

THE MANAGING INFORMATION SYSTEM - THE MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM OF THE AGRICULTURAL EXPLOITATION

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Abstract.

The managing information system is represented by all the communication means, equipments, information fluxes, processing procedures of information used during the *prevision – organization – training – coordination – control and evaluation* process.

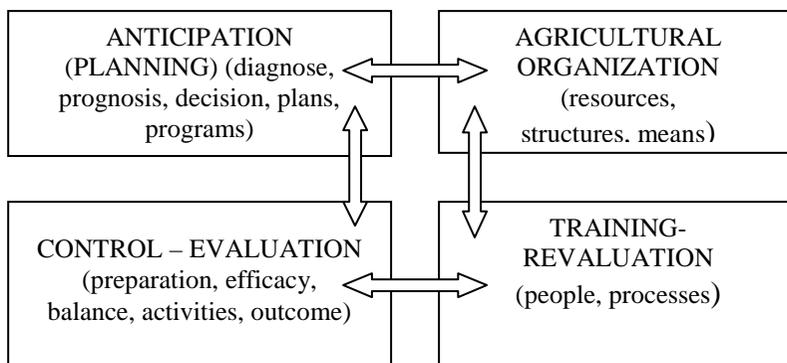
Through the managing information system it is brought into operation the decision package and are monitored the effects of its application in order to warrant the achievement of the agricultural organization’s targets. The information fluxes aim at the decision flux so that to ensure a correlation of the activities by means of the feedback effect.

Keywords: managing, information, communication, system, agricultural, organization

The managing information system

The managing cycle can be schematised (by the first steps): *information-decision-action*.

The couple information-decision represents an inseparable assembly; the information (the quantity or quality element that characterizes a phenomenon or activity) determines the making of a decision; on the other hand, the decisions lead to the making of some dynamic lacks of balance within the system, which means the registration of new information, respectively of new decisions etc.



If in the information system they also use means of automatic processing of information then this instrument is called *informatory system*¹. For organizations that provide highly technical goods the managerial information system can also identify itself with the *informatory system*; theoretically it thus tends to the situation when decisions are automatically made by the computation and processing systems without the relatively subjective interference of the managers. Through the local *informatory systems*, information gathering and processing is carried out by means of the electronic computation units available nearer to the location where (there) takes place the production works. For the distributed informatory systems the automatic data gathering is performed by modern technical facilities to be found at the interconnected working places (connected to the network), and the data processing is performed by central computation and processing units. In fact there are more data processing filters so that at the premises of the central unit there come only the processing of the primary information.

The classification of information is made by various criteria:²

1. From the viewpoint of the way in which they are expressed, the pieces of information are:

Oral: the orally transmitted information is shaded, verifiable by s/he who presents it, it is not widely spread, it doesn't imply processing, the oral information has the disadvantage that it can be distorted or fragmentarily presented in compliance with the observer's training.

Written: usually it is more concise and accurate than the oral reports; it is an advantage as the written documents are accepted judicial proofs and therefore it is paid more attention to the way in which they are conceived.

Audio-visual: such information is presented to be seen and heard; its transmission instantaneous, undistorted, by specific means (closed circuit television, panels of control and synoptic watching, specialized monitors etc.)

2. From the viewpoint of the nature of the processes that it represents information is:

Commercial: it reflects the commercial, marketing, supply, warehousing, sale activities, etc., of the organization;

Research – development;

Production: it reflects the specific activities of the production departments;

Finance accounting;

Personnel: it reflects the relation with the public, the relation with the personnel, aspects, concerning, payments, promotion.

¹ This includes all the means procedures, programs, data bases, expert systems, models that ensure the partial or whole processing of the information provided by the managing information system

² general classification

3. From the point of view of the origin, the information is:

External: its origin is exterior to the organization (including the competitor's field) or from the supra-item that the organization belongs to;

Internal: it comes from the organization own subsystems; they are rough and unprocessed;

4. Concerning its processing degree, the information is:

Primary: it comes straight from the workers, it is not processed or distorted, it covers the field of all the phenomena that take place during the working process.

Intermediate: it is the most spread type of information; it has a low processing degree and addresses to the low ranked managers³

Final: it has a strong synthetic character being refined through various stages; it is for the highly ranked managers.

5. Concerning its circulation, the information is:

Ascending: (on vertical) it goes to the accomplisher or to those subsystems whose leaders are superior.

Descending: (on vertical) it goes from managers to accomplishers or to lower ranks and it acts like a decision

On the horizontal line: it is operational information.

6. Concerning the way of its being organized it is:

Technical – operational: it allows localizing both the activities and the period when they take place

Financial – accounting evidence: it refers to information used for the periodical evaluation of the organization's activities and it allows achieving short and medium term prognoses.

Statistical: it refers to information used for periodical evaluation of the organization's activities and it allows achieving long-term prognoses.

7. According to the period of its appearance, it is:

Periodical: information that comes out daily, weekly, monthly, yearly.

Non-periodical: it has an aleatory feature is of on outstanding interest, their appearance not being prognosticated.

8. Concerning the secret feature, the information is:

Top secret: it refers to aspects concerning the strategic development of the organization⁴.

³ the manager as a person that has authority over an (agricultural) organization or its branch

⁴ Only highly ranked managers have access to it

Professional secret: it covers information concerning the operations of the organization or those referring to its tactics; it includes information concerning new technologies investments or innovations.

Non –secret: it is information that can be released to the public opinion and to the press⁵.

With regard to its credibility, the information is:

Credible: it is accurate, real and can be used

Pseudo – information: it refers to false data introduced in the system in order to block its work⁶

The information covers the road from the transmitter to the receiver through the information circuits (under the form of phone lines, optic cables, electrical circuits). More informational circuits serving the same transmitter – receiver dipole are called information fluxes. The permanent information fluxes are used for continuous activities, which are frequently affected by external disturbances. Under such circumstances the managers' interventions must be prompt, not to jeopardize the scheduled activities. The periodical information fluxes are used to evaluate and control the processes that cannot be easily disturbed by the variables of the environment or for the sequential processes. The non-periodical information fluxes are found in the atypical special working processes that do not comply with the pre-established rules.

The information system of an organization has the following functions:

- Documentary
- Decisional
- Operational

Creating the data basis and the expert system materializes the documentary function of the information system. The decisional function is consecutive to the documentary one, which allows to make decisions after the analysis of the processed information (stocked in the data basis). Throughout the information system it is gathered the primary information, which - by processing, can generate decisions. The operational function of the managerial information system is materialized by the automatic information processing so that in order to make decisions, there are taken in to consideration only the data noteworthy for the coordinated and controlled process.

The managerial communication system of the agricultural exploitation

The efficiency and efficacy of the managerial processes are given by the capacity of the leaders of the system and of the subsystems to communicate in order to be informed, to ask for details, to transmit decisions and evaluate the

⁵ Their presentation is part of the very strategy of the organization

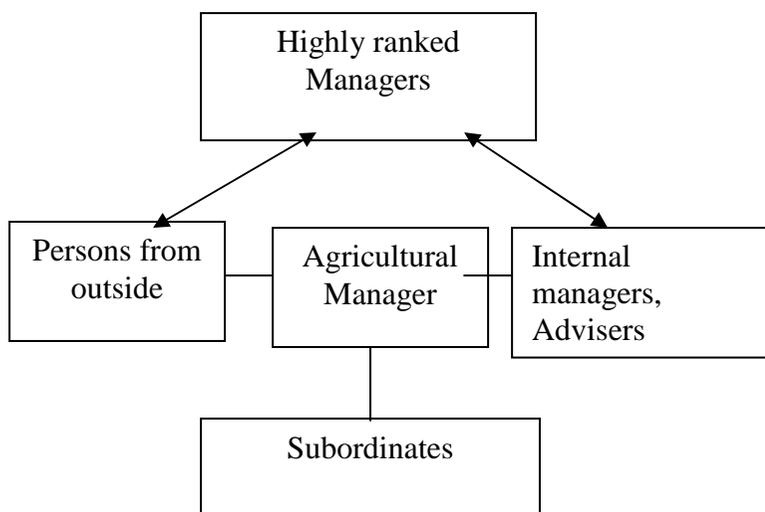
⁶ It is to be noted that the partial truths belong to the category of pseudo-information

results obtained by the personnel at a given moment. Largely speaking, the managerial communication is the transmission from the transmitter to the receiver through a communication channel, of certain facts, data, impressions, ideas in order to make possible, the making evident, evaluation, correction or directing of a working process. The communication process can be incomplete (in one way only) or comprehensive (from transmitter to receiver).

The manager communicates within the agricultural organization with his/her subordinates (down the vertical line) with his/her superiors (on the vertical line) and with the other managers (on the horizontal line). The manager also communicates with persons from outside:

- Managers
- Marketing agents
- Clients
- Beneficiaries of the organization’s services
- Agents
- Government institutions

Schematically, the information fluxes that the agricultural manager is involved in is presented in the below figure. For the remaining personnel, the information fluxes and their amplitude are limited, depending upon the hierarchical position and the job’s nature.



As a process⁷, communication can be oral written and non-verbal. According to opportunities there are used one or more forms of communication.⁸

⁷ as a working process communication can be also classified according to the form of the chain of persons who take part at providing the information flux

⁸ but communication is preponderant

The oral communication can be informal (aleatory) or formal (scheduled to take place during the following working reunions, conferences, consultations, meetings). The oral communication has the following advantages:

1. It is direct and punctilious
2. It provides to the participants with the satisfaction of being involved in the decision-making process
3. It allows the transmission and reception of the feelings
4. It is quick, the feed-back being straight away
5. It allows an exchange of ideas and impressions

The oral communication has the advantage that all the transmitted information can be incomplete or distorted, the oral accounts do not represent a reliable judicial proof, and they have a subjective character.

The written communication is synthetic, concise and relatively accurate. Drawn up attentively, the written communication doesn't allow ambiguous interpretations and if it is freely expressed, it can be a judicial proof. This way of communication has a contribution to the creation of databases and it is a useful means for the elaboration of prognoses, plans and programs.

The written communication has other advantages as well: it can be easily disseminated and processed. In contrast with the oral communication, the written documents can be consulted and used any moment.

The non-verbal communication is usually associated with the oral communication and is represented by: voice tonality, voice amplitudes, pauses, body expression etc.

In writing, the non-verbal communication is express by means of communication chosen by the transmitter by the way such an information is presented, its volume etc.

The synthesizing instrument that allows the agricultural manager and his/her advisers to organize coordinate, manage and evaluate the subsystems and the activities performed within their framework is the *managerial synoptic picture*⁹. This instrument allows the managerial team to evaluate at any moment the nature, volume, intensity and accuracy of the main activities being carried on within the respective organization. *MSP* is also the support, which allows decision-making, based upon the synthetic information provided by the general ensemble of the agricultural organization's structure, objectives and resources.

The main features of *MSP* are:

1. It ensures the centralization of the synthetic information;
2. It allows the synoptic presentation of the phenomena;

⁹ MSP

3. It permits the anticipation of the strategic and operational decisions;
4. It suggests the correction measures that must be applied;
5. It allows the active coordination in real time;
6. It makes the active control possible.

MSP accumulates the following functions: systematisation, to form the hierarchical system, generalization, integration, analysis, synthesis anticipation, coordination, control, evaluation and diagnosis.

In essence, *MSP* is an expert program, which places the information and suggestions that serve for decision making, at the managing team's disposal. For strictly technical activities *MSP* is scheduled to adopt decisions alone, to schedule activities and resources.

In the practical tackling of the relation manager-subordinates there are taken into account the following very important principles:

1. The leading status of the manager can be provided only if the formal part of the power (authority) is mixed with its informal part (the power of influence)
2. The ensuring of a coherent and continuous information flux on the vertical line (between various decision levels) and on the horizontal line (at the same decision level)
3. The ensuring of the subordinates' access to managers
4. Decision-making in compliance with the organization's objectives and the personnel's interests.
5. After the decision-making, all the personnel should get involved in its application.
6. The observance of the equity principle regarding rewards
7. The assuming of responsibilities at all the managing and execution levels.

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