



Perspectives on making and enforcing decisions in an organizational group within a company

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Abstract. In this paper, there will be a presentation of a perspective on how to make and implement decisions - so necessary for the proper conduct of business in a company, but also for achieving organizational goals, set by the organization's management. From this perspective, it should be noted that the need to achieve a desired level of efficiency, will also be taken into account.

In some situations, it has been shown that the partners involved in carrying out various activities in a company, may encounter certain difficulties, or may face various obstacles, which can be overcome with the help of cognitive means. Thus, regardless of the field of activity of a company, a problem will actually mean a theoretical or practical difficulty, an obstacle, a barrier to the efficient conduct of organizational activities. Therefore, depending on the objectives, participants and leaders, the organizational activities carried out for decision-making, develop in a traditional way, from defining problems and causes, continuing with possibilities to eliminate disruptive elements and ending with finding the best solutions.

Keywords: decisions, meetings, solving problems

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to present new and current ways of making and implementing decisions in a company, so that it can achieve its organizational objectives.

In order to achieve the desired efficiency, it is necessary that both the manager of the organization and the team of each organizational group know a series of methods and procedures for solving problems, but also their practice and monitoring the results.

At the present time of the study, in group work, in order to look for solutions to solve organizational problems, it is necessary to follow a succession of stages - on the one hand - but also to observe them, in a predetermined order - on the other hand. These steps are, as Dewey suggested [1]:

- Defining the organizational problem, as Baron [2] and Rustichini [3] identified,
- Studying and analyzing the organizational problem, according to the studies of Deming [4],
- Establishing criteria and models for assessing possibilities and alternatives, in the opinion of Selart [5],
- Establishing methods for listing possible alternatives,
- Evaluation and implementation of alternatives, as demonstrated by a number of other authors [6].

APPLICATION OF THE METHOD

Defining the organizational problem.

In the organizational communication of tasks in a group, the partners of this process encounter difficulties, which can go as far as blocking their action, confronting obstacles that can be overcome only through cognitive means.

The cognitive process of solving problems is the field of performance of thinking. Regardless of the field of activity, a problem actually means a theoretical or practical difficulty, an obstacle, a barrier in organizational relations. Most of the time, the problem is the question marks on an unknown phenomenon, which makes the gap in knowledge obvious. Practice proves that until the notification of the existence of a problem, there is a cause that generates it, called problem situation [7].

At that stage, it is found that, through the usual procedures, the cognitive gap cannot be covered, or there is a mismatch between the requirements of the organizational communication situation on the one hand and the communication possibilities, on the other hand, in other words between means and purposes.

Defining the concept of "problem" has the perspective of the problem as a cognitive obstacle in interpersonal relationships or with the world, and taking on the task of overcoming the obstacle and the cognitive and technical pathways undertaken for this purpose is the field of problem solving. And in the field of organizational management, the definition of the problem starts from this essential element, the identification of the obstacle [10]. According to their degree of structuring, organizational problems fall into two distinct categories:

- Well-defined problems - which can be solved by applying algorithmic strategies;
- Poorly defined problems - involving the use of heuristic strategies to solve.

Taking as classification criteria: the measure of specifying the initial data from the problematic situation; the extent to which the purpose was specified, as well as the need for the operations used, the organizational problems were classified from a "cybernetic" perspective, as follows:

- Problems that do not require cognitive-creative participation, being solved algorithmically - productively-uncreatively;
- Problems in which the end is well specified and requires demonstration, explanation, finding the cause - innovative-creative;
- Problems in which both the beginning and the end are poorly delimited, requiring cognitive - heuristic-creative abilities;
- Problems in which the initial elements are well specified - inventive-creative;
- Problems with a well-defined initial state, and the final one unknown - of creative redesign.

Thus, solving an organizational problem involves transforming the unknown into the known, ie overcoming the obstacle and covering the cognitive gap.

This stage is generally omitted, because the members of the organizational group assume that everyone knows exactly how the problem was defined. The hypothesis can be real only if the organizational problem has been brought to the attention of the group by a person outside it. Therefore, it is not beneficial to eliminate this stage, because a series of ambiguities may appear later, during the solution of the organizational problem.

Although it would seem that it saves time, in reality much more will be spent, until a final solution is reached, and the members of the group will not be in consensus, given the fact that each initially understood in his own way. the essence of the organizational problem.

Even if at first a problem seems clear, it is good to insist on clarifying it, through questions that lead to sketching the essence of the organizational problem. Given the importance of this stage, the debate on the definition of the organizational problem will be able to be the topic of an entire collective meeting of the organizational group. But the correct identification of the organizational problem also helps to know the expected results.

After the organizational problem has been known by all members of the organizational group, another verification of the correctness of the understanding is required, using the completion of a specific form. This form will contain certain questions, to which the answers are expected to reflect the degree of understanding of the organizational problem.

A correct answer will be obtained only when the question will contain essential, logical elements. To this practice, other requirements of the formulation of questions can be added, such as:

- the question must avoid the succinct answer by YES or NO, which does not offer creative possibilities;
- the formulation of the question should not aim at an evasive, vague, or general answer;

- the question should focus on concrete issues, which involve making concrete decisions in solving the problem.

The stage of defining the organizational problem is all the more necessary since, in any organizational activity, without defining the concepts used, it is not possible to understand the content of the problem. As such, in obtaining efficient solutions in solving the problems of the organizational group, the stage of defining the concept of organizational problem will be required.

Studying and analyzing the organizational problem.

The process of solving organizational problems therefore begins with putting the problem, possibly reformulating it, an action that involves thinking about the possible connection between the known and the unknown.

In organizational communication, the success in finding the solution largely depends on the way the organizational problem is posed. This stage is an analytical one, as it presupposes a good understanding of the conflict, as well as the definition of the possible variants of combining the data, even in restrictive conditions [8].

In a next stage of solving the organizational problems, hypotheses will be formulated on the solution to be obtained, as well as on the solving procedures. Any conflict in organizational communication involves finding hypothetical solutions, but which will be tested later, to choose the optimal option. If in a first phase, the process was analytical, it will continue to operate synthetically to establish models for solving, which would eventually lead to the executive stage of the effective solution of the problem. Following this path, the whole resolving process will be able to be resumed, in case of failure. There is a tendency for this second stage to be omitted in the practice of certain organizational groups, due to lack of information, or ignorance of the problem itself.

It is not enough to simply go through the stage, without a study and without a deep and real analysis. Thus, a thorough research of all aspects related to a concrete solution is required, under specific conditions.

At this stage, it is particularly important to know in full (or almost) the sources of information related to the organizational problem that the organizational group has to solve. Also, it is not possible to conceive the continuation of the analysis, without drawing up beforehand a list with the fields related to the solution of the organizational problem. It is necessary that the information is collected systematically, it should be cataloged according to the interest and purpose pursued.

The sources of information will be as varied as possible, containing specialized opinions, as well as concrete experiences of other companies. The data thus obtained by each member of the organizational group will be submitted to the discussion of the group, in order to be subsequently systematized and presented in a unitary structure.

In practice, it was necessary to observe certain rules in the case of information analysis in the organizational group [11]:

- establishing a rigorous order of presentation of the chosen information;
- giving opportunities to the members of the organizational group to present the data obtained, in order to create the possibility of mutual completions;
- ensuring the correlation of the information and an established succession, so as not to omit any field that has been researched.

Establishing the evaluation criteria of the possible alternatives.

This is the most important step in solving organizational problems, because without establishing criteria in an evaluation, it is not possible to continue research in finding solutions. The problem of establishing the evaluation criteria has given rise to numerous debates related to: definition, types, when and how these criteria are used, etc.

In this sense, a criterion can be considered as a kind of guide, standard, rule, which the organizational group accepts, in an attempt to find solutions to the given problem. At the same time, a criterion can be a whole list of conditions that must be met, when, from several alternatives, the final solution to the problem is sought, as Guo suggested [9].

Depending on the various reference systems, the range of types of criteria is particularly wide. However, the most used categories of evaluation criteria are qualitative and quantitative. In organizational practice,

the establishment of evaluation criteria takes place before the analysis of alternatives, as possible solutions to solve organizational problems.

In this sense, the following situations are encountered, generally valid for differentiating organizations:

- when the organizational problem to which solutions are sought is particularly complex;
- when the organizational problem being solved involves value judgments and emotional components;
- when members of the organizational group do not have sufficient experience in solving organizational problems and are inclined to use solutions already applied by others.

After the organizational group has decided according to the criteria it will look for the solution, its attention will focus on finding the optimal one. Of course, the criteria will not be confused with the solutions themselves, because these (criteria) are just the way to find solutions.

At the same time, it is possible to choose to organize the discussion of the criteria within the organizational group, using another procedure, which will include the following sub-steps:

- compiling a list of possible criteria, unanimously accepted by the members of the organizational group;
- evaluation of each criterion in order to be divided into "important" and "unimportant". This division is achieved by reducing the list of criteria to an operational size (by combinations or eliminations);
- dividing the remaining criteria into "necessary" and "secondary";
- giving a symbol that reflects the value and importance of the remaining criteria.

Enumeration, evaluation and implementation of alternatives.

The efficiency in the work of looking for possible alternatives, as solutions to solving organizational problems, will increase, only if the creative thinking of each member of the organizational group will be capitalized.

Such a method of creative thinking, practiced with positive results in most organizations, involves stating possible solutions found, followed by evaluating each solution. Among the most well-known and applied techniques in finding solutions in solving organizational problems are: brainstorming, Delphi technique, Syntectics session (Gordon's method), Philips 66 meeting [12]. Correct completion of the previous stage makes the evaluation of each alternative more efficient. For an effective evaluation of alternatives, organizations use certain recommendations, such as [13]:

- scrolling through the list of found alternatives and eliminating those that do not meet the established criteria;
- reducing and concentrating the list of alternatives, in order to obtain a functional size;
- thorough analysis of each remaining alternative, both its strengths and weaknesses;
- checking the correspondence between the evaluation criterion and the alternative;
- keeping, in the end, a maximum of three alternatives, considered appropriate.

After opting for the optimal alternative, the organizational group will discuss how to apply it in practice. It is important that the discussion of the practical application methods be carried out in the presence of all the members of the organizational group, in order to have the certainty that the theoretically chosen solution is the really applicable one.

If the organizational group finds that the chosen solution - the first on the list - requires additional resources, the use of which could meet the resistance of senior management, it will be abandoned and the next solution on the list will be analyzed - fig. 1.

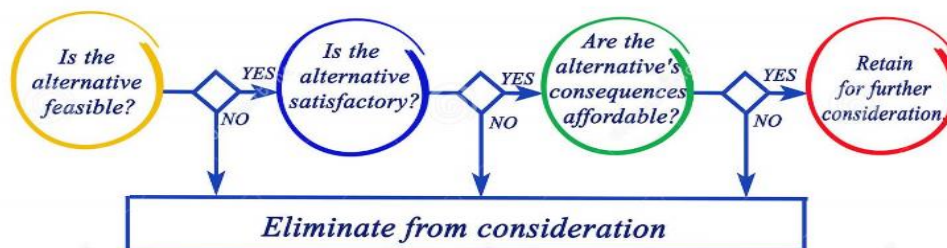


Figure 1. Evaluation of alternatives

If the new solution proves viable, the organizational group can make the implementation decision alone, recommending it to the higher decision makers. The organizational group will have to follow the results of the application of the solution, either it will have the expected success, or other problems will appear - fig. 2.

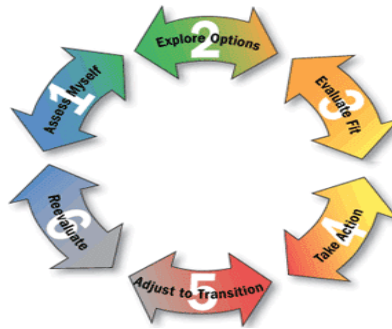


Figure 2. Monitoring the application of the solution

USING CREATIVITY IN SOLVING ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS

The most well-known and used problem-solving model within organizational groups in companies is the CPS model - Creative Problem Solving - or the Creative Problem Solving model. This model was developed by the Center for Creative Studies set up by Alex Osborn [14]. In companies, at present, the emphasis is on creativity in solving organizational problems, within the activities developed by the organizational groups - tab. 1.

Table 1. Creative solving organizational problems

Steps	Alternative
1. Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepting the theme • Reformulations • Documentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notifying the problem area • Formulation of the problem • Probing - trial and error
2. Incubation	
3. Inspiration	
4. Development and/or verification	

The CPS model uses both classical methods and techniques to generate the diversity of each stage - divergence - as well as special strategies for selecting a single option - convergence - fig. 3.

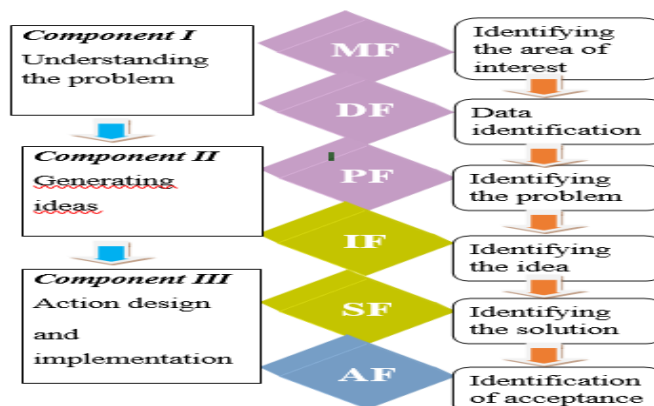


Figure 3. Using CPS model

The chosen option will diverge in the next phase, to converge again. The process is repeated until a single final solution is obtained, for which there is an elaborate strategy. In the graphical representation of CPS - fig. 1 - rhombuses suggest those complementary processes - divergence and convergence - found in the stages of the resolving process. What brings the new CPS model is not the number of stages, but the alternation between divergence and convergence for each stage.

Thus, in a first phase, the problematic situation of the “area of interest” MF - Mess Finding - is identified, which is a divergent sub-stage. For the selection of a single solution, by convergence, a series of criteria will be proposed. Next, the DF data identification sub-step is done with the help of answers to questions such as: what do I know, what do I think, ... about...? The data thus collected will later be classified in the following five categories:

- information - people, places, situations, events, etc.;
- impressions;
- sensory intuitions;
- emotions and feelings;
- questions.

From this convergent sub-stage, start using the technique of grouping the selected items into various categories. Convergence will continue, with the option for a limited number of items. Furthermore, the following sub-stage, for identifying the PF problem - Problem finding - is also done according to the divergent-convergent algorithm, conditioning the observance of the criteria that an organizational problem must meet in order to be creative:

- divergent - clear, well defined, well delimited;
- convergent - ambiguous, diffuse, solution to another problem.

At the end of grouping the statements, one has to get to one - the creative problem. But this statement will also go through other reformulations, segmentation and reconstructions. Next, the IF idea identification sub-stage - Idea Finding - is a divergent sub-stage, in which methods are used to generate known ideas, to stimulate inspiration, according to preferences and to adapt to the problem. For convergence, a first selection will be made, through the intuitive appreciation of the most inspired ideas, evaluated later by other specific techniques. The next step is the identification of the SF solution - Solution Finding - sub-stage in which the retained ideas become applicable, only if they are validated by certain criteria. The selection of the evaluation criteria will be done either intuitively or by referring to certain evaluation grids, and finally the listing of the accepted solutions takes place.

Finally, in the last sub-stage of identifying acceptance by the other members of the AF organizational group - Acceptance Finding -, the aim is to generate ideas to promote the successful solution. At the end, after selecting the final solution, the result of this stage consists in compiling a final action plan -

APPLYING CREATIVITY IN SOLVING ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS WITHIN THE COMPANY

The process of creatively solving organizational problems is applicable in any individual or group work situation [15]. In complex activities that involve solving organizational problems, moments of maximum concentration are needed to capture the less visible relationships of the statement. At the same time, precision is needed, but also correctness in solving organizational problems, elements that manifest themselves almost automatically. These automated components of the activity, but which have been consciously developed and subsequently consolidated through experience, are represented by skills.

In practice, multiple forms and classifications of skills are known, according to various criteria, but what is more important to remember is that most skills are acquired, not innate. In general, the skills needed to creatively solve organizational problems are formed in a whole process of elaboration, which goes through stage by stage, from intention to mastery. Likewise, these specific skills are a result of other basic skills, finding in the orientation towards the specific goals pursued in the organizational group. Among the specific processes of creative solving of organizational problems within the group, a special role is played by the meetings, during which the decisions are made.

And the way meetings are conducted in a company can be based on certain skills, which can positively or negatively affect the development of that activity. In general, the meetings within the companies

fulfill specific communication functions in the management process, defining the group, the team, the unit, but also giving the members and the collective a certain identity.

During the organizational meetings, various knowledge, experiences, habits are highlighted, all accumulated by the members of the whole group, as a common good. In most of the situations, all these elements will facilitate the optimal fulfillment of the individual objectives within the various activities carried out. However, there may be times when the influence of the elements mentioned above has a less positive impact.

In most organizational meetings, the group exists and works as an entity. The managers in the company, regardless of the hierarchical levels, are perceived as leaders, and the members of the working groups contribute to the achievement of the general objectives of the organizational group.

The most used organizational meetings are classified according to certain specific criteria. Thus, the following are used:

- depending on the purpose pursued - information, planning, validation, evaluation, training, decision-making meetings;
- depending on the number of participants, the following may be involved: a smaller number, up to ten members, with an optimal number of five members; a larger number, up to forty members.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After analyzing a large number of organizational meetings held at the level of some companies, it was concluded that, in order to be effective, these specific forms of information transfer and decision-making involve a series of skills related to the preparation, conduct and fulfillment. their objectives. Thus, the stage of preparation of an organizational meeting involves several phases, starting with the establishment of groups, selection of participants, thinking of ways to stimulate discussions and to prepare the material means of arranging the venue, audio-video means necessary, etc.

At the same time, the person who will lead the organizational decision-making meeting can be found in one of the following positions, with positive or negative effects on the objectives originally proposed:

- "Activator", in the sense of stimulating and maintaining a balance between the objectives pursued and the relationships of the participants;
- "Knight", being the one who shows a greater interest in the interpersonal relationships established within the organizational group;
- "Controller", when it will focus more on the objectives set;
- "Abdicator", which fails to emphasize either established goals or interpersonal relationships in the organizational group.

Of all the positions mentioned above, the last is by far the one that will easily lead to a failure of action. In the organizational practice of companies, it has been found that each manager or leader will decide on their own approach to an organizational meeting. The individual choice of this style of approach will be made, of course, depending on a number of factors, of which the most important are:

- the specifics of the situation,
- characteristics of the organizational group,
- objectives pursued,
- own personal peculiarities.

The organizational decisions obtained at the end of these activities can be obtained:

- following a consensus - most often based on professional compromises, when the solutions found can satisfy the views of each participant,
- by obtaining unanimity - rarer situations.

Therefore, it can be seen that, depending on the objectives, participants and leader, the discussions in an organizational meeting are done with the observance of clear steps, from the definition of organizational problems, causes, possibilities to eliminate disruptive elements and until you finish finding the optimal solution – fig. 4.



Figure 4. Example of finding the solution to solving an organizational problem

Naturally, at the end of the organizational meeting, it is necessary to evaluate the achievement of the initially proposed objectives, but also an evaluation of the involvement of the members of the organizational group in making the final decision, in order to further identify the subsequent responsibilities. In this sense, one of the members of the organizational group may be appointed to control the process of the organizational meeting, having a role similar to the role of moderator. In this regard, the following will be pursued:

- concentrating the participation of the members of the organizational group on the theme of the organizational meeting;
- observance of the time allocated to each point in the established order;
- how the involvement and communication behavior of the participants in the action is stimulated.

It has also been found that situations may arise when certain disruptive factors may occur. In most cases, these factors came from specific non-compliant behaviors of some participants in the organizational decision-making meeting. Therefore, it should also be noted that, in order to ensure effective control of the organization of meetings in order to solve problems and make the final decision, in most companies have used general techniques to prevent disruptive events.

These prevention techniques were usually applied before the start of the organizational meetings, because most of the time, on the one hand, participants who knew certain non-compliant specific behaviors were known, and on the other hand, certain rules of conduct were established and used. behavior for the time of activities. In order to find solutions to remedy these situations, the moments of occurrence were identified for the beginning and accordingly, certain methods of remedying the situations were recommended and put into practice - tab. 2.

Table 2 Final action plan, results

<i>The moment of appearance disruptive event</i>	<i>Method of remedial</i>
blocking discussions, by objecting to a topic already discussed;	it will be suggested to return to the subject at the end of the meeting;
the manifestations of some participants only to be noticed;	their participation will be acknowledged, but in a concise manner, and the main topic of discussion will be continued;
tendencies to dominate the discussions;	warn discreetly, through appropriate nonverbal language;
interruptions of discussions, inadvertently;	be careful to follow the current discussions;
disapproval or verbal aggression against other members of the organizational group present at the discussions.	open approach and discussion of the problem.

CONCLUSIONS

A first conclusion that can be deduced from the presented, is that, in any company, to achieve the desired level of efficiency, it is necessary that both the manager and all members of the organizational group should know a number of methods and problem-solving procedures - on the one hand, as well as to practice them and monitor the results obtained - on the other hand.

Another conclusion refers to the need to go through and follow specific steps, necessary to solve an organizational problem. In this sense, the usefulness of maintaining a pre-established order was demonstrated, from defining the problem, to studying and analyzing the problem, establishing certain criteria and methods for evaluating the different possible alternatives, to evaluating and finally applying the chosen alternatives.

Therefore, in a company, depending on the objectives, participants and leaders, the discussions of the organizational meeting develop from the definition of problems and causes, continuing with possibilities to eliminate disruptive elements and ending with finding the best solution.

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