

## **REVIEW**

**by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teodora Milcheva Lazarova**

of dissertation for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, Professional field 3.8. Economics, PhD program "Finance, Insurance and Social Security"

**Author:** Maya Hristova Yaneva

**Topic:** "Business communication as a key tool for business development. (Following the example of international organizations in a multicultural environment) "

**Scientific adviser:** Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Ilieva

### **1. General description of the submitted materials**

The dissertation is structured in the following parts: content, introduction, three chapters and conclusion, list of references, reference to the main scientific and applied contributions, reference of publications on the topic, list of tables used, list of figures used and twelve applications.

The dissertation is 235 pages long, the main text (excluding the appendices) is 177 pages. 29 tables and 46 figures are presented. The list of used literature sources includes 132 issues, of which 37 in Bulgarian, 73 in English and 22 Internet articles. The author of the dissertation is a doctoral student in the Department of Marketing and Management at the Higher School of Insurance and Finance.

By order № 35 of 10.03.2021 of the Rector of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance Assoc. Prof. Dr. Grigoriy Vazov I was appointed a member of the scientific jury to provide a procedure for the defense of a dissertation on the topic: "Business communication as a key business development tool. (Following the example of international organizations in a multicultural environment) "for obtaining the educational and scientific degree" Doctor "in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, Professional field 3.8. Economics, PhD program "Finance, Insurance and Social Security". The author of the dissertation is Maya Hristova Yaneva - PhD student in an independent form of study at the Department of Marketing and Management with supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Ilieva from VUZF.

The materials submitted by Maya Hristova Yaneva include documents according to the presented inventory: - Files with publications; File with summaries of publications in Bulgarian and English; Abstract in Bulgarian and English; Dissertation work; Information on fulfillment of the national minimum requirements; Autobiography; Declarations 14 and 15 of the annexes to the Regulations for admission and training of doctoral students at VUZF.

The doctoral student has attached 3 publications.

The dissertation was discussed at the Department Council of the Department of Finance at the Higher School of Insurance and Finance - Sofia on January 21, 2021. and is approved for public protection.

## **2. Brief biographical data about the doctoral student**

Maya Hristova Yaneva defended her master's degree in economics at the University of National and World Economy in Sofia in 2002, majoring in Economics and Labor Organization, having previously completed the same specialty as a bachelor. He specialized in "Interpersonal Relations in Management" at the Wirtschaftsuniversität, Vienna in 2003. He was certified as a "Quality Manager" under ISO 9001 in 2004, and in 2009 he was certified with "Six sigma - Green belt".

Maya Hristova Yaneva has over 20 years of experience in the field of management of successful small and large teams, sales, international negotiations, project management, partnership development, outsourcing, building teams and offices in Bulgaria and abroad. her.

She has won several significant awards and distinctions, namely:

- Best customer relationships and global business growth 2019, Sitel Group
- 2016 Q1 Sitel Outstanding Partnership Award
- 2014 Sitel Mean More Silver Award EMEA
- 2014 National Golden Prize "Human Resources" from the magazine "Human Resources" and Human Resources in Bulgaria and European Integration Foundation.

## **3. Importance of the topic and successful achievement of the set goals and tasks**

Modern business trends are related to the continuing globalization of the economy and the continuous development of innovation. These trends are determined by the growing number of international organizations, the strong global economic competition, the constant flow of

innovation and the growing importance and need for highly qualified staff. The main 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 government must apply management practices that properly integrate the impact of the business environment and labor market development, human capital characteristics, technological development and stakeholder interests (employees, employers, consumers, contractors, government policy, society etc.) and organizational strategies and goals for future development.

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

#### **4. Understanding of the main topic of the dissertation**

Maya Hristova Yaneva demonstrates in-depth knowledge in the chosen topic. The review of literature sources, as well as the detailed theoretical analysis of the mentioned literature make a pleasant impression. The doctoral student has the skills to synthesize and analyze information, as well as to summarize and derive patterns in order to validate the working hypotheses of the dissertation.

#### **5. Research methodology**

The basis of the research approaches in the dissertation 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 method of observation, 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.

#### **6. Characteristics and evaluation of the dissertation**

The presented for review dissertation on "Business communications as a key tool for business development in the management of international organizations in a multicultural environment" emphasizes the importance of effective business communication in an

organizational environment. The author shares the statement that international organizations use specific business communication, which includes understanding cultural factors and overcoming them in order to achieve effective communication. Maya Yaneva defines a methodology for improving the business communication skills of employees in international companies, setting herself the ambitious task of deriving a model for assessing business communication skills.

The author has clearly formulated the subject, goals and objectives of the study. The main goal is to develop an original author's methodology for improving the business communication skills of employees in international companies. The thesis and research hypotheses are clearly distinguished. The structure of the dissertation follows the requirements for this type of scientific work and is built logically to link the overall development of the research problem with the achievement of research goals and objectives.

The exposition of the scientific work consists of three consecutive chapters, which develop and prove the research thesis.

The dissertation is structured as follows:

**Chapter I.** Theoretical and methodological aspects of the research;

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

**Chapter III.** Experiment of the methodology for increasing the business communication skills of employees in international companies.

Especially valuable here is the developed experiment of the methodology for increasing the business communication skills of employees in international companies. Many theoretical approaches to the nature and significance of business communication are considered. The social and cultural differences in working in multicultural teams are analyzed. International cultural differences have been studied and classified.

The author's contribution is clearly traceable and distinctive.

Significant volume of scientific literature (132 sources) used and correctly cited is presented in a well-formed list. Some of the main accents in the presented dissertation are considered as follows:

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

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 an international company. The last research question and research task are solved in the third chapter of the dissertation, in which an experiment and testing of the author's methodology developed in the second chapter for improving the business communication skills of employees in international companies is realized.

## **7. Contributions and significance of the dissertation for the science and practice**

The doctoral student emphasizes the use of management and improvement of business communication in a multicultural environment as a method for increasing the opportunities for achieving organizational goals and results of the organization. In this regard, scientific and scientific-applied contributions are derived and summarized:

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 focus areas. The knowledge in the field is systematized and enriched by deriving and developing an author's paradigm.

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

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

4. An author's model of the key business communication skills for working in an international company has been developed with the help of an expert assessment.

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

6. A staging of the empirical research in the form of an experiment has been made. The implementation of the experiment in an international company confirmed the importance of the identified key business communication skills for working in an international company.

### **8. Evaluation of the publications on the dissertation**

The doctoral student has presented 3 independent publications in English, as follows:

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
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
3. Yaneva, Maya, Business communication skills of Bulgarians within a multi-cultural environment, Sp. Rhetoric and Communications, Issue 33, March 2018 ISSN 1314-4464 (online)

The presented publications address the issues underlying the theoretical review of the dissertation. The publications are prepared according to all the requirements for publication in peer-reviewed publications, thus increasing the relevance of the researched issues and contributing to the expansion of the scientific searches in the field of the researched issues.

### **9. Assessment of compliance with the minimum national requirements**

1. Dissertation for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" by Maya Yaneva on the topic: "Business communication as a key tool for business development. (Following the example of international organizations in a multicultural environment)"- 50 points.
2. Articles and reports published in non-peer-reviewed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes:

2.1. 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 - 10 points

2.2. 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 - 10 points

2.3. Yaneva, Maya, Business communication skills of Bulgarians within a multi-cultural environment, Sp. Rhetoric and Communications, Issue 33, March 2018 ISSN 1314-4464 (online) - 10 points

**Total: 80 points**

### **10. Personal participation of the doctoral student**

The author's view in the study of the set topic is clearly perceptible. Maya Hristova Yaneva analyzes and synthesizes a large volume of literary sources in support of the hypotheses. The doctoral student's attempt to cover, in his dissertation, all possible aspects and theoretical concepts in connection with the research task also makes a pleasant impression. I believe that the presented dissertation is an author's elaboration with duly cited sources.

### **11. Abstract of the dissertation**

Maya Hristova Yaneva presented an abstract of 49 pages, both in Bulgarian and in English. The doctoral student has complied with all the requirements of the relevant regulations, as well as has reflected the main results achieved in the dissertation. In addition, a report on the contributions to the dissertation and a list of publications have been prepared. The abstract is precisely formed and follows the logical sequence of the dissertation.

### **12. Critical notes and recommendations**

One of the main recommendations to the author of the dissertation is to expand the scope of her experiment. Research in the field of behavioral and social sciences is a huge challenge for every scientist due to the personal and behavioral characteristics of the subjects. In this sense, and taking into account the large volume of analyzed literature, I recommend testing the author's methodology in a variety of organizations, which will not only enrich the study, but also validate the author's hypotheses with statistically significant results. I think this

would be a very good starting point for the doctoral student to expand their research and continue their development in the academic field.

### **13. Personal impressions**

The precise arrangement of the provided materials makes a pleasant impression, as well as the in-depth study of the research problems posed by the author. The author's many years of experience in a corporate environment support the opportunity to analyze the applied aspects of the topic. In addition, the overall expertise of Maya Hristova Yaneva has led to the preparation of a dissertation with applied orientation and practical significance for business organizations.

### **CONCLUSION**

The dissertation contains scientific, scientific-applied and applied results, which represent an original contribution to science and meet all the requirements of the Law for development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB) and the Regulations for application of ZRASRB. The presented materials and dissertation results fully comply with the specific requirements of the Regulations for admission and training of doctoral students at the Higher School of Insurance and Finance.

The dissertation shows that the doctoral student Maya Hristova Yaneva has in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills in Professional field 3. 8. Economics, demonstrating qualities and skills for independent research.

**Due to the above, I confidently give my positive assessment of the research presented** by the above peer-reviewed dissertation, abstract, results and contributions, and I offer the **esteemed scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree 'Doctor' of Maya Hristova Yaneva** in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences; Professional field 3. 8. Economics; doctoral program "Finance, Insurance and Social Security".

May 15, 2021

Reviewer: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teodora Lazarova