

# THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION WITHIN ORGANIZATIONS: A RESEARCH ON TWO 5 STAR HOTELS IN ANTALYA REGION

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## **Key Words:**

Communication, information sources, interaction between employees and managers, five-star hotels.

## **ABSTRACT**

As a feature of socially defined people, everyone is in communication with the others in the social context. Whatever the content is, individuals should exchange and share thoughts, news, in other words they should communicate (CÜCELOĞLU, 1998, p. 12). In this regard, especially in organizations where formal and informal communication exists, “communication within organization” plays a vital role in structuring the organizational activities, objectives, company policies and strategies.

## **SECTION 1**

### **1.1 COMMUNICATION**

Communication can be defined as the exchange of an information, thought and emotion between individuals of groups, in other words, communication plays a fundamental role in balancing individual and organizational objectives (BOYACI, 1996, p. 3-5).

## 1.2 TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

Communication within organizations is classified into two groups as formal and informal. The types of formal communication are “up to down”, “down to up”, “horizontal” and “cross” communication.

## SECTION 2

### 2.1 AIM OF THE RESEARCH

The aim of this research is trying to explain the importance of communication in two 5 star hotels in Antalya region. In this respect, communication types, tools, sources, interaction between employees in different levels of hotels are investigated.

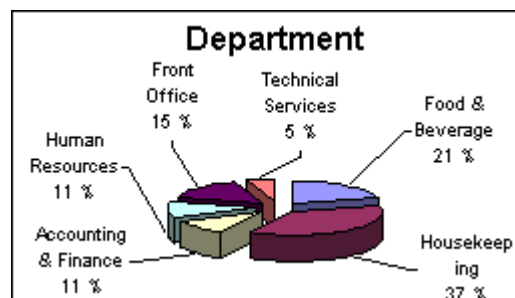
### 2.2 CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

This paper aims to find out real situation of communication levels. Because of its touristic potential, Antalya region was selected as a sample. According to Regional Tourism Directory, out of 55 hotels in Antalya region, two 5 star hotels have been included in our research. Our research has started in March 2000 and finished in the middle of April 2000.

The questionnaire consists of 30 questions, all of which are close-ended. In this paper only the important results were shown. Questionnaires were answered by 65 employees consisting of 36 employees from different departments of Hotel X which is a member of a famous hotels chain and 29 employees from different departments of Hotel Y operating as a single organization. For statistical evaluation, SSPS has been used.

### 2.3 EVALUATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE:

#### 2.3.1. Departments

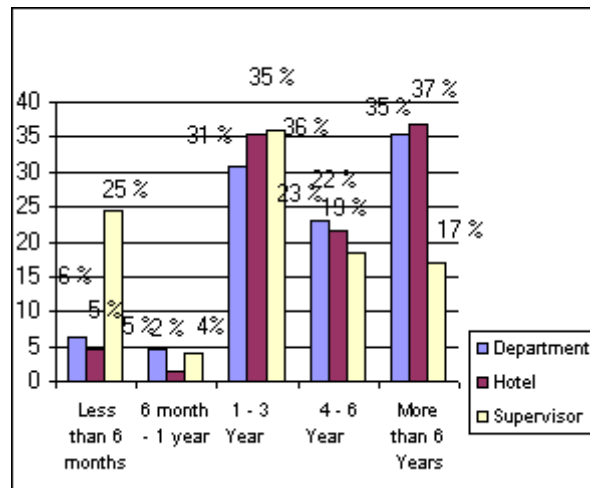


Graphic 1

Graphic 1 shows a ranking of departments as stated by the hotels contacted:

Housekeeping (37%), food and beverage (21%), front office ( 15%), human resource and accounting & finance (11%), technical services ( 5%).

### 2.3.2 Job experience

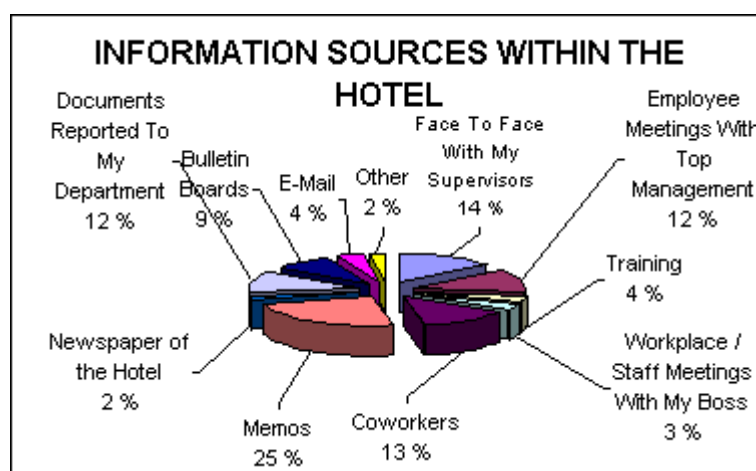


Graphic 2

Graphic 2 shows a ranking of employee's job experiences:

- 35 % of employees are working at the same department for more than 6 years, 31 % of employees (for 1-3 years), 23 % of them (for 4-6 years), 6 % of them (for less than 6 months)
- 37 % of employees are working at the same hotel for more than 6 years, 35 % of them (for 1-3 years), 19 % of them (for less than 6 months).
- 36 % of employees are working with the same supervisors (for 1-3 years), 25 % of them (for less than 6 months), 19 % of them (for 4-6 years), 17 % of them (for more than 6 years), 5 % of them (for less than 6 months).

### 2.3.3 “Generally, where do you get information about your organization and other matters that affect your job?”

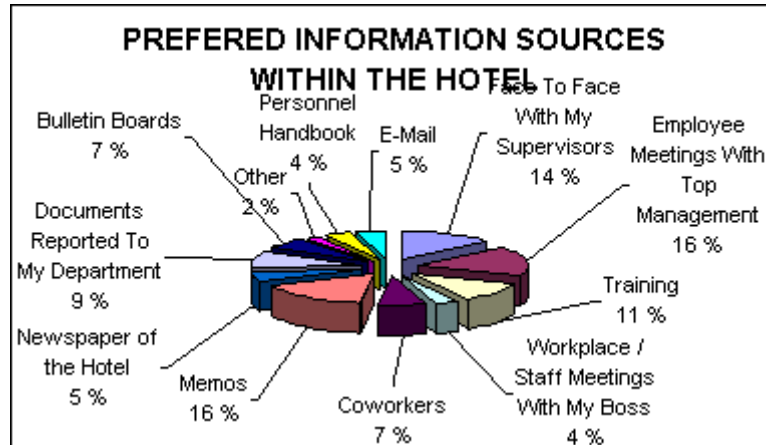


Graphic 3

Graphic 3 shows a ranking of information sources within the hotel as stated by the hotels contacted: Memos (25%), supervisors (14%), coworkers (13%), employee meetings with top management and documents reported to departments (12%), bulletin boards (9%),

E-mail and training possibilities (4%), workplace/staff meetings with boss (3%). This ranking shows a normal communications levels in the sampled hotels. In communication, written communication plays an important role as well as oral communication. At this context the rate of using bulletin boards, hotel newspaper, E-mail connections can be increased.

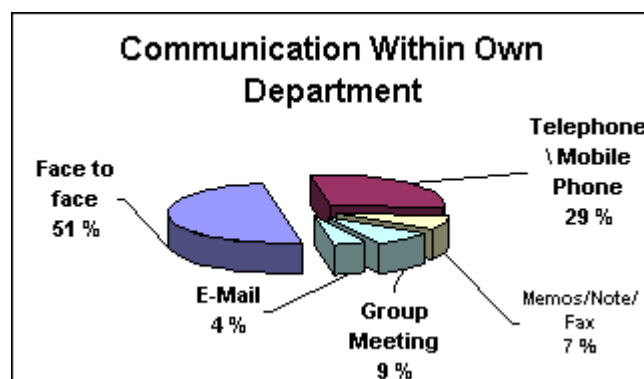
**2.3.4 “Where would you prefer to get information about your organization and other matters that affect your job?”**



Graphic 4

Graphic 4 shows a ranking of information sources within the hotel in order of employees preferences: Memos and employee meetings with top management (16%), supervisors (14%), training (11%), documents reported to departments (9%), bulletin boards and coworkers (7%). This results again show the importance of written and oral communication within sampled hotels. According to employee’s preferences information sources with the top three: memos and employee meetings, supervisors and training possibilities.

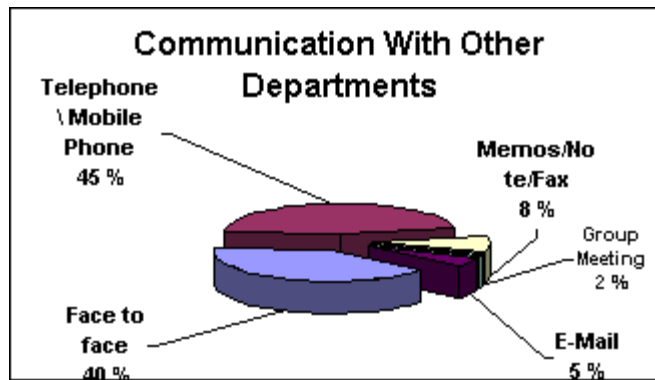
**2.3.5. “How do you most often communicate with employees who work at the same department?”**



Graphic 5

Graphic 5 ranks communication within own department with the top three: face to face (51%), telephone/mobile telephone (29%) and group meeting (9%).

**2.3.6. “How do you most often communicate with employees who work at the other departments?”**

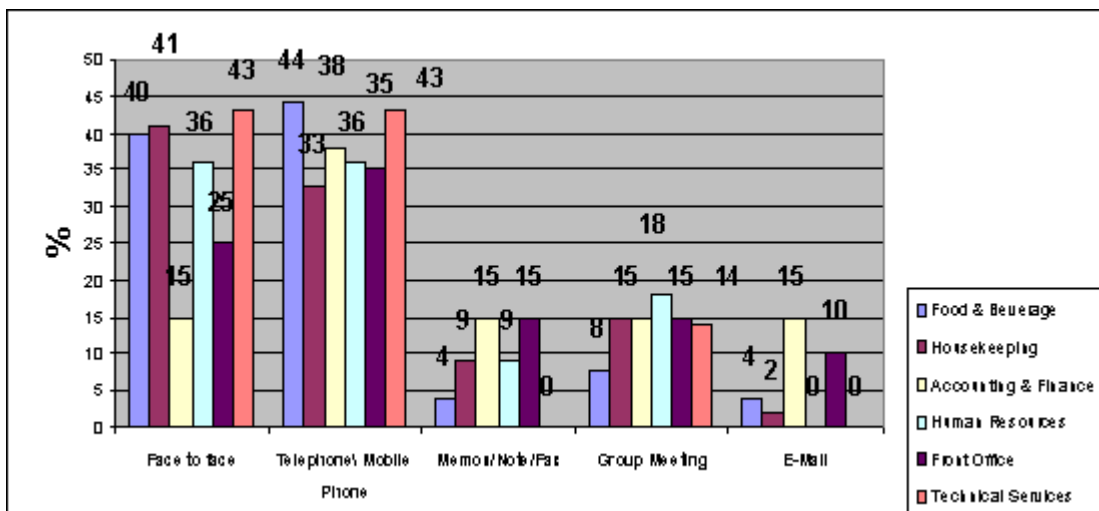


Graphic 6

Graphic 6 ranks communication with other departments with the top three: telephone/mobile telephone (45%), face to face (40%), and memos/note/fax (8%).

Both in graphic 3 and 4 with little changes in the order, the most important communication tools are nearly the same. With its less importance, E-mail connections are also preferred because of its speed and economic aspects.

**2.3.7. “How do departments most often communicate within each other?”**



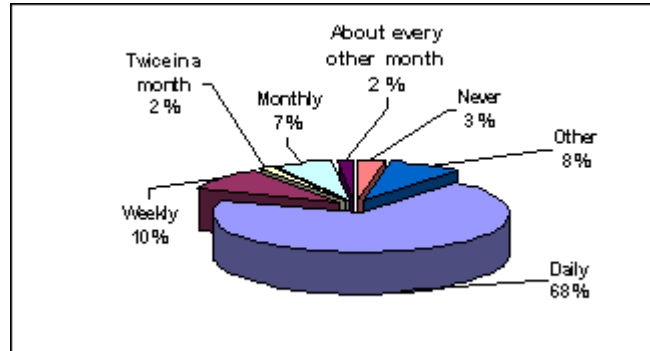
Graphic 7 Communication preferences according to departments

Graphic 7 shows a ranking of a communication preferences according to departments:

- Food & Beverage; telephone/mobile phone (44%), face to face (40%), group meeting (8%), memos/note/fax and E-mail (4%).
- Housekeeping; face to face (41%), telephone/mobile phone (33%), group meeting (15%), memos/note/fax (9%), E-mail (2%).
- Accounting & Finance: telephone/mobile phone (38%), face to face, memos/note/fax, group meeting, E-mail (15%).

- Human Resources; face to face and telephone/mobile phone (36%), group meeting (18%), memos/note/fax (9%).
- Front Office; telephone/mobile phone (35%), face to face (25%), memos/note/fax and group meeting (15%), E-mail (10%).
- Technical Services; face to face and telephone/mobile phone (43%), group meeting (14%).

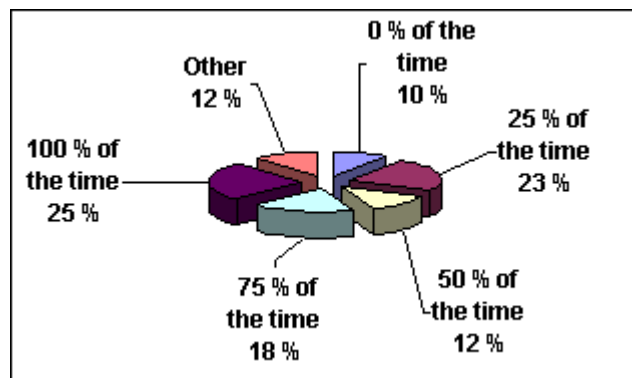
**2.3.8. “How often do you communicate with your manager?”**



Graphic 8

The frequency of communication with the managers according to ranking are: daily (8%), weekly (10%), other (8%), monthly (7%), never (3%), twice in a month and about every other months (2%). When these results are examined, it will be seen that most of the employees are communicating with the managers on a daily basis. This situation will support co-operation, problem solving and communication among employees.

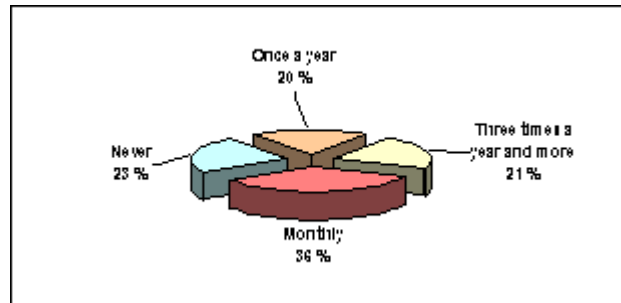
**2.3.9. “In your one-on-one interactions with your manager concerning your work, does she encourage you to offer ideas on how to do your job better?”**



Graphic 9

Graphic 9 shows a ranking of encouraging employees to do their job better: 25% of managers (all the time), 23% of managers (25% of their times), 18% of managers (75% of their times), 12% of managers (50% of their times), For encouraging employees to do their job better much more importance must be given.

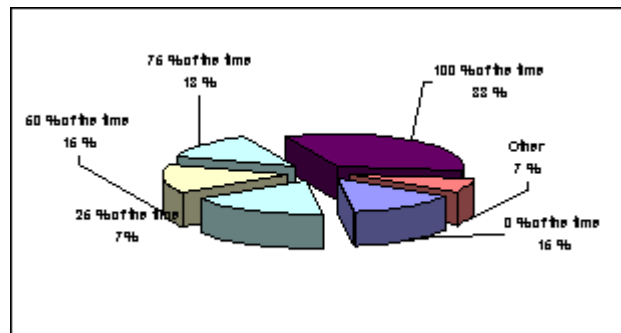
**2.3.10. “How often does your manager meet with you to review your performance objectives?”**



Graphic 10

Graphic 10 shows a ranking of reviewing employee’s performance objectives by managers: monthly (36%), never (23%), three times a year and more (21%), once a year (20%). From these results it can be said that sampled hotels have to be more interested in reviewing employee performance objectives. Because this subject is related with career planning and general performance of the hotels. Informing standards for performance criteria every hotel must evaluate its own structure and activity.

**2.3.11. “How often does your manager ask for your ideas before making decisions that affect your job?”**

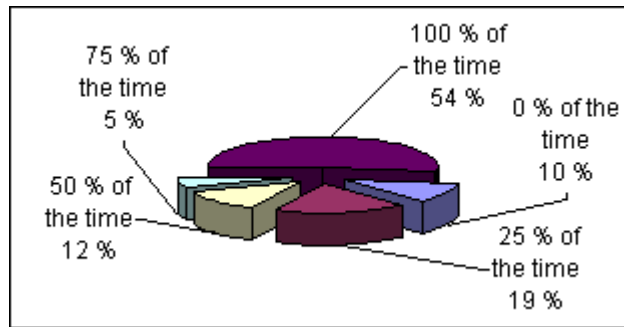


Graphic 11

Graphic 11 shows a ranking of asking employee ideas by managers making decisions: 33 % of managers (all the time), 15 % of managers (50% of their times), 13% of managers (75% of their times), 7% of managers (25% of their times).

Generally asking employee ideas before making decisions will increase motivation and give belonging feeling to employees.

**2.3.12. “Does your manager give you specific enough feedback about the way you perform your job so that you can improve your performance?”**

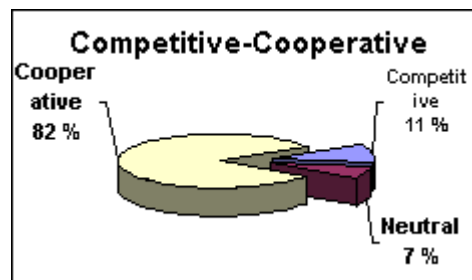


Graphic 12

Graphic 12 shows a ranking of giving feedback by managers: 54% of managers (all the time), 19 % of managers (25 % of their times), 12 % of managers (50 % of their times), 5 % of managers (75 % of their times).

Having information about performance results is important for both managers and employees. Performance results can be helpful for hotels determining deviations between targets and outputs.

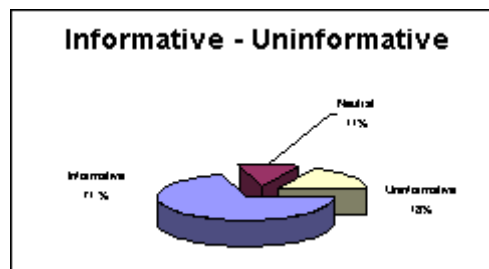
**2.3.13 “Characterize your interactions with your own department with respect to each of adjective pairs.”**



Graphic 13

Graphic 13 shows a ranking of employee interactions with own department: cooperative (82%), competitive (11%), neutral (7%).

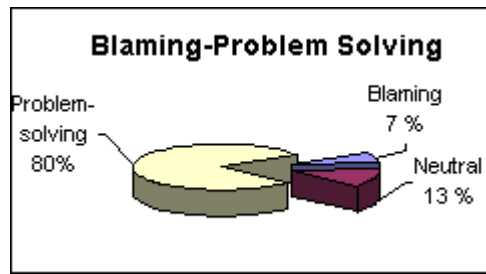
Most of the employees evaluate the interactions with their own department as cooperative. This situation will make communication easier.



Graphic 14

Graphic 14 shows a ranking of employee interactions with own department: informative (71%), uninformative (18%), neutral (11%).





Graphic 15

Graphic 15 shows a ranking of employee interactions with own department: problem-solving (80%), neutral (13%), blaming (7%).

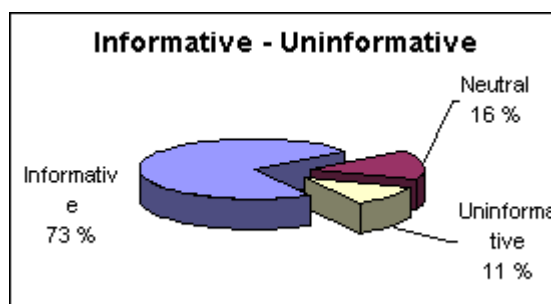
Both in graphic 14 and 15 it seems there is no problem in employee interactions related with being informative and problem-solving.

**2.3.14 “Characterize your interactions with other departments with respect to each of adjective pairs.”**



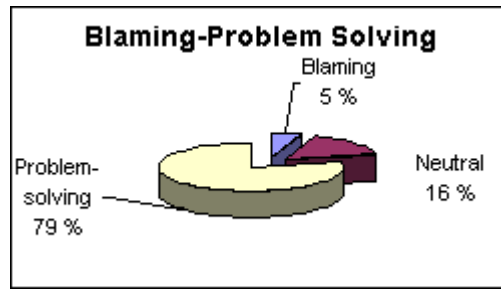
Graphic 16

Graphic 16 shows a ranking of employee interactions with other departments: cooperative (74%), neutral (15%), competitive (11%).



Graphic 17

Graphic 17 shows a ranking of employee interactions with own department: informative (73%), neutral (16%), uninformative (11%).



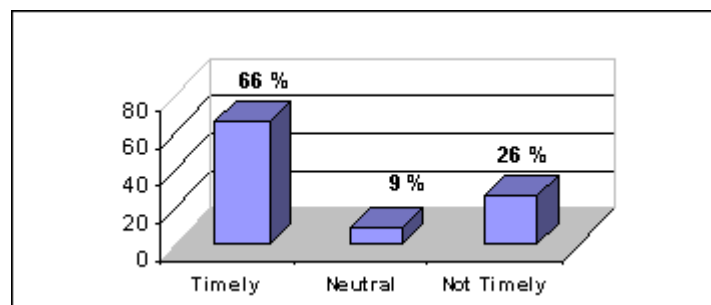
Graphic 18

Graphic 18 shows a ranking of employee interactions with other departments: problem-solving (79%), neutral (16%), blaming (5%).

Both in graphic 16, 17 and 18, it seems there is no problem according to interactions with other departments in being cooperative, problem-solving and informative.

### ANALYSIS OF SOME CROSS TABLES

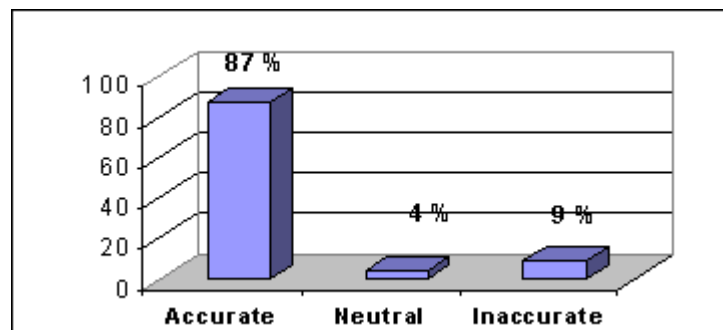
#### 2.3.15 Cross table of: 3<sup>rd</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> (a) questions (Having information from supervisor/managers on time.)



Graphic 19

Graphic 19 shows a ranking of answers about having information from supervisor/managers on time: timely (66%), not timely (26%) and neutral (9%).

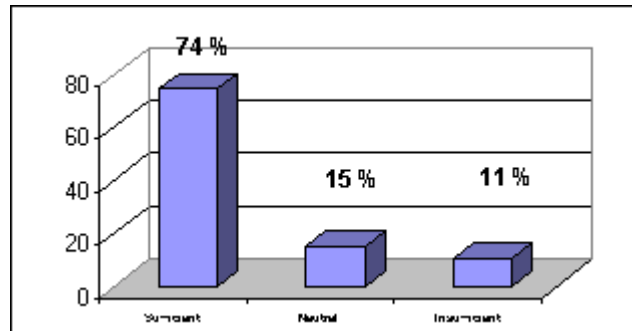
#### 2.3.16 Cross table of: 3<sup>rd</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> (b) questions Having accurate information from supervisor/managers)



Graphic 20

Graphic 20 shows a ranking of answers about having accurate information from supervisor/managers accurate (87%), inaccurate (9%) and neutral (4%).

**2.3.17 Cross table of: 3<sup>rd</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> (c) questions Having sufficient information from supervisor/managers)**

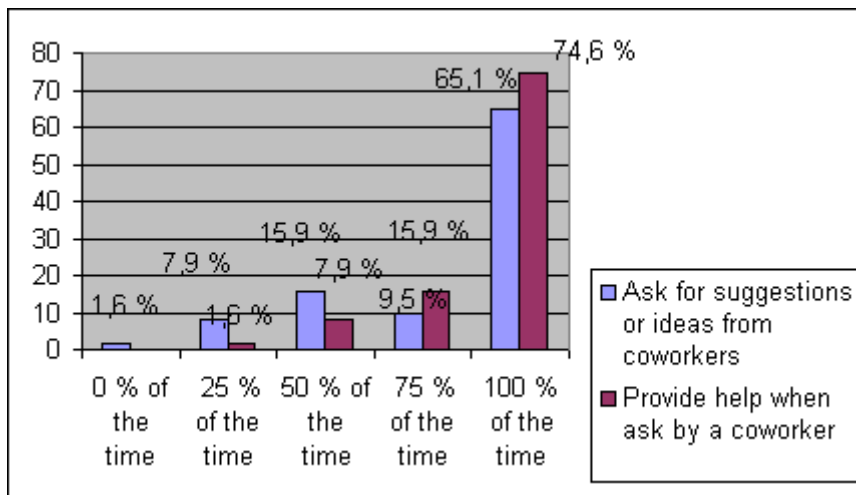


Graphic 21

Graphic 21 shows a ranking of answers about having sufficient information from supervisor/managers: sufficient (74%), neutral (15%) and insufficient (11%).

For general evaluation, it can be said that employees mostly have on time, accurate and sufficient information from their supervisors/managers.

**2.3.18 Cross table of: 19<sup>th</sup> –20<sup>th</sup> questions (Asking suggestions/providing help frequencies)**



Graphic 22

Graphic 22 shows a ranking of asking suggestions/providing help frequencies:

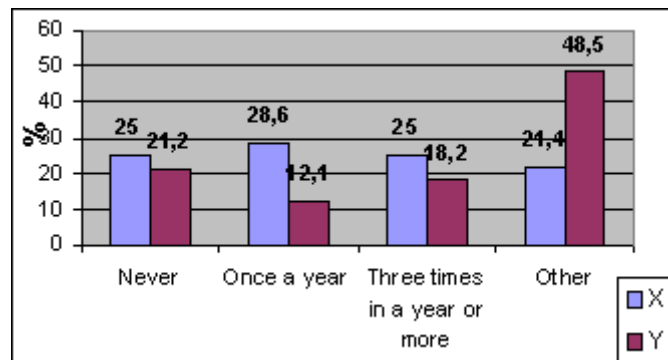
- Asking for suggestions; 65,1 % of employees (all the time), 16,9 % of employees (50% of their time), 9,5 of them (75 % of their time).
- Providing help; 74,6 % of them (all the time), 15,9 % of them (75 % of their time), 7,9 % of them (50 % of their time), 1,6 % of them (25 % of their time).

## ANALYSIS OF HOTEL COMPARISONS

The analysis mentioned before are the combined results of the two five-star hotels. The results show that two sampled hotels have a general tendency to communicate within the same pattern and employ the same types and tools of communication, although some minor variations are observed.

Below mentioned analysis are based on the comparison of the two sampled hotels according to the employee performance objectives, team working, open door policy and usage of the open door policy subjects.

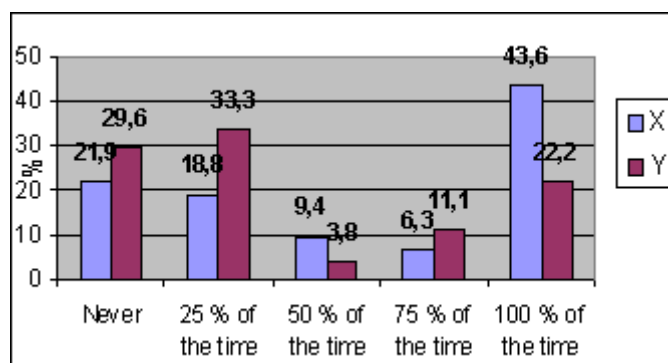
### 2.3.19 “How often does your manager meet with you to review your performance objectives?”



Graphic 23

In terms of reviewing employee performance objectives, 48.5 % of the employees states that employee performance evaluations in Hotel Y occurs monthly or once in two month as oppose to 21.4 % of Hotel X employees. The percentage of employees stating the absence of performance evaluations is dramatically high for Hotel X and Y, 25 % and 21.2 % respectively. 28.6 % of Hotel X employees states once a year performance evaluations while 25 % of them are stating three times in a year or more performance evaluations as oppose to 12. 1 % and 18.2 % of the Hotel Y employees respectively.

### 2.3.20 “How often does management set a good example of teamwork to the employees?”

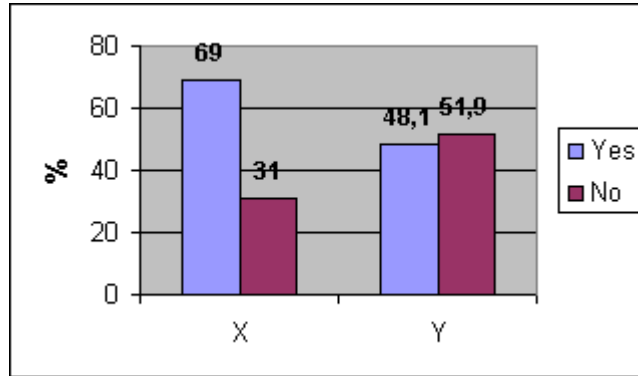


Graphic 2 4

In terms of team working, 43.6 % of the Hotel X employees state that in every situation where necessary, management set a good example of teamwork to the them, as oppose to 22.2 % of Hotel Y employees declaring this situation. This huge difference can be

attributed to the characteristics of the Hotel X being a member of a big chain. Unfortunately, 21.9 % and 29.6 % of the employees in both hotels X and Y respectively state that, their management “never” set a good example of teamwork to the them.

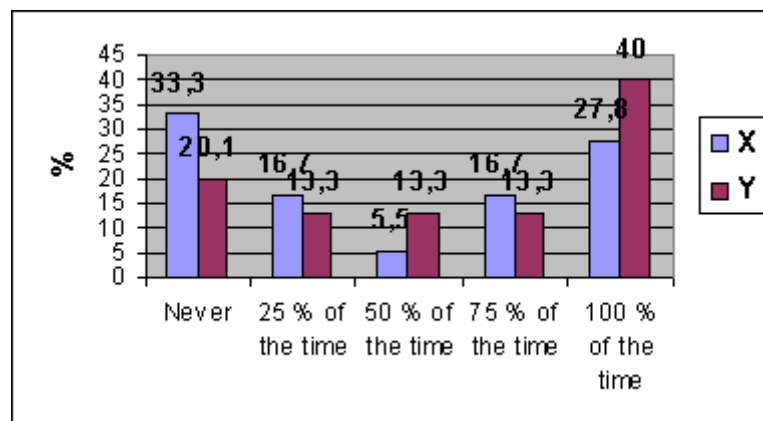
**2.3.21 “Do you know what the Open Door Policy is?”**



Graphic 25

In terms of open door policy, 69 % of the Hotel X employees states that they are familiar with the open door policy concept as oppose to 31 % of them do not know what it means. On the other hand, 48.1 % of the Hotel Y employees states that they are familiar with the open door policy concept as oppose to 51.9 % of them do not know what it means. This difference can be again attributed to the characteristics of the Hotel X being a member of a big chain.

**2.3.22 “Do you use the Open Door Policy to take your concern directly to higher management?”**



Graphic 26

Although as discussed in graphic 25, 69 % of the Hotel X employees states that they are familiar with the open door policy concept, 27.8 % of them “100 % of the time” makes use of this as oppose to 40 % of the Hotel Y employees using “100 % of the time”. In addition to this argument, 33.3 % of the Hotel X employees states that they “never” use this approach as oppose to 20.1 % of the Hotel Y employees. This results show that being a member of a chain and knowing the approaches does not guarantee the usage and performance.

## 2.4. RESULTS AND COMMENTS

- Information sources with the top three: Memos, supervisors and coworkers as stated by the sample hotels. Employee preferences are also supporting this situation ranking: memos and employee meetings with top management, supervisors and training possibilities. In communication, hotels must give the same importance to oral and written communication. In order to increase the effectiveness, much more attention must be given to bulletin boards, hotel newspapers and E-mail connections.
- With little changes in the order, ranking of communication within/with other departments are the same as; face to face and telephone/mobile phone possibilities. For communication with other departments sampled hotels prefer memos/note/fax possibilities. For communication within department sample hotels prefer group meetings.
- Sampled hotels must give much more importance to encourage their employees and review their performance objectives. In order to increase motivation, feeling of belongingness, employee loyalty these two subjects play important roles.
- In the sampled hotels, employees have the opportunity to communicate with their managers mostly on a daily basis. This situation will enable cooperation, problem solving and communication among employees.
- Most of the employees see their colleagues as informative, problem-solving, cooperative whether in their own department or in other departments.
- In the sampled hotels most of the employees state that they have accurate and sufficient information from supervisor/managers on time. Communication with management subject plays a critical role in communication.
- In the sampled hotels food & beverage department mostly prefer telephone/mobile phone and face o face communication, housekeeping mostly prefer face to face; accounting & finance mostly prefer telephone/mobile phone; human resources mostly prefer face to face and telephone/ mobile phone; Front Office mostly prefer telephone/mobile phone; Technical Service mostly prefer face to face and telephone/mobile phone.
- For sampled hotels it can be said that employees have a good cooperation in asking suggestions or providing help to each other.

Evaluating data generally, will enable to state the real communication situation of sampled hotels. Sampled hotels have normal levels of formal communication from “down to up” with communication between employees and managers, asking employee ideas before making decisions, but in encouraging employees managers must be more interested. From “up to down” employees accept the current communication situation. For increasing the effectiveness much more importance can be given to written communication like bulletin boards, hotel newspapers. Having sufficient, accurate information is also supporting the current “up to down” communication. From “horizontal” and “cross” communication, employees see their colleagues as informative, problem-solving, cooperative both in their and in other departments.

Consequently, it can be said that sampled hotels have a normal formal communication with sufficient information flows supporting “up to down”, “down to up”, “horizontal” and “cross” communications. As a whole they have the possibility to complete their communication policy with their corporate policy.

## REFERENCES

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- [2] CÜCELOĞLU, D., (1998), “*Yeniden İnsan İnsana*”, Remzi Kitabevi, İstanbul.

1. Is there any newspaper / magazine of your hotel?  
? Yes ? No
2. If you answered “yes” to question 1, rank the following type of articles appearing in newspaper of the hotel from 1 to 11, with “1” representing the article you appear most often and “11” the one appeared least often.
- ? Front page article(s)
  - ? Safety stories
  - ? Health/fitness articles
  - ? Employee recognition/award stories
  - ? Conduct of my department business/operations
  - ? Good communication practices
  - ? Employee innovation/productivity
  - ? Quality improvement articles
  - ? Process Improvement Program stories
  - ? Trading Post
  - ? News about the hotel
3. Generally, where do you get information about your organization and other matters that affect your job?
- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| ? Face-to-face with supervisors/managers | ? Memos                               |
| ? Employee meetings with top management  | ? Newspaper of the hotel              |
| ? Training                               | ? Documents reported to my department |
| ? Workplace/staff meetings with my boss  | ? Bulletin boards                     |
| ? Training                               | ? Letters to my home                  |
| ? Coworkers                              | ? Employee handbook                   |
| ? News media (e.g., newspapers, TV)      | ? Electronic mail                     |
| ? Other:.....                            |                                       |

4. Where you would prefer to get information about your organization and other matters that affect you and your job?
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face with supervisors/managers | <input type="checkbox"/> Memos                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employee meetings with top management  | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper of the hotel              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Training                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Documents reported to my department |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Workplace/staff meetings with my boss  | <input type="checkbox"/> Bulletin boards                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Training                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Letters to my home                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coworkers                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Employee handbook                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> News media (e.g., newspapers, TV)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic mail                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other:.....                            |  |
5. How do you most often communicate with employees who work at the same department? Rank the following methods from 1 to 5, with "1" representing the method you use most often and "5" the one used least often. Please assign different ranks to each method (no ties).
- Face-to-face, one-on-one meetings
  - Telephone
  - Memos/notes/faxes
  - Group meetings (3 or more people)
  - Electronic mail
6. How do you most often communicate with employees who work at the other departments? Rank the following methods from 1 to 5, with "1" representing the method you use most often and "5" the one used least often. Please assign different ranks to each method (no ties).
- Face-to-face, one-on-one meetings
  - Telephone
  - Memos/notes/faxes
  - Group meetings (3 or more people)
  - Electronic mail
7. Do you know where to go to look up Hotel orders and policies and procedures?
- Yes  No
8. Do you know what the Open Door Policy is?
- Yes  No
9. If you had a major problem or conflict with your supervisor that you could not resolve to your satisfaction, how likely is it that you would use the Open Door Policy to take your concern directly to higher management? (circle one answer; skip this question if you answered "no" to question 10).
- Never
  - 25% of the time
  - 50% of the time
  - 75% of the time
  - 100% of the time



10. How often do you communicate with your manager?

- ? Daily
- ? Weekly
- ? Twice in a month
- ? Monthly
- ? About every other month
- ? Never
- ? Other:.....

11. In your one-on-one interactions with your managers concerning your work, does she/he encourage you to offer ideas on how to do your job better?

- ? Never
- ? in about 25% of the time
- ? in about 50% of the time
- ? in about 75% of the time
- ? in 100% of the time
- ? Other:.....

12. How often does your manager meet with you to review your performance objective?

- ? Never
- ? Once a year
- ? Twice a year
- ? Three or more times a year
- ? Other:.....

13. How often does your manager ask for your ideas before making decisions that affect your job?

- ? 0% of the time
- ? 25% of the time
- ? 50% of the time
- ? 75% of the time
- ? 100% of the time
- ? Other:.....

14. Does your manager give you specific enough feedback about the way you perform your job so that you can improve your performance?

- ? 0% of the time
- ? 25% of the time
- ? 50% of the time
- ? 75% of the time
- ? 100% of the time
- ? Other:.....

15. Please characterize your interactions with your boss with respect to each of the adjective pairs listed below. For each pair of adjectives circle the number that best describes the nature of your interactions with him or her. The closer the number to an adjective at either end of the scale (1 or 5), the stronger you believe that adjective applies to your interactions with your boss. Circle 3 if you are uncertain.

My interactions with my boss are:

competitive	1	2	3	4	5	cooperative
closed	1	2	3	4	5	frank (open)
one-way	1	2	3	4	5	two-way
blaming	1	2	3	4	5	problem-solving
confusing	1	2	3	4	5	clear
relaxed	1	2	3	4	5	tense
attentive	1	2	3	4	5	inattentive
informative	1	2	3	4	5	uninformative
sufficient	1	2	3	4	5	insufficient

16. Since the beginning my working experience the information I have received about *my department's* issues/events has been:

timely	1	2	3	4	5	not timely
accurate	1	2	3	4	5	inaccurate
sufficient	1	2	3	4	5	insufficient

17. Since the beginning of my working experience in the hotel, the information I have received about the hotel issues/events has been:

timely	1	2	3	4	5	not timely
accurate	1	2	3	4	5	inaccurate
sufficient	1	2	3	4	5	insufficient

18. Since the beginning of my working experience the information I have received from *other departments* that I need to do my job has been:

timely	1	2	3	4	5	not timely
accurate	1	2	3	4	5	inaccurate
sufficient	1	2	3	4	5	insufficient

19. You're having difficulty solving a problem assigned to you. How often do you ask for suggestions or ideas from coworkers?

- ? 0% of the time
- ? 25% of the time
- ? 50% of the time
- ? 75% of the time
- ? 100% of the time

20. How often do you provide help when asked by a coworker who is trying to solve a problem?

? 0% of the time

? 25% of the time

? 50% of the time

? 75% of the time

? 100% of the time

21. Please characterize your interactions with (A) the coworkers in your work group AND (B) your interactions with other work groups with respect to each of the adjectives pairs listed below. For each pair of interactions with the specified individuals (coworkers in your group or with members of other work groups). The closer the number to an adjective at either end of the scale (1 or 5), the stronger you believe that adjective applies to your interactions. Circle 3 if you are uncertain.

*PART A: My interactions with coworkers in my work group are:*

competitive	1	2	3	4	5	cooperative
closed	1	2	3	4	5	frank (open)
one-way	1	2	3	4	5	two-way
blaming	1	2	3	4	5	problem-solving
confusing	1	2	3	4	5	clear
relaxed	1	2	3	4	5	tense
attentive	1	2	3	4	5	inattentive
informative	1	2	3	4	5	uninformative
sufficient	1	2	3	4	5	insufficient

*PART B: My interactions with other work groups are:*

competitive	1	2	3	4	5	cooperative
closed	1	2	3	4	5	frank (open)
one-way	1	2	3	4	5	two-way
blaming	1	2	3	4	5	problem-solving
confusing	1	2	3	4	5	clear
relaxed	1	2	3	4	5	tense
attentive	1	2	3	4	5	inattentive
informative	1	2	3	4	5	uninformative
sufficient	1	2	3	4	5	insufficient

22. How often does management set a good example of teamwork to the employees?
- ? 0% of the time
  - ? 25% of the time
  - ? 50% of the time
  - ? 75% of the time
  - ? 100% of the time
23. Which of the following classroom training courses offered at this division have you attended? Circle all that apply.
- ? New Employee Orientation
  - ? General Employee Training
  - ? Successful Professional Development
  - ? Performance Management System
  - ? Office Professional Training
  - ? Root Cause Analysis Training
  - ? Other Technical Training (specify):.....
24. Overall, approximately how much of the information contained in the classroom training courses you've attended have you been able to successfully apply on-the-job?
- ? 0%
  - ? 25%
  - ? 50%
  - ? 75%
  - ? 100%
25. Do you know your boss?
- ? Yes ? No
26. Department: .....
27. Are you:
- ? Male
  - ? Female
28. How long have you worked in your current department/unit?
- ? less than 6 months
  - ? more than 6 months but less than 1 year
  - ? 1-3 years
  - ? 4-6 years
  - ? more than 6 years

29. How long have you worked at the Hotel?

? less than 6 months

? more than 6 months but less than 1 year

? 1-3 years

? 4-6 years

? more than 6 years

30. How long have you worked for your current manager?

? less than 6 months

? more than 6 months but less than 1 year

? 1-3 years

? 4-6 years

? more than 6 years

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!**