In this thesis I concentrate on questions around open communications. Weblogs and other social media provide a whole new approach to the use of dialogic communications. As the hierarchies of organisations are falling down, there is a move in the paradigms of working places as well. The context of the thesis is the merger of a network communications company. The company has its customer base in over 160 countries across five continents, with tens of thousands of employees all over the world.

Theoretical framework of the thesis is based on two main concepts. Dialogic communications theory provides an understanding of how communality and atmosphere of trust can be created in an organisation by dialogical intercourse. In the context of change, I do not see it as such a satisfactory explanation by itself: conflicts, disagreements, distrust and power games are also visible during the cultural clashes. Therefore I combine with it the theory of communications double function. First function emphasizes the integrative role of communications as the other function refers to uncontrolled and unleaded dissipative communications.

My empirical material is mainly based on the debates and discussions in a virtual environment, meaning Web 2.0- based applications such as Weblogs. This is an important exclusion to the thesis, as Web 2.0 is a rather new tool for large companies to handle their communications. In my case company, Weblogs are used in a way that makes, in my view, a difference to the culture and communications of the company.

My research problem focuses on the possibilities open online communications creates within the context of a merger. Research questions are the following:

1. How can open online communications be built via Web 2.0 applications in organisations?
2. What kind of arguments, nuances and themes do the discussions bring out in the context of a merger and during the integration process?
3. Are there differences within the views of employees of former organisations A and B and if so, are they due to differences within proceedings of the legacy cultures?

The answers to these questions were the result of a literature review and quantitative analysis of discussions in three different Web 2.0 applications. To deepen my view further, I used theme interviews and survey results from the surveys the case company had made itself.

My conclusions were for example the following. To start with, open online communications will be inevitable part of large companies in the future. It is an efficient tool for giving feedback both in top-down and down-top directions, and allows participation in decision-making in a large scale. It is a good way to develop an informal and possibly anonym discussion forum between employees and upper management. Furthermore, collegial support is sought after in these forums, when facing challenges in the work place.

Main references:

Avainsanat-Nyckelord-Keywords
dialogic communications
dissipative communications
change
organisational learning
cultural integration
mergers
web 2.0

Säilytyspaikka-Förvaringsställe-Where deposited
Muita tietoja-Övriga uppgifter-Additional information