



HIGHER SCHOOL OF INSURANCE AND FINANCE

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**„Business communication as a key tool for
business development.
(Following the example of multinational
organizations operating in a multicultural
environment)“**

ABSTRACT

of a dissertation paper for the award
of doctoral degree “PhD”

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This dissertation paper is structured in the following parts: table of contents, introduction, three chapters and conclusion, a list of literature sources used, a reference of main research and scientific-applied contributions, a reference of the publications on the topic, a list with used tables, a list with used figures and twelve appendices. The dissertation paper contains of 235 pages, the main text (excluding the appendices) is 177 pages. 29 tables and 46 figures are presented in the paper. The list with literature sources used includes 132 reference items, of which 37 are in Bulgarian, 73 in English and 22 Internet articles.

The author of the dissertation paper is a doctoral student in the Department of “Marketing and Management” at the Higher School of Insurance and Finance.

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The defense of the dissertation will take place on 03.06.2021 in an open meeting of the Scientific Jury appointed by Order of the Rector of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance, consisting of:

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The materials on the public defense are available to the interested persons at the library of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance.

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I. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DISSERTATION PAPER

1. Relevance and significance of the issues researched

Modern business trends are related to the continuing globalization of the economy and the continuous development of innovations. These trends are determined by the growing number of multinational organizations, the strong global economic competition, the constant flow of innovations and the growing importance and need for highly qualified staff. Functioning in a complex business environment forces modern organizations to be increasingly active in seeking competitive advantage and establishing stable positions on international business markets. Along with external changes, the organizations face many internal changes that require them to be more adaptable to market needs, more flexible in meeting organizational business objectives and more adaptable to the multicultural environment. Addressing these external and internal challenges can be achieved by organizations through a greater focus on products or services, human capital and its core competencies.

The key factor that ensures the survival and development of organizations in a dynamic business environment is their ability to effectively adapt to change. Managers at all levels of management must apply management practices that properly integrate the impact of the business environment and development of labor market, characteristics of human capital, technological development and interests of stakeholders (employees, employers, consumers, contractors, government policy, society, etc.) and organizational strategies and goals for future development. The microeconomic level of management must promote adaptability and flexibility as key factors and apply and implement business models that are adaptable to the dynamic environment. The need for investment in training and enhancing the qualification of human resources as a tool for achieving a competitive advantage of the organization in international markets also comes to the fore.

According to E. Salas, G. Goodwin and S. Burke¹, the need of adapting to a dynamic business situation is often due to cultural diversity. Adapting to cultural diversity in a rapidly changing world is a difficult process, as culture is still changing much more slowly than most business processes. In this context, the success of organizations requires mastering the ability to interact with different cultures and a full

¹ Salas, E., G. F. Goodwin, S. C. Burke, Team Effectiveness in Complex Organizations: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives and Approaches, New York: Psychology Press, 2009

understanding of the process of intercultural management and the ability to function effectively in a multicultural environment.²

The manifestation and the influence of the multicultural environment in organizations is most often reduced to the following possibilities - an organization that has established divisions that operate independently in different countries; an organization that is physically located in a country but provides its products or services on international markets; an organization where employees who are working are representatives of various multicultural backgrounds; an organization with virtual teams from different cultures.

The multicultural business environment brings together employees and partners who are representatives of different cultures, who differ significantly in terms of personal and business understandings. The existence and development of organizations in conditions of cultural differences requires them to improve and acquire new techniques and approaches for conducting effective business communications and negotiations. Solely knowing cultural differences and improving communication skills can help organizations and employees reduce possible conflicts during communication and work in a multicultural environment. Thus, culture functions as a reference frame within which business communication is conducted, analyzed and understood.

In modern conditions, a new phenomenon is emerging, called multicultural human capital, which requires managers to carry out effective business communication, which includes understanding cultural differences and overcoming them in the implementation of common organizational tasks. G. Hofstede³ states that in multinational organizations, understanding cultural differences and overcoming them can contribute to the success of negotiations, the results of which depend on solutions to important global issues for the organization. A similar situation is increasingly common in multinational organizations that operate offices in Bulgaria.

² Ottewill, R., D. Laughton, East Meets West: Using Multi-Cultural Groupwork to Develop the Cross-Cultural Capability of Tomorrow's International Managers, Journal of Teaching in International Business, 2000,

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234572307_East_Meets_West_Using_Multi-Cultural_Groupwork_to_Develop_the_Cross-Cultural_Capability_of_Tomorrow's_International_Managers

³ Hofstede, G., Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations (2nd ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2001

From the arguments presented so far, it can be concluded that business communication as a key tool for managers of multinational organizations operating in a multicultural environment as a research topic is extremely relevant and significant.

2. Thesis of dissertation paper

The thesis defended in the dissertation work is that multinational organizations use specific business communication, which includes understanding the cultural factors and their overcoming in order to achieve highly effective communication. Despite the many aspects and the importance of the business communication process in a multicultural environment, it is subject to comprehensive definition and modeling so as to ensure significant improvement of organizational results through the application of appropriate training, action plans and improving the knowledge of managers in the organization.

3. Working hypotheses of the research

The use of management and improvement of business communication in a multicultural environment increases the opportunities to achieve organizational goals and increases the results of the organization. In this regard, three working hypotheses have been presented as follows:

Hypothesis 1: It is possible to synthesize a model for assessing business communication skills.

Hypothesis 2: It is possible to define a methodology for improving the business communication skills of employees working in multinational companies.

Hypothesis 3: The results after conducting an experiment by using the methodology developed for improving the business communication skills of employees working in multinational companies show that the application of the developed methodology has a positive effect on employee performance and welfare of the organization.

The main goal of the dissertation paper is to develop an original author's methodology for improving the business communication skills of employees working in multinational companies. Achieving this goal is associated with solving the following research tasks:

- 1) Research and analysis of the theoretical and methodological aspects of the concept of communication, in particular business communication, and determining the nature and main characteristics of both concepts.
- 2) Research and analysis of multicultural differences and existing barriers to effective business communications.
- 3) Research and analysis of techniques and tools for overcoming intercultural barriers.
- 4) Identification of the impact of cultural factors on the communication process among the employees of the multinational organization.
- 5) Development of a model for assessment of business communication skills in international communication.
- 6) Development of an author's methodology for enhancing the business communication skills of employees working in multinational companies.
- 7) Development of research set of tools and conducting an experiment in a multinational company operating on the Bulgarian market.
- 8) Formulation of conclusions, recommendations and guidelines for future research.

4. Object and subject of the dissertation paper

The object of dissertation research is the business communication of multinational organizations.

The subject of this research is overcoming the barriers of the multicultural environment faced by human capital in the implementation of business communication in multinational companies.

5. Structure of dissertation paper

The structure of the dissertation paper follows the requirements for this type of research work and is built logically to link the overall development of the problem researched to the achievement of research goals and objectives. The exposition of the research work consists of three consecutive chapters, which develop and prove the research thesis.

The content of the first chapter includes an analysis of theoretical Bulgarian and foreign sources for definitions of the concept of communication and conceptual views on the main characteristics of communication. The general model for the implementation of the communication process and its key elements are analyzed. The place, role and importance of business communication in modern business conditions are determined. The main functions, goals, types and channels for business communication viewed give a clearer idea of the process within the organization. The multicultural differences that need to be known and managed are formulated. The international business etiquette is presented and the international cultural barriers that arise during business communication are classified. The synthesized basic conceptual apparatus and the characteristics and manifestations of the concepts reviewed provide a complete understanding of the subject of this dissertation work.

The second chapter presents the dissertation research. An analysis of possible techniques and tools for overcoming intercultural barriers arising during multinational business communication is included. Based on this review, the key business communication skills that managers and employees must have to work in a multinational company are presented. Based on the list of business communication skills, a model for their assessment has been built. The focus of this chapter is the establishment of a methodology for enhancing business communication skills of employees working in multinational companies.

The third chapter shows the applied aspects of the dissertation work and presents an experiment by using the methodology for enhancing the business communication skills of the employees working in a multinational company on the Bulgarian market.

6. Research approaches and methods of scientific research

The basis of the research approaches in the dissertation work is the systematic approach. In developing the dissertation research, research methods were used as a complex research method based on analysis and synthesis, comparative analysis, induction and deduction, the observation method, descriptive statistical methods and others. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect primary information during the in-depth interview and expert assessment.

The MS Excel software product and the SPSS software package were used for processing and analysis of the obtained results.

The methodological connections of the present topic with other sciences are related to human resources management, theory of management, business communications, social management.

7. The restrictive conditions of the dissertation work can be reviewed in the following main directions:

- The set of key business communication skills that have an impact on the multicultural environment does not claim to be exhaustive, but presents the author's point of view based on theoretical analysis and summaries of scientific sources in the areas studied.
- The methodology developed for increasing the business communication skills of employees working in multinational companies does not measure the ways to increase the business communication skills of human capital through a change in another management activity.

II. STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS OF THE DISSERTATION PAPER

1. Structure of dissertation paper

This dissertation paper contains two hundred and seventy-seven pages. It consists of a title page, abbreviations, table of contents, introduction, three chapters and a conclusion, a reference with main research and scientifically applied contributions, a reference of the publications on the topic, a list of literature sources used, a list of figures and a list of tables and six appendices. 29 tables and 46 figures are presented. The appendices contain 20 pages. The list of literature sources used includes 132 issues, of which 37 in Bulgarian, 73 in English and 22 Internet articles.

2. Contents of dissertation paper

Introduction

Chapter I. Theoretical and methodological aspects of the research

1. The role of communication as a key process for the functioning of modern organizations
2. The place of business communications within the organization - nature and characteristics of business communication
3. Channels and means for conducting effective business communication
4. The multicultural business environment and cultural differences and barriers that predetermine the effective course of business communications
5. International business etiquette in conducting business communications
6. Summaries and conclusions from the first chapter

Chapter II. Building a methodology for improving the business communication skills of employees in multicultural companies

1. General framework of the dissertation research
2. Techniques and tools for overcoming intercultural barriers
3. Derivation of key business communication skills for work in an international company
4. Building a model for assessment of business communication skills - expert assessment
5. Synthesis of a methodology for improving the business communication skills of employees in multinational companies
6. Summaries and conclusions from the second chapter

Chapter III. Experiment of the methodology for increasing the business communication skills of employees working in multinational companies

1. Building an experiment
2. Study of group A
3. Conducting the experiment

4. Repeated study of group A
5. Analysis of the obtained results
6. Argumentation of the dissertation hypotheses
7. Recommendations for future studies
8. Summaries and conclusions from the third chapter

Conclusion

Sources used

Statement of copyright

Reference of main research and scientific-applied contributions in the dissertation

Reference of the publications on the topic of dissertation

List with tables used in dissertation

List with figures used in dissertation

Appendices

III. SYNTHESIZED EXPOSITION OF DISSERTATION PAPER

1. Introduction

In the introduction of the dissertation the relevance and significance of the researched issues are substantiated. The main thesis is defined. The working hypotheses, the subject and the object of the dissertation are formulated. The purpose, tasks, research approaches and methods of scientific research, the scope and limitations related to the dissertation are indicated.

2. Chapter One: Theoretical and methodological aspects of the research

Modern business organizations operate outside the local markets. Positioning on the global stage requires them to adapt and improve communication skills for conducting business communication in a multicultural environment. The importance of business communications for the development of modern business brings to the fore

their more detailed use and analysis through the prism of the cultural environment in which the organization operates. At the beginning of the first chapter the concept of communication is presented as a definition and main characteristics, and for this purpose a set of foreign and Bulgarian literary sources is analyzed. The general model for implementation of the communication process and its constituent elements is analyzed. Based on this analysis, a more complete idea of the importance of communication in the modern business world is obtained and completely logically the object of subsequent review is the role and place of business communication. The main functions, goals, types and channels for business communication reviewed give a clearer idea of the process within the organization. The object of subsequent analysis is the cultural environment and the resulting major multicultural differences that need to be known and managed. At the end of the chapter, the international business etiquette is presented and the international cultural differences during business communication are classified. This chapter ends by giving conclusions on the concepts and processes considered and outlines the framework in which the author of the dissertation paper puts her research. By this chapter the first two tasks of the dissertation paper are solved.

The first paragraph of the chapter is aimed at clarifying the role of communication as a key process for the functioning of modern organizations. First of all, a literary review of the concept of communication is made, and the author's opinion on the basic understandings of communication is presented:

- Communication is understood as a transaction, i.e. it includes two or more individuals.
 - The participants in the communication develop mutual expectations.
 - It is necessary to ensure that the message is understood through feedback from the recipient.
- Communication is the exchange of thoughts, ideas, feelings, information, opinions and knowledge.
- Communication is effective if the message transmitted and the message understood have the same meaning.

The following definition is accepted under the term “Communication” within the dissertation: "the process of social interaction carried out through one-way dissemination - transmission, reception or mutual exchange of messages"⁴.

On next place, this paragraph discusses the communication process in order to determine the meaning, goals, tasks and functions of communication in modern business organizations. The paragraph ends by outlining the four main principles of the communication process, derived by P. Drucker.

The second paragraph of the theoretical and methodological chapter of the dissertation paper defines the place of business communications within the organization - the nature and characteristics of business communication. The author makes a literary review of Bulgarian and international authors on the concept of business communications by clearly stating that she accepts the definition of W. Scott, as best describing the essence of business communication – “business communication is a process that involves transmission and accurate reproduction of ideas provided through feedback in order to select actions that will achieve organizational goals”⁵.

In this paragraph the author of the dissertation presents the range of functions of business communication: informational, instructing, integrating, evaluative, educational, influential, image and orientating. The main goals of the concept are also presented. The paragraph ends by presenting a comparative analysis between internal business communication and external business communication against the following indicators: meaning, forms, purpose, participants, frequency of implementation and information flow.

The next paragraph of the first chapter focuses on tracking the channels and means of conducting effective business communication. The first part of the paragraph makes a comparative analysis of formal business communication and informal business communication. On next place, in the third paragraph of the first chapter, a distinction is made between verbal and non-verbal means of communication. Verbal communication involves communication that takes place orally or in writing. The components of non-verbal business communication are expressed in: facial expression and gaze, gestures, body language and posture, paralinguistics, time and space, touches.

⁴ Aleksieva, S., „Business Communications“, NBU, Sofia, 2006

⁵ Scott, William G., T. R. Mitchell, Organization Theory: A Structural and Behavioral Analysis, Irwin, 1976

The fourth paragraph presents the multicultural business environment and cultural differences and barriers that determine the effective course of business communications. Summarizing the review and analysis of the concept of culture and multicultural business environment, the author of the dissertation makes the following important conclusions about the importance of multicultural environment on business communications: *Culture is characterized by basic assumptions and mental models, artifacts and values, policies, procedures and behavioral conventions that are shared by a group of people and which cause influence on their perceptions when communicating with representatives of other cultures. Business communications in a multicultural environment is determined by the need for prior knowledge of mandatory, preferred and acceptable behavior in a particular organizational context. The cultural environment is a framework for conducting business communication, which requires knowledge of cultural differences, flexibility and adaptation to foreign culture and good communication skills.*

The issue of multicultural communication is of great importance for the global business scenario. The success in managing employees with different multicultural backgrounds largely depends on the ability of managers to communicate effectively with people having different backgrounds and to know and respect cultural differences. In the process of communication in a multicultural environment, barriers arise that hinder its effectiveness. Knowing and overcoming these barriers would help to enhance the communication with different cultures and would benefit both the organization and the individuals.

On the next place, the main communication challenges faced by business communications in a multicultural environment are presented and analyzed: language barrier, stereotypes, ethnocentrism, culture shock, resolution of conflicts, completion of tasks, decision making, relationships and trust, personal life, non-verbal communication.

The fifth paragraph of the theoretical and methodological chapter of the dissertation paper focuses on international business etiquette in conducting business communications. International business is the result of globalization, driven mainly by economic interdependence and the progress in technology. Success in global business ventures is limited by the inability of international managers to understand the business etiquette, customs and values needed for effective business communication with foreign cultures around the world. The vital role of international

business etiquette for management and communication in a multicultural environment is emphasized in the scientific literature. Managing a multicultural workforce and communicating with different stakeholders requires proper behavior and adherence to certain cultural rules.

A key place in this paragraph is given to the classification of international cultural differences, which presents the types of culture based on certain criteria, which are presented through their characteristics and location of manifestation: 1) attitude to business: transaction-oriented cultures, moderately transaction-oriented cultures and cultures of relationships; 2) etiquette, hierarchy and respect: informal cultures and formal cultures; 3) way of behavior: closed cultures, expressive cultures and cultures with different ways of expression; 4) attitude to time: monochronic cultures, moderately monochronic cultures and polychronic cultures.

On the next place, based on the presented international cultural differences, the paragraph discusses specific aspects of the complexity of business etiquette in the work of international partners, colleagues or clients. As not all existing business etiquettes in different countries can be covered, in the subsequent analysis the author of the dissertation does not claim to be exhaustive and emphasizes that the focus is on the most contrasting cultures - those of the USA, Japan, England, Germany, Greece, Poland and that of Bulgaria. The individual rules for business etiquette are described in terms of business communication, meetings and negotiations, as well as in terms of various social aspects.

The last paragraph of the first chapter presents the main summaries and conclusions of the first chapter. The following important conclusion is synthesized: *The presented and analyzed definitions, characteristics and features of the concepts communication, business communication and multicultural environment provide a basis for understanding and awareness of the importance and significance of business communications in the management of multinational organizations in a multicultural environment. It is precisely the analyzes and summaries presented that show the relevance of the topic selected by the author of the dissertation paper and they give her reason to develop and build an author's model to ensure the overcoming of the challenges related to conducting business communication by improving communication skills in a multicultural environment.*

3. Chapter Two: Development of a methodology for improving the business communication skills of employees working in multinational companies

The second chapter of the dissertation paper is theoretically divided into six parts. The first part presents a general framework of the dissertation research. The chapter summarizes and analyzes techniques and tools for overcoming intercultural barriers. Key business communication skills for working in an international company are analyzed and derived. Using the expert assessment method, a model for assessing business communication skills in an international organization has been built. After the analysis, an author's methodology for increasing the business communication skills of employees in international companies was synthesized. Each part of developed methodology is gradually explained and differentiated - steps, recommendations, tools, resources and other necessary elements are presented.

The main tasks of dissertation work to be solved in this chapter are three, four, five and six: research and analysis of techniques and tools for overcoming intercultural barriers; identification of the impact of cultural factors on the communication process among the employees of the multinational organization; development of a model for assessment of business communication skills in international communication and development of an author's methodology for increasing the business communication skills of employees working in international companies. The chapter ends by formulating conclusions on the aspects reviewed in the studied area.

In the first paragraph of the second chapter - general framework of the dissertation research, the author of the dissertation with the help of critical analysis derives her general framework as follows:



Figure 1. General framework of the dissertation research

The figure presents the main six stages through which the general framework of the dissertation research passes.

The second paragraph of the second chapter of the dissertation presents and analyzes a different set of techniques and tools for overcoming intercultural barriers. When implementing communication in an international culture, it is necessary to make an effort on the part of employees in order to overcome communication barriers. Based on the review and analysis, the following main points are presented:

- Employees should avoid using the reference framework.
- It is necessary to use language and non-verbal signs that are familiar to the communicating parties.
- The participants in communication must be actively listening.
- When there is doubt about the understanding of the situation, employees should be aware that the organization supports and encourages the use of verbal clarity and asking questions is mandatory.
- The environment in the organization should show the promotion of a space for mutual respect.
- The culture in the organization should be aimed at training employees to be open to new ideas and opportunities provided by working in a multinational environment.

- The cultural apprehension of each member of the organization should be aimed at accepting and adapting the different cultures of the employees working in the organization.
- Employees in the organization can significantly improve their understanding of their activities and role by avoiding stereotypes about their colleagues.
- Managers and leaders in the organization should encourage the positive acceptance of cultural differences.
- It is appropriate to organize systematic trainings and seminars in the organization, aimed at learning and understanding other cultures and their norms.
- It is essential to use informal communication between employees to overcome their internal barriers, for this purpose the organization of casual meetings after working hours, informal presentations, team buildings and other similar events can be used.

The next paragraph of the second chapter presents the derived key business communication skills for working in a multinational company. The effectiveness of communication in a multinational company brings to the fore the challenge of acquiring a number of skills related to the knowledge, adaptation and behavior of the individual during communication. The global nature of the modern business world and the emergence of multinational companies require employees at every level of the organization to have the intercultural communication skills necessary for successful interaction with international associates.

The author of the dissertation identifies the following key business communication skills for working in a multinational company:

- Knowledge of multicultural differences.
- Adaptability to foreign culture.
- Improving language skills and models for nonverbal communication.
- Proper use of the means for conducting business communications.
- The ability to actively listen and understand.
- Observing business etiquette when conducting intercultural communication.
- Overcoming cultural barriers.

The paragraph concludes with the following author's conclusion: International business organizations must constantly develop intercultural competence of their employees to ensure that barriers to intercultural communication are overcome effectively.

In the fourth paragraph an author's model for assessment of business communication skills is presented by using the expert assessment method. In the first part of this paragraph, the author of the dissertation paper defines the process of conducting the research by using seven main steps, which are presented in the following figure:

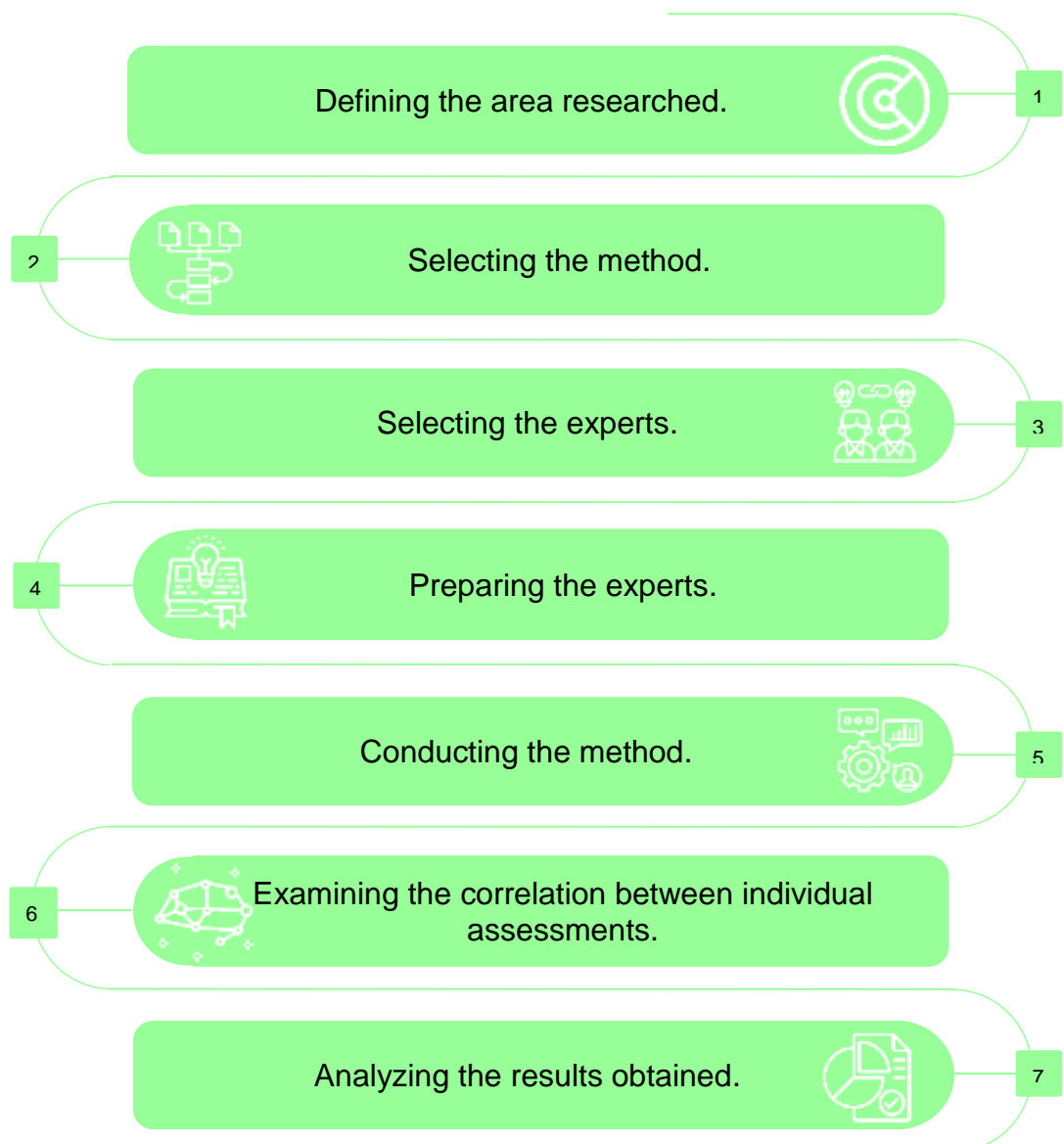


Figure 2. Process of the expert assessment method

After the conducting the research, a model was synthesized, which is presented in the form of a table with the help of the ranked business communication skills of the

employees in multinational companies with certain weights corresponding to the importance for each one of them. The value of all presented weights is defined:

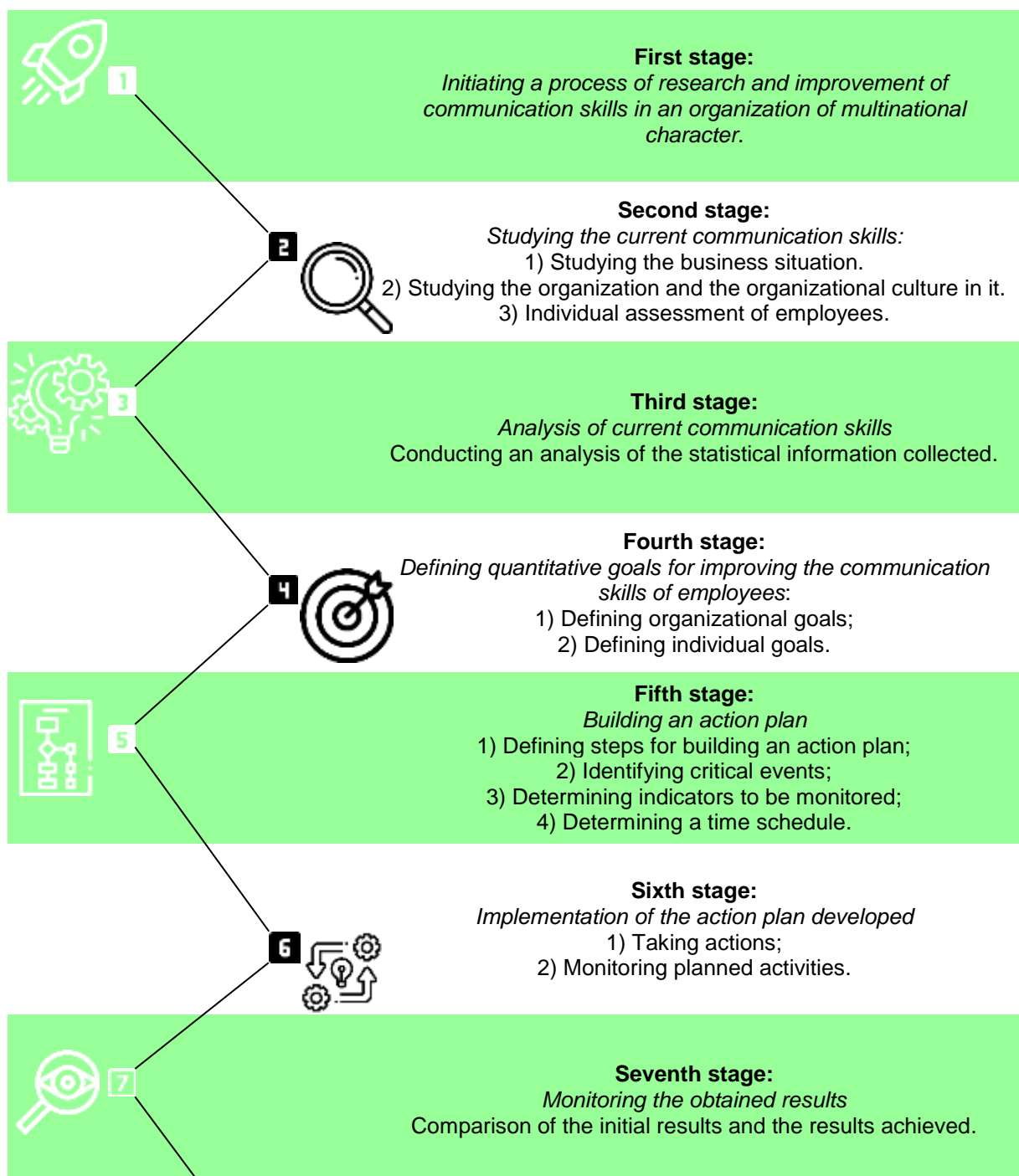
Table 1. Business communication skills model

No	Business communication skills of employees in multinational companies	Weight
1	The ability to actively listen and understand <i>(The ability to actively listen and understand helps to better understand and apprehend the message in communication.)</i>	17,29%
2	Knowledge of multicultural differences <i>(Ability to gain knowledge related to the psychological models, artifacts, attitudes and values of all cultural groups, between which it is necessary to communicate in a multinational organization.)</i>	16,29%
3	Overcoming cultural barriers <i>(Knowledge of communication barriers and the development of skills by the communicator to overcome them without problems. This skill also includes preparation for anticipating possible problems that arise during communication.)</i>	15,29%
4	Adaptability to foreign culture <i>(Communication skill related to the flexibility in communicating with different cultural groups in a multinational company.)</i>	14,29%
5	Improving language skills and models for nonverbal communication <i>(Communication skill where new language skills are developed as quickly as possible and new non-verbal models for communication in a multicultural environment are learned.)</i>	13,29%
6	Proper use of the means for conducting business communications <i>(Knowledge and skill how to properly use the means of verbal and nonverbal communication in different communication conditions in a cultural environment.)</i>	12,29%
7	Observance of business etiquette when conducting intercultural communication <i>(Communication skill for using the proper and allowed behaviors when communicating with a representative of another culture - greetings, space, gifts, etc.)</i>	11,29%

Next to the last paragraph of the second chapter presents the synthesized methodology for improving the business communication skills of employees working in multinational companies. In the beginning of the paragraph, the author emphasizes that the fundamental principle in applying the process of improving certain skills is based on the fact that improvement is the result of continuous activity and not of a single action. In conducting the evaluation and implementation of changes, there are always problems and challenges faced by the management that need to be addressed in a timely manner. Improving the skills of employees includes the business practice of identifying, analyzing and improving the current situation. There are various validated approaches that can be used: PDSA (Plan - Do - Study - Act), DMAIC (Define, Measure, Analysis, Improvement and Control), Six Sigma, Total Quality Management,

5 whys and other approaches. After reviewing and analyzing these basic methods, the author of the dissertation concludes that she fully supports the general provisions of the presented tools as a basis for improvement and enhancement of each process within the organization regardless of its nature: improvement of production process, improvement of services, attitude to clients, improvement, integration of change and reengineering, improvement of the organizational culture or improvement of the employees through trainings.

The author's methodology for improving business communication skills is as follows:



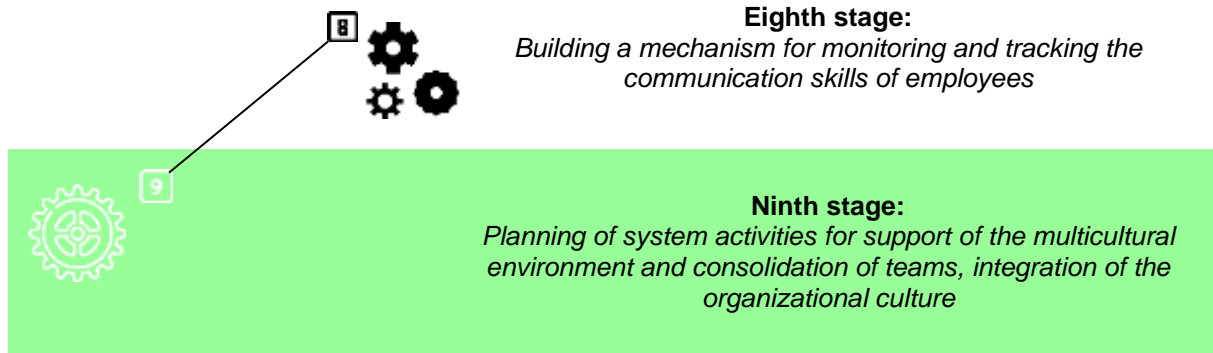


Figure 3. Methodology for improving the business communication skills of employees working in multinational companies

The objective of the methodology is to change positively the business communications of employees and thus increasing their efficiency and effectiveness in order to achieve organizational goals and strategies:

I. Initiating a process of research and improvement of communication skills within an organization of multinational character

The first stage of the author's methodology has a fundamental character. It starts the algorithm of the developed methodology. The first step in this process is related to the awareness of the need to undertake activities related to increasing the business communications of employees in multinational companies. Usually this need is caused by the necessity to improve efficiency in teamwork, improve organizational culture, increase cohesion between employees, improve the performance of the organization and others. The main place in this stage is occupied by the support of the management, due to the nature of the process. The support is necessary, because it is the management that provides the necessary resources of any nature for the implementation of the process. Next comes the formation of a team that will help to build engagement in employees. It is recommendable that the team is formed by employees within the company, who can allocate the tasks and responsibilities against the activities, procedures and actions related to the integration of this process within the company.

II. Studying the current communication skills

The second stage of methodology presented focuses its attention on the study of communication skills within the organization. This type of study is primarily related

to a set of cognitive methods and procedures for revealing the state of communication skills by measuring specific, instantaneous values of certain parameters. The main goal at this stage is to establish the deviations of the skills actually desired.

The study of communication skills is related to three purposeful activities: research of the business situation, research of the organization and the organizational culture in it and individual assessment of the employees.

The first type of study - related to the business situation, aims to establish the current state of the type of business in which the organization operates.

The following study is aimed at tracking the state of the organization and the organizational culture built within it. This study can be divided into the following set of activities studying various aspects of the organization: analysis of internal documentation, analysis of annual financial results, empirical study of the current organizational culture among all employees in the organization or in the absence of comprehensive study, at least a sample study to provide a basis for drawing conclusions about existing culture.

The last study in this stage of the author's methodology is focused on individual assessments of employees of their business communication skills. It is appropriate to carry out this study in the following four stages:

- 1) Personal self-assessment of employees for the state of their skills;
- 2) Assessment of the communication skills of the employees by a line manager;
- 3) 360^o assessment of employees by their teammates;
- 4) Professional assessment by an external consultant who is a specialist in business communication skills and international etiquette.

The assessment of the available business communication skills of the employees aims to identify the deficits according to the wishes of the organization and to undertake the appropriate and necessary corrective activities for the improvement of these skills.

In some organizations of a multinational nature, the use of a professional assessment by an external consultant is not necessary, as the organization has also internal experts who can perform the necessary assessment.

In this stage, the author's model developed and presented in Table 1, paragraph four of this chapter is also used.

III. Analysis of current communication skills

In this stage the empirically collected information from stage two is processed and the main judgments are created, on the basis of which conclusions are made about the current state of the business communication skills of the employees within the organization. It is appropriate to use statistical tools to identify dependencies and identify key elements to start with. A comparison is made between the current situation and the desired one, thus establishing the deficits of each employee.

IV. Defining quantitative goals for improving the communication skills of employees:

Setting goals involves defining what, why and how it is necessary to be taken in the desired direction. In practice, when formulating goals, the so-called SMART principles⁶ are used: specific, measurable, agreeable, accordant with the company's mission and with each other, realistic, time bounded. Each goal set must be designed to include an assessment criterion that determines its effective achievement.

When setting goals, it is necessary to create first organizational goals that can be in sync with the organizational strategy, vision and mission. Secondly, individual goals are set, which can be individual for each employee or team.

V. Building an action plan

The action plan⁷ can be seen as a checklist for the steps or tasks you need to complete in order to achieve your goals. The plan consists of well-defined goals; tasks /activities that must be performed in order to achieve the set goals; the people who will be responsible for completing each task; when these tasks will be completed (deadlines and stages); resources needed to complete the tasks; indicators to measure progress on each task.

The following set of teaching methods that can be applied should be considered: planned internal trainings, coaching and mentoring, lectures, discussion method, demonstrations, seminars and conferences, reading or video materials, business simulation, business games, role-playing games, team training, behavior modeling, computer modeling, computer-based training, team building and others.

VI. Implementation of the developed action plan

⁶ Harizanova, M., N. Mironova, M. Mirchev, Management, Helios Print, Sofia, 2006

⁷ Athuraliya, Amanda, The Easy Guide to Developing an Effective Action Plan, 13 July 2020, <https://creately.com/blog/diagrams/how-to-write-an-action-plan/>

In this stage of the methodology developed, the established action plan is implemented and its systematic nature is monitored. It is necessary to organize regular meetings to discuss progress and its activities. Monitoring the critical events and the implementation of the time schedule is of key importance for the overall implementation of the tasks assigned.

VII. Monitoring the results obtained

The seventh stage of the methodology is a comparison of the initial results and the results achieved. The establishment of the achieved results is made with the help of a repeated study of the "new" current business communication skills of the employees of the multinational company. The comparison of the new assessments with the initial ones is of key importance. The established difference in the presented assessments is an indicator of the result obtained from the activities undertaken in the organization.

VIII. Building a mechanism for monitoring and tracking the communication skills of employees

This stage is based on the establishment of a mechanism and development of practices within the organization that will allow the monitoring and tracking of communication skills of employees. The purpose of the eighth stage is to build constant feedback on the state of communication skills in the organization. It is appropriate to provide for activities in the HR department to monitor specific indicators. On the other hand, this process must be monitored by each line manager of the respective employee in the organization.

IX. Planning of systematic activities for support of the multicultural environment and consolidation of the teams, integration of the organizational culture

The last stage of the author's methodology developed is aimed at the integration in the organization of systematic activities, which are related to trainings, seminars, team building events and other events that unite the team and aim at reducing the cultural barriers.

The purpose of carrying out this type of activity is associated with the implementation of effective organizational communication, which will lead to the following benefits:

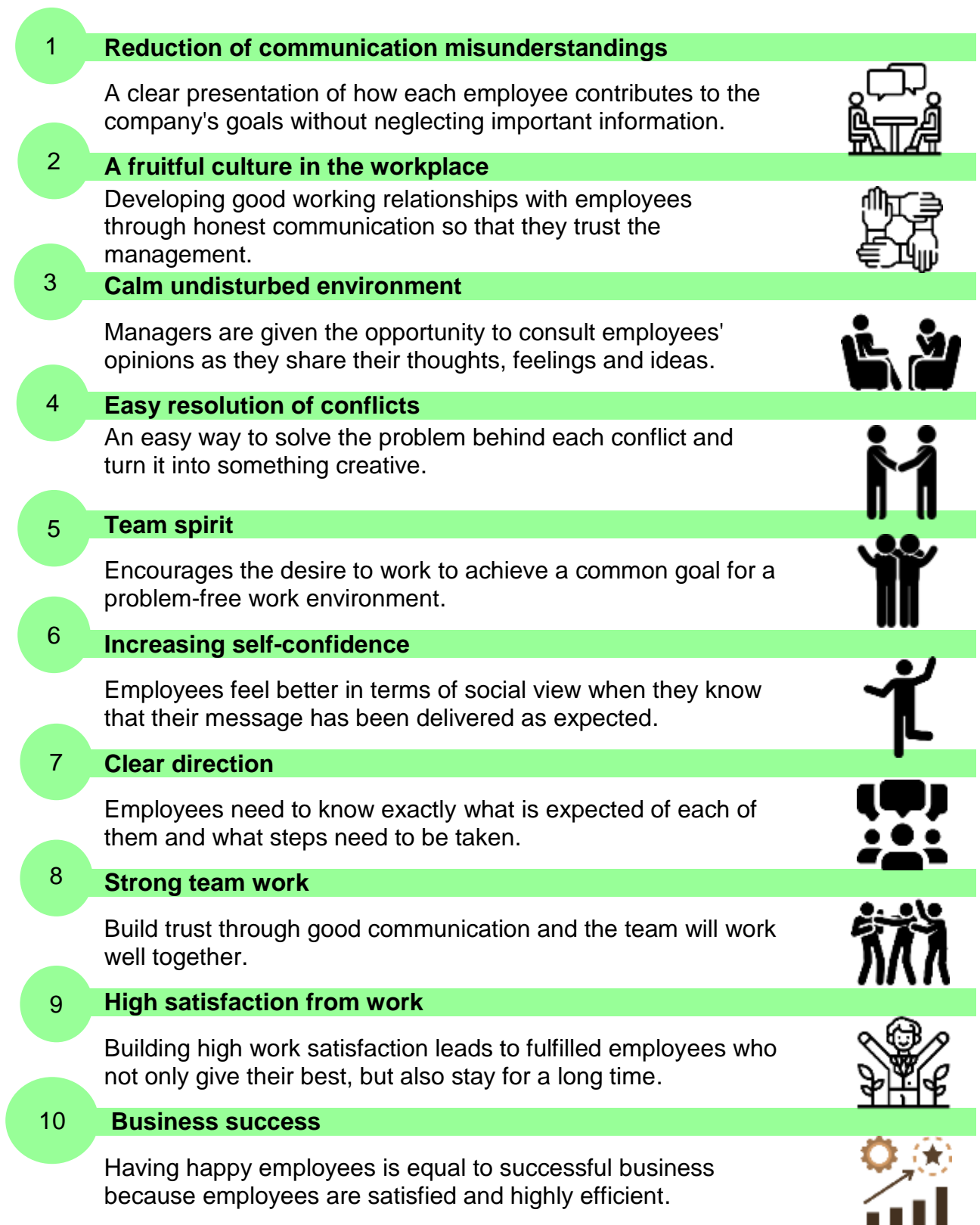


Figure 4. Advantages of the effective communication

Source: Kashyap, Sandeep Here's, *How Effective Communication is in the Hands of 73% of Professionals*, July 21, 2019, <https://www.proofhub.com/articles/effective-communication>

In connection with the methodology developed for improving the business communication skills of employees in multinational companies, the author of dissertation paper outlines the following main challenges that may arise:

- The full support of the management and leaders in the organization is needed;
- It is necessary to provide the necessary financial, human and other resources for the purposes of the methodology;
- An expert team is needed to apply the author's methodology.
- Assistance is needed from the employees for conducting the study and the impact on the current state of their communication skills.
- Motivation and desire on the part of employees is needed for continuous improvement and work in an organizational culture suitable for a multinational company.

The last paragraph presents the main summaries and conclusions from the exposition of the second chapter.

4. Chapter Three: Experiment of the methodology for improving the business communication skills of employees working in multinational companies

The third chapter of dissertation paper focuses on conducting an empirical study in the form of an experiment and testing the author's methodology developed in the second chapter to increase the business communication skills of employees in multinational companies. This chapter is divided into seven parts. The first part is related to the construction of an experiment, it describes the goals, objectives, object of study, the set of tools and other elements of the study. The initial study of group A in order to establish the current state of communication skills of employees in the organization takes central place in the third chapter. The third part practically shows the conduct of the experiment. The fourth part is aimed at conducting a repeated study of group A, or the so-called verification of the impact on the study group. The next part presents an analysis and interpretation of the results of the experiment. The next to the last part of this chapter provides recommendations for future studies. The last part of the third chapter presents summaries and conclusions from the experiment. The third chapter of the dissertation is focused on the practical part of the author's methodology and solves the seventh and eighth tasks of the dissertation, namely the

development of research tools and conducting an experiment in a multinational company operating on the Bulgarian market and formulating conclusions, recommendations and guidelines for future studies.

The first paragraph of the third chapter presents the construction of the experiment. After summary and consideration of the author of the dissertation on the basis of contemporary authors developing their scientific and research work in the field of research methodologies, the author derives the following process:

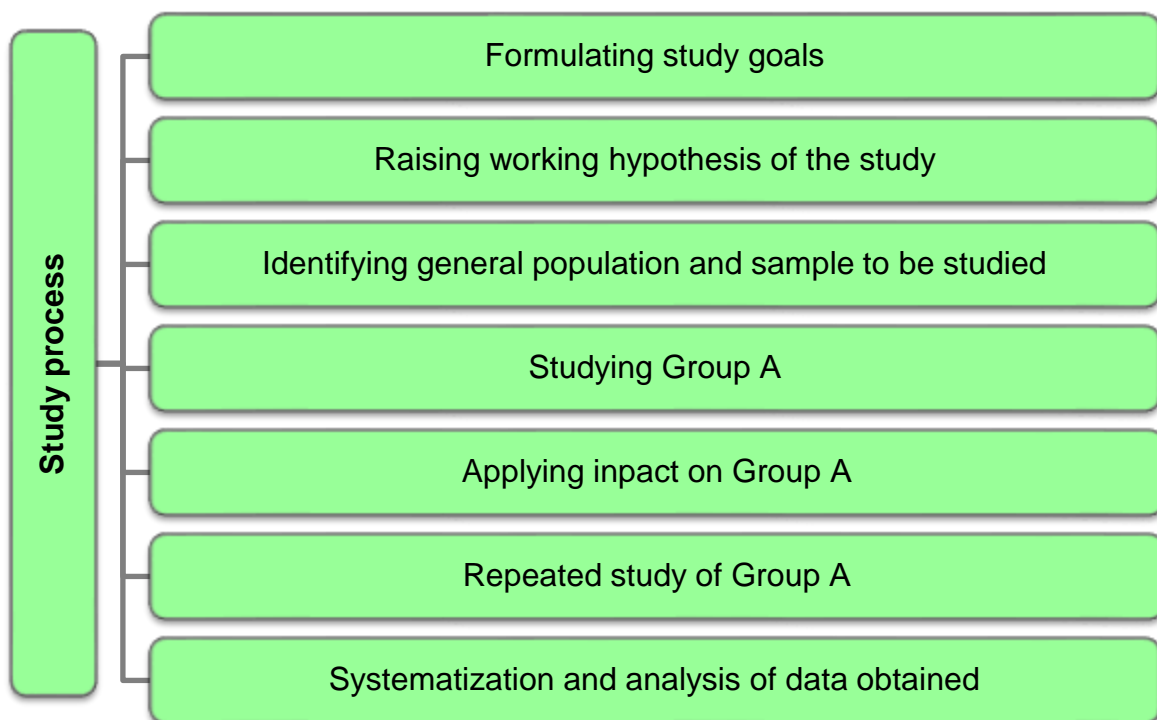


Figure 5. Study process

The second paragraph focuses on the group A study. Initially, a preliminary study was conducted across the company under study for all regions among 11 countries and more than 30 locations working in sales/ account management/ sales support departments. Two types of questionnaires were prepared for team members and their managers. The study was completed within one month and included all selected department heads and their teams. The responses are anonymous and are summarized in a brief presentation at departmental level and a general summary of the study results. The focus of the dissertation is the study conducted on the team in Bulgaria, in particular in Sofia - BG 1.

The results of the preliminary study provide an opportunity for the author of the dissertation to conclude that it is necessary to make a serious impact on the study subjects in order to increase and improve the overall average value of the office in Sofia. The goal of the impact is aimed at catching the highest average rating of 3.8 or even achieving a higher one. On the other hand, this study and the results obtained give grounds for initiating the author's methodology for increasing the business communication skills of the employees in multinational companies. The results achieved so far show that the management supports the initiation of activities related to improving the communication skills of employees, as well as that it provides the necessary resources for this.

The exposition of the second paragraph of Chapter Three of the dissertation also presents the implementation of the second stage: Study of current communication skills, and third stage: Analysis of current communication skills by the implementation of the author's methodology.

Based on the developed author's methodology, the study of the current communication skills goes through three main stages: 1) study the business situation; 2) study the organization and the organizational culture in it and 3) individual assessment of the employees.

In connection with the analyzes and summaries presented from the conducted studies in the organization, the author of the dissertation synthesizes the following goals for increasing the communication skills of the employees:

- Improving the performance of the organization.
- Increasing the overall level of communication skills of employees in the organization.
- Increasing the skills for active listening and understanding of the employees from Sofia office by 40%.
- Increasing the skills for knowledge about the multicultural differences of the employees from Sofia office by 65%.
- Increasing the skills for overcoming the cultural barriers of the employees from Sofia office by 40%.
- Increasing the skills for adaptability to the foreign culture of the employees from Sofia office by 35%.
- Increase of language skills and models for non-verbal communication of employees from Sofia office by 35%.

- Increasing the skills for proper use of the means for conducting business communications of the employees from Sofia office by 50%.
- Increasing the skills for observance of business etiquette when conducting intercultural communication of the employees from Sofia office by 45%.

An action plan has been developed for the achieving the goals, which can be presented as follows: First of all, the main policy must be developed, followed by a motivational policy, which is subordinated to the first policy. On third place is the improvement of the training system, which should include and integrate the necessary training for the implementation of the established policies. The fourth place in the action plan includes the implementation of a series of trainings and training techniques for improving the current communication skills in multinational companies of the current employees on the basis of the conducted studied. This activity is the subject of presentation in the next paragraph of this chapter of the dissertation. The last activity represents the integration of systematic seminars for training and improving the cultural knowledge of colleagues and their acceptance by employees as part of the work.

The next paragraph is related to conducting the experiment or the so-called conducting an impact on group A. A program has been developed that is concordant with the work commitments of employees and is aimed at implementing planned activities. In the first place, a general internal training was conducted on the importance of using a team of an international nature. In this training, in addition to the lecture course, a section with open questions and answers is planned, which focuses on the importance of the so-called feedback and verification of the knowledge acquired from the training. In other words, in this section, in addition to questions that have arisen during the training by the employees, the trainers also ask questions.

Then a series of trainings are planned in the form of lectures based on the discussion method, demonstrations, business simulations and role-playing games, individually focused on each of the skills that need to be improved. The specialized trainings were conducted by an external consultant who has over 10 years of experience in the field of communication training. This specialist is also used for the individual assessments of employees. In other words, this is a professional who already knows the employees and can apply not only general information and training, but also an individual approach to each of the persons studies. The training was carried out within one month. Gradually from a general information tool to simulations and role-

playing games that will determine the degree of acceptance of new knowledge during the sessions.

In addition to the planned and special purpose-oriented trainings, the employees were provided with appropriate reading materials and video materials related to communication skills - how to improve personal communication skills and how to better communicate.

The fourth paragraph of the third chapter focuses on the repeated study of group A. Six months later, after the trainings, an empirical study was conducted to examine the current state of communication skills of employees. For the purposes of this study, the same resources were used again: a sample of 20 employees (previously studied persons), the questionnaire used, as well as the information form for assessment by a line manager, 360⁰ assessment by colleagues and professional assessment.

The next paragraph of this part of the dissertation presents the analysis of the results obtained in a comparative plan between the initial and repeated study.

The first section, considered in comparative terms, is presented in the following figure:

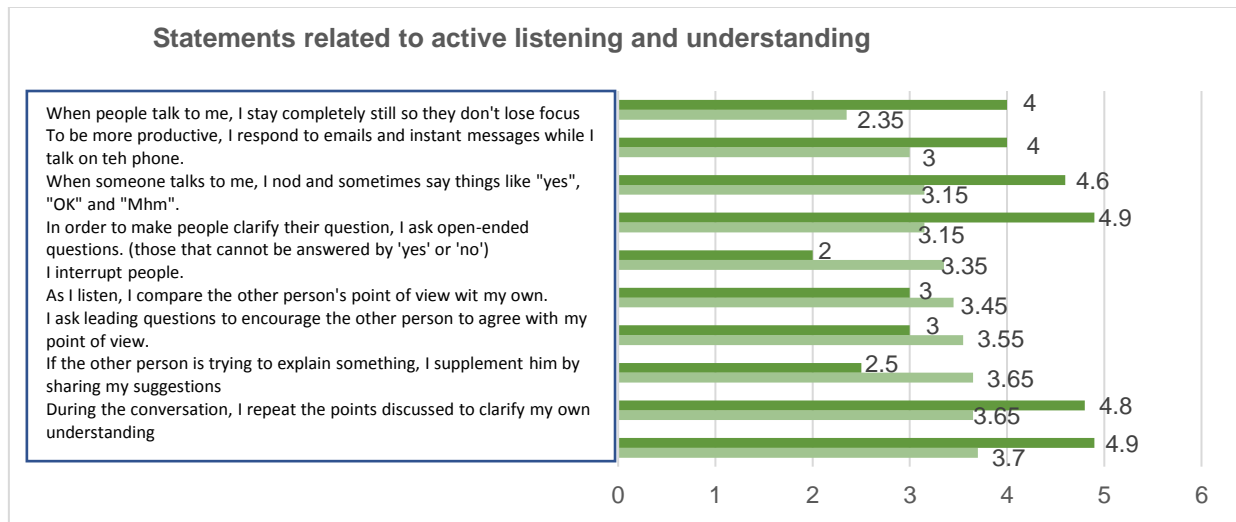


Figure 6. Comparison between the first and the subsequent study of the total average value of the statements related to active listening and understanding skills

The figure shows a significant improvement in the communication skills in the field of active listening and understanding of the employees being studied. In the first study (light green results), the arithmetic average values of the factors were within the

range of [2.35; 3.70]. After the implementation of the planned actions, the results obtained in the subsequent study (dark green results) are significantly better and are within the range of [2,90; 4,90].

The figure clearly outlines which were the most developed skills for active listening and understanding in the first study, as well as which were the most developed ones in the subsequent study.

In the first study, the statement "I'm trying to read the other person's body language while listening to him" stands out with an arithmetic average value of 3.7, and in the subsequent study this is again the highest rated statement with a value of 4.9.

In addition to these data, the figure shows that the greatest progress has been made in the statement "In order to make people clarify their question, I ask open-ended questions (those that cannot be answered by 'yes' or 'no')": from the average value of 3.15, at the moment there an average value of 4.90 is reached. This result shows that the activities undertaken and the trainings conducted had a significant impact on the skills of the employees.

In addition, an important clarification that is observed in the figure is that some of the studied statements have a reduced result, as they are not aimed at good and appropriate practices for communication between international employees. These are: "If the other person is trying to explain something, I supplement him with my own suggestions", "I ask leading questions to encourage the other person to agree with my point of view", "As I listen, I compare the point of view to the other person with my own" and "I interrupt people".

The statements related to knowledge skills for multicultural differences presented in a comparative plan between the first and the subsequent study are summarized using the following table:

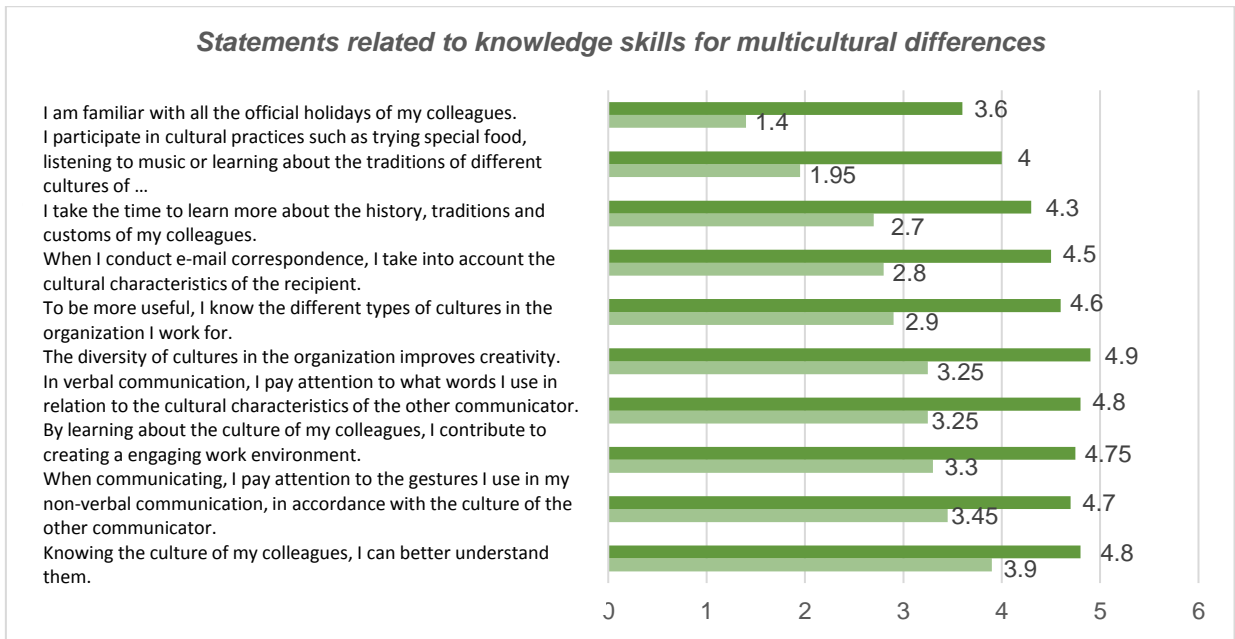


Figure 7. Comparison between the first and subsequent study of the total average value of the statements related to knowledge skills for multicultural differences

This comparison once again shows significant improvements in current communication skills. The resulting range of [1.40; 3.90] was changed to [3.60; 4.90]. Among the highest rated statements were "Knowing the culture of my colleagues, I can better understand them" - in the first study it had a value of 3.9 (the highest within the range) reaching to 4.8 in the subsequent study. In the second study, the statement "Diversity of cultures in the organization improves creativity" was ranked with the highest arithmetic average value - 4.9. These data allow us to conclude that the training on the importance of working in a team of a multinational nature, as well as individual training and training on the knowledge of multicultural differences have contributed to a serious increase in knowledge and skills of employees. The statement with the largest positive increase is "I am familiar with all official holidays of my colleagues". It should be noted here in both studies this statement had the lowest value and from 1.40 it reached value of 3.60. This figure shows the most significant increase in the overall performance of studied subjects.

Section number three of the questionnaire used is summarized in a comparative plan as follows:

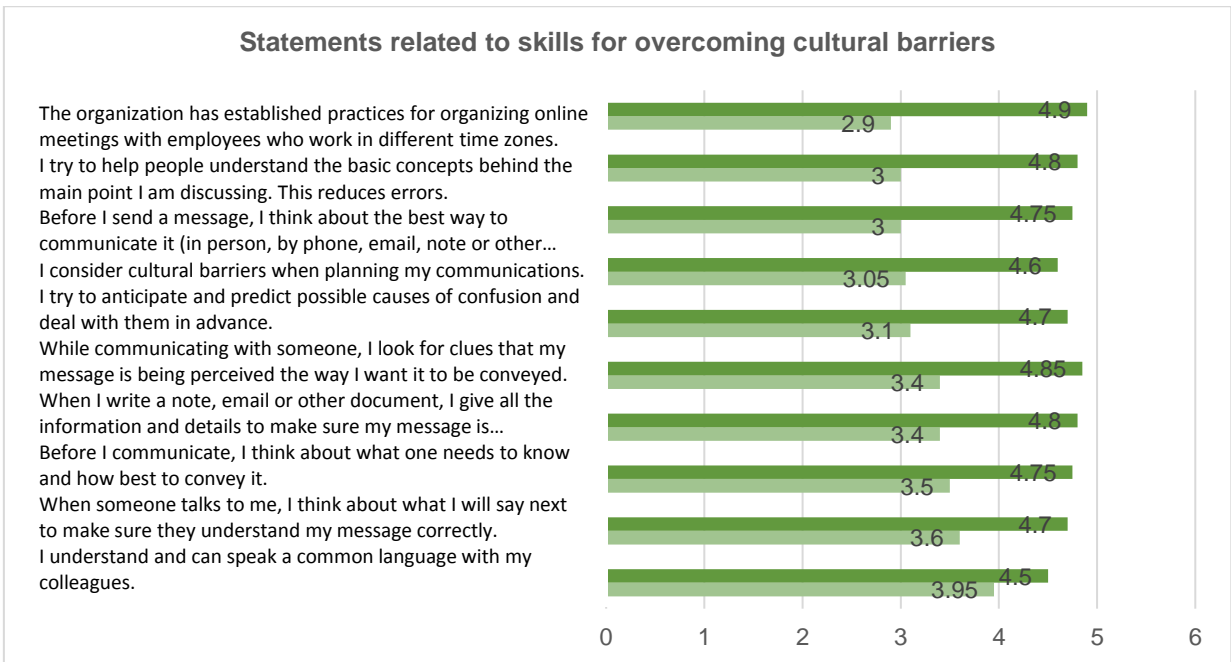


Figure 8. Comparison between the first and the subsequent study of the total average value of statements related to skills for overcoming cultural barriers

The statements related to the skills for overcoming cultural barriers of the employees in the organization on the basis of the repeated self-assessment of the studies subjects give the following generalized results:

- The first range of this group of skills ranging within [2.90; 3.95] was increased to [4.50; 4.90]. These are the group of skills with the highest arithmetic average value from the subsequent study conducted.
- In the first study, the statement “I understand and can speak a common language with my colleagues” was given the highest value - 3.95, and in the subsequent study the value reached 4.50.
- In the subsequent study with the highest arithmetic average score is the statement "The organization has established practices for organizing online meetings with employees who work in different time zones" - 4.9. This is the statement with the highest difference between the initial and current assessment. The results shown give grounds to conclude that the implemented policies and organizational practices have a serious positive effect on communication skills.
- In the subsequent study, the statement “While communicating with someone, I look for clues that my message is being perceived the way I want it to be

conveyed” is in second place with an arithmetic average value of 4.85, which is a result of a special purpose-oriented communication training.

The fourth section focuses on the study of the skills for adaptability to the foreign culture. The data obtained in a comparative aspect between the first and the subsequent study are illustrated in Figure 9.

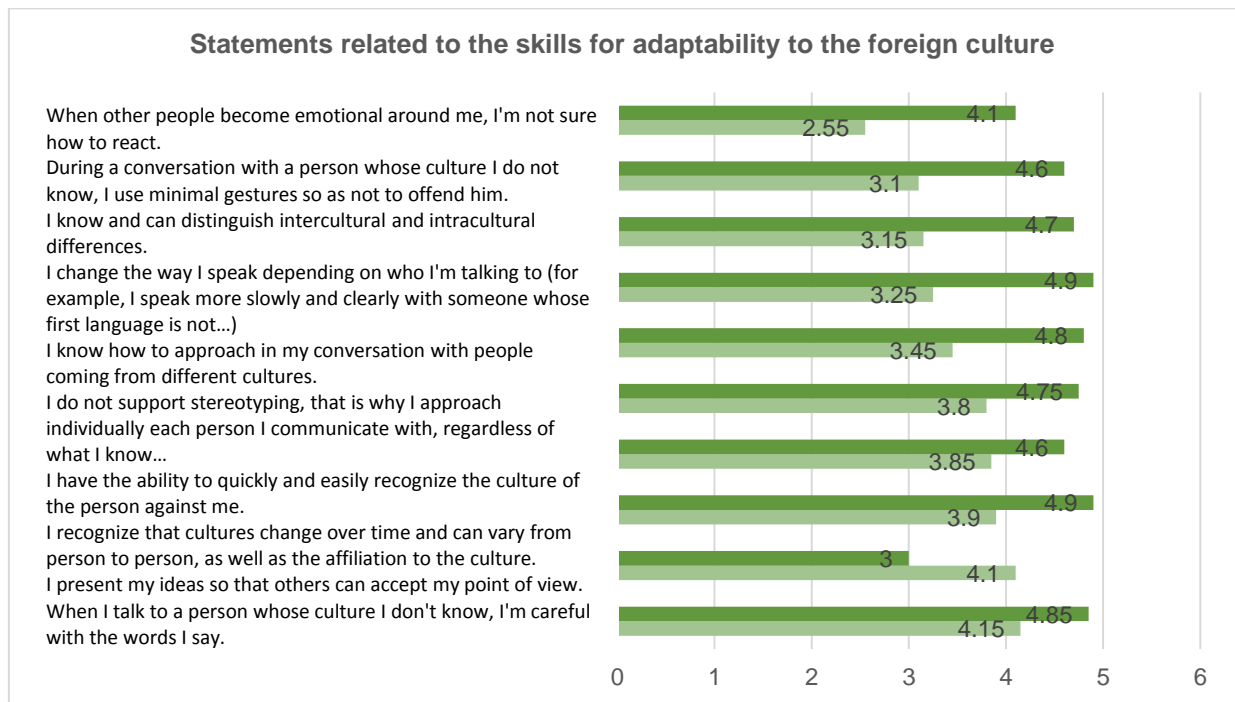


Figure 9. Comparison between the first and the subsequent study of the total average value of the statements related to the skills for adaptability to the foreign culture

The overall range in the first study was [2.55; 4.15], while in the subsequent study it was increased to [3.00; 4.90]. These data clearly prove that the impact taken has improved the skills of the respondents.

The data presented show that the statement "I present my ideas so that others can accept my point of view" has a reduced average value from 4.1 to 3. This result is due to the fact that during communication it is not necessary to impose the opinion of one of the communicators, but both parties must hear and understand each other.

The statement "I change the way I speak depending on who I'm talking to (for example, I speak more slowly and clearly to someone whose first language is not English; I avoid using work-related jargon when talking to someone who does not work

the same type of work)” has the best increase compared to the initial study with a value of 3.25 increased to 4.90.

The following section of questions is summarized as follows:

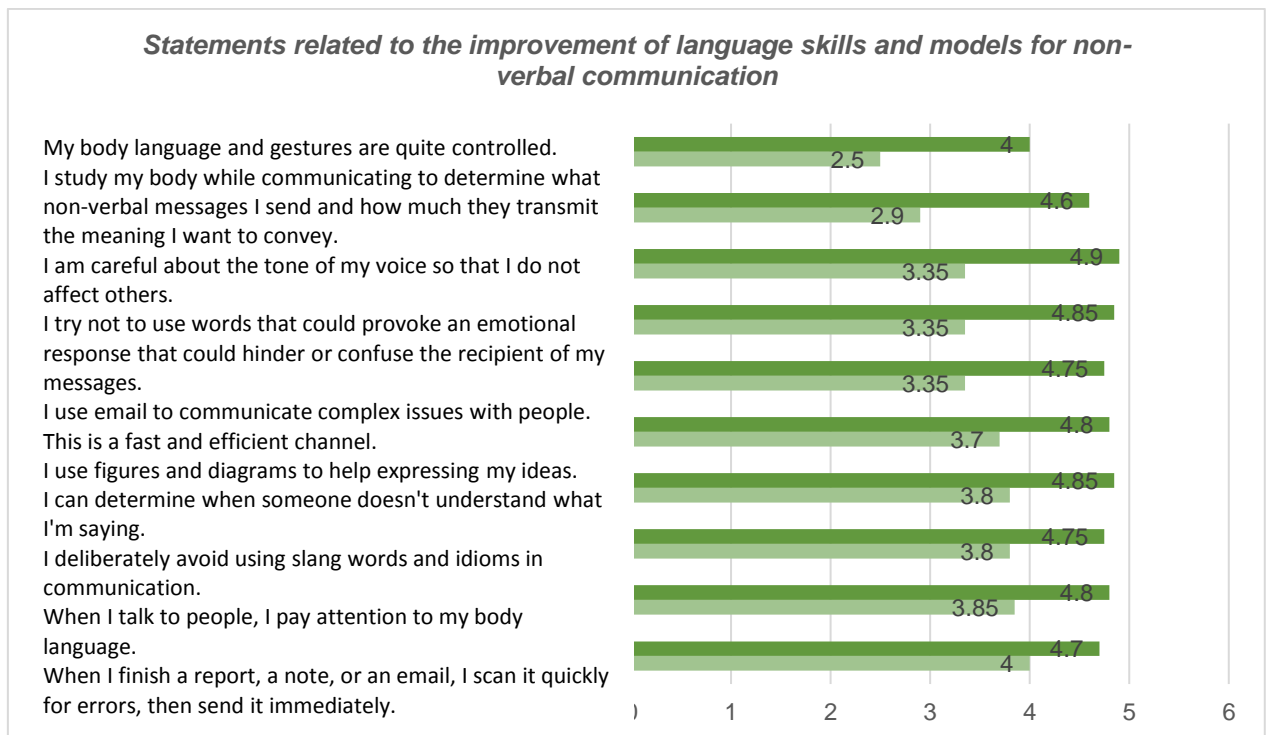


Figure 10. Comparison between the first and the subsequent study of the total average value of the statements related to the improvement of language skills and models for non-verbal communication

The comparative column chart presented on Figure 10 shows a serious positive impact on all presented statements reflecting the communication skills for language and non-verbal models. Among the most influenced skills are the statements: "I study my body while communicating to determine what non-verbal messages I send and how they transmit the meaning I want to convey", "I am careful about the tone of my voice so that it does not affect others", "I try not to use words that could provoke an emotional response that could hinder or confuse the recipient of my message" and "My body language and gestures are quite controlled", arranged in ascending order starting with the statement with the highest increase. In connection with the presented data it can be summarized that the non-verbal communication skills of the respondents reached significant improvement as a result of conducted trainings.

An illustrative comparison between the first and the second study of the sixth group of questions from the questionnaire used is Figure 11:

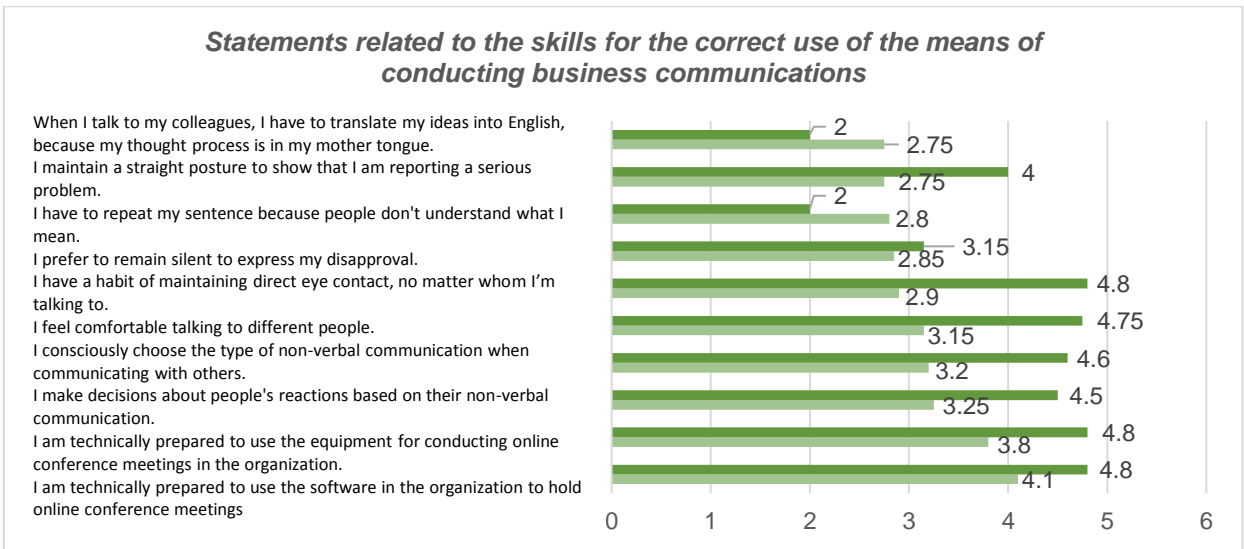


Figure 11. Comparison between the first and the subsequent study of the total average value of the statements related to the skills for the correct use of the means of conducting business communications

This group of questions managed to reach the smallest arithmetic average difference in the range of results obtained in the subsequent study, which can be seen on the figure. This conclusion is made on the basis of the fact that in the first study the closed range of the results of the arithmetic average values was [2.75; 4.10], while in the second study the range was [2.00; 4.80].

Two of the statements presented have a decrease in their average value: "I have to repeat my sentence because people don't understand what I mean" and "When I talk to my colleagues, I have to translate my ideas into English because my thought process is in my mother tongue".

The highest positive increase reached the statement "I have a habit of maintaining direct eye contact, no matter whom I am talking to". With an average value of 2.90 it increased to 4.80.

Figure 12 shows the last group of questions presented in a comparative aspect compared to the two studies conducted:



Figure 12. Comparison between the first and the subsequent study of the total average value of the statements related to the skills for compliance with business etiquette in conducting intercultural communication

Business etiquette skills in conducting intercultural communication have been significantly improved. The average range in the initial study was varying between [2.85; 3.7], in the second study this range was [4.60; 4.90]. This information gives grounds to conclude that the training in business etiquette has had a serious impact on employees and results they shown are significantly higher than the initial ones.

Among the highest average values are the following statements: "I always arrive before the meeting starts, I never miss a meeting and I prepare for meetings well in advance" - with a difference of 1.85, and "I mute the phone completely on all meetings and I never interrupt a meeting with side conversations"- with a difference of 1.7.

The results obtained from the second study give grounds to draw the general conclusion that after the impact taken by the organization there is a noticeable improvement in communication skills of employees. There are also effects that have not yet been completely eliminated, but this is due to individual understandings of the individual respondent. *The general conclusion is that the actions taken have achieved positive results, and they should not be stopped at the present moment, but it is necessary to continue to stimulate employees and involve them in systematic and organized training in order to promote the importance and significance of building international teams, increase the knowledge of conducting international communication skills and design behavior that is appropriate to the organization.*

The results of the subsequent assessments of the employees by a line manager, 360° assessments by their teammates, as well as a professional assessment by an external consultant specializing in business communication skills and international etiquette, make it possible to make the following findings:

- The arithmetic average value obtained in the study from assessment of employees by managers is about 2% lower than the arithmetic average self-assessment of employees.
- The arithmetic average value obtained by colleagues is about 1% lower than the self-assessment of employees.
- The average value obtained from professional assessment by an external consultant is lower by about 1% than the assessment done by managers.
- Independently of each other, all four types of assessments show that the results of the conducted studies are significantly closer than the ones in the initial study.
- *The four types of assessments allow us to conclude that employees have significantly improved their communication skills.*
- The quantitative targets set before the start of the impact on employees have been met.

The presented comparative analysis of the two studies gives grounds to conclude that the impact on the communication skills of employees is successful.

The conclusion from the conducted series of studies is that the actions taken by the action plan developed have achieved positive results. On the other hand, in order to keep the positive effects on the communication skills of the employees and to continue to develop them, it is necessary to continue activity directed to their improvement.

The eighth stage of the developed author's methodology is related to the construction of a mechanism for monitoring and tracking the communication skills of employees. The purpose of this mechanism is to conduct systematic training and build an opportunity for constant feedback on the state of communication skills of employees. This can be achieved by establishing and regularly organizing trainings, team building, role-playing games and simulations. Monitoring is related to observation, tracking, assessment, analyzing and compiling reports on the actual state of communication skills of employees in the multinational company. From this point of view, monitoring can be seen as a key process of studying the communication skills of employees in the international company being studied. The team responsible for the

implementation of these activities is the representatives of the Human Resource Management Department and the Internal Communications Department.

The last - the ninth stage of the author's methodology for improving the business communication skills of employees in multinational companies, is related to planning and integration of systematic activities to support the multicultural environment and team building, integration of organizational culture.

Verification of the working hypothesis

The presented data, analyzes and summaries so far give grounds to conclude that the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is confirmed: There is a significant difference between the business communication skills of employees working in a multinational company before and after the application of the methodology for improving communication skills.

The sixth paragraph is aimed at providing argumentation for the dissertation hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: It is possible to synthesize a model for assessing business communication skills.

The verification of this hypothesis is related to the systematic dissertation analysis of communications and multicultural environment - presented in the exposition of the first chapter of this paper, the derived communication skills for employees in a multinational company - presented in paragraph three of the second chapter of this paper, as well as the results obtained from the expert assessment carried out in paragraph four of the second chapter of this paper.

This first hypothesis has been **proven**.

Hypothesis 2: It is possible to define a methodology for improving the business communication skills of employees in multinational companies.

In the second chapter of the present dissertation the author's methodology for increasing the business communication skills of the employees in multinational companies is presented.

This second hypothesis has been **proven**.

Hypothesis 3: The results after conducting an experiment with the help of the methodology developed for improving the business communication skills of employees in multinational companies show that the implementation of the developed

methodology has a positive effect on employee performance and the organization welfare.

The assumption for this hypothesis is **confirmed**. It is best illustrated by the comparative figures presented here above in the exposition between the first study and the subsequent study after impacting on the communication skills of the employees. The descriptive analysis shows that according to the results related to the communication skills of the respondents, a significant improvement of their communication skills in a multinational company is established.

The following paragraph presents the author's recommendations for future studies:

- On first place, the study conducted in this dissertation work in the multinational organization, object of the study, to be conducted in a larger number of organizations;
- To implement the application of the author's methodology for improving the business communication skills of employees in multinational companies in several organizations with different characteristics: number of staff, management of different types of products and services, number of markets to track the diversity of manifestations of different cultures.
- To continue systematic and targeted training, monitoring and studying the results in the organization, object of the study, in order to monitor and compare the results in a longer run.
- To monitor and study the development of a motivational mechanism for affirming the importance of the use of international teams and building a work environment in which work professionals who show good key communication skills in multinational companies.

The last paragraph of the third chapter of the dissertation presents summaries and important conclusions from the exposition of the chapter.

5. Conclusion

Multinational companies are undergoing unprecedented changes due to globalization and all the consequences associated thereto, in the way they communicate with each other across borders and in the way communication is managed within companies.

Modern trends in business communication can be described as language and communication competencies in the modern multinational and multicultural business environment. Practice shows that these types of competencies are highly valued, even financially, because they can be transferred into economic benefits for organizations.

There are a lot of studies in the scientific literature that prove the communication plays a crucial role in developing and maintaining trust in organizations. Trust, in turn, is a prerequisite for managerial and organizational efficiency, leading to active involvement of employees and their effectiveness. In other words, it can be concluded that the study of current trends in multicultural business communication in multinational companies is important for their effective management.

In any multinational organization, human capital is considered the most important asset for the company. For this reason, communication among the human capital within the organization and the communication between the human capital and external parties is considered the tool for achieving business goals. The study and management of intercultural business communication in the organization is very important for improving the business communication within the organization and the communication between the organization and its business partners.

In accordance with the prerequisites listed so far, the author of this dissertation within the exposition presented here fulfills the main goal of the dissertation, namely to develop an original author's methodology for improving the business communication skills of employees in multinational companies.

The logical sequence of the exposition of the dissertation follows the study tasks set in the introduction.

The first chapter focuses on the theoretical and methodological aspects of the concept of communication as a definition and main characteristics, the general model for the implementation of the communication process and its constituent elements is analyzed. The main functions, goals, types and channels for business communication are presented. An analysis is made of the cultural environment and the resulting major multicultural differences that need to be known and managed. At the end of the chapter, the international business etiquette is presented and the international cultural differences during business communication are classified.

In the second chapter, the author finds answers to the questions related to building a general framework of the dissertation research, what are the techniques and

tools for overcoming intercultural barriers, what are the key business communication skills for working in a multinational company. Using the expert assessment method, a model for assessing business communication skills in a multinational organization has been built. After the analysis, an author's methodology for increasing the business communication skills of employees in multinational companies was synthesized. Each section of developed methodology is gradually explained and differentiated - steps, recommendations, tools, resources and other necessary elements are presented.

The last research question and research task are solved in the third chapter of the dissertation, in which an experiment and approbation of the author's methodology developed in the second chapter for increasing the business communication skills of employees in multinational companies is conducted.

The established state of business communication skills of employees in multinational companies after the first study is not satisfactory. In order to increase their values, an action plan has been drawn up and implemented. The established significant improvement of the assessment values of the skills by the employees in the organization proves that the author's methodology is applicable in the organizational environment.

Main conclusions: the author's methodology for improving the business communication skills of employees in multinational companies has a positive impact on the organization not only in the communication skills of employees, team spirit and organizational culture, but also in financial and time terms. Based on the presented analysis, the author of the dissertation paper concludes that the dissertation goal is fulfilled.

The successful approbation of the methodology for increasing the business communication skills of employees in multinational companies and the substantiated dissertation hypotheses prove the author's thesis that multinational organizations use specific business communication, which includes understanding cultural factors and overcoming cultural barriers in order to achieve highly effective communication. Despite the many aspects and the significance of the business communication process in a multicultural environment, it is subject to comprehensive definition and modeling so as to ensure significant improvement of organizational results through the implementation of appropriate trainings, action plans and improvement the knowledge of senior staff in the organization.

IV. REFERENCE OF CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE DISSERTATION PAPER

Research and scientific-applied contributions:

1. The exposition of the first chapter presents the result of a critical analysis of the theoretical and methodological aspects of the concepts of communication, business communication, multicultural business environment and cultural differences and barriers, international business etiquette in conducting business communications and the author's conceptual apparatus in the focus areas. The knowledge in the field is systematized and enriched by presenting and developing the author's paradigm.

2. A general framework of the dissertation research has been established, which goes through stages, which aim at and lead to the development of the methodology for increasing the business communication skills of the employees in multinational companies.

3. Through an in-depth study of the specialized literature, the key business communication skills for working in a multinational company have been identified.

4. An author's model of the key business communication skills for working in a multinational company has been developed by using an expert assessment.

5. An original author's methodology for increasing the business communication skills of employees in multinational companies has been developed. The methodology is presented in a figure with recommendations for direct adaptation and implementation in business practice.

6. An empirical research is formulated in the form of an experiment. The implementation of the experiment in a multinational company confirmed the importance of the key business communication skills identified for working in a multinational company.

V. LIST OF PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION PAPER

1. Yaneva, Maya, Employee Satisfaction vs. Employee Engagement vs. Employee NPS, European Journal of Economics and Business Studies, ISSN 2411-9571 (Print), ISSN 2411-4073 (online), Vol 4 No 1, April 2018, <http://archive.sciendo.com/EJES/ejes.2018.4.issue-1/ejes-2018-0024/ejes-2018-0024.pdf>
2. Yaneva, Maya, Z Generation in Corporate Environment. How To Address it?, Economic and Social Development, 27th International Scientific Conference on Economic and Social Development, Rome, 1-2 March 2018, ISSN 1849-7535 (online), p.739, https://www.esdconference.com/upload/book_of_proceedings/Book_of_Proceedings_esd_Rome_2018_Online.pdf
3. Yaneva, Maya, Business communication skills of Bulgarians within a multi-cultural environment, Rhetoric and communications megazine“, vol. 33, March 2018, ISSN 1314-4464 (online), <https://rhetoric.bg/maya-yaneva-business-communication-skills-of-bulgarians-within-a-multi-cultural-environment>

VI. DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation paper „Business communication as a key tool for business development.(Following the example of multinational organizations operating in a multicultural environment)“ is completely authentic authors work. In this paper were not used others publications and researches in violation of their copyrights.