


A Needs Analysis of Employee Communication at a  
Health Insurance Company

Leilahn Albertyn

 CAPE PENINSULA  
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY  
LIBRARY

Dewey No. .... ARC 302.35 A1B

CAPE PENINSULA  
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY



20136568

CPT ARC 302.35 AUB

(CRED)

**A NEEDS ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION AT A  
HEALTH INSURANCE COMPANY**

by  
**LEILAHN ALBERTYN**  
**202016285**

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree  
**Magister Technologiae: PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGEMENT**

in the Faculty of Informatics and Design  
at the CAPE PENINSULA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Supervisor: Marian E Pike (Ms)  
Cape Town  
December 2011

CPUT copyright information

The thesis may not be published either in part (in scholarly, scientific or technical journals),  
or as a whole (as a monograph), unless permission has been obtained from the University.

## DECLARATION

I, Leilahn Albertyn, declare that the contents of this thesis represent my own unaided work, and that the thesis has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

---

Signed: Leilahn Albertyn

December 2011

Date

## ABSTRACT

### Title

A needs analysis of employee communication at a Health Insurance Company.

### Main objectives

This mini thesis investigates the research question, "*What are the internal communication needs of the Cape Town based employees at Metropolitan Health Group?*" Since 2000, Metropolitan Health Group has expanded rapidly; and it is normal in business to equate rapid growth with changes in management and organisational culture.

The research question is further divided into sub-questions, namely:

- *What is the level of satisfaction of non-managerial employees with the current overall internal communications?*
- *What internal communication model(s) is/are currently being practised at Metropolitan Health Group?*

### Design and methodology

The research uses an empirical, quantitative and descriptive research design. Primary data was collected via a survey questionnaire consisting of three (3) general information questions and 30 questions informed by the Downs and Hazen (1977) factor analysis on communication satisfaction. Due to the limited scope of this mini-dissertation, the population was restricted to a stratified random sample of the non-management employees (sampling frame) based at the Cape Town office of Metropolitan Health Group, with each member of the population having the same probability of selection within the strata, thus making generalization possible.

### Key Findings

The key findings to the research sub-question "*What is the level of satisfaction of non-managerial employees with the current internal communications?*" were:

- A large majority (74.5%) agree to strongly agree the internal communication of Metropolitan Health Group is satisfactory.

- This level of satisfaction is supported by 59.3% – 65.7% (agreeing – strongly agreeing) describing internal communication at Metropolitan Health Group as consistent, fast, understandable, credible, purposeful, relevant, efficient, customer-focused and reaching all staff.
- Furthermore, 61,2% agree to strongly agree that all their internal communication needs are being fulfilled.

The key finding to the research sub-question: *What communication model(s) is/are currently being practised at Metropolitan Health Group? were:*

- There is evidence of the two-way model of communication is currently being practised at Metropolitan Health Group, however it leans.

### **Conclusions**

Although there are weaknesses and room for improvement, Metropolitan Health Group employees are generally satisfied with the internal communication processes, content and management's communication skills.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that guidelines be developed to address the weaknesses in the implementation of the two-way symmetric model of communication being practised at Metropolitan Health Group. In addition it is recommended that further studies be conducted to assess the impact of the silo business model of Metropolitan Health Group on communication satisfaction. It would be of interest to determine whether the management style of each silo (branch) of Metropolitan Health Group impacts on communication satisfaction. Finally further study (content analysis) off all the communication messages received by the Metropolitan Health Group (Holding Company MMI, MHG and MHG divisions) to determine whether it is an integrated communication (message).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank:

- *My supervisor, Marian Pike, for your time, guidance and extraordinary faith in me.*
- *The CEO of Metropolitan Health Group, Blum Khan, for the opportunity to base my study on Metropolitan Health Group as well as the financial assistance received.*
- *The 'Tortoises' study group; thank you for your support and sharing this journey with me.*
- *My wonderful family, for all your love, motivation and support.*
- *My friends Lameez Hendricks and Farhaana Allie, for your continuous motivation and friendship.*
- *My Mom and Dad; for your love and teaching me the value of education.*
- *Lastly, my statistician and husband, Yaaseen. Thank you for your love, support and being the amazing person you are.*

## DEDICATION

To Sanaa and Yusrah,  
*So that I may pass on the value of education to you, as my parents did.*

## GLOSSARY

- Communication climate:** Satisfaction with communication climate is reflective of communication on an organisational and personal level. On the organisational level, it includes communication which motivates and stimulates staff to fulfil their objectives, and on a personal level, it includes whether attitudes and personalities affect health communication within the organisation. (Downs & Adrian, 2004).
- Corporate information:** This deals with information about the organisation which includes financial standing, changes and overall policies and goals of the organisation. (Downs & Adrian, 2004).
- Co-worker Communication:** Satisfaction with co-workers refers to horizontal and informal communication. Horizontal communication relates to peer-to-peer communication, and informal communication relates to the degree to which this type of communication is accurate and free flowing within the organisation. This also includes the extent to how active the grapevine is within the organisation. (Downs & Adrian, 2004).
- Media quality:** Satisfaction with media quality refers to the extent to which meetings are well organised, written communication is understandable. (Downs & Adrian, 2004).
- Organisational integration:** Satisfaction with organisational integration refers to the information that is supplied to the employees about their immediate work environment regarding departmental policies and plans, as well as personnel news. (Downs & Adrian, 2004).

- Personal feedback: This involves the employees' investigation into how they are judged and how their performance is appraised. (Downs & Adrian, 2004).
- Subordinate communication: This deals with the upward and downward communication with subordinates, including the subordinate responsiveness to downward communication and the extent to which subordinates starts upward communication. (Downs & Adrian, 2004).
- Supervisory communication: This refers to the upward and downward flow of communication with superiors and also the extent to which supervisors listen to their sub-ordinates and offers guidance (insert reference) (Downs & Adrian, 2004).

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title	i
Declaration	ii
Abstract	iii
Acknowledgements	v
Dedication	vi
Glossary	vii
Table of contents	ix
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background and motivation .....	1
1.2.1 Research Lens .....	2
1.3 Preliminary literature review .....	2
1.3.1 Public relations theory (including excellence theory).....	3
1.3.2 Strategic communications.....	4
1.3.3 Stakeholder management.....	5
1.3.4 Internal communication .....	6
1.3.5 Communication audit.....	7
1.4 Research topic and problem .....	8
1.5 Research question.....	8
1.5.1 Research sub-questions:.....	8
1.5.2 Research rationale, benefit and significance.....	9
1.5.3 Research assumptions .....	9
1.6 Research design and methodology .....	9
1.6.1 Population, sample and sample size .....	10
1.6.2 Data collection instrument .....	10
1.6.3 Data collection, data coding, data capture, data editing .....	11
1.6.4 Data analysis.....	11
1.6.5 Strengths of the research .....	11
1.6.6 Limitations of the research.....	12
1.6.7 Ethical issues .....	12
1.7 Chapter outline of the thesis .....	12
1.7.1 Chapter one: Introduction .....	12
1.7.2 Chapter two: Literature review .....	12
1.7.3 Chapter three: Research methodology .....	13
1.7.4 Chapter four: Findings, conclusions and recommendations.....	13
1.8 Summary.....	13
2 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	14
2.1 Introduction.....	14
2.2 Public relations .....	14
2.2.1 Public relations models (Grunig and Hunt) .....	16
2.2.2 Excellence theory .....	19
2.3 Strategic communications.....	21
2.3.1 Strategic management .....	21

2.3.2	Stakeholder management.....	22
2.3.3	Internal communication .....	24
2.4	Communication audit.....	28
2.4.1	Communication satisfaction.....	28
2.5	Dimensional framework .....	29
2.6	Conclusion.....	30
3	CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY .....	32
3.1	Introduction.....	32
3.2	Research in public relations.....	32
3.2.1	Conceptualisation .....	32
3.3	Research question.....	33
3.3.1	Sub research questions.....	33
3.4	Research design.....	33
3.4.1	Research objectives .....	34
3.4.2	Research benefits and significance .....	34
3.5	Research methodology.....	34
3.6	Issues of measurement .....	35
3.6.1	Questionnaire design.....	36
3.6.2	Format of measuring instrument.....	37
3.7	Population, sample design and sampling methods .....	38
3.7.1	Sampling method.....	38
3.7.2	Sample size.....	39
3.8	Data collection methods and process .....	39
3.8.1	Data collection.....	39
3.8.2	Data coding and capturing.....	40
3.9	Data analysis.....	40
3.9.1	Reliability and validity .....	42
3.10	Reporting the results .....	43
3.10.1	Shortcomings of the research design and methodology .....	43
3.11	Summary.....	43
4	CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	44
4.1	Introduction.....	44
4.2	Findings & discussion.....	44
4.2.1	What are the levels of communication satisfaction at Metropolitan Health Group? .....	45
4.2.2	Satisfaction with communication climate.....	45
4.2.3	Satisfaction with communication content and media.....	46
4.2.4	Satisfaction with management communication .....	47
4.3	Which model of public relations is practised at Metropolitan Health Group? .....	47
4.4	What are the communication needs of employees at Metropolitan Health Group? .....	48
4.5	General information .....	48
4.6	Conclusions and Recommendations.....	49
	LIST OF REFERENCES.....	51
	Metropolitan Health Group.....	57
5	Background .....	57

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: Models of public relations	18
Table 2.2: Internal communication matrix	26
Table 2.3: Dimensions of symmetrical communication and communication satisfaction	30
Table 3.1: Summary of stratified random sample of available population	39

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1: Conceptual framework findings	45
---	----

## APPENDICES

Appendix A: Metropolitan Health Group (Background)	57
Appendix B: Cover email to respondents	61
Appendix C: Questionnaire	62
Appendix D: Findings	72
Appendix E: Statistical report	108

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this limited scope research study is to investigate the research question "What are the internal communication needs of the Cape Town based employees at Metropolitan Health Group?" The research will investigate whether the current internal communication practise/s and communication content at Metropolitan Health Group satisfy the needs of employees. The research will be informed by the Downs and Hazen (1977:72) factor analytic study of communication satisfaction which concluded that "the concept of satisfaction can be a useful tool in an audit of organisational communication."

### 1.2 Background and motivation

Since 2000, Metropolitan Health Group has grown rapidly and its employee base has increased from 200 employees to over 3500 employees today. It is common knowledge that rapid growth is accompanied with change in management and organisational culture within an organisation. According to the Greek philosopher Heraclitus (500BC) 'the only constant is change,' a sentiment echoed by Isaac Asimov, who went onto say that all sensible decisions need to consider this 'inevitable change' and take into account the world as it is today and the world as it will be tomorrow. Strategic management of organisations and communication must constantly manage change through measurement followed by adjustment to remain successful. One of the methods for strategic managers to deal with change is to manage the relationship between the organisation and its employees (Daly *et al*, 2003; Kitchen & Daly, 2002; Proctor & Doukakis, 2003).

Numerous theories regarding employee motivation exist; the most well-known are probably Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs; McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y and McClelland's learned needs (power, affiliation and achievement) theory, but of interest is Frederick Herzberg's Motivation – Hygiene Theory, as it investigates work place satisfaction (Robbins, 1998:169-195). Communication is essential for effective management of people and according to Hargie and Tourish (1993), quality communication is crucial for success. According to Grunig (1992), internal communication is "the catalyst, if not the key, to organisational excellence and effectiveness." Effective

communication can be measured via a communication audit and the concept of satisfaction provides an indication as to whether the communication meets the needs of the employees (Downs & Hazen, 1977).

It will be interesting to find out whether the communication structures in place at Metropolitan Health Group are robust enough to accommodate the company's rapid growth and recent merger between the two medical scheme administration businesses, Metropolitan Health Group and Momentum Medical Scheme Administrators.

(For further information on the structure of Metropolitan Health Group, see Appendix A: Metropolitan Health Group).

### **1.2.1 Research Lens**

As a public relations management graduate, the researcher is currently employed in corporate communications (internal communications) within the corporate affairs division of Metropolitan Health Group.

The researcher will audit and analyse the current internal communication practise/s at Metropolitan Health Group to determine whether they satisfy the needs of employees; as well as to identify the current communication model/s practised at Metropolitan Health Group so as to assess what, if any, improvement/s is/are needed to improve internal communication. The researcher would then be able to make recommendations to management as to the status as well, if needed, how to improve internal communication within the Metropolitan Health Group.

### **1.3 Preliminary literature review**

The purpose of this research is to audit the internal communication practise of the Metropolitan Health Group to non-managerial employees based in Cape Town. The literature review will thus focus on the theoretic domains of public relations as an overarching discipline together with its definition, purpose, strategic communication role within the corporate environment as well as the communication role within management theory.

Therefore for the purpose of this thesis, public relations will be discussed under five sub-headings; namely public relations theory (including excellence theory); strategic management (including management communications); stakeholder management; internal communication; and the communication audit. The background for this discussion will be the corporate environment.

### **1.3.1 Public relations theory (including excellence theory)**

According to the Institute for Public Relations and Communication Management of Southern Africa (PRISA), public relations is defined as “*the management, through communication, of the perceptions and strategic relationships between an organisation and its internal and external stakeholders.*” Public relations theorists Mary Ann Ferguson (1984) and subsequently James E. Grunig (1992:69) support ‘relationships’ as being the foundation or “*the substance of public relations*”, and believe that successful organisations should develop relationships which are appropriate to assist with meeting corporate strategic goals.

#### **1.3.1.1 Public Relations Models (Grunig)**

The perceptions of the underlying practise and purpose of public relations practitioners varies, according to Grunig (1992:6), and range from “*manipulative*” to “*the dissemination of information, resolution of conflict or promotion of understanding.*” Grunig and Hunt (1984:14) discuss the role of the public relations practitioner based on a four-model theory with modus operandi (practise or purpose) as their base. These models are namely; “the press agency/publicity model; the public information model; two-way asymmetrical model and two-way symmetrical model.” However, Grunig and Hunt (1984:23) dismiss their earlier press agency/publicity model, (which is a one-way model; describing it as the role of public relations practitioners who are seeking attention for their organisation in any way possible), to select the two-way symmetrical model, which consists more of a dialogue or conversation, as underpinning today’s contemporary practise of public relations.

The two-way symmetrical model of public relations is said to be the ‘*ideal or best practice*’ model that would be most able to achieve excellent internal communications (Grunig & Grunig, 1992:320). In addition, the two-way symmetrical model uses research to facilitate mutual understanding and uses “*truthful interpretations of the public and the organisations*” according to Stacks & Watson, (*in Toth, 2008:70*). Truth is an important attribute in

satisfying the communication needs of employees. An important aspect of this model, according to Wright (1995:191), is that the various parties listen to one another in order to achieve mutual understanding.

### **1.3.1.2 Excellence theory**

Alternatively called the '*excellence theory*' or '*excellence study*', this general theory of public relations resulted from a 15 year investigation into '*best practices*' of communication managers. The investigation was conducted by a six-member research team, headed by James E. Grunig of the University of Maryland for IABC (International Association of Business Communicators). The investigation started in 1985 and the book, published in 1992 with Grunig as editor, is called "*Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management.*"

The excellence theory, according to Grunig, "*first explained the value of public relations to organisations and society based on social responsibility of managerial decisions and the quality of relationships with stakeholder publics*", and defined the strategic value of stakeholder management to build relationships through symmetrical communication, to the benefit of the organisation. In addition, the excellence study sought to promote public relations as a critical management function, as well as leading an integrated communication function as outlined in the two-way symmetrical model.

### **1.3.2 Strategic communications**

A common enough term in business and academic circles; '*strategic communications*', according to Hallahan et al (2007:4), is in the process of being defined considering the "*purposeful nature of strategic communication*" to be essential to public relations practise as it determines how "*an organisation presents and promotes itself through the intentional activities of its leaders, employees and communication practitioners,*" through the choices it makes. Argenti, Howell and Beck (2005:83) agree through their definition of strategic communication as "*communication aligned with the company's overall strategy, to enhance its strategic positioning*" as leaders who understand strategic communication allow "*strategy to drive their communication choices.*" Similarly strategic communication is based on the choices, contained in Harold Lasswell's chain of communication namely; "Who says What in which Channel to Whom with what Effect" (1971).

### 1.3.2.1 Strategic management

These definitions of strategic communications support the strategic concept of global strategist, Pankaj Ghemawat (1993:132), that strategy is simplistically, the ability to logically choose between ideas that are likely to be valuable or those which are unlikely to be valuable. In addition, Ghemawat (1993:70) makes the point that competitive advantage “comes from an integrated set of choices about activities and a firm whose choices do not fill well together is not likely to succeed.”

### 1.3.3 Stakeholder management

The statement that relationships are the very essence of public relations is, according to Grunig (1992:4), what links public relations management to communication management via the definition “*management of communication between an organisation and its publics.*” He thus introduces the concept of stakeholder management and its importance to the corporate environment. Similar suggestions from Steyn & Puth (2000:3), Marx et al (1998:554) and Skinner et al (2001:4) support Grunig. According to Wright (1995), communication should be underpinned by a desire to build a relationship rather than be seen as the dissemination of information; and thus adds to Charron’s (1994:42) posit that public relations is more than ‘*a source of information*’.

Three critical ideas underpin stakeholder management, according to Donaldson and Preston (1995) namely: “*descriptive accuracy; instrumental power and normative validity,*” with descriptive accuracy offering insight into making predictions on operating processes. Donaldson and Preston (1995:67) define stakeholders as “*persons or groups with legitimate interests in procedural and/or substantive aspects of corporate activity.*” Stakeholders are therefore grouped according to their interests in the corporation and not vice-versa, and subsequently defined as internal, external, primary, secondary, voluntary and involuntary stakeholders by numerous scholars including Freeman (1984); Clarkson (1995) and Mitchell et al (1997).

However, these scholars with Hillman and Keim (2001), Jones and Wicks (1999) and Jones (1995) agree that an organisation’s survival and success depend upon the ability of the organisation to manage valuable relationships with its stakeholders.

#### 1.3.4 Internal communication

Internal communications is most often discussed in literature under a variety of headings including employee communication (Argenti, 1997); organisational communication (Grunig, 1992) and corporate or business communication (Kitchen, 1997). In addition, there is significant evidence that internal communication, which involves all communication that occurs within an organisation, plays an important role in organisational success, given that successful companies normally have effective communication strategies (Tourish & Hargie, 2004; Argenti & Forman, 2002). However, internal communication can be defined in many ways and can take many formats. In defining the purpose of internal communication, Argenti (2003:128) believes:

*“Internal communication is, in essence, about creating an atmosphere of respect for all employees within the organisation. Communication from management should come directly from one manager to the next, and from supervisor to employee, but as companies grow larger and more complex, this often becomes more difficult – hence the need for the internal communication function.”*

Researching the benefits of internal communications on companies, Clampitt and Downs (1993) concluded that quality communication impacted on productivity and service quality (improved), absenteeism, costs and strikes (reduced), and innovation (increased).

On the other hand there is evidence (Robson & Tourish, 2005:220) that an excessive workload placed on senior management would reduce their ability to communicate to the internal stakeholders further down the line. In turn, this would negatively impact on senior management's ability to do their jobs. This suggests that communication does not only impact down, but impacts up as well. This lends support to Grunig's two-way symmetrical communication model, which encourages two-way communication between all employees and management, serving an important aspect in achieving effective internal communication.

Effective leadership is a prerequisite for employees to be satisfied with the communication delivered by the organisation, according to Gray and Robertson (2005:26), who are of the opinion that improving the communication skills of top executives and especially the

organisations' CEO will prove cost-effective in improving the employees' satisfaction with the communication deliverables of the organisation. Gray and Robertson (2005:28) point out that organisational leadership needs to be effective in communicating issues that involve the organisations' mission, goals, activities, customers, competitors and the importance of the various departments' contribution in achieving these.

However, it is equally important for organisational leadership to gain the trust of employees and Ruppel and Harrington (2000:314) emphasise that employee communication is indeed an underlying dynamic of trust. Issues that are communicated from the top down should be truthful and ethical. If executive management does not get buy-in to the quality and transparency of their communications, employees lose their trust within the organisation, and thus lead to dissatisfaction and disengagement. However the forms and channels of communication that are the most effective in delivering a message that is clear and understandable are storytelling, social interaction and gossip (Rosen, 2005:25). However Rosen (2005:25) believes that these channels are best used to clarify issues between parties and thus can lead to behavioural change.

The research applied by Ruppel and Harrington (2000:325) suggests that within an ethical work climate, enhanced employee communications exists and that "*management sets the tone for the open communications that lead to trust*". Internal communication can be enhanced if business leaders adopt a work ethic that adheres to the organisational mission and vision. Gray & Robertson (2005:28) further state that this ethic determines the culture of the organisation and how the vision will be achieved.

### **1.3.5 Communication audit**

Although more commonly associated with accounting, an audit is used to gather data to evaluate or analyse a phenomenon. A communication audit would thus evaluate an organisation's ability to communicate or an assessment of an organisation's ability to transfer information needed to conduct the business, as well as the ability to build relationships. The importance of communication within management is considered by Hargie and Tourish (2000:4) to be the most "fundamental and pervasive of all management activities," and is linked to organisational effectiveness and success. Hargie and Tourish (2000:23) use Emmanuel's (1985:50) definition of a communication audit defining it as "*a comprehensive and thorough study of communication philosophy,*

*concepts, structure, flow and practises within an organisation.*” Downs and Adrian (2004:13) see the communication audit as a tool to gain insight into the impact of information sharing as well as insight into organisational functioning.

Baker (1999:2) describes the audit as a process, rather than a cycle, which has at “*least five stages namely: the selection of a topic; the specification of desired performance in terms of criteria and standards; the collection of objective data to determine whether the standards are met; the implementation of appropriate changes to improve performance; and the collection of data for a second time, to check whether any changes introduced have affected performance.*” The researcher will follow a similar process in this research, but the implementation of appropriate changes will fall outside the research, although the appropriate changes will be coached as recommendations within the research.

#### **1.4 Research topic and problem**

It is not known whether internal communication at Metropolitan Health Group meets the communication needs of the Group's Cape Town-based, non-managerial employees or whether they do not meet them. This research aims to bench mark the organisational communication practise at Metropolitan Health Group, determine the quality of the communication and identify the communication model.

#### **1.5 Research question**

The research question is

*“What are the internal communication needs of Cape Town based employees at Metropolitan Health Group?”*

##### **1.5.1 Research sub-questions:**

The research question is further divided into two sub-questions regarding communication satisfaction and communication model. The sub-questions are:

- *What is the level of satisfaction of non-managerial employees with the current overall internal communications?*
- *What communication model(s) is/are currently being practised at Metropolitan Health Group?*

### **1.5.2 Research rationale, benefit and significance**

The aim of this research project is to determine the communication needs of non-managerial staff of Metropolitan Health Group; to assess the current status of communication practise and to measure the level of communication satisfaction amongst the employees. The research hopes to identify a best practise model and then benchmark the current status of communication within Metropolitan Health Group and assess it against the needs and satisfaction levels of employees. The results of this research may allow the researcher to identify gaps which may exist between actual communication practises and desired outcomes of the internal communication campaigns. The results may provide top management with guidelines to improve excellent internal communication practises.

### **1.5.3 Research assumptions**

Although there is an assumption that employees are satisfied with the communication process and content within the Metropolitan Health Group, the researcher is reminded that the results should be analysed carefully. Chen, Silverthorne and Hung (2006:242) remind the researcher that "a review of the research on organisational processes concluded that member satisfaction with organisational communication practises has been ignored." Thus warned, the researcher will be careful not to assume that employee needs are neglected.

### **1.6 Research design and methodology**

This limited scope thesis (mini-thesis) uses an empirical, quantitative and descriptive research design. It is non-experimental and falls within the positivist (objective) paradigm. The research is non-experimental as it does not experiment with variables (Welman *et al*, 2005:78). According to Allen *et al*, (2009) quantitative research uses systematic observations to determine human behaviour. A survey (data collection instrument) has been used to collect primary data via an online programme to answer the research question: "*What are the internal communication needs of Cape Town based employees at Metropolitan Health Group?*" The survey is based on the factor analysis of the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire, developed by Down and Hazen (1977).

### **1.6.1 Population, sample and sample size**

According to Welman et al (2005:52) and Lapan and Quartaroli (2009:88), a population is "a group of potential participants to whom the researcher wants to generalise the results of a study". The population within the Metropolitan Health Group thus includes all employees, whether management or non-management, temporary or permanently employed and at all branches of the organisation. Due to the limited scope of this thesis, a sample of the population was extracted by means of stratified random sampling. Mitchell and Jolley (1992) state that a stratified random sample ensures that the sample matches the population on certain key variables. As the population is large, a targeted sample (population) was chosen by concentrating the research only on Cape Town based staff, and eliminating employees at all other regions. The sampling procedure first separates management from non-management employees, as managerial staff is excluded from this study. A list of non-management, permanently employed Cape Town based employees was obtained from the Metropolitan Health Group Human Resources department. The list has been grouped according to the four structures within Metropolitan Health Group, namely Metropolitan Health Group Admin, Metropolitan Health Group IT, Qualsa and Corporate Services. This list was further reduced by choosing the third name on the list to be included as part of the final sample as this method ensured that each structure is equally represented in relation to their structure size. A final sample size of 540 employees were selected for participation in this study.

### **1.6.2 Data collection instrument**

The data collection instrument used is a questionnaire. The questionnaire is informed and influenced by the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire, developed by Downs and Hazen (1977). As this questionnaire was developed more than 30 years ago, it has been tested considerably in the academic world and is deemed as reliable in measuring the relationship between communication satisfaction and job productivity.

However, the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire has been criticised in certain aspects. It is for this reason that the questionnaire used for this study was adapted from Ingrid Jensen's 2004 study, which measured communication satisfaction within a utility. The Ingrid Jensen (2004) questionnaire, also based on the Downs and Hazen Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire, is more suitable for this study as it incorporates the areas for which the Downs and Hazen (1977) was criticised, i.e. top

management communication and new media. In addition, the Ingrid Jensen's (2004) study measure constructs which are of interest to this research namely: Communication climate; Communication content; Communication by management; and Communication media. Furthermore, the Ingrid Jensen (2004) questionnaire includes demographical section detailing general information as well as an question requesting an overall evaluation of internal communication, which is necessary for cross referencing results with the constructs.

The questionnaire contains 33 questions. All questions except those under the 'general information' section are designed to be answered on a Likert (summated) scale, which is a popular method to gather attitudinal information in social science research, according to Welman et al (2005:156).

### **1.6.3 Data collection, data coding, data capture, data editing**

An online survey software package subscription, Survey Monkey, was purchased to develop the research questionnaire. Once developed and setup, a web link to the survey was generated and emailed to the stratified random sample, with a covering email including a brief background to the survey and instructions. The Survey Monkey software automatically coded and captured the responses. The responses was then analysed by the researcher.

### **1.6.4 Data analysis**

As part of the online software subscription to Survey Monkey, a percentage report was generated. Further statistical analysis was sought from a qualified statistician. The statistician will provided a report with a mean and mode score for all the questions. The satisfaction constructs were measured and correlated to keywords which describe Grunig's most ideal model of public relations, namely the two way symmetrical model. This method of analysis was used to determine the outcome of the objective to determine the model of public relations practise at Metropolitan Health Group, by bench marking it against the academically accepted best practice model.

### **1.6.5 Strengths of the research**

The research provides insight into the effectiveness of the internal communication process of Metropolitan Health Group by measuring the satisfaction level. It also benchmarks the

process which will allow the Metropolitan Health Group to implement changes, if necessary, to improve communication.

### **1.6.6 Limitations of the research**

The research is limited to the Cape Town based non-managerial staff of Metropolitan Health Group, and thus ignores the communication satisfaction levels of management and employees based in the company's other offices.

### **1.6.7 Ethical issues**

Confidentiality, privacy and Metropolitan Health Group policies will be respected in this study and the respondents as well as management will have access to the results of this study.

## **1.7 Chapter outline of the thesis**

### **1.7.1 Chapter one: Introduction**

The research is based within the context of the impact of communication on organisational effectiveness and success. It asks "*What are the internal communication needs of Cape Town based employees at Metropolitan Health Group?*" It aims to examine where non-managerial employees are satisfied with the communication process, and to benchmark the communication practise against Grunig's ideal model for public relations (two-way symmetrical model). The research makes use of a single, structured questionnaire, distributed via email and using Survey Monkey to collate the data. As the questionnaire offers high measurement reliability and validity; the stratified random small sample makes it possible to generalise the results from a small sample.

### **1.7.2 Chapter two: Literature review**

The literature review focuses on the theoretic domains of public relations as an overarching discipline together with its definition; its purpose, its strategic communication role within the corporate environment as well as the communication role within management theory. Therefore for the purpose of this thesis, public relations will be discussed under five sub-headings; namely public relations theory, (including excellence theory); strategic management (including management communications); stakeholder management; internal communication; and the communication audit. The background for this discussion is the corporate environment.

### **1.7.3 Chapter three: Research methodology**

This chapter details the research design and methodology used. This limited scope thesis (mini-thesis) uses an empirical, quantitative and descriptive research design. It is non-experimental and falls within the positivist (objective) paradigm. The research makes use of a single, structured questionnaire, distributed via email and uses Survey Monkey to collate the data. The population, sampling methods, measurement instruments, data collection and data analysis is further explained.

### **1.7.4 Chapter four: Findings, conclusions and recommendations**

In this chapter, only significant and interesting results is interpreted and discussed. The full results, including graphs, are included as appendices. This chapter provides an overall conclusion for this study, as well as provide recommendations to the management of the organisation.

## **1.8 Summary**

This chapter introduces and provides perspective to the research study, i.e. investigating the internal communication needs of employees at Metropolitan Health Group. It further outlines what will be done, how it will be done, and the theories that support this study. The next chapter reviews the literature regarding public relations under five sub-headings; namely public relations theory, (including excellence theory); strategic management (including management communications); stakeholder management; internal communication; and the communication audit. The background for this research is the corporate environment.

## 2 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this limited scope (mini thesis) research study is to investigate the research question, *“What are the internal communication needs of the Cape Town based employees at Metropolitan Health Group?”* This research will take the format of a needs analysis of employee communication and will investigate whether the current internal communication practise/s and communication content at Metropolitan Health Group satisfy the needs of employees. The research will be informed by the Downs and Hazen (1977:72) factor analytic study of communication satisfaction which concluded that *“the concept of satisfaction can be a useful tool in an audit of organisational communication.”*

This literature review will explore public relations theory under five sub-headings; namely public relations theory, (including excellence theory); strategic management (including management communications); stakeholder management; internal communication; and the communication audit. The environment for this research is corporate organisation.

### 2.2 Public relations

Public relations has been defined by many, all of which have significantly differed across geographic span and time. To demonstrate this shift, it is necessary to begin in 1922, when Edward L Bernays taught the first PR class at New York University that the role of the *‘PR counsellor’* was to act as intermediaries between an organisation and its stakeholders (Grunig & Hunt, 1984:14), and to include the attempt in 1976 by Rex Harlow (*in Hunter, 1997:12*) to define public relations by combining 472 different definitions, but retaining a distinctly managerial perspective. His definition reads:

*“Public relations is a distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and co-operation between an organisation and its publics; involves the management of problems or issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinion; defines and emphasises the responsibility of management to serve the public interest; helps management to keep abreast of and effectively utilise*

*chance, serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends and uses research and sound ethical communication techniques as its principle tools."*

In line with Rex Harlow's definition, Grunig and Hunt (1984:8) endorse public relations as a *"management function, which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an individual or an organization with the public interest, and plans and executes a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance."* Furthermore the Institute of Public Relations (IRP) supports the Grunig and Hunt (1984:8) definition adding that it is a *"sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and understanding."*

Mary Ann Ferguson (1984) and James E. Grunig (1992:69) believe *'relationships'* to be the foundation or *"the substance of public relations"* and consider successful organisations as those who develop relationships, which are appropriate to assist with meeting corporate strategic goals. A newer evolution from Skinner (2001:4) and The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) posits that public relations *"supports and guides organisations and its stakeholders to acclimate mutually to each other."* The Institute for Public Relations and Communication Management of Southern Africa' (PRISA) combines these definitions of public relations into a succinct statement defining public relations as *"the management, through communication, of the perceptions and strategic relationships between an organisation and its internal and external stakeholders."* An additional dimension to the role of public relations is its evolution into being the *'social conscience'* of organisations (Fitzpatrick, 1996). A position supported by Steyn (2002), who believes that this reflects the changing role of business in society and the impact of society on the behaviour of organisations.

These definitions of public relations suggest that the discipline is multi-faceted; that it is indeed more than simply a *'source of information'* (Charron, 1994:42); and it includes strategic communication, building relationships, stakeholder management, and impacts on organisational leadership and its role in management of people to achieve organisational goals (Robbins, 1998:2).

### **2.2.1 Public relations models (Grunig and Hunt)**

It is clear that the principles informing public relations are aligned with the role of public relations within the organisation, which are, according to Grunig and Hunt (1984); Grunig et al (1992); and Cheney and Ashcraft, (2007), to: a) introduce or establish legitimacy; and b) build and maintain acceptance (legitimacy) of new ideas, products and organizations. However the perceptions of the practise and purpose of public relations practitioners varies, according to Grunig (1992:6) and ranges from “*manipulative*” to “*the dissemination of information, resolution of conflict or promotion of understanding.*” Grunig and Hunt (1984:14) discuss the role of the public relations practitioner based on a four-model theory with modus operandi (practise or purpose) as the bases for their observations on the evolution of public relations.

Grunig and Hunt are considered founders of public relations and define it as “*the management of communication between an organisation and its publics*” (1984:6) and used this as the foundation for building the four models of public relations and their evolution over time. Grunig and Hunt (1984:14) conceptualised four models of public relations, as they observed the evolution of the role of public relations through history. These models are namely; “*the press agency/publicity model; the public information model; two-way asymmetrical model and two-way symmetrical model.*”

Grunig and Hunt divide the four models into one-way (press agency/publicity and public information) or two-way models (two-way asymmetric and two-way symmetric models). The symmetrical models are based on balanced efforts from both parties, where equal communication seeks to create mutual understanding (Stacks & Watson, *in* Toth, 2008:67).

#### **2.2.1.1 Press agency/publicity model**

According to Hunter (1997:16), the press agency/publicity model of public relations was one of the first models practised, from about 1850 – 1900, and it used propaganda as its key function to successfully manipulate information to serve the best interests of the organisation.

### **2.2.1.2 Public information model**

The main function of public information model is to disseminate information, according to Grunig and Hunt (1984:14). Its heyday was between 1900 and 1920, although it is still used today, and the public relations practitioner would make use of controlled and mass media to relay objective information (i.e. information without persuasive intent) about the organisation to its stakeholders.

### **2.2.1.3 Two-way asymmetric model**

Although information flows “both to and from publics” (Grunig & Hunt, 1984:23), according to Hunter (1997:17) the two-way asymmetric model is based on scientific persuasion. It differs from the press agency/propaganda model in that public relations practitioners applied a scientific research and social science theory approach to manipulate stakeholders to support the organisation by investigating what stakeholders ‘liked’ about the organisation and highlighting only those aspects. Bernays (*in* Grunig & Hunt, 1984:42) refers to these strategies as ‘*crystallizing of public opinion*’ and the ‘*engineering of consent*’. Grunig & Hunt (1984:22) further state that this isolation of ‘likes’ cannot be labelled as ‘feedback’ from stakeholders as it was gathered only in response to communication campaigns crafted by the organisation. This model was developed in the 1920s.

### **2.2.1.4 Two-way symmetric model**

The latest in the evolution of public relations model, the role of public relations practitioners in the two-way symmetrical model is to act as mediators between the organisation and its stakeholders (publics) and is more in line with the definitions of public relations presented earlier in this chapter.

With its origins in the 1960s – 1970s, the two-symmetrical model underpins the importance of both the organisation and its stakeholders by developing a mutual understanding of one another’s interests. This model allows for open dialogue between the parties and “*ideally, both management and publics will change somewhat after a public relations effort*” (Grunig & Hunt, 1984:23). However, at the time of writing their book, Grunig and Hunt (1984:25) state that “*practitioners were only beginning to adopt*” this model. Grunig and Hunt (1984:42) based the two-way symmetrical model on negotiation and compromise, underlying the importance of these two contributing factors to achieve mutual

understanding and collaboration between the organisation and its stakeholders. Although this model, like the two-way symmetric model, makes use of scientific research and social science theory, the objective differs. In this instance research illustrates how the stakeholders view the organisation and how the organisation uses it to design communication strategies to improve understanding between the parties, address the needs of the stakeholders as well as to serve public interest. The two-way symmetrical model is used to building the relationship between the organisation and its stakeholders.

Characteristic	Press agency/publicity	Public information	Two-way asymmetric	Two-way symmetric
Purpose	Propaganda	Dissemination of information	Scientific persuasion	Mutual understanding
Nature of communication	One-way; complete truth not essential	One-way; truth important	Two-way; imbalanced effects	Two-way; balanced effects
Nature of research	Little; "counting house"	Little; readability readership	Formative; evaluative of attitudes	Formative; evaluative of understanding
Leading historical figures	P.T. Barnum	Ivy Lee	Edward L. Bernays	Bernays; educators; professional leaders
Where practiced today	Sports; theater, product promotion	Government, nonprofit associations, business	Competitive business; agencies	Regulated business; agencies
Estimate percentage of organizations practicing today	15	50	20	15

**Table 2.1: Models of Public Relations**

(Laskin, 2009:39 Adapted from Grunig and Hunt, 1984:22)

According to Grunig (1992:558-559), "*building open, trusting, and credible relationships with strategic employee constituencies*" improves organisational effectiveness, and thus claims that the two way symmetrical model is the ideal for achieving excellent public relations. He presents this model as the most ethical approach to use for internal communications and supports this through his research of symmetrical concepts, which include ten (10) dimensions or concepts namely "*trust, credibility, openness, relationships, reciprocity, network symmetry, horizontal communication, feedback, adequacy of information, employee-centred style*". Grunig (1992:558) found that there were strong correlations between symmetrical communication and job satisfaction and proposes that high levels of job satisfaction and organisational job satisfaction are a result of good relationships with these strategic employee constituencies.

The underlying concept of the two-way symmetrical model is to encourage mutual understanding and promote advocacy. In analysing Grunig's proposal, satisfaction, defined as "the affective response to the fulfilment of expectation type standards" (Hecht, *in*

Jensen 2004:14), in the workplace is derived from the concepts of symmetry, as detailed earlier. In examining the above, although the two-way symmetric model promotes advocacy, it still leaves the responsibility of enabling communication with top management. However, it makes sense as a top down approach is necessary for communicating organisational strategy, vision and mission.

### **2.2.2 Excellence theory**

Various research projects (Grunig, 1984; Turk, 1985; Kelly, 1991 and Grunig et al, 1995) tested these theories extensively, but the most insightful test was the project, alternatively, called the '*excellence theory*' or '*excellence study*'. This general theory of public relations resulted from a 15 year investigation into '*best practises*' of communication managers. The investigation was conducted by a six-member research team, headed by James E. Grunig of the University of Maryland for IABC (International Association of Business Communicators). The investigation started in 1985 and the book, published in 1992, with Grunig as editor, is called "*Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management.*"

However, according to Laskin (2009:41) it should be noted that the excellence study was not exclusively about Grunig and Hunt's public relations models; but about the principles of excellence (including knowledge, shared expectations and participative culture) stating "*It is not sufficient to be a great technician capable of writing great press releases; it is important to be able to manage two-way communication, conduct research and understand social science behind communication. All these capabilities, however, can fail to materialise without the support of senior management.*" The excellence theory, according to Grunig, "*first explained the value of public relations to organisations and society based on social responsibility of managerial decisions and the quality of relationships with stakeholder publics*" and defined the strategic value of stakeholder management as building relationships through symmetrical communication to the benefit of the organisation. In addition, the excellence study sought to promote public relations as a critical management function; as well as leading an integrated communication function as outlined in the two-way symmetrical model. Grunig and Grunig (1992:320) present this model as the ideal in achieving excellence in public relations and communication management.

Ten years later, after extensive research based on the excellence theory, Grunig's et al (2002) findings were that the two-way symmetrical model was the normative model for public relations. They believe that the two-way symmetrical model is the most ethical approach and contributes more towards organisational effectiveness than any of the other models.

### **2.2.2.1 Criticisms of the two-way symmetric model**

Some scholars have vastly disagreed with their belief in the two-way symmetrical model. Some of the criticism is based on scholars are not, according to Laskin (2009:45) able to state conclusively that the two-way symmetrical model is actually the model predominantly practised in public relations, whilst others are concerned that the two-way symmetrical model is not attainable in practise and is thus a purely academic concept (Dover, 1995) or an utopian ideal.

Further, Roper (2005:70) criticises that public relations could become "a strategy for hegemony". He defines the concept of hegemony in the two-way symmetric model as "*domination without physical coercion through the widespread acceptance of particular ideologies and consent to the practises associated with those ideologies*". This is relevant as concessions must be made by one party; otherwise stability in the relationship would be lost. This supports the criticism that mutual understanding cannot be achieved with both parties in a win-win situation (Zerfaß, *in* Hunter, 1997:21). Chen (2008:171) argues that the 'mixed-motive model', which combines both two-way asymmetric and two-way symmetric models, is more feasible. The reason is that communicators should serve as advocates for both their organisation and its strategic stakeholders (Chen, 2008:171). The mixed-motive model aims to achieve a win-win scenario for all stakeholders.

A more serious criticism however is the failure of the models to recognise the relationship-building aspect of public relations; a concept presented by Ferguson (1984) and Grunig (1984, 1992), amongst others, as essential to the practise of public relations. While the excellence study does recognise the importance of relationships; no criteria were included in the study to measure it. Laskin (2009:49-50) believes a short-fall of the study includes its inability to transcend from public relations models into public relations dimensions; but he considers the concept of dimensions to be "*a viable measurement tool for public*

*relations activities*" and concludes stating that "more research is needed to develop the next step of the excellent project and the new conceptualisation of models/dimensions."

### **2.3 Strategic communications**

A common enough term in business and academic circles; '*strategic communications*', according to Hallahan et al (2007:4), is in the process of being defined considering the "*purposeful nature of strategic communication*" to be essential to public relations practise as it determines how "*an organisation presents and promotes itself through the intentional activities of its leaders, employees and communication practitioners,*" through the choices it makes. Steyn and Puth (2000:29-30) summarises the concept 'strategy', as a "*direction*", "*movement*", "*purpose*", "*pattern*", "*proactive*", "*determining success*" and "*providing a framework*". These terms are of relevance in the definition that states that strategy is a proactive approach from organisations in determining its desired position in the environment in which it operates – "*the instrument that enables an organisation to find synthesis between its goals and resources in view of the risks and challenges of the changing environment*" (Steyn & Puth, 2000:29). Argenti, Howell and Beck (2005:83) agree through their definition of strategic communication as "*communication aligned with the company's overall strategy, to enhance its strategic positioning*" as leaders who understand strategic communication allow "*strategy to drive their communication choices.*"

#### **2.3.1 Strategic management**

These definitions of strategic communications support the strategic concept of Pankaj Ghemawat (1993:132), a global strategist, that strategy is, simplistically, the ability to logically choose between ideas that are likely to be valuable or those which are unlikely to be valuable. In addition, Ghemawat (1993:70) makes the point that competitive advantage "*comes from an integrated set of choices about activities and a firm whose choices do not fill well together is not likely to succeed.*" According to Robbins (1998:4) "*managers get things done through people*" and uses the traditional functions of management to plan, organise, lead and control, in order to do so.

Although Schermerhorn (2011:11) states that planning involves setting the direction and objectives, organising involves managing people and tasks, leading is inspiring the people to work hard, and control is measuring and evaluating the performances of those managed. However, it is the strategic orientation of the organisation that determines the

direction and tactics that planning, organising, leading and controlling management takes. As organisational strategy identifies the "*organisation's positioning for the future*" says Steyn, (2000:25) and strategic thinking is important as it is a prerequisite for the development of an organisational strategy as strategic thinking gives the organisation an overall picture, including an external and long term focus on what the future environment might be like. It is a proactive approach in determining how future events can affect the vision and mission of the organisation, which is ultimately the strategy of the organisation. Mintzberg (*in* Steyn & Puth, 2000) further explains that it is necessary to break down the strategy so that operational strategies are clear, and then further breaking down the operational strategies into action plans, and stating what is required to fulfil these '*sub-strategies*'.

### **2.3.2 Stakeholder management**

The statement that relationships are the very essence of public relations is, according to Grunig (1992:4), what links public relations management to communication management via the definition "*management of communication between an organisation and its publics.*" He thus introduces the concept of stakeholder management and its importance to the corporate environment. Similar suggestions from Steyn & Puth (2000:3), Marx et al (1998:554) and Skinner et al (2001:4) support Grunig. According to Wright (1995), communication should be underpinned by a desire to build a relationship rather than be seen as the dissemination of information; and thus adds to Charron's (1994:42) posit that public relations is more than '*a source of information*'.

Three critical ideas underpin stakeholder management, according to Donaldson and Preston (1995) namely: "*descriptive accuracy; instrumental power and normative validity,*" with descriptive accuracy offering insight into making predictions on operating processes. Donaldson and Preston (1995:67) define stakeholders as "*persons or groups with legitimate interests in procedural and/or substantive aspects of corporate activity.*" Stakeholders are therefore grouped according to their interests in the organisation and not vice-versa, and subsequently defined as internal, external, primary, secondary, voluntary and involuntary stakeholders by numerous scholars including Freeman (1984); Clarkson (1995) and Mitchell et al (1997). It is interesting to note that Mitchell's et al (1997) stakeholder theory is based on the concepts of power, legitimacy and urgency and overlaps with the McClelland motivational theory of needs concepts of power, affiliation and

achievement (Robbins, 1998:175). However, Freeman (1984); Clarkson (1995) and Mitchell et al (1997) with Hillman and Keim (2001), Jones and Wicks (1999) and Jones (1995) agree that an organisation's survival and success depend upon the ability of the organisation to manage valuable relationships with its stakeholders.

Another element contributing to corporate or organisational strategy is '*competitive advantage*', according to Galbreath (2006:1106). He reasons that as employees are a major contributor to organisational performance, their contribution to achieving competitive advantage is indeed part of the organisational strategy; and concludes that it is therefore important that employees are identified as a critical stakeholder in the organisational strategy. Furthermore, White and Dozier (*in* Grunig, 1992:93) believes that public relations is able to act as a bridge between strategic management and stakeholders by using its boundary spanning capability to highlight problems and perceptions of the stakeholders, enabling management to make informed decisions how on to address issues that arise.

According to Galbreath (2006:1109), organisations that develop trust and co-operation with its employees as a critical stakeholder place the organisation in a better position than those who do not; and these relationships are formed with intention of establishing a mutually beneficial understanding based on trust. Stephen R Covey (*in* Covey 2006:xxiv) agrees stating that trust is the foundation of relationships; and that trust "*goes beyond ethical behaviour in leadership and beyond compliance... it is the ultimate root and source of our influence.*" Covey's opinion resonates with Phillips et al, (2003:480) definition of stakeholder theory as "*a theory of organisational management and ethics.*"

### **2.3.2.1 Criticisms of the stakeholder theory**

In presenting their argument as to why it is necessary and important to distinguish between different types of stakeholders in stakeholder theory, so as to accommodate the continual change in relationship, Friedman and Miles (2002:2-3) criticises stakeholder theory for having almost completely been defined from the perspective of the organisation and its benefit for example: stakeholder's contribution to strategic management; and the stakeholder's theory on managerial decision-making as this organisational-centric focuses destroys any balance in the theory.

However, Friedman points out two noticeable exceptions; Hill and Jones for their development of the agency-stakeholder model in 1992; and Calton and Kurland for replacing '*managerial discourses*' with '*multilateral stakeholder dialogues*' which may be able to address the existing broad definitions within stakeholder theory. This creates, according to Freeman and McVea (2005), an artificial separation between stakeholders and exacerbates the 'separation thesis' (Freeman, 1944) that the world of business cannot be usefully analysed if it is considered separate to the world of ethics or politics; neither can the increasing pressure of companies to conform to corporate governance regulations be ignored.

### **2.3.3 Internal communication**

Literature indicates that internal communications forms an integral part of an organisation's strategic communication structure, however very little attention is paid to this area (Yeomans; Scholes *in* Welch & Jackson, 2007:178-182). Slee and Harwood (2004:51) believe that "effective external communications begins with effective internal communications". While Brown (1995:24) agrees that public relations (referring to external communications) can be leveraged from internal communications, he is of the opinion that organisations must realise that anything published for employees are "*potential public documents*" especially as formal internal communication media may include handbooks, memos, newsletters, intranet, staff emails, podcasts, videos, posters, presentations, etc.

Nonetheless internal communications is most often discussed in literature under a variety of headings including employee communication (Argenti, 1997); organisational communication (Grunig, 1992) and corporate or business communication (Kitchen, 1997). Equally, the term internal communication is often used interchangeably with the terms internal relations, employee communications, employee relations, internal public relations and staff communications (Welch & Jackson, 2007:178). For the purpose of this literature review, the term 'internal communication' will be used wherever possible.

#### **2.3.3.1 Defining internal communications**

Welch and Jackson (2007:177-198) claim that theorists have continued to base definitions of internal communications on the 1989 definition by Frank and Brownwell (*in* Welch & Jackson, 2007:179) whose definition reads:

*“the communication transactions between individuals and/or groups at various levels and in different areas of specialisation that are intended to design and redesign organisations, to implement designs and to co-ordinate day-to-day activities”.*

Welch and Jackson (2007:177-198) argue that this definition is based in the context of organisational communication, and not specific to the study of integrated corporate communication. However, internal communication refers to all communication and interaction that takes place within an organisation, whether formal or informal (Kalla, 2005). Internal communication can take place vertically (up and down the lines of authority), horizontally (between peers on the same level of authority) or diagonally (across different levels of authority) within an organisation (van Staden et al, 2007). Internal communications can be used as a management tool to identify, establish and maintain relationships between the management and employees of an organisation (Chen, 2008:167).

#### **2.3.3.2 Benefits of internal communication**

According to Welch (2012), successful internal communication is beneficial to management as it contributes to employee commitment and develops the employees' understanding of their roles within an organisation. This result resonates with Clampitt and Downs (1993) findings that that quality communication impacts on productivity and service quality (improved); absenteeism, costs and strikes (reduced); and innovation (increased). This is supported by Gray and Robertson (2005:26) who state that improving the communication skills of top executives, especially the organisations' CEO, will prove cost-effective in improving the employees' satisfaction with the communication deliverables of the organisation. This outcome is supported by Chen (2008:189) whose study established:

*“a linkage between internal/employee communication and organisational effectiveness. By measuring the effects reflected in the levels of trust and openness between management and employees, and employee job satisfaction levels, the study revealed several key correlates, including: a) a participative culture serving as a base for internal/employee communication; b) two-way symmetrical approach being adopted as dominant communication mode; c) two-way vehicles being applied as main communication channels; d) the objective of*

internal/employee communication being set for employee management relationship building; and e) corporate communication being the true managers or part of the dominant coalition.

Thus, it is clear that communication satisfaction is an important dimension to determine when examining in communication needs and it follows that it is important to analyse whether employees are satisfied with current internal communication practise.

### 2.3.3.3 Internal communication dimensions

Using a stakeholder approach to internal communication, Welch and Jackson (2007:185) devised an 'Internal communication matrix' (Table 2.2) with which they hope to answer "who communicates to whom, in what ways, with what content, and... for what purpose," a question first presented by Lasswell (1971).

The "Internal communication matrix" (Table 2.2) demarcates the dimensions in which internal communication can take place, the levels (within the corporate sphere), the models of communication, the specific participants and the type of communication that occurs between these type of participants. However, the "Internal communication matrix" (Table 2.2) excludes all informal methods of internal communication as it is only concerned with managed internal communications.

Dimension	Level	Direction	Participants	Content
1. Internal line management communication	Line managers/supervisors	Predominantly two-way	Line managers-employees	Employees' roles Personal impact, e.g. appraisal discussions, team briefings
2. Internal team peer communication	Team colleagues	Two-way	Employee-employee	Team information, e.g. team task discussions
3. Internal project peer communication	Project group colleagues	Two-way	Employee-employee	Project information, e.g. project issues
4. Internal corporate communication	Strategic managers/top management	Predominantly one-way	Strategic managers-all employees	Organisational/corporate issues, e.g. goals, objectives, new developments, activities and achievements

**Table 2.2 Internal communication matrix, as defined by Welch and Jackson (2007)**

In addition, research by Tourish and Hargie (2004) and Argenti and Forman (2002) provide support that internal communication, which involves all communication that occurs within an organisation, plays an important role in organisational success, given that successful companies normally have effective communication strategies. Expanding on this concept Goodijk (2003:226) adds four aspects which should be considered if employees as stakeholders are to become more active in the decision-making at corporate level. These include *“mobilise human responsibility; create the best organisational framework; manage involvement/participation; and balance stakeholder interests”*.

The stakeholder model places emphasis on the employee as a key driver to the success of the organisation. However, this theory fails to take the personal influences, such as culture and values (Friedman & Miles, 2002), and the social psychology of the employee into consideration. In addition, the theory states that employees who feel that they have more responsibility will make a better contribution to the organisation according to Goodijk, (2003:230).

Oliver (2000:26) believes that internal communication is driven by demand for information (pull) rather than supply (push), meaning that in practise, employees demand more information, in more instances, than what management provides. Although management – employee communication is information driven, however, peer-to-peer conversations is the “most significant factor in shaping culture, and therefore behaviour”, (Rosen, 2005:25).

Grunig (1992:559) suggests that face-to-face communication enhances symmetrical communication. Face-to-face conversations may include what is commonly known as the ‘grapevine’. The grapevine is uncovered and controlled by the organisational opinion leaders (Rosen, 2005:25). Opinion leaders are not necessarily management or supervisors, but they use formal media as a talking point for conversations.

Internal communications needs to be aligned to the external communications strategy in order to gain the trust of employees. Brown (1995:24) believes that an external communication approach needs to be applied to internal communications, as it is often that internal communication is ‘sweetened’ to make top management look good. Therefore, an aligned communication function, i.e. internal and external communications

functions together will illustrate and develop credibility and trust as the same messages are communicated to both internal and external stakeholders.

## **2.4 Communication audit**

Although more commonly associated with accounting, an audit is used to gather data to evaluate or analyse a phenomenon. A communication audit would thus evaluate an organisation's ability to communicate or an assessment of an organisation's ability to transfer information needed to conduct the business as well as the ability to build relationships. The importance of communication within management is considered by Hargie and Tourish (2000:4) to be the most "fundamental and pervasive of all management activities," and is linked to organisational effectiveness and success. Hargie and Tourish (2000:23) use Emmanuel's (1985:50) definition of a communication audit defining it as "*a comprehensive and thorough study of communication philosophy, concepts, structure, flow and practises within an organisation.*" Downs and Adrian (2004:13) see the communication audit as a tool to gain insight into the impact of information sharing as well as insight into organisational functioning.

Baker (1999:2) describes the audit as a process, rather than a cycle, which has at "*least five stages namely: the selection of a topic; the specification of desired performance in terms of criteria and standards; the collection of objective data to determine whether the standards are met; the implementation of appropriate changes to improve performance; and the collection of data for a second time, to check whether any changes introduced have affected performance.*" The researcher will follow a similar process in this research, but the implementation of appropriate changes will fall outside the research, although the appropriate changes will be coached as recommendations within the research.

### **2.4.1 Communication satisfaction**

The literature on internal communication confirms that employee communication satisfaction is a well-used measure of employee satisfaction with the internal communication process and therefore a worthwhile measure for this research. It is a term (communication satisfaction) first developed by Downs and Hazen (1977) and used in their Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (based on a factor analysis) to investigate the relationship between communication and job satisfaction; and concluded that communication satisfaction is a multidimensional construct as opposed to a one-

dimensional construct (Clampitt & Downs, 1993:6). Downs and Hazen (1977) used eight (8) dimensions for communication satisfaction to define communication satisfaction, namely communication climate, supervisory communication, organisational integration, media quality, co-worker communication, personal feedback, corporate information, and subordinate communication. (All these terms are fully defined in the glossary and will be further discussed in Chapter 3: Measurement instrument).

However, Downs and Hazen's Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire has been criticised for a) not including communication from top management who are the decision-makers within the organisational environment (Hargie & Tourish, 2009; Ruck & Welch, 2012) and b) for omission of new media (Ruck & Welch, 2012) within the questionnaire. In response to the criticism, Downs (1990) expanded the questionnaire to include two new factors namely: a) top management communication which evaluates top management and their willingness and openness to listen and communicate more effectively; and b) interdepartmental communication which deal with the communication that takes place between different departments and how this contributes to the effectiveness of the organisation (Varona, 1996). However, with regard to the omission of online media, it is extremely unlikely that a questionnaire developed in 1977 would include online media; and neither would the newly expanded questionnaire development in 1990. This criticism simply highlights a new development and should serve as reminder that the questionnaire should be adapted to accommodate more recent developments. Regardless of this criticism, the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire provides insight into possible problem areas, which can then be investigated further (Hargie & Tourish, 2009).

## **2.5 Dimensional framework**

In his conclusion, Laskin (2009:50) acknowledges that conceptual evolution of the models and dimensions as measures within public relations, as developed during the excellence study are viable measures of public relations; but laments the sharp decline in the number of publications addressing these issues in recent years.

The purpose of this research is to answer the research questions "*What are the internal communication needs of the Cape Town based employees at Metropolitan Health Group?*" and the sub-questions, namely: "*What is the level of satisfaction of non-managerial*

*employees with the current overall internal communications?” and “What internal communication model(s) is/are currently being practised at Metropolitan Health Group?”*

Both the concept of two-way symmetrical communication and the factor analysis by Downs and Hazen’s Communication Satisfaction Survey contain dimensions which relate to communication within organisations and its impact on organisational effectiveness and success. The researcher has listed these dimensions in Table 2.3 and matched them where possible to determine whether there is an overlap between communication satisfaction dimensions and two-way symmetrical communication dimensions.

It should be noted that Grunig’s dimensions are not as clearly defined as those of Downs and Hazen and should there be a correlation between the two obtained in the communication needs analysis of this research, then further study would be required prior to the researcher reaching any conclusion.

Grunig’s ten (10) concepts, summarised into eight (8) dimensions	Down and Hazen’s eight (8) dimensions of communication satisfaction
Horizontal communication	Subordinate Communication
	Co-worker Communication
Relationships	Organisational Integration
Reciprocity, Tolerance for disagreement, and negotiation”	Communication Climate
Network symmetry	Media quality
Feedback	Feedback
Adequacy of information	Corporate information
Employee-centred style / Management Style	Supervisory Communication
Trust, Credibility, Openness	

**Table 2.3: Dimensions of symmetrical communication and communication satisfaction**

## 2.6 Conclusion

The literature indicates that employees are a vital stakeholder in any organisation. In keeping employees satisfied within their jobs, and thus maintaining high productivity and high morale, it is important to have an effective internal communications programme. The literature reviewed outlines the theories that support internal communication as an important and strategic function within organisations. Grunig and Hunt’s (1984) models of public relations and the excellence study provide into the dimensions that should be

considered when investigating whether internal communication / employee / organisational communication contributes to organisational effectiveness and success. In addition this literature review highlights the two-way symmetrical model of public relations to be the utopian or ideal model of communication; although there is doubt as to whether it is possible or practical. The Downs and Hazen (1977) factor analysis Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire has significantly influenced this study and has been adapted to conduct a needs analysis of employee communication at the Cape Town office of Metropolitan Health Group and, to this end a dimensional framework combining Grunig's 10 dimensions of two-symmetrical communication and the 8 dimensions (factors) of Downs and Hazen's Communication Satisfaction survey has been included.

The next chapter (Chapter 3) will discuss the research design and methodology used in this study.

### 3 CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This limited scope (mini) thesis uses an empirical, quantitative and descriptive research design to answer the research question is “*What are the internal communication needs of the Cape Town based employees at Metropolitan Health Group?*” The research is non-experimental and falls within the positivist (objective) paradigm, as defined by Welman *et al* (2005:78) as it does not experiment with variables. The research is based on a research thesis completed by Ingrid Jensen (2004) to determine communication satisfaction of employees within a utility.

Chapter 3 outlines the design and methodology used in the research study with particular reference to population sample size and sampling procedure, instrument of measurement, data collection, editing, analysis and interpretation.

#### 3.2 Research in public relations

Quantitative and qualitative research in the study of public relations have both contributed to the growth and sustainability of public relations as a theoretical discipline and research area over the past two decades. According to Botan & Taylor (2004: 659), public relations is more than a corporate communication practise and has moved into area or research that combines a variety of applied communication practises.

##### 3.2.1 Conceptualisation

Since 2000, Metropolitan Health Group has grown rapidly and its employee base has increased from 200 employees to over 3500 employees today. It is common knowledge that rapid growth is accompanied with change in management and organisational culture within an organisation. Numerous theories regarding employee motivation exist, the most well known are most probably Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs; McGregor’s Theory X and Theory Y, McClelland’s learned needs (power, affiliation and achievement) theory, but of interest is Frederick Herzberg’s Motivation – Hygiene Theory as it investigates work place satisfaction (Robbins, 1998:169-195). Communication is essential for effective management of people and according to Hargie and Tourish, (1993) quality communication is crucial for success. According to Grunig (1992), internal communication

is *“the catalyst, if not the key, to organisational excellence and effectiveness.”* Effective communication can be measured via a communication audit and the concept of satisfaction provides an indication as to whether the communication meets the needs of the employees (Downs and Hazen, 1977).

This research will use a communication audit to conduct a needs analysis of Cape Town based employees to determine communication satisfaction of employees, identify any gaps and identify the public relations model used at the Cape Town offices of Metropolitan Health Group. The research will be conducted within the organisational environment of a corporate company.

### **3.3 Research question**

“What are the internal communication needs of Cape Town based employees at Metropolitan Health Group?”

#### **3.3.1 Sub research questions**

The research is divided into two sub-questions namely;

What is the level of satisfaction of non-managerial employees with the current overall internal communications?

What internal communication model(s) is/are currently being practised at Metropolitan Health Group?

### **3.4 Research design**

The research is empirical, which means that the questions can be answered by “looking at the world” and is based on observations and measurements, rather than thinking about it (Sumser, 2001:6; Trochim, 2006). The research is within a positivist approach, in that it studies observable and measurable human behaviour, according to Welman et al, (2005:6) and is quantitative and non-experimental.

Primary data will be collected via a single structured self-administered questionnaire distributed online to the Cape Town based employees at Metropolitan Health Group as selected in a stratified random sample. The survey (questionnaire was adapted from Jensen’s study) is based on the dimensions developed by Downs and Hazen (1977) in their Communication Satisfaction Survey. According to Allen et al (2009), quantitative

research uses systematic observations to determine human behaviour. The data will be coded, analysed and used to address the research question.

### **3.4.1 Research objectives**

The research objectives are to ascertain:

*What are the internal communication needs (gaps) of Cape Town based employees at Metropolitan Health Group?"*

*What areas of internal communication are being neglected?*

*What areas of internal communication are being filled / met?*

*What is the level of communication satisfaction amongst the Cape Town based employees of Metropolitan Health Group?*

*What internal communication model(s) is/are currently being practised at Metropolitan Health Group?*

### **3.4.2 Research benefits and significance**

The aim of this research project is to determine the communication needs of non-managerial staff of Metropolitan Health Group; to assess the current status of communication practise and to measure the level of communication satisfaction amongst the employees. The research hopes to identify a best practise model and then benchmark the current status of communication within Metropolitan Health Group and assess it against the needs and satisfaction levels of employees. The results of this research may allow the researcher to identifying the gaps, which may exist between actual communication practises and desired outcomes of the internal communication campaigns. The results may provide top management with guidelines to improve excellent internal communication practises.

### **3.5 Research methodology**

This research uses a communication audit to conduct a needs analysis of Cape Town based employees to determine communication satisfaction of employees, identify any gaps and identify the public relations model used at the Cape Town offices of Metropolitan Health Group.

### 3.6 Issues of measurement

Primary data will be collected via a single structured self-administered questionnaire distributed online to the Cape Town based employees at Metropolitan Health Group as selected in a stratified random sample. The survey (questionnaire was adapted from Jensen's study) is based on the dimensions developed by Downs and Hazen (1977) in their Communication Satisfaction Survey. Communication satisfaction is a prerequisite for analysing the gaps in internal communication, i.e. the internal communication needs of employees.

According to Maree and Pietersen (*in Maree, 2007:155*), a survey is "an assessment of the current status, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes by questionnaires or interviews from a known population". According to Struwig & Stead (2005: 90), a questionnaire should be logically divided into sections, ask questions which are easy to answer and make provision for "I don't know" answers.

A questionnaire based on Ingrid Jensen's study, "Determining Employee Satisfaction in a Utility: A Case Study" (2004) was adapted to meet the needs of this research. It is according to Ruck & Welch (2012), useful to adapt a questionnaire as it provides for a level of benchmarking across the discipline. The original Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire provides the foundational theory required to implement this study, however because it was developed more than 30 years ago, it lacks in addressing new communication media. Adapting Jensen's questionnaire (based on the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire by Downs and Hazen (1977) allowed the researcher to adjust the original Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire to accommodate the new media environment prevalent in today's business world.

Jensen's questionnaire originally had 56 questions. The researcher had found that this was too long and only used the questions that are deemed relevant to this study. Where the content of Jensen's questionnaire was specific to the Utility, it was replaced with Metropolitan Health Group specific content and media. In addition, after consultation with the Metropolitan Health Group CEO, it was requested that the question relating to rating the merger communications was added.

### 3.6.1 Questionnaire design

The research question reflects a potential relationship between two variables, namely internal communication satisfaction and the needs of employees. The survey questionnaire measures the relationship between these variables, as perceived by Metropolitan Health Group non-management.

The survey consists of five sections, namely:

Section A: General Information

Section B: Communication Climate

Section C: Communication Content

Section D: Communication by Management

Section E: Communication Media

Section F: Overall Evaluation of Internal Communication

The knowledge obtained from the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire and the models of public relations inform the existing constructs from Jensen's study (2004). Since it is established that the preferred model of public relations is that of the two-way symmetrical model, the sections of Jensen's questionnaire is chosen based on the alignment of what the preferred/best practise model of public relations is, and the dimensions of communication satisfaction.

The constructs of communication climate, communication content, communication media and communication by management are incorporated into the questionnaire for this study in the following manner:

The models of public relations are reviewed in determining the climate of communication practises at Metropolitan Health Group. In the context of internal communications, the one-way models of public relations are bureaucratic as little research is done and manipulated propaganda is disseminated to the stakeholders, whereas the two-way models of public relations provide a dialogical environment for its stakeholders, i.e. management and subordinates (non-management). Further to the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire, this construct measures whether or not communication in the organisation motivates employees to achieve the company goals and objectives. It includes measuring using keywords that are aligned to symmetrical communication. Internal communication

content and media is reviewed in association with what makes internal communications effective in terms of types of media used and the quality of the media. Essentially, effective organisations are excellent organisations. Communication content keywords are used to determine whether current content used by the internal communications department is satisfactory in terms of quality and quantity and the communication media section surveys the existing media used as internal communication vehicles within Metropolitan Health Group.

Communication by management is deemed important in achieving excellent internal communications and is incorporated under strategic management and the managerial role – these are two of the concepts, as defined by Grunig (1992) that makes internal communication excellent. The Downs and Hazen communication satisfaction constructs of supervisory communication, personal feedback and subordinate communication is surveyed under this section by measuring management communication skills in terms of knowledge of the organisation, understanding, compassion, listening skills and ability to provide feedback.

Overall Evaluation of Internal Communication: This section includes three questions that measure the areas of internal communication process, internal communication satisfaction and internal communication needs.

### **3.6.2 Format of measuring instrument**

The questionnaire contains a total of 33 questions; the first three questions are used to determine general information and the next 30 closed ended questions, in the form of statements are grouped into each on the above-mentioned sections. Apart from Section A, all questions are presented on a Likert scale. A Likert scale is particularly useful for measuring construct, as it asks respondents to either agree or disagree with statements (Maree & Pietersen, *in* Maree, 2007).

In interpreting the results, the following numerical values are applied in order to determine a statistical report:

1 = *Strongly agree*

2 = *Agree*

3 = *I don't know/not sure*

4 = *Disagree*

5 = *Strongly disagree*

The actual questionnaire is available in Appendix B. The above constructs provide enough information to achieve the aim of this study. The general information section of the questionnaire provides some insight into whether there are interesting correlations between similar job grades, number of service years and business areas.

### **3.7 Population, sample design and sampling methods**

According to Welman et al (2005:52) and Lapan and Quartaroli (2009:88) a population is "a group of potential participants to whom the researcher wants to generalise the results of a study". The population within the Metropolitan Health Group thus includes all employees, whether management or non-management, temporary or permanently employed and at all branches of the organisation. Due to the limited scope of this thesis, a sample of the population was extracted by means of stratified random sampling. Mitchell and Jolley (1992) state that a stratified random sample ensures that the sample matches the population on certain key variables. As the population is large, a targeted sample (population) will be chosen by concentrating the research only on Cape Town based staff, and eliminating employees at all other regions.

The sampling procedure will first separate management from non-management employees as managerial staff is excluded from this study. A list of non-management, permanently employed Cape Town based employees was obtained from the Metropolitan Health Group Human Resources department. The list has been grouped according to the four structures within Metropolitan Health Group, namely Metropolitan Health Group Admin, Metropolitan Health Group IT, Qualsa and Corporate Services. This list was further reduced by choosing the third name on the list to be included as part of the final sample as this method ensured that each structure is equally represented in relation to their structure size. A final sample size of 540 employees were selected.

#### **3.7.1 Sampling method**

The Management and Information Systems department of Metropolitan Health Group provided the researcher with a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet containing the name, job grade, job title and physical office location of 1618 permanently employed, non-managerial

employees. The spreadsheet was divided into strata based on business unit structure, resulting in four strata, namely Metropolitan Health Group Administration, Qualsa, Metropolitan Health Group IT and Corporate Services.

However, the above structure was amended to include input from the CEO. This had to be included so that approval could be granted. The business unit structure was expanded as follows: Metropolitan Health Group Admin was expanded to GEMS, Bankmed and Corporate Services; Corporate Services was expanded to Finance, Risk, HR and Other.

### 3.7.2 Sample size

A sample of 30% was drawn from each stratum. The sample size of 30% was selected based on guidelines by Du Plooy (1995:53), which provide for a 95% confidence level and 5% error tolerance.

Stratum	Accessible population	Sample
Metropolitan Health Group Administration	1131	378
Qualsa	210	70
Metropolitan Health Group IT	144	48
Corporate Services	132	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>1617</b>	<b>540</b>

Table 3.1: Summary of stratified random sample of available population

## 3.8 Data collection methods and process

Since the sample size was fairly large, a subscription to the online survey software, Survey Monkey, was purchased. All questions were uploaded and the software generated a web link which could be sent to the sample. An email with a web link to the survey was sent to the available sample. The covering email is available in Appendix A.

### 3.8.1 Data collection

Of the 540 sample, only 518 employees had valid email addresses. The difference of 22 email addresses was not available to the researcher on the Metropolitan Health Group MS Outlook address book at the time of the research. The questionnaire with the covering letter was emailed to 518 employees. Of a total of 274 questionnaires returned, 55 were

invalid. A total of 219 usable questionnaires were returned, which represents 40% of the sample and 13% of the accessible population.

### 3.8.2 Data coding and capturing

Data coding in surveys is the process where the data is given a numeric value (Berends & Zorrola, *in* Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009:92). The Survey Monkey subscription included automatic data coding for all questions. A statistician was consulted to provide the mean and mode scores of all questions. This statistical report can be found in Appendix D.

The data was analysed according to the five sections of the questionnaire. The Survey Monkey subscription included automatic data analysis and percentage reports were downloaded for each question. The responses to these questions addresses the first objective, i.e. to determine whether the employees are satisfied with the current communication practises at Metropolitan Health Group.

### 3.9 Data analysis

Keywords identified from the literature which describes symmetrical communication was used to align of the results to one of Grunig and Hunt's models of public relations. This analysis was used to address the objective of determining the model of public relations used in the internal communication practise at Metropolitan Health Group. From this analysis, measures can then be taken to address communication needs if they do not conform to the best practise model, i.e. the two-way symmetrical model of public relations management.

To determine which model(s) of public relations is/are currently being practised internally at Metropolitan Health Group, the concepts of two way symmetrical communication, as described by Grunig, were correlated to the following statements in the questionnaire, as per the conceptual framework, where SB = 'Section X' and Q1 = 'Question number':

- SB Q1. The internal communication process at MHG encourages **two-way feedback (reciprocity, tolerance and negotiation)**.
- SB Q3. I **trust** the internal communication process (**trust**).
- SB Q5. MHG's internal communication process shows me that I can **influence my relationship** with the company (**network symmetry**).

- SB S6. MHG's internal communication process is **transparent. (credibility)**
- SB Q8. MHG is doing a good job communicating about the merger (**adequacy of information**).
- SD Q2. My manager talks **to me and listens** when I talk. (**feedback**)
- SD Q3. I can **openly discuss** work related issues with my manager (**openness**).
- SC Q1. MHG's internal communication provides me with high **quality information** that makes it easier for me to do my job (**adequacy of information**).
- SC Q2. MHG internal communication provides me with **enough information** to do my job (**adequacy of information**).
- SD Q5: My manager's communication skills displays an **understanding and compassion** for my work-related needs (**employee-centred style**).
- SD Q6. My manager's communication skills displays an **understanding and compassion** for my personal-related needs (**employee-centred style**).
- SD Q7. My manager **communicates well to senior management**, representing staff's needs raised at workplace meetings (**feedback + relationships**).
- SD Q8. My manager always provides feedback to my concerns, enquiries or suggestions (**feedback**).
- SE Q1. In my immediate team, we have regular face-to-face meetings (**horizontal communication**).
- SE Q2. The face-to-face meetings that I attend are participative (**reciprocity**).

To determine the model of public relations practised at Metropolitan Health Group, the results to the above was captured according to the symmetrical concepts. The Likert scale measurements of *strongly agree* and *agree* indicates a positive response and *strongly disagree* and *disagree* indicates a negative response. The results of the statements above were added to determine an overall percentage per concept. The purpose of this measurement was to determine if the concepts of symmetry are practised at Metropolitan Health Group, and if they are practised or not, to then determine the gap between satisfaction and the concepts present. This provides an indication of employee communication needs.

In addition, a statistician was consulted to calculate the overall mean score per statement for the total number of responses and the mode score per statement for the total number of responses.

Mean and mode scores are two measures of central tendencies. These measures find the middle number of a data set (Jackson, 2011:116). The mean is the average of a numerical set. This is found by adding the values of the entire numerical set, then dividing it by two to determine the average. Mode is the value of the numerical set with the greatest frequency. The values attached to each of the responses are: Strongly disagree = 5; Disagree = 4; Neither agree nor disagree = 3; Agree = 2; Strongly agree = 1.

For the purpose of analysing the results the mean scores are interpreted in the following manner:

- *A mean score of 2 and below would indicate that the majority of respondents agree or strongly agree with a statement and would be considered that respondents are satisfied with the internal communication practises.*
- *A mean score of between 2 and 3.5 would indicate a neutral to more positive response, although there would be less than general agreement on the issue in question.*
- *A mean score of between 3.5 and 4 would indicate a neutral to negative response.*
- *A mean score of higher than 4 would indicate that the majority of respondents disagree or strongly disagree with a statement.*

### **3.9.1 Reliability and validity**

Reliability is the "freedom of random error", (Alreck & Settle, 1985). It refers to how consistent and accurate the instrument of measurement is (De Vos & Fouche, 2001:85), in this case, the questionnaire. The questionnaire has been pre-tested and it is consistent in that all respondents received the same questionnaire. As it was based online, it could not be manipulated.

Due to the limited scope of this dissertation, the outcomes of this research is purely based on the perceptions of employees based the Cape Town region. The perceptions of employees within the other regions may vastly differ from the practises at the Head Office. The survey questionnaire does not provide for additional comments, which limited the respondents' relay of understanding of the questions to the researcher.

### **3.10 Reporting the results**

The results are reported in chapter four, in response to the research questions. The results are presented using percentages, graphs and mean and mode scores.

#### **3.10.1 Shortcomings of the research design and methodology**

As the questionnaire was based online, the researcher could not ascertain whether the respondents understood some of the statements. This could be attributed to the large percentage of "I don't know/Not sure" answers.

### **3.11 Summary**

This chapter covers the research process that was implemented to answer the research questions. It covers the development of the research question; how the questionnaire was adapted, and how the integration and alignment of the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire and the concepts of symmetry is used to determine the degree to which internal communications at Metropolitan Health Group is symmetrical or not.

## **4 CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

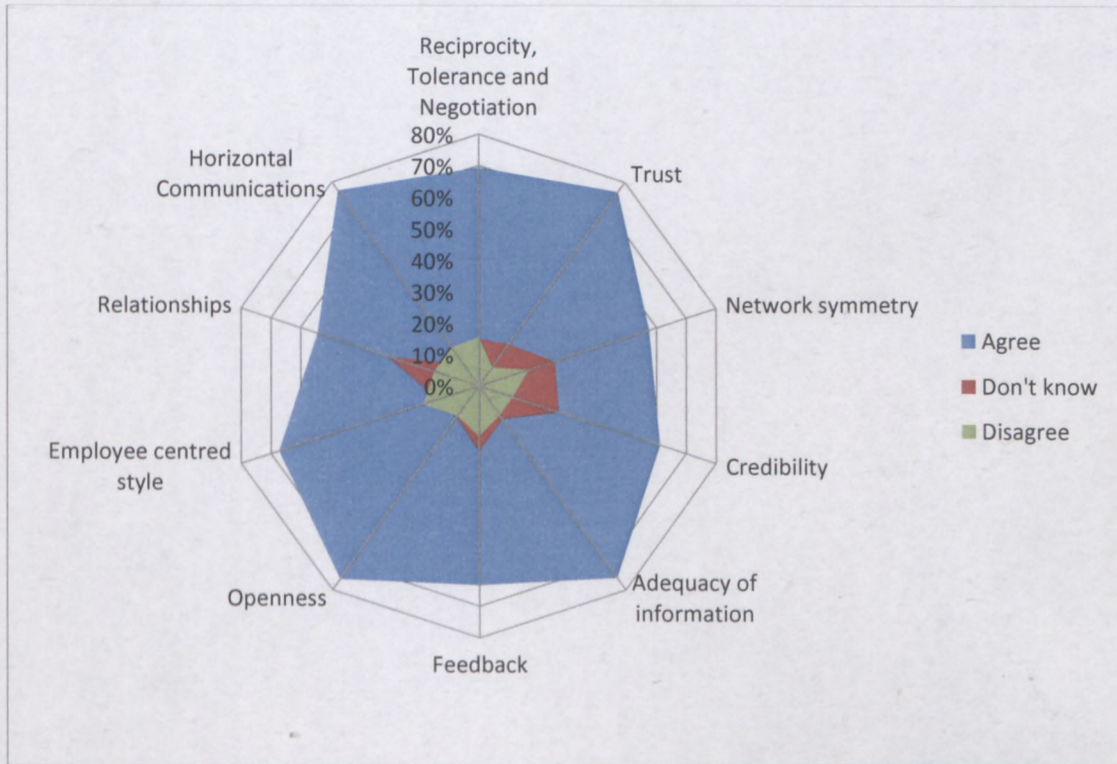
### **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this limited scope dissertation is to investigate the communication needs of employees at Metropolitan Health Group. This chapter outlines the results of the research undertaken. For ease of reference, the actual results are attached as appendices. The questionnaire was divided into five sections, according to a survey adapted from Ingrid Jensen's 2004 study. Significant findings are discussed as per the research questions and in accordance to the academic literature covered, as well as an overall evaluation. A statistical report is also included as an appendix, and this includes mean and mode scores for each of the responses. Conclusions and recommendations are offered in bridging the gap between employee communications needs and the best practise model for public relations; i.e. answering the research question.

### **4.2 Findings & discussion**

The graph below depicts the findings in accordance to the conceptual framework developed in chapter two and is interpreted in alignment with the questionnaire key findings.

#### 4.2.1 What are the levels of communication satisfaction at Metropolitan Health Group?



**Figure 4.1: Conceptual Framework Findings**

A large majority of 74.5% of respondents agree to strongly agree that the internal communication process is satisfactory. This indicates that the media used to communicate with employees is effective and successful.

The graph above indicates that the areas of relationships (54.3%), feedback (63.3%), network symmetry (57.5%) and credibility (61%) lack satisfaction. Areas of horizontal communication, trust, adequacy of information and openness enjoy high levels of satisfaction among employees of Metropolitan Health Group.

#### 4.2.2 Satisfaction with communication climate

Despite undergoing a merger, an overwhelming majority of respondents feel proud to be a part of the Metropolitan Health Group community. This could be attributed to the fact that

61.2% of respondents agree to strongly agree that the internal communication process is transparent. They therefore trust the process (majority of respondents agreeing to strongly agreeing at 76.2% on trust) and the vast majority of 89.4% believe that Metropolitan Health Group is doing a good job communicating about the merger.

Majority of respondents (71.7%) strongly agree to agree that the Metropolitan Health Group internal communication process encourages them to achieve the company's goals. This is indicative that employees are aware of the company goals and what is expected of them to achieve these goals.

62.1% of employees agree that the internal communication process encourages two-way feedback, and 57.5% believe that they can influence their relationship with the organisation.

An overall mode score of 2 indicates that the communication climate at Metropolitan Health Group is healthy and favourable, in that the information supplied by internal communications motivates and stimulates employees to fulfil their objectives.

#### **4.2.3 Satisfaction with communication content and media**

It is interesting to note that the 'grapevine' is live and well within Metropolitan Health Group. 34.7% of respondents indicate that they receive Metropolitan Health Group-relevant information from unofficial internal sources, while 39.7% of respondents disagree to strongly disagree.

Majority of employees are happy with the quality (66.2%) and quantity (70.8%) of information available to them via internal communications. Face-to-face meetings are regular amongst 76.3% of respondents, and it is highly regarded as participative (76.7%). The majority of respondents agree to strongly agree that the internal communication media such as IntraNews (internal electronic newsletter) and Staff Communications (email based) are valuable, effective, useful and easy to understand.

An overall mode score of 2 indicates that general satisfaction exists with the Metropolitan Health Group's internal communication content and media.

#### **4.2.4 Satisfaction with management communication**

An overall evaluation of management communication skill indicates that 66.2% of employees feel that their managers deliver clear and concise communication, and 75.3% of employees agree to strongly agree that their managers have a good understanding of the Metropolitan Health Group business policies and procedures. However, only 54.3% of employees feel that their managers raise and communicate staff needs to top management. A relatively high percentage of employees at 30.6% indicate that they are not sure whether their managers represent their needs to top management. In support, 16% are unsure and 18.8% disagree to strongly disagree that their managers do not provide feedback to their concerns, enquiries and suggestions. However, majority of respondents agree to strongly agree that their managers listen to them when they have something to say.

Majority of respondents (64.4%) believe that their managers display understanding and compassion for their personal needs, and 70.3% of respondents believe their managers display understanding and compassion for their work related needs. 75.8% of respondents agree to strongly agree that they can openly discuss work-related issues with their managers.

An overall mode score of 2 for this construct indicates that employees are generally satisfied with the flow of communication to and from superiors, pointing toward the two-way symmetrical model of public relations. However, there is a discrepancy which needs to be addressed as only 54.3% of employees feel that their managers raise their issues to top management.

#### **4.3 Which model of public relations is practised at Metropolitan Health Group?**

In terms of the graph 4.1, it is noted that there are concepts of symmetry existing within the internal communication practise at Metropolitan Health Group. However, there are areas such as relationships (54.3%), feedback (63.3%), network symmetry (57.5%) and credibility (61%) that are lacking. This means that excellence in internal communication, as

defined by Grunig (1992), is achieved in some areas such as trust (76%), horizontal communications (77%), openness (76%) and adequacy of information (75%).

The graph depicts that either one of the symmetrical models of public relations management is practised at Metropolitan Health Group, however, it cannot be concluded as to which one, i.e. the two way symmetrical model or the two way asymmetrical model.

#### **4.4 What are the communication needs of employees at Metropolitan Health Group?**

In addressing the research question, respondents agree to strongly agree that all their internal communication needs (61.2%) are fulfilled. Only 12.7% of respondents answered negatively, implying that their needs are not met. An alarming 26% are unsure of whether their needs are met or not. This could mean that the question was not understood, or that they are simply not that engaged in internal communication practises.

In support of the above finding, 59.3% and 65.7% answered positively, agreeing or strongly agreeing respectively, by describing internal communication at Metropolitan Health Group as reaching all staff, consistent, fast, understandable, credible, purposeful, relevant, efficient and customer-focused. It must, however, be noted that just under 20% of respondents are unhappy with the internal communications.

Graph 4.1 identifies where there are large gaps between symmetry and satisfaction. These gaps inform the communication needs, which are relationships, network symmetry credibility and feedback.

#### **4.5 General information**

In this section, respondents were required to provide some background information. As per request from the CEO, the structure of Metropolitan Health Group Admin and Metropolitan Health Group IT were broken down further as it would provide greater insight into trends which may arise from certain business units.

It was found that the greatest percentage of respondents came from the Metropolitan Health Group Admin division, at 69.5%, of which 47.9% were from the GEMS business unit. This is understandable as the Metropolitan Health Group Admin division is the largest of all other divisions, and GEMS is the largest business unit within the Admin division, i.e. the most employees are employed in this business unit.

As it is company policy to only employ individuals with a matric (Grade 12) qualification, it can be assumed that this is the minimum educational level. It is for this reason that educational qualifications were omitted from the questionnaire. Job grade 4 employees provided the highest amount of responses at 42.5%. These are semi-skilled workers, predominantly fulfilling the roles of call centre agents, premium management clerks, finance clerks, etc. Job grade 6 and 7 are at specialist level, where either extensive experience or an academic qualification is required in terms of educational criteria, and contribute to 28.3% of respondents.

It is important to note that majority of respondents (89.5%) have more than one year's experience at Metropolitan Health Group, and the assumption can be made that they are aware of and have been exposed to the internal communication practises.

#### **4.6 Conclusions and Recommendations**

The findings of the questionnaire provide adequate information to address the research questions posed. By conducting a communication audit the researcher was able to measure the gap between the levels of communication satisfaction and two-way symmetrical communication. The purpose of this is to benchmark the current practise with the ideal model of public relations, which literature notes as Grunig's two-way symmetrical model. The gap between the concepts of feedback, network symmetry, credibility and relationships; and achieving two-way symmetry is especially large at more than 35%. As the two-way symmetrical model uses research to facilitate mutual understanding and uses "truthful interpretations of the public and the organisations" (Stacks & Watson, *in* Toth, 2008:70), it becomes increasingly more important for the organisation to address these issues as dissatisfaction can lead to disengagement.

In managing the gap of credibility, management and the internal communications department needs to identify who the opinion leaders are within the organisation. Literature reveals that these employees are not necessarily in leadership positions, but other employees respect and listen to their opinions. These opinion leaders have the potential to assist management in achieving a two-way symmetrical environment. These opinion leaders are valuable to management, via a consultative approach, in creating a mutual understanding with employees.

Grunig's four concepts for achieving excellent internal communications does not address the grapevine, as it is interesting to note that almost an equal amount of employees engage in grapevine activity, while a considerable amount are not sure whether they do or not. It is recommended that top management create a channel for employees to address business-related rumours. As Metropolitan Health Group is currently undergoing a merger, rumours can be detrimental to the organisational climate.

The findings show that traditional one-way media such as newsletters and email from top management is useful and practical in large organisations. However, for top management to maintain trust and credibility with employees, it is recommended that the one-way media approaches be backed up with regular face-to-face interactions with employees, which gives opportunity for the concepts of symmetry to flourish.

It is recommended that a further study investigate the communication needs of line management and team leaders, and the communication relationship they hold with top management.

Overall, with a mode score of two (2) for each of the four constructs i.e. communication climate, communication content, communication media and management communication; it can be deemed that there is general satisfaction with Metropolitan Health Group's internal communication.

It is further recommended that a full scale study of the entire population be researched so that conclusive results can be obtained to implement a fully excellent internal communications strategy, tailored to the needs of the strategic constituency – the employees.

## LIST OF REFERENCES

- Allen, M., Titsworth, S. & Hunt, S.K. 2009. *Quantitative research in communication*. California, Sage Publications.
- Alreck, P.L. & Settle, R.B. 1985. *The survey research handbook*. USA, Richard D. Darwin Inc.
- Argenti, J 1997 'Stakeholders: the Case Against', *Long Range Planning*, vol. 30, no. 3, pp. 442 – 445.
- Argenti, P.A. and Forman, J 2002. *The power of corporate communication: Crafting the voice and image of your business*. McGraw Hill, New York, N.Y.
- Argenti, PA, Howell, R.A & Beck, KA 2005, 'The Strategic Communication Imperative', *MIT Slogan Management Review*, 46(3):83-89.
- Baker, R. Hearnshaw, H. & Robertson, N (eds) 1999. *Implementing change with clinical audit*. Chichester: Wiley.
- Berends, M. & Zottola, G. 2009. A Primer of Survey Methods, in S.D Lapan & M.T. Quartaroli (eds.), *Research Essentials: An introduction to designs and practises*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, pp.79 – 101
- Bernays, E in Grunig, -J.E & Hunt, T. 1984. *Managing public relations*. Wadsworth. Thomson Learning Inc
- Brown, T. 1995. Leverage PR for internal communications. *Industry Week*. Pp24
- Charron, J 1994, 'Relationship between journalists and public relations: Cooperation, conflict and negotiation', *A Canadian Journal of Communication*, 14(2):41-54.
- Chen, N. 2008. Internal/Employee communication and organisational effectiveness: a study of Chinese corporations in transition. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 17 (54); 167 – 189. February.
- Chen. J.C.; Silverthorne, C., Hung, J.Y., 2006. Organization communication, job stress, organizational commitment, and job performance of accounting professionals in Taiwan and America. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 27(4):242 – 249
- Cheney, G. & Christensen, L.T. 2006. What should public relations theory do, practically speaking? *Journal of Communication Management*, 10(4):100 – 102
- Clampitt, P.G. & Downs, C.W. 1993. Employee perceptions of the relationship between communication and productivity: a field study. *The Journal of Business Communication*, 30(1)

- Clarkson, ME 1995, 'A stakeholder framework for analysing and evaluating corporate social performance', *Academy of Management Review*, 20(1):92-117.
- Daly, F, Teague, P and Kitchen, P. 2003 Exploring the role of internal communications during organisational change. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*. 8(3):153 – 162
- De Vos, A.S. & Fouche, C.B. 2001. General introduction to research design, data collection methods and data analysis, in A.S De Vos (ed), *Research at Grass Roots: A primer for the caring professional*. Pretoria, Van Schaik Publishers
- Donaldson, T & Preston, LE 1995, 'The stakeholder theory of the corporations: concepts, evidence and implications', *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 20, no. 1. Pp 65- 91
- Downs, C.W and Hazen, MD 1977. A factor analytic study of Communication Satisfaction, *Journal of Business Communication*. 14(3):63 – 73
- Downs, C.W. and Adrian, A.D 2004 *Assessing Organizational Communication: Strategic Communication Audits* (Guildford Communication Series), Guildford Publications Inc, Kindle Edition. New York, N.Y.
- Du Plooy, GM. 1995. *Introduction to Communication – Course Book 2: Communication research*. Kenwyn: Juta & Co Ltd.
- Ferguson, MA. 1984. Building theory in public relations: Interorganizational relationships as a public relations paradigm. Paper presented to *Public Relations Division, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual Convention*. University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida: August.
- Fitzpatrick, K. 1996. The role of public relations in the institutionalisation of ethics. *Public Relations Review*, 22(3): 249 – 258.
- Freeman, RE 1984, *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*, Pittman, Boston, MA.
- Friedman, A.L. & Miles, S. 2002. Developing stakeholder strategy. *Journal of Management Studies*, 39(1):1-21
- Galbreath, J. 2006. Does primary stakeholder management positively affect the bottom line? Some evidence from Australia. *Management Decision*, 44(8):1106-1121
- Ghemawat, P 1999, *Strategy and the Business Landscape*, Harvard Business School Publishing, Boston, MA
- Goodijk, R. 2003. Partnership at corporate level: the meaning of the stakeholder model. *Journal of Change Management*, 3(3):225-241.
- Gray, R. & Robertson, L. 2005. Effective internal communication starts at the top.

*Communication World*. July-August pp 26-28

Grunig, J.E & Hunt, T. 1984. *Managing public relations*. Wadsworth/Thomson Learning Inc. Belmont CA

Grunig, J.E. & Grunig, L.A. 1992. Models of public relations and communication, in J.E. Grunig (ed), *Excellence in public relations and communication management*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp 285 – 325

Grunig, J.E. (ed). 1992. *Excellence in public relations and communication management*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Grunig, J.E. 1992. Systems of internal communication in J.E. Grunig (ed), *Excellence in public relations and communication management*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp 531 – 575

Grunig, J.E. 1992. What is excellence in management?, in J.E. Grunig (ed), *Excellence in public relations and communication management*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp 219-250

Grunig, J.E. 1992. Communication, Public relations, and Effective Organizations: An Overview, in Grunig, JE (ed), *Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Hillsdale NJ, USA.

Grunig, J.E., Grunig, L.A. & Ehling, W.P. 1992. What is an effective organisation? In J.E. Grunig (ed), 1992.*Excellence in public relations and communication management*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp 65 – 90

Grunig, J.E., Grunig, L.A. & Dozier, D.M. 2002. *Excellent public relations and effective organisations: a study of communication management in three countries*. Hillsdale, NJ Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Hallahan, K, Holtzhausen, D, Van Ruler, B & Sriramesh, K 2007, 'Defining Strategic Communication', *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 1(1):3-35.

Hargie, O. & Tourish D 1993 Assessing the effectiveness of communication in organisations: the communication audit approach. *Health Services Management Research*. 6(4):276 – 283

Hillman, A.J and Keim, G.D 2001 Shareholder Value, Stakeholder Management and Social Issues: *What's the Bottom Line?* 22(2):125 – 139

Hunter, A.T.D. 1997. *The relationship of public relations and marketing against the background of integrated communications. A theoretical analysis and empirical study at US-American corporations*. Masters Degree Thesis. University of Salzburg. Germany

Jackson, S.L. 2011. *Research methods and statistics: A critical thinking approach*.

California, USA. Wadsworth

- Jensen, I. 2004. *Determining employee satisfaction in a utility. A case study.* Magister Technologiae Dissertation, Cape Technikon. Cape Town
- Jones, T & Wicks, A 1999, 'Convergent Stakeholder Theory', Jones, T & Wicks, A 1999, 'Convergent Stakeholder Theory', *Academy of Management Review*, 24(2):16 – 206.
- Jones, T. 1995 Instrumental Stakeholder Theory. A synthesis of ethics and economics. *Academy of Management Review*, 20(2):404 – 437
- Kalla, H.A. 2005. Integrated internal communications: a multidisciplinary perspective. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*. 10(4):302-314
- Kitchen , P 1997. *Public Relations: Principle and Practise*, Thomson Business Press London.
- Kitchen P.J & Daly, F. 2002. Internal communication during change management. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*. 7(1):46 – 53
- Larkin, T.J. & Larkin, S. 2006. Mission impossible: increasing employee trust in your CEO. *Communication World*. Jan-Feb, pp 40-41
- Laskin, A.V. 2009. The Evolution of models of public relations: an outsiders' perspective. *Journal of Communication Management*, 13(1):37-54.
- Lasswell, H.D. 1971. The structure and function of communication in society, in W. Schramm and D.F. Roberts (eds) *The Process and Effects of Mass Communication*, University of Illinois Press, Chicago pp 84- 99
- Maree, K. & Pietersen, J. 2007. Surveys and the use of questionnaires in M Maree (ed), *First steps in research*. Pretoria. Van Schaik Publishers, pp 154-170
- Marx, S., Van Rooyen, D.C., Bosch, J.K. & Reynders, H.J. 1998. *Business Management*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, Van Schaik Academic, SA.
- Mitchell, M. & Jolley, J. 1992. *Research design explained, second edition*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc. USA
- Mitchell, R.K., Agle, B.R. & Wood, D.J. 1997. Toward a theory of stakeholder identification and salience; defining the principle of how and what really counts. *Academy of Management Review*, 22(4):853 – 886
- Oliver, S. 2000. Symmetrical communication: does reality support rhetoric? *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 5(1): 26-33
- Proctor, T & Doukakis, I .2003 Change management: the role of internal communication and employee development. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*. 8(4):269 – 277

- Quinn, D. & Hargie, O. 2004. Internal communication audits: a case study. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*. 9(2):146 – 158
- Robson, P.J.A. and Tourish, D. 2005 Managing Internal Communications: an organisational case study. *Corporate Communications: An international journal*. 10(3):213 - 222
- Roper, J. 2005. Symmetrical communication: Excellent public relations or a strategy for hegemony? *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 17(1): 69-86
- Rosen, S. 2005. Carry on the Conversation. *Communication World*, March-April:24-26
- Ruck, K. & Welch, M. 2012. Valuing internal communication; management and employee perspectives. *Public Relations Review*, 38(2012): 294 - 302
- Ruppel, C.P. & Harrington, S.J. 2000. The relationship of communication, ethical work climate, and trust to commitment and innovation. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 25:313 - 328
- Schermerhorn, J. 2011. *Exploring management, third edition*. USA, Wiley Publishers Inc.
- Slee, P. & Harwood, E. 2004. 'One big happy family': How to plan an internal communications strategy. *Perspectives*, 8(2). April
- Skinner, C, Von Essen, L, & Mersham, G 2001, *Handbook of Public Relations*, 6<sup>th</sup> edn. Oxford University Press, New York, NY, USA.
- Stacks, D.W. & Watson, M.L. 2008. Two-way communication based on quantitative research and measurement. In Toth, E.L. (ed). *The future of excellence in public relations and communication management*. Routledge, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Steyn, B. 1999. CEO expectations in terms of PR roles. *Communicare*, 19(1):20-43
- Steyn, B. & Puth, G. 2000. *Corporate communication strategy*. Sandown: Heinemann Publishers.
- Steyn, B. 2002. A meta-theoretical approach to the role of the corporate communication strategist. *Communicare*, 21(2): 42-63
- Sumser, J. 2001. *A guide to empirical research in communication*. Sage Publications. California
- Tourish, D. & Hargie, O. 2004 The crisis of management and the role of organisational communication in Tourish, D. And Hargie O (Eds) *Key Issues in Organizational Communication*. Routledge, London: 17 – 36.
- Trochim, W.M. 2006 *The Research Methods Knowledge Base*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Internet page, at URL <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/>
- Van Staden, E., Marx, S. & Erasmus-Kritzinger, L. 2007. *Corporate communication:*

- getting the message across in business*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Van Schaik Publishers. Pretoria
- Welch, M. 2012. Appropriateness and acceptability: employee perspectives of internal communication. *Public Relations Review*: 39(2012): 246 - 254
- Welch, M. & Jackson, P.R. 2007. Rethinking internal communication: a stakeholder approach. *Corporate Communication: An International Journal*. 12(2): 177-198.
- Welman, Kruger & Mitchell. 2005. *Research methodology: 3<sup>rd</sup> edn*. Oxford University Press. South Africa.
- White, J. & D.M. Dozier. 1992. Public relations and management decision making, in J.E. Grunig (ed), *Excellence in public relations and communication management*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates
- Wright, D.K. 1995. The role of corporate public relations executives in the future of employee communications. *Public Relations Review*. Fall. 21(3):181-198

## **APPENDICES**

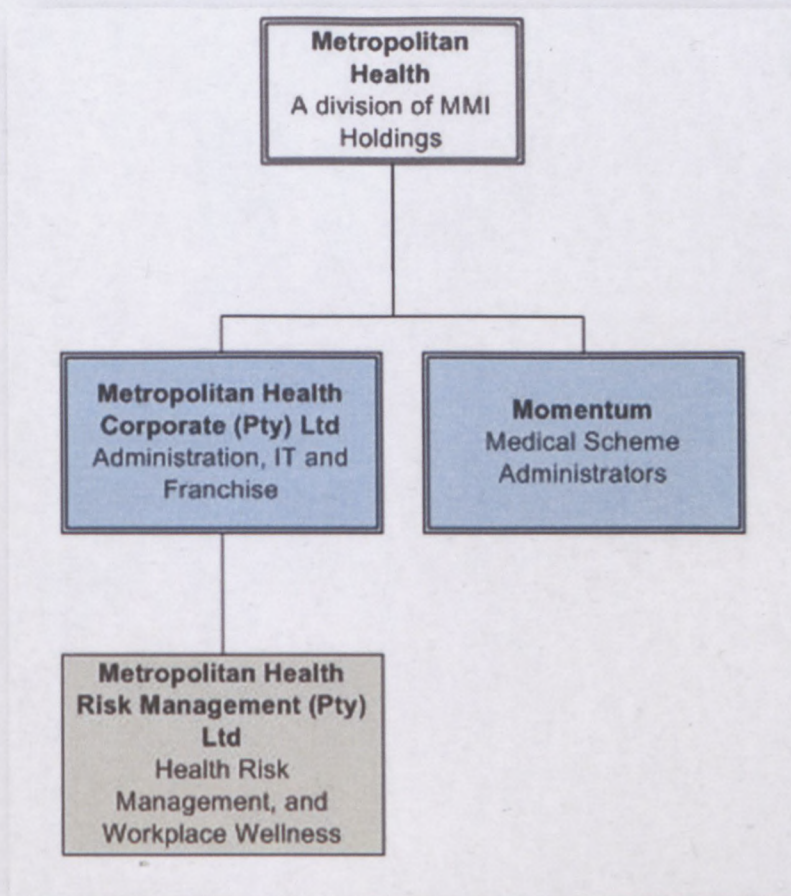
### **APPENDIX A: BACKGROUND: METROPOLITAN HEALTH GROUP**

#### **Metropolitan Health Group**

Currently, Metropolitan Health Group, now known as Metropolitan Health, is the health administration business of MMI Holdings, a listed company on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange.

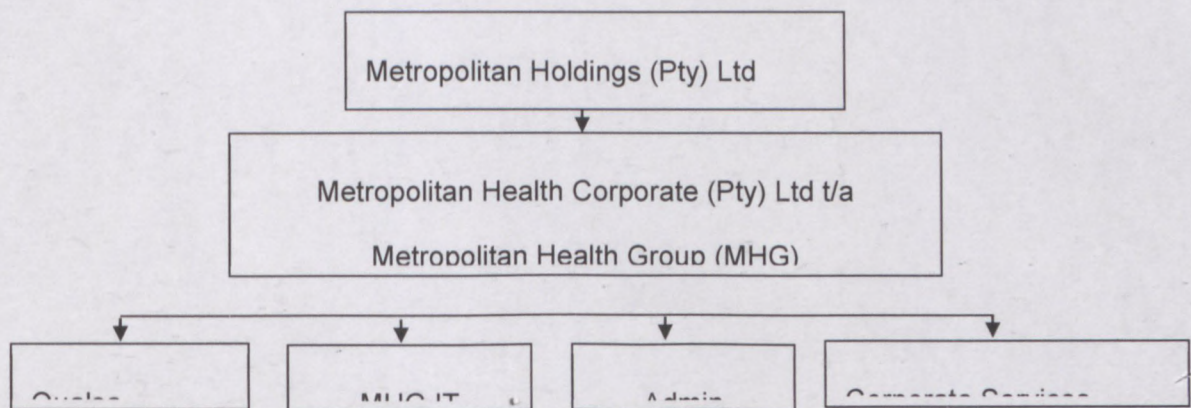
#### **5 Background**

MMI Holdings was formed as a result of a merger between Metropolitan Holdings Ltd (the previous holding company to Metropolitan Health Group) and Momentum. The merger was made official on 1 December 2010. Metropolitan Health was formed as a result of the merger between the two medical scheme administration businesses, Metropolitan Health Group and Momentum Medical Scheme Administrators. Metropolitan Health is the largest administrator of medical schemes in South Africa, managing the administration of 27 medical schemes. Metropolitan Health Risk Management (previously/pre-merger known as Qualsa Healthcare) is the wholly-owned managed care subsidiary of Metropolitan Health.



**Figure 1.1: Post-merger structure of Metropolitan Health**

For the purposes of this study, the pre-merger structure at the Cape Town office, as illustrated in figure 1.2 below is discussed as it was this structure that was sampled and researched. All reference hereon will be made to Metropolitan Health Group.



## Figure 1.2: Pre-merger structure of Metropolitan Health

For operational purposes, Metropolitan Health Group is divided into four separate businesses, i.e. Qualsa, Information Technology (IT), Administration (Admin) and Corporate Services. The administration business provides medical schemes with administration solutions such as claims management, premiums management, client services (in-bound call centre) and membership management, etc. The IT division provides all hardware, software and ICT solutions to the businesses, and provides all application support for these businesses to operate. The Corporate Services division incorporates all support services such as Corporate Affairs, Risk management, Infrastructure management, Human Resources management, Finance and Operations management. Each of these divisions are headed by an Executive, while each of the other businesses (Qualsa, IT and Administration) are headed by a Managing Director (MD). All of the MDs and Executives report directly to the Metropolitan Health Group CEO.

Having implemented a new business strategy of aligning and integrating the service offering from the Admin and Qualsa businesses, new reporting roles – that of the 'General Manager' has been implemented. The implication is that these new roles, although with the purpose of 'integration', still creates a division of company culture in terms of the business unit headed. There is a General Manager for each of the large medical schemes, i.e. GEMS, POLMED, Transmed, Bankmed and for a cluster of smaller retail schemes called 'Corporate Schemes'.

The Metropolitan Health Group business model is client centric focused, which means that each client is given a dedicated business unit, comprising of top management, line management, team leaders and clerical staff dedicated to one client scheme. As a result of the client centric business model, the various business units are working in silos, independent of one another. Many staff have the same job titles, but are employed to service different clients, who require different Service Level Agreements (SLAs).

Although there is a small internal communications department, the current business model provides many challenges for effective internal communication to take place. Cultures within the different business units are driven by the specific leadership of that business

unit. Not only are business unit operations independent from one another, some are also geographically dispersed, which creates a further divide.

*Sources: Metropolitan Health Group Capability Brochure 2010*

*MMI Holdings Capability Brochure 2011*

## APPENDIX B: COVER EMAIL TO RESPONDENTS

Dear Colleagues

I am conducting independent academic research to investigate the internal communication needs of employees at Metropolitan Health Group/MMI health division, in partial fulfilment of the degree MTech: Public Relations Management at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

You have been randomly selected to complete an online survey. The survey should take less than 5 minutes to complete.

Please [click here](#) to access the survey.

If you cannot access the link, please copy and paste the following address into your web browser: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NMNDNV5>

The results of the research are completely anonymous, unless you would like to opt to win Metropolitan Health Group branded items in a lucky draw (then include your name in the survey). By participating in the survey, you could be selected to win a Metropolitan Health Group branded goodies hamper.

NB: Please do not forward this email to your colleagues as it would skew the results of the survey. Your participation would be much appreciated.

Thank you.

Kind regards,

Leilahn Albertyn

## APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE

## Needs analysis of employee communication at MHG

### 1. Section A: General Information

Please choose an appropriate answer from the drop-down menu. You can only choose one (1) option.

1. To which division to you belong?

2. What is your job grade?

3. How long have you been working at MHG?

## Needs analysis of employee communication at MHG

### 2. Section B: Communication Climate

Please read the statements below and indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement according to your own perceptions of the internal communication process. Please choose only one option in the appropriate block.

**\* 1. I am proud to be part of the MHG community.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 2. The internal communication process at MHG encourages two-way feedback.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 3. I trust the MHG internal communication process.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 4. MHG's internal communication process encourages me to achieve the company's goals.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

## Needs analysis of employee communication at MHG

**\* 5. MHG's internal communication process shows me that I can influence my relationship with the company.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 6. MHG's internal communication process is transparent.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 7. MHG's internal communication has improved during the last 12 months.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 8. MHG is doing a good job communicating about the merger.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

## Needs analysis of employee communication at MHG

### 3. Section C: Communication Content

Please read the statements below and indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement according to your own perceptions of the internal communication content. Please choose only one option in the appropriate block.

**\* 1. MHG's internal communication provides me with high quality information that makes it easier for me to do my job.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 2. MHG internal communication provides me with enough information to do my job.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 3. MHG internal communication provides me with a clear picture of where my division fits within the whole company.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

## Needs analysis of employee communication at MHG

### 4. Section D: Communication by management

Please read the statements below and indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement according to your own perceptions of the communication delivered by management. Please choose only one option in the appropriate block.

For the purposes of this survey, the term 'manager' refers to your direct or line manager/supervisor/team leader (i.e. the person to whom you report to).

**\* 1. My manager delivers clear and concise communication.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 2. My manager talks to me and listens when I talk.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 3. I can openly discuss work related issues with my manager.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 4. My manager has a good understanding of MHG's business policies and procedures.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

## Needs analysis of employee communication at MHG

**\* 5. My manager's communication skills displays an understanding and compassion for my work-related needs.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 6. My manager's communication skills display an understanding and compassion for my personal needs.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 7. My manager communicates well to senior management, representing staff's needs raised at workplace meetings.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 8. My manager always provides feedback to my concerns, enquiries or suggestions.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

## Needs analysis of employee communication at MHG

### 5. Section E: Communication Media

Please read the statements below and indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement according to your own perceptions of the communication media delivered by the internal communications process and management.

**\* 1. In my immediate team, we have regular face-to-face meetings.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 2. The face-to-face meetings that I attend are participative.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 3. I find the information in IntraNews valuable.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 4. I find IntraNews easy to understand.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

## Needs analysis of employee communication at MHG

**\* 5. Staff Communications is a useful source of work information.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 6. Staff Communications is a reliable source of work information.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 7. I find MHG's intranet easy to use.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 8. I often receive information relevant to MHG from other, unofficial internal sources.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 9. MHG's internal communications media is relevant.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

# Needs analysis of employee communication at MHG

## 6. Section F: Overall evaluation of internal communication

Please choose only one option in the appropriate box that best corresponds to your opinion of MHG's internal communication process where 1 indicates that you strongly agree and 5 indicates that you strongly disagree; for example:

Internal communication at MHG is best described as:

Sufficient 1 2 3 4 5 Insufficient

**\* 1. On a rating where 1 = Strongly Agree and 5 = Strongly Disagree, can internal communication at MHG be best described as:**

	1	2	3	4	5
Reaches all staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consistent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fast	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understandable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Credible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Purposeful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relevant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Efficient	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Customer-focused	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**\* 2. MHG addresses all my communication needs.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**\* 3. I am satisfied with the MHG internal communication process.**










- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know/I'm not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

## APPENDIX D: FINDINGS

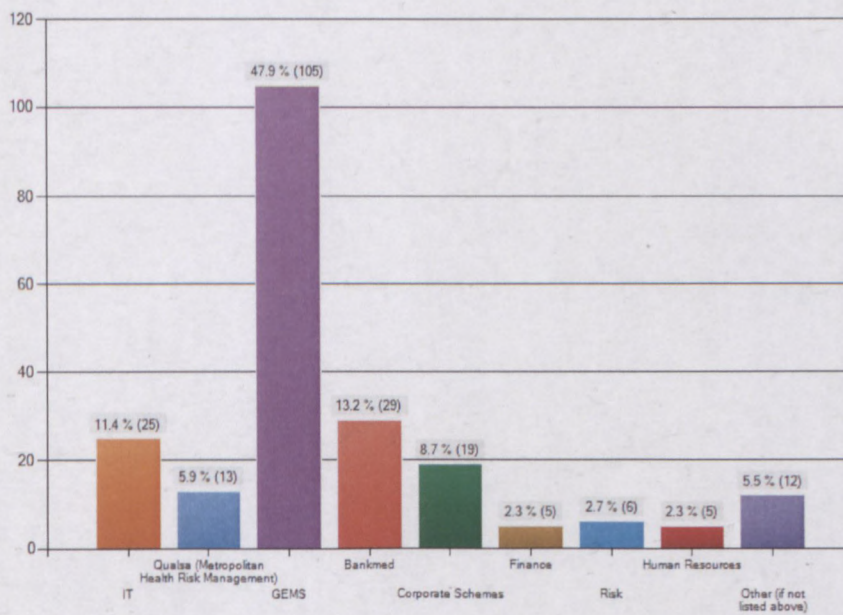
1. \*OPTIONAL: Please provide your full name and surname in order to be eligible for the lucky draw. Do not fill in if you wish to remain anonymous.

	Response Count
	167
answered question	167
skipped question	52

## 2. To which business unit do you belong?

		Response Percent	Response Count
IT		11.4%	25
Qualsa (Metropolitan Health Risk Management)		5.9%	13
GEMS		47.9%	105
Bankmed		13.2%	29
Corporate Schemes		8.7%	19
Finance		2.3%	5
Risk		2.7%	6
Human Resources		2.3%	5
Other (if not listed above)		5.5%	12
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>219</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>0</b>

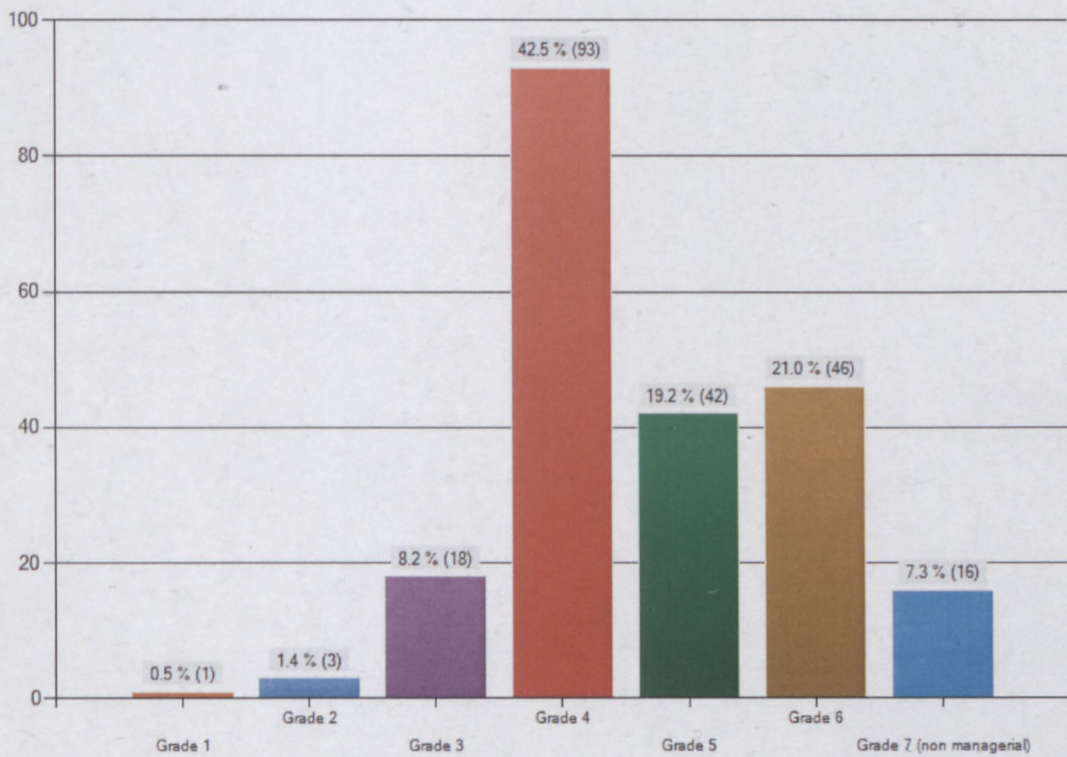
To which business unit do you belong?




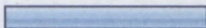
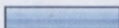


### 3. What is your job grade?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Grade 1	0.5%	1
Grade 2	1.4%	3
Grade 3	8.2%	18
Grade 4	42.5%	93
Grade 5	19.2%	42
Grade 6	21.0%	46
Grade 7 (non managerial)	7.3%	16
answered question		219
skipped question		0

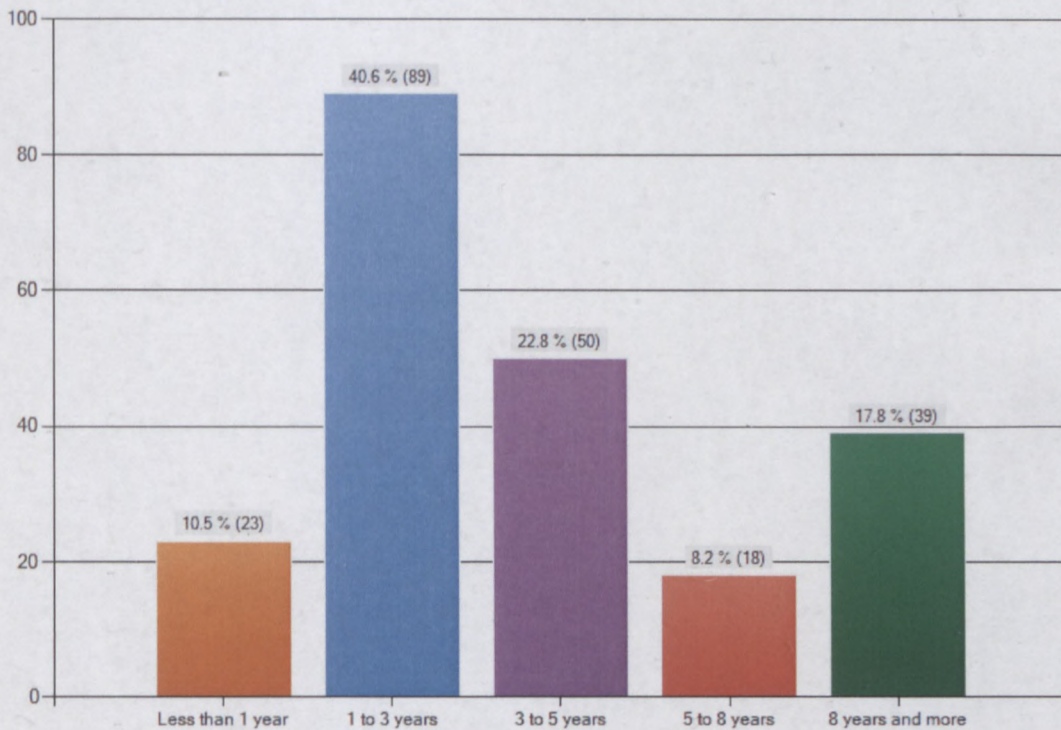
What is your job grade?



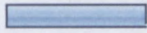




**4. How long have you been working at Metropolitan Health Group (now known as the MMI health division)?**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 1 year		10.5%	23
1 to 3 years		40.6%	89
3 to 5 years		22.8%	50
5 to 8 years		8.2%	18
8 years and more		17.8%	39
answered question			219
skipped question			0

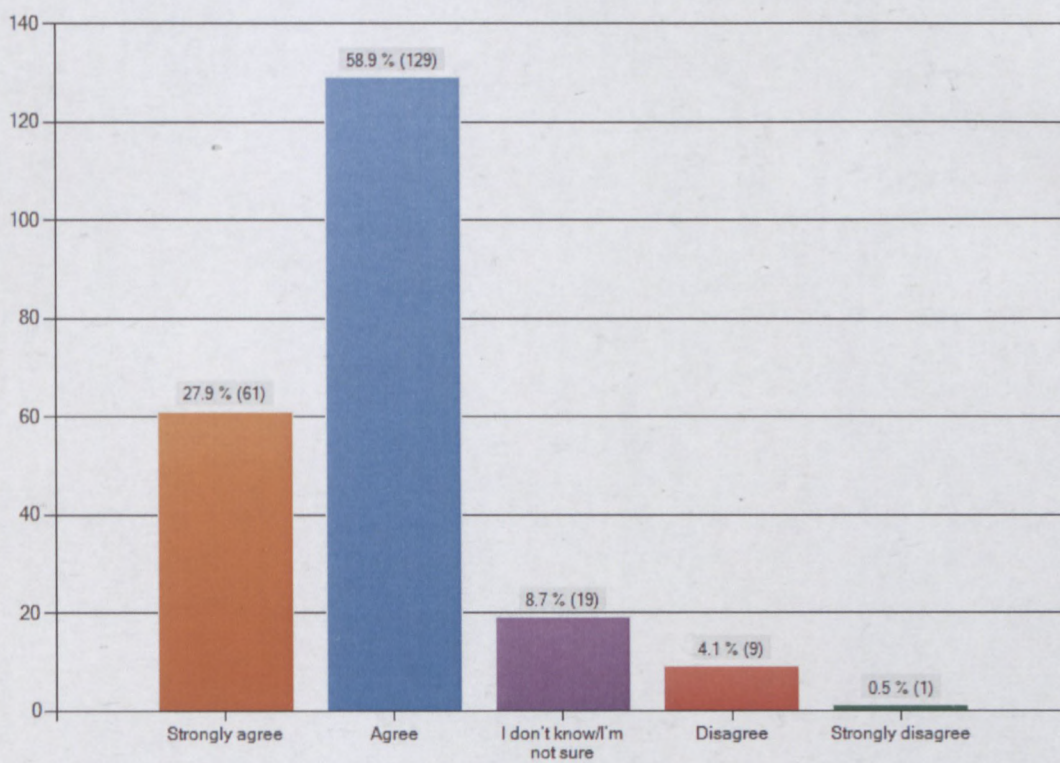
**How long have you been working at Metropolitan Health Group (now known as the MMI health division)?**








**5. I am proud to be part of the MHG/MMI health division community.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		27.9%	61
Agree		58.9%	129
I don't know/I'm not sure		8.7%	19
Disagree		4.1%	9
Strongly disagree		0.5%	1
answered question			219
skipped question			0

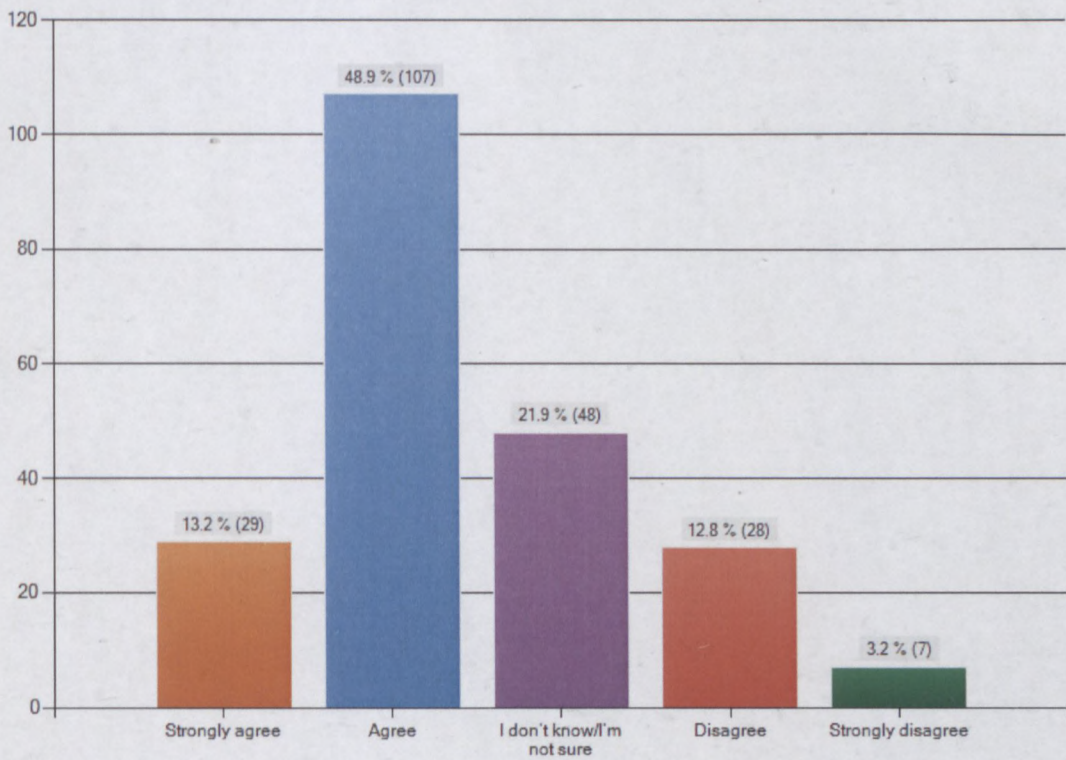
**I am proud to be part of the MHG/MMI health division community.**



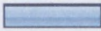




**6. The internal communication process at MHG encourages two-way feedback.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		13.2%	29
Agree		48.9%	107
I don't know/I'm not sure		21.9%	48
Disagree		12.8%	28
Strongly disagree		3.2%	7
answered question			219
skipped question			0

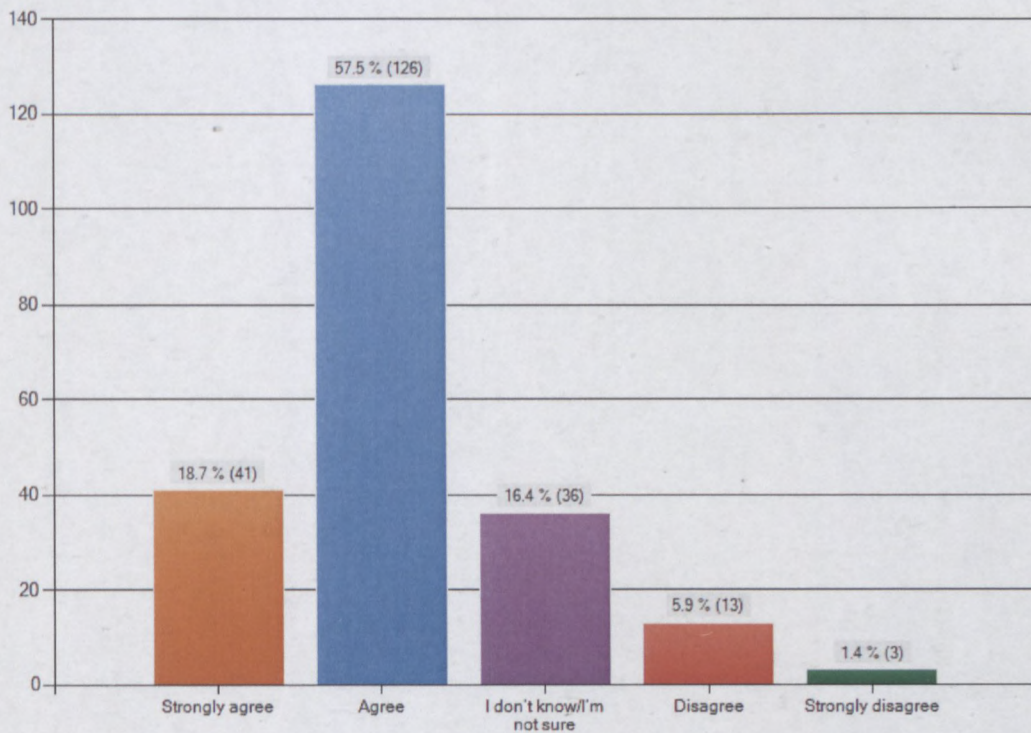
**The internal communication process at MHG encourages two-way feedback.**



### 7. I trust the MHG internal communication process.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		18.7%	41
<b>Agree</b>		<b>57.5%</b>	<b>126</b>
I don't know/I'm not sure		16.4%	36
Disagree		5.9%	13
Strongly disagree		1.4%	3
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

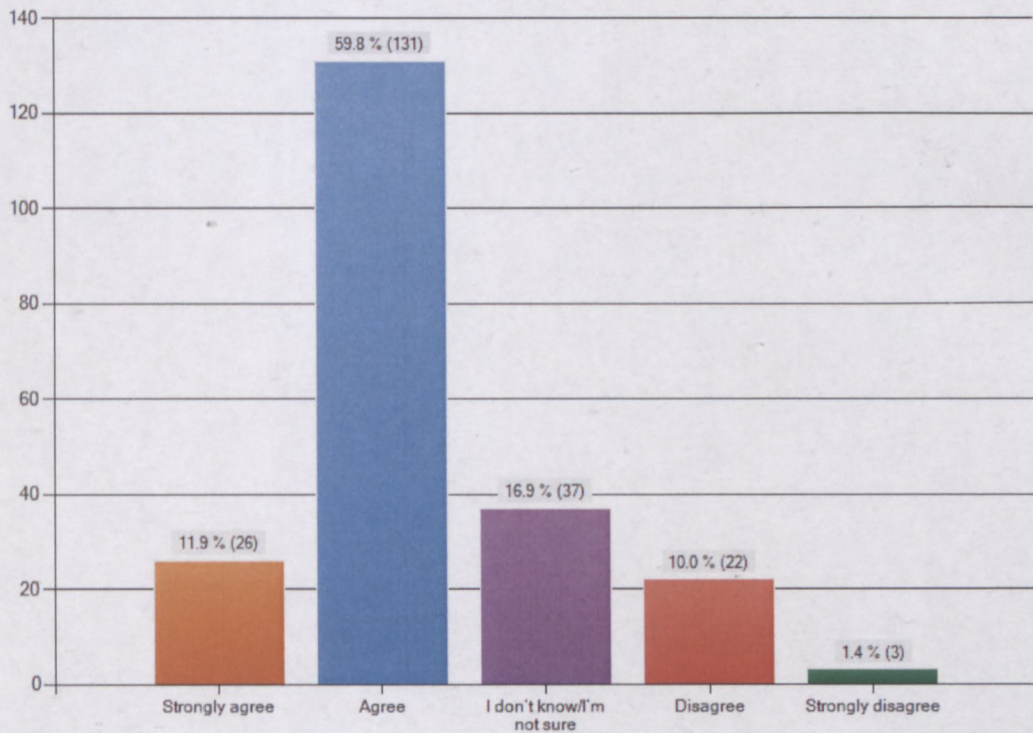
### I trust the MHG internal communication process.








**8. MHG's internal communication process encourages me to achieve the company's goals.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		11.9%	26
<b>Agree</b>		<b>59.8%</b>	<b>131</b>
I don't know/I'm not sure		16.9%	37
Disagree		10.0%	22
Strongly disagree		1.4%	3
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

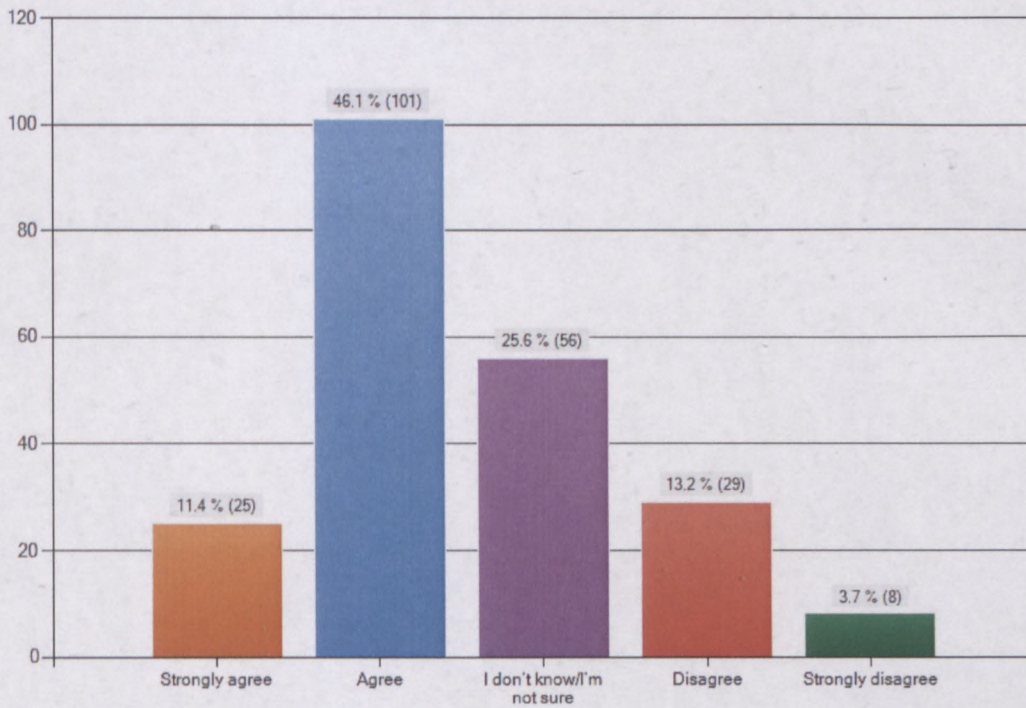
**MHG's internal communication process encourages me to achieve the company's goals.**





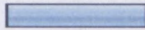


**9. MHG's internal communication process shows me that I can influence my relationship with the company.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		11.4%	25
<b>Agree</b>		<b>46.1%</b>	<b>101</b>
I don't know/I'm not sure		25.6%	56
Disagree		13.2%	29
Strongly disagree		3.7%	8
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

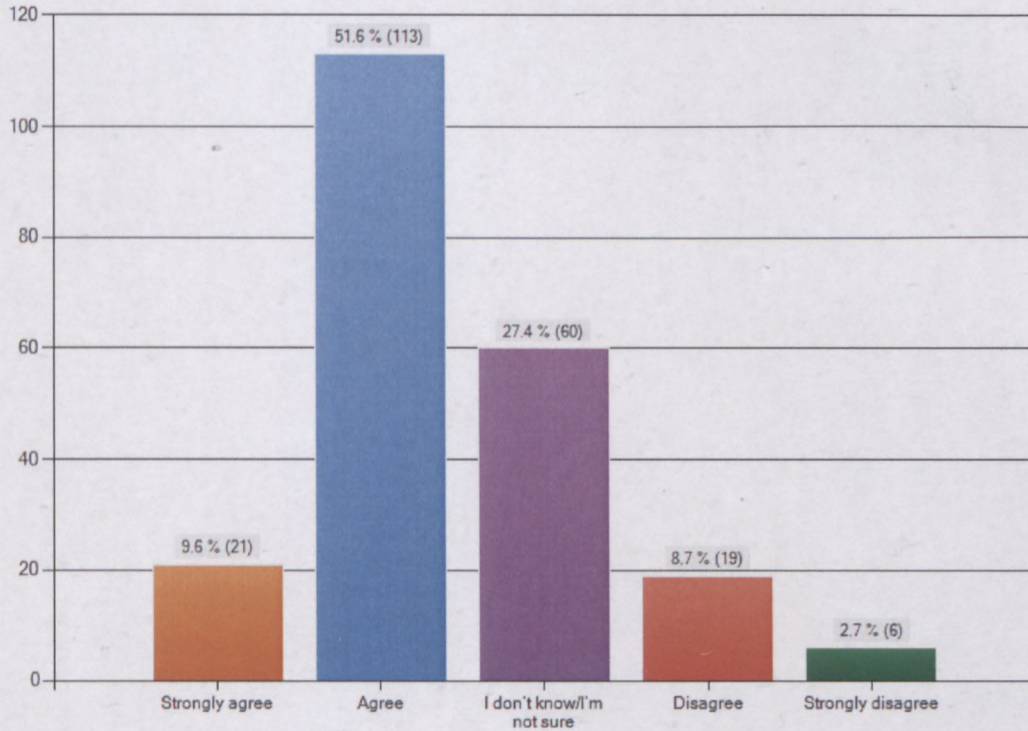
**MHG's internal communication process shows me that I can influence my relationship with the company.**



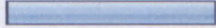




**10. MHG's internal communication process is transparent.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		9.6%	21
<b>Agree</b>		<b>51.6%</b>	<b>113</b>
I don't know/I'm not sure		27.4%	60
Disagree		8.7%	19
Strongly disagree		2.7%	6
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

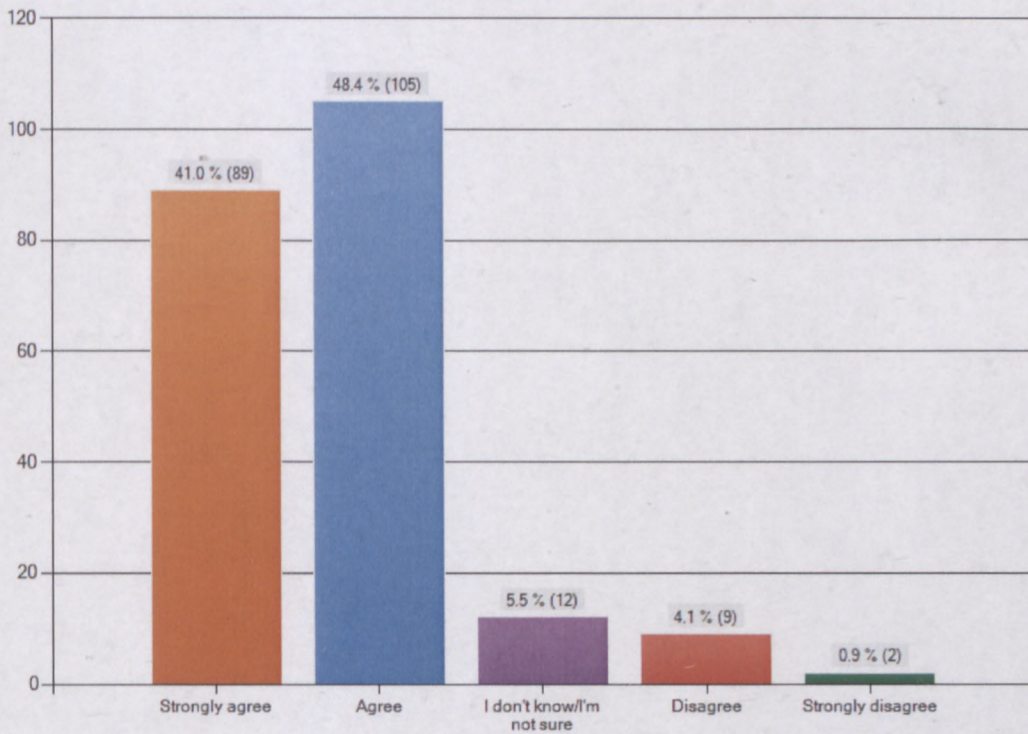
**MHG's internal communication process is transparent.**




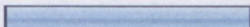



**11. MHG is doing a good job communicating about the merger.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		41.0%	89
Agree		48.4%	105
I don't know/I'm not sure		5.5%	12
Disagree		4.1%	9
Strongly disagree		0.9%	2
<b>answered question</b>			<b>217</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>2</b>

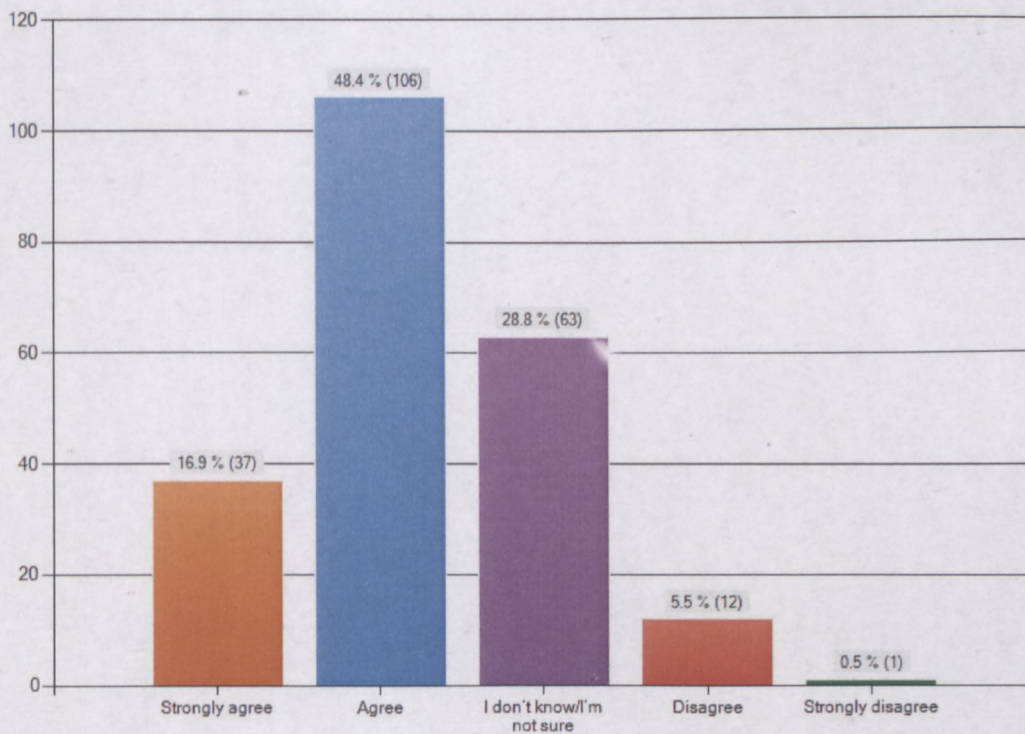
**MHG is doing a good job communicating about the merger.**





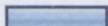


**12. MHG's internal communication has improved during the last 12 months.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		16.9%	37
Agree		48.4%	106
I don't know/I'm not sure		28.8%	63
Disagree		5.5%	12
Strongly disagree		0.5%	1
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

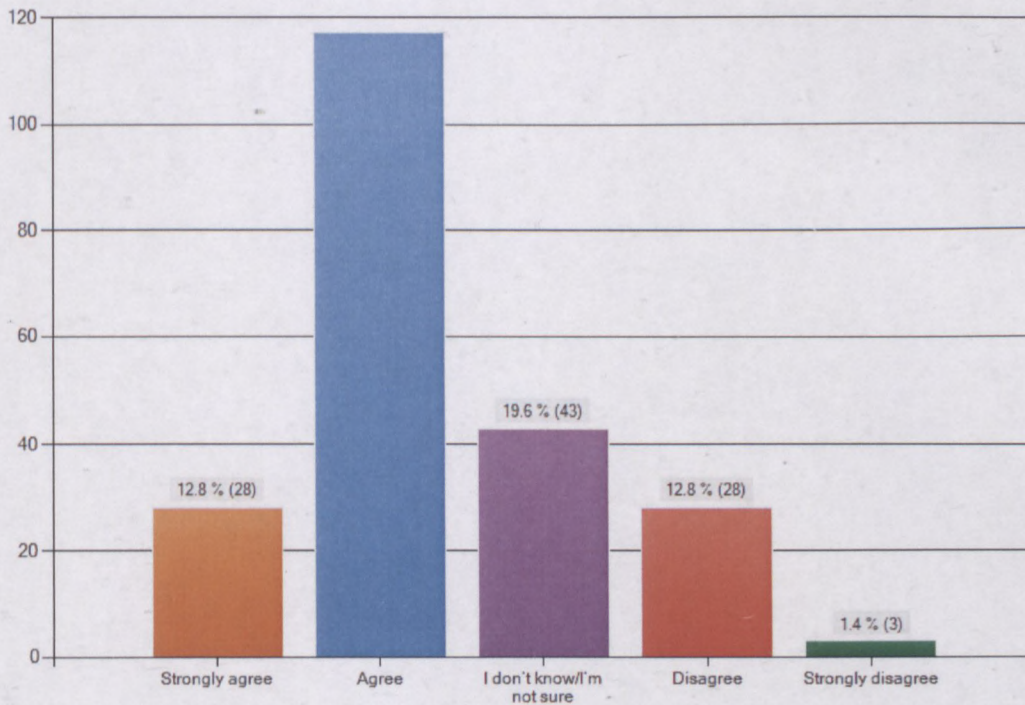
**MHG's internal communication has improved during the last 12 months.**








**13. MHG's internal communication provides me with high quality information that makes it easier for me to do my job.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		12.8%	28
Agree		53.4%	117
I don't know/I'm not sure		19.6%	43
Disagree		12.8%	28
Strongly disagree		1.4%	3
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

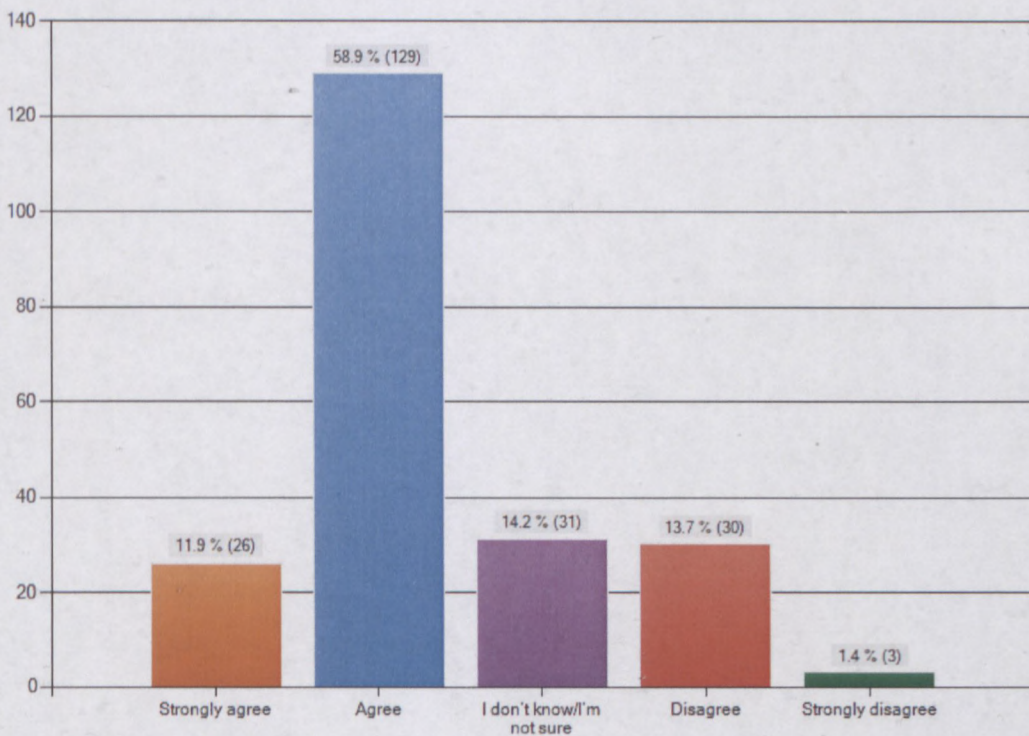
**MHG's internal communication provides me with high quality information that makes it easier for me to do my job.**




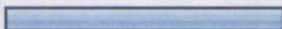



**14. MHG internal communication provides me with enough information to do my job.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		11.9%	26
<b>Agree</b>		<b>58.9%</b>	<b>129</b>
I don't know/I'm not sure		14.2%	31
Disagree		13.7%	30
Strongly disagree		1.4%	3
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

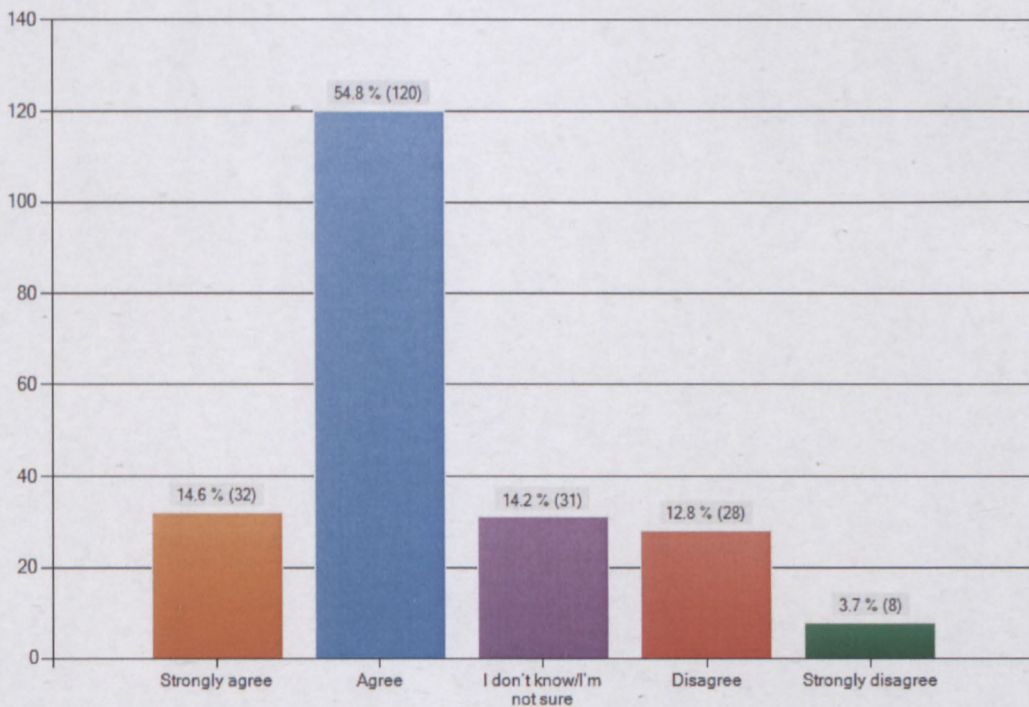
**MHG internal communication provides me with enough information to do my job.**








**15. MHG internal communication provides me with a clear picture of where my division fits within the whole company.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		14.6%	32
Agree		54.8%	120
I don't know/I'm not sure		14.2%	31
Disagree		12.8%	28
Strongly disagree		3.7%	8
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

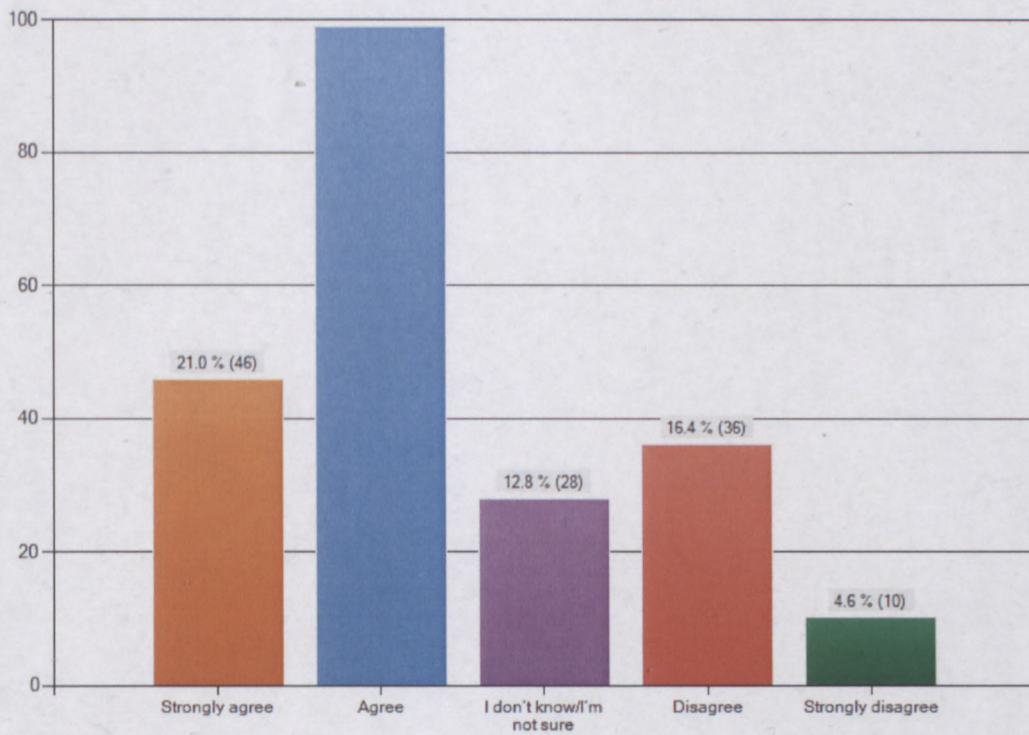
**MHG internal communication provides me with a clear picture of where my division fits within the whole company.**








**16. My manager delivers clear and concise communication.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		21.0%	46
Agree		45.2%	99
I don't know/I'm not sure		12.8%	28
Disagree		16.4%	36
Strongly disagree		4.6%	10
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

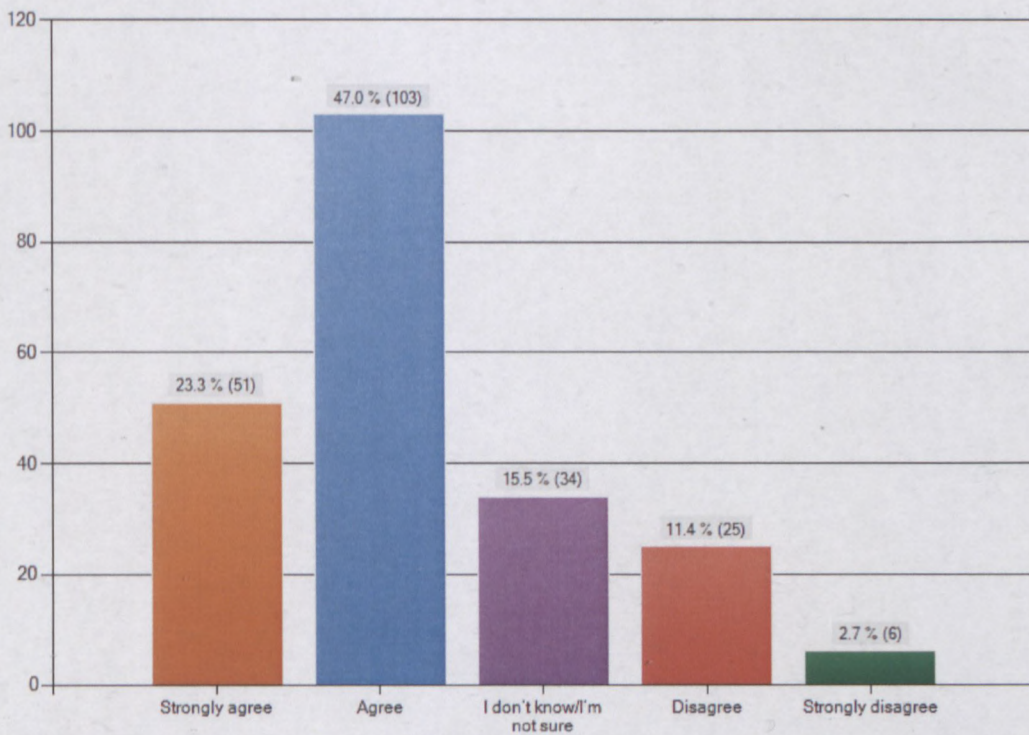
**My manager delivers clear and concise communication.**








### 17. My manager talks to me and listens when I talk.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		23.3%	51
Agree		47.0%	103
I don't know/I'm not sure		15.5%	34
Disagree		11.4%	25
Strongly disagree		2.7%	6
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

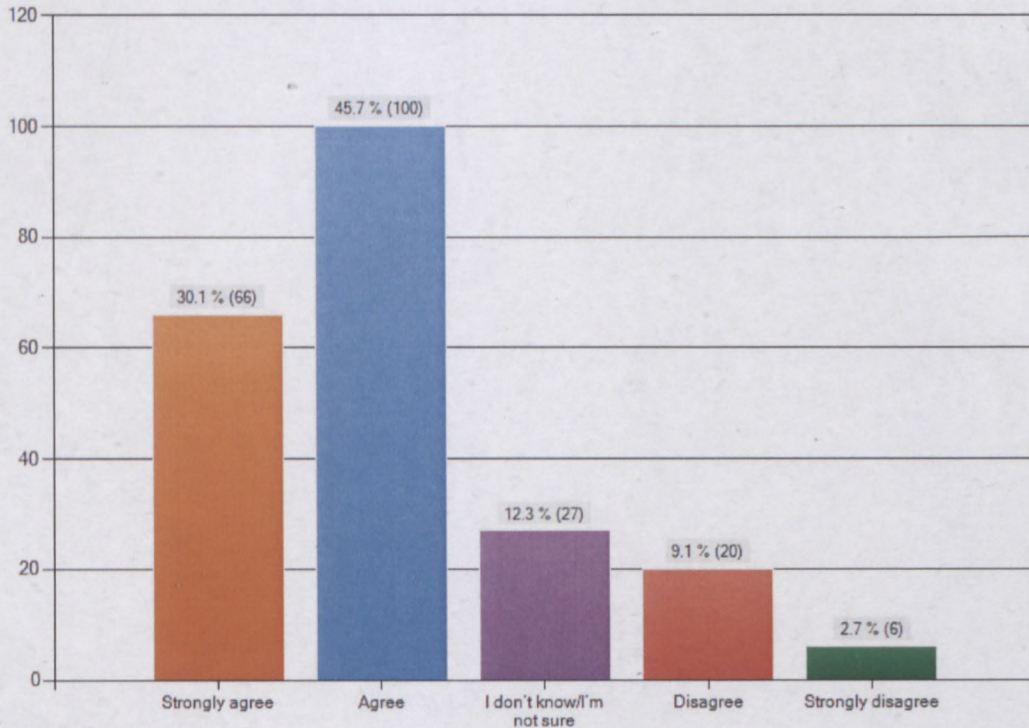
My manager talks to me and listens when I talk.




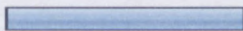



18. I can openly discuss work related issues with my manager.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		30.1%	66
Agree		45.7%	100
I don't know/I'm not sure		12.3%	27
Disagree		9.1%	20
Strongly disagree		2.7%	6
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>219</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>0</b>

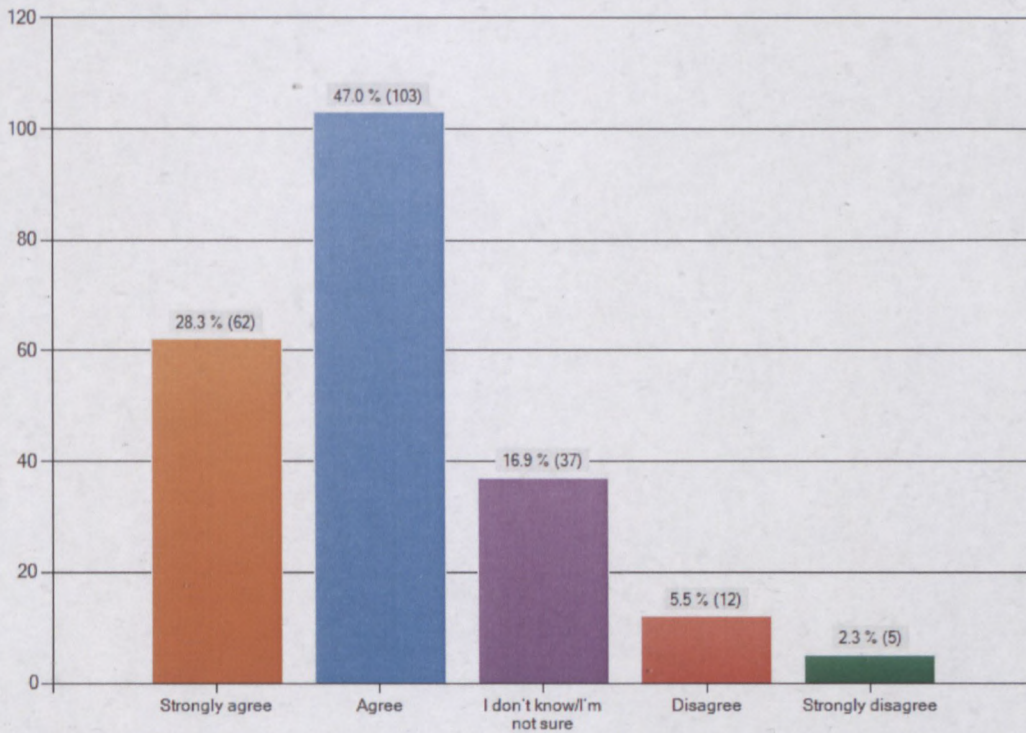
I can openly discuss work related issues with my manager.








**19. My manager has a good understanding of MHG's business policies and procedures.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		28.3%	62
Agree		47.0%	103
I don't know/I'm not sure		16.9%	37
Disagree		5.5%	12
Strongly disagree		2.3%	5
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

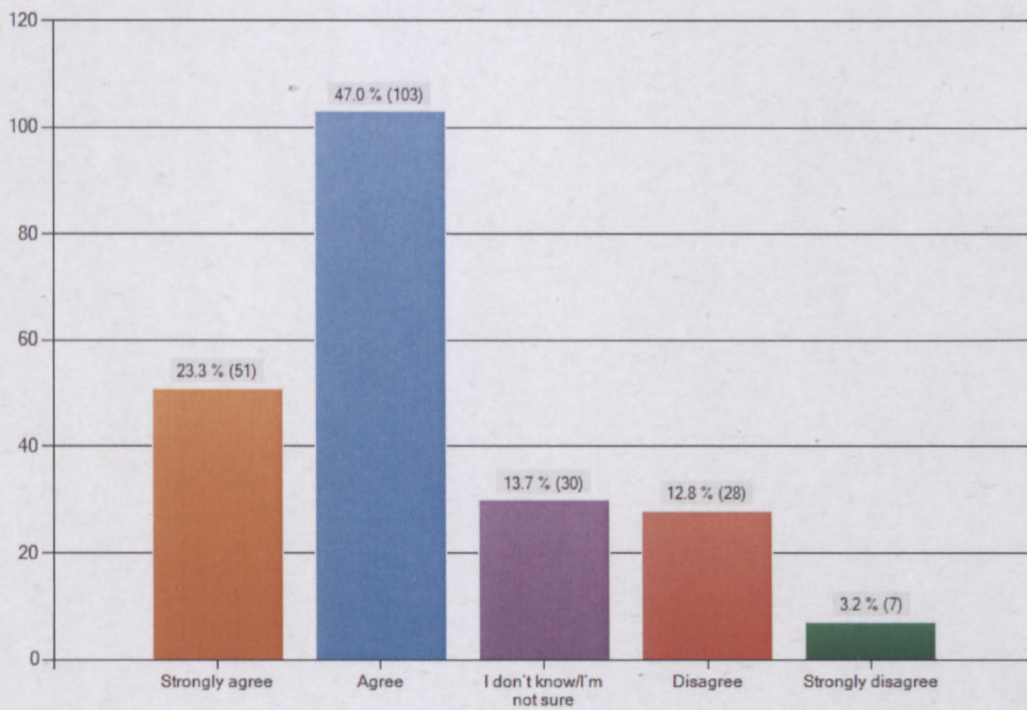
**My manager has a good understanding of MHG's business policies and procedures.**




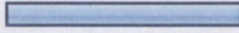



**20. My manager's communication skills displays an understanding and compassion for my work-related needs.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		23.3%	51
<b>Agree</b>		<b>47.0%</b>	<b>103</b>
I don't know/I'm not sure		13.7%	30
Disagree		12.8%	28
Strongly disagree		3.2%	7
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

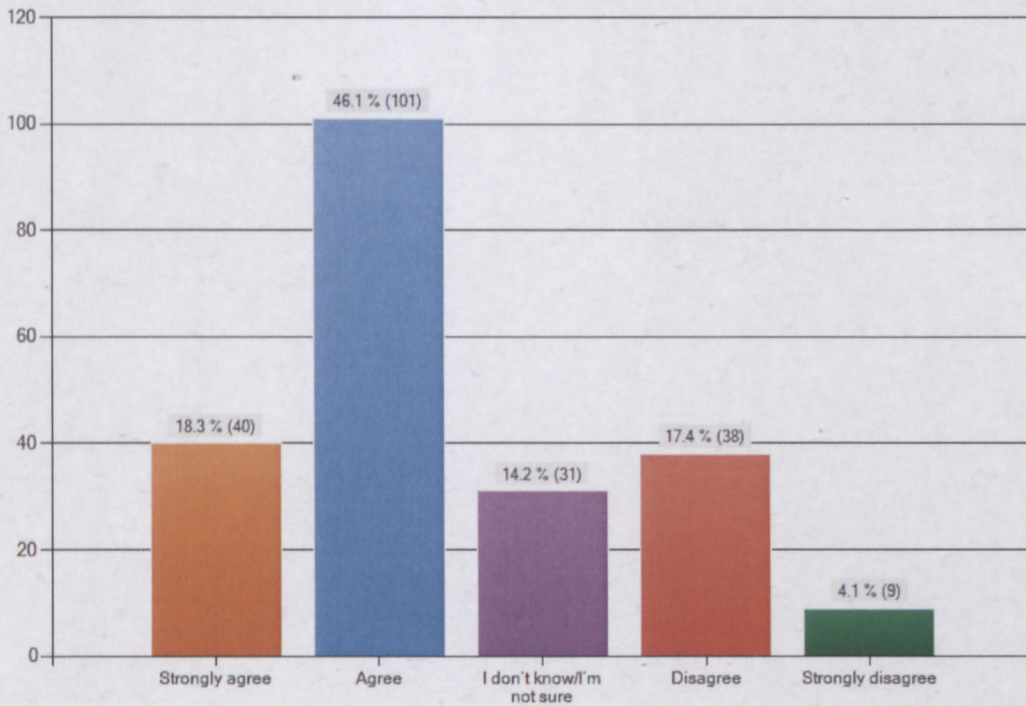
**My manager's communication skills displays an understanding and compassion for my work-related needs.**




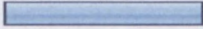



**21. My manager's communication skills display an understanding and compassion for my personal needs.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		18.3%	40
<b>Agree</b>		<b>46.1%</b>	<b>101</b>
I don't know/I'm not sure		14.2%	31
Disagree		17.4%	38
Strongly disagree		4.1%	9
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

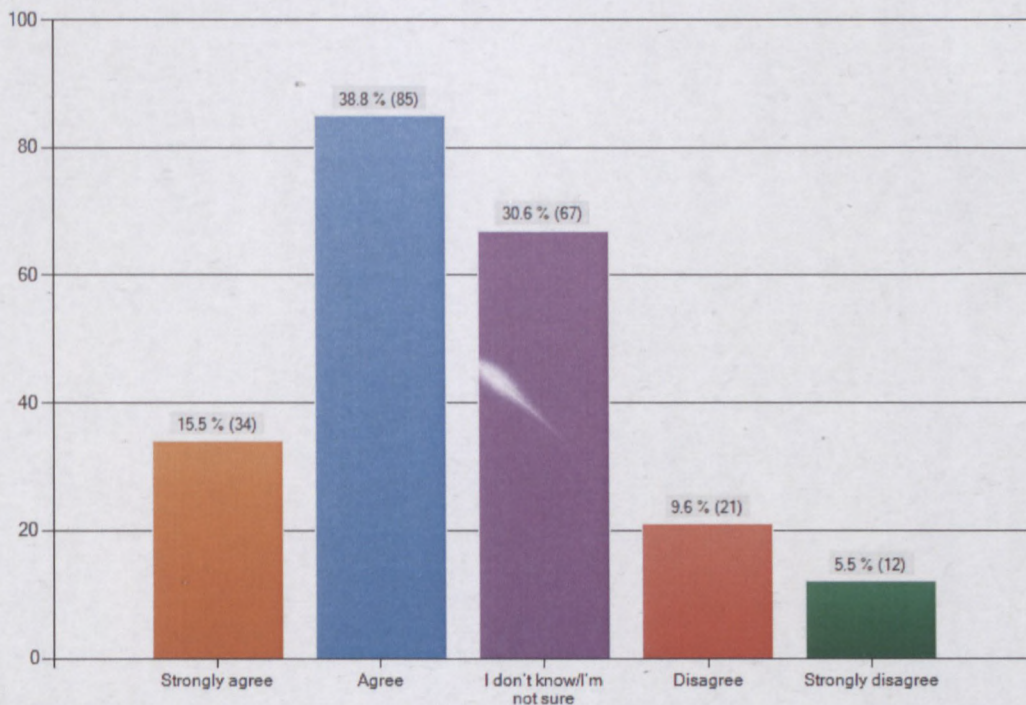
**My manager's communication skills display an understanding and compassion for my personal needs.**




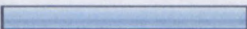



**22. My manager communicates well to senior management, representing staff's needs raised at workplace meetings.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		15.5%	34
Agree		38.8%	85
I don't know/I'm not sure		30.6%	67
Disagree		9.6%	21
Strongly disagree		5.5%	12
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>219</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>0</b>

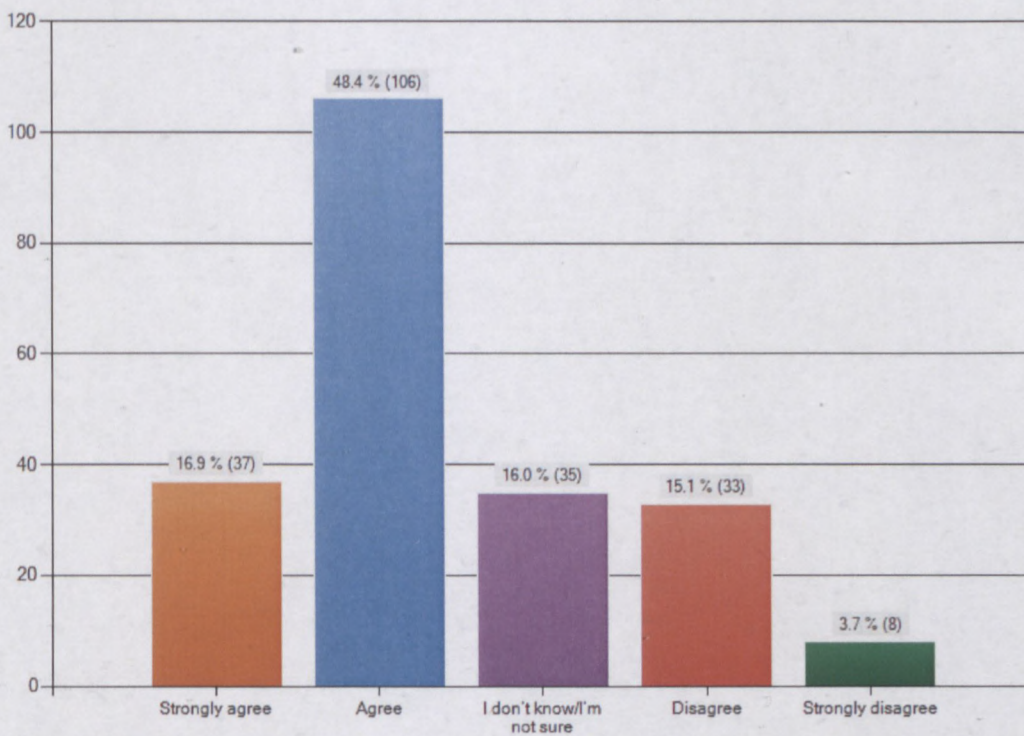
**My manager communicates well to senior management, representing staff's needs raised at workplace meetings.**




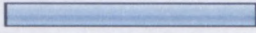



**23. My manager always provides feedback to my concerns, enquiries or suggestions.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		16.9%	37
<b>Agree</b>		<b>48.4%</b>	<b>106</b>
I don't know/I'm not sure		16.0%	35
Disagree		15.1%	33
Strongly disagree		3.7%	8
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

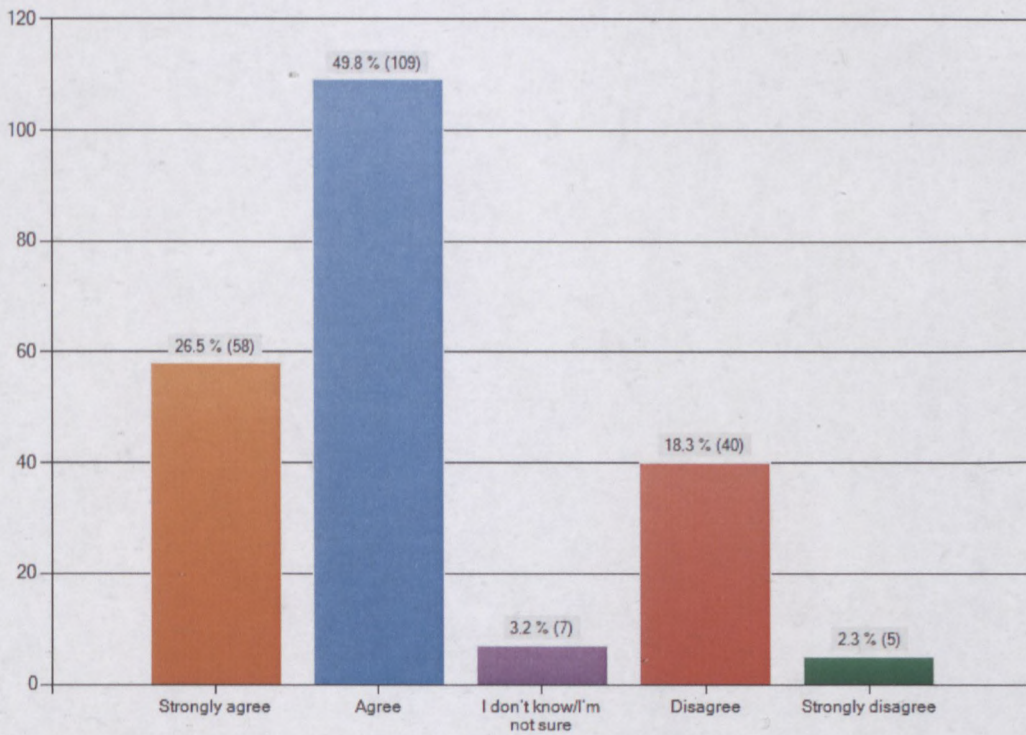
**My manager always provides feedback to my concerns, enquiries or suggestions.**








**24. In my immediate team, we have regular face-to-face meetings.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		26.5%	58
Agree		49.8%	109
I don't know/I'm not sure		3.2%	7
Disagree		18.3%	40
Strongly disagree		2.3%	5
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

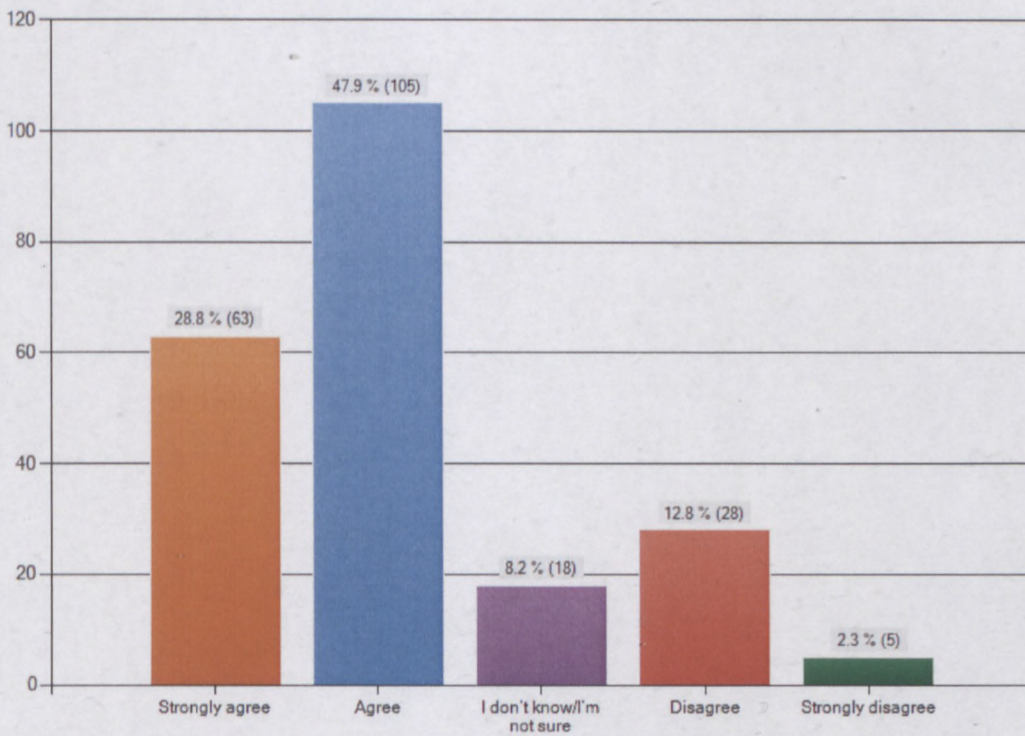
**In my immediate team, we have regular face-to-face meetings.**




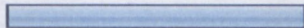



**25. The face-to-face meetings that I attend are participative.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		28.8%	63
Agree		47.9%	105
I don't know/I'm not sure		8.2%	18
Disagree		12.8%	28
Strongly disagree		2.3%	5
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

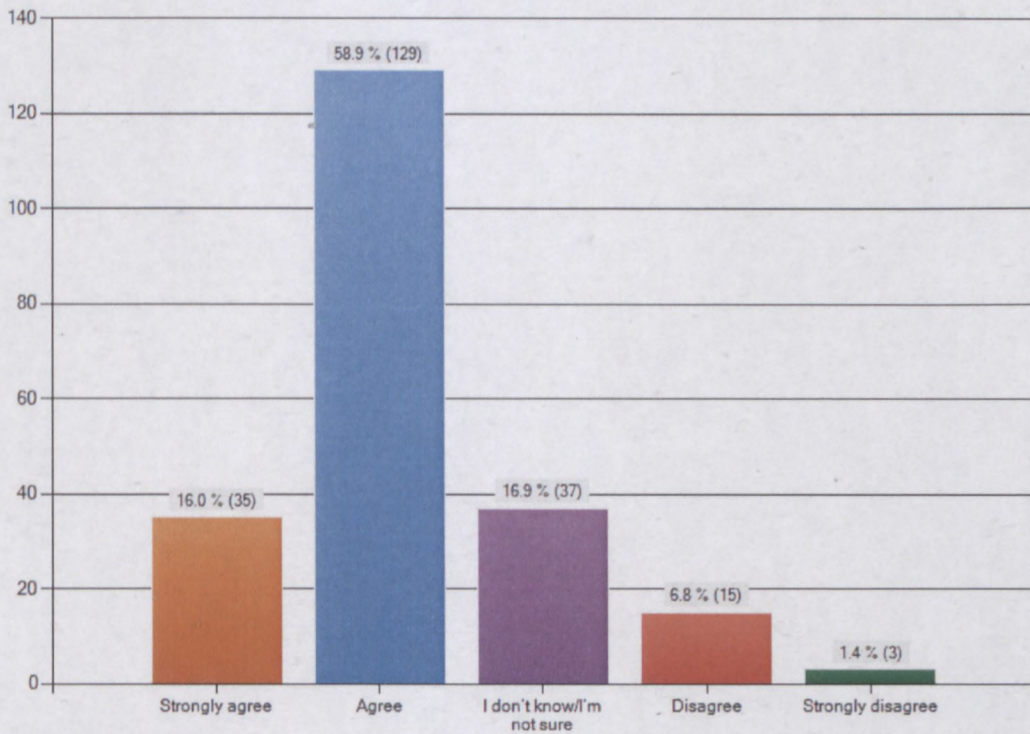
**The face-to-face meetings that I attend are participative.**



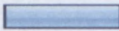
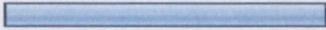



**26. I find the information in IntraNews valuable.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		16.0%	35
Agree		58.9%	129
I don't know/I'm not sure		16.9%	37
Disagree		6.8%	15
Strongly disagree		1.4%	3
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

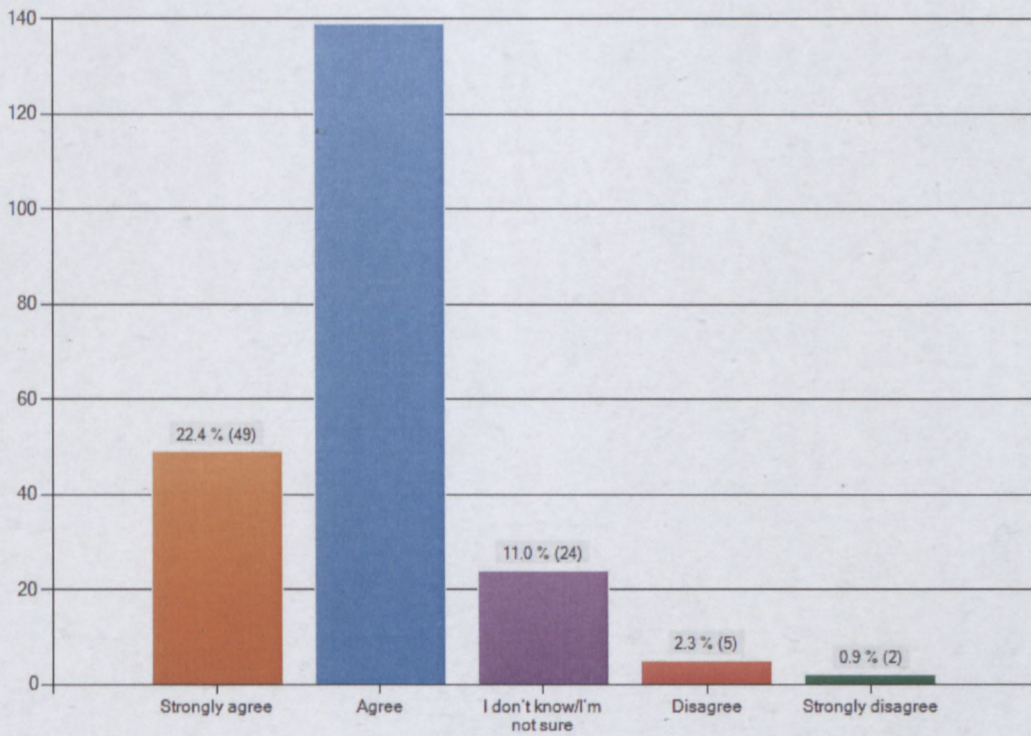
**I find the information in IntraNews valuable.**



**27. I find IntraNews easy to understand.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		22.4%	49
Agree		63.5%	139
I don't know/I'm not sure		11.0%	24
Disagree		2.3%	5
Strongly disagree		0.9%	2
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

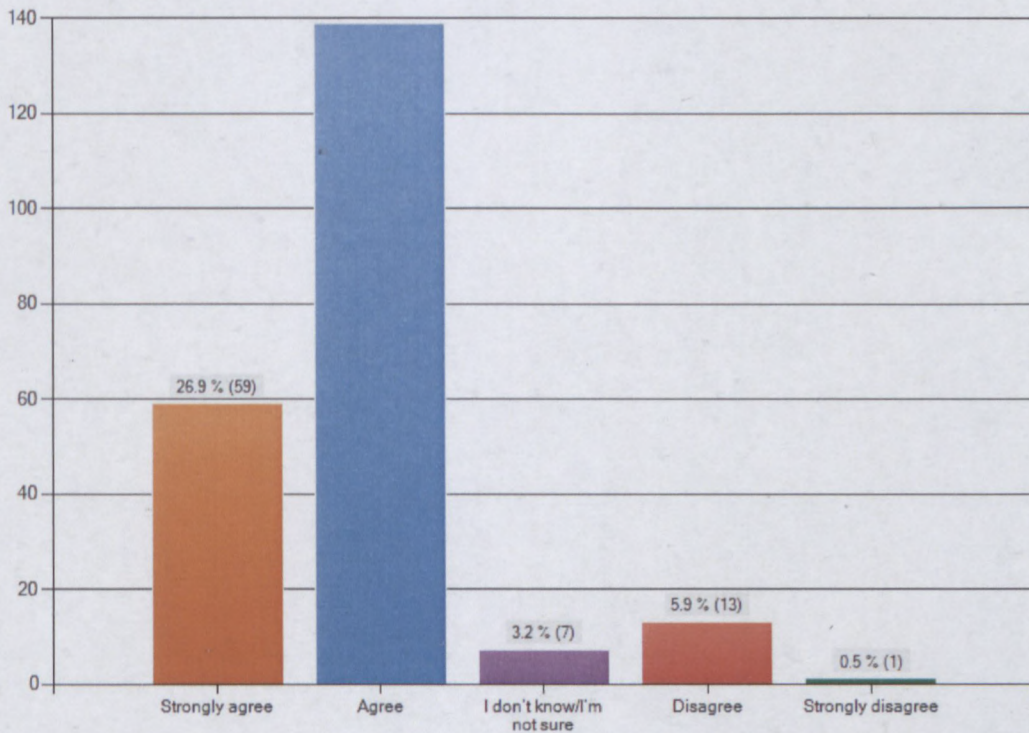
**I find IntraNews easy to understand.**







**28. Staff Communications is a useful source of work information.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		26.9%	59
Agree		63.5%	139
I don't know/I'm not sure		3.2%	7
Disagree		5.9%	13
Strongly disagree		0.5%	1
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>219</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>0</b>

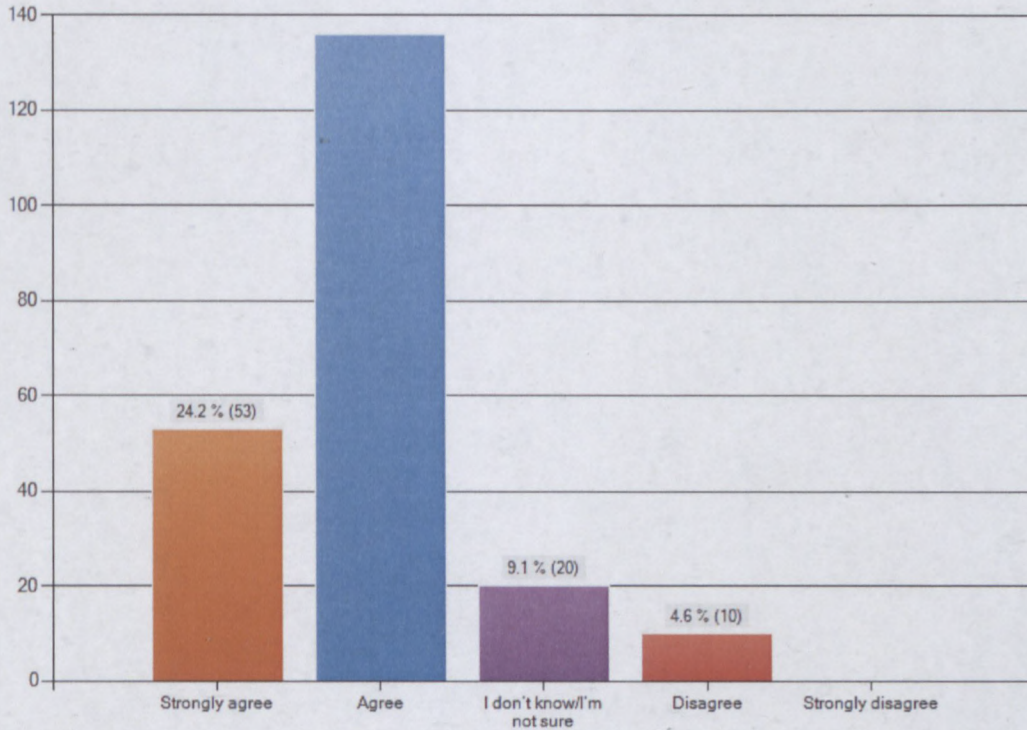
**Staff Communications is a useful source of work information.**



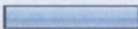
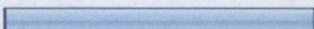



**29. Staff Communications is a reliable source of work information.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		24.2%	53
Agree		62.1%	136
I don't know/I'm not sure		9.1%	20
Disagree		4.6%	10
Strongly disagree		0.0%	0
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>219</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>0</b>

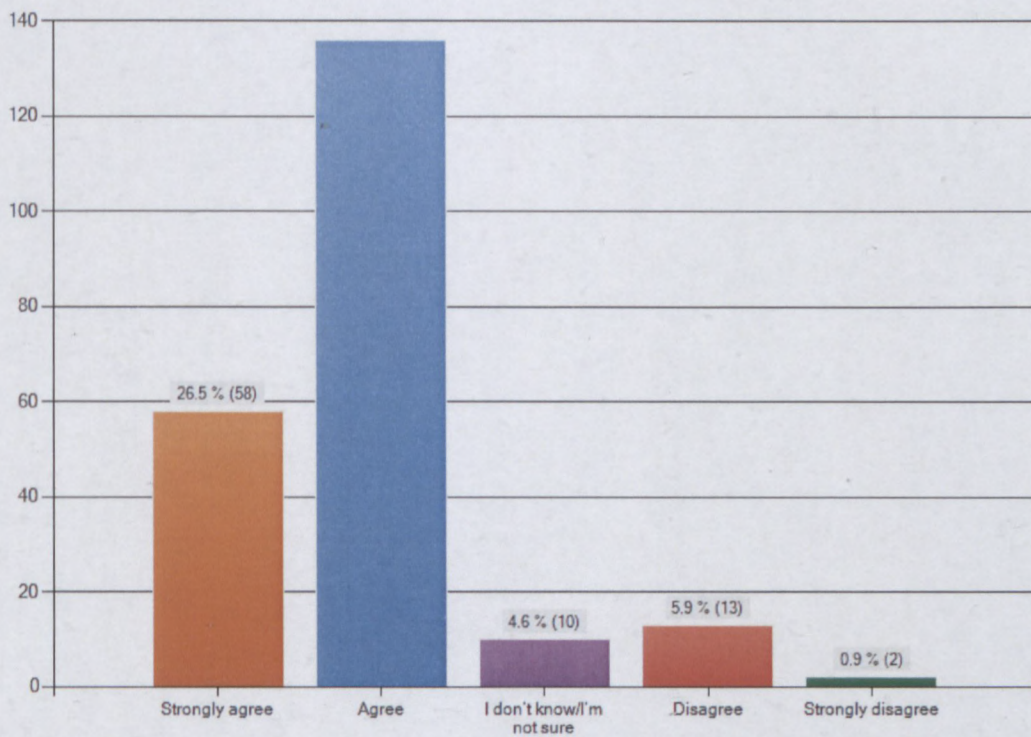
**Staff Communications is a reliable source of work information.**




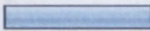

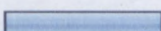

### 30. I find MHG's intranet easy to use.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		26.5%	58
Agree		62.1%	136
I don't know/I'm not sure		4.6%	10
Disagree		5.9%	13
Strongly disagree		0.9%	2
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

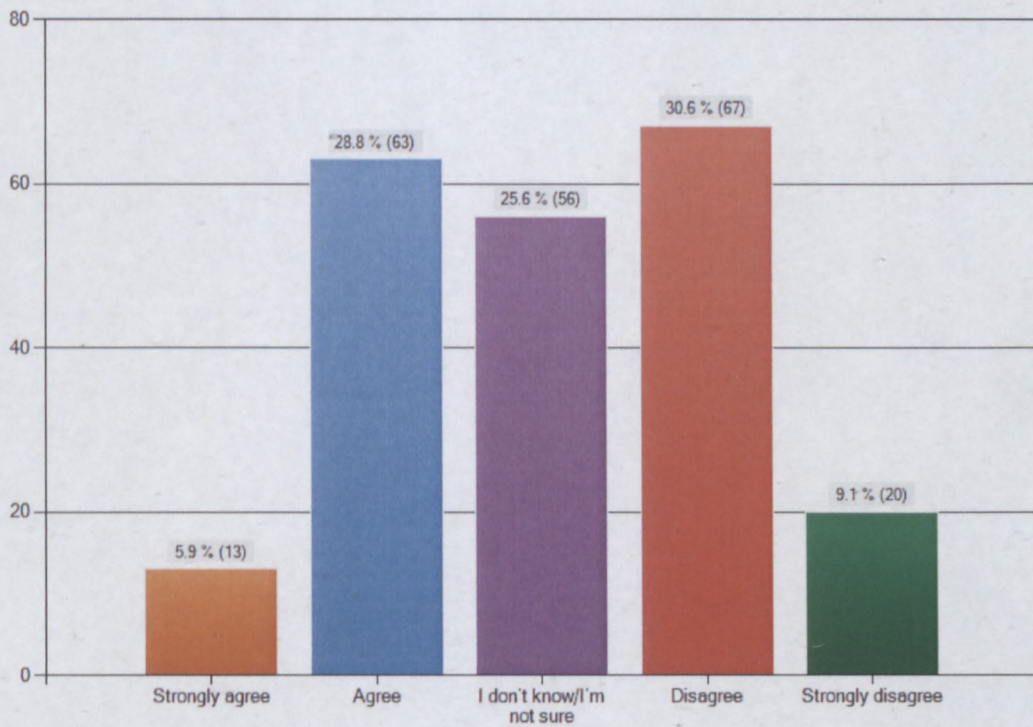
I find MHG's intranet easy to use.




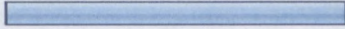



**31. I often receive information relevant to MHG from other, unofficial internal sources.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		5.9%	13
Agree		28.8%	63
I don't know/I'm not sure		25.6%	56
Disagree		30.6%	67
Strongly disagree		9.1%	20
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

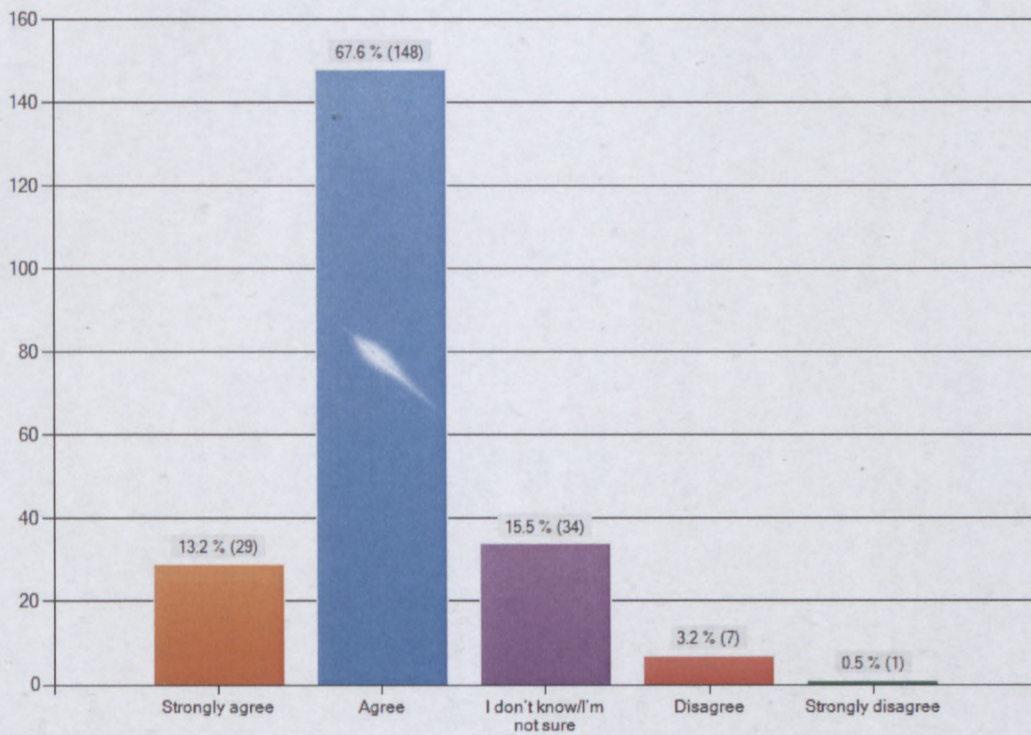
**I often receive information relevant to MHG from other, unofficial internal sources.**



### 32. MHG's internal communications media is relevant.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		13.2%	29
Agree		67.6%	148
I don't know/I'm not sure		15.5%	34
Disagree		3.2%	7
Strongly disagree		0.5%	1
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>219</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>0</b>

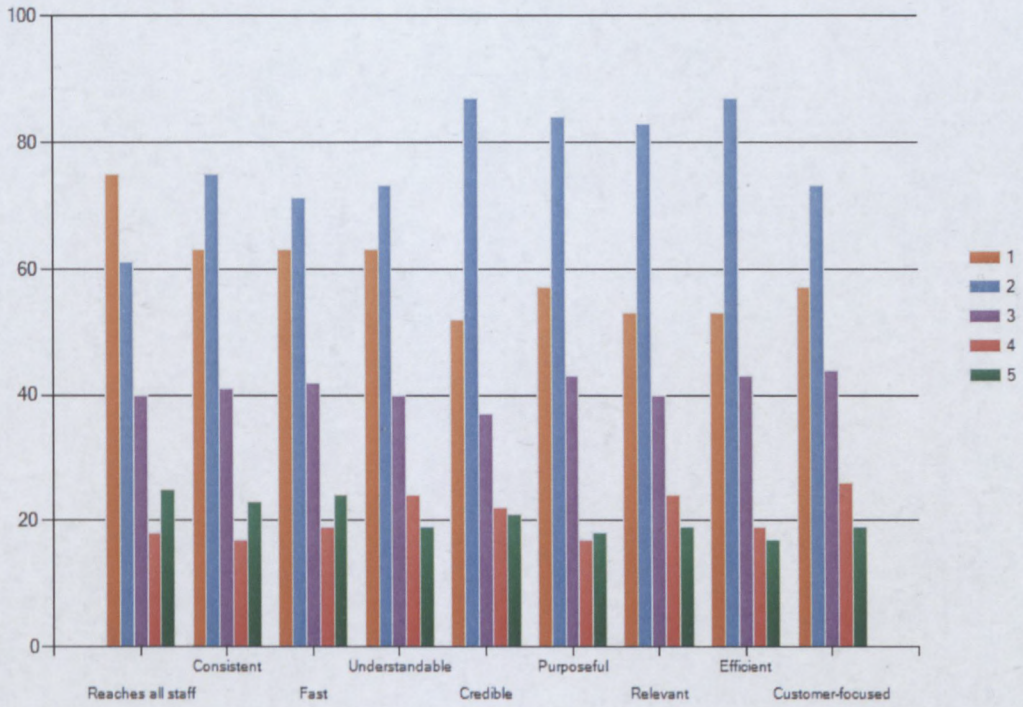
MHG's internal communications media is relevant.





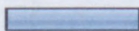


**33. On a rating where 1 = Strongly Agree and 5 = Strongly Disagree, can internal communication at MHG be best described as:**

	1	2	3	4	5	Rating Average	Response Count
Reaches all staff	<b>34.2%</b> (75)	27.9% (61)	18.3% (40)	8.2% (18)	11.4% (25)	2.35	219
Consistent	28.8% (63)	<b>34.2%</b> (75)	18.7% (41)	7.8% (17)	10.5% (23)	2.37	219
Fast	28.8% (63)	<b>32.4%</b> (71)	19.2% (42)	8.7% (19)	11.0% (24)	2.41	219
Understandable	28.8% (63)	<b>33.3%</b> (73)	18.3% (40)	11.0% (24)	8.7% (19)	2.37	219
Credible	23.7% (52)	<b>39.7%</b> (87)	16.9% (37)	10.0% (22)	9.6% (21)	2.42	219
Purposeful	26.0% (57)	<b>38.4%</b> (84)	19.6% (43)	7.8% (17)	8.2% (18)	2.34	219
Relevant	24.2% (53)	<b>37.9%</b> (83)	18.3% (40)	11.0% (24)	8.7% (19)	2.42	219
Efficient	24.2% (53)	<b>39.7%</b> (87)	19.6% (43)	8.7% (19)	7.8% (17)	2.36	219
Customer-focused	26.0% (57)	<b>33.3%</b> (73)	20.1% (44)	11.9% (26)	8.7% (19)	2.44	219
<b>answered question</b>							<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>							<b>0</b>

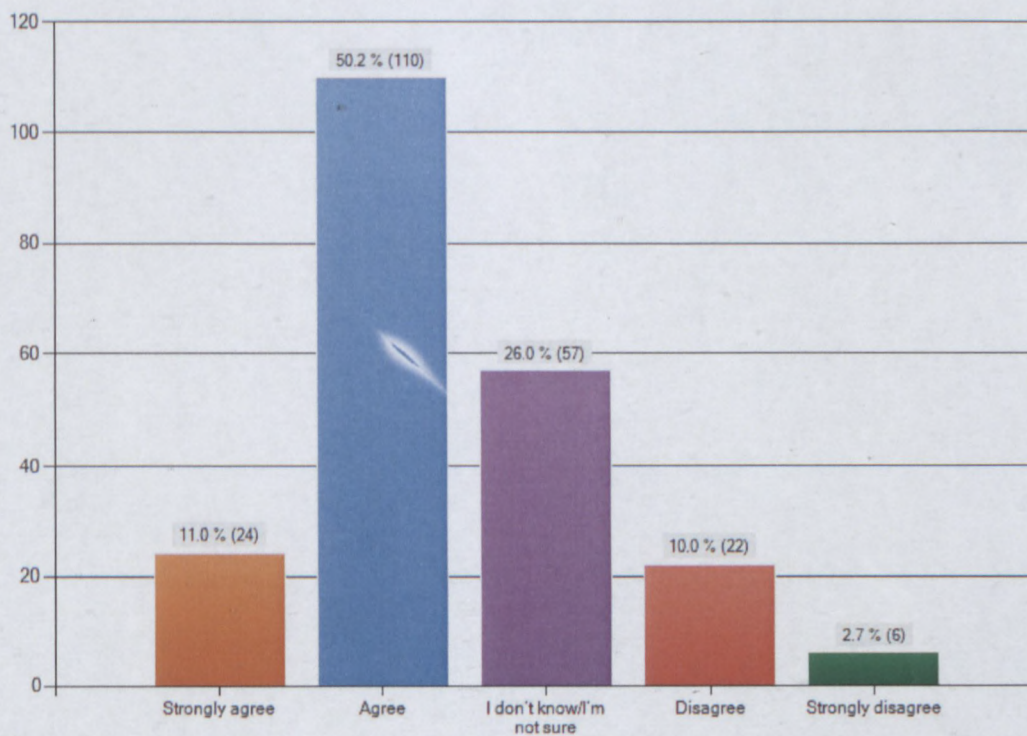
On a rating where 1 = Strongly Agree and 5 = Strongly Disagree, can internal communication at MHG be best described as:








### 34. MHG addresses all my communication needs.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		11.0%	24
Agree		50.2%	110
I don't know/I'm not sure		26.0%	57
Disagree		10.0%	22
Strongly disagree		2.7%	6
<b>answered question</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>0</b>

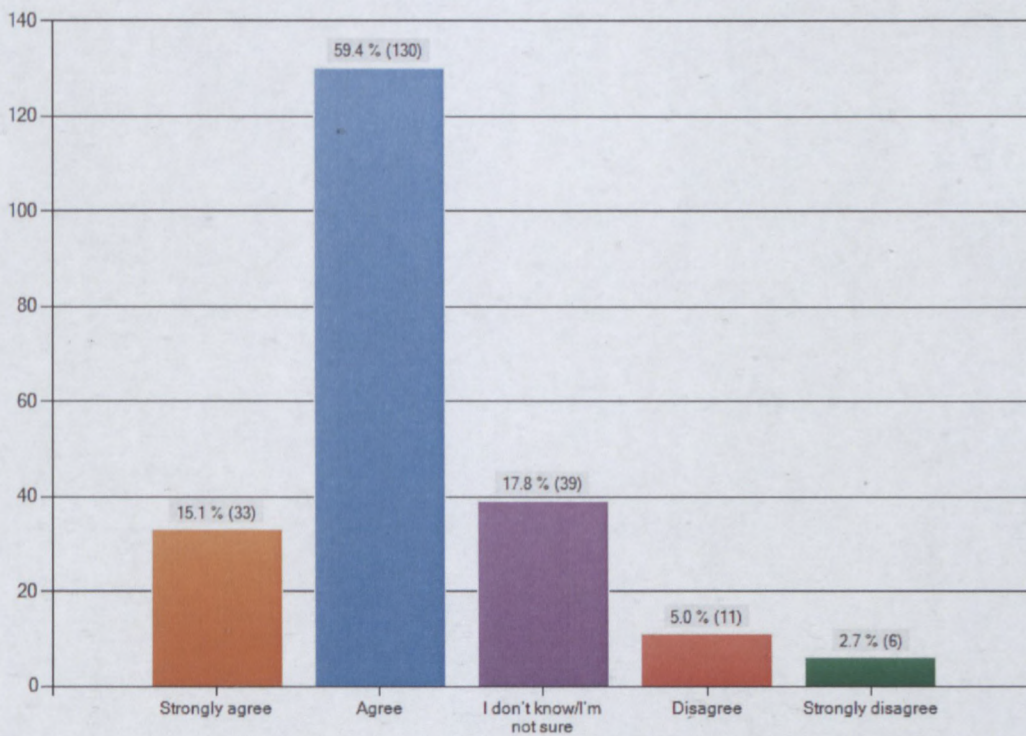
### MHG addresses all my communication needs.



**35. I am satisfied with the MHG internal communication process.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		15.1%	33
Agree		59.4%	130
I don't know/I'm not sure		17.8%	39
Disagree		5.0%	11
Strongly disagree		2.7%	6
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>219</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>0</b>

**I am satisfied with the MHG internal communication process.**



## APPENDIX E: STATISTICAL REPORT

	MEAN	MODE
I am proud to be part of the MHG/MMI health division community.	1.90411	2
The internal communication process at MHG encourages two-way feedback.	2.438356	2
I trust the MHG internal communication process.	2.136986	2
MHG's internal communication process encourages me to achieve the company's goals.	2.292237	2
MHG's internal communication process shows me that I can influence my relationship with the company.	2.515982	2
MHG's internal communication process is transparent.	2.43379	2
MHG is doing a good job communicating about the merger.	1.767123	2
MHG's internal communication has improved during the last 12 months.	2.242009	2
MHG's internal communication provides me with high quality information that makes it easier for me to do my job.	2.365297	2
MHG internal communication provides me with enough information to do my job.	2.3379	2
MHG internal communication provides me with a clear picture of where my division fits within the whole company.	2.360731	2
My manager delivers clear and concise communication.	2.383562	2
My manager talks to me and listens when I talk.	2.232877	2

I can openly discuss work related issues with my manager.	2.086758	2
My manager has a good understanding of MHG's business policies and procedures.	2.063927	2
My manager's communication skills displays an understanding and compassion for my work-related needs.	2.255708	2
My manager's communication skills display an understanding and compassion for my personal needs.	2.429224	2
My manager communicates well to senior management, representing staff's needs raised at workplace meetings.	2.506849	2
My manager always provides feedback to my concerns, enquiries or suggestions.	2.401826	2
In my immediate team, we have regular face-to-face meetings.	2.200913	2
The face-to-face meetings that I attend are participative.	2.118721	2
I find the information in IntraNews valuable.	2.187215	2
I find IntraNews easy to understand.	1.958904	2
Staff Communications is a useful source of work information.	1.894977	2
Staff Communications is a reliable source of work information.	1.940639	2
I find MHG's intranet easy to use.	1.926941	2
I often receive information relevant to MHG from other, unofficial internal sources.	3.082192	4
MHG's internal communications media is relevant.	2.100457	2
On a rating where 1 = Strongly Agree and 5 = Strongly Disagree, can internal communication at MHG be best described as: - Reaches all staff	2.347032	1

On a rating where 1 = Strongly Agree and 5 = Strongly Disagree, can internal communication at MHG be best described as: - Consistent	2.369863	2
On a rating where 1 = Strongly Agree and 5 = Strongly Disagree, can internal communication at MHG be best described as: - Fast	2.406393	2
On a rating where 1 = Strongly Agree and 5 = Strongly Disagree, can internal communication at MHG be best described as: - Understandable	2.374429	2
On a rating where 1 = Strongly Agree and 5 = Strongly Disagree, can internal communication at MHG be best described as: - Credible	2.420091	2
On a rating where 1 = Strongly Agree and 5 = Strongly Disagree, can internal communication at MHG be best described as: - Purposeful	2.3379	2
On a rating where 1 = Strongly Agree and 5 = Strongly Disagree, can internal communication at MHG be best described as: - Relevant	2.420091	2
On a rating where 1 = Strongly Agree and 5 = Strongly Disagree, can internal communication at MHG be best described as: - Efficient	2.360731	2
On a rating where 1 = Strongly Agree and 5 = Strongly Disagree, can internal communication at MHG be best described as: - Customer-focused	2.438356	2
MHG addresses all my communication needs.	2.43379	2
I am satisfied with the MHG internal communication process.	2.210046	2

CAPE PENINSULA  
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

