

COMS 361 – BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

SPRING SEMESTER, 2020

STUDY GUIDE FOR UNIT 2: Measuring (Organizational COMS)

Material from the reading by Guzley

1. Know whether or not communication climate has been **considered separately** from the **larger context** of organizational climate. Know whether or not **tenure** has frequently been used as a **moderating variable** in **studies of climate**. Know whether or not the relationships between organizational climate, communication climate, and organizational commitment may be **moderated by other variables**. Know whether or not a recent study by Trombetta and Rogers found **support** for the relationship between communication climate and organizational commitment. Know whether or not **Buchanan** found that not only did managers' perceptions of organizational experiences **vary with tenure**, but the specific experiences that **predict organizational commitment** also varied with tenure. (p. 379-380)
2. Know whether or not the study operates from the **behaviorally oriented** and **externally motivated** view of commitment. Know whether or not the three elements cited by **Mowday, Steers, and Porter** are likely to exist in **new employees**, but not in those with **lengthy tenure**. Know whether or not organizational climate must be seen as a way of **separating** the **individual** and the **organization**. Know whether or not, although the importance of organizational climate **has been established**, its conceptualization is **equivocal**. Know whether or not **Tagiuri** views climate as a **property** of the organization itself, identifiable by **particular characteristics** and interpreted by organizational members, that in turn **"affects their attitudes and motivation."** Know whether or not **Ashforth** argued that climate is a property of the **organization**, not **the individual**. Know whether or not a study by **Welsch and La Van** (1981) supports the notion of communication climate as **separate** and **apart** from organizational climate. Know whether or not it appears that **commitment**, in its most stable form, **grows slowly**. Know whether or not, for managers with tenure of **two through four years**, organizational commitment was **predicted** by self-image **reinforcement** and **personal importance**. Know whether or not both **decision making** and **accuracy of information** have been **positively linked** to organizational commitment. Know whether or not **Welsch and La Van** found that the communication variables of **acceptance**, **accuracy**, and **all directional flow** were **positively related** to organizational commitment. Know whether or not **Taylor and Bowers** support the notion that organizational climate refers to the interaction between **environmental and personal variables**. Know whether or not **Poole and McPhee** found that organizational climate represents members' **generalized beliefs and attitudes** about the organization. Know whether or not **Pritchard and Karasick** argued that organizational climate is a **relatively enduring quality** of an organization's internal environment, **distinguishing it from other organizations**. Know whether or not communication flow is the extent to which information flows **effectively upward, downward, and laterally** in the organization. (p. 381-386)
3. Know whether or not all but one of the **locations** of the company were **represented in the study**. Know whether or not a **majority** of the respondents reported they have **supervisory responsibilities**. Know whether or not about **half of questionnaire items** were taken from **existing scales**. Know whether or not the **average length** of employment was **4.6 years**, the **median 3.9 years**. Know whether or not communication flow, organizational climate was measured with **22 items specifically designed** for this survey. Know whether or not, of the **three independent variables**, organizational **clarity** emerged as the **most consistent predictor** of organizational commitment throughout the three tenure stages. Know whether or not, in each case, there were **no significant differences** from sample group to sample group. Know whether or not results of multiple regression analysis indicated that the **independent variables** (organizational clarity, superior-subordinate communication, and participation) accounted for **41% of the variance** in commitment. Know whether or not there were any **separate regression analyses** conducted using tenure as a moderating variable. Know whether or not **Buchanan's (1974)** three tenure stages were employed in this study to determine if tenure **moderates the relationship** between organizational commitment and the three independent variables. (p. 386-395)
4. Know whether or not the current study focused on communication climate primarily from the perspective of **horizontal communication**. Know whether or not the results of this study suggest that **organizational clarity** and **participation** are predictors of **organizational commitment**, perhaps particularly during **times of change** in the organization. Know whether or not a possible explanation why participation **did not emerge** as a predictor of commitment at Stage 1 is that at **this early stage** in employees' careers with an organization, the **primary focus**

is on learning the **basics of one's job**. Know whether or not tests of those variables that affect organizational commitment during times of change are seen **infrequently** and **are needed**, given the frequency of **takeovers, mergers, and the like** in the business community today. Know whether or not the **importance of clarity** in relation to employees' commitment to the organization, however, **varies with tenure**. Know whether or not the findings of the study **enhance what is known** in general about the relationship between **organizational climate, communication climate, and organizational commitment**. Know whether or not **participation** may become a **more salient issue** once employees feel **less** of a sense of control over their job situation. Know whether or not **Eisenberg, Monge, and Miller** found that job involvement and communication network involvement **interacted** as **predictors of organizational commitment**. Know whether or not **Hypothesis 1** (the more favorable the perceived organizational climate, the higher the level of organizational commitment of employees) received **strong support**. Know whether or not, **contrary to previous research** that established a **relationship** between organizational commitment and superior-subordinate communication (Dennis, 1975), superior-subordinate communication **did not emerge** as a predictor of organizational commitment in the **overall regression analysis**. (p. 395-398)

Material from the reading by Kegan et al.

1. Know whether or not **resistance to change** almost **always reflects opposition**. Know whether or not it is true that, if your employees are to **engage in honest introspection** and **candid disclosure**, they must understand that their revelations **won't be used against them**. Know whether or not, in a sense, **managers are psychologists**. Know whether or not change **challenges** the very **psychological foundations** upon which people function. Know whether or not some people will opt not to **disrupt their immunity** to change, choosing instead to **continue their fruitless struggle** against their **competing commitments**. Know whether or not **competing commitments** cause valued employees to behave in ways that seem **inexplicable and irremediable**. Know whether or not Helen had been assigned responsibility for **speeding up production** of the company's **most popular product**. Know whether or not, at a deep level, Helen was concerned that if she succeeded in her new role—one she was **excited about and eager to undertake**—she would become more a **peer** than a **subordinate**. Know whether or not the **inconsistencies** between John's and Helen's stated goals and their actions reflect both **hypocrisy and unspoken reluctance** to change. Know whether or not, underneath it all, John believed that if he became **too well integrated** with the team, it would threaten his sense of **loyalty** to his own racial group. (p. 051-055)
2. Know whether or not, while **undoubtedly sincere** in voicing information about commitments, people can **nearly always identify** some way in which they are **in part responsible** for preventing them from being **fulfilled**. Know whether or not the **final step** is to transform **passive fear** into a statement that reflects an active commitment to **preventing certain outcomes**. Know whether or not big assumptions are **deeply rooted beliefs** about employees themselves and **the world around them**. Know whether or not **competing commitments** should be seen as **weaknesses**. Know whether or not **overcoming immunity to change** starts with **uncovering competing commitments**. Know whether or not people often realize they **hold big assumptions** because, quite simply, they **accept them as reality**. Know whether or not **unquestioning acceptance** of a big assumption anchors and **sustains an immune system**. Know whether or not Mary's big assumption was that her teammates were **as smart or experienced as she**. Know whether or not uncovering a big assumption **usually occurs quickly, all at once**. Know whether or not, with a little help, most people can call big assumptions up **fairly easily**, especially once they've **identified their competing commitments**. (p. 055-057)
3. Know whether or not questioning big assumptions can be **frustrating** for high achievers accustomed to **leaping into motion** to solve problems. Know whether or not, in **Step 2**, employees must look actively for experiences that **might cast doubt** on the **validity** of their big assumptions. Know whether or not, left to their **own devices**, people tend to create tests that are either **too risky** or so **tentative** that they don't actually challenge the assumption and in fact **reaffirm its validity**. Know whether or not revealing a big assumption necessarily means it will be **exposed as false**. Know whether or not, in **Step 1**, the authors specifically ask people to try to **make any changes** in their thinking or behavior. Know whether or not looking for contrary evidence usually makes **people satisfied** with the foundations of their big assumptions. Know whether or not it is **rare** for people to trace their big assumptions to **early experiences** with parents, siblings, or friends. Know whether or not, by asking people to search specifically for experiences that would cause them to **question their assumptions**, the authors help them see that they have been **filtering out** certain types of information. Know whether or not John was able to find a way to **support the essence** of his competing commitment—to **maintain his bond** with his racial group—while **minimizing behavior** that **sabotaged** his other stated commitments. Know whether or not, in the **"explore the history" step**, one lets people to become the **"biographers"** of their assumptions. (p. 057-058)

4. Know whether or not managers are **every bit as susceptible** to change immunity as employees are. Know whether or not, in the end, Andrew's and Helen's **competing commitments** were, without their knowledge, **mutually reinforcing**. Know whether or not it turned out that Andrew was harboring **some contradictions** of his own. Know whether or not the authors' process is about **identifying unproductive behavior** and systematically **making plans to correct it**, as if treating symptoms would **cure a disease**. Know whether or not the authors' method is about **understanding the complexities** of people's behavior, **guiding them** through a productive process to bring their competing commitments **to the surface**, and helping them cope with the inner conflict that is **preventing them** from achieving their goals. (p. 058)

Material from the reading by Toastmasters

1. Know whether or not it is true that **Kanter** puts **little or no emphasis** on the role that communications plays in keeping a **culture unified**. Know whether or not organizations often **institute change initiatives**, big and small, without so much as a **second thought** about communicating them. Know whether or not leaders tend to **blame the initiative** itself, when all too often it was simply the **failure to communicate** it properly. Know whether or not the new initiative **represents change**, and people **do not like change** unless it is explained properly and put into the context of the organization. Know whether or not leadership communications plays a **vanguard role** in communicating change as well as in **reinforcing organizational culture**. Know whether or not communications **does not occur in a vacuum**, but is part of the **culture of an organization**. Know whether or not leaders need to **follow up** the message with a series of follow-on messages noting progress and **keeping people up to date** on what is happening. Know whether or not **discordance** between **active and passive** communications leads to an **undermining of credibility**. Know whether or not **active communications** concerns **what comes in**. Know whether or not communications absorbs the **character of the organization's culture**. (Entire article)
2. Know whether or not, as a **leadership communicator**, you need to discover the **climate for communications**. Know whether or not, in **nurturing cultures**, are open to one another, but **don't feel free** to make suggestions to their boss. Know whether or not the **best way** to find out about the culture is to conduct a **three-pronged study** that uses interviews, focus groups, and surveys. Know whether or not climate refers to **how open people feel** about **voicing their opinions or making suggestions**. Know whether or not, in places where the culture is **repressive**, many people are afraid to **voice concerns** even to coworkers, let alone to **their boss**. Know whether or not **individual interviews** give you the opportunity to explore a question or issue with someone in **more depth** than is possible with any other method. Know whether or not a question you **do not want to ask** is, "Do you know where the organization is headed?" Know whether or not you should consider interviewing **at least two people** from every function or organizational level. Know whether or not, when people **feel at ease**, they will **reveal a great deal** about how they see themselves within the **context** of the team or the organization. (Entire article)
3. Know whether or not an **important factor** interviewing research is **choosing whom to interview**. Know whether or not **focus groups** are good for getting different viewpoints in a **short period of time**. Know whether or not a **good focus group question** is, "How do senior leaders communicate to you?" Know whether or not, in a **focus group**, you should limit the time to **no more than one hour**. Know whether or not you should use an **experienced facilitator** to draw out the **opinions of the group**. Know whether or not, with focus groups, group dynamics will have a **big impact** on the quality of the responses and the nature of the discussion. Know whether or not it is best to send surveys to **as many people** as possible. Know whether or not, if you survey the **entire organization**, you can **slice (organize)** the data according to specific groups. Know whether or not **middle managers** may need more communications on issues **related to hiring**, while **supervisors** may need greater levels of communications on **development planning**. Know whether **computer-based formats** usually get **better return rates** than hard copy. (Entire article)
4. Know whether or not, if you receive responses from **more than 50 percent** of those surveyed, and this number is **at least 30** (and preferably 100 or more), you can consider your **results valid**. Know whether or not you have to use **all three methods of analysis**. Know whether or not the **more types of analysis** you use, the **greater the validity** of your conclusions. Know whether or not any one of the analysis methods is a **form of intervention**. Know whether or not you must always explain **why you are gathering data** and what you will **do with it**. Know whether or not, while the **audit** may assess organizational climate, it is often used to measure the **response to specific forms of communication**. (Entire article)