THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CORPORATE PERFORMANCE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM THAT FACILITATES CONTINUOUS PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT

by

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ACKNOWLEGEMENTS

This piece of work is for all those who have crossed my path and left me enriched. I believe the purpose of life in general is to enable others, and if they cannot be enabled they should at least not be inhibited. Especially those in management positions should view it as a privilege to perform through and with those who report to them. To those who enabled me towards becoming a fuller me… in the spirit of UBUNTU … I am because you are.

Lead them, or follow them, or get out of their way!

SUMMARY

This thesis argues that the role of productivity growth in an economy is critical to the welfare of a nation. It further argues that productivity growth in an economy is dependent on the productivity growth within organisations operating in that economy. It goes on to argue that the establishment and maintenance of continuous productivity improvement requires a management role that enables all employees to interact optimally with their work environments at all times. It argues that the means to such a management role change is a formal efficient and effective integrated corporate performance communication system - A system that continuously facilitates purposeful communication between managers and their employees across all dimensions of the organisation and its environment.

To demonstrate this, the research in this study identifies the main building blocks of productivity on which the performance communication system should be focused. It investigates the pitfalls of the traditional role of management namely "controller" versus the advantages of a management role of "enabler" towards continuous productivity improvement. It also investigates the pitfalls of traditional strategic planning and organisational transformation as a consequence of performance communication breakdown. A corporate performance communication system was developed based on this study, computerised and tested in theory with employees from various organisations as well as experts on this terrain. The argument is substantiated by the results from a statistical analysis based on a work environment study, the results from surveys and role-plays executed in a case study on a knowledge organisation.

A summative overview of what productivity improvement and the performance communication system encompass, identifies the complex nature of productivity, as well as the minimum areas which need to be addressed when attempting to improve productivity. A detailed discussion of the method, which was employed, and the instrument developed to enhance corporate performance communication, precedes the experimental results. A critical discussion of the results obtained from the statistical analysis and the literature

on productivity improvement provide a theoretical foundation on which the system was designed. The system is then explained to illustrate how organisations can apply it to facilitate a management role change that is conducive to continuous productivity improvement and how it can support organisational change as the nerve system of a learning organisation.

Thereafter, a discussion of the areas which were explored and led to the development of the performance communication system, as well as an explanation of the system, provide the context in which the system should be viewed as a guideline for continuous productivity improvement and the change of the management role to enable that.

This thesis recommends that, in order to continuously improve on productivity, the us-them syndrome should be eliminated by a management role change to enabler of performance. The corporate performance communication system developed in this study could be considered as a starting point. A further recommendation is that the experiment primarily based on theoretical studies and practical experience gained over a number of years could provide the need for further research. The thesis concludes that as far as could be determined, this was the first time that a study of this nature was undertaken and that the need for future research to validate this study and its results, exists.

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REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE