

UDK 005.96:005.57(497.7) MOTIVATING LANGUAGE - ML AS A TOOL IN SUPERIOR-SUBORDINATE RELATIONS DURING ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE: A CASE STUDY IN MACEDONIA

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Abstract

The topic of employee motivation has become increasingly important with the transition from command to market economy and the dramatic changes that have been undertaken in almost all organisations in Macedonia in recent years. Hence, the current research seeks to examine the specific role that leader's language plays in relationship and communication with employees, as critical aspect of employee motivation. The primary aim of this paper is to assess the level of a supervisor's Motivating Language use in communication with employees and to measure the extent of employees' communication satisfaction with their immediate superior. Moreover, a comparison will be drawn of superior-subordinate communication relations before and after organisational changes. For the aforementioned purpose, primary research was conducted in a company in Macedonia which is experiencing dramatic changes after its recent privatisation and restructuring. The results are expected to reveal an overall average level of leader's Motivating Language use and differences in the level of Motivating Language use by different supervisors, as well as moderate employee communication satisfaction with their immediate superior. Finally, the findings are expected to reveal a need for supervisor's training in strategic use and deliberate variance of Motivating Language in the process of motivation of employees, especially during organisational changes.

Key words: motivating language, organizational change, motivation, communication, statistics.

Introduction

Increased globalisation, strong competition and rapid improvement of technology, liberalization of markets, and deregulation have generated a need for a continuous change within organisations and business in general. Moreover, in order to stay competitive, to increase productivity and efficiency in working, as well as to rapidly respond to fast-changing sophisticated customer demands, organisations seek to become more flexible and innovative, and to provide high quality services to their customers. This has encouraged business parties and companies to adopt changes faster and to adjust to or lead the new trends. In addition, the opening of ex-socialist countries' markets in Southeast Europe including Macedonia, the privatization of state assets, and the growing number of new entrepreneurial businesses, have introduced radical changes at all levels within organizations in these regions.

The dissolution of Yugoslavia and the transition from command to market economy gave rise to a period of dramatic economic change. Losing their traditional markets, the Macedonian companies were forced to search for new ways to improve their competitiveness and succeed in more demanding markets. In that respect, the human resource management was seen as one of the most important sources of competitive advantage. The above has raised a need for major improvement in this area aiming at integrating human resource strategy into the corporate strategy, and at incorporating human resource practices at all levels within an organisation. However, the acceptance and application of these practices by all employees in their everyday work is a separate process. Moreover, achieving competitiveness through people requires a highly capable workforce, high level of motivation and a supportive work environment (Dmitrovic & Zupan, 2001).

Studies of Slovenian companies (Petrin, 1995; Vrsec, 1992, cited in Dmitrovic and Zupan, 2001) identified the lack of managerial knowledge to enable rapid restructuring as a reason for low competitiveness of Slovenian companies in international markets. Among others, the managerial knowledge was weak in the use of human resource management practices. In addition, Zinnes et al. (2001, cited in Szamosi et al., 2004) ranked Macedonia's management and labor competitiveness as 24th out of 25 countries in Central, Eastern, and South-Eastern Europe. On the other hand, more than a decade of transition, privatisation and complete restructuring of state-owned companies, thousands of redundancies, and the rapid pace of introducing sophisticated technology made the employees reluctant to change, distrustful and uncertain about their future. Therefore, the main issue is how to encourage employees to accept changes and increase performance in this situation. In such turbulent times, effective leadership, motivation and communication as deliberate processes become indispensable.

Indisputably, human resources, as a field, is playing an increasingly important role in the success of companies. However, the understanding of its full dimension leaves much to be desired. Nowadays, the companies in Macedonia are ready to accept HRM policies but not to implement them. The centralized authority and autocratic style of management is still practiced in Southeast Europe (Tixier, 1994), including Macedonia. Communication, leadership and motivation of employees are quite underdeveloped. During the past decade, consultants and lecturers, supported by organisations as EU and USAID, disseminated western HR management practices and techniques through corporate trainings. However, this remained within the constraints of a limited number of companies. In addition, Jankowicz (1998) suggests that it takes at least 10 years for the knowledge acquired from human resource training to be implemented in all its ramifications.

The companies with foreign capital play a leading role in the introduction of HR issues in the country. These companies conduct employee training and invest in their human assets. However, the majority of the companies in Macedonia still do not go beyond recruitment and payroll issues. Taylor and Walley (2002) in their 21 company case studies conducted in Croatia found that foreign-owned organisations are leading the way towards HRM. Namely, their findings showed that many Croatian companies have introduced new HR practices but only in some of the cases the implementation of such practices was perceived to be successful, usually the foreign-owned ones. Contrary, there were lots of examples of resistance to, and poor implementation of, new practices mainly due to middle managers' retention to old cultural values and practices.

In a recent study involving 21 small and medium enterprises in Macedonia, Szamosi et al. (2004) found that SMEs are not giving their employees what they want from their job, such as career development, participation in decision making and alike. SME managers in Macedonia are supportive of planning and communicating the work that needs to be done, but they need to improve issues as sharing information and listening to workers concerns. On the other hand, the study showed that Macedonian employees report neutral job and organisational satisfaction and moderate support from their managers.

Hence, the need for successful leadership and increased communication and motivation in Macedonian companies is apparent. Some attempts have been made to raise the awareness of the companies on the importance of HR, however the HR field remains insufficiently developed and implemented.

Importance of superior-subordinate relations during organisational change

The literature, in general, has emphasized leadership, motivation and communication as key factors crucial for successful change (Appelbaum et al., 1998; Nadler, 1998; Kanter, 1997; Schweiger and DeNisi, 1991; Sayles, 1989).

Covin and Kilmann (1990) (cited in Richardson and Denton, 1996) underline that not only communication and participation is of significant importance for successful change, but also management's consistent and transparent support for change expressed by actions. The amount of information shared with the employees and the channels of communication vary among organisations, and depend mostly on the type of the organisation. However, it has been found that the most successful and richest medium is face-to-face communication, which is preferred by employees (Lewis, 1999). This is critical not only for both downward and upward flow of information, but also because it gives people a feeling that they are more integrated in the organisation and that they are a crucial part of the change process.

Supervisors are closer to employees than senior management due to their everyday communication and interaction and, subsequently, they should communicate the changes related to the work of the employees. Hence, the greatest responsibility for communicating the change is on immediate supervisors who are the key link between the senior management and the employees. Gonring (1991) stresses the importance of educating, training and assisting supervisors in their responsibility to communicate the change.

Moreover, the literature reveals the importance of oral and face-to-face communication in leader-member relationships. Brewster et al. (1994) found that employees in 9 out of 10 organisations in Europe specify their immediate superior as a key channel of communication. It was also found that employees want to be informed of changes by their immediate superior (Larkin and Larkin, 1996) through the most successful and richest medium, preferred by employees, face-to-face communication (Lewis, 1999).

Nevertheless, a research of four Brazilian and four British companies (Belmiro et al., 2000) reported that the communication process was happening contrary to the theory. In other words, only top management was involved in planning the vision and mission, and there was a lack of communication at lower levels. The lack of communication and respect from the supervisors can create resistance and even more cynicism among employees. The feelings of uncertainty and anxiety, characteristic in times of changes, mainly derive from low levels of communication and interaction between the superior and subordinate (Austin et al., 1997). The cynicism demeans the levels of motivation and creates resistance to change, decreasing the already poor communication, thus formulating a vicious cycle.

Communication is fundamental for successful leadership in developing both the relationship with the employees and among them and in motivating them to contribute to the organisational goals. Nadler (1998) suggests that leaders can influence the employee behaviour and increase support mainly by personal example. During the early stages of change employees closely monitor leader's behaviour in a search for more information and signals. Therefore, the way leaders employ language and symbols, rewards and punishments, and how they act in public can greatly increase or decrease employees' support for change. The most successful leaders deliberately and skilfully use language and symbols to gain employees support and commitment to change. The supportive language of leaders increases employees' belief in the reality and legitimacy of change.

The importance of superior-subordinate relationship in the process of motivation and communication is emphasized throughout literature. "The physical dimension of the give-and-take, the social interaction between superior and subordinate, has a significant effect on motivation" (Sayles, 1989, p.70). In a study of managerial effectiveness, Richardson (1965) (cited in Sayles, 1989) found that those ranked as effective superiors spend one-third of the working day interacting with other people, and even more they were the initiators of the contacts with subordinates. Increased interaction between the superior and subordinates will provide an atmosphere in which employees feel freer to provide more information to their superiors regard-

ing their fears, uncertainty, and expectations. Subsequently, an interaction based on trust may develop. The literature acknowledges the critical role of middle managers in the change process. Nadler (1998) argues that, for employees, leadership is embodied in the immediate supervisors who are representatives of the organisation. Thus, for change efforts to be successful middle managers must understand where the organisation is heading and what it wants to accomplish, and even more to accept and to be truly committed to the change.

Recent studies have shown that supervisors are less effective than others in different countries in leading and motivating their subordinates. Namely, the efficiency of superior-subordinate relationship is lowest in Portugal, Spain and Greece (Saias, 1989, cited in Sparrow and Hiltrop, 1994). Comparing the management styles in Europe and particularly in the countries of EU, Tixier (1994) found that the countries of Southern Europe (i.e., Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece) have greater hierarchical distance in the organisations due to more centralized authority and autocratic management. This hierarchical distance influences the formality within the organisation and, even more it has negative impact on the internal corporate communication. The above implies that employee participation in the management of a company is at a lower level rather than the countries of Northern Europe where the management style is decentralized, democratic and participatory. The latter creates a system which recognizes that better informed and consulted employees are more motivated, more productive and better understand and support company goals.

Nevertheless, findings of a survey conducted in organisations throughout Europe revealed that there is a substantial increase in direct communication with employees, both oral and written, in the majority of organisations in almost all countries (Brewster et al., 1994). In addition, the survey indicated that the wave towards decentralization of the management style and the encouragement of employee participation has led to increased face-to-face communication as well as upward communication with the immediate superior as mostly used channel of communication.

Implementation of successful change efforts requires motivation, commitment, involvement and contribution of all employees within the organization. Arguing that supervisor's use of language greatly influences employee motivation, Sullivan (1988) describes three types of supervisor-subordinate communication, based on his Motivating Language Theory of linguistics: direction giving (perlocutionary), the one that reduces employees' uncertainty and increases their knowledge; meaning-making (locutionary), the one that facilitates employees' construction of cognitive schemas and scripts thus giving meaning to the work; and empathetic (illocutionary), the one that reaffirms employees' self-worth and trust. Sullivan's (1988) theory provides a comprehensive model for understanding how leadership language impacts workers. It predicts that strategic oral communication is an important motivational tool which has positive, measurable effects on employee performance and job satisfaction.

Supervisor's use of these three languages contributes to giving directions and increasing workers' knowledge on tasks, goals, rewards and policies, thus, reducing the uncertainty; it also assists in explaining organisational rules, values and structure giving meaning to their work and overall contribution. Finally, it helps in reaffirming employees' self-worth, thus, building relationships based on trust and bonding. The effectiveness of managerial influence on employees through communication depends largely on the variety of speech acts applied. Based on the expectancy and goal setting theory, employees seek information from their superiors in order to reduce uncertainty. Therefore, in order to motivate employees, the supervisors should facilitate the communication that results in giving meaning to their work. The previous would understand formal and informal talks and myth making. Sullivan (1988) indicates that superiors usually communicate the meaning making language unintentionally, acting as representatives of an organisation's beliefs, values and goals.

Leadership is a process that contains both organisational elements, such as organisational goals, mission, and rewards, and interpersonal elements, such as personality traits and beliefs (Kelly, 2000). Organisations use goal setting as part of their motivational techniques. It is an important element in motivating the employees in a way that it directs employees' efforts and attention, encourages commitment to pursuing the organisational goals, and facilitates planning of strategies and actions for achieving the already

set goals of the organisation. Appelbaum et al. (1998) emphasize that for implementation of effective change efforts employees should know their responsibilities and their performance in order to be evaluated against a predetermined set of goals. Law et al. (1998) (cited in Tjosvold and Wong, 2000), in a survey of 170 superior-subordinate relationships, found that strong cooperative goals generate positive relationships between leaders and employees, and subsequently high levels of performance and job satisfaction. In addition, leaders should use vivid language and symbols, express positive energy and personal convictions in order to transmit the change successfully, provoke enthusiasm, and encourage employees to commit to it (Kouzes & Posner, 1995; Berger & Luckmann, 1965, cited in Kelly, 2000).

The Motivating Language Theory proposes that strategic managerial application of all three speech acts will have a significant and positive effect on employee performance and process outcomes (Sullivan, 1988). The positive influence of superior's motivating language use on employees performance and job satisfaction was further on revealed by Mayfield et al. (1998) who found significant correlation between superior's ML use and subordinates' performance and job satisfaction. Through a deliberate use of the three languages, perlocutionary (direction giving and uncertainty reducing), locutionary (meaning-making), and illocutionary (expression of humanity), the supervisor can directly influence employees performance and job satisfaction simultaneously creating dyadic relations based on trust and support, crucial in times of organisational changes.

The primary aim of this paper is to assess the level of supervisors' motivating language use in their communication with employees and to measure the extent of employees' communication satisfaction with their immediate supervisors, as central aspects of employee motivation. This research will draw a comparison of superior-subordinate communication before and after organisational changes.

For the above-mentioned purpose, primary research was conducted in an organisation with foreign capital in Macedonia, which has experienced drastic organisational changes after its acquisition. In pursuit of business excellence and increasing the quality of its services, the new management team has undertaken structural, operational and cultural changes at all levels within the organisation. The technological improvements, the modernisation of operational activities, the structural changes, job enrichment, and job enlargement have substantially impacted employees' work, their responsibilities and the way they accomplish their tasks. This kind of environment within the organisation, with the complex changes at all levels and aspects, requires motivated employees as an essential prerequisite for successful change efforts.

Taking into consideration that employees' motivation is greatly impacted by supervisor-subordinate communication (i.e. by superiors' motivating language use, as proposed by Sullivan (1988) and examined by Mayfield et al. (1998)), this study will attempt to assess the extent to which managers use the motivating language and employees' communication satisfaction with their immediate superiors, before and after the organisational changes undertaken within the company. The findings are expected to reveal a modest use of the motivating language and a need for supervisor's training for strategic use of motivating language in the process of motivation of employees, especially during organisational changes.

Methodology

The research addresses the critical issues on leader's general oral communication skills with subordinates and his/her strategic use of spoken language variance to motivate workers. The emphasis is put on the level of communication between superior and subordinates through the supervisor's motivating language use, and on employee communication satisfaction with their immediate superior, as central aspects of employee motivation.

The original questionnaires, based on the Motivating Language Model designed by Sullivan (1988) and developed and examined by Mayfield et al. (1995), were used with only minor modification. The outcomes from this survey were measured using the Likert rating scale. Namely, the motivating language scale rang-

ing from "Very little" (1) to "A whole lot" (5), employee communication satisfaction questionnaire from "Strongly disagree" (1) to "Strongly agree" (5), and the communicator competence questionnaire from "Strong disagreement" (1) to "Strong agreement" (5). In the original questionnaires developed by Mayfield et al. (1995), however, the communicator competence questionnaire had opposite scoring from the previous two, ranging from "Strong agreement" (1) to "Strong disagreement" (5). Nevertheless, for the purpose of this study and with an intention to avoid any misunderstanding in the analysis of the results, as well as to achieve clearer comparison, the scoring is equivalent to the previous two questionnaires.

The company had over 1000 employees, with about 50 percent working in the head office, and the remaining employees in several branches throughout the country. In order to be able to make comparison before and after the acquisition and due to the changes in middle management, the survey included only those departments where the managers kept the same post. The participants from each department included in the survey consisted of a manager and several of his/her subordinates. This was done to maintain the dyadic relations of supervisors and subordinates taking into consideration the nature of the correlated questionnaires. Moreover, in some divisions both managers and assistant managers were included in the survey with the intention to make comparison between two supervisors and their oral communication skills. The respondents were randomly chosen from different departments within the head office and from one branch office and they were given company time to fill out the questionnaires. Data were collected from supervisor and subordinate pairs. The subordinates rated their superior on the use of motivating language and their satisfaction with the superior's communication before and after the acquisition, and as a comparison, the superiors rated each of the subordinates-participants on their communication competence. Having participants from different departments allows comparison between departments, both before and after the organisational change.

The data from the questionnaires are presented with a mean value, before and after the organisational changes. The Motivating Language Scale questionnaire is analysed in three parts. Namely, the direction-giving/uncertainty reducing language, empathetic language, and the meaning-making language outcomes are separately analysed, for each department included in the survey, before and after the organisational changes. The data on the Communication Satisfaction and the Communicator competence are also analysed for each department, before and after the organisational changes.

Findings

Sample characteristics

From the randomly chosen 56 participants, 39 of them were working in three different departments within the head office, and 17 of them were working in the branch office.

Eight participants were managers of different departments and the remaining 48 respondents were subordinates of these 8 managers. From the total number of participants included in the survey, 3 managers and 14 of their immediate subordinates were working in the branch office and the remaining 5 managers and 34 of their subordinates were from the head office. All of the participants returned the questionnaires. However, because of incompleteness two survey questionnaires answered by two respondents-subordinates were discarded and a total of 46 survey questionnaires filled by the participants-subordinates were further analysed. In order to maintain the proportion between the superiors' and subordinates' questionnaires, two communicator competence questionnaires, referring to the participants-subordinates whose questionnaires were discarded, were not included in the analysis. The mean age of the participants was 40 years, that is 32.2% were in the age between 30 and 40 years, 35.5% of the participants were in the age between 40 and 50 years, and 32.2% in the age between 50 and 60 years. Moreover, 64.5% of the total number of participants were female, and 35.5% were male. From all participants in the survey, 58% had completed high school, and 42% held a university degree.

Outcomes

In order to make clear comparison and evaluation, data from the survey are separately analysed according to different departments, different supervisors, both before and after the organisational changes that have taken place.

The initial data showed somewhat moderate use of ML and slightly higher communication satisfaction with the immediate supervisor. Overall, the data, before and after the organisational changes, suggest that supervisors do not give directions regarding workers' role and tasks sufficiently (2.65 and 3.25, respectively), and though they have shown improvement in their empathetic behaviour (2.84 and 3.54) there is a substantial lack in explaining the structure, rules and values of the organisation's culture to their subordinates (2 and 2.29). Nevertheless, the respondents-subordinates report modest increase in communication satisfaction with their immediate supervisor (3.75 and 4.24, respectively). As a comparison, the respondents-supervisors are "neutral" toward their subordinates' communication competence (3.55 and 3.67, respectively) (Table I).

Table I
Mean values of ML,
communication satisfaction and
communication competence

	Before	After
Motivating Language Scale		
Direction-giving	2.65	3.25
Empathetic	2.84	3.54
Meaning-making	2	2.29
Total	2.5	3.03
Communication Satisfaction	3.75	4.24
Communicator Competence	3.55	3.67

The respondents-subordinates in the survey showed, overall, lowest results for certain communication issues in their relations with the superiors, both before and after the organizational changes. In particular, the respondents-subordinates reported a significant lack in receiving good definitions of what they must do to receive rewards (1.87 and 2.43), specific information on how they are evaluated (2.48 and 2.7), and news about organizational achievements and financial status (2.13 and 2.91) as part of direction-giving language. Moreover, the data suggest that supervisors do not support employees' professional development (2.52 and 3.22), show lack of interest in employees' professional well-being (2.48 and 3.04) as part of the empathetic language; and do not convey stories about people who have been rewarded by this organization (1.7 and 1.96), nor about people who have left this organization (1.87 and 2) as part of meaning-making language. The data on communication satisfaction with supervisors showed that respondents have "neutral" feelings toward superior's honesty in communication with them (3.26 and 3.87), and do not completely agree that their superior understands their job needs (3.43 and 3.83). However, the respondents-subordinates show to some extent better results on feeling free to disagree with their immediate superior (3.78 and 4.3). On the other hand, superiors reported rather modest employee communicator competence. They show lack of employee's sensitivity to other's needs (3.61 and 3.87, respectively) and not paying attention to what other people say to the employee (3.57 and 3.83). (Table II)

Table II

Summary of lowest mean values of ML and communication satisfaction measures

	Before	SD	After	SD
Motivating Language Scale				
Gives me good definition of what I must do in order to receive rewards	1.87	1.002	2.43	1.311
Offers me specific information on how I am evaluated	2.48	1.243	2.70	1.297
Shares news with me about organizational achievements and financial status	2.13	1.024	2.91	1.151
Expresses his/her support for my professional development	2.52	1.225	3.22	1.153
Asks me about my professional well-being	2.48	1.260	3.04	1.282
Tells me stories about people who have been rewarded by this organization	1.70	.986	1.96	1.053
Tells me stories about people who left this organization	1.87	1.087	2.0	1.116
Communication Satisfaction				
My immediate superior is honest with me	3.26	1.373	3.87	.909
I am free to disagree with my immediate superior	3.78	1.094	4.30	.726
My immediate superior understands my job needs	3.43	1.276	3.83	1.060
My immediate superior understands my job needs	3.43	1.276	3.83	1.060
Communicator Competence				
My subordinate is sensitive to other's needs of the moment	3.61	1.164	3.87	1.204
My subordinate pays attention to what other people say to him/her	3.57	.958	3.83	.902
My subordinate generally says the right thing at the right time	3.48	.983	3.74	1.063

The data according to different departments showed substantial differences in the ML use as well as the communication satisfaction. Namely, the respondents-subordinates from the third department, both before and after the organisational changes, report higher ML use by their supervisors (2.83 and 3.62, respectively) and show higher communication satisfaction with their supervisors (4.13 and 4.63). As a contrast, the data on the second department and the branch office show that the supervisors have lowest level of motivating language use and subsequently participants-subordinates report lowest communication satisfaction with their superiors. The survey data suggest modest use of direction-giving and empathetic language and insufficient use of the meaning-making language. Overall, there is only slight improvement in the ML use by supervisors before and after the organisational changes. (Table III)

Table III

Summary of measures according to departments

	First department		Second department		Third department		Branch office	
	before	after	before	after	before	after	before	after
Motivating Language Scale								
Direction-giving	2.64	3.12	2.26	3.0	3.0	3.92	2.72	2.96
Empathetic	2.73	3.66	2.6	3.35	3.25	4.2	2.78	2.97
Meaning-making	2.06	2.13	1.63	2.0	2.24	2.74	2.08	2.30
Total	2.48	2.97	2.16	2.83	2.83	3.62	2.53	2.74
Communication satisfaction	4.2	4.66	3.01	3.95	4.13	4.63	3.67	3.72
Communicator competence	3.24	3.27	3.54	3.78	3.57	3.69	3.84	3.93

The above data have led to the belief that there is a great difference in the use of ML and communication satisfaction with the supervisors not only in different departments but also among different supervisors within same department. The subordinates report a significant variance in the use of ML by supervisors. This is due to the lack of training in deliberate use of ML, thus leaving the supervisors' ML use to depend on their individual communication abilities. (Table IV).

Table IV

Summary of measures according to different supervisors

Motivating Language								Communication Satisfaction	
Direction-giving Empathetic Meaning-making									
First department	Supervisor 1	2.64	3.12	2.73	3.66	2.06	2.13	4.2	4.66
Second department	Supervisor 1	2.12	3.33	2.6	3.6	1.83	2.13	3.27	4.3
	Supervisor 2	2.41	2.7	2.6	3.1	1.43	2.06	2.75	3.6
Third department	Supervisor 1	2.45	3.45	2.75	3.91	1.66	1.83	3.66	4.61
	Supervisor 2	3.55	4.4	3.75	4.5	2.83	3.66	4.61	4.66
Branch Office	Supervisor 1	3.35	4.0	3.75	4.0	3.0	3.16	4.22	4.16
	Supervisor 2	3.0	2.65	3.25	3.0	1.66	1.66	4.38	3.83
	Supervisor 3	1.81	2.23	1.36	1.93	1.60	2.1	2.42	3.18

Discussion of findings

Taking into consideration that superior-subordinate relations and communication greatly influence employee motivation, especially during organisational changes, the survey had two primary purposes. The first was to examine the extent to which the supervisors use the motivating language in their communication with employees after the acquisition and during change efforts, as well as to make comparison between the levels of usage of motivating language before and after organisational changes. The second purpose was to measure employees' satisfaction with the communication with their immediate superiors as a prerequisite for motivated workers. The findings of the survey report less than moderate use of motivating language, as well as individual differences in the motivating language use, and somewhat moderate levels of employee communication satisfaction with their immediate superior.

However, the data clearly point toward higher levels of direction-giving and empathetic language use than the meaning-making language use by supervisors. This implies that superior's communication with the employees is mainly focused on giving direction regarding workers' role and tasks, and reducing the uncertainty (i.e., increasing their knowledge regarding rewards, goals and tasks). Moreover, higher levels of empathetic language use imply that superiors show expressions of humanity; they behave in an empathetic manner with their workers thus, reaffirming employees' self-worth and establishing trust in their relations. The meaning-making language is significantly less used by superiors, which means that they do not explain well enough the structure, rules and values of the organisation's culture to their workers. Having in mind that the meaning making language is communicated primarily through small talks, informal interactions, narratives and myth making (Sullivan, 1988), the outcome shows that supervisors do not use frequently informal interactions to exchange ideas and attitudes with employees, to advocate organisation's values and goals, and to explain to employees the importance of individual's and unit's role in achieving organisation's goals.

In addition, the findings from the survey reveal difference in the level of use of motivating language in different departments and different supervisors within same department. Some significant differences were found in the data on motivating language use among different supervisors from same department. According to the principles of MLT, differences in key outcomes shown by employees are the results of variance in how

well managers engage in three fundamental speech acts when communicating with subordinates (Mayfield et al., 1995). This implies that individual communication abilities are crucial in superior-subordinate relations, that is, the individual character, behaviour and communication abilities of the supervisor may have a strong impact on the success of dyadic relations. Moreover, the data on the employees' satisfaction with their superior's communication correspond to the level of motivating language use by their immediate superiors. Due to the correlation between the use of motivating language by superiors and employee communication satisfaction with their immediate supervisors, there is a difference in the level of employee satisfaction with different supervisors.

The organisational changes slightly improved superior-subordinate relations from the aspect of motivating language use, as well as subordinates' communication satisfaction with their immediate supervisor. In particular, the leader's motivating language has increased for approximately 21% compared to the leader's use of motivating language before the organisational changes, while the communication satisfaction of the employees has increased for only 13%. The above figures show that the slight improvement in the use of motivating language roused minor employee communication satisfaction. Due to the fact that there was no training programme on leader's use of motivating language in the company, the slight increase is not unexpected. Since this is a period of changes and that means decreased motivation, fear of the unknown and uncertainty regarding the future, decrease in loyalty and trust, and subsequently lower performance, the communication within the organisation should be continuous and intensive in order to gain employees' support, commitment and contribution to the change efforts.

Conclusion and Limitations

Organisational changes, including different ways and levels of privatisation, changes in the economic and non-economic activities, and the transition from command to market economy changed the course of action. This has caused enormous turmoil, doubts and fear of the unknown. The restructuring from one system of working to another is expected to result in higher productivity and efficiency of working by continuous education and by following the contemporary trends in the adequate field. However, in order to achieve these goals some prerequisites must be satisfied:

1. Rapid and easy adjustment to the new system of working;
2. Elasticity and enthusiasm in acceptance of new and unknown;
3. Transparency of the new activities through continuous and intensive communication, and;
4. Introduction of adequate processes of employee motivation and their adjustment with the new organisational changes.

Nevertheless, in practice, the above mentioned is not easily achievable primarily because it suggests substituting the former system with a new one. Hence, the ability of supervisors to communicate with employees, and their skilfulness, in most simple and acceptable manner to organize, explain, motivate, and reward the new system of working are of utmost importance during organisational changes.

It is a responsibility of supervisors to give direction to employees and uncertainty-reducing information regarding tasks, performance, goals, policies and rules, to guide employees' work behaviour and share information that would help them better understand how their needs can be met and expectations lived up to, and finally by supporting employees to reaffirm their self-worth and develop mutual trust.

Therefore, the need for supervisor training in communication is inevitable and confirmed throughout literature. This should support supervisors in communication with their employees. It should not only help supervisors adequately supply information and feedback to the employees, but also assist them in becoming advocates of organisation's values and goals, and in creating a habit of frequent informal communications with

their workers. Supervisors' training in deliberate variance of motivating language use is a strong motivation tool to help employees accomplish desired personal and organisational goals. Graen and Scandura (1987, cited in Mayfield et al., 1998) found that leader conversational training was followed by improved subordinate ratings of productivity, job satisfaction, loyalty to immediate superior, and reduced stress levels. In addition, when there are high levels of leader-member exchange, subordinates see themselves as having good working relationships with their supervisors and know how satisfied their supervisors are with their performance (Graen et al., 1982, cited in Scandura and Schriesheim, 1994). High leader-member exchange has been associated with increased subordinate satisfaction and productivity, and with decreased rates of employee turnover.

In conclusion, for achieving business excellence, organisations must exploit the full potential from their resources, among which the human as well. As Steers and Porter (1991) underline, organisations started viewing their employees as a human asset from a long-term perspective. Thus, a lot of attention is given to developing employees to ensure a continuous reservoir of well-trained employees through development programmes, personnel planning, and by encouraging employees to increase their job skills. Each of the above has created additional need for highly motivated employees. Organisations are continuously seeking more effective motivation programmes to enhance employees' participation and contribution to organisational goals.

The study had several limitations. First, the lack of deliberate use of motivating language by supervisors was a great limitation to the study. Taking into consideration that there was no training programme for deliberate variance of direction-giving/uncertainty reducing, empathetic and meaning-making language, supervisors' communication with employees is mainly based on personal communication skills and abilities, and his/her personality and individual behaviour. Second, there was no possibility to make clear comparison between younger and older generations of both supervisors and employees. This was mainly due to the fact that the average age of the participants included in the study was 40 years. Finally, possible limitation to the study was the lack of tradition to conduct surveys, in organisations in this country, where employees are direct participants. This has caused feelings of anxiety and uncertainty among participants-employees regarding the questionnaires and the purpose of the study. Therefore, any future research on superior-subordinate relations in Macedonian companies should be more extensive, should cover larger percentage of participants, and it should examine more extensively the dyadic relations between supervisors and employees and the impact of leader's deliberate motivating language use on employees performance and job satisfaction.

Finally, any further research should focus on enhancing superior-subordinate communication relations and supervisors' use of motivation language as critical aspects of employee motivation. Moreover, future research should thoroughly examine employee's communication competence and how it affects the dyadic motivation and communication relations. The strategic use of direction-giving/uncertainty reducing language, empathetic language, and meaning-making language could be achieved through intensive training of supervisors for deliberate variance of motivation language in communication with employees. The above will strengthen the superior-subordinate relations by developing trust, security, recognition, and self-expression, by clarifying roles and expectations, and by giving meaningfulness of the individual and collective contribution to the organisational goals and change efforts.

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