
Ms Mardi Delport
E-mail: mdelport@cut.ac.za

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APPENDIX E: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Q57 What is the best aspect of communication at the CUT?

E-mail (25)
Internet
Available PC, E-mails, Intranet communication excellent.
E-mail and Telephone. (4)
E mails, Telephone and Meetings. (2)
E-mail, Telephone, Intranet. You will be able to get all the information.
Internet, E-mail and Telephone.
Upward communication, Telephone conservation and electronic mails.
Email; Memos (4)
E-mail, Notice Boards
Emails and Bulletins.
E-mail or Meetings.
Oral by supervisors, Electronic.
Electronic devices and Audiovisual communication.
E-mail is efficient.
E-mail is fast. (5)
Electronically effective.
E-mail - I open it everyday and get all messages. (2)
Emailng is the best aspect as everybody has access to it (personnel).
Well developed electronic media such as E-mails etc.

None (7)
At the moment none, however the equipment s there for use.
There is no communication. (7)

I can't recall any!!!
I cannot think of anything. (3)
Hard to tell.

Communication at the CUT has no "best aspect". It is limited and preferential and in most cases can't be trusted.

Need to improve. (2)

Unsustainable information is communicated, rather this than nothing.

Information overload.

Sometimes attempts to communicate issues are made.

Internal communication in units is good.
Information on faculty-level is communicated satisfactorily.

It is always done in an orderly way, professional.
All aspects of communication.
Interactive communication.
The information can reach every one of us. Or we can all share the same information.
The fact that messages are at least send through.
To be informed. (2)

Variuos mediums available. (2)
The infrastructure is provided for communication.

Meetings with staff by supervisors or by MANCOM members with staff.
Informal meetings.
No comments – I'd prefer unit meetings, Quarterly interaction of staff and management and maybe with council twice.

CUT staff is not informed and that creates uncertainty.

People still talk and listen at peer level.

Hearing things that happen in the news.

Some of the important issues are not communicated through. Sometimes if you have a problem, responsible people will behave as if they have knowledge of issues or you'll be posted from one point to the other.

By using self directed work team stream-processes and implementing continuous improvement programs and total quality.

Face to Face communication. (3)

Telephone communication.

The direct approach of my first-line manager.
For me, as part-time, from the supervisor.

That everybody has to change!

Keeps you updated (Mirror and Gratia).
Clear and timely in writing.
Editorial quality of what is communicated.

Communication survey.

Friendly, helpful staff members, always available.

Q58 What is the worst aspect of communication at the CUT?

I had not experienced it yet.

Failure to inform employees of the future status of the institution and serious problem of being not transparent. (3)
Not frequent and thorough enough, too many hush-hush and secrets. The wrong people knowing too much. (2)
People should be open with the information. (2)
MANCOM only interested in what benefits them, not interested in staff welfare, in general "corrupt".
The fact that management does not seem to care that the staff of the CUT is properly informed. (4)
Not knowing what MACOM does and the decisions they make. (3)
The fact that the acting VC is not willing to listen to the legitimate problems of concerns.
The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.
Selective, top down autocrats. (3)
Council decided on issues without consulting the stakeholders.
MANCOM does not live in the real world and do not listen to what people have to say.

Memorandums (2)
Newsletters (2)
Mirror
Letters
Newspaper information - next week CUT provide information.

Notice Boards (7)

Long meetings.

Sending documents to finance by internal mail.

What we are acknowledging is that everyone has strengths and weaknesses in terms of ability that make him or her relatively superior or inferior to others in performing certain tasks or activities.

Loads of E-mail with deadlines that are not always communicated with me and do not always fit/suit my schedule. (2)
E-mail - again because not everybody has access to it, and most of the time it is sent to the irrelevant people when using the address.
E-mail and Memos (2)

If something is not sent ahead of time and puts me under pressure.
Late/not on time. (11)
Incomplete, does not reach all stakeholders, tea rooms talks sometimes incite/upset, not based on facts.

As deeltydse personeellid bereik sommige inligting my glad nie - eers as dit te laat is hoor ek deur die bostelegraaf daarvan.
You hear about it after the effect had already been experienced.
Grapevine (15)
Gossip (4)

No co-ordination in integration of different departments.
Between colleagues.

Media (3)
The fact that we have to read news about our institution in the paper before it reaches us within the institution. (2)

Incorrect Information. (3)
Not always understandable. (3)
Information not comprehensive.
Miscommunication (2)
Mixed messages.
Ambiguity. A feeling of communication form top-down exists regardless of how many times bottom-up communication is tried.
Second hand communication

Intranet

No communication (16)
The worst is the fact that the CUT does not make decisions at all - keep everything on hold.
Very little communication to employees exists at CUT.
There is little communication with personnel.

Cumbersome red tape of a billion policies when you ony need a million policies.

Only senior managers are informed.

Meetings due to the fact that not all personnel attends because there's a lot of work to be done in offices and some are attending conferences and workshops, giving lectures and so forth. (2)

Poor communication to Welkom Campus. Bloemfontein campus not used to a campus scenario.

Downward communication which often leads to misunderstanding and conflict of interest between supervisors and subordinates. (2)

To reach all employees.

No suggestions.

Information from the different sources are not always co-ordinated and therefore different messages are received - the recipient needs to make an effort to get the information.

There is no communication from the bottom upwards. (2)
There is the same people sitting in a position but do not do something. People do not have pride in their work.

If you want an article in the Mirror you need to write it yourself.

Telephone (3)

The fact that skype + other audiovisual methods of communication are not used more often.

The training is basic and not applied in the work place. I have not attended any.

People don't use the information and memo's - go straight on desks without reply.

The fact that messages that are communicated are not implemented as is indicated. People/units/managers etc. can relay a message but don't have the powers to dispose or execute it.

The emotional content in which communication takes place.

Vision and leadership are communicated.

No proper communication channel.

It can sometimes mislead people.

The little that there is does not contain the truth.

Make sure all staff members are informed. (6)
Is postdoc staff informed?

Where communication is!

Fakse

Passive resistance.

N/A

Q59 Do you have any suggestions to improve internal communication at the CUT?

None (4)
No (3)
No suggestions (3)
Don't know

Things will not come right.
It does not exist.

Management to be trained on proper communacation channels and be evaluated from time to time. (2)
I think management have their own style which is more towards dictatorship and therefore are not willing to change. We are in the new South Africa where democracy is enriched and therefore every thing should be done transparently. Management should be fair so that they can be accountable and thus have the opportunity to be challenged.
Communication channels are not clear and not maintained, senior management keep info to themselves for their own benefit.
Management must start talking to their staff on important messages and not leave it to supervisors only.
Management should give out the correct information to staff.
I am not sure that management directors etc. knows what happen with lecturers on ground level. Whether they are coping, happy with what they do, or are they giving their best.
Management should be more active in communicating with other staff at a personal level and HR should be more involved with internal communication and marketing.
CUT Management knows what the problem is but they are not prepared to change.
Yes, but it will be ignored by CUT Management like before.
Sharing must start among 1st line managers so that important information can filter through to the staff who share common (work related) interest with staff in their sections.
Two focus areas: 1) CEO of the CUT - Company 2) communication competitive of immediate supervisions.
"Managing by working ground" management must be visible to all ranks at the CUT. Not locked into their offices!!!
MANCOM make decisions that are not practical to implement. They should incorporate lower level of employees in the decision making process.
MANCOM needs to keep staff informed about what is happening right now. Right now everyone is in the dark as to the future of CUT. Appointment of new rector, Deputy, as well as supervisors.
MANCOM must listen to what people have to say, they should familiarize themselves with what is happening on the ground, and get out of their ivory towers where they exist in isolation and obviously to the real world.
Start with MANCOM then to first line managers to Departments.
Yes, Tell MANCOM members what maybe communicated?

Suggest that internet, E-mail be used to forward important information. (10)

All staff should have access to E-mail.
Supervisors should communicate with employees on daily basis matters that are very important (face to face0, communication should be by Email – it's one of the fastest.

Follow E-mail up with telephone.

Notices on Notice boards.

Much more and often divisional meetings with first line managers. (6)
Minutes of meeting or resolutions that should be communicated to staff should be circulated by a document that should be acknowledged by each and every employee of the CUT to avoid distortion of information. (2)
Meetings are information sessions, hardly anyone participates. Meetings should be informal sometimes which would result in getting staff to participate, share ideas or come up with better proposals. No decisions are really implemented - talk about we will do so and so; but so and so is never carried out.
Reduce meetings / meeting time.

The message is the actual physical product from the sources encoding. Our message is affected by the code or group of symbols we use to transfer meaning - the content of the message itself.

Perhaps need anonymous questionnaires and other internal memos to be printed out and posted in mailboxes (as it was) to accommodate the many (mostly part time) staff who are not on E-mail.
Memos as to what is happening, especially the restructuring, more visual means.
Monthly newspaper. (2)
Distribute a weekly pamphlet written in English, Afrikaans, and Sesotho.
Yes, important issues affecting staff, such as safety, negotiations, restructuring, post evaluations, promotions etc. Have to be communicated regularly and efficiently.

Use all forms of communication.(3)

Video Conferencing

Sufficient staff

Policy consolidation

Accept Welkom campus as a campus and communicate with us.

SMS's, Bulletin board and outlook.

Everyone must realise that hey must be together to accomplish something. (2)

Encourage vertical communications; make vertical communication more "accessible" and user friendly.
More open communication channels, especially upwards (vertical) (2)
Just make the message as clear as possible, whether it's upward or downward messages. (2)
Prompt feedback.

To be open and honest. (11)

Talk the Truth.

Transparency (6)

Confidence in staff.

Always communicate, information is not on time, Grapevine always reaches us first. (2)
Decisions taken should be communicated more often to staff members.
First line managers must communicate better to subordinates (timeously).
Verantwoordelike persone moet doodgewoon die inligting betyds (voortyding indien nodig!) deurstuur. (2)

Respect for others.

Getting all the people on the same level together once a quarter for discussion of problems and getting to know what's going on outside the Mahabane Building.

Maak gebruik van meertaligheid. Equal amounts of Afrikaans and English. (3)

Less paperwork (reports etc.) and more direct communication (with cc to manager). (2)

Regular interactive communication with other units.

People who don't understand other working situations shouldn't deal with problems etc. (2)

Yes, please, verbal communication (mouth to mouth). (5)
Combination of oral and written communication messages is the best suggestion as one will be in a possession of a hard copy for future reference or a proof that something has indeed been communicated between parties.

Speak less and listen more. (2)

Decentralize authority/power to handle and implement messages / communications.

Yes, the people must be well informed before communication takes place.

Information been classified for a few individuals. (2)

Maybe people did not give possible common or suggestions or people who were responsible did not do their work effectively so.

Clear out reporting areas.
Reporting lines are too formal /strict.

Opleiding v. personeel.

Communication manager, structure, workshops.

Q60 Reseons for failure of previous attempts to improve internal communication at the CUT.

No
No suggestions.
Nothing
Not sure why. (3)
Do not know. (4)
Not here long enough to be able to comment.
Not aware of failure.

We receive no communication. (4)
Lack of communication. (2)

Management is simply not prepared to improve on the aspect.
Management does not lead by example, I personally think that one at the CUT understands the importance nor the concept of internal marketing.
No trust, Top management only look after themselves, they didn't care about lower ranks.
There is a huge gap (financially, status wise) between lower level employees and MANCOM.
Management don't speak from one mouth, causes distrust. When questioned for real hard facts, it is often hidden whch causes conflict.
Because management cannot manage. People/processes. (3)
People are afraid to tell management, keep secrets and are not as transparent as they should be. You think it is a secret and should not be communicated.
Lack of management support - they honour an outcome - not the process. They need to learn to talk so that all can understand, and seriously need to learn how to listen.
Management remains reluctant to become involved, they are afraid that they will get difficult questions.
Feeling of non involvement of management at "ground level".
They do not listen (2)
The employee's interests are not protected. (2)
No commitment. No care from senior management to his employees.
People don't trust other colleagues/staff. Too much personal agendas.

Management (MANCOM)
Management, does not know how to deal with the information. They must first learn what it is to serve!
Management did not continue with communication with personnel - is totally uninformed regarding decision and processes on campus. Not every union is informed.
Staff is still not being told everything. No official announcement on issues e.g. re-evaluation – what is happening with that!
Inconsistence
MANCOM not prepared to communicate with the normal/everyone "working class" at the CUT. They believe they're always right. (3)
Top management not transparent enough. (2)
Yes, management take the decisions for the personnel.

Training must bring things in context and help all staff members to deliver core objectives.

Work overload.

Not all Employees have access to post, Email and faxes. (2)

People are resistant to change.
People involved were not serious to bring about change.

It is because staff do not always trust what management is saying.

Not all communications focuses were pursued.
Communication processes not understood? "Assuming" every body understands/ knows communicating process.
Use one or two kinds of communication and stick to them.
By not adhering to the communication channels, for example: students communicating directly with the principal.
Communication is very broad and can be difficult to channel, but a simple strategy can solve all.

Process not consistent.

Responsible people were obviously not committed to their task(s).

Communication from top levels to lower levels is very poor, don't consider those on the ground level. (5)

There is still very strong bearer of color/racism at CUT. Hence communication is well only within the different groups or ethnic groups and not across all ethnic groups.

People do not read.
People are lazy to read and too scared to take action.

Illiteracy

Because most managers seem to think information is power. (2)

Too many changes too frequent.

Because of the organisation structure we need loss levels.

I really do not know issues are communicated effectively, but I am not sure that productivity and Job satisfaction is spoken about often.

Communication not followed by action.
The clarity of what needs to be done, by whom it should be done by and lastly when it should be carried out.
You have all these surveys - yet no-one has ever taken the time to actually do something about what's inside of all the surveys. Less paperwork - more pesonal communication on the ground with employees.

People not interested to improve.

People do not care for their subordinates or each other - only interested in their own interests. (2)

Eentaligheid. Amptelike dokumente in engels is self vir my moelik ontsyferbaar. Ek is op die oomblik nie baie beindruk met my Alma mater (UVS) nie, maar hulle is baie meer drietadig as die SUT.
They refused to accept even an Afrikaans memo.

Too many units and departments feel themselves over and better than others. (2)
No direct involvement.
Co-operation, that spirit of togetherness and pride in general at CUT that lacks among colleagues working in all areas.

Because the information got distorted as it is passed by word of mouth.

Dishonesty

No trust.

Communication not clear - staff perceptions - not easy to read or easily understood and wrongly interpreted.
Integrity, messages and actual actions differed, we need urgently to change morale as personnel sense value to CUT.

EASY to get consultants, HARD to implement their advice.

Information is still late. (3)
Internal posts, sometimes it is very slow, you wait for a document for about two days. It delays your work.

No follow up.

Not serious to communicate to academic staff.

Lack of research made.

No holistic approach, practice what you preach - people be willing and able to do what they require others to do.

Staff members are too negative!!

Views are aired right up against a resonator.

Information is shared selectively and only there for the privileged few. (3)
Only trivial issues are communicated. Very important issues are partly communicated or not communicated at all.

Everything is kept a secret - even a resignation.

It might be because of lack of interest by personnel or it might be because of the implementation strategies which were used. (2)

Destruct in general.

Selfishness

People are unable to put things to use because they are not qualified!

People

Wasn't coordinated properly.