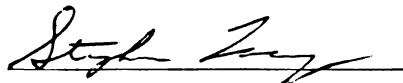This is to certify that the

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IN EMPLOYEE PUBLICATIONS:
A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF INTERNAL PUBLICATIONS
OF AN AUTOMOTIVE MANUFACTURER DIVISION

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Robert John Gramer

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ABSTRACT

CORPORATE GATEKEEPING
IN EMPLOYEE PUBLICATIONS:
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By

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Internal employee publications from a division of a major automotive manufacturer were analyzed for business content that meets organizational objectives. Analysis results show a strong gatekeeping process is working to the advantage of the organization, because the majority of publications emphasized business content that corresponded to published corporate recommendations. Editors' perceptions of business coverage corresponded to actual measured coverage. However, wide variances indicated a lack of uniformity in editors' performances and perceptions.

Variables that significantly influenced the inclusion of business items are length of editors' service with the organization, amount of hours devoted to communication, frequency of publication distribution, editors' efficiency, location where a publication is produced, and the editors'

Robert John Gramer

education. Editors with college degrees seemed to include
more business content.

        In other aspects of communication, plant managers are
not using the employee publications to communicate to their
employees, but the publications are used to convey
communication from employees to supervision.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Corporate internal employee publications present opportunities to share vital information. In many instances, employee publications lack substantive content related to organizational purposes. This thesis attempts to examine the relationships that exist among various factors which act to affect the flow of available information for publication and to identify factors that influence the communication of substantive business content. The initial underlying assumption of this research was that organizational information is controlled by gatekeeping practices that result from avoidance behaviors to personal and organizational barriers. Avoidance behaviors surface as practices that impede the communication process.

Unfortunately, enough time and money was not available to investigate the actual avoidance behaviors and barriers in the organization being reviewed. Also, the organization was not interested in an in-depth study until it was determined that their internal publications warranted improvement. By examining the relationship among the factors that impact the control of information, gatekeepers could improve their employee publications to serve the needs

of the organization, management, and employees. This
research analyzed the publications to locate any problem
areas and indicates which aspects need improvement.

After nearly ten years in employee communication for
Michigan Motors, I developed biases toward the importance of
providing information to employees. (Michigan Motors is a
fictitious name that was created to conceal the actual
identity.) A core bias would be toward an organization that
shares information of all kinds. In contrast to open
sharing of information, corporate gatekeepers
characteristically hold that employees receive information
at their discretion. I propose that gatekeeping policies
and practices can prevent significant information from
reaching employees. Thomas J. Peters and Robert H.
Waterman, authors of In Search of Excellence, described
communication in "excellent companies" as "a vast network of
informal, open communications."[1]

The gatekeeping process in publications involves
deciding which items will be printed and what emphasis will
be placed on the separate items that are printed. The
person who makes gatekeeping decisions is known as the
gatekeeper. Gatekeeping in internal corporate publications
results from an interrelation of several key factors:
advocacy in favor of the corporation, barriers to
communication, and avoidance techniques such as concealing
information. In typical situations, corporate gatekeeping
can occur freely without consideration for employee needs

for information, the employee grapevine, and upward communication from employees to management.

This thesis contains a normative discussion of corporate gatekeeping influences on internal employee publications. Isolating and describing gatekeeping factors does not preclude the fact that other important influences mold the communication climate in an organization, but a thorough examination of factors related to gatekeeping could lead to a basis for improving internal publications.

This research was performed with cooperation of the Michigan Components Division of Michigan Motors Corporation. (Both company names are fictitious to conceal the actual identity of the organizations.) The Michigan Components Division represents a complete division with over twenty-nine thousand employees of one the world's largest automotive manufacturers with fifteen publications drawn from an administrative divisional office (with four publications) and nine manufacturing plants (with eleven publications).

My previous employment with the organization provided a rare opportunity to investigate internal employee communications in the automotive industry. The automotive industry normally does not release internal publications to outsiders. A research grant from Michigan Components enabled hiring content analysis coders which helped to control biases that I might hold as a result of my experience as a former employee.

Publications ranging in frequency from daily, weekly, twice monthly, and monthly to quarterly were analyzed for thirty-three specific content categories from seventy 1986 randomly selected sample issues of fifteen publications. Six major content groupings contain several content categories that were selected for analysis by several conversations with the Director of Public Relations for the Michigan Components Division. The defined items in the business issues group reflect the major goals considered important to accomplishing the objectives of the organization's business plan. The majority of the content and style categories are covered in two handbooks the corporation has given to all editors to assist them in their tasks, so the editors should be familiar with the categories used in this research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Every effort was made to survey business publications
that covered employee communications from as many business
and professional areas as possible. Since this research has
limited generalizability because it concerns one
organization, literature about many different types of
organizations was examined. While research on employee
communication exists for many years, this literature review
emphasizes post-1980 literature to reflect current evidence
and trends from theory and research.

The following literature review concentrates on
gatekeeping as it relates to communication of business
issues and business events—the major topic of this thesis.
For a more complete understanding of organizational
communication, other areas not covered by this thesis should
be explored such as organizational goals, organizational
structure, role of the manager, employee communication
needs, grapevine and rumors, and upward communication.

Description of Internal Corporate Communication

Corporations thrive on information; their very
existence depends on the successful use of information.

Whether an internal communication system consists of short, work-related orders or provides persuasive information to elicit employee commitment, businesses cannot operate without some form of an employee communication system. Corporate employee communication systems use a variety of formats—print, video, meetings, and broadcast—as contrasted with mass media communication organizations that specialize in one format. This thesis limits its analyses of corporate communication to internal employee publications that were prepared for mass distribution to employees.

In 1980, employee newsletters, house magazines, and internal publications reached 75 million American homes at a cost to industry that exceeded $100 million. A survey of International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) members found that employee publications enjoy a combined circulation of 228 million in the United States and Canada—over three times the circulation of daily newspapers in both countries.[2]

In a survey of human resource managers conducted by Personnel magazine, 87 percent (of 154 usable responses) reported using some kind of written source for company information. The major publications in use are newsletters (79 percent), newspapers (22 percent), magazines (15 percent), and daily bulletins (4 percent). The total exceeds 100 percent, because some companies use several kinds of publications.[3]

Meetings are a popular means to disseminate information according to 94 percent of the respondents. Companies were nearly divided in terms of the frequency of meetings with 50 percent reporting regular meetings and 49 percent holding meetings as the need arose. The regularly scheduled meetings vary in frequency as follows: annual (11 percent), quarterly (30 percent), monthly (32 percent), weekly (10 percent), and daily (3 percent).[4]

Bulletin boards ranked highest (96 percent) as the most popular form of basic employee communication. The most common items posted on bulletin boards are job openings (30 percent), policies and procedures (21 percent), legal notices (9 percent), company and community activities (9 percent), memos (8 percent), safety information (5 percent), and educational or training opportunities (4 percent). Only one respondent used electronic bulletin boards.[5]

Some of the information was collected from reader responses to a questionnaire in Personnel magazine, while detailed questionnaires also were sent to three hundred human resource managers. No details were given regarding the statistical methods used.

Additional studies of U.S. and Canadian workers showed that employees receive organizational news through various sources including immediate supervisors, the grapevine, employee handbooks or other booklets, bulletin boards, and small group meetings.[6] Employees indicated that

they prefer sources for information in the following order:
immediate supervisors, small group meetings, top executives,
and employee handbooks or other booklets. Employees want
information on future organizational plans, productivity
improvement, job-related information, and job advancement
opportunities.[7]

Previous research literature focused on improvement
suggestions and descriptions of the typical employee
newsletter, but the IABC study developed a normative
theoretical framework in order to understand the uniqueness
of internal organizational publications. Special features
of employee publications are:

> First, the publication is funded and supported by
> management. Hence, the purpose of the publication must
> be consistent with the goals and philosophy of the
> organization. . . .
> Second, the employee publication is only one of a
> number of different sources of relevant information
> about the organization. Therefore the information in it
> can be conflicting, reinforcing, or different from the
> information available through other channels like the
> grapevine, group meetings, and training manuals. . . .
> Third, the employee publication is a written form of
> communication that provides a permanent record. . . .
> one legitimate concern of many organizations is that
> information released in an employee newsletter may fall
> into the hands of a competitor. Unwritten forms have
> less likelihood of doing so.[8]

Clampitt, Crevcoure, and Hartel theorized that
employee publications can be viewed from three distinct
perspectives: management, editorial staff, and employee.[9]
Each group values the company newsletter according to its
own goals, so three strategies emerge to accommodate the
needs of the group perspectives.

First, collaboration exists when all groups use the employee newsletter to satisfy their needs for information. The editor develops open and candid articles with information provided by management and employees in an atmosphere of mutual respect and consideration for the needs of both groups. Often, employee needs for information do not mirror management's conception of employee concerns, so the publication serves as an upward communication channel that conveys employee information to management. In the long run, the researchers propose that collaboration is the most beneficial approach to the total organization.

Second, capitulation results when the editors publish articles that promote only management's perspective. Unfortunately, most employees will be skeptical or ignore information that does not represent their plight, so management may be the only serious reader of the publication. Capitulation to the editor's or to the employees' perspective rarely happens, because management controls the budget for the newsletter.

Third, trivialization resolves conflicting demands by publishing information that is innocuous--information that will not offend or show favor to alternate perspectives. Management often claims and believes that it is meeting employees' informational needs with any kind of information. Some employees appreciate even trivial information, because any information from management is evidence of recognition.

The researchers compiled data from open-ended questionnaires that solicited critical editorial concerns from twelve editors along with a random sampling of three hundred companies that yielded 135 responses and fifty-three sample publications.[10] Claiming a reliability exceeding 90 percent with Holsti's formula,[11] the researchers used content analysis procedures to identify communication profiles in the surveys, questionnaires, and publications.[12]

The average publication surveyed was characterized by key traits/features:[13]

- Issued monthly
- Mailed to employee's home or handed out at work
- Primarily written by the editor
- Editor received some formal training in journalism
- Publication begun in 1967
- Three thousand copies per issue
- Cost per copy averaged forty cents
- Primary target audience was employees and their families
- 8-1/2 by 11 inches dimensions
- One to ten pages in length
- Illustrated with one to ten photographs
- Presented in a newspaper format

The majority of opinions regarding the current purposes of the publications were "motivational/recognition tool" (35.6 percent), "information source" (33.9 percent), and "internal communication source" (29.7 percent). Respondents indicated that employee recognition articles were the most frequently published as well as the most important.[14] Subsequent content analysis generally confirmed the perceptions of the editors. Employee recognition topped the list of purposes that editors perceived important at 22.2 percent with 56.9 percent of the

sampled publications actually including articles on employee recognition.[15]

Effectiveness of the publication was judged by oral feedback from employees (65.3 percent) and formal surveys (36.4 percent). On a seven-point scale from "great impact" (1) to "little impact" (7), most editors perceived a moderate impact (4.76 average) on employee productivity. On a similar scale, almost 50 percent indicated that their publication reflected "to a great extent" (1.97 mean) the management philosophy.[16]

Researchers caution that the results may have been biased during the editors' completion of the questionnaires and that receiving only fifty-three publications may have skewed the results.[17]

Five tentative conclusions regarding the purposes of employee publications were suggested:

> First, the results of the study were similar to past research on the characteristics of the "typical publication." . . .
> Second, there appears to be some congruency between the stated purpose and the types of articles actually contained in the publications. . . .
> Third, there was little evidence that employee publications were formally evaluated. . . .[18]
> Fourth, the major purpose and focus of employee publications appears to be employee recognition. One of the more striking findings of this research was that many editors perceived an apparent shift in purpose of the publication from conception to present usage. . . .
> Fifth, evidence suggests that many editors appear to be leaning toward the trivialization strategy. . . .[19]

Since most communication experts recommend emphases different from recognition in employee publications, the researchers questioned the ultimate effectiveness of

employee publications that emphasize employee recognition needs and trivialization. Articles about the organization's future plans, question/answer columns, comments by the central executive officer (CEO), and collaborative examples were missing from most of the examined publications.[20]

Advocacy in Corporate Communication

Corporate gatekeepers bias their decisions to advocate the goals of the organization, in contrast to the typical roles of gatekeeping and advocacy in journalism as described by Janowitz.[21] Gatekeepers emphasize the search for objectivity and the sharp separation of reporting facts from disseminating opinion. Gatekeepers detect, emphasize, and disseminate what their standards show to be important information. Traditional journalism advocates insure that all perspectives are represented in the media, because the resolution of social conflict depends on effective representation of alternative definitions.[22]

Regarding the advocacy difference between business communication and media journalism, Matthews explains:

> Understand in advance that business communication is not journalism, even though it may look like it. It is, instead, the practice of advocacy, a means to aid your employer in pursuit of the organization's economic mission. Be on guard against the application of journalism's mind-set to your work as a business communicator.[23]

An ethical norm exists in journalism that keeps publishers from commanding subordinates to follow policy;[24] a similar policy does not exist in corporations. Executives

in corporations exercise authority to regulate all functions
necessary to maintain the purposes of their regulating
offices by using power within their spheres of authority[25]
granted by their stature in the corporate hierarchical
structure. Executives assume their gatekeeping role as part
of their normal responsibilities; i.e., control of printed
information is an integral part of the executive's perceived
need to regulate.

Since employee communication traverses departments,
an editor can receive multiple gatekeeping influences from
several directions. In cases of conflicting opinions among
gatekeepers, the editor normally follows decisions from the
individual with the highest organizational responsibility.
In the event that gatekeepers with equal authority disagree,
the article may be altered to meet a consensus opinion. An
impasse between gatekeepers usually results in abandonment
of the disputed article.

The primary responsibilities of corporate gatekeepers
rest in areas outside employee communication--production
control, personnel administration, etc.--so time spent on
employee communication cuts into their designated work
responsibilities. Why, then, do managers and gatekeepers
give their time for employee communications? Internal
communication gets management endorsement and attention
because employees receive information about the company that
remains under management's control.[26]

Many of the principles espoused in the Society of

Professional Journalists'/Sigma Delta Chi's Code of Ethics[27] are incompatible with the advocacy demands placed on corporate journalists. In the following comparisons, the corporate comparatives are based on the personal observations and experience of the author of this thesis. Mass media journalists respect the public's right to know events; internal corporate journalists release information coinciding with the objectives of the organization which are deemed acceptable for release to employees. Freedom of the press is guarded as an inalienable right of people in a free society; freedom of the corporate press is controlled by hierarchical constraints. Media journalists adhere to principles of ethics, accuracy, and objectivity that are similar to those of corporate journalists, but corporate writing contains the bias of the organization. In the stated area of "fair play," both camps of journalism merge.

Withholding information from employees brought business losses and unemployment at Kroger. Zimmerman reports that the Kroger Company realized its communication with employees had been poor after a series of store closings, so internal communication now occupies a priority second only to sales and profit.[28] During the closing of seventy stores and the reopening of forty-five stores, Kroger separated communicating with the public from communicating with the employees. The cost competitiveness issues communicated to the public were not presented as thoroughly to the employees.

Relating problems that resulted from less than full disclosure, Paul Bernish, public relations director for Kroger, revealed:

> Kroger learned from this that we must rethink in total the manner and frequency with which we communicate inside the company. The effectiveness of employee communication is, or should be, one of any organization's highest priorities because it has a direct relevance to overall corporate performance. I think effective organizational communication adds to the bottom line. Ineffective or nonexistent internal communication diminish a company's profit performance.
> In Pittsburgh and here, our frustration centered on our inability to convince our employees just how serious our operating problems really were. The lesson of that, quite obviously, is the necessity of regular, consistent dialog between the two sides, so that in difficult situations there will be some common ground, some degree of mutual understanding and confidence, some assurance that both sides really mean what they say.[29]

Barriers to Effective Communication

While it may seem that gatekeepers impede the flow of information, any obstructions are normally a result of dysfunction. Censors prevent information from reaching publication, whereas gatekeepers are making decisions on information destined for publication. Gatekeepers act in response to barriers that hinder internal communication effectiveness. Barriers range from indigenous to temporal and from penetrable to rock-solid. By understanding and admitting that barriers exist, editors could navigate a path leading to effective communication.

The most prevalent barrier is information-brokering that stems from an aspect of organizational political behavior--controlling as much information as possible.

Control over information is an assumed privilege found in hierarchical power structures. The critical nature of the information and scarcity of it strengthen the power base of the people who have information.[30] If a person has information that another needs, the person with information has "expert power" over the other.[31] Authority relationships exist when a subordinate willingly conforms his behavior to a decision reached by another, regardless of his own judgment on the correctness of that decision.[32] Most editors find themselves in subordinate positions to gatekeepers, so they acquiesce.

An examination of classical organizational theories provides a normative basis for understanding the origins of power structures in corporations that support the attitudinal behaviors of the information-brokers. Many modern corporations have developed organizational structures that sprang from the original tenets of bureaucracy while many large corporations match Weber's classical description exactly.

In characterizing bureaucratic management methods, Weber fostered a principle of fixed and official jurisdictional areas that are driven by ordered sets of rules, laws, and administrative regulations. Decisions result from hierarchically-graded levels of authority accompanied by an ordered system of superordination and subordination with the higher offices supervising the lower ones.[33]

Bureaucratic structure concentrates decision-making in the top official who can choose to delegate portions of decision-making to subordinates.[34] The bureaucrats strengthen their superiority by keeping information secret and by releasing portions to subordinates in metered amounts for the completion of defined tasks. Invented by bureaucracy, the "official secret" is a concept fanatically defended by the bureaucratic elite.[35] Conversely, bureaucrats expect and demand information exchange from employees. Maintaining essential information and deciding which information is essential constitutes a major power base in bureaucratic systems, so information-brokers are following the bureaucratic system with their rationale for releasing information. They are acting in accordance to their conditioning.

Scientific management is an early management theory that helped lay a foundation for job specialization and mass production. Contained in the theoretical foundations of scientific management was the separation of doing a task from the thinking processes associated with the task.[36] Management divided work tasks into small, quickly learned, and routine operations with quantity, quality, and time standards for each task. Scientific management presupposes that workers are motivated by wages, so information needs of workers were defined by management to involve wages and financial incentives.[37] Managers held proprietary control over decision-making, so workers seldom learned any of the

underlying reasons. Managers fundamentally did not even consider discussing management issues with subordinates.

As the work force matured, it sought fulfillment needs in addition to wages. One emerging employee need was to know why managers made their decisions, and management began to recognize value in an informed employee sector. Conditioned by a tradition of withholding information, managers experienced difficulty in sharing information, so a concept known as "T-groups" started in the 1940's as a formalized effort to draw management and workers closer together.[38] Unfortunately, T-groups did not work out as intended.

Kaplan found that many organizations have abandoned openness in its true form as a result of dissatisfaction with the outcome of the T-group concept. T-groups were intensive small group experiences commonly known as sensitivity training. The basic reasons for the failure of sensitivity training in organizational settings resulted from a deserved reputation for producing negative outcome by hurting individuals or damaging work relationships.[39] Also, even when participants had good experiences, they had trouble applying those experiences in their workplace. Positive results often dissipated, because they did not seem useful to the organizations that sponsored the training.[40]

Kaplan identified organizational qualities that assist in understanding the overall concept of barriers to corporate communication. While, conventional organizations

have varying degrees of trust, high commitment, closeness, and emotions, Kaplan confides that organizations are not known for these qualities.[41]

Many conventional organizations are characterized by their emphasis on task performance with corresponding deemphasis on interpersonal relationships and emotions. Organizations expect members to hold in their feelings, to refrain from expressing them, and to suppress negativity and conflict. Kaplan contends that the employee group culture and the conventional work organization act as opposing forces to openness.[42]

Operating in the same area but apparently independent of Kaplan, Fernald proposes additional roadblocks to good communication are intrapersonal, interpersonal, organizational, and technological barriers.[43] Two intrapersonal barriers are selective perception and individual differences in communication skills. Interpersonal factors that can create barriers deal with areas of climate, trust, credibility, and sender-receiver similarity.[44]

Eight organizational barriers to communication are status, hierarchy, condensation, closure, expectation, association, group size, and spatial constraints. Large chains of command can hamper communication's timeliness and accuracy. Technological barriers involve meanings, nonverbal cues, channel effectiveness, and information overload.[45]

Fernald recommends that corporations can improve communication by being sensitive to employee needs and feelings. He finds that most managers think they are sensitive but reports that studies show they are neither as perceptive nor as sensitive as they believe.[46]

Resistance to open sharing of information also resulted from unsatisfactory experiences with the mass media. In a questionnaire surveying CEOs of Fortune 500 companies, Sigband found that many executives believe that the press treats them unfairly.[47] Information shared with employees could leak to the press, so managers are reluctant to release any essential information. Some information-brokers also view their own internal publications as part of the genre of mass media feared by corporate officers. Sigband found that approximately 80 percent of the respondents had printed and distributed company policies for communication with the media or special interest groups while 20 percent had discussed policies but had not taken formal action.[48] Many cited business schools for doing a poor job with communication training. No statistical evidence was given for the findings which represent a 20 percent response rate from slightly over five hundred inquiries.[49]

The last barrier to communication effectiveness involves several methods that editors use to prepare printed communication. Routine editing processes found in journalistic environments can create conflict in a corporate

setting. Editing for publication violates normal
hierarchical reporting relationships, because most editors
are subordinate to the suppliers of management information.
Some managers identify editing as criticism, and criticism
from subordinates is seldom welcome.

Putting hierarchical relationships aside, most people
do not appreciate editing of their words. The source's
impression is that the meaning and content of the words will
change during the editing process. The source is unaware
that good editing is a process of arranging words to
facilitate the reader's comprehension of the original
meaning and content. Evaluating another's writing makes the
critiqued writer defensive about his own writing efforts.[50]
Managers in corporations do not want to be put in a
defensive posture with subordinate editors, so managers
counter the editor's behavior with gatekeeping decisions—an
area where the manager has unquestioned authority.

Newswriting with its familiar inverted pyramid
structure—short sentences crisply written with conclusions
presented first—conflicts with conventional corporate
writing. Fielden and Dulek found that only one in twenty
organizational documents had efficient structure to aid
comprehension.[51] They investigated a random sample of two
thousand letters, memos, and reports drawn from nine million
filed messages in the division headquarters of an unnamed
organization.[52]

Dulek and Fielden related that the majority of organizational inefficiency in writing on the part of the writers is purposeful:

> . . . often deliberate, or, if not consciously deliberate, so deeply ingrained in all their behavioral programming that it causes an irresistible impulse to beat around the bush. Put simply, people organize messages backwards, putting their real purpose last. But people read frontwards and need to know the writer's purpose immediately. That purpose is what we call the message's bottom line.[53]

Comprehension times for the readers studied were reduced greatly when the communication stated its purpose at the beginning.[54] Using a conservative estimate of the purpose of the nine million messages, the researchers formulated that 12 percent were individually composed for duplication and distribution at a conservative estimate of $10 for the cost of creation, typing, and distribution bringing the annual cost to $10.8 million.[55] Approximating the average reading time at three minutes, the total minimum reading cost for the messages was $4.5 million. When the sponsoring organization learned the $15.3 million total, the major concern other than cost was that employees were losing productivity as a result of inefficient writing.[56]

The researchers proposed and implemented a training program to improve written messages. They found that the principles were intellectually accepted, but emotional commitment did not follow. Writers' commitment to circuitousness was so ingrained that forcing people to be direct in writing irritated them.[57]

Searching for the reasons behind writer's resistance to change, the researchers theorized that social upbringing, educational programming, and anxiety indoctrination were the root causes. Social upbringing teaches that blunt, direct answers are considered impolite. Educational programming places a premium on length of papers instead of strength of content. Anxiety indoctrination starts when a young employee learns to write. Since new employees normally write to supervisors, they write cautious, lengthy messages to avoid upsetting their superiors. Surprisingly, after encouragement to write in a direct manner, employees "avoid coming to the point with an almost religious passion."[58] In negative or sensitive situations, they refused to state their purposes and requests directly by rationalizing that their perceived self-preservation was at risk when making direct statements. In summary, the clear, decisive nature of newswriting arouses fears that the edited version will irritate the readers and the original source of the material will bear the brunt of the readers' anger, so sources of information in corporations are reluctant to release information for publication.

Avoidance Behaviors:
Responding to Communication Barriers

Corporate editors occasionally encounter gatekeeping behaviors that seem unconscionably designed to block the flow of information. The gatekeepers may be exhibiting

adaptive behavioral responses to existing barriers that have been described. Several of the barriers are so firmly entrenched that the organizational culture and management systems have institutionalized noncommunicational practices. Recognizing the avoidance behaviors to communication and assessing the frequency with which the avoidance behaviors are used provides a benchmark for determining the communication environment within an organization.

Some items in an organization--ranging from official policy to work practices--are not discussed. The rationale for refusing to discuss any particular item might be linked to an individual's personal avoidance behavior or to organizational barriers.

Refusal to communicate is a learned behavioral avoidance response to barriers. From childhood through the working years, people hear: "We won't discuss that item any more. . . . That's my decision; we won't discuss it. . . . I know something, but I'm not at liberty to discuss it." People are conditioned to accept the refusal, so the flow of information stops. When an item is important, the requester of information will find an answer, often through a source different from the person who refuses to discuss the matter.

Wiseman suggests that employees and management should learn to discuss the "undiscussible," because undiscussibles hinder productivity in an organization.[39] Every company has its undiscussibles--things that people cannot or will not talk about. By not talking, Wiseman

cautions that a business can be prevented from moving forward, and absolute refusal to talk can signal the death of a company. Undiscussibles occur often as a consequence of reluctance to raise issues, because someone might get angry or the issues cannot be resolved to everyone's satisfaction. When behavioral responses harm productivity, the instigating barrier needs to fall.[60]

Delaying critical decision-making and frequent conflict associated with critical issues is endemic to survival systems in many corporations but counterproductive to the success of the organization. Argyris cites "skilled incompetence" as a learned behavioral quality with defensive routines that prevent executives from making decisions.[61] Managers who are skilled communicators may be good at covering up real problems by using their communication skills to circumvent the issues.[62]

Argyris claims that "a people's tendency to avoid conflict, to duck the tough issues, becomes institution- alized and leads to a culture that can't tolerate straight talk."[63] The past patterns that managers set up became institutionalized, and prior personal exchanges have now become organizational defense routines to avoid the real issues. Argyris' analyses of organizations indicate that defense routines are systemic in that most people within the company adhere to them.[64] The result is that people in the organization fall into an expected behavioral pattern of avoidance with respect to communication.

Ragan illustrates how management can avoid discussing the real issues by shifting responsibility through communication[65] which is another avoidance technique similar to Argyris' concept of skilled incompetence. Ragan targets a recurrent tendency that managers use in attempting to excite employee commitment for the economic success of the organization. For the most part, managers must believe that employees can be persuaded with this message, because managers repeat their economic challenge to employees with determined regularity. Ragan sees that typical economic communication is misguided:

> The problem with economic education programs and unified communication themes intended to stimulate production is a simple one: It confuses communication with persuasive advertising. Whenever we find ourselves saying "what they oughta know" we are in trouble, for they don't have to know nothin', not unless they want to. Employees are not school children. Although they all want to learn--that's part of being human--they can't be taught. . . .
> We should not say, "What they ought to know is" so much as we should ask "What do they want to know."
> . . .
> No, communication programs intended to make people work harder, smarter, faster, or better will fail because they don't ask the right questions. The right question, one is embarrassed to bring into the open, is "Why?" . . .
> To ask workers to produce better or more is to imply blame--blame upon them for not working harder; and no matter how clever the message, no matter how bright the headlines, no matter how coordinated the audiovisuals and the films and the cute posters posted in the plant, the programs won't wash because it shifts responsibility from management to workers--and that's not where it belongs.[66]

Horton discusses learned behaviors that prevent open communication.[67] One is the classical fear of rocking the boat. Few people volunteer for the perilous job of

messenger bearing bad news. Yet, if management and employees do not learn the bad news, the situation is likely to get worse. In large organizations, formal messages to top management typically go through many layers of review. By the time the CEO hears it, the bad news has been sanitized.[68]

Kiechel reports that a survey conducted by Opinion Research Corporation of 48,000 employees in an unnamed company showed downward communication was rated favorably by fewer than half of the employees in all groups.[69] Kiechel scorches management by writing: "If the brass don't wake up soon, they stand to get their sleepy little heads handed to them by the competition." He continues by saying that experts who have studied the problem--executives, consultants, and business school professors--agree that information must be shared with employees to get their commitment.[70]

The current business climate is responsible for quieting managers who now avoid being bearers of bad news. Kiechel warns against silence during critical times, because employees need information to fill gaps created by the uncertainties.[71]

The barriers to open communication previously described are similar to Kiechel's findings that most executives dislike the idea of open communication about company problems. Most executives are unaccustomed to communicating candidly even with fellow executives. In

working with top management groups of twenty-six companies,
Psychological Associates, Inc. found that executives
consistently rated communication behaviors among themselves
as their principal area of difficulty--ahead of handling
conflict, holding meetings, or making decisions.[72]

Opinion Research Corporation found that 80 percent of
the executives in the organizational layer immediately below
the president were afraid to share their feelings about
problems in the organization. Kiechel concludes, "No wonder
the troops get confused about the direction of the march."[73]

Singh observes that dissent in organizations is not
only discouraged but actively curbed.[74] Singh suggests a
"Sycophancy Index" of servile self-seeking flattery for
evaluating an organization's communication behaviors with
high levels of sycophancy serving as a warning to
management. Weakly-stated goals and timorous employees
unable to question their sycophant managers make it
inevitable that the hard issues will remain untackled.[75]

The language chosen to avoid open communication
surreptitiously conceals the real issues. Seeing a lack of
substantive communication, Bove chides:

> Instead of clear direction on how to improve
> productivity, American employees are being buried in
> buzzwords, prodded towards "excellence," and plugged
> into campaigns that are "market-driven" and
> "performance-based" in order to keep their companies
> perched on the "cutting edge."
> What people in organizations need to ask is how they
> can start talking substance again before their paychecks
> have to be sent out to Japan or Germany for signatures.
> It's not enough to merely state that the goal is "to
> work harder, be more productive, and improve the bottom

line." Both the "how" and the "why" have to be
provided. To assume that employees don't need to
know—or can't absorb such information is naive and
sells both them and the organization short. Managers
need to begin talking about what they know, and
employees need to ask for solid information and not act
merely as vanity mirrors for their superiors.[76]

When corporations develop communication avoidance
behaviors that stifle the information needs of employees,
the employees will create methods to obtain information. In
many corporations, employee unions have assumed the official
function of direct communication to employees. Through the
years, managers have lost or volunteered away their right to
address employees directly. American automotive
corporations have started to release their grip on formal
employee communication by inviting the unions to share in
joint-process employee communication efforts. From an
upward communication perspective, a formal,
institutionalized joint procedure insures that unionized
employees will have a stated right to participate in the
implementation of employee communication.

Rock finds that elected trade union representatives
had gradually established themselves as the primary channel
for communicating with the work force:

Dangerously, this allowed the trade unions to control
the information to be communicated, and also sometimes
resulted in shop stewards explaining management
decisions—a job for which managers were really
responsible.[77]

In response to management's attempts to organize a
systematic training program in briefing skills and
techniques, the Transport & General Workers' Union (T&GWU)

[Great Britain] strongly opposed the training program which would allow management to communicate directly and systematically with the work force.[78] The union perceived the communication proposal as a deliberate attempt to undermine its position and bypass the normal channels. Despite assurances from management that the consultative and negotiating procedures would remain intact, the union would not budge. Rock interprets the union's opposition:

> It was likely that a union like the T&GWU, with a tradition of power in the transport industry, would strongly oppose any development which, among other things, was intended to reestablish management's leadership role in the company.[79]

The union's resistance confirmed management's analysis that the trade unions had stepped in to fill a communication vacuum and in doing so had greatly enhanced their own position. The discussions with T&GWU ended in a standoff. Management continued its training with salaried employees for the purposes of improving communication among salaried employees; the union retained the exclusive right to communicate with unionized employees.

Corporations do not like to admit their mistakes in employee communication, because the admission might lead to lawsuits. A few examples exist where corporations admitted previous methods for employee communication were not as effective as new ones that brought successful results. Open communication produced positive results where previous avoidance behaviors did not.

Dittmann relates a debate that erupted between corporate officers at Whirlpool Corporation over sharing sensitive, confidential information.[80] The debate centered on the fear that competitors could learn the information if it was shared with employees. Dittmann states the officers' realization that led to sharing information was: "How can we accomplish our five-year mission if we don't communicate it to our employees who are ultimately responsible for its execution?" Dittmann believes that "management and workers can't pull together for common corporate goals if the employees don't know the goals."[81]

Since 1985, Whirlpool shares financial information once it becomes public, new product lines that may be a year away from introduction, market-share intelligence, and strategies regarding foreign competitors with 150 of its most senior managers. At manufacturing locations, Whirlpool employees receive the same information orally, but do not receive hard copies.

Devine describes a situation where he worked with a major international corporation in designing a "bad news" communication that worked.[82] As a result of rising costs, employee insurance benefits had to be reduced, and the employees would have to increase their monthly contributions. In the past, the organization acted first and notified employees, after the fact, by letter. Faced with delivering a double-barreled negative message, personnel management tried a new method.[83]

A three-stage communication plan consisted of a brief brochure followed by a series of small group meetings with audiovisual presentations. A comprehensive benefits kit with a color brochure completed the plan. According to Devine, the employee response was more favorable than experienced with past methods of communication that notified employees after a decision was made. Devine credits the success to treating the employee audience as the primary factor:

> First, we treated our audience as primary--their interests, concerns, and needs formed the center of the entire presentation.
> Secondly, we did not pretend that benefits reductions were really improvements. We projected respect for the readers' intelligence, for their ability to understand the seriousness of the problem, and for their willingness to cooperate in the joint venture.
> Finally, the benefits department developed a respectable series of alternates for the program; employee response to becoming more actively involved in their health care has been encouraging.[84]

Literature Summary

While internal employee communication ranks high in stated corporate priorities, the preponderance of literature and research points to inadequacies. The recorded instances of effective communication were few, but the recommendations for improvement were numerous. Publications were commonly used to measure communication effectiveness, but indicators show that printed communication represents only a small portion of business communication.

Concentration on the shortcomings of corporate communication may be a result of gatekeeping processes by

the authors, researchers, and/or publication editors in the researched literature. Negative news attracts more attention than reports that all systems are functioning properly.

Most of the published research literature was drawn from opinion surveys that were not verified for accuracy. Controls to minimize the biases of respondents were often missing. For example, the effectiveness of a publication was often judged by the editor as opposed to polling the employees or subjecting the publication to content analysis.

Research Questions

Recognizing inadequacies in some of the prior research in organizational communication, the research questions in this thesis examine publication content, organizational goals for publications, editors' perceptions, and demographics. Criteria for analyses were drawn from documents that the organization uses to influence the content of their various publications.

Gatekeeping practices at Michigan Motors and Michigan Components range from corporate mandates to individual employees who control the flow of information. For several years, top management officials have publicly encouraged improvements in communication--which culminated in the MM chairman circulating a multi-paged letter to all locations that detailed the importance of employee communication in meeting the needs of the organization (see Appendix 1).

In the chairman's letter, many specific items were "approved" and mandated for employee communication. Some of the items were previously considered as priority domains of management. In effect, the chairman lifted the shroud of secrecy from alleged proprietary information that was withheld for many years. Now, a few years after employee communication was sanctioned by the chairman, communication is an established buzzword. Throughout the corporation and its various divisions, managers espouse: "We need improved communication." and "Employee communication is very important."

One measure of employee communication is the employee publication. This thesis examines employee publications for two general questions:

1. How are the various publications meeting the corporate recommendations for content that are outlined in published corporate recommendations for employee publications?

2. What factors influence the communication of specific business content categories?

Since editors have never received definitive guidelines on the amount or frequency of content coverage that a publication needs to be considered as meeting recommendations, this research was based on the assumption that business issues and business events should constitute the greatest percentage of space used and/or the greatest percentage of frequency of inclusion.[85] Also, other areas--local information and proactive communication--do not

have specific quantitative recommendations, so the assumption was again that the items considered were viewed as meeting recommendations if the items represented the majority percentage. The letter from the MM chairman emphasizes many business concerns without recommending standards for expected or minimum requirements for inclusion frequency of business items or local information, so it was necessary to develop an evaluation criteria.

The implementation of the chairman's recommendations and other corporate guidelines rests solely with the editors and management involved with each publication. While most of the editors forward their publications to corporate and divisional offices, the publications are not critiqued, and any kind of feedback to the editors is infrequent.

Specific Research Questions

To answer the general questions, specific research questions were investigated as follows:

1. By examining the relative amounts of space used and the inclusion frequencies of various content categories in articles, are publications giving major emphasis to "total business?"

2. How do the editors' perceptions of content coverage compare to the actual measured coverage?

3. What percentage of articles contain local information that meets the business needs of the organization?

4. How often do publications inform employees before an event occurs?

5. Does the planned frequency of publication relate to the editors' efficiency (ability to meet publication schedules)?

6. Does the editors' length of service with Michigan Motors have any effect on the inclusion frequency of business items?

7. Does the amount of hours that editors use to prepare the publications have any effect on inclusion frequency of business items?

8. Does the frequency of distribution have any effect on the inclusion frequency of business items?

9. Does the editors' efficiency have any effect on the frequency of inclusion for business items?

10. Does the location where a publication is produced have any effect on the inclusion frequency of business items?

11. Does the editors' education have any effect on the inclusion frequency of business items?

12. How often does the local manager use the publication to communicate to employees?

13. How often are the publications useful as a vehicle for upward communication from employees to management?

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

To answer the research questions, data was collected
from responses to surveys (see Appendix 2) and analyses of
content and style in randomly selected issues of the fifteen
Michigan Components publications (see Appendix 3). The
appropriateness of content and style classifications was
verified by examining information in two corporate handbooks
that all editors have received.

Sampling Methods

Daily publication samples consisted of two randomly
constructed weeks yielding ten issues per publication. From
other publications, four issues were randomly selected. Two
quarterly publications produced only three issues, so all
were used.

Special issue publications that did not conform to
the normal format of the publication were excluded. The
July 7, 1986, edition of Publication No. 1 carried a message
from the production manager that discussed the reasons for
outsourcing (farming out) an existing job. While the
information sharing was good, the issue was rejected because
it was not the usual two-sided many-article format.

In the case of one publication, the current editor
replaced the previous one during the year. Since this
research contains demographics on current editors, the
random selection included only issues produced by the
current editor.

Content Analysis Methods

The unit of measure for reporting content is the
percentage of space in units of square millimeters. The
actual measurements were taken to the nearest millimeter.
When a measurement fell between ruler markings, the highest
marking was used. Text copy was measured by starting from
the top of ascending letters and concluding with the bottom
of descending letters. Headlines, white space, and margins
were not included in text measurements. Graphics and
cutlines were measured separately from text but added to
accompanying text for reporting purposes.

Individual issues were photocopied, and the articles
were assigned individual identification numbers. The
article identification number was written on a coding sheet,
and a new set of coding sheets was used for each article
(see Appendix 3). The coding instrument and definitions for
the coding categories were developed during the 1987 summer
term at Michigan State University.

After a training session, a pretest was conducted to
test the coding instrument. Pretests were repeated twice
until it was determined that the coding instrument was

reliable. Several articles were selected for each pretest that offered a variety of content categories. The original coding definition sheets were modified to eliminate a few ambiguities in the definitions that produced coder disagreement (see Appendix 4). Coding analysis began when intercoder agreement reached 81 percent. After a few publications were coded, one coder was dismissed, because that individual's coding of identical items was not consistent and not in general agreement with the other coders.

At intervals during the content analysis, identical articles were coded by different coders for reliability checks aimed at 80 percent agreement.[86] Intercoder agreement on five checks resulted in the following agreement percentages: 81, 81, 100, 91, and 100. All completed coding was subjected to a 100 percent check to eliminate possible validity errors, but none of the original answers of the coders were changed until agreement was reached that an error had been made and a change was needed. Some reason for concern existed, because the coders were not familiar with the automotive industry and automotive jargon, so the coding definition sheets contained expanded information to assist the coders in their interpretations. Coders were instructed to ask for definitions of words that are not in the dictionary before completing their coding.

Some of the articles may have touched on several topics. To avoid dissecting sentences and paragraphs into

content categories, the main thrust of the article determined the category. In the event that the coders encountered a "laundry list" article, the following rule applied: measure the content that relates to the headline and ignore all other content, because we were looking for the primary reason the article was published. For example, this rule applied to articles that discuss "quality" for several paragraphs but include statements such as: "In addition to quality, we also need to be concerned with productivity, absenteeism, competition, and scrap rates."

In cases where there was confusion over content that was interrelated and intertwined among categories (making clear separation impossible), the coders were instructed to let the headline guide their decision. For example, productivity may be cited as increased from a result of quality improvements. If the headline stated: "Quality improvements boost production," the article was classified as quality. If the headline stated: "Production improves by 20 percent," the article was classified as productivity. If the headline was not indicative of the content, each paragraph was labeled with the applicable content category. The category selected for the whole article was the one representing the majority of space used. In practice, this situation was encountered less than six times in the 572 articles that were analyzed.

Where two or more major subjects are addressed as seemingly separate subjects within the article, coders were

instructed to measure the amount of content that each subject covered and indicate the amount of space that each content area entailed. Only complete sentences qualified to be counted in a content category. In the event that separate content categories were warranted, coders were requested to circle the additional category or categories on their coding sheet and to write the space used next to the circled category or categories. The balance of the coding sheet determinations refer to the style and format of the total article, so additional separation was not needed.

In actual practice, from 572 articles coded, only two articles required labeling of separate paragraphs to determine the content category. The majority of the articles involved one primary topic.

Two areas were difficult or often impossible for the hired coders to determine without an intimate knowledge of the source. In the "attribution" category, coders marked the attribution source with a color highlighter, and the coding supervisor identified the source. In the category of "audience intended," the definitions often sufficed, so coders registered their quick impressions based on the definitions. The coding supervisor checked all coding to compensate for the fact that the coders did not understand all of the intrinsic elements of the automotive business. For example, coders did not know that attendance bonuses were paid to hourly employees as a result of contractual agreements, so the coding was corrected.

Definition of Variables

The variables used in the content analysis of this
research are discussed in their theoretical and operational
definitions. Theoretical definitions specify the meaning of
the concept in a general way. Operational definitions
indicate the ways the concept will actually be measured.
One concept may have a variety of operational indicators, so
several may be used if each indicator measures a different
part of the concept.[87]

Theoretical Definitions

Relative amounts of space used refers to the proportion of
space occupied by items in a given publication.[88]

Articles are distinct independent sections of the
publication that normally deal with one major issue.

Percentage of space used is the proportion of space occupied
by a particular item in a given publication.

Frequency of inclusion is the number of times that
particular items were topics of an article.[89]

Content classifications and content categories are separate
subject matter divisions designed to determine what items
individual articles cover.[90]

Editor's perception of content coverage is the editors'
self-reported[91] intuitive cognition regarding the proportion
that items occupy in a given publication and/or the
frequency with which the items were published.

Actual measured coverage is the two-dimensional linear product of the space occupied by the item in a given publication.

Length of service refers to the time the editors worked for Michigan Motors.

Coverage of content refers to the inclusion of content items in a publication.

How often refers to the frequency of inclusion.

Local manager is the person with the highest responsibility and authority at a particular location.

Use the publication to communicate to employees refers to instances when the publication is chosen as the medium to convey information to employees.

Local information originates at the location of the local publication.

Business needs of the organization are those activities that promote the success of the organization—usually referred to as "business issues," "business events," and "total business" in this research.

Upward communication is the flow of information from subordinate employees to management.

Management includes any employees who are involved in decision-making processes on business issues and events.

Planned frequency of publication refers to the scheduled distribution of a given publication during a specified time interval.

Editors' efficiency refers to the editors' performance in meeting the planned frequency of publication.

Before an event occurs refers to providing the information prior to the event.

Operational Definitions

Relative amounts of space used and percentage of space used for each content category were calculated by dividing the total space for all articles belonging to a specific category by the total space for all categories. Amounts of space were measured in square millimeters, excluding headlines and margins.

Articles can be individual text blocks and/or graphic elements that pertain to one exclusive content category.

Percentage of space used for each content category was calculated by dividing the total number of articles classified in that category by the total number of articles in the selected publications.

Frequency of inclusion was determined by counting the number of articles belonging to specific content categories.

Content classifications and content categories consist of thirty-three content categories and thirteen style classification (see Appendix 4 for listings and definitions). In some calculations the various content categories were combined into six major categories as follows:

Method of combining subcategories
into six major categories

1. Business issues categories include quality, productivity, cost reduction, customer news, competition, and job security.

2. Business events categories are plant layout changes, gain or loss of business, employment changes, actions affecting business, schedule changes, statistical reporting, informative articles, and question/answer sessions.

3. Business-related recognition categories consist of awards, commendations, personnel activity, retirements, patents, and suggestion awards.

4. Employee information categories are MM sponsored charities, benefits, safety store, training announcements, and personnel policy announcements.

5. Union news and issues categories include contracts and negotiations, elections, contractual issues, and union-specific training announcements.

6. Nonbusiness categories are ones not directly linked to the business of the organization.

Editors' perception of content coverage was measured by survey responses to the six major content categories.

Actual measured coverage consisted of the square millimeters of space for individual articles.

Length of service was converted to years of employment with Michigan Motors in three ranges—one to nine years, ten to nineteen years, and twenty or more years.

Coverage of content means the six major content categories.

Local manager was identified by name or title.

Use of the publication to communicate to employees was the occurence of items that are attributed to the manager by direct quotation or direct reference to his name or title.

Local information was counted when the attributed source of information was local, the name of the location was mentioned and/or the topic discussed was obviously a part of the location (named departments, named employees, products unique to the location, etc.). If a direct connection could not be made, the article was not considered local.

Business needs of the organization consisted of the two major categories of "business issues" and "business events."

Upward communication was evidenced when the attributed source of information held the job classifications of hourly and/or nonsupervisory salaried employees. Question/answer sessions also qualified as upward communication regardless of the job classification of the questioner, because the answerer had "expert power" authority.

Management could not be identified as having received the upward communication by the analysis methods in this research. All that can be assumed is that management had the opportunity to receive the upward communication, because the communication was in the organizational publication.

The planned frequency of publication was determined by the number of workdays in 1986 which breaks down as follows: daily (220) and weekly (49).

<u>Editors' efficiency</u> was calculated by dividing the number of publications produced by the number of workdays for the organization. The editor's personal workdays (220 days minus personal vacation time and sick leave) were not used. <u>Inform employee before the event occurs</u> was found by finding dates for events that are in advance of the date of the publication and examples of future tense verbs where the event was mentioned in the same sentence. (For example, statements such as: "We will work hard to beat competition." will not qualify because the sentence does not contain an actual "event."

Rationale for Content Analysis of

Content and Style Categories

The categories that were in the content analyses of this research were taken from the same reference book that all editors in Michigan Motors have.[92] The publication is considered a standard corporate-wide editors' reference guide for their work in internal employee communications. The individual content categories and style recommendations used in the content analysis portion of this research are based on items in the corporate reference guide (see Appendix 5 and Appendix 6).

Incorporating Results of Previous Content Surveys

In 1987, Michigan Motors introduced a supplementary publication to the editors' resource book that linked communication to the organization's performance.[93] All

editors received this book in addition to selected top management at all locations. A basic mandate in the publication states: "Employee media must be focused on the business issues."[94] The book includes results of a 1986 communications survey of 1,806 employees at ten locations of Michigan Motors (none of which were Michigan Components Division locations) (see Appendix 6).

Statistical Methods

Content analysis procedures followed Holsti's recommendations.[95] The editor's perceptions and demographics were taken by survey methods--mail and telephone, for those who failed to respond to the mail survey. Demographics for the editor's supervisor and for the plant manager were taken by survey and by consulting personnel records.

Statistical tests for significance included Chi-square tests to determine the probability that the samples exist in the population studied.[96] Calculations of Phi[97] and Cramer's V [98] were used to examine strength of relationships, with "zero" indicating no relationship and "one" indicating perfect relationship. The computer programs used for statistical analysis were "Elite-Calc"[99] and "Teachers' Database."[100] Standard errors were calculated for all publications using Moser's finite population correction where applicable.[101]

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH RESULTS

Results were calculated with data obtained from the content analyses of 572 articles from seventy randomly selected issues of fifteen publications. The major discussion of content category analyses in this research deals with six major content groups that consist of several content subcategories (see page 45 for the method used to determine the major groups).

The prevalent unit of analysis is the inclusion frequency of individual articles that were classified into major content groups. The amount of space individual articles occupied was measured in square millimeters for determining the percentages of space devoted to content groups. Minimum acceptable statistical significance must meet the $p < .05$ level; i.e., a probability exists 5 percent of the time that the analyzed relationship could occur by chance. Statisticians commonly use the $p < .05$ level as a cut-off point in determining statistical significance.[102]

When content categories are referenced, they will be enclosed in quotation marks to distinguish the categories from normal text. For example, "union" (in quotes) refers to the content category that deals with union news and

issues. The word, union, (without quotes) refers to a labor union in the text with no intended reference to the content category.

The primary concern of this research deals with the coverage of business items, so the "business issues" and "business events" categories were combined for analysis into a "total business" category to provide a unified profile of the business content. Some articles contained content that could fit several categories, but the coding instructions and definitions set standards that were designed to eliminate possible ambiguity that would allow an item to fit into several categories.

In addition to "total business," two additional categories are used for summary analyses that bear explanation. The "proactive business" category includes all articles that meet the criteria for the "total business" category, but the "proactive" articles contain text that informs employees before an event occurs. The "local business" category includes all articles that meet the criteria for the "total business" category, but the "local" articles contain text that originated at the location where the publication is published.

Summary Characteristics of Publications and Editors

The researched publications were distributed in the following manner: daily (2), weekly (9), twice-monthly (1), monthly (1), and quarterly (2). Eleven publications were

produced by nine manufacturing plants, and four publications
were produced at the divisional office. One manufacturing
plant produced a weekly newsletter (Publication No. 14) for
the first part of the year and changed to a daily newsletter
(Publication No. 15) for the rest of the year. Another
manufacturing plant published a weekly newsletter
(Publication No. 11) and a quarterly half-tabloid
(Publication No. 6). Since two editors were individually
responsible for two publications, these two editors actually
represent four of the fifteen editors in this research
dealing with fifteen publications; i.e., thirteen editors
produced fifteen publications.

The publications (totals in parentheses) used a
variety of formats which are as follows: 8 1/2 by 11 inch
(8), 8 1/2 by 14 inch (1), multi-page folded (2), multi-page
stapled (2), magazine (1), and half-tabloid (1). Six of the
publications have one column layouts despite corporate
recommendations for two columns (see Appendix 4). Six of
the publications used two column formats. One monthly and
two quarterly publications used multiple columns.

Eleven publications used typewriter type for text
while corporate recommendations show other type faces (see
Appendix 5). One monthly and two quarterly publications
used vendor-produced typeset text, and one weekly
publication used proportional dot-matrix text that has a
typeset appearance. Six publications were printed and nine
were reproduced on a photocopier.

Eleven editors were solely responsible for preparation and reproduction of their publications. One editor had in-house assistance, and three editors used vendors for typesetting, keylining, and printing. Equipment used by the editors to prepare the final copy for reproduction was as follows: typewriter (4), computer and printer (8), and vendor-produced typesetting (3). Corporate recommendations advise "run your name and phone number in each issue" (see Appendix 5), but five of the editors are not identified in their respective publications.

Seven editors have not graduated from college. Of the six editors with college degrees, only two met the corporate recommendations for degrees in journalism (see Appendix 5). All editors have attended training events (3.2 events per editor) that deal with communication. Nine of the editors are female, and four are male. One female and one male editor are black. One editor is an hourly employee and is the only editor without a supervisor. Two editors supervised three other editors. The editor for Publication No. 5 supervises the editor for Publication No. 4, who supervises the editors for Publications No. 2 and No. 10. Thirteen editors had supervisors with major organizational responsibilities outside the area of employee communication. Five supervisors were personnel directors. Other supervisor classifications were general manager, production superintendent, production manager, public relations director, and personnel administrator.

Results for Research Question 1

The first research question sought to determine if publications gave major emphasis to "total business." Relative amounts of space used and the inclusion frequencies of various content categories in articles were examined.

The total percentages of space used in each publication for all content categories are reported in Table 1. Percentages for inclusion frequencies are reported in Table 2. The individual percentages in Table 1 and Table 2 are grouped into their respective major content groups in Table 3.

The results for percentage of space used show that fourteen publications gave major emphasis to "total business," but the performance ranged widely from 37.11 to 100 percent (see Table 3). Only Publication No. 9 showed that "total business" (22.39 percent) ranked below the "nonbusiness" (29.36 percent) and "union" (29.17 percent) categories.

The results for inclusion frequency show that thirteen publications gave major emphasis to "total business." Again, the performance showed a wide range from 26.32 to 100 percent (see Table 3). After reevaluation from percentage of space used to the new basis of inclusion frequency, Publication No. 1 fell from its position with others that emphasized "total business," because the "total business" (33.33 percent) followed "nonbusiness" at 38.10 percent. Publication No. 9 also was below

TABLE 1

PERCENTAGE OF SPACE USED FOR CONTENT CATEGORIES
(N - 572 articles)

Content Category	Individual Publications								
	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09
Quality	0	0	12.91	0	16.74	7.69	5.32	3.48	2.38
Productivity . .	0	0	4.71	16.26	4.63	1.87	.34	7.37	0
Cost reduction .	4.70	0	3.73	7.84	2.19	5.49	4.53	0	0
Customer news .	0	0	0	0	22.33	10.07	0	17.48	0
Competition . .	0	0	5.64	48.69	20.22	4.31	2.89	0	0
Job security . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Misc. issues . .	0	0	4.03	0	0	0	.64	0	0
Plt. changes . .	0	17.86	.90	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gain or loss . .	13.54	0	0	6.20	6.05	0	.77	0	0
Empl. changes .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Actions affect .	1.46	0	9.15	7.39	0	13.59	8.84	1.37	0
Schedule chg. .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Statistical . .	0	0	5.47	0	0	0	3.17	.78	0
Informative . .	16.92	6.74	15.68	7.08	4.89	26.07	12.22	2.25	17.97
Q/A sessions . .	0	0	0	6.53	0	0	13.06	0	0
Misc. events . .	5.55	37.84	2.43	0	4.39	1.40	7.63	4.38	2.04
Awards earned .	0	0	0	0	0	4.85	0	0	0
Commendations .	0	0	0	0	3.26	0	0	0	0
Personnel . . .	2.55	0	1.44	0	7.90	3.30	.34	5.67	8.49
Retirements . .	6.57	0	1.19	0	0	4.30	0	5.26	1.10
Patents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Suggestions . .	0	0	0	0	0	.96	0	1.17	0
MM charity . . .	12.84	1.67	0	0	3.08	5.63	1.96	13.37	7.64
Benefits	4.74	15.63	0	0	0	0	1.31	5.52	0
Store	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Training	4.66	9.89	5.21	0	2.19	0	0	0	0
Policy	0	0	.77	0	0	0	.81	0	0
Misc. empl. info	0	5.88	0	0	0	0	1.01	0	1.86
Negotiations . .	0	0	0	0	2.13	0	0	0	0
Elections . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cont. issues . .	1.41	0	1.18	0	0	7.54	4.90	11.03	13.45
Train (union) .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.00	15.72
Nonbusiness . .	25.05	4.50	25.57	0	0	2.94	30.27	18.86	29.36
N	42	17	87	16	26	54	69	38	24

TABLE 1—CONTINUED

Content Category	Individual Publications							
	10	11	12	13	14	15	Mean	S.D.
Quality	0	6.52	0	3.51	12.06	2.40	4.86	5.18
Productivity . .	7.13	3.25	0	5.71	11.41	5.05	4.51	4.54
Cost reduction .	0	5.03	0	12.88	16.31	12.27	4.99	5.08
Customer news .	0	3.32	0	0	0	0	3.54	6.96
Competition . .	23.26	4.05	4.35	0	.80	2.87	7.80	12.93
Job security . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Misc. issues . .	0	2.02	0	2.70	0	0	.62	1.21
Plt. changes . .	0	2.48	0	.98	0	0	1.48	4.42
Gain or loss . .	21.38	1.43	5.24	0	0	1.56	3.74	5.98
Empl. changes .	0	1.01	0	0	0	2.10	.20	.32
Actions affect .	14.36	12.40	15.96	8.12	2.19	21.23	7.73	6.55
Schedule chg. .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Statistical . .	0	0	6.44	0	0	0	1.05	2.08
Informative . .	3.64	1.98	13.11	19.19	22.15	14.07	12.26	7.30
Q/A sessions . .	2.49	0	0	24.28	7.53	0	3.59	6.69
Misc. events . .	2.73	8.76	9.72	3.94	0	4.50	6.35	8.87
Awards earned .	0	4.05	12.13	0	0	0	1.40	3.24
Commendations .	4.32	0	0	0	2.26	0	.65	1.36
Personnel . . .	2.30	9.37	0	0	0	0	2.75	3.32
Retirements . .	0	0	0	3.39	2.57	0	1.62	2.17
Patents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Suggestions . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	.14	.36
MM charity . . .	0	0	0	.22	0	4.49	3.39	4.45
Benefits	0	4.27	15.64	0	0	7.97	3.67	5.31
Store	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Training	18.39	1.81	0	0	1.84	0	2.93	4.94
Policy	0	3.90	0	4.19	0	4.01	.91	1.58
Misc. empl. info	0	0	1.88	0	0	0	.70	1.52
Negotiations . .	0	0	3.10	0	0	0	.34	.90
Elections . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cont. issues . .	0	2.93	0	2.31	0	0	2.98	4.22
Train (union) .	0	0	0	0	0	3.91	1.44	3.95
Nonbusiness . .	0	21.42	12.43	8.56	20.88	13.56	14.22	10.70
N	15	38	32	39	33	42		

TABLE 2

PERCENTAGE OF INCLUSION FREQUENCY FOR CONTENT CATEGORIES
(N = 572 articles)

Content Category	Individual Publications								
	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09
Quality	0	0	8.05	0	11.54	7.41	4.35	2.63	4.17
Productivity . .	0	0	2.30	6.25	7.69	1.85	1.45	2.63	0
Cost reduction .	2.38	0	2.30	6.25	3.85	5.56	4.35	0	0
Customer news .	0	0	0	0	15.38	5.56	0	5.26	0
Competition . .	0	0	9.20	25.00	11.54	3.70	1.45	0	0
Job security . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Misc. issues . .	0	0	1.15	0	0	0	2.90	0	0
Plt. changes . .	0	17.65	1.15	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gain or loss . .	4.76	0	0	6.25	7.69	0	1.45	0	0
Empl. changes .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Actions affect .	2.38	0	13.79	12.50	0	11.11	4.35	2.63	0
Schedule chg. .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Statistical . .	0	0	20.69	0	0	0	2.90	2.63	0
Informative . .	14.29	11.76	13.79	18.75	7.69	20.37	10.14	2.63	12.50
Q/A sessions . .	0	0	0	25.00	0	0	7.25	0	0
Misc. events . .	9.52	17.65	1.15	0	7.69	1.85	8.70	7.89	4.17
Awards earned .	0	0	0	0	0	3.70	0	0	0
Commendations .	0	0	0	0	3.85	0	0	0	0
Personnel . . .	4.76	0	1.15	0	11.54	5.56	1.45	10.53	4.17
Retirements . .	7.14	0	2.30	0	0	5.56	0	5.26	4.17
Patents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Suggestions . .	0	0	0	0	0	1.85	0	2.63	0
MM charity . . .	9.52	5.88	0	0	3.85	11.11	2.90	15.79	12.50
Benefits	2.38	11.76	0	0	0	0	1.45	5.26	0
Store	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Training	2.38	5.88	3.45	0	3.85	0	0	0	0
Policy	0	0	1.15	0	0	0	2.90	0	0
Misc. empl. info	0	23.53	0	0	0	0	1.45	0	4.17
Negotiations . .	0	0	0	0	3.85	0	0	0	0
Elections . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cont. issues . .	2.38	0	1.15	0	0	7.41	1.45	10.53	12.50
Train (union) .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.63	16.67
Nonbusiness . .	38.10	5.88	17.24	0	0	7.41	39.13	21.05	25.00
N	42	17	87	16	26	54	69	38	24

TABLE 2—CONTINUED

Content Category	Individual Publications							
	10	11	12	13	14	15	Mean	S.D.
Quality	0	5.26	0	5.13	12.12	2.38	4.20	3.98
Productivity . .	6.67	2.63	0	5.13	9.09	2.38	3.20	2.92
Cost reduction .	0	2.63	0	7.69	9.09	4.76	3.25	2.91
Customer news .	0	2.63	0	0	0	0	1.92	4.05
Competition . .	13.33	2.63	9.38	0	3.03	7.14	5.76	6.80
Job security . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Misc. issues . .	0	2.63	0	2.56	0	0	.61	1.08
Plt. changes . .	0	2.63	0	2.56	0	0	1.59	4.38
Gain or loss . .	20.00	2.63	6.25	0	0	2.38	3.42	5.15
Empl. changes .	0	2.63	0	0	0	2.38	.33	.84
Actions affect .	6.67	7.89	21.88	10.26	3.03	23.81	8.02	7.31
Schedule chg. .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Statistical . .	0	0	12.50	0	0	0	2.58	5.77
Informative . .	13.33	5.26	9.38	15.38	18.18	14.29	12.51	4.76
Q/A sessions . .	6.67	0	0	10.26	3.03	0	3.48	6.60
Misc. events . .	6.67	5.26	9.38	5.13	0	7.14	6.14	4.42
Awards earned .	0	2.63	6.25	0	0	0	.83	1.81
Commendations .	6.67	0	0	0	3.03	0	.90	1.93
Personnel . . .	6.67	15.79	0	0	0	0	4.10	4.89
Retirements . .	0	0	0	2.56	3.03	0	2.00	2.42
Patents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Suggestions . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	.29	.77
MM charity . . .	0	0	0	2.56	0	2.38	4.43	5.13
Benefits	0	2.63	6.25	0	0	9.52	2.61	3.72
Store	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Training	13.33	2.63	0	0	3.03	0	2.30	3.47
Policy	0	2.63	0	7.69	0	2.38	1.11	2.04
Misc. empl. info	0	0	3.13	0	0	0	2.15	5.85
Negotiations . .	0	0	3.13	0	0	0	.46	1.19
Elections . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cont. issues . .	0	2.63	0	2.56	0	0	2.70	3.95
Train (union) .	0	0	0	0	0	2.38	1.44	4.15
Nonbusiness . .	0	26.32	12.50	20.51	33.33	16.67	17.54	12.86
N	15	38	32	39	33	42		

TABLE 3

SUMMARY OF CONTENT PERCENTAGES
FOR
INCLUSION FREQUENCY, SPACE USED, AND EDITORS' PERCEPTIONS
(N = 572 articles)

	Individual Publications							
	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08
N	42	17	87	16	26	54	69	38
Std. Error (∓ %) .	4.44	6.73	2.34	0	5.25	0	3.93	4.98

PERCENTAGE OF INCLUSION FREQUENCY

	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08
Business Issues . .	2.38	0	22.99	37.50	50.00	24.07	14.49	10.53
Business Events . .	30.95	47.06	50.57	62.50	23.08	33.33	34.78	15.79
Business Related .	11.90	0	3.45	0	15.38	16.67	1.45	18.42
Employee Info. . .	14.29	47.06	4.60	0	7.69	11.11	8.70	21.05
Union	2.38	0	1.15	0	3.85	7.41	1.45	13.16
Nonbusiness	38.10	5.88	17.24	0	0	7.41	39.13	21.05
Total Business . .	33.33	47.06	73.56	100.0	73.08	57.41	49.28	26.32

PERCENTAGE OF SPACE USED

	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08
Business Issues . .	4.70	0	31.02	72.79	66.11	29.43	13.72	28.33
Business Events . .	37.47	62.44	33.63	27.20	15.33	41.06	45.69	8.78
Business Related .	9.12	0	2.63	0	11.16	13.41	.34	12.10
Employee Info. . .	22.24	33.07	5.98	0	5.27	5.63	5.09	18.89
Union	1.41	0	1.18	0	2.13	7.54	4.90	13.03
Nonbusiness	25.05	4.50	25.57	0	0	2.94	30.27	18.86
Total Business . .	42.17	62.44	64.65	99.99	81.44	70.49	59.41	37.11

EDITORS' PERCEPTIONS

	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08
Business Issues . .	25.00	30.00	20.00	99.00	60.00	35.00	65.00	18.00
Business Events . .	25.00	30.00	20.00	0	39.00	30.00	10.00	25.00
Business Related .	25.00	10.00	20.00	0	1.00	15.00	9.00	25.00
Employee Info. . .	20.00	25.00	20.00	0	0	15.00	10.00	25.00
Union	0	0	0	0	0	0	3.00	5.00
Nonbusiness	5.00	5.00	20.00	0	0	5.00	3.00	2.00
Total Business . .	50.00	60.00	40.00	99.00	99.00	55.00	75.00	43.00

TABLE 3—CONTINUED

	Individual Publications						
	09	10	11	12	13	14	15
N	24	15	38	32	39	33	42
Std. Error (∓ %) .	6.92	10.26	4.72	5.62	6.01	5.94	4.79

PERCENTAGE OF INCLUSION FREQUENCY

	09	10	11	12	13	14	15
Business Issues . .	4.17	20.00	18.42	9.38	20.51	33.33	16.67
Business Events . .	16.67	53.33	26.32	59.38	43.59	24.24	50.00
Business Related .	8.33	13.33	18.42	6.25	2.56	6.06	0
Employee Info. . .	16.67	13.33	7.89	9.38	10.26	3.03	14.29
Union	29.17	0	2.63	3.13	2.56	0	2.38
Nonbusiness	25.00	0	26.32	12.50	20.51	33.33	16.67
Total Business . . .	20.83	73.33	44.74	68.75	64.10	57.58	66.67

PERCENTAGE OF SPACE USED

	09	10	11	12	13	14	15
Business Issues . .	2.38	30.39	24.19	4.35	24.80	40.58	22.59
Business Events . .	20.01	44.60	28.06	50.47	56.51	31.87	43.46
Business Related .	9.59	6.62	13.42	12.13	3.39	4.83	0
Employee Info. . .	9.50	18.39	9.98	17.52	4.41	1.84	16.47
Union	29.17	0	2.93	3.10	2.31	0	3.91
Nonbusiness	29.36	0	21.42	12.43	8.56	20.88	13.56
Total Business . .	22.39	74.99	52.25	54.82	81.31	72.45	65.95

EDITORS' PERCEPTIONS

	09	10	11	12	13	14	15
Business Issues . .	35.00	40.00	35.00	15.00	10.00	25.00	25.00
Business Events . .	30.00	30.00	30.00	25.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
Business Related .	10.00	20.00	15.00	20.00	10.00	15.00	15.00
Employee Info.. . .	15.00	10.00	15.00	20.00	30.00	25.00	25.00
Union	5.00	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nonbusiness	5.00	0	5.00	20.00	40.00	25.00	25.00
Total Business . .	65.00	70.00	65.00	40.00	20.00	35.00	35.00

expectations when evaluated on the basis of inclusion frequency. That publication had more articles on "union" (29.17 percent) and "nonbusiness" (25.00 percent) than "total business" (20.83 percent).

The "total business" for Publication No. 7 was elevated by seven small clip-art illustrations of posters that were business-oriented. While the illustrations did not directly apply to the business of the organization, they could not be excluded by the coding definitions. For that publication, the small illustrations only accounted for 1.95 percent of the space, but the inclusion frequency was boosted by 10.14 percent.

Results for Research Question 2

The second research question asked how editors' perceptions of content coverage compared to the actual measured coverage.

Differences were found between perception and performance (see Table 4). In the "total business" category, the editor's perception (57.40 percent) is very close to the inclusion frequency (57.06 percent) but less than the percentage of space (62.78 percent). Editors were surveyed for their perceptions of "business issues" and "business events," and the two categories were totaled and reported as "total business" for this research as a summary index of all business items contained in one figure.

TABLE 4

EDITORS' PERCEPTIONS FOR TOTAL DIVISION
VERSUS
ACTUAL CONTENT PERCENTAGES
(N = 13 editors/15 publications)

Major Categories*	Editor's Perception Percentages		Actual Percent Space		Actual Percent Frequency	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Business Issues . .	35.80	22.36	26.35	20.65	18.96	13.17
Business Events . .	21.60	10.63	36.43	14.54	38.10	14.81
Business Recognition	14.00	7.26	6.58	5.09	8.14	6.75
Employee Info. . . .	17.00	8.71	11.61	8.84	12.62	10.57
Union News/Issues .	.86	1.78	4.77	7.33	4.61	7.36
Nonbusiness	10.66	11.78	14.22	10.70	17.54	12.86
Total Business . . .	57.40		62.78		57.06	

*The major categories are groupings of content subcategories.
See page 45 for an explanation of the method for determining
the major groups.

The standard deviations for perception and performance for the major content areas show that a wide variance exists between the editors' perceptions (range = 1.78 to 22.36), space used (range = 5.09 to 20.65), and inclusion frequency (range = 6.75 to 14.81). Two editors exhibited performances that were very close to their perceptions in the "total business" category. One editor's perceptions totaled 99 percent, and the actual percentages for inclusion frequency and space used were 100 percent. Another editor's "total business" perception was 70 percent, with actual inclusion frequency at 73.33 percent and space used at 74.99 percent. Other editors showed various dissimilarities between perception and performance (see Table 3 for data on individual editors and publications).

Results for Research Question 3

The third research question examined articles for local information that met the business needs of the organization.

An analysis of individual publications shows that an average of 52.47 percent of all articles have local sources of information (see Table 5). A standard deviation of 20.4 indicates a wide variance exists between publications. When local information for "total business" is analyzed, the average for local information drops to 26.04 percent with a standard deviation of 10.9.

TABLE 5

INCLUSION FREQUENCY PERCENTAGES
FOR LOCAL SOURCE OF INFORMATION IN
ALL ARTICLES
VERSUS
TOTAL BUSINESS ARTICLES
(N = 572 articles)

Publ. No.	All Articles (percent)	Total Business (percent)	N
01	50.00	16.67	42
02	94.12	47.06	17
03	33.33	22.99	87
04	31.25	31.25	16
05	30.77	19.23	26
06	64.81	27.78	54
07	52.17	21.74	69
08	73.68	15.79	38
09	79.17	20.83	24
10	66.67	46.67	15
11	63.16	23.68	38
12	21.88	12.50	32
13	56.41	43.59	39
14	36.36	24.24	33
15	33.33	16.67	42
Mean	52.47	26.04	
S.D.	20.4	10.9	

Results for Research Question 4

The fourth research question asked how often publications informed employees before an event occurs.

An analysis of individual publications shows that an average of 35.99 percent of all articles inform employees before an event occurs (see Table 6). Informing employees before an event occurs will be referred to as "proactive communication" throughout this thesis. A standard deviation of 15.23 indicates a wide variance exists between publications. When proactive communication for "total business" is analyzed, the average for proactive communication dropped to 17.74 percent with a standard deviation of 8.79.

Results for Research Question 5

The fifth research question compared the planned frequency of publication to the editors' efficiency (ability to meet publication schedules).

The mean efficiency rating for all editors was .75 (see Table 7). Daily publication editors ranked third (.90) and fifth (.85) in efficiency. Efficiency ratings for weekly publication editors ranged widely from 1.00 to .53. The quarterly and monthly publication editors clustered at the mean efficiency (.75). The twice-monthly publication editor was least efficient (.46).

TABLE 6

INCLUSION FREQUENCY PERCENTAGES
FOR PROACTIVE COMMUNICATION* IN
ALL ARTICLES
VERSUS
TOTAL BUSINESS ARTICLES
(N = 572 articles)

Publ. No.	All Articles (percent)	Total Business (percent)	N
01	50.00	16.67	42
02	64.71	29.41	17
03	20.69	11.49	87
04	12.50	12.50	16
05	26.92	26.92	26
06	9.26	3.70	54
07	44.93	20.29	69
08	50.00	13.16	38
09	33.33	0	24
10	40.00	33.33	15
11	47.37	23.68	38
12	50.00	21.88	32
13	20.51	12.82	39
14	36.36	21.21	33
15	33.33	19.05	42
Mean	35.99	15.23	
S.D.	17.74	8.79	

*Proactive communication is present
in articles that inform employees
before the event occurs.

TABLE 7

RANKING OF PUBLICATION EFFICIENCY
(Efficiency = Actual / Possible issues)
(N = 15 publications)

Publi-cation	Actual Issues	Possible Issues		Effi-ciency
05	49	49	**	1.00
02	46	49	**	.94
03	199	220	*	.90
14	25	29	**	.86
15	82	97	*	.85
01	40	49	**	.82
11	39	49	**	.80
06	3	4	*****	.75
04	3	4	*****	.75
13	9	12	****	.75
08	34	49	**	.69
12	31	49	**	.63
07	28	49	**	.57
09	26	49	**	.53
10	11	24	***	.46

Mean = .75   Standard Deviation = .149

* daily   ** weekly
*** twice monthly   **** monthly
***** quarterly

Results for Research Question 6

The sixth research question asked if the length of editors' service with Michigan Motors had any effect on the inclusion frequency of business items.

A significant relationship (p < .01) exists between length of service and the inclusion frequency for "total business," but the strength of relationship (Cramer's V = .136) is low (see Table 8). Editors with less than ten years years of employment included more "total business" (61.61 percent) than editors with ten to nineteen years (47.62 percent). Editors with twenty or more years published 61.59 percent "total business," which approximated the percentage achieved by editors with the least amount of seniority.

A significant relationship, although weak, (p < .025, Cramer's V = .119) also exists between length of service and the inclusion frequency for "local business" (see Table 8). Editors with less than ten years of employment included more "local business" (30.81 percent) than editors with ten to nineteen years (20.00 percent) and editors with twenty or more years (20.53 percent).

The relationship between length of service and "proactive business" was not significant.

Results for Research Question 7

The seventh research question asked if the amount of hours that editors used to prepare the publications had any

TABLE 8

CONTINGENCY TABLES FOR
EDITORS' LENGTH OF SERVICE
VERSUS
PERCENTAGE OF INCLUSION FREQUENCY

	Years of Editor's Employment		
	1 to 9 N = 7	10 to 19 N = 5	20 or more N = 3
TOTAL BUSINESS			
Total Business	61.61% (130)	47.62% (100)	61.59% (93)
No Total Business	38.39% (81)	52.38% (110)	38.41% (58)
Totals	100.00% (211)	100.00% (210)	100.00% (151)

Chi-square = 10.571   d.f. = 2 $p < .01$
Cramer's V = .136

PROACTIVE BUSINESS

Proactive Business	16.59% (35)	17.14% (36)	14.57% (22)
No Proactive Business	83.41% (176)	82.86% (174)	85.43% (129)
Totals	100.00% (211)	100.00% (210)	100.00% (151)

Chi-square = .454   d.f. = 2 $p < .25$
Cramer's V = .028

LOCAL BUSINESS

Local Business	30.81% (65)	20.00% (42)	20.53% (31)
No Local Business	69.19% (146)	80.00% (168)	79.47% (120)
Totals	100.00% (211)	100.00% (210)	100.00% (151)

Chi-square = 8.163   d.f. = 2 $p < .025$
Cramer's V = .119

effect on the inclusion frequency of business items.

A significant relationship, although weak, (p < .01, Cramer's V - .129) exists between hours of preparation and the inclusion frequency of "total business" (see Table 9.)

Editors with one to ten hours of preparation time recorded less "total business" (55.05 percent) than editors with eleven to twenty hours (67.16 percent), and editors with more than twenty hours published the least amount (48.85 percent).

The relationships between hours of preparation and "proactive business" or "local business" were not significant.

Results for Research Question 8

The eighth research question asked if the frequency of distribution had any effect on the inclusion frequency of business items.

A significant relationship (p < .001) exists between the frequency of distribution and the inclusion frequency of "total business" (see Table 10). The strength of relationship (Cramer's V - .23), while weak, is the strongest measured in this research. Daily publications printed the most "total business" (71.31 percent). Weekly publications published the least amount (46.39 percent). Less than weekly distribution publications produced slightly less than daily publications (66.94 percent).

TABLE 9

CONTINGENCY TABLES FOR
EDITORS' HOURS OF PREPARATION
VERSUS
PERCENTAGE OF INCLUSION FREQUENCY

	Hours to Prepare Publication		
	1 to 10 N = 6	11 to 20 N = 5	> 20 N = 4
TOTAL BUSINESS			
Total Business	55.05% (169)	67.16% (90)	48.85% (64)
No Total Business	44.95% (138)	32.84% (44)	51.15% (67)
Total	100.00% (307)	100.00% (134)	100.00% (131)

Chi-square = 9.577   d.f. = 2   p < .01
Cramer's V = .129

PROACTIVE BUSINESS

	1 to 10	11 to 20	> 20
Proactive Business	15.64% (48)	21.64% (29)	12.21% (16)
No Proactive Business	84.36% (259)	78.36% (105)	87.79% (115)
Totals	100.00% (307)	100.00% (134)	100.00% (131)

Chi-square = 4.514   d.f. = 2   p < .25
Cramer's V = .089

LOCAL BUSINESS

	1 to 10	11 to 20	> 20
Local Business	22.48% (69)	24.63% (33)	27.48% (36)
No Local Business	77.52% (238)	75.37% (101)	72.52% (95)
Totals	100.00% (307)	100.00% (134)	100.00% (131)

Chi-square = 1.281   d.f. = 2   p < .25
Cramer's V = .047

TABLE 10

CONTINGENCY TABLES FOR
FREQUENCY OF DISTRIBUTION
VERSUS
PERCENTAGE OF INCLUSION FREQUENCY

	Frequency of Distribution		
	Daily N = 2	Weekly N = 9	< Weekly N = 4
TOTAL BUSINESS			
Total Business	71.31% (92)	46.39% (148)	66.94% (83)
No Total Business	28.68% (37)	53.61% (171)	33.06% (41)
Totals	100.00% (129)	100.00% (319)	100.00% (124)

Chi-square = 30.267   d.f. = 2   p <.001
Cramer's V = .230

PROACTIVE BUSINESS

	Daily	Weekly	< Weekly
Proactive Business	13.95% (18)	19.12% (61)	11.29% (14)
No Proactive Business	86.05% (111)	80.88% (258)	88.71% (110)
Totals	100.00% (129)	100.00% (319)	100.00% (124)

Chi-square = 4.673   d.f. = 2   p <.10
Cramer's V = .090

LOCAL BUSINESS

	Daily	Weekly	< Weekly
Local Business	20.93% (27)	21.00% (67)	35.48% (44)
No Local Business	79.07% (102)	79.00% (252)	64.52% (80)
Totals	100.00% (129)	100.00% (319)	100.00% (124)

Chi-square = 11.158   d.f. = 2   p <.005
Cramer's V = .140

A significant relationship (p < .005) also exists between the frequency of distribution and the inclusion frequency of "local business," but the strength of relationship (Cramer's V = .14) is weak (see Table 10). Similar percentages of "local business" were published by daily publications (20.93 percent) and weekly publications (21.00 percent), but publications with less than weekly distribution produced the most at 35.48 percent.

The relationship between frequency of distribution and "proactive business" was not significant.

Results for Research Question 9

The ninth research question asked if the editors' efficiency had any effect on the frequency of inclusion for business items.

A significant, but weak, relationship (p < .001, Cramer's V = .164) exists between editors' efficiency and inclusion of "total business" (see Table 11). The most efficient editors (efficiency = 1.00 to .85) published the most "total business" (67.32 percent). Editors with mid-range efficiency (efficiency = .82 to .69) produced slightly less "total business" (49.78 percent) than least efficient editors (efficiency less than .69) with 51.43 percent published.

The relationships between efficiency and "proactive business" or "local business" were not significant.

TABLE 11

CONTINGENCY TABLES FOR
EDITORS' EFFICIENCY
VERSUS
PERCENTAGE OF INCLUSION FREQUENCY

| | Editors' Efficiency | | |
	1.0--.85 N = 5	.82--.69 N = 6	< .69 N = 4
TOTAL BUSINESS			
Total Business	67.32% (138)	49.78% (113)	51.43% (72)
No Total Business	32.68% (67)	50.22% (114)	48.57% (68)
Totals	100.00% (205)	100.00% (227)	100.00% (140)

Chi-square = 15.393   d.f. = 2   p <.001
Cramer's V = .164

PROACTIVE BUSINESS			
Proactive Business	18.05% (37)	13.22% (30)	18.57% (26)
No Proactive Business	81.95% (168)	86.78% (197)	81.43% (114)
Totals	100.00% (205)	100.00% (227)	100.00% (140)

Chi-square = 2.576   d.f. = 2   p <.25
Cramer's V = .067

LOCAL BUSINESS			
Local Business	23.41% (48)	25.99% (59)	22.14% (31)
No Local Business	76.59% (157)	74.01% (168)	77.86% (109)
Totals	100.00% (205)	100.00% (227)	100.00% (140)

Chi-square = .789   d.f. = 2   p <.25
Cramer's V = .037

Results for Research Question 10

The tenth research question asked if the location where a publication is produced had any effect on the inclusion frequency of business items. In each analysis, divisional office publications exhibited higher frequencies for "total business" than plant locations.

A significant relationship (p < .005) exists between the location of the publication and the inclusion frequencies of "total business," but the strength of relationship (Phi = .128) is weak (see Table 12). Publications in the divisional office published more "total business" (72.97 percent) than plant locations (54.02 percent).

Although weak, a significant relationship (p < .025, Phi = .098) exists between the location of the publication and the inclusion frequencies of "proactive business" (see Table 12). Publications in the divisional office published more "proactive business" (25.68 percent) than plant locations (14.86 percent).

A significant relationship (p < .05) exists between the location of the publication and the inclusion frequencies of "local business," but the strength of relationship (Phi = .087) is weak (see Table 12). Publications in the divisional office published more "local business" (33.78 percent) than plant locations (22.69 percent).

TABLE 12

CONTINGENCY TABLES FOR
LOCATION OF PUBLICATION
VERSUS
PERCENTAGE OF INCLUSION FREQUENCY

	Location	
	Plants N = 11	Division N = 4
TOTAL BUSINESS		
Total Business	54.02% (269)	72.97% (54)
No Total Business	45.98% (229)	27.03% (20)
Totals	100.00% (498)	100.00% (74)

Chi-square = 9.419   d.f. = 1   p < .005
Phi = .128

PROACTIVE BUSINESS		
Proactive Business	14.86% (74)	25.68% (19)
No Proactive Business	85.14% (424)	74.32% (55)
Totals	100.00% (498)	100.00% (74)

Chi-square = 5.536   d.f. = 1   p < .025
Phi = .098

LOCAL BUSINESS		
Local Business	22.69% (113)	33.78% (25)
No Local Business	77.31% (385)	66.22% (49)
Totals	100.00% (498)	100.00% (74)

Chi-square = 4.331   d.f. = 1   p < .05
Phi = .087

Results for Research Question 11

The eleventh research question asked if the editors'
education had any effect on the inclusion frequency of
business items.

A significant but weak relationship ($p < .001$, Phi =
.214) exists between editors' education and the frequency of
inclusion for "total business" (see Table 13). Editors with
college degrees devoted a higher percentage (65.37 percent)
of space to "total business" than editors without degrees
(43.88 percent).

The relationships between inclusion frequencies and
"proactive business" or "local business" were not
significant.

Results for Research Question 12

The twelfth research question asked how often the
local manager used the publication to communicate to
employees.

An analysis of percentages from individual
publications shows that an average of 3.59 percent of all
articles included attribution from the local manager (see
Table 14). A standard deviation of 6.27 indicates a wide
variance exists between publications. In the "total
business" category, the average for local manager
attribution dropped slightly to 3.24 percent with a standard
deviation of 6.28.

TABLE 13

CONTINGENCY TABLES FOR
EDITORS' EDUCATION (COLLEGE DEGREE)
VERSUS
PERCENTAGE OF INCLUSION FREQUENCY

	College Degree	
	None N = 7	Degree N = 8
TOTAL BUSINESS		
Total Business	43.88% (104)	65.37% (219)
No Total Business	56.12% (133)	34.63% (116)
Totals	100.00% (237)	100.00% (335)

Chi-square = 26.08   d.f. = 1   p <.001
Phi = .214

PROACTIVE BUSINESS

	None	Degree
Proactive Business	18.14% (43)	14.93% (50)
No Proactive Business	81.86% (194)	85.07% (285)
Totals	100.00% (237)	100.00% (335)

Chi-square = 1.056   d.f. = 1   p <.25
Phi = .043

LOCAL BUSINESS

	None	Degree
Local Business	21.94% (52)	25.67% (86)
No Local Business	78.06% (185)	74.33% (249)
Totals	100.00% (237)	100.00% (335)

Chi-square = 1.055   d.f. = 1   p <.25
Phi = .043

TABLE 14

INCLUSION FREQUENCY PERCENTAGES
FOR LOCAL MANAGER ATTRIBUTION IN
ALL ARTICLES
VERSUS
TOTAL BUSINESS ARTICLES
(N = 572 articles)

Publ. No.	All Articles (percent)	Total Business (percent)	N
01	0	0	42
02	0	0	17
03	0	0	87
04	25.00	25.00	16
05	3.85	0	26
06	5.56	5.56	54
07	7.25	5.78	69
08	0	0	38
09	0	0	24
10	6.67	6.67	15
11	0	0	38
12	0	0	32
13	2.56	2.56	39
14	3.03	3.03	33
15	0	0	42
Mean	3.59	6.27	
S.D.	3.24	6.28	

Results for Research Question 13

The thirteenth research question investigated how often the publications are used as a vehicle for upward communication from employees to management.

An analysis of percentages from individual publications shows that an average of 20.63 percent of all articles included attribution from hourly and/or nonsupervisory salaried employees (see Table 15). A standard deviation of 15.64 indicates a wide variance exists between publications. In the "total business" category, the average for upward communication dropped to 14.72 percent with a standard deviation of 15.84. (Question/answer sessions were also counted as upward attribution. Articles with more than one source of upward attribution were only counted once.)

Summary of Research Results

Several factors thought to affect the percentages of content inclusion were found statistically significant, but the strengths of relationships were generally weak. None of the variables studied could be called singular determining factors. The interrelation of factors might lead to stronger relationships, but subsequent attempts at analysis using control variables proved impractical. As the number of cells in the "control" contingency tables increased, many individual cells contained information from only one or two publications, with several cells containing no information.

TABLE 15

INCLUSION FREQUENCY PERCENTAGES
FOR UPWARD COMMUNICATION* IN
ALL ARTICLES
VERSUS
TOTAL BUSINESS ARTICLES
(N = 572 articles)

Publ. No.	All Articles (percent)	Total Business (percent)	N
01	21.43	4.76	42
02	11.76	0	17
03	8.05	5.75	87
04	62.50	62.50	16
05	11.54	11.54	26
06	12.96	7.41	54
07	14.49	13.04	69
08	15.79	5.26	38
09	12.50	4.17	24
10	53.33	40.00	15
11	15.79	10.53	38
12	3.13	3.13	32
13	20.51	17.95	39
14	24.24	18.18	33
15	21.43	16.67	42
Mean	20.63	15.64	
S.D.	14.72	15.84	

*Upward communication consists
of question/answer articles and
articles with attribution from
hourly and/or nonsupervisory
salaried employees.

For example, since the sample population contained only two daily plant newsletters, educational information about daily editors could not be compared to divisional editors. No daily newsletters were produced in the divisional office. Another example was found when attempting to compare editors' length of service with frequency of distribution as a control variable. No daily editors had less than ten years of service, and no editors with more than ten years of service produced publications with less than weekly distribution. When the analysis satisfied calculation requirements (no blank cells) the small sample size of fifteen publications/editors spread out thinly, so many cells contained only one publication, which created problems with statistical calculations. Some new demographic information was discovered by attempts to control for certain variables. This information will be identified as coming from control attempts in the following discussion of research conclusions.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

The research results showed that all of the proposed
factors affecting the inclusion of "total business" content
were statistically significant, but only a few were
significant in "proactive business and "local business"
categories. The Michigan Components organization should be
encouraged by the results which show that business issues
are being emphasized in its various employee publications.
The following research conclusions are based on data
compiled in the research results section of this thesis.
Where applicable, the conclusions are interpreted with
supplemental information from prior research and literature.

Conclusions for Research Question 1

The first research question sought to determine if
publications gave major emphasis to "total business."
Relative amounts of space used and the inclusion frequencies
of various content categories in articles were examined.

Most of the employee publications of the Michigan
Components Division of Michigan Motors are meeting many of
the corporate recommendations for content. With one
exception, the publications studied are giving major

emphasis to "total business" in terms of the percentage of space used. On the basis of inclusion frequency, all but two publications are giving major emphasis to "total business."

The majority of literature dealing with the gatekeeping process approaches the topic from a negative position; i.e., gatekeeping prevents information from reaching the individuals who could benefit from the information. Much of the existing literature in this area cited trivial information and employee recognition as typical emphases in employee publications. On first examination the publications from the Michigan Components Division seem to contradict conclusions drawn from similar research, because business-related topics predominate as the major emphasis.

Gatekeeping in employee publications can have a positive aspect when information about the business aspects does reach the employees. The "gate" used in the gatekeeping process does not always remain closed, because information does pass through for publication. The nature of the information released reflects the biases of the gatekeepers and the gatekeeping process. If biases did not exist, several of the six major content categories used in this research could have appeared scattered throughout the fifteen publications as major emphases. With the overwhelming majority of the publications emphasizing "total business," a strong gatekeeping process exists. While the

amount of "total business" varies greatly among publications, general agreement exists among publications to concentrate on the business of the organization. The recommendations in the corporate editors' reference guides and the chairman's letter seem to have made an impact on the gatekeeping process used to prepare employee publications, which serves as strong evidence that publishing detailed recommendations for organizational communication can result in communication that does meet organizational objectives.

Attempting to say that the publications are fulfilling their function solely on the basis of "total business" percentages would ignore other aspects that may be important to the credibility of the publications as sources of employee information. While this research concentrates on the analysis of "total business," other areas should be investigated before these publications are considered models of effective employee communication. Good performance in one content area should not serve as a single assessment of the publication.

For example, none of the 572 articles addressed topics of "job security" and "schedule changes." With the rampant uncertainties in the automotive business during 1986, it is surprising that the two content categories directly related to the employees' jobs were missing from all publications. Also empty was the "patents" category, which can serve as one barometer of future business. New

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patents attract new business which enhances job security and increases production schedules.

Conclusions for Research Question 2

The second research question asked if editors' perceptions of content coverage compared to the actual measured coverage.

On the basis of inclusion frequency, editors show strong similarity between average perception (57.40 percent) and performance (57.06 percent) in the "total business" category. The inclusion frequency (57.06 percent) was less than the percentage of space used (62.78 percent), so the "total business" articles were given additional emphasis from somewhat lengthier coverage than other content areas. Obviously, the editors understand they have a responsibility to concentrate on this area.

In "business recognition" and "employee information," the performance was less than perception, which indicates that the editors were not giving the attention to these areas that they anticipated. Performances for "union" and "nonbusiness" categories were higher than perceptions which shows that the editors were publishing more in these categories than they thought.

A brief assessment of the publications from the employees' perspective shows most of the publications had some articles in the "union" category (4.61 percent). The average editors' perception for "union" coverage was

extremely low (.83 percent) with three editors reporting 3,
4, and 5 percent. Twelve editors perceived that their
"union" coverage was zero—which is surprising when the
majority of employees are union members and 1986 was the
year of espoused division-wide commitment to joint-
participation, which means management and union join forces
to work together on defined items. There were no specific
gatekeeping instructions regarding de-emphasis of union
topics, so the "union" results seem to be strong evidence of
bias on the part of the gatekeepers.

Conclusions for Research Question 3

The third research question examined articles for
local information that met the needs of the organization.

The majority of information (52.47 percent) in the
publications was local, but the percentage dropped to 26.04
percent when local content pertained only to "total
business." This observation from the content analysis could
be interpreted positively or negatively. A pessimist would
say that only 26.04 percent of all articles include local
business information. An optimist would say that one-half
of all local information was "total business"—far more than
any other category.

Regardless of the polarity of the interpretation, the
lower percentage for local "total business" is evidence of
gatekeeping at the location of the publication. The MM
chairman's letter (see Appendix 1) and the editors' guide[103]

(see Appendix 7) indicate that the approval process for local information is more complex than any process that results in reprinting information received from outside the location. If articles were rated on their speed of approval, local articles would place a distant second to external articles.

The complexity of the local approval process is often directly proportional to the local importance of the article. As the local importance increases, there is an increase in local approval procedures. Unfortunately, the concern for local approval is dysfunctional; i.e., the most important articles take the longest interval of time to reach the employees. While not measured in this research, there have been articles where the level of local importance was high enough to prevent the item from being printed in the local publication. Situations where the local media broke the news before the employee publication are typical examples. The restraints on local information are unfortunate, because the importance of local information is stressed in formal communication literature and in corporate directions to editors and managers of Michigan Motors locations. From the employees' perspective, local articles have the greatest appeal.

Conclusion for Research Question 4

The fourth research question asked how often publications informed employees before an event occurs.

Proactive communication occurs in an average of 35.99 percent of all articles published but drops to 17.74 percent for articles in the "total business" category. Rationalized in the same manner as local information, from a negative perspective, only 17.74 percent of the articles are proactive. From a positive perspective, of all the proactive articles, nearly one-half are devoted to "total business."

The linkage to gatekeeping is more difficult to identify in proactive areas. Someone in management normally knows the nature of a business event prior to the occurrence of the event. For example, an important meeting with an official from the corporation might be planned for next month, but the article about the meeting will normally be printed after the meeting. Since future events are perhaps the most difficult ones for the editors to discover, the measurement of proactive communication might be an indicator of management's gatekeeping control. Since most of the editors are not part of the upper levels of management, they learn about events as they occur just like other employees.

Possibly, the measurement of proactive communication is an indicator of the level of traditional scientific management existing at a location. The traditional scientific manager would not see a need to inform employees

prior to an event, because that information is privileged management information. Communication literature suggests that proactive communication is evidence of good planning. However, the scientific manager is not concerned with showing evidence of good planning, because management's processes are essentially secretive.

Conclusions for Research Question 5

The fifth research question compared the planned frequency of publication to the editors' efficiency (ability to meet publication schedules).

Daily publication editors were more efficient than monthly and quarterly publication editors. Logical assumptions would predict that keeping publication schedules should be easier for editors with longer time intervals between publications, because they have more time available for preparation and approval procedures. Also, the monthly and quarterly editors have professional assistance in preparing and distributing their publications, which should allow more time for the editor to meet schedules. Weekly publications ran the scale of efficiencies, so no trend could be identified. Since only two daily editors are involved and only three longer interval publications are involved, trends are hard to predict. The answer may lie in the regimen and work habits of the individuals involved.

Conclusions for Research Question 6

The sixth research question asked if the length of editors' service with Michigan Motors had any effect on the inclusion frequency of business items.

Almost identical high percentages for "total business" were published by editors with one to nine years of service (61.61 percent) and editors with twenty or more years (61.59 percent). Editors with ten to nineteen years were much lower in "total business" (47.62 percent).

The higher percentages of "total business" for the lowest seniority editors could be linked to the fact that the editors were hired after the 1981 distribution of the reference guide and the 1983 letter from the MM chairman. Both documents encouraged publication of employee information that previously was not always distributed to employees. While the lowest seniority employees may be aware of past restrictions on communication, they did not work with the restrictions and develop behavior patterns.

In attempting to apply controls for editors' efficiency to the length of service, editors with one to nine years of service included more "total business" content as their efficiency decreased; i.e., editors who more closely met their publication schedules included less business content. The highest seniority editors could be publishing more than editors with ten to nineteen years, because their advanced experience has led to higher positions of responsibility in the organizational structure

as well as handling other responsibilities beyond editing.
As seen in the literature review, higher organizational
status leads to increased access to business information.
With the low and high seniority editors producing nearly
identical "total business" percentages, length of service is
questionable as a controlling factor.

The drop in inclusion frequency for editors with ten
to nineteen years in the "total business" category could be
due to factors other than seniority. This group published
nearly three times more "nonbusiness" (30.45 percent) than
editors with one to nine years (10.37 percent) and editors
with twenty or more years (12.76 percent). Surveying the
editors might identify reasons for their performance that
are not apparent in an analysis for the influence of
seniority.

Editors with one to nine years of service published
articles with one-third more "local information" (30.81
percent) than the nearly equal performances of editors with
ten to nineteen years (20.00 percent) and editors with
twenty or more years (20.53 percent).

In the area of "local business," the more experienced
editors may have tired of the inconvenience of required
approval procedures and prefer to publish items that can be
approved easily and/or published without the need for local
approval. If this is true, the local approval process is
functioning as a barrier that propagates an avoidance
behavior to minimize local information. Also, more

experienced editors may be conditioned by past practices to withhold local information. Local gatekeepers—management and/or editors—may not subscribe to the newer recommendations to communicate local information.

Editors with less seniority might publish more "local business" as a result of their willingness to tackle the local approval process. Since they have not attained the organizational security of higher levels of employment, they may be driven to do more work to gain promotions and salary increases.

When attempting to control for editors' education, low percentages were discovered for nondegreed editors with ten to nineteen years (39.26 percent) and twenty or more years (26.32 percent). These performances reduced the respective percentages of the corresponding degreed editors (62.67 percent and 73.45 percent) to a point that the service categories for all editors beyond ten years fell below the lowest seniority group. Education seems to be a contributing factor beyond ten years, because "total business" for nondegreed editors (64.06 percent) essentially equaled degreed editors (60.54 percent) in the one to ten years of service category. The interaction of education to length of service bears further investigation.

Conclusions for Question 7

The seventh research question asked if the amount of hours that editors used to prepare the publications had any effect on the inclusion frequency of business items.

Editors who spend eleven to twenty hours weekly produced the best results (67.16 percent) for "total business." Editors with one to ten hours followed with 55.05 percent, and editors with greater than twenty hours produced the least amount (48.85 percent) of "total business." The results suggest that ten to twenty hours is the optimum range whereas the normal assumption would be that editors with more hours would produce better results. Presuming that hours of preparation can be directly proportional is not valid, because published articles cannot be manufactured at a definite rate like products in the automotive plants. For example, gatekeeping could be another factor that can alter the content frequencies regardless of the editor's preparation time.

An examination of the editors' demographics indicates that using the surveyed editors' hours might not be a valid variable for this research. For example, the two daily editors reported ten and twelve hours weekly preparation time. Both daily editors are supervisors, so their relatively short times for daily newsletters are probably a result of delegating part of the work such as typing, duplication, and distribution. Since the demographic survey did not isolate editing time from production and

distribution, the hours reported by different editors are probably not accurate measures of the same variable. Future content analysis research involving editor's time should query the time required to prepare the publication prior to duplication and distribution, since decisions on content inclusion are only made when the publication is prepared. For the purposes of this research, the reported time will represent the editors' involvement with employee communication as opposed to isolated editing time.

Attempts to control for other variables indicate efficiency could be interacting with the editors' hours. All four of the highest efficiency editors (and none of the lowest efficiency) fell into the eleven to twenty hours category, which indicates that the efficiency of editors in this range of hours could be a contributing factor with editors' hours.

Conclusions for Question 8

The eighth research question asked if the frequency of distribution had any effect on the inclusion frequency of business items.

Taken as a group, daily editors published the highest percentage of "total business" (71.31 percent). Publications with less than weekly distribution followed daily publications at 66.94 percent of "total business." The lowest group, weekly publications, produced 46.39 percent. Speculating that daily publications will result in

more business content in employee publications is dangerous with only two daily publications represented in the analysis. The content distribution could be based more on the individual traits of the editors involved.

For example, one of the daily editors produced a weekly publication during part of the year. This editor's consistency with both publications suggests that the individual's work habits might be more of a controlling factor than the frequency of distribution. The editor's efficiencies for daily (.85) and weekly (.86) were nearly identical. The preparation hours for daily (12) and weekly (12) were identical. The "total business" inclusion frequencies for the daily newsletter (66.67 percent) and the weekly version (57.57 percent) ranked in the top one-half of all editors' results. Again, with only one editor as a sample, the evidence is inconclusive for generalizations.

An explanation for the percentage drop in weekly publications is suggested by attempts to control for the editors' education. Of the six weekly editors with less than 50 percent "total business," five of the six do not have college degrees. Other analyses in this thesis show that degreed editors produce more "total business" (see results and conclusions for Research Question 11).

In the area of "local business," editors with less than weekly distribution produced the largest percentage at 35.48 percent, followed by the nearly identical performances of daily publications (20.93 percent) and weekly

publications (21.00 percent). Possibly, since local items normally take longer for approvals, editors with less than weekly distribution publications include more "local business," because the longer time span between issues provides time for approval. A longer time span also allows for more local articles to accumulate.

Conclusions for Question 9

The ninth research question asked if the editors' efficiency had any effect on the frequency of inclusion for business items.

The most efficient editors produced one-third more "total business" than less efficient editors. Discovering that the most efficient editors produce the highest percentage of "total business" supports a preconception that work habits are consistent with the individual regardless of the task.

In attempting to control for education, it was discovered that five of the least efficient editors did not hold college degrees. There were no editors with college degrees in the lowest efficiency category. Editors without degrees had substantially lower percentages for "total business" in the two higher efficiency categories. Education seems to be interacting with efficiency.

Conclusions for Question 10

The tenth research question investigated if the location where a publication is produced had any effect on the inclusion frequency of business items. In each analysis, divisional publications exhibited higher inclusion frequencies than plant publications.

Divisional office publications produced more "total business" (72.97 percent), while manufacturing plants produced 54.02 percent. The inherent nature of the divisional office could be the reason for higher percentages of "total business" in divisional publications; i.e. the divisional office primarily functions in areas of communication and coordination, whereas plants focus primary attention on manufacturing processes. Also, the divisional office receives and processes more information than plant locations. In addition to information generated from the divisional offices, information also is received from every plant location, so the divisional information base is larger.

In attempting to control for editors' hours, it was discovered that six of the plant editors spend between one and ten hours, and no divisional editors are in this category. Divisional editors may have an advantage for "total business," because they devote more time than the majority of the plant editors.

Divisional office publications produced more "proactive business" (25.68 percent) than manufacturing

plants (14.86 percent). Since the director of public
relations reports directly to the general manager of the
division, that relationship provides access to proactive
information that can be included in divisional publications.
(All divisional office publications are produced and/or
supervised by the public relations office.) Additionally,
the director, who edits a weekly supervisors' newsletter,
has a peer relationship with the highest level of
decision-makers at the divisional office.

Editors in plant locations are separated from top
management by one to four layers of management. In essence,
several layers of gatekeepers could flavor the original
message before the editor receives it. Even if the message
is undistorted, timeliness is often lost, so the nature of
the original proactive information becomes reactive when it
reaches the editor. The subordinate-superordinate
relationships are so clearly defined and observed in some
locations that some of the sources of information would
never consider communicating directly with the editor.

Divisional office publications produced 33.78 percent
"local business," and manufacturing plants produced less at
22.69 percent. In each analysis in this research, "local
business" coverage lags behind "total business," so a
problem seems to exist in this area. While the approval
process is considered normal procedure with the
organization's publications, editors often view the process
as a barrier that results in gatekeeping behaviors to impede

the flow of local communication. The nature of the approval process for local items (see Appendix 7) might be the major reason for the higher performance from divisional office publications.

The approval process in the divisional office can be faster than plant locations. All divisional office publications are supervised in the public relations office, and the editors of three publications are supervised by individuals who also are editors. The divisional office publications might realize higher percentages of "local business," because the staff is more familiar with and often completely responsible for the approval process. Manufacturing plant personnel are not generally familiar with approval criteria, so a "better be safe than sorry" attitude can curtail the amount of published information that reaches employees.

Conclusions for Research Question 11

The eleventh research question asked if the editors' education had any effect on the inclusion frequency of business items.

Editors with college degrees published more (65.37 percent) "total business" than nondegreed editors (43.88 percent). Degreed editors might produce more "total business" as a result of their education. Since degreed employees are eligible for and generally hold higher employee classification levels than nondegreed employees,

their advanced status may provide more access to sources of information. Removing layers of management can result in fewer gatekeepers, which improves the editors' access to information. Subordinate employees at Michigan Motors are not expected to have aggressive traits normally associated with the role of an editor. Appointing editors who are not degreed may be a negative form of gatekeeping, because the editor's mobility in the organization and access to information will be limited.

In attempting to control for other variables that might be interacting with education, several possibilities were found. Degreed editors produced more "total business" in the two highest efficiency ranges. There were no degreed editors in the lowest efficiency range, but five editors without degrees were in the lowest efficiency range and produced lower percentages of "total business." Relatively equal amounts of degreed and nondegreed editors are in plant and division office locations, but degreed editors recorded comparatively higher percentages of "total business" at both locations. In evaluating editors' hours, degreed editors produced higher percentages of "total business" in each time variant. Analyzing length of service showed that degreed editors include more "total business" as their service time increased, and nondegreed editors produce less "total business" as their service time increased. The editors' education interacts with more variables than any other factor in this research.

Conclusions for Question 12

The twelfth research question asked how often the local manager used the publication to communicate to employees.

Attributions from the local manager were found in an average of 3.59 percent of all articles. The percentage of manager attribution dropped slightly to 3.24 percent when "total business" articles were considered. Either percentage is very low considering the emphasis placed on the manager's expected role as the key communicator for the location in the editors' reference guides and the chairman's letter.

The general manager of the Michigan Components Division is setting an excellent example, because his attributions show up in three of the four separate divisional office publications. In fact, the 25 percent attribution rate for the divisional manager in the divisional office quarterly publication is the primary reason the average percentage for the fifteen publications was above 3 percent. Eight of the publications had no articles with information that could be attributed to the local manager.

Clearly, local manufacturing plant managers have not responded to the challenge of acting as the key communicator for their locations as recommended by the corporation, the division, literature, and research. One explanation for the low levels of local manager attribution could be that the

managers do not have time for employee communication, but the attribution level of the general manager demonstrates that managers can find time to communicate. On the basis of available time, the general manager probably has less flexibility than any of the manufacturing plant managers. Since we have only one general manager as a sample, generalizations about other general managers for the division cannot be made, but the communication behavior of fourteen local managers does show a trend away from employee communication. Traditional bureaucratic, scientific management theories would suggest these managers are closely guarding management information.

Management information is reaching the pages of the employee publications, because supervisors, department heads, superintendents, etc. were frequent attributed sources in many articles. The majority of articles attributed to management representatives dealt with "business events" as opposed to "business issues," so employees might be missing the reasoning processes underlying the events. The possibility exists that the local managers delegated the communication responsibility to management representatives who supplied information for the publications. Also, the managers may be communicating to employees in other ways not measured by the employee publications.

Survey results seem to support the results from content analysis. Managers in four locations reported that

they spend one hour per week for print communication while twelve managers reported that they spend no time for print communication. Every manager reported some time for other employee communication. The average reported time for all managers was 3.87 hours per week with a range of one to six hours. None of the times were verified by analysis, nor were other preferred methods of communication specified. Perhaps the employee publication is not viewed as an acceptable form of communication by the plant managers.

Conclusions for Question 13

The thirteenth research question investigates how often the publications are used as a vehicle for upward communication from employees to management.

Upward communication is evidenced in an average of 20.63 percent of all articles, so the publications are serving a function as two-way communication vehicles as suggested by the MM chairman's letter. However, upward communication in "total business" drops to 14.72 percent. As before, the results for upward communication could be viewed negatively or positively. The optimist would quickly point out that the major share of all upward communication is in the "total business" category.

The pessimist would concentrate on the reasons for the drop in percentage. Whether the drop in percentage is due to traditional bureaucratic scientific management, gatekeeping, or the local approval processes is difficult to

determine. For purposes of discussion, literature and research would tend to support the following explanation: Employees don't know enough about the business aspects to serve as a source for "total business" information. Traditional management behavior would not result in sharing business information with employees, nor would managers who control the gatekeeping process and the publications necessarily be interested in receiving information from employees in an area that is clearly the domain of management. No attempts were made to ascertain the validity of the previous explanation which was based on literature and research, so the application to Michigan Components Division may or may not be applicable.

Conclusion Summary

Two general questions directed the research in this thesis:

1. How are the various publications meeting the corporate recommendations for content that are outlined in published corporate recommendations for employee publications?

2. What factors influence the communication of specific business content categories?

Most of the employee publications of the Michigan Components Division of Michigan Motors are meeting many of the corporate recommendations for inclusion of business content. As a result of published recommendations for editors and management, a strong gatekeeping process exists

to concentrate on business items that meet the objectives of the organization. This evidence stands contradictory to the majority of previous research in employee communication which indicates that trivial items predominate over business. Percentages for local and proactive content dropped in business areas, which is evidence of gatekeeping at the location of the publication that results in limiting these kinds of information.

Interpretation of the corporate recommendations resulted in wide variances in performance between the various publications and editors. Editors' perceptions of content inclusion also varied, but most editors' perceptions were similar to measured content percentages in business areas. In contrast to the majority of previous research based on editors' responses to surveys, this research was based on actual measured content in 572 randomly selected articles.

Variables that were found to influence the inclusion of business items significantly are:

--Length of editors' service with the organization

--Amount of hours editors devote to communication

--Frequency of distribution for the publications

--Editor's efficiency (meeting publication schedules)

--Location where a publication is produced

--Editors' education (college degree)

Several variables were found to interact. Unfortunately, due to the small sample size of editors, statistical

analyses with control variables were impractical.

The most important variables seem to be editors' education and the location of the publication. These two variables appeared in several analyses as possible interacting variables, with consistently higher percenteges of business content produced by college degreed editors and divisional publications.

Plant managers are not using the employee publications as a vehicle to communicate to their employees. If the publications are valid indicators, the plant managers are not fulfilling their role of key communicator as recommended by the corporation. However, the general manager does communicate through the publications. Whether the difference in communication styles of the managers is due to differences in location, editors, or personalities of the managers, the reasons for low levels of plant manager attribution in publications should be investigated.

The organization's publications are used to convey communication upward from employees to supervision. Previous research criticized employee publications for their preponderance of management messages. In this respect, Michigan Component's plant publications are markedly different from the typical employee house organs, but the plant publications analyzed in this research have gone to the other extreme by eliminating, for all practical purposes, the presence of the local manager in their publications.

While the gatekeeping instructions from the corporation cover many content recommendations, measurable standards for performance in employee communication are missing. The introduction of published performance standards should yield more uniformity in performance with the various publications.

Employee communication has escaped analytical scrutiny in an organization that thrives on forecasts, statistics, production efficiency, quality indexes, scrap rates, payroll, benefit computations, efficiency ratings, attendance statistics, budget computations, performance to budget analyses, charity fund raising, and sophisticated material control systems. It would be safe to say—with the exception of employee communication—all other business areas in Michigan Motors are subject to regular statistical assessment. Constant monitoring of "actual to budget" and "current to prior" are accepted traditional methods the organization employs to monitor its operations.

The best evidence that employee communication is not embraced as a management system is the absence of normal control mechanisms and the absence of communication managers with direct reporting relationships to the top management at each location. The widely ranging variances found in this research of employee communication would not be tolerated in other managed systems in the organization.

Employee communication has traditionally been the responsibility of each location. The corporate and

divisional offices avoid formal criticism of any of the
publications received from the various editors at
manufacturing locations. Again, employee communication
receives unique treatment as the only area in the
organization where accountability does not accompany
responsibility. In other areas, manufacturing plants send
daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual reports to the
central location for compilation and analysis. Any variance
from predetermined limits is dealt with immediately.

This thesis does not recommend statistical analysis
as a cure for possible employee communication problems.
However, to identify strengths and weaknesses, some formal
method to monitor employee communication is needed to
achieve uniformity. Possibly, since statistics is the
normal mode of communication for nearly all of the
organization's managed systems, employee communication needs
to share the common language of statistics to be worthy of
consideration as a manageable system.

APPENDICES

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APPENDIX 1

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF MICHIGAN MOTORS

SUBJECT EMPLOYE COMMUNICATIONS   NO. 1466

TO   General Managers of Divisions   DATE October 12, 1983
General Operating Officers
Group Executives
Staff Executives
Heads of Staff Sections

Effective two-way communication between management and employes is critical for success in our highly competitive worldwide business.

The need for employe understanding, involvement and cooperation has never been greater — and a broad base of information about the business is fundamental to the achievement of all these goals. More than that, ■ has an obligation to keep its employes informed about important matters that affect the business and their own livelihood.

Two-way information-sharing can improve decision making and work performance by facilitating the making of decisions at the lowest possible levels by employes who know the most about getting the job done right. In turn, this increased participation can contribute to higher levels of employe satisfaction and quality of work life. We need ideas and suggestions from all employes about how to operate more efficiently — at every level of the business. Good communications also can promote better employe understanding and consequent support for the Corporation's positions on key public issues.

The best means of communicating is by regular face-to-face exchange of information. But employe publications, bulletin board postings, letters to employe homes and other media should be used to supplement management-employe meetings and other forms of face-to-face communications.

Although local news is of primary interest to employes, local communications must also include priority corporate information. Surveys of ■ employes have shown a high degree of interest in many corporate activities, such as technological developments, new products, financial performance, government actions, worldwide competition and foreign affiliations, future plans and other key aspects of the business. Guidelines for optimum management/employe communications at each ■ location are attached.

Effective employe communications are essential to ■■■■■■ and each of you is urged to give to this important activity your full support and cooperation.

Chairman

Date: October 12, 1983

Subject: <u>GUIDELINES FOR MANAGEMENT/EMPLOYE COMMUNICATIONS</u>

To: General Managers of Divisions
          Plant Managers
          General Operating Officers
          Group Executives
          Staff Executives
          Heads of Staff Sections

The Employe Communications Section of the Public Relations Staff is responsible
for coordinating corporate-wide employe communication efforts. Included are
development of corporate print information, audiovisual materials, and other
services designed to help ▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆ staffs, divisions, and plants maintain
effective programs of information-sharing with all employes. These activities are
developed in cooperation with the Industrial Relations and Personnel
Administration and Development Staffs. This memorandum discusses recommended
standards and outlines guidelines concerning priority subjects for
employe-management communications.

<u>RECOMMENDED STANDARDS</u>

To maintain a satisfactory level of employe communication throughout the
Corporation, basic standards have been developed based on programs already in
operation at many locations. The recommendations are that each location:

1. Establish a formal, organized program of regular communication with all
    employes involving key information about the business and its effect on
    employes.

2. Establish regular, frequent printed communications for all employes.

3. Encourage regular meetings between management and employes. At least twice a
    year, management should provide all employes with a review of the state of
    the business (from both corporate and local viewpoints), as well as
    discussion of management problems, goals and outlook, plus what is expected
    from employes. Employe questions should be encouraged, with answers ideally
    being given at the meetings or through other communication channels as soon
    as practical.

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4. Make effective use of the supervisory structure to provide for two-way communication. All supervisors should understand the importance of communicating key information to subordinate supervisors and to employes in their work groups. Top management at all ██ locations should make sure that supervisors have a regular flow of information to discuss with their employes — weekly newsletters and regular meetings with all supervisors to exchange information are recommended. Also, supervisors have a responsibility to - receive and transmit upward through organizational channels pertinent employe opinions, problem areas, and ideas for improvement.

5. Conduct periodic surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of employe communications and to provide direction for continuing improvements.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

o The local Employe Communications Coordinator (or Manager) is the key to a successful program. He or she should have the responsibility for organizing and managing a planned, systematic program involving various channels of communications. Included are printed materials, bulletin boards, employe meetings, and audiovisual materials produced both locally and at the corporate level. To insure a successful program, local communicators should have the full support and cooperation of top management, as well as timely access to essentially all management information of the types listed on the next page.

o Managers and supervisors should be encouraged to share with employes all information that is useful for increasing employe understanding of, and contributions to, the operation of the business. Only truly confidential information should be withheld.

o Employe communications should serve the information needs of _both_ management and employes. Special care should be given to maintaining a reasonable balance in coverage of hourly and salaried activities to demonstrate management's desire to communicate with _all_ employes on an ongoing basis.

o It is good practice to communicate the bad news as well as the good news to avoid negative effects of rumors and misinformation and to maintain management credibility with employes. It also is good practice to respond promptly to rumors or negative information about the local organization or ██ that would be of concern to employes.

o It is imperative that important information be communicated to employes prior to or simultaneously with its release to the news media.

o Make prompt and effective use of corporate information materials and special services made available by the Public Relations Staff. (See attached list.) All of these materials are approved for release to employes and the public unless specifically restricted.

o Expand or rewrite Corporation information whenever possible to reflect local interests as a means of increasing its impact on local employes.

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PRIORITY CORPORATE INFORMATION

To help coordinate corporate-wide information-sharing, a list of priority subjects for employe communications is developed each year and made available to Employe Communications Coordinators. These cover a variety of subjects such as:

o Product quality.

o ███ worldwide competitive challenge.

o ██ technological leadership.

o ██ product leadership; selling ██ products.

o Facts about ███ business — special emphasis on economic factors.

o Government actions affecting ███

o ███ response to social, safety, and environmental problems.

o Benefits of being a ██ employe.

PRIORITY LOCAL INFORMATION

The corporate priorities provide a base for development of local priorities. In addition, special attention should be given to the exchange of local information with employes on other subjects, such as:

o Plans, goals, and problems of the local organization.

o Performance levels — production output, absenteeism, quality, reject rates, progress in meeting established goals.

o Work schedules.

o Reports on quality of work life and employe participation groups with emphasis on achievements through teamwork of employes, management, and unions.

o Other local projects involving joint efforts of management and unions.

o Competitive problems, such as: how local plant won or lost contracts for business.

o Expansion or modification of physical facilities, improvement of equipment — what these changes mean to employes.

o Action or events which require special employe understanding — layoffs, reduction in production levels, or changes in overtime needs.

o Plant safety — basic rules, reports on accidents and how employes can help.

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o Personnel matters -- benefit programs, job opportunities, training and development opportunities, employment levels.

o Role of the local unit in community relations -- how its management and employes contribute.

o Significant, interesting news about employes at work.

HANDLING OF CONFIDENTIAL OR SENSITIVE CORPORATE INFORMATION

While an open climate of information-sharing is desirable to satisfy both the needs of the business and of our employes, it is important to safeguard the security of certain types of confidential information. This would include information which, if available to competitors or to the general public, would be advantageous to competitors or detrimental to ▆ its shareholders, or its employes.

Whenever there is a question concerning the release of information to employes, the matter should be reviewed with the appropriate plant, division, or corporation staff executive. The ▆ Public Relations Staff also is available to assist in the clearance of informational material.

Vice President   Vice President   Vice President
Personnel Administration   Public Relations Staff   Industrial Relations Staff
and Development Staff

cc: Public Relations Directors
     Personnel Directors
     Employe Communications Coordinators (or Managers)
     Employe Publication Editors

APPENDIX 2

SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

PUBLICATION (initials to conceal identity)   (- -)
01--BB
02--C
03--U
04--MC
05--F
06--GL
07--GL
08--H
09--KT
10--OD
11--U
12--STE
13--TFR
14--TT (weekly)
15--TT (daily)

PUBLICATION FREQUENCY   (-)
1--daily
2--n-weekly
3--weekly
4--n-monthly
5--monthly
6--other regular
7--other irregular

NUMBER OF 1986 PUBLICATIONS PRODUCED   (- - -)

PUBLICATIONS POSSIBLE (work days in 1986)   (- - -)

FORMAT   (-)
1--letter
2--legal
3--multiple page stapled
4--multiple page folded
5--multiple page saddle stitched (magazine)
6--half-tabloid

COLUMNS (predominant)   (-)
1--one
2--two
3--multi

SPACE AVAILABLE (exclude margins/nameplate)(- - - - -)

REPRODUCTION METHOD   (-)
1--printing
2--photocopier

FONTS USED   (-)
1--typeset
2--typewriter
3--dot-matrix
4--computer set dot-matrix

HEADLINE FONT   (-)
1--same as text
2--bigger and bolder

PREPARATION OF PUBLICATION (prior to printing)   (-)
1--inplant resources (photographer, typesetting, layout,
    etc.)
2--outside vendor
3--editor does it all

EQUIPMENT USED FOR PREPARATION   (-)
1--typewriter
2--computer and printer
3--typesetter
4--combination of above

EDITOR   (-)
1--identified
2--not identified

EDITOR'S DEMOGRAPHICS

Age   (- -)

Sex   1--male or 2--female   (-)

Minority status   1--yes or 2--no   (-)

Length of MM service in years   (- -)

Highest level of education in years   (- -)

Degree in journalism or communications 1--yes 2--no   (-)

Any formal training in communications 1--yes or 2--no (-)

Number of training events in communications   (- -)
        (Communispond, seminars, conventions, workshops)

Months in present job   (- - -)

Years at present location   (- -)

Employee status   1--hourly or 2--salaried   (-)

Hours per week for print communications   (- -)

Hours per week for other employee communications   (- -)

EDITOR'S PERCEPTION OF CONTENT DISTRIBUTION PERCENTAGES

Business Issues   (- -)

Business Events   (- -)

Business Related Recognition   (- -)

Employee Information   (- -)

Union News and Issues   (- -)

Nonbusiness Items and Issues   (- -)

SUPERVISOR'S DEMOGRAPHICS

Age   (-   -)

Sex   1--male or 2--female   (-)

Minority status   1--yes or 2--no   (-)

Length of MM service in years   (-   -)

Highest level of education in years   (-   -)

Degree in journalism or communications 1--yes or 2--no (-)

Any formal training in communications 1--yes or 2--no (-)

Number of training events in communications   (-   -)
        (Communispond, seminars, conventions, workshops)

Months in present job   (-   -   -)

Years at present location   (-   -)

Hours per week for print communications   (-   -)

Hours per week for other employee communications   (-   -)

PLANT MANAGER'S DEMOGRAPHICS

Age   (-   -)

Sex   1--male or 2--female   (-)

Minority status   1--yes or 2--no   (-)

Length of MM service in years   (-   -)

Highest level of education in years   (-   -)

Degree in journalism or communications 1--yes or 2--no (-)

Any formal training in communications 1--yes or 2--no (-)

Number of training events in communications   (-   -)
        (Communispond, seminars, conventions, workshops)

Months in present job   (-   -   -)

Years at present location   (-   -)

Hours per week for print communications   (-   -)

Hours per week for other employee communications   (-   -)

APPENDIX 3

SAMPLE CONTENT ANALYSIS CODING FORM

ARTICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (– – – – – – – – –)

CODER'S NAME _____ I.D. NO. (–)

START TIME _____ END TIME _____ TOTAL (– –)

Date coding performed   (– – – –)

Supervisor check for completion; enter in computer   (   )
Return to coder for completion of circled items   (   )

CONTENT CATEGORIES FOR CODING ANALYSIS
CHOOSE ONLY ONE

1--Business Issues   (– – –)
    01--Quality
    02--Productivity
    03--Cost reduction
    04--Customer news, relations with customers
    05--Competition
    06--Job security
    07--Miscellaneous

2--Business Events   (– – –)
    08--Plant layout changes
    09--Gain or loss of business
    10--Employment changes
    11--Actions affecting plant or business
    12--Schedule changes
    13--Statistical reporting
    14--Informative articles
    15--Question/Answer sessions
    16--Miscellaneous

3--Business Related Recognition   (– – –)
    17--Awards earned for business accomplishments
    18--Commendations
    19--Personnel activity
    20--Retirements
    21--Patents
    22--Suggestion awards

4--Employee Information   (-   -   -)
    23--MM sponsored charities
    24--Benefits
    25--Safety store announcements
    26--Training announcements
    27--Personnel policy announcements
    28--Miscellaneous

5--Union News and Issues   (-   -   -)
    29--Contracts and negotiations
    30--Elections
    31--Contractual issues
    32--Training announcements

600--Nonbusiness Items and Issues   (-   -   -)

RATIONALE
1--explained
2--not explained

TIMELINESS
1--proactive
2--reactive
3--unknown

SOURCE OF ARTICLE
1--local
2--external
3--reprint
4--unknown

ATTRIBUTION
Coders, color highlight the source(s) of attribution.
1--attribution present
2--no attribution

AUDIENCE INTENDED
1--hourly
2--salaried
3--all

NEGATIVE PHRASEOLOGY USED
Coders, circle the negatives.
1--yes, but confined to one sentence or headline
2--yes, more than one sentence or headline
3--no

IMPERATIVE VOICE
Coders, circle the imperatives
1--yes, but confined to one sentence or headline
2--yes, but more than one sentence or headline
3--no

HEADLINE REFERENCE
1--relates to the article
2--does not indicate the content of the article
3--no headline

HEADLINE WRITING
1--correct
2--incorrect

GRAPHICS
1--line art
2--graphs
3--charts
4--halftone photographs
5--unscreened photographs
6--combination of one or more of above graphic elements

USE OF GRAPHICS
1--supports text
2--stands alone

CUTLINE WITH GRAPHICS
1--yes, properly written
2--yes, improperly written
3--no cutline

SPACE DEVOTED TO GRAPHICS   (- - - - - - -)

_____ x _____   Coders measure sq. mm

SPACE USED FOR TEXT   (- - - - - - -)

_____ x _____   Coders measure sq. mm

ATTRIBUTION SOURCE--CODERS DO NOT ANSWER THIS ONE.
01--plant manager   1--yes 2--no   (-)
02--plant staff   1--yes 2--no   (-)
03--plant salaried   1--yes 2--no   06--division
staff 1--yes 2--no   (-)
07--division salaried 1--yes 2--no   (-)
08--division hourly   1--yes 2--no   (-)
09--MM corporate management 1--yes 2--no   (-)
10--MM corporate staff 1--yes 2--no   (-)
11--MM corporate salaried   1--yes 2--no   (-)
12--UAW regional   1--yes 2--no   (-)
13--UAW international   1--yes .2--no   (-)
14--editor   1--yes 2--no   (-)
15--unknown 1--yes 2--no   (-)

APPENDIX 4

DEFINITIONS FOR CONTENT CODING

Numbers in parentheses correspond to numbers for content categories used for computer entry from the coding instrument.

Business Issues

(101) QUALITY is defined as conforming to the requirements of the customer (mentioning the customer's needs is imperative). Include Statistical Process Control (SPC), Material Complaint Notices (MCN), and quality education articles that introduce terms and concepts (articles that refer to quality but do not qualify as education or customer conformance do not meet the criteria for this category).

(102) PRODUCTIVITY includes activities related to meeting requirements for producing manufactured products, new equipment, production achievements, and recognition, improvements to maintain business, references to capacity, and any activities of employee teams where specific accomplishments are mentioned (formation of groups and announcements of intentions do not qualify—must have action).

(103) <u>COST REDUCTION</u> activities are related to reducing costs or to keeping costs in line with expectations. Typical terms encountered are as follows:

ABSENTEEISM--employees not present as assigned

BURDEN--nonproductive expenses

ENERGY CONSERVATION--cost reduction of utilities

OVERTIME--working beyond 40 hour schedule

SCRAP--defective material or equipment, reworked products, returned goods, material complaint notices (MCN), and repairs.

SUGGESTION PLAN REPORTS--results of implementation

TIME SAVINGS--reducing labor, improving efficiency

(104) <u>CUSTOMER INFORMATION</u> refers to news about customers and MC involvement/relationships with customers. A customer is any plant that uses Michigan Components (MC) products.

(105) <u>COMPETITION</u> involves costs of products related to competition and news/information about competitors. Mainly, we are concerned with direct competitors to MC, but we will include ALL news about car manufacturers other than MM. MC is a component parts manufacturer, so products like motors, radios, and assembled cars are not considered competition. Competitors can be other MM facilities that make similar products, since MC is considered an independent business unit. Specific competitors or specific references must be made; general statements about competition or competitiveness do not qualify for this category.

(106) <u>JOB SECURITY</u> is defined as specific references to continued employment. Seniority does not apply for this category.

(107) <u>MISCELLANEOUS</u> items are as follows: housekeeping procedures, hazardous material developments, and safety innovations/regulations.

Business Events

(208) <u>PLANT LAYOUT CHANGES</u> involve changes in floor space and equipment. Typical terminology encountered:

CONSTRUCTION--building new facilities and installing new equipment to replace old.

REARRANGEMENT--moving production to different location.

REMODELING--changing facility to accommodate new.

REPAIRS--fixing and/or replacing equipment.

(209) <u>GAIN OR LOSS OF BUSINESS</u> shows in retention of business, gain or loss of production, gain or loss of product, impending gains or losses, change or modification of production, competitive cost differences, new contracts for business, bidding process news, and sales/marketing news.

(210) <u>EMPLOYMENT CHANGES</u> are evidenced in layoffs and callbacks whether impending or actual.

(211) <u>ACTIONS AFFECTING PLANT OR BUSINESS</u> can result from the following: market conditions, corporate decisions, reorganization of business units, state or federal regulations, taxes, external strikes by suppliers or consumers, stock and profit activity, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rulings, Occupational Safety and Health Authority (OSHA) rulings, recalls, corporate mergers and joint ventures, and crude oil/gasoline prices. If not as specified in this section, the external item will have to be specifically related to the business of the division to be eligible for this category.

(212) <u>SCHEDULE CHANGES</u> result from changes in production schedules.

(213) <u>STATISTICAL REPORTING</u> methods are as follows: reporting on various accomplishments in items such as productivity, quality ranking, scrap, absenteeism, and material complaint notices (MCN). (Differs from items in business issues in that this category involves mere reporting or recounting of activity with little or no accompanying text; i.e., tabular forms, graphs, etc.)

(214) <u>INFORMATIVE ARTICLES</u> can be industry news (except about competition), employees, products, and familiarization with departments where no change in production is specified. Include all articles that discuss general business-related topics where no issue or event is predominant.

(215) QUESTION/ANSWER SESSIONS are interchanges between employees and management usually structured as questions followed by answers.

(216) MISCELLANEOUS--internal product news, meeting announcements, general meeting reports, housekeeping, visitors to local facility, inventory, hazardous material notices, and safety.

Business-Related Recognition

(317) AWARDS--specific formal commendations for business performance, MM sponsored community events and charities, and MM Chairman Excellence Award for Community Activity.

(318) COMMENDATIONS--positive feedback other than awards where employees have done a good job. The actual reason must be cited. General "attaboys" do not qualify.

(319) PERSONNEL ACTIVITY--promotions, transfers, and service record recognition.

(320) RETIREMENTS--listings or features about employees that retire.

(321) PATENTS--listings or features about patents granted or pending.

(322) SUGGESTION AWARDS--listings of awards received. (Detailed accounts of awards and the cost savings reasons are to be coded in the cost savings section.)

Employee Information

(423) MM SPONSORED CHARITIES--blood drives, Junior

Achievement, United Way, United Fund, Old Newsboys, Scouting,

affirmative action activities, scholarships, media events

with MM sponsorship, and internships. (All other charities

are termed nonbusiness.)

(424) BENEFITS--changes and announcements of employee

benefits, car purchase programs, perquisites, and discount

programs for purchases.

(425) SAFETY STORE--items for sale and schedules (This has

nothing to do with product safety or reports on plant safety

procedures.)

(426) TRAINING ANNOUNCEMENTS--availability of training

opportunity, meetings, and organization of employee work

groups where no specific action is stated, and offsite

meetings.

(427) PERSONNEL POLICY ANNOUNCEMENTS--expectations of

employee conduct, holiday and vacation schedules, and payment

notifications regarding timing of payment (not articles

descriptive of reasons for payment such as bonuses and

benefits.)

(428) MISCELLANEOUS--Cafeteria, parking lot, vehicle traffic,

and weather notices.

Union News and Union Issues

UNION NEWS AND ISSUES--must constitute main subject or predicate relationship in sentence with union mentioned (mere reference to union does not qualify).

(529) CONTRACTS and NEGOTIATIONS--activities associated with the formal bargaining process including "agreements."

(530) ELECTIONS--nominations and elections of union officials.

(531) CONTRACTUAL ISSUES--relates to official activities and issues that are guaranteed by contract; i.e., attendance bonus, cost of living allowance (COLA), profit sharing, and joint process (MM-UAW).

(532) TRAINING--training that is not project related, apprentice training, G.E.D. (high school equivalency certificate), high school and college classes sponsored by UAW.

Nonbusiness

(600) NONBUSINESS ISSUES--These items are not related to the business of the organization and the employees. Typical items are as follows: recognition outside business; sports news and awards; personal vacation news; employee's family news; tips on health, diet, gardening, recipes, etc.; human interest not connected to business; fillers; and jokes, cartoons, and unrelated clip art.

Additional Explanations for Coding

RATIONALE—Look for the reasoning, facts, or supportive information given in the article. For example: In announcing a layoff, if the reasons given for the reduction of force are in the article, then it is classified as explained. Do not evaluate quality and quantity of information. Only look for a presence of a reasonable attempt to explain.

TIMELINESS—PROACTIVE timeliness means that information is given prior to the event. REACTIVE timeliness means that information is given after the fact. UNKNOWN means that the time relationship cannot be established.

SOURCE OF ARTICLE—We want to know where the article originated. LOCAL articles originate at the location; EXTERNAL articles come from outside the location. REPRINTS are items lifted from other publications, whole or in part; the publication must be referenced. UNKNOWN sources are those that cannot be attributed to other classifications.

ATTRIBUTION—We're looking for the use of direct quotation or references to named sources who provided the information. Proper names of individuals, publications and/or organizations meet the criteria. (Spokesperson, "a source," and representative do not apply.) Coders only color highlight the source(s).

employees; i.e., salaried employees do not get attendance bonuses or attend union meetings. Most general plant issues appeal to all employees, because all employees work in all areas and their collective future is determined by actions in all areas.

NEGATIVE PHRASEOLOGY--Negative phraseology is a logical statement formed by asserting the falsity of the statement. Look for negative verbs and adjectives like "not, wrong, and bad." A typical example would be: "We won't keep producing the product if we don't improve our quality." Positively stated, we would read: "We can keep our product by improving our quality." CIRCLE EXAMPLES YOU FIND.

IMPERATIVE VOICE--Imperative statements indicate that the speaker is commanding the audience. Implied imperatives (can, should, and let) do not count as imperative voice. A typical example would be: "You must correct the situation that exists; do it right the first time." Properly stated, we would read: "The situation can be corrected if we can take the opportunity to eliminate reworking an item." CIRCLE EXAMPLES YOU FIND.

HEADLINE REFERENCE--The headline must directly relate to the content in the article and indicate what the article contains. "Attention Employees" does not relate to the article unless the text is telling employees to stand at attention.

HEADLINE WRITING--To be correctly written, a headline should contain a subject and a verb. Understood verbs of being (is, are, was, were, and to be) do not have to be present for the headline to be written correctly. Typical bad examples would be: "Employee benefits" and "Scrap." Properly written, we would read: "Employee benefits improve" and "Scrap reduced in finishing area."

GRAPHICS--Determine the type of graphics used.

LINE ART is a line drawing, a logotype, or bold type that is dissimilar to the text font and is not a headline.

GRAPHS are diagrams that have two coordinates with one or more points, lines or bars that represent variable comparisons of values represented by the coordinates.

CHARTS are maps, tabular information, diagrams, layouts, or engineering drawings.

HALFTONE PHOTOGRAPHS contain small dots to provide varying amounts of light and dark areas in photographs.

PHOTOGRAPHS UNSCREENED have no halftone dots. Generally, the only tones are black and white, with no gray areas.

COMBINATIONS of graphics will be listed with no attempt to identify which types were used.

USE OF GRAPHICS--Determine if the graphics supports the text material. For example if the text says that business has taken a turn for the worse, the downward trend should appear in the graphics to qualify as supporting.

CUTLINE WITH GRAPHICS--A properly written cutline has a subject and a verb, refers to the content of the graphics, and is written in the present tense. (Some historical references are permitted to use the past tense, but historical references are rare.)

SPACE DEVOTED TO GRAPHICS--Measure and calculate the square millimeters and include the space taken by the cutline. Use the same criteria for measurement as defined in "SPACE USED FOR TEXT" definition.

SPACE USED FOR TEXT--Measure amount of space used for text, not including margins. Do not include headlines. Ignore blank lines (skip-a-spaces) and do not subtract them from the amount of space. Most publications are consistent with their use of spacing, so the percentage of space within a publication should not be markedly affected by blank lines.

APPENDIX 5

EXCERPTS FROM MM EDITORS' REFERENCE GUIDE

The content numbers used in the coding analysis are in parentheses. See Appendix 4 for an interpretation of the numbers.

Five Major Goals of Communication Efforts

1. To provide employees with a better understanding of the business so they will make a greater effort to improve productivity (102), quality (101), and efficiency (102 and 103)

2. To stimulate increased ideas from employees to help us run the business more efficiently (215, 321, and 322)

3. To contribute to improved employee morale. An employee who is well informed feels like a member of the team and is more likely to be loyal, interested, and make increased contributions to business objectives (not measured)

4. To encourage our employees to buy and sell Michigan Motors products (424)

5. To help us develop an action-oriented constituency among our employees by providing them with understandable company positions on public issues of importance to our business (214)[104]

Michigan Motors Information Priorities

—Quality (101)

—Customer satisfaction (104)

—Technology (102, 208, 211, and 321)

—Energy (103 and 211)

—Capital investment (103 and 214)

—Industry/government cooperation (211 and 214)

—Competition (105)[105]

Michigan Motors Editor's Resource Guide

The first priority for any publication is to carry news of the local organization, and then news about Michigan Motors. This involves reporting stories that fall in the following categories:

—Plans, goals, and problems concerning the local unit and Michigan Motors (101-107 and 208-216)

—Performance levels—production (102), quality (101), absenteeism (103), scrap rates (103), and progress in meeting established goals (213)

—Expansion or modification of facilities, equipment improvements—what they mean to the employee (208)

—Actions or events that require employee understanding—layoffs (210), production increases or cutbacks (209), and overtime schedules (212)

—Plant safety—rules, reports, and how employees can help (216 and 107)

--Personnel matters--benefit programs (424),

   compensation (427), work schedules (212), job

   opportunities (106, 426, and 532), and employment

   levels (106)

--Role in the community--how management and employees can

   contribute to community betterment (423)

--Significant, interesting news about people (317-322)[106]

Additional Areas

Two additional areas are mentioned on other pages in

the resource guide that were included in the content

categories as follows:

Consequence: Events outside the publication's primary
territory might carry significant consequences for the
readers and editors should be alert to local angles. For
instance, a strike at a supplier company might have a
significant impact on Michigan Motors or the editor's own
operation. (211)[107]

News About People
--Retirements (320)
--Promotions (319)
--Service anniversaries (319)[108]

Style Recommendations

Style recommendations from the guide book were

incorporated in the content analysis. In the following

listing, words in all capitals are style categories included

in the coding form of this research followed by a transcrip-

tion of the text from the editor's book.

TIMELINESS. Timeliness: The premium is on up-to-date news.
In the case of most planned events, the advance story is
usually the most desirable.[109]

SOURCE OF ARTICLE. Proximity: An event occurring within the
plant or circulation area of a given publication is of greater
interest than an event outside that area.[110]

ATTRIBUTION. Attribution: Statements of authority or of a
congratulatory nature should not be ghost-written by the
editor . . . They become shallow, puffy, and meaningless
when they are. Instead, attribute all subjective commentary
to an appropriate person in the organization.[111]

NEGATIVE PHRASEOLOGY USED. Negative phraseology: Put
statements in a positive form.[112]

HEADLINE REFERENCE. Headlines: The role of the headline is
two-fold--to convey the essential information in the story
below and to entice the casual reader to dig deeper into the
story. Headlines must be valid . . . Does it relate to the
information in the story?[113]

GRAPHICS. Photographs: If the in-house facilities you use are
unable to screen the photographs, farm out the screening to a
local offset printer.[114]

CUTLINE WITH GRAPHICS. Cutlines for all photos: Regardless of
how many words a photo may be worth, no photo should be run
wordless in a news publication.[115]

IMPERATIVE VOICE. Avoid the imperative or command mood. Most
of your readers have bosses and they are directly or
indirectly giving the readers commands all day. Readers do
not appreciate being given commands in what should be an
enjoyable publication to read.[116] [No specific reference was
made to imperative verbs in the guide book. However, other
publications have suggested that imperatives should be
avoided.]

    Recommendations from the guide book were also

incorporated in the demographic survey of the publications and

editors:

COLUMNS. Two column: Long sentences are difficult to read and
produce "blocks of gray" that drive the eye away from the
page. The better newsletters in Michigan Motors--and
elsewhere--build eye appeal and legibility usually by running
two-column copy.[117]

FONTS USED. Type faces: The best guideline is to remember
that readability is the end point of all of your efforts. By
sticking with the classic faces--Times Roman, Optima, Bookman,
and Century Schoolbook are good examples--you can assure that
people will feel more comfortable.[118]

[Noticeably absent from the recommendations is American Typewriter. Because most of the newsletters use standard typewriter type, two references are included which might explain why typewriter fonts are not recommended. Results from 33,031 respondents in 66,402 reading tests showed that: "American Typewriter definitely retards speed of reading and therefore should not be used unless a novelty effect is desired."[119] In another study comparing ten fonts, American Typewriter ranked ninth slowest in speed of reading.][120]

EDITOR. Editor's name: Be sure to run your name and phone number in each issue of your publication.[121]

EMPLOYEE STATUS. Employee communication must be a management system.[122] [A management system could include hourly employees, but, if exceptions are not stated, editors are salaried.]

EDITOR'S EDUCATION. Four-year college degree with major in journalism, English, communications or equivalent training or two years' experience in practice of journalism or teaching.[123] [Excerpted from the personnel department's job requirements for the salaried classifications of editorial specialist; editor, employee publications; and senior editor--exempt professional status]

APPENDIX 6

SURVEY RESULTS FROM SUPPLEMENTARY REFERENCE BOOK

Content categories used in this research are also listed in parentheses in the following transcriptions. See Appendix 3 for an interpretation of the content numbers.

Content Employees Are Most Interested In

1. What can be done to improve quality at my location?--97 percent (101)
2. Plans and outlook for my location--97 percent (102 and 109)
3. Michigan Motors' plans and outlook--97 percent (102 and 109)
4. How well my location's products compare with the competition--94 percent (105)
5. Changes in employee benefit programs--95 percent (424)
6. What can be done to improve job security at my location?--95 percent (106)[124]

Content Employees Are Least Interested In

1. How MM is competing in overseas markets--83 percent (105)
2. Outside factors that affect business--82 percent (211)
3. Retirements, service anniversaries, etc.--72 percent (320)
4. Relations between Michigan Motors and the government--72 percent (211)
5. Management views on public issues--61 percent (214)[125]

Most Preferred Sources of Information
(Attribution codes are in parentheses.)

1. Management at my location--82 percent (01 and 02)
2. Michigan Motors top management--15 percent (05 and 06)
3. Union representatives--7 percent (04, 08, 12, and 13)
4. Outside sources--3 percent (15 and 16)
5. The grapevine--2 percent (not measured)[126]

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Current Sources of Information

1. Local management--36 percent (01 and 02)
2. The grapevine--26 percent (not measured)
3. Outside sources (media)--23 percent (15)
4. Corporate management--10 percent (09 and 10)
5. The union--7 percent (04, 08, 12, and 13)[127]

APPENDIX 7

PROCEDURE FOR APPROVAL PROCESS

OBTAINING APPROVALS

One of the most consistent problems of the employe publication editor is obtaining speedy approvals of editorial content.

Corporate materials supplied by the ██ Public Relations Staff are fully approved. But many stories at the local level should be approved as an integral, day-to-day part of editing an employe publication. This is particularly important if the subject is of a technical nature or pertains to labor relations, personnel matters or other sensitive areas. In short, if you are writing on a subject which is not totally familiar to you, clearance is highly recommended.

Experienced editors don't get upset about having their materials reviewed by the experts. In fact, they are the ones who insist on having every article checked for accuracy. They also want to be courteous to their sources and to the people they have interviewed. They want to be sure they are following the "party line" on certain subjects. Most have learned by bitter experience that nobody can be an expert on everything all of the time.

So, it is important for editors to establish a prompt and efficient approval system.

GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWERS: Develop guidelines for key people who may review copy on a regular basis. Make clear that the main reason for checking articles is to insure their accuracy, not their literary style. You may have to bend a little on this from time to time, but any editor worth his salt will insist on his basic editorial prerogatives. Equally important is the need to establish a rule of urgency for approvals with specific time deadlines. Include an "approval slip" which provides the approver a place for initialing and dating the approval.

If there is any doubt about confidentiality or policy, someone in authority—probably in the department from which the item came—should be immediately available to review the information and give you an approval decision. In addition, you should have a clearly defined high level approval system for sensitive items—including your top manager and a designated alternative or two to serve in his absence. The staff level communicator should have the authority for approval if none of these people are available.

NOTES

NOTES

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[3]Paul L. Blocklyn, "Employee Communications" _Personnel_, May 1987, 62.

[4]Ibid., 62.

[5]Ibid., 62.

[6]Christine Ogan, John Polich, and Ardyth Sohn, _Newspaper Leadership_ (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1986), 28.

[7]Ibid., 29.

[8]Clampitt, Crevcoure, and Hartel, "Exploratory Research," _The Journal of Business Communication_ 23:2 (Summer 1986): 6.

[9]Ibid., 6-8.

[10]Ibid., 9.

[11]Ole R. Holsti, _Content Analysis_ (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), 137.

[12]Clampitt, Crevcoure, and Hartel, "Exploratory Research," _The Journal of Business Communication_ 23:2 (Summer 1986): 9.

[13]Ibid., 10.

[14]Ibid., 12.

[15]Ibid., 13.

[16]Ibid., 14.

[17]Ibid., 15.

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[18]Ibid., 15.

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[20]Ibid., 17.

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[28]Susan Zimmerman, "Employee Relations: Kroger Tries Harder," Supermarket News, 28 January 1985, 2.

[29]Ibid., 16.

[30]Ricky W. Griffin and Gregory Moorehead, Organizational Behavior (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1986), 402.

[31]Ibid., 386.

[32]Herbert A. Simon, Administrative Behavior (New York: The Free Press, 1965), 22.

[33]Max Weber, "Bureaucracy," Organizations: Structure and Behavior, 3d ed., ed. Joseph A. Litterer (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1980), 34.

[34]Ibid., 40.

[35]Ibid., 44.

[36]Simon, Administrative Behavior, 11.

[37]Ibid., 12.

[38]Robert E. Kaplan, "Is Openness Passé?," _Human Relations_ 39:3 (March 1986): 229.

[39]Ibid., 238.

[40]Ibid., 239.

[41]Ibid., 233.

[42]Ibid., 234.

[43]L. W. Fernald, Jr., "Breaking the Barriers," _Management World_, September/October 1986, 28.

[44]Ibid., 28.

[45]Ibid., 29.

[46]Ibid., 29.

[47]Norman B. Sigband, "The Changing Role of the CEO," _The Bulletin_, June 1985, 4.

[48]Ibid., 2.

[49]Ibid., 4.

[50]Betty S. Johnson and Kathryn F. White, "Evaluation Criteria Used in Business Communication," _ABCA Bulletin_, September 1984, 39.

[51]Ronald E. Dulek and John S. Fielden, "How to Use Bottom-Line Writing," _Business Horizons_, July/August 1984, 25.

[52]Ibid., 25.

[53]Ibid., 24.

[54]Ibid., 25.

[55]Ibid., 26.

[56]Ibid., 26.

[57]Ibid., 28.

[58]Ibid., 29.

[59]Sharon Nelton, "Discussing the Undiscussible," _Nation's Business_, March 1987, 56.

[60]Ibid., 56.

[61]Chris Argyris, "Skilled Incompetence," Harvard Business Review 64:5 (September/October 1986): 50.

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[63]Ibid., 75.

[64]Ibid., 76.

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[80]Brian S. Moskal, "Sharing Family Secrets," Industry Week, 17 February 1986, 48.

[81]Ibid., 48.

[82]Everett Devine, "Reporting General Bad News," The Bulletin, March 1985, 14.

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[89]Ibid., 122.

[90]Ibid., 104.

[91]Guido H. Stempel III and Bruce H. Westley, eds., Research Methods in Mass Communication (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1981), 145.

[92]MM Employee Communications, MM Editors' Resource Guide (Motor City: Michigan Motors, 1981) [Names were changed to conceal identity.]

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[102]Rowntree, Statistics Without Tears, 118.

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[105]Ibid., 3.

[106]Ibid., 3.

[107]Ibid., 13.

[108]Ibid., 5.

[109]Ibid., 13.

[110]Ibid., 13.

[111]Ibid., 16.

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[122]MM Employee Communications, Performance Guide, 7.

[123]Michigan Motors, "Draft 10-9-84" (Unpublished document, Michigan Motors, 1984)

[124]MM Employee Communications, Performance Guide, 34.

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