

ALŽBETA BIELIKOVÁ, Ph.D.
E-mail: alzbeta.bielikova@fpedas.utc.sk
University of Žilina, Faculty of Operation and Economics of
Transport and Communications
Department of Economics
Univerzitná 8215/1, 010 26 Žilina, Slovak Republic

Transportation Economy
Review
Accepted: May 16, 2007
Approved: Dec. 19, 2007

CORPORATE CULTURE – THE WAY OF INCREASING THE WORK QUALITY IN TRANSPORT ORGANIZATION

ABSTRACT

The article deals with corporate culture in transport organization. The corporate culture has a momentary character and it is affected by continual confrontation with business priorities and by movement of external environment. For this reason the activity of transport organization must be still adapted to customer expectations and needs and corporate culture must be adapted to this objective.

KEY WORDS

corporate culture, customer, customer relationship management, company's ethical codex, organization structure, system of internal communication, model of "key references"

1. INTRODUCTION

To reach a really magnificent effect of customer satisfaction, the transport organization must appreciate the quality of its services not according to its criteria, but according to the customers' criteria. Generally, one can say that the core of cultural awareness of the organization consists in the knowledge that the organization's focus on the customer begins with its own people and in the organization of processes and relations. The most difficult moment in building of strategically needed corporate culture is the harmonization of attributes of individuals and organization.

The term "corporate culture" means long-range and actual climate in the organization that is shown both inside and outside the organization. Every organization has its special corporate culture, entirely specific and different from others. It may be established spontaneously or as an effect of systematic activity of transport organization management. The success of transport organization business is measured mainly by exploiting its resources to reach the profitable growth through satisfaction of customer needs. The spotlight is not on the product now, but rather on the customer as a person – a conscious focus of all parts of the transport organization on the customer. Thus, it is not the

product, but the problems, expectations and needs of actual and potential customers that are the most important.

2. CHANGE OF CORPORATE CULTURE IN TRANSPORT ORGANIZATION

A part of corporate culture change in transport organization should be the change of behaviour of its personnel, so that this organization should become the best in its specialization. The improvement process of one's own organization can start following the particular review of other organizations' successes, and the main task should focus on the development of the working capabilities and qualifications of the managers and other personnel. In this way the transport organization can reach a marked improvement of its achievements. The competitive advantage does not mean only reaching the comparable achievements in relation to competition, but rather overtaking as well. The objective should lie in achieving the leading position on the market in the quality of services, product assortment, responsibility, etc.

This requirement is also underlined in the set of standards ISO 9001:2000 that in the quality management system concretely presents: "As a help for establishment of transport organization future and satisfaction of interested members the management should create a culture including people actively searching occasions for improvement of capacity of processes, activities and products."

Top management should create customer-focused organization by:

- defining the effective maintenance of processes, that will lead to improvement of efficiency of the organization,
- directing the procedure of the organization towards its continual improvement,
- employing suitable methods oriented to plotting of process improvement by the mode of self-assessment and management review.

Customer Relationship Management – CRM is closely related to the problem of value maximization for the customer. CRM is customer-oriented marketing and managerial approach establishing and to the practice implementing very strong philosophy of transport organization controlled by the customer. The CRM objective is to build the best and lasting relations with transport organization's customers, mainly with the sections of key customers.

Value management maximizes the value for the customer as the first and elementary assumption for the prosperity of the transport organization. Products with the maximum value for the customer will hardly change the commercial success without good relations between the producers and those to whom they are assigned. Only quality real contents (maximal value for customers) are always the fundamental ones and assume high-quality relations with customers.

Based on the defined requirements the transport organization will make an analysis of the existing corporate culture, that is identify which elements of the actual culture have negative influence on its current and future results. During the formation of corporate culture it is necessary to carefully diagnose the opinions and attitudes of all people. For this a three-phase project can be used. Its objective should be:

- to determine the opinions of people about the basic elements of control and communication, determine the level of motivation and satisfaction of people, orient people to the strategy and basic objectives of the organization and to the responsibility for reaching them, to promote and direct the activity from the "bottom",
- to codify the corporate ethical codex, to establish targeted and coordinated development of human resources, open the vertical and horizontal level communication, to deepen the positive attitude of people to quality, creativity and involvement,
- to prepare people for possible changes, establish an atmosphere of confidence and assurance between people and management, impress the defined objectives, attributes and attitudes to everyday behaviour and engagement of people.

The entire process of culture building will accelerate, if based on the analytical results some operating teams were created, that would design the change of systemic elements (dividing of functions, organization structure, internal communication system) and assess their influence on corporate culture. After the approbation of designs by managers the implementation of changes gets on. Controlled change or controlled forming of corporate culture expects using of some "simplified" model. This may be the model of "key references" in the transport organization that would connect the strategic level with the level of leadership

and improvement of people and also with the level of achievements or results at the customer's.

This model would allow correctly specified measurable variables and thus evaluate the corporate culture improvement. Only adept and resolute managers can change the corporate culture that is firmly locked in the minds of people and convince them that the customer must be always in the centre of transport organization's attention.

All the people of the transport organization must conform to the organization values, such as respect to customers and also to colleagues, justice or willingness to listen to others. Some of the arrangements can be brought to life or the organization immediately, whereas the implementation of others may be of a long-time character. If the transport organization management took seriously the building of the corporate culture supporting high efficiency of the organization, the first results can be seen after a few months. The effect of systemic changes will show in the second year. If the effort continued and a certain part of people adopted the new system, after some corrections the marked demonstrations of the new corporate culture would be registered within three to five years.

It is certain that the set of standards ISO 9001:2000 represents a very effective means for improvement of the transport organizations work through the implementation of the quality management system. The assumption of successful corporate culture lies also in that the work gives people a feeling that they are part of a special organization.

3. THE MAIN BUILDING ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL CORPORATE CULTURE OF THE TRANSPORT ORGANIZATION

- *Performance orientation and work seriousness*, which means low tolerance to no quality from the leadership of the transport organization, managers and people, prevailing high work rate and immediate resolving of problems;
- *Flexibility*, which means openness to new ideas and approaches, willingness to try and not disclaim designs of people;
- *Trust and candidness*, which means good know-how of people about the evolution of transport organization and about the plans of management, trust between people and managers, establishment of the field for people's initiative and creativity;
- *Maintenance of ethic values*, which means insisting on social values and ethical behaviour to customers, contractors, personnel and external environment, interest in the good fame of transport organization and its monitoring.

The transport organization management should clearly signalize and emphasize the values of successful corporate culture. It is necessary to emphasize constantly these values related to work quality, ethical behaviour or relation to innovations till they become a substantial part of the organizations' environment. The leaders of the company should not only speak about transport corporate culture, but they have to represent it every day. Only long-term personal example can make their initiative reliable and can guide others to follow them.

Generally, people appreciate what their superiors pay attention to and they behave accordingly. The effect of corporate culture is evident. If the managerial attention was paid to some fields of people's behaviour, they would build the organization values important also for the personnel of transport organization. The forming of successful corporate culture requires adequate mode of recompense for people who represent the corporate culture values.

4. CONCLUSION

It is apparent today that there is evident continuity between the success of transport organization and the corporate culture. Through the change of corporate culture the transport organization wants to reach its greater prosperity, improve its competitive ability and assure its development. It is important for the work quality policy in transport organization to become an equivalent and systemic part of its global organizations policy and strategy. The corporate culture of prosperous organization is based on awareness that every employee is needed and useful on their places. Demonstration of trust and deep respect to people does not mean tolerance to their failures. The culture

may be the source of competitive advantage, mainly if it is allowed to be valuable, rare and very difficult to reproduce.

ALŽBETA BIELIKOVÁ, Ph.D.

E-mail: alzbeta.bielikova@fpedas.utc.sk

Žilinská univerzita,

Fakulta Prevádzky a ekonomiky dopravy a spojov

Katedra ekonomiky

Univerzitná 1, 010 26 Žilina, Slovenská republika

ANOTÁCIA

PODNIKOVÁ KULTÚRA – CESTA ZVYŠOVANIA KVALITY PRÁCE DOPRAVNÉHO PODNIKU

Tento príspevok sa zaoberá významom podnikovej kultúry v dopravnom podniku. Podniková kultúra je ovplyvňovaná neustálou konfrontáciou s podnikateľskými prioritami a dynamikou vonkajšieho prostredia. Z tohto dôvodu je potrebné činnosť v dopravnom podniku neustále prispôbovať potrebám zákazníka a tomuto cieľu prisôbujú aj podnikovú kultúru.

KLÚČOVÉ SLOVÁ

podniková kultúra, zákazník, manažment riadenia vzťahov so zákazníkmi, kľúčové kompetencie, podnikový etický kódex, budovanie podnikovej kultúry, systémové zmeny, výkonnosť podniku

LITERATURE

- [1] **Bartošová, V.**: *Optimalizácia finančnej štruktúry podniku*. EDIS ŽU, Žilina 2005.
- [2] **Čihovská, V.** a kol.: *Firemný imidž*. Eurounion. Bratislava 2001.
- [3] **Foret, M.**: *Jak komunikovat se zákazníkem*. Computer press. Praha 2000.
- [4] ISO 9000:2000.