THE USE OF EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTERS
FOR CHANGE COMMUNICATION:
AN ANALYSIS OF TWO CORPORATIONS' NEWSLETTERS
DURING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

By
Lisa Shupp Mules

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Communication.

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Approved: George A. Borden, Ph.D.
Professor in charge of thesis on behalf of the Advisory Committee

Approved: Douglas Boyd, Ph.D.
Chairman of the Department of Communication

Approved: R. B. Murray, Ph.D.
University Coordinator for Graduate Studies
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The purpose of this study was to investigate the communication process of two organizations during major change situations to determine if the employee newsletters were used to communicate with the employees about the change situations. When one considers the number of employees affected by the planned moves of the two organizations studied (1300 at ABC and 630 at XYZ) the magnitude of the communication involved in these changes becomes evident. This study looks at this process and addressed the questions: Are employee newsletters used as a communication tool to inform employees of details concerning a major change situation within an organization?

This question was investigated through a content analysis of two organizations' newsletters. The newsletters contained a total of 263 articles which were individually measured and then read and categorized into one of seven categories. This process was completed by three coders whose opinions were then compared with one
another to determine the degree to which they agreed. Ninety percent of the category choices were agreed on by all coders.

After coding, each category was considered on two dimensions. The amount of space delegated to each category was determined and the frequency with which the articles appeared within each category was totaled. Each calculation was presented as a percentage of the total space or number of articles. Budd's attention score (Budd, 1964) was calculated for each article pertaining to the change situations to determine if any special emphasis was placed on these stories.

In general it was found that the organizations communicated with their employees about their upcoming changes. To accomplish this communication each organization used several media but neither utilized their employee newsletters to a great extent. Suggestions were made in the thesis as to how communication could have been improved through the use of the organizations' newsletters.
CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Public relations, like charity, begins at home. No amount of propaganda in the market place or the community can gloss over a company which is weakened and divided by misunderstanding and mistrust within. The company's employees are not only the power house of its profit, they are also its ambassadors to the outside world (Southgate, p. 108).

Although the above quote gives a widely accepted point of view, organizations have traditionally looked first to their external publics as keys to profitability. While they spend millions of dollars to develop and maintain relationships between themselves and their customers, government sources, and investors, communication to the organization's internal publics has often been ignored. Huseman, Alexander and Driver find this particularly true in an organization which is experiencing change. They say that while organizations spend large amounts of resources to design major organizational change, little attention is given to planning the communication of that change to their employees (p. 32). The opening quote, however, implies the opposite would be true if organizations would recognize
their employees as carriers of the company's image to external publics.

Instead of utilizing employees as information carriers when the need for organizational change becomes evident, management often hesitates to even inform their workers of impending bad news. Jane Bensahed gives several reasons for management's reactions based on the research of E. L. Quarantelli and Russel R. Dynes (co-founders of Ohio State University's Disaster Research Center). She says that they perceive that "People are easily panicked"; "Making it official creates deeper fears"; "People will try to save their own skins at the expense of the company"; and think that an "executive maintains better control of the situation by withholding bad news until it is a fact" (p. 50). Although all of these may be true, some individuals welcome change as an opportunity for adjustment to an existing bad situation and a chance for new relationships. Those employees who do resist a change and its perceived disruptive effects do so for many reasons.

Economic concerns such as fear that the change will result in unemployment or temporary displacement, emotional fears and biases toward the unknown qualities of change, cultural limitations, and perceptual barriers, including the individual's interpretations of the change
environment (Williams, p. 230), all play a part in how the employee perceives the change situation. Each of these must be dealt with as an organization enters into change.

In addition to these barriers, initiation of a change in an organization often fails for one of two major reasons: the change itself was poorly planned or the organization did not "effectively plan the communication or implementation of the planned change" (Huseman, et al., p. 32). Change planning must include consideration of such factors as the organization's interaction with its internal and external publics, the resulting costs and benefits of the change, and the introduction of the proposed change to all publics.

In a study of the closing of four General Foods Inc. divisions and their consolidation and relocation to one new plant located in Delaware, Whitman and Schmidt discuss the importance of planning during change. They also say that keeping communication channels open is primary to successful change (p. 149). This would seem to imply that keeping employees informed of the change should weigh heavily in the planning of change.
In organizing communication on change the manager needs to keep several things in mind:

- Expect that employees have some foresight, too. It's a rare crisis in business that an executive has foreseen but his subordinates have not at least suspected.

- Expect them to respond. If you show your confidence in them by giving advance warning of trouble, and asking for their cooperation, they will help willingly. They can help draft more effective contingency plans. They will be better able to meet the crisis when it arrives.

- Expect that they will recognize the stake they have in the company.

- Expect the crisis to bring out the best in people. Far from panicking, most people respond to a serious threat with reserves of energy, ingenuity and cooperation that you may not have dreamed they possessed (Bensahed, p. 50).

By keeping employees informed and leaning on them as resources, surprises (which can only serve to decrease the success in dealing with the change) are reduced. "Good planning will include adequate (timely and accurate) communication ... to insure that surprises are avoided and conflict is minimized" (Huseman, et al., p. 35).

Along with this the possibility of negative sentiments being carried by the employees to the outside community may also be reduced.
As a need for organizational change becomes evident, management must be cautious of adopting an attitude of "more and better (especially more) communication".

The glorification of a full and free information flow is a healthy step forward in intraorganizational problems as well as in the relations of an organization to the larger social system. It is, however, a gross oversimplification. Communication may reveal problems as well as eliminate them... Communication may also have the effect intended or unintended, of obscuring and confusing existing problems... In short, the advocacy of communication needs to be qualified with respect to the kind of information relevant to the solution of given problems and with respect to the nature of the communication process between individuals, between groups, and between subsystems (Katz & Kahn, p. 429).

Thus the communication must be viewed as relevant by the employees. The amount of communication as well as the content and channel or mix of channels used must be considered very carefully when communicating a change situation.

In addition to quantity and quality, consideration of the flow of an organization's communication and the tools used to facilitate this flow is of importance when planning a major organizational change. Communication is seen by Katz and Kahn (1978) as "the very essence of a social situation or organization" (p. 428). It would seem
then, to insure smooth introduction and implementation of change, communication must be central in the change plan. Additionally, in a change which directly involves an organization's employees, communication would need to be closely monitored to contend with employee concerns and objection.

In change as well as in daily business functions, management depends upon a smooth flow of messages from management to employees. In general, downward communication can serve a variety of purposes. Katz and Kahn list five downward communication types, some of which may be used during organizational change.

The first downward communication type consists of specific task directives. During change an employee's function may become or appear to become ambiguous to the employee. To alleviate uncertainty, communication of task directives can supply instruction about tasks which an employee is expected to perform. In this way, downward communication can serve to insure performance of duties associated with the role assigned to the employee.

Related to this is communication concerning job rationale. This provides workers with an understanding of their job and places them within their working
subsystem. As change is introduced into the work system, reassurance of the workers place and importance within the system will be needed. Rationale which clarifies the employee's function in the working of the system can aid in the transition period of the change and further reduce any uncertainty about the worker's value to the system.

Information about organizational procedures and practices is a third type of communication which will be channeled downward during change. Since organizational standards may be changing or being questioned during change, it would seem likely that reiteration of company expectations would play a vital role in communication of a change situation to affected employees.

Feedback, the fourth downward communication type discussed by Katz and Kahn, supplies workers with information on how well they are meeting the demands of their role. Feedback during change is of importance in both upward and downward directions. In addition, it would seem that an organization with a strong feedback system prior to change would be in a better position to gain employee support and cooperation for the initiation of change. As employees' roles change, feedback could be an instrument for correction of role deviation and could be utilized to supply reinforcement for compliance.
The final type of downward communication involves indoctrination of goals. This provides employees with information of an ideological character on directions or plans which the organization is taking. This functions to supply a sense of mission for individual employees by reinforcing their role in reaching the organization's goals. In change periods this may be called upon to inform employees of new organizational goals and to reinforce the necessity of change to meet these goals.

A MODEL OF CHANGE COMMUNICATION

To summarize Katz and Kahn's ideas and to visually incorporate them into a situation where an organization is presenting change to its employees, Figure 1 has been developed. Here the organization's various message types are being channelled down through the organization to employees who may be harboring feelings of uncertainty and concern. Specific task directives, information on changed job rationale and organizational goals, feedback and goal indoctrination must be passed to the employees through some channel. The choice of communication channels or tools which the organization makes use of can determine the extent to which the message is received.
A MODEL OF CHANGE COMMUNICATION
COMMUNICATION TOOLS

An example of tools which an organization may use during communication of organizational change is discussed by Whitman and Schmidt. Management, in this case, relied mainly on written communication tools to discuss the plant relocation with the affected employees.

Employees at the four old plants were the first to know of the March 7, 1962, decision by GF's board of directors. Letters, bulletins and news releases had been prepared and cleared with management well in advance of the scheduled board meeting. Three hours after the board took action, every employee at the four affected plants had been given a personalized letter from the general manager of the Jello Division and a copy of a news release scheduled to go to the press the following day (p. 92).

Additional information was supplied through more letters of the type of the first one and through a series of bulletins called "On the Move to Dover". Seventeen of these bulletins were distributed over the next two and a half years with the primary purpose of discussing transfer and relocation information. To supplement these written means managers were encouraged to stay in touch with their workers to deal with employee concerns as they arose.
As seen in this instance written communication tools can be successfully depended on for downward communication during change. However, Dahle has indicated that the most effective downward communicated messages would be carried via combined oral and written channels. This would allow redundancy and could supply reinforcement to management's messages concerning change.

Other channels which management may consider include interorganizational memos, departmental meetings, face-to-face conversations with subordinates, bulletin boards, letters sent to employees' homes, posters, telephone calls, speeches to all employees, video taped recordings, and in-house publications. Management's decision on which of these communication channels to use during various phases of the change would depend on factors such as effectiveness and cost. Although it is beyond the scope of this research to determine the cost effectiveness of each of the many downward communication tools, it would seem that an already established tool would have a lower cost and higher acceptance rate among employees than would a tool such as General Foods' "On the Move" flyer or some other new tool which is developed only for the change situation. The option of using an established channel, such as the employee newsletter, is one which has received
little attention in current research literature. It is, however, one which needs further exploration.

THE NEWSLETTER

Several authors (Bensahed, Huseman, Olsen, Samara and Southgate) discuss the importance of management/employee communication. Emphasis is given by these authors to the general development of open communication lines within organizations. Only Southgate specifically mentions employee newsletters as a viable communication tool. He calls personal contact between managers and the people who work under them the "most important method of internal communication" (p. 110). However, he also contends that employee newsletters "play a vital role ... as a genuine news or information medium" despite limitations posed because management pays for its production. "Trust (in the newsletter) must be built up by removing opinion and propaganda from its pages" (p. 138). In this way the newsletter could become a possible channel for communication on change.
A QUESTION FOR RESEARCH

It is clear from the research on organizational change that it is necessary for management to communicate with its workers during change on an ongoing basis. Little insight, however, has been given as to how this communication should take place. Whether there is a lack of trust in newsletters by employees or by the management who produces them, little has been done to show the potential of a newsletter to play a "vital role" in providing news and information to employees during major organizational change.

In view of this, this thesis will study the question: Are employee newsletters used as a communication tool to inform employees of details concerning a major change situation within an organization?

A brief look at a typical employee newsletter reveals a resemblance to a small town newspaper. One sees space devoted to announcements of births, retirements, weddings and local events. The organizational newsletter may contain divisional sports team scores and coverage of various social clubs and activities. It appears that newsletters are often used as a means of strengthening an otherwise impersonal corporation's
family image, or to build employee moral. It would seem, however, that an organization which is entering into a change period has in its employee newsletter a strong tool with which to keep employees informed on current and upcoming events. If the newsletter is already in existence, cost for its use in this function would be minimal and readership may be greater than if a new information source were contrived for change information. In an organization where the newsletter has a credible reputation, it would seem that this tool could aid in the communication of change with little negative effect.

To determine if or how newsletters are used in this function, this research will consider two organizations' employee newsletters during periods when the companies were experiencing major change situations. Overall, the study will consider how the two organizations communicated with their employees information on their respective change situations. Several definitions are necessary to further clarify this question.

EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTERS, IN-HOUSE PUBLICATIONS, NEWSLETTERS will all be used interchangeably to refer to any regularly distributed publication produced by management and distributed to employees.
MAJOR CHANGE SITUATION, for the purposes of this study, is a circumstance in which a management decision reorganizes, relocates or in some other way alters the existing work situation of its employees. In addition the circumstance has received news coverage by media outside of the organization. This coverage may be in print or electronic media. If in print, it will appear at least one day on the front page of the local paper and be followed by supporting stories in the following days. The News Journal papers will be the local print media used for both organizations under study.

THESIS OVERVIEW

Chapter 2 lays a theoretical base for the use of content analysis in studying newsletter content. The following chapter expands on the specific research plan for the study of the two organizations' communication with their employees during their change periods. It integrates the method of content analysis into the research question and elaborates on the processes used to evaluate the organizations' newsletters.

The remainder of the thesis is broken into two sections. Chapter 4 presents the content analysis of the two organizations newsletters. In the final chapter (Chapter 5), a description and summary of how the change situations were handled within the newsletters is given with concluding remarks and suggestions for further study.
No attempt is made in this study to define the motivations of the newsletter's source or to analyze the effects of the messages once the newsletters were received by the employees. It looks only at the content of the newsletters to determine if the change situation is being addressed and if the newsletters are being used as a communication tool during the change situation.
CHAPTER 2
RESEARCH METHOD

To address the research questions presented on the previous pages, and to study the newsletters of the organizations in change situations, the research method of content analysis seems appropriate. Although a search of current business and personnel administration journals uncovered no research which has used this method to study the content of in-house publications, content analysis has commonly been used in researching newspaper content. Coverage of United States news events in foreign media (Budd, 1964), measurement of change in newspaper make-up (Hachten, 1961), and the similarities or difference between newspaper contents (Raich & Jones, 1956; Hardt & White, 1961), are examples of this. It was thought that since newspapers are similar in structure to newsletters, the study of the newsletters may also be accomplished through the use of content analysis.

CONTENT ANALYSIS

Content analysis is a widely used research method which utilizes what people write or say to draw conclusions
and make judgements about characteristics of the writer or speaker. It focuses on 'artifacts' of behavior but does not attempt to study the behavior. Phillip Stone and Ole Holsti define content analysis as "any research technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics within text" (Stone, p. 5).

Stone expands this definition by looking at the phrase making inferences. "The verbal record, then, is a piece of evidence that may be used to make inferences about any and all of these factors. The inference may be fairly direct, or, ... it may involve a web of overt and latent levels" (Stone, p. 6). The texts can represent the author or the social situation in which it was developed. The study of these texts can give insight into characteristics of both. It is up to the researcher to derive these characteristics through analysis of the documents. Content analysis can also draw out the nature of the documents' source. "Reflected," Stone says, "are the pressures of the current social situations" as well as the "disposition and interests" of the source (Stone, p. 5). In the present study this could give insights into the current position of the organization in their change
state, or may lead to inferences on the organizations' reactions to outside press coverage.

It is not sufficient, however, for a researcher to make random inferences. They must be systematic and objective for a content study to be valid. Holsti warns against "fishing expeditions"; research attempts characterized by a lack of plan or strategy. In contrast:

A good research design makes explicit and integrates procedures for selecting a sample of data for analysis, content categories, comparisons between categories, and the classes of inference which may be drawn from the data. It thus implies that the investigator has clearly thought out the rationale for his inquiry, that he is able to specify the type of evidence needed to test his ideas, that he knows the kinds of analyses he will make once the data are gathered and coded, and the inferences they permit him to make (Holsti, p. 26, 27).

Theory, data gathering, analysis and interpretation need, then, to be integrated in order to meet the criteria for a good research design. 'Systematic' does not demand the entire collection or universe of documents be investigated. It says instead that concrete, specific criteria and justifications must be developed in sample selection and all portions of the research design.

Questions concerning the importance of strict quantitative design in content analysis are frequently
seen in research literature. At one extreme is the belief that "There is clearly no reason for content analysis unless the question one wants to answer is quantitative" (Laswell, Learner, and Pool, p. 45). Stone holds that quantitative content analysis research procedures performed on the computer assure that the study will be systematic and objective. Other researchers equate quantitative with numerical. "Content analysis aims at a classification of content in more precise, 'numerical terms' than is provided by impressionistic 'more or less' judgments of 'either-or'" (Kaplan and Goldsen in Holsti, p. 6).

Berelson differs from these formats and supports studies using less quantifiable terms such as 'more and less', and 'increasing and decreasing'. These studies are "sufficiently structured" to meet the criteria of systematic and objective (Berelson, p. 17). Two other quantitative methods are discussed by Holsti: contingency analysis and quantitative analysis based on themes. Coding based on the absence or presence of a symbol or attribute is used in contingency analysis. This, rather than frequency of appearance, is the basis for inferences and can be presented numerically in a variety of forms. Analysis based on themes can also be quantitatively
performed. The themes are systematically recorded and counted, and can be summarized statistically as a percentage of total counted units (sentences, paragraphs, articles). Analyses like these are valid, and can lend valuable insight to research investigation. However, more than just a collection of statistics is needed. A careful blend of insight and inference with statistical figures is needed.

It should not be assumed that qualitative methods are insightful, and quantitative ones merely mechanical methods for checking hypotheses. The relationship is a circular one; each provides new insights on which the other can feed (Pool, 1959, p. 192).

Holsti summarizes with the statement: "Therefore, the important question for the analyst to ask himself is not: 'Am I being quantitative?', but rather: 'What is the theoretical relevance of the measures I am using?" (p. 9). Allowing for both qualitative and quantitative activities in the research design is being systematic and objective while adding greater accuracy and innovation to the final product.

Purposes and Uses.

Holsti proposes three general purposes for content analysis: "to describe characteristics of communication; to make inferences about the causes of
communication, and to make inferences as to the effects of communication" (Holsti, p. 25). Table I, on the following page, summarizes the various comparisons, questions and research problems which stem from Holsti's three purposes. All of these are relevant to the present study but only the first will be developed. Inferences concerning the causes and effects of the information contained in the newsletters are possible topics for future investigation.

Describing the attributes of a message involves no inference on the intentions or effects. It addresses the questions of "what": what trends?, what characteristics?, what, in comparison?; the questions of "how": how done? (persuasion, style); and "to whom". These are answered over time, across situations and audiences when using one source, or in a comparison between two sources or against a standard of adequacy.

The classification used by Holsti investigates the causes of the message or the author. In this, says Holsti, "content analysis is a problem in pragmatics, the relationship of signs to those who produce them" (p. 32). It is difficult however, to assume that our interpretations of these symbols can actually represent the antecedents of the message. "Owing to possible
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<th>TYPES OF COMPARISONS</th>
<th>RESEARCH PROBLEM</th>
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|                                              | Messages, source type A  
|                                              | Messages, source type B  
|                                              | Messages/standard 1. A priori 2. Content 3. Noncontent                               | To relate known characteristics of sources to the messages they produce |
|                                              |                                                                                      | To audit communication content against standards                                |
| To Make Inferences as to the antecedents of communication (the process) | Message/nonsymbolic behavioral data 1. Direct 2. Indirect                             | How?  To analyze techniques of persuasion  
|                                              |                                                                                      | To analyze style                                                                 |
|                                              |                                                                                      | To Whom?  To relate known characteristics of the audience to messages produced for them |
|                                              |                                                                                      | To describe patterns of communication                                             |
| To make Inferences as to the effects of communication (decoding) | Sender messages/recipient messages  
|                                              | Sender messages/recipient behavioral data                                              | Why?  To secure political and military intelligence  
|                                              |                                                                                      | To analyze psychological traits of individuals                                |
|                                              |                                                                                      | To infer aspects of culture and cultural change                                  |
|                                              |                                                                                      | To Provide legal evidence                                                         |
|                                              |                                                                                      | Who?  To answer questions of disputed authorship                                   |
|                                              |                                                                                      | With what effect?  To measure readability  
|                                              |                                                                                      | To analyze the flow of information  
|                                              |                                                                                      | To assess response to communication |
differences in the ways people may express their feelings, intentions, and other traits, inferences about the antecedent causes of messages drawn solely from content data cannot be considered self validating ... it is hazardous indeed to assume, without corroborating evidence from independent, non-content data, that inferences about the author may be drawn directly from content data" (Holsti, p. 32).

The final purpose discussed by Holsti involves inferences about the effects of the message upon its receiver. Few researchers have attempted to answer the question of "with what effect" using content analysis. Since each person's combination of past experiences, beliefs and ideas differ, the same message presented to several people can be interpreted or decoded in different ways. Examples of designs used in investigations of this type are also shown in Table 1. In using these designs, Holsti warns against falling prey to the "post hoc, ergo propter hoc fallacy" (p. 36). This is a situation where the researcher assumes that the antecedent (content of the sender's message) caused the consequence (the receiver's behavior or the content of the receiver's message). Although the question of "what effects?" could potentially
lend interesting insight to a researcher's analysis, without proper control little significant information can be derived.

The diversity of the applications of content analysis is seen when considering some of the areas where it has been used. Psychiatry, psychology, history and anthropology are among these. Therapy sessions and test situations such as in TAT story construction are two examples. In history and anthropology a variety of research problems have been studied. Questions on authorship, hidden messages and cultural variables have been addressed through studies of historical papers (Rokeach in Kerlinger, p. 527); Presidential speeches and newspaper editorials (Mortensen; Smith et al., in Stone, p. 359); and folktales (North; Kalin et al., in Stone, p. 569). It is this flexibility of application which makes the careful selection of units and categories a fundamental part of a content analysis research design and which allows this method to be utilized in the study of newsletter content.

Categories.

The first step in content analysis research is the definition of the universe, or "U", that is to be analyzed. The previously mentioned study by Rokeach used ten essays
from each of the disputed authors (Madison and Hamilton) and twelve other essays which were thought to have been written by either Madison or Hamilton (Kerlinger, p. 527).

Categorization of U is the next step. "Partitioning is perhaps the most important part of a study. It spells out, in effect, the variables of the hypotheses" (Kerlinger, p. 528). In the study by Rokeach it was postulated that the two possible authors of the disputed papers would differ reliably in their use of value words. Using Rokeach's terminal concepts and eleven instrumental concepts as categories, the researchers broke down U by looking at the values expressed in the essays. The results showed, with a reliability of .85 or higher, that the values of the writers were similar but that Madison most likely authored the disputed papers (Kerlinger, p. 527).

Setting up categories based on the research question and hypotheses is a means of choosing methods to fit the research purpose. In this systematic and objective research design, reliable and accurate results can be obtained.
Units.

Five major recording units are commonly recognized in content analysis literature: words, themes, characters, items, and space-and-time-measure (Berelson, p. 507). In addition, single sentences and paragraphs are mentioned by Holsti as possible but not practical units of analysis.

An easy unit to work with is the single word. Stone suggests this is the most suitable for use with computerized analysis. It is the smallest unit of those commonly recognized. Holsti says that the word, as a unit of analysis, "has found widest use in studies of readability..., style..., psychotherapy..., and literary detection" (p. 110). In the Rokeasch study, the definition of U could have been easily defined and then categorized into value words and non-value words if using a word as the unit of analysis.

Analysis through use of the unit 'theme' entails classifying the content based on a "single assertion on some subject" (Holsti, p. 116). Although often viewed as difficult, this unit is frequently used in studies of propaganda, values, attitudes and beliefs. Berelson stresses the time consuming and sometimes unreliable
nature of this approach. (p. 508). Kerlinger, however, feels that content analysis based on theme is useful and of great importance "because it is ordinarily realistic and close to the original content" (p. 529). This degree of realism and closeness to the original content of the document studied adds relevance to the current research on organizational newsletters.

A unit often used in the analysis of fiction, drama, movies, radio and other forms of mass media is the character. "In this case the coder tallies the number of persons, rather than the number of words or themes, into the appropriate categories" (Holsti, p. 117). The characterization of role models and stereotypes in media programs could be one area of research utilizing character analysis.

The analysis of an entire item such as an essay, document, or news story, is an approach which is often used. Whereas Kerlinger finds this unit a particularly useful one in behavioral research, Holsti calls it "too gross for most research", and says it may present problems when items fall between categories" (p. 117). For extra control, close watch on reliability and validity must therefore be practiced in any research design which uses the entire item as the unit of analysis.
Space-and-time studies rely on the actual measurement of space allotment or time expenditure in the total content. Number of inches, paragraphs, minutes, etc. are the main concern in the analysis.

To supplement the use of space measures and item counts in content analysis and to analyze the importance placed on certain news themes, Richard Budd developed an "Attention Score" (Budd, 1964). He used this to study American news coverage found in Australian and New Zealand newspapers.

Budd's original research surveyed eight daily papers by using space measurement and an item count. Often, Budd noticed, two papers which gave equal space coverage to U. S. stories did not appear to give equal weight or emphasis to the stories. Strong "play" was evident through: 1). headline size; 2). the positioning on the page; 3). the page number on which the story appeared; 4). the use of accompanying photographs; and 5). the length of the story. To take into account these various factors, Budd used his attention score.

In developing this measure, Budd contacted the editors of the eight papers which he had originally
studied. The editors were asked to rate the importance of the above criteria by applying a story on the same general topic to each of the five. The editors agreed without qualification that the first, second and fifth were indicators of a story's importance. All but one of the editors agreed that criteria three, concerning length was one on which importance could be judged. Only the fourth criteria (accompanying photographs) received a wide split of opinion. This criterion was dropped and the final attention score was measured based on the criteria shown on the following page in Table 2. These scores were then applied back to the original research materials and were found to be highly correlated with the previous results. Budd further recommended that this method be used in conjunction with another unit of measure to give further validity to research on news content (Budd, 1964).

CONCLUSION

No information found in the preceding survey of literature indicated that content analysis has been used to study messages presented in employee newsletters. This method has, however, been used in analyzing news and editorial content and it is felt that it can effectively be utilized in the present study for the following reasons:
Page one.

Assign 1 point for any article appearing on
length of the story.

Score: Pictures accompanying articles
(column length of newspaper concerned)
for purposes of assigning the attention
factors of a column or more (based on the
容纳 to any article occupying three-

NOTE:

Story had to appear above the fold.
The first line of the body text of the
page to be considered above the fold,
fold or above the measured center of any

2 points.
The number of columns of the page was assigned
occupied horizontally more than half the
of an article carrying a headline that
two columns or more in width, except that

Table 2

ATTENTION SCORES
1) Content analysis can draw systematic and objective inferences about the newsletters' potential use as a communication tool during organizational change;

2) It can supply qualitative information about the treatment of change situations in the newsletters studied and can quantitatively measure the frequency of the appearance of change-themed articles as compared to the appearance of other themes;

3) This method can describe the character of the communication between the management of the two organizations studied and their employees during change;

4) It will allow categorization of the newsletters and provide a closer inspection of the components of the communication instrument;

5) Content analysis can pinpoint assertion on the change situation as provided in the themes of the various newsletter articles; and

6) It can be used to determine if emphasis is placed on the change-themed articles of the newsletters when Budč's attention score is used.

Therefore, content analysis, specifically theme and space analysis, is used in this study to investigate the content of the organizations' newsletters to determine if and/or what information on the current organizational change situation was included. The following chapter explains further the specific design of this research project.
CHAPTER 3
PROCEDURES

This research utilized theme and space content analysis to investigate the thesis questions: Are employee newsletters used as a communication tool to inform employees of details concerning a major change situation within an organization? Newsletters from two organizations which introduced major change situations to their employees in the recent past, were studied to determine if they were used to communicate this change to the organizations' employees.

This research looked only at the thematic breakdown of the articles and did not attempt to identify hidden messages or company propaganda. The research did not investigate the effects of the newsletter's content, but worked to determine if the newsletter was used as a communication tool during the change situation. Additional information on the channels which company officials used to discuss the change situation with the employees was obtained by questioning the person responsible for employee communication. Finally, to give examples of the
media coverage on the change situations, a sample of News Journal articles which appeared during the time of study was collected and summarized. Since the News Journal is the only major local newspaper, it was assumed that this paper was a major news source for the employees.

THE CHOICE OF ORGANIZATIONS

In choosing the organizations, it was decided that two parameters would be used. The first was that the company had to have experienced or introduced a change situation which directly affected its employees. Secondly, the change situation had to have received coverage in the local newspaper, The News Journal. This parameter was used to classify the situation as "major".

ABC's corporate headquarters in Wilmington and XYZ's manufacturing division in southern Delaware were chosen for study on the basis of the above criteria. Each organization announced or eluded to plans to close and relocate their present facilities. Each company not only received media coverage locally, but was discussed nationally in a variety of print and electronic media sources.

ABC, Inc. The first implication of plans to move from ABC's present corporate headquarters in Wilmington
came in April, 1978 when the company president spoke of the negative business climate existing in Delaware. Little formal communication about the organization's plans occurred until about a year later. In a meeting with ABC's employees in February, 1979, the company president informed them that a study was underway as to the future location of the company headquarters. He outlined the four options under consideration: 1). remain at the present location and have major renovations done to the building; 2). build an ABC, Inc. home office building at the Research Center or on other suburban property owned by the company and located near the present site; 3). move into a modern new office building which will be built and financed by the city and leased to ABC, Inc. on a long term basis; and 4). move across the state lines into leased buildings or acquire property and construct a new building across state lines.

The company president explained that a decision as to what the company would do would be made before the end of the summer. He also stressed that the company's preference currently would be to move no further than easy commuting distance for its present employees.

Although this information was released to the media following the meeting, no article appeared in the
News Journal clipping file which reflected this information. In fact, coverage did not begin appearing in the News Journal for another two months.

In the April 12, 1979 Evening Journal a headline read "ABC, Inc. Tells Texas: Our Eyes are Upon You". Staff correspondent, Mary Rowland, reporting on a speech given to the Fort Worth, Texas Chamber of Commerce by the company president, said the president had been "dropping broad hints in Delaware for over a year about a possible headquarters move out of Delaware". The article discussed the president's comments on Delaware's "anti-business climate" in contrast with Texas' "pro-business climate". The reporter painted a picture of an uncaring business about to close shop in Wilmington, leaving their unemployed workers behind.

A week later the president addressed a group of Delaware business people with a similar theme. This was reported in an Evening Journal article carrying the headline: "ABC, Inc. After 'Smell of Opportunity'." The quote in the headline was from a statement taken out of context from the president's Texas speech.

And, for good measure, he told the group here (Texas) how well ABC, Inc. is doing....'First quarter profits will be double those of a year ago,' he said.... 'Business is good. It would be easy to despair of the situation -- increasing
taxes, government over regulation, accusations of 'obscene profits', but the smell of opportunity always blows despair away' (News Journal, April 12, 1979).

Opinionated reporting by the News Journal papers was a pattern throughout the discussion stages of the relocation of ABC's headquarters according to the Director of Public Relations for ABC. A negative business attitude was consistently exhibited and an equally negative image of ABC, Inc. was portrayed. This was attributed to ABC's openness with the affected employees. Prior to release of any information to the press, memos and copies of news releases were distributed to employees. This, according to the director of public relations, was not appreciated by the Journal's staff who would have preferred to have had the information first.

An open letter to the ABC, Inc.'s employees from the company's president was distributed in late June, 1979. This letter explained the company's position on the move, described the reasons for the existing business climate in Delaware, the effects this climate had on the quality of life in Delaware, and introduced the series of moves designed by the Governor's office and legislature to improve the climate. "In reviewing all of the foregoing," the letter concluded, "we have been greatly encouraged
and thus have made a decision to keep our corporate headquarters in Delaware at the present time". This letter was followed with a memo and a copy of a news release which was given to reporters at a press conference on July 2, 1979. It announced that ABC, Inc. was "encouraged by efforts to improve the business climate within the State" and that their corporate headquarters would stay in Delaware. In the months that followed plans were released for building a new corporate headquarters in Delaware, ground breaking ceremonies were held October 6, 1980, and a target completion date of December, 1982 was set.

XYZ, Inc. On March 14, 1980 three meetings were held at XYZ's plant in southern Delaware. At 9 a.m. all staff managers were told by the general manager that the plant would close. An hour later, in separate meetings, professional employees and other workers received a briefing on the plans. According to a personnel representative of XYZ, all groups saw and heard the same presentation.

At noon on the same day a press conference was held by XYZ officials in the local town hall. Local and state government officials, federal representatives and members of the press were invited. The Vice-President and the local general manager of XYZ announced at this
meeting that the plant would close in late 1981 and that new facilities were being built in South Carolina. The new location would house the engineering and manufacturing facilities which were at the present site. Company officials gave two reasons for the plant closing: a change in the division's charter and past inabilities to attract and keep professional employees due to the lack of advanced education facilities in the area.

To help keep communication channels open between management and employees during the period between the announcement and the actual plant closing, an information sheet called "Charter Chatter" was originated. This dealt strictly with the move to South Carolina, answering questions, exposing rumors and announcing information meetings and sources.

The first Charter Chatter, distributed on March 31, 1980, consisted of an open letter to employees. The content of this letter is in Figure 2. Throughout the next months the Charter Chatter was produced on a need basis. The frequency of distribution declined as the move came closer.

News Journal press coverage began the day after the March 14 employee meeting. Initially, the articles
Between now and the opening of our facility in South Carolina, there will probably be lots of rumors, questions and concerns of all kinds around the facility. Some of these stories will be true, some partly true, and some entirely false.

In order to help everyone sort out the facts from the rumors, and to answer questions concerning the charter change and the opening of our new facility in South Carolina, watch for this "CHARTER CHATTER" sheet to be published from time to time.

As soon as a rumor or question is brought to our attention, we will respond to it. Please do not hesitate to take any questions or rumors to your manager. An answer will be given.

March 31, 1980

Released by Personnel Resources
consisted mostly of quotes from local and state officials who were angry over the plant's closing. XYZ officials attributed the "bad press" which they received to the "public officials who were irate because of the announcement". According to an XYZ representative, the management "tried to personally contact as many officials as possible to alleviate this reaction". Meetings were held with the governor, senators and congressmen as an outreach to the local community and the state. Two months after the first announcement, on May 15, 1980, the first transfer of professional employees to South Carolina occurred. By July 15, 1980 the remainder of Research and Development Engineering was moved. Starting in August, 1981, the move of Phase II employees, which includes professional employees who were transferred and other plant workers who have decided to relocate to the new site at their own expense, will begin. The final plant closing is expected in October, 1981.

THE CHOICE OF TIME FRAME

The time periods for this study were chosen based on the dates on which articles on the change situations appeared in the News Journal papers. Reviewing the various articles, it was found that coverage of each situation was concentrated in specific time periods.
In April, 1978, the president of ABC, Inc. was reported as alluding to a possible move to a better business climate. A year later it was frequently, publicly discussed that the company was being courted by several other major cities in the hope that the corporate headquarters would be moved to their city. Articles on this situation appeared almost daily during the month of April, 1979 starting on the 12th. They continued to appear, however less frequently, during May and June. On July 2 it was announced in a press conference that ABC, Inc. would stay in Wilmington. Regular press coverage stopped at this point.

XYZ’s research and manufacturing plant in southern Delaware announced in March, 1980, that their facilities would close in late 1981. The first article about this issue appeared on the front page of the News Journal on March 15, 1980. Coverage continued as the organization expressed its difficulty in attracting and holding professional employees and as legislators tried to convince the organization to stay in the southern Delaware location. The last article on the move appeared in the April 20 News Journal. The company would definitely leave Delaware.
It was decided that the time periods for study would start one month prior to the onset of the heavy coverage periods and continue until two weeks after the coverage had stopped. For ABC, Inc., all newsletters distributed from March 12, 1979 to July 17, 1979 were studied. Newsletters from XYZ were collected and studied for the period February 15 to May 15, 1980. To assure that the chosen time periods sufficiently encompassed the change situations, the newsletter issue closest to the opening and closing dates of the time spans were included.

THE CHOICE OF CATEGORIES

Each article in the newsletters was assigned to one of seven categories based on the article's theme. The articles were measured to determine how much space was devoted to each theme category and an attention score was calculated to analyze the importance placed on the topic.

The choice of categories was based on a trial analysis of four randomly chosen newsletters from a year previous to the change situations. Each article in the newsletters was read and its specific theme recorded. This list was then studied to determine the general theme categories which were present. The following categories
emerged in this trial analysis and were used to code the newsletters:

#1 - Announcements of Upcoming Events

Includes announcements and notifications of upcoming activities for the employees. Announcement of company sponsored and outside-organization sponsored events are included in this category.

#2 - Personal

Includes articles on individual employees of the organization: coverage of individuals receiving awards, being re-assigned or honored, having babies, getting engaged or married, retiring, joining organizations, taking office, teaching classes, publishing papers or books, or other individual activities or accomplishments. The key is that the article gives recognition to an individual or several individuals for their personal activities or accomplishments.

#3 - Group Activities and Awards

Includes coverage of group activities which have already taken place and awards given to departments (rather than individuals): coverage of club meetings, departmental progress or awards, sports teams, parties, picnics and other group event or accomplishments. This category is distinguished from Category #1 in that it covers events which have already occurred rather than announces upcoming events. It is distinguished from Category #2 in that it deals with a group rather than an individual.

#4 - Product Information

Includes articles on the products produced by the organization: articles
on the applications or uses of products, coverage of trade shows or exhibitions showing the organization's products, training programs concerning products, announcements of new products, and other articles about the organization products.

#5 - Company Business

Includes articles about the administrative function of the organization other than the change situation: information concerning dividends, profits, stockholder meetings, policy changes, acquisitions, mergers, benefits, credit union, the functions of various departments or divisions and other subjects concerning the daily functioning of the organization EXCLUDING THE SPECIFIC CHANGE SITUATION BEING STUDIED.

#6 - Organizational Change Situation

Includes any article which refers to the organization's plans (or absence of plans) to move from their present facilities. References to the economic climate of Delaware or difficulties in recruiting or holding professional employees at the current plant location or reference to the media coverage of the change situation will also be included in this category.

#7 - Other

Includes articles which for any reason can not be placed in one of the first six categories. Each entry into this category should be accompanied by a brief explanation of why it has been placed in this category.

To assure that the categories were mutually exclusive and exhaustive, the "other" category was included. Coders were instructed to use this category when they could not place an article in one of the other categories.
It was also requested that a brief explanation of why an article was placed in the "other" category be given.

CODING PROCEDURES

Three student volunteers were used as coders for the newsletters. In a group meeting, a general overview of the research projects was given to the coders by the researcher. The coding packet, which included an explanation of the change situations, the list of categories and their definitions, coding instructions and coding sheets, (see Appendix A) was then distributed and explained to the coders. Each piece of the packet was read by the coders and questions were answered by the researcher.

To demonstrate the coding categories, a sample newsletter page was distributed, read and coded by the coders. This sample was not from the chosen time period for the study. The coders individually coded the sample page, results were compared and differences in category choices were discussed. This aided in clarifying the categories and coding procedures and helped assure that the coders were on a similar level of understanding about their task.
Coders were asked to return their completed packets within three weeks. Once returned, the individual coder's choices were collated and compared to find the level of agreement between the coders. Any article which was coded into more than one category by the coders was placed in a separate group called "No Agreement". Articles on which the categorization was agreed upon were tallied within each category to determine the frequency of appearance and percentage of total space which was allotted to each category.

CONSIDERATION OF OTHER INFORMATION SOURCES

Other information, supplied by the organizations studied, was considered to supplement the data obtained through the analysis of the newsletters. Local newspaper coverage of the change situations was read to determine the extent of the coverage and to get an impression of how the organization was being treated by the news. (Brief summaries of the news coverage for the organizations are in Appendix B and Appendix C). In addition, memos and special communication tools such as employee meetings and XYZ's "Charter Chatter" news sheet were considered and discussed with organization representatives. This was done to obtain rationale for their use in distributing information about the change.
Results obtained from the procedures described in the preceding pages are presented in Chapter 4.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

A brief look through the newsletters used in this study indicated a broad diversity in the specific articles' subject matter. A closer look, however showed that both sets of newsletters were often used to disseminate information of an administrative type. Discussion of company policies, benefit information, etc., was found to be the topic more frequently than the other categories.

In comparison, the treatment of the change situations varied between the two organizations' newsletters. ABC devoted only one entire article and one line placed in the final paragraph of another article to the discussion of the change situation. XYZ's newsletters, on the other hand, frequently devoted space to their change by dealing with general information on the progress of the move and presenting specific information on concerns and questions brought to the attention of personnel.

A focus on the categories into which the articles of the newsletters studied were divided gives interesting
insight into the role which the newsletters played as communication tools during the change situation. In both percentage of total space allotted and percentage of total number of articles appearing in the newsletters, the categories receiving heavy and light coverage varied. The placement of the change-themed articles in XYZ's newsletter also varied with little or no special emphasis on the change given via their placement within the newsletter.

CATEGORIZATION OF THE ARTICLES

ABC, Inc. The complete categorization of the newsletters of ABC appears on the following page in Table 3. Agreement between the coders was obtained in 89% of the 223 articles.

The greatest percentage of space in the newsletters of ABC was in the category containing business related articles. The articles, dealing with the administrative functions of the organization encompassed 34% of the total space of the newsletters studied. Twenty-two percent of the total number of articles found in the newsletters fell into this category. Only the "Personal" and "Announcement" categories contained a greater number of articles than were found in the business category. Information on individuals and their activities appeared in 31% of the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>% OF TOTAL SPACE</th>
<th>% OF ARTICLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ANNOUNCEMENTS</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. PERSONAL</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. GROUPS</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. PRODUCTS</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. BUSINESS</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. CHANGE</td>
<td>.4%</td>
<td>.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. OTHER</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CODER AGREEMENT</td>
<td></td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CODER DISAGREEMENT</td>
<td></td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 233
total number of articles, taking 24% of the total amount of space of the newsletter. These articles were often in the form of a group of paragraphs with each paragraph devoted to a different individual and his or her achievement. Announcement of current events such as competitions, programs and activities were the theme of 24% of the total number of articles yet constituted only 16% of the total amount of space.

Least frequent of the categories appearing in the newsletter was the category for articles on the organization's change situation. Only one article dealing with the change appeared in the newsletter during the time period studied. The article covered the July 2nd meeting at which ABC's president announced to employees and news media that the corporate headquarters would remain in Delaware. In his speech, the article reported, the president said that it was still undecided exactly where within the state the organization would locate. This article appeared in the July 6 issue of the newsletter. As can be seen in Appendix B it was at this time that press coverage stopped on a regular basis. This article which was 11.5 millimeters (mm) in length, made up .4% of the total space of the newsletters studied.
XYZ, Inc. The breakdown of the categories and their related percentages which were found in the XYZ newsletter appear on the following page in Table 4. As seen in this table, agreement between coder evaluations of the articles in the newsletters was obtained in 95% of the articles.

The "Personal" category in XYZ's newsletter was the single category devoted the greatest amount of space. These articles, describing employee's activities and accomplishments, were allotted 35% of the total space and of the total number of articles.

The change situation at XYZ was discussed in the company newsletter to a greater extent than with ABC. Twenty percent of the total space and 18% of the total number of articles contained information on the change. These articles were often directed at controlling rumors concerning the move. Several articles were written in a question and answer format. Other articles kept employees informed on progress at the new plant site. Building plans were discussed, human interest stories were presented and new appointments were announced in the various articles appearing in the newsletters.
N = 40

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>% of Articles</th>
<th>% of Total Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Announcements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Personal</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Groups</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Products</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Business</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Change</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Other</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coder Agreement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coder Disagreement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

XYZ, Inc.

Summary of Newsletter Content

Table 4
ATTENTION SCORES

All articles on the change situations which appeared in the two organizations' newsletters were rated on the five point attention score presented in Table 2 in Chapter 2. These scores were then combined into a total score. A high individual article score would indicate a degree of emphasis being placed on that article. Additionally, a high total score for the group of articles would indicate added emphasis being placed on the topic. A summary of the attentions scores which were derived for the change-themed articles of both organizations is given on the following page in Table 5.

The article entitled "ABC Intends to Maintain Corporate Headquarters in the State of Delaware" appeared on page one of the ABC newsletter. The length of this article was 11.5 mm long, .8mm less than three-quarters of a column long. It appeared above the half mark or "fold line" of the newsletter. This awards 2 out of a possible 5 points as an attention score for this article and indicates that it received no special emphasis based on Budd's original use of attention scores (Budd, 1964).

The seven articles on XYZ's change situation varied in size and placement and received scores from
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TOTAL OUT OF 16</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL OUT OF 5 = 2

ABC, INC.

SUMMARY OF ATTENTION SCORES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>ARTICLE HEADLINE</th>
<th>LENGTH ABOVE FOLD</th>
<th>(PT) PLACEMENT</th>
<th>(PT) (PT) (PT)</th>
<th>(PT) (PT) (PT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

TABLE 5
zero to 4. No single article obtained a score of 5 by meeting all criteria. Two articles were placed on page 1 of the newsletters in which they appeared. The articles' scores combined to total 16 out of a potential 35 points, an average of 2.28.

The attention scores as a total indicated little special emphasis being placed on the topic. Individually, the two articles which received scores of four could be said to have been made more prominent by their placement in their newsletters. It is difficult, however, to designate much importance to these two individual scores in view of the relatively low group average.

OTHER INFORMATION SOURCES

The consideration of the various other communication tools used by both organizations leaves little doubt that the employees were kept informed of major events concerning the changes. This was accomplished in both organizations through discussion of the situations with their employees in employee/management meetings. Following the initial announcement and speculation on the change situations, information was supplied via media other than the newsletter at both organizations.
ABC depended mainly on internal memos and copies of news releases distributed through managers to keep information flowing downward to employee. Copies of news releases were distributed prior to release to the press in order to give the employees a reliable news source and possibly to lessen employee dependence on the local newspaper's biased accounts.

XYZ's news sheet, "Charter Chatter", was distributed on a need basis. This dealt only with information on the change, was a very informal publication, and was usually only one page long. The sheet presented current information on the change, often in a question and answer or true/false format. It was directed at exposing rumors and dealt directly with the fears and concerns of the employees.

Neither organization discussed outside press coverage in their newsletters. Appendices A and B show summaries of the coverage which each organization received. A comparison between these summaries and their respective newsletters articles on the change showed no relationship.
CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the communication process of two organizations during major change situations to determine if the employee newsletters were used to communicate with the employees about the change situations. When one considers the number of employees affected by the planned moves of the two organizations studied (1300 at ABC and 630 at XYZ) the magnitude of the communication involved in these changes becomes evident. This study looks at this process and addressed the question: Are employee newsletters used as a communication tool to inform employees of details concerning a major change situation within an organization?

This question was investigated through a content analysis of two organizations' newsletters. The newsletters contained a total of 263 articles which were individually measured and then read and categorized into one of seven categories. This process was completed by three coders whose opinions were then compared with one
another to determine the degree to which they agreed. Ninety percent of the category choices were agreed on by all coders.

After coding, each category was considered on two dimensions. The amount of space delegated to each category was determined and the frequency with which the articles appeared within each category was totaled. Each calculation was presented as a percentage of the total space or number of articles. Budd's attention score (Budd, 1964) was calculated for each article pertaining to the change situations to determine if any special emphasis was placed on these stories.

In general it was found that the organizations did communicate with their employees about their upcoming changes. To accomplish this communication each organization used several mediums, but neither utilized their employee newsletters to a great extent.

Prior to the period of study, information on the change for ABC was mentioned in an article covering an employee meeting where the organization's president spoke. During the period of study, only one entire article and a part of another discussed information on the change. This does not mean that the management left employees
uninformed. Employee meetings and memos were utilized to inform the workers of the pending change. In addition, following the period of study, after the announcement that the corporate headquarters would move only a few blocks from its present site, articles on the progress of the move appeared in greater frequency in the newsletter.

XYZ's newsletter presented information on the change situation more often than did ABC's, but the percentage of total number of articles is low in contrast to that of the Personal category. This gives emphasis to the earlier stated purpose of employee newsletters: to build employee moral and reinforce an image of the corporation as a family.

A detriment to the potential value of XYZ's employee newsletter during the change was its infrequent distribution. The newsletter was produced on a semi-monthly schedule as compared to ABC's bi-monthly production. This however was dealt with through the periodic distribution of their supplementary news sheet "The Charter Chatter" which dealt with employee concerns and questions and provided additional information on the change situation. The newsletter distribution was changed to a monthly basis two months after the period of study.
This offered more opportunity for distributing the news on the change.

**DISCUSSION**

Figure 3 shows the model presented in Chapter 1 with a combination of employee meetings and employee newsletters substituted for a general communication channel. This model is proposed as an ideal to be used during communication of change within an organization.

It has already been discussed that verbal combined with written communication channels are most effective for change communication. In a more specific sense, each of the Katz and Kahn forms and functions of downward communication from Chapter 1 can be developed if both employee meetings and newsletters are used as the channels for communicating the change.

It would be difficult (if not impossible) to present individual job instruction and rationale via a large group meeting or a newsletter. However, a newsletter could present information of the function of various key individuals or department in the form of feature articles. As changes occur, shifts in the distribution of functions or responsibilities could also be presented and clarified in the newsletter or formal structures such as
organizational charts could be shown. In ABC's newsletter there was an on-going series of "spotlights" on individuals and their job function. This was not, however, integrated into the proposed change in any way. Likewise, XYZ made no effort to utilize their publications to serve this function.

As change of any type leads to uncertainty, new or revamped procedures and practices will need to be presented to employees tactfully. Initially the changes can best be presented in employee meetings. This gives opportunity for questions and clarification. Later, follow up supplemented with additional information will also be needed. This could best be accomplished in the regularly published newsletter. As an existing channel it would have a degree of reliability and would be identified as fact not rumor. Newsletter articles would allow more detail to be presented and provide opportunity for repetition of the rationale for the change. Secondly, it would provide a permanent information source to which employees could refer as new questions or concerns developed.

Procedures and practices were described in both newsletters studied. These articles, however, were not usually related to the situation studied but instead involved miscellaneous other changes within the organization.
(telephone system, credit union hours). Only one article in XYZ's newsletter addressed the procedure of closing the plant. It was written in a question and answer format and discussed the severance package offered to employees who were not relocating.

Feedback of a general nature to the workers as a group could be presented on a regular basis through the newsletter. A "Change Update" column could be initiated following the first announcement of the change. As people moved or as progress was achieved in the change, reports could be made in the newsletter. Not only could this feedback serve to keep employees up to date but it might have created a greater sense of involvement among the workers.

Unfortunately this opportunity was not recognized and feedback concerning the changes was not presented in the newsletters. XYZ's Charter Chatter which was developed for this function fell far short of its goals. While it did answer questions concerning the change, it gave little to no information about the progression of the change situation.

The final function which a newsletter could serve is to provide a channel for the indoctrination of the
goals of the organization during change. Since, most change will be met with resistance, repetition of the company's position will need to be a frequent message. Management will need a channel to demonstrate that the organization is concerned with the effects of the change. As a result, reports of how the employer is working for (not against) the employee will become a necessary part of an employee newsletter during change.

It is most disappointing to see a communication channel such as the employee newsletter wasted as with the two organizations studied. Instead of rallying support for the organization's goals and presenting ideological information concerning the changes, the newsletters concentrated on sports events or weddings. Since no matter how imperfect a newsletter is it appears that it is usually read by employees, it seems foolish and definitely uneconomical to overlook it as a tool in downward communication of change.

TOPICS FOR FUTURE STUDY

A strong contrast appeared between the overall quality of the two newsletters. ABC's instrument was a well written, professional appearing production. XYZ's however, had the appearance of a rather low budget.
production. The articles were written in a simplified manner as if directed to an uneducated audience regardless of the fact that the plant housed a large research and development facility. Articles in the "Charter Chatter" were often lists of questions and answers without introductions or conclusions. This apparent lack of structure could possibly reflect a lack of concern toward the recipients of the newsletter and in the long run could have portrayed an uncaring corporate image. The consideration of the employees' perceptions of the newsletters offers possibilities for future study.

Several questions could be asked in research of a nature similar to the present study: What were the feelings and reactions of the employees who were receiving the newsletters in these organizations? Did the employees feel informed on their company's decisions or were they feeling "left in the dark"? If they were in need of further information where did the employees look? to their managers?, other employees?, or did the workers adapt the opinions of the local press? Any or all of these questions could lead to interesting insight on the effects of the information process utilized during the implementation of a change in an organization. However, such a study would have to be made at the time of the change.
An alternate approach to answering the original research question concerning the treatment of organizational change in employee directed publications is also available. Rather than categorizing the newsletters by looking for a specific change situation, it would be feasible to instruct coders to use "Category 6 - Change" for any article dealing with a change situation within the organization. This would give a general view of how frequently an organization introduces organizational change via their employee publications and what type of changes were important enough to be included therein.

GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Although the shutdown or move of a major organization may always be met with opposition, an organization improves its chance for a smooth close or transfer when open communication is first established inside the organization. Ideally, an organization's internal communication would deal with the distribution of factual information. Too often, however, organizations concentrate on trivia rather than substance when communicating. Gerald Veros, in "Management Review" (Oct., 1979), says, "Babies, bowling scores and babble are no longer enough..." Since employees are concerned with basically
An existing in-house publication or employee newsletter could be used as an integral source of information.

If the topic is of interest to workers, it could be used as an opportunity to encourage a change. It could also act as a follow-up.

or possibility the press...

worker to worker and from worker to external source.

no longer acceptable to communicate with employees in a formal information source. Employees may turn to the absence of

useful smooth business operations. In the absence of

the need to keep employees informed on a daily basis. These tools (employee/management meetings, memo, newsletters) to

communication in their departmental communication

Traditionally, organizations have utilized a

communication within the organization.

But this objective, it would seem logical to utilize existing

needs to be a primary manager, objective, In meeting

support this information, especially during change.

may lack enthusiasm and often less reliable sources.

communication (6). If information is not supported

sound, present and future), they have a need for similar

the same issues as management (profile, progress, and a
existing medium, rather than one fabricated for a current situation, development and introduction costs for the tool would be minimal. Distribution channels would already exist and would not need additional development. Also, the initial acceptance rate (or readership) of the existing newsletter could possibly be higher than that of a new channel since it would be a familiar information source. In an organization where the newsletter has low credibility extra effort would have to be made to improve the perceived reliability of the publication. Finally, an employee newsletter offers benefits which other communication channels cannot. It is a tangible, lasting news source. In contrast to employee meetings, the newsletter provides first hand information at the convenience of the reader. The employee who is absent the day of the employee meeting would receive information second hand from a co-worker or friend. With the newsletter, the employee reads the same information as provided originally by management. He may also reread it as often as is needed for clarification.

This proposal does not suggest the displacement of all other forms of communication during change. However, employee newsletters, when taken seriously, can
become an important supplement in communication between employees and management during change.

The organizations in the present study utilized a variety of communication vehicles in varying amounts to keep their employees informed. However, the amount of coverage of the change situations by the two organizations' newsletters seems to imply that the newsletters were not viewed as viable communication tools for relaying information on the change to their employees. On the other hand, the large portion of space devoted to the "personal" category could indicate that the organization was trying to reinforce the family image of the corporate structure during a period when employees were faced with an uncertain environment.

A regularly distributed employee newsletter has the potential of being a strong information source for employees. It could be used to strengthen downward communication lines and encourage exchange of information on company wide concerns and policies. In these organizations they were utilized at less than their potential during periods when external news sources were critical of the organizations' plans. It would seem that by developing an organization's newsletter into a credible news source and then utilizing it to give employees
straight, factual information on internal concerns, the newsletter could become an inexpensive tool for management to aid in the successful implementation of change.
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ABC, Inc.

The first implication of plans to move from ABC's present corporate headquarters in Wilmington came in April, 1978 when the company president spoke of the negative business climate existing in Delaware. Little formal communication about the organization's plans occurred until about a year later. In a meeting with ABC's employees in February, 1979, the company president informed them that a study was underway as to the future location of the company headquarters. He outlined the four options under consideration: 1). remain at the present location and have major renovations done to the building; 2). build an ABC, Inc. home office building at the Research Center or on other suburban property owned by the company and located near the present site; 3). move into a modern new office building which will be built and financed by the city and leased to ABC, Inc. on a long term basis; and 4). move across the state lines into leased buildings or acquire property and construct a new building across state lines.
The company president explained that a decision as to what the company would do would be made before the end of the summer. He also stressed that the company's preference currently would be to move no further than easy commuting distance for its present employees.

Although this information was released to the media following the meeting, no article appeared in the News Journal clipping file which reflected this information. In fact, coverage did not begin appearing in the News Journal for another two months.

In the April 12, 1979 Evening Journal a headline read "ABC, Inc. Tells Texas: Our Eyes are Upon You". Staff correspondent, Mary Rowland, reporting on a speech given to the Fort Worth, Texas Chamber of Commerce by the company president, said the president had been "dropping broad hints in Delaware for over a year about a possible headquarters move out of Delaware". The article discussed the president's comments on Delaware's "anti-business climate" in contrast with Texas' "pro-business climate". The reporter painted a picture of an uncaring business about to close shop in Wilmington, leaving their unemployed workers behind.
The president addressed a group of 55 people with a similar theme. This was an Evening Journal article carrying the headline, "Inc. After 'Smell of Opportunity'." The headline was from a statement taken out of the president's Texas speech.

And, for good measure, he told the group here (Texas) how well ABC, Inc. is doing... 'First quarter profits will be double those of a year ago,' he said.... 'Business is good. It would be easy to despair of the situation -- increasing taxes, government over regulation, accusations of 'obscene profits', but the smell of opportunity always blows despair away' (News Journal, April 12, 1979).

Opinionated reporting by the News Journal papers was a pattern throughout the discussion stages of the relocation of ABC's headquarters according to the Director of Public Relations for ABC. A negative business attitude was consistently exhibited and an equally negative image of ABC, Inc. was portrayed. This was attributed to ABC's openness with the affected employees. Prior to release of any information to the press, memos and copies of news releases were distributed to employees. This, according to the director of public relations, was not appreciated by the Journal's staff who would have preferred to have had the information first.
An open letter to the ABC, Inc.'s employees from the company's president was distributed in late June, 1979. This letter explained the company's position on the move, described the reasons for the existing business climate in Delaware, the effects this climate had on the quality of life in Delaware, and introduced the series of moves designed by the Governor's office and legislature to improve the climate. "In reviewing all of the foregoing," the letter concluded, "we have been greatly encouraged and thus have made a decision to keep our corporate headquarters in Delaware at the present time". This letter was followed with a memo and a copy of a news release which was given to reporters at a press conference on July 2, 1979. It announced that ABC, Inc. was "encouraged by efforts to improve the business climate within the State" and that their corporate headquarters would stay in Delaware. In the months that followed plans were released for building a new corporate headquarters in Delaware, ground breaking ceremonies were held October 6, 1980, and a target completion date of December, 1982 was set.
XYZ, Inc.

On March 14, 1980 three meetings were held at XYZ's plant in southern Delaware. At 9 a.m. all staff managers were told by the general manager that the plant would close. An hour later, in separate meetings, professional employees and other workers received a briefing on the plans. According to a personnel representative of XYZ, all groups saw and heard the same presentation.

At noon on the same day a press conference was held by XYZ officials in the local town hall. Local and state government officials, federal representatives and members of the press were invited. The Vice-President and the local general manager of XYZ announced at this meeting that the plant would close in late 1981 and that new facilities were being built in South Carolina. The new location would house the engineering and manufacturing facilities which were at the present site. Company officials gave two reasons for the plant closing: a change in the division's charter and past inabilities to attract and keep professional employees due to the lack of advanced education facilities in the area.
To help keep communication channels open between management and employees during the period between the announcement and the actual plant closing, an information sheet called "Charter Chatter" was originated. This dealt strictly with the move to South Carolina, answering questions, exposing rumors and announcing information meetings and sources.

The first Charter Chatter, distributed on March 31, 1980, consisted of an open letter to employees. The content of this letter is in Figure 2. Throughout the next months the Charter Chatter was produced on a need basis. The frequency of distribution declined as the move came closer.

News Journal press coverage began the day after the March 14 employee meeting. Initially, the articles consisted mostly of quotes from local and state officials who were angry over the plant's closing. XYZ officials attributed the "bad press" which they received to the "public officials who were irate because of the announcement". According to an XYZ representative, the management "tried to personally contact as many officials as possible to alleviate this reaction". Meetings were held with the governor, senators and congressmen as an outreach to the local community and the state. Two months
March 31, 1980

manager. An answer will be given.

We will respond to your

questions as soon as possible.

For this 'Chapter Chatter', please watch

of our new facility in South Carolina. Watch

concerning the chapter change and the opening

from the rumors, and to answer questions

in order to help everyone sort out the facts

False.

be true, some part[ly] true, and some entirely

around the facility. Some of these stories will

rumors, questions, and concerns of all kinds

South Carolina, there will probably be lots of

between now and the opening of our facility in

CHARTER CHATTER – NUMBER 1

PLOUSE

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after the first announcement, on May 15, 1980, the first transfer of professional employees to South Carolina occurred. By July 15, 1980 the remainder of Research and Development Engineering was moved. Starting in August, 1981, the move of Phase II employees, which includes professional employees who were transferred and other plant workers who have decided to relocate to the new site at their own expense, will begin. The final plant closing is expected in October, 1981.
INSTRUCTIONS TO CODERS

A. Read description of each of the seven (7) theme categories.

B. Read an article in the attached packet and determine its theme. Do not "over read" the articles by trying to look for hidden themes or meanings. Read only to determine the surface message.

C. Reviewing the descriptions of the seven theme categories, check the appropriate category on the attached coding sheet for each article. Be sure to designate the article number (located at the top left of each article) in the proper column of the coding sheet.

   If any article can not be placed in one of the first six (6) categories, check the category labeled "other". Then, on the back of the coding sheet, write the article number and a brief explanation of why it did not fit into one of the first six categories.

D. Repeat steps A, B and C for each of the articles in the packet.

NOTE: PLEASE DO NOT COMPARE OR DISCUSS YOUR CATEGORY CHOICES WITH OTHER CODERS IN THIS PROJECT.
CATEGORIES

#1 - Announcements of Upcoming Events
Includes announcements and notifications of upcoming activities for the employees. Announcement of company sponsored and outside-organization sponsored events are included in this category.

#2 - Personal
Includes articles on individual employees of the organization: coverage of individuals receiving awards, being reassigned or honored, having babies, getting engaged or married, retiring, joining organizations, taking office, teaching classes, publishing papers or books, or other individual activities or accomplishments. The key is that the article gives recognition to an individual or several individuals for their personal activities or accomplishments.

#3 - Group Activities and Awards
Includes coverage of group activities which have already taken place and awards given to departments (rather than individuals): coverage of club meetings, departmental progress or awards, sports teams, parties, picnics and other group event or accomplishments. This category is distinguished from Category #1 in that it covers events which have already occurred rather than announces upcoming events. It is distinguished from Category #2 in that it deals with a group rather than an individual.

#4 - Product Information
Includes articles on the products produced by the organization: articles on the applications or uses of products, coverage of trade shows or exhibitions showing the organization's products, training programs concerning products, announcements of new products, and other articles about the organization products.
#5 - Company Business

Includes articles about the administrative function of the organization other than the change situation: information concerning dividends, profits, stockholder meetings, policy changes, acquisitions, mergers, benefits, credit union, the functions of various departments or divisions and other subjects concerning the daily functioning of the organization EXCLUDING THE SPECIFIC CHANGE SITUATION BEING STUDIED.

#6 - Organizational Change Situation

Includes any article which refers to the organization's plans (or absence of plans) to move from their present facilities. References to the economic climate of Delaware or difficulties in recruiting or holding professional employees at the current plant location or reference to the media coverage of the change situation will also be included in this category.

#7 - Other

Includes articles which for any reason can not be placed in one of the first six categories. Each entry into this category should be accompanied by a brief explanation of why it has been placed in this category.
APPENDIX B

SUMMARY OF ABC NEWSPAPER COVERAGE
SUMMARY OF ABC NEWSPAPER COVERAGE

January 29, 1978 - The building which houses the ABC corporate headquarters is reported as being advertised for sale. Tenants of the building and major stockholder of the present owner had not been advised of this.

April 12, 1979 - Representative Al O. Plant (D-Wilmington) introduced a bill which would require that the Department of Labor be given one year's notice of major employers' plans to move from the state. The bill, Plant says, was spurred by ABC's consideration of moving from Delaware.

April 12, 1979 - ABC's president addressed a group in Texas on what makes a state attractive to business. He is reported as 'dropping hints in Delaware for over a year about a possible move (and has) apparently decided to talk to people who were more interested. The president said Texas' tax structure and cooperative attitude toward business is attractive to businesses in less favorable states.

April 18, 1979 - ABC's president reportedly told Delaware's Committee of 100 that his organization wants to define a good business climate and to determine whether Delaware will try to fit it or if he has to go elsewhere. He also is reported as having talked alot about Delaware's income tax rate. The president also says that no decision on a corporate move has been made but that one would be made by July 1.

May 9, 1979 - Depending on the legislature, ABC may decide to stay in Delaware. The organization is looking for changes to encourage a positive business climate.

May 25, 1979 - City and state officials are working on a package to encourage ABC to stay.

July 2, 1979 - ABC's president announced in a press conference that the organization will remain in Delaware. The company will move from their present building but
the new location has not yet been decided. Property located at Market Street and the Brandywine River is reported as being a strong possibility.

August 22, 1979 - Full page ad in the form of a letter titled "Thanks ABC" appeared. The 'letter' was signed by Mayor McLaughlin and the Wilmington Council in conjunction with 65 individuals and organizations. It expressed that the community was glad ABC would stay in Delaware and asked the organization to remain in Wilmington.

March 29, 1980 - ABC announced definite plans to remain in Wilmington and will build a 500,000 square-foot complex at 14th and Market Streets. The decision to stay hinges on several conditions to be met by the city and state. They include buying land for the $70 million complex, building a multi-million dollar parking garage and arranging government loans and grants.
March 15, 1980 - First announcement of XYZ's plant closing. Company officials are said to blame lack of higher education facilities in the area to train employees. The company reports it will move to South Carolina in 1981.

March 21, 1980 - Governor DuPont gives plea to XYZ to remain in Delaware.

March 19, 1980 - Local officials make plea to XYZ to remain in Delaware.

April 20, 1980 - Background story on XYZ's history since 1967 when plant in southern Delaware was purchased. Company definitely will leave in late 1981.

June 20, 1980 - Wilmington College proposes to offer classes in XYZ's vicinity in hope other higher education facilities would follow suit. XYZ is still leaving.