Use of Delphi Technique to determine communication problems in hotel, restaurant, and institution management

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Use of Delphi Technique to determine communication problems in hotel, restaurant, and institution management

by

Esther L. Walker

A Thesis Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
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INTRODUCTION

A review of the literature indicated that educators and professionals alike were faced with a growing concern that managers needed good communication skills and needed to be able to develop successful interpersonal skills. Buergermeister (1983) surveyed hospitality operators, educators, and recent graduates to determine competencies needed by beginning hospitality managers. Communication related factors that were classified as essential were 1) maintain effective communication with personnel, clients, customers, and community; 2) train personnel to serve customers graciously; and 3) motivate personnel to perform effectively. Emenheiser and Vincent (1982) surveyed recruiters for chain restaurants with a diversity toward entertainment concerning the selecting of successful managerial recruits. Factors considered to be of high importance were leadership qualities, ability to motivate others, and ability to get things done.

In a survey reported by Loyd and Vaden (1977), clinical, administrative, and general dietitians determined competencies needed by entry level dietitians. The practitioners were asked to rate 56 competency statements as: 1) not expected of entry level dietitians, 2) desirable but not essential, and 3) essential for entry level practice. The respondents rated maintaining effective communication with personnel through
regular conferences and meetings as being an essential competency.

However, according by Brymer (1979), communication skills are only mentioned in passing in most hospitality education curricula. When communication skills are mentioned, they are typically within the context of "human relations" and are given a few hours at most. Brymer felt that interpersonal skills do not receive the attention that studies and practitioners have indicated as necessary. Knight and Salter (1985) surveyed hospitality educators and food service training program representatives to determine the traits that good managers need. The trainers and educators agreed that good managers needed excellent oral communication skills. The authors stated that communication skills could be taught and suggested a program for teaching those skills. The program included requiring practice in writing memoranda, business correspondence, and weekly status reports. Oral communication training included making frequent oral reports both person to person and in groups, telephone professionalism, and if needed, formal speech training.

Case studies have been used to develop other managerial skills in the hospitality field. For a senior management development program at a major university, case studies were developed by asking leading industry executives what problems most frequently crossed their desks (Powers, Patterson, and
Leenders, 1983). Others have developed case studies by asking program instructors or other experts to generate incidents or make predictions of future events (Finley, 1979; Huber, 1980). However, few case studies have been written for hospitality students that cover the topic of communication skills.

The Delphi Technique has been defined as a "method for structuring a group process in decision making" (Linstone and Turoff, 1975, p. 3). One outstanding difference between the Delphi and the Nominal Group Techniques is that the Delphi Technique provides for individual anonymity. The Delphi Technique is usually completed with a series of questionnaires, each building on or modifying the one previous to it (Delbecq, Van de Ven, and Gustafson, 1975). The Delphi Technique is used to solicit the opinion, prediction, or knowledge of the appropriate experts and is not intended to be a random sampling of the given population. The Delphi Technique is especially appropriate when the subject matter lends itself better to collective subjective judgment rather than precise analytical techniques, when the task requires more individuals than can effectively meet face to face, or it is desirable to preserve anonymity (Linstone and Turoff, 1975).

In order to determine how to write case studies to teach communication skills in hospitality curricula, it was necessary to clarify the types of communication problems that
exist and to determine the negative consequences of these problems. Poor communication skills and the need for teaching communication have been mentioned frequently in the literature but the consequences of poor communication skills have not been identified. Due to the lack of this information, the purposes of this study were to:

1) Identify communication problems as perceived by Iowa hospitality industry experts and practitioners, using the Delphi Technique.

2) Compare expert and practitioner perceptions of the communication problems by types, causes, potential solutions, and selected demographic variables.

3) Make recommendations for the development of case studies covering communication problems based on feedback from practitioners and experts.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

One objective for this study was to determine the type of communication problems as perceived by managers in the Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Management field. Once these problems have been identified they can be used as the basis for case studies and simulation to prepare undergraduate students to handle communication problems. Topics that were covered in the review of literature included the need for managerial communication skills, the case method of instruction, development of case studies, and the Delphi Technique.

Managerial Communication Skills

The most basic definition of a manager is someone who gets things done through other people (Dessler, 1982). The functions of a manager are commonly defined as planning, organizing, leading and controlling, or other similar lists (Williams, DuBrin, and Sisk, 1985). Because managers deal primarily with people, most of their time will be spent communicating. Without communication, it would be impossible to accomplish any of the other managerial functions (Genfan, 1976).

There are several widely used versions of the same basic communication model in most management textbooks. The model presented by Williams et al. (1985) is included in Figure 1.
A communication event requires a source or sender. That source can be any person who attempts to send a message to others. The message may be verbal, nonverbal, or written. The message is the information which is being passed between sender and receiver. Factors which affect how well a message is received are clarity, complexity, length, and organization of the information. Messages may be sent using a variety of channels. Most messages are written, spoken, or both written
and spoken, in addition to various nonverbal cues. A
communication event is not complete until it is received by
another party. Receivers tend to distort messages according
to their needs. Noise can be identified as anything that
disrupts communication such as attitudes, emotions, or the
noise of machinery. The environment involves the setting in
which the communication takes place. Organizational climate
and rules and regulations as well as physical surroundings may
be involved in this category.

One author has estimated that managers spend between 50% and
90% of their time in some type of interpersonal
communications. This communication time was divided into 10%
with superiors, 40% with subordinates, and 50% with peers
(Sargent, 1978). No documentation was given for these
figures.

Mintzberg (1975) summarized several important studies in
managerial work. The studies involved a variety of managers
from street gang leaders to factory supervisors to presidents
of nations. The methods used for the studies ranged from
intense personal observation to analysis of records.
Mintzberg concluded that managerial functions should be
redefined. Ten roles were identified and grouped into three
categories; interpersonal, informational, and decisional. Of
the informational roles, the author observed, "The processing
of information is a key part of the manager's job. In my
study, the chief executives spent 40% of their time on activities devoted exclusively to the transmission of information; 70% of their incoming mail was purely informational. . . . The manager does not leave meetings or hang up the telephone in order to get back to work. In large part, communication is his work" (p. 56).

Several studies have demonstrated that communication and interpersonal relationship skills are essential in the hospitality industry and should be taught at the undergraduate level.

Pavesic (1984) conducted a study to determine educator, practitioner and recent graduate perceptions of the importance of various course subject areas that were included in most hospitality curricula. The participants were asked to rate 33 selected subject areas on a Likert type scale ranging from 1 to 5. Marginal importance was given a score of 1 and essential importance was given a score of 5. The Likert scale responses were totaled for each subject area. The researcher assumed that subject areas with the highest totals were of greatest importance to each of the respondent groups. The researcher did not conduct any statistical analysis or assume the results to be representative of any population because of the selective, limited number of respondents. The responses were then listed in ranked order of importance for each of the three groups and divided into four quartiles. Subjects in the
first quartile were determined to be essential, while subjects in the second quartile were determined to be important. For all three groups of respondents, strong concern was shown for the area of personnel or other people skills. When scores from all three groups were compiled and ranked, supervision and human relations was ranked third of all subjects.

Ley and Sandler (1982) surveyed the recruiters for 15 hospitality firms that regularly conducted job interviews at the University of New Hampshire, to determine the value of various criteria to interviewers in evaluating candidates. The hospitality firms included three major restaurant chains, four contract feeders, and eight national hotel chains. The recruiters were asked to rate each of 15 criteria as being of great importance, some importance or no importance. The respondents indicated that the ability to respond, display interest and enthusiasm, and personal appearance were three of the four criteria rated most highly. The authors concluded that hospitality students who, for whatever reason, were not good communicators during the interviewing process were at a great disadvantage in finding management-trainee positions.

Buergermeister (1983) surveyed a sample of hospitality operators, educators, and recent graduates to assess the competencies needed by beginning hospitality managers. The questionnaire contained 83 statements, over half of which referred to general management skills. Of the remaining
statements, 20% were directed to food service/restaurant and 20% were directed specifically to lodging/rooms. The questionnaire also consisted of a section of demographic questions. The participants were asked to rate the 83 factors using an importance rating with 1 for unimportant (does not perform the task) to 5, extremely important (performs task without supervision). Statements with mean scores above 4.0 were classified as essential for the beginning manager. Of the six general statements that were in this category, four were communication oriented. These were 1) maintain effective communication with personnel, 2) train personnel to serve customers graciously, 3) maintain effective communication with clients, customers, and community, and 4) motivate personnel to perform effectively. Statements with mean scores between 3.5 and 3.99 were rated as competencies highly desirable for the beginning manager. Of the 10 general statements in the category, 5 were communication related. These were 1) delegate appropriate tasks to others, 2) perform in-service training of personnel, 3) capable of interviewing and selection of personnel, 4) train employees with appropriate materials, and 5) assist others in the process of change. Buergermeister concluded that the hospitality industry was expecting to find beginning managers who could communicate orally and in writing with all levels of personnel, customers, and community members; and who could train personnel to serve
customers graciously. The author recommended that hospitality curricula give extra recognition to the areas of human relations, motivational skills, supervision, and effective communication.

Emenheiser and Vincent (1982) surveyed recruiters for chain restaurants with a diversity toward entertainment to determine factors used in selecting managerial recruits. The recruiters were asked to rate each of 60 factors using a five-point scale with 5 for high importance and 1 for no importance. The authors determined that factors with mean scores above 4.5 were of highest importance to the recruiters. Factors with mean scores between 3.5 and 4.49 were considered to be of above average importance. Of the 10 factors in the high importance category, 3 involved communication skills. These were 1) leadership qualities, 2) ability to motivate others, and 3) ability to get things done. The other seven factors were all personality traits or character qualities. Ability to work as part of a team, interpersonal skills, and oral communication skills were rated by the recruiters as factors with above average importance. An interesting finding was that food production expertise was rated as having average importance, and a degree in Hotel and Restaurant Administration was of low importance. The authors recommended that the hospitality management students be provided with
opportunities to develop leadership qualities and the ability to motivate others.

A survey was conducted with clinical, administrative, and general dietitians, in the continental United States to determine competencies needed by entry level dietitians by Loyd and Vaden (1977). The practitioners were asked to rate 56 competency statements as: 1) not expected of the entry level dietitian, 2) desirable but not essential, 3) essential for entry level practice. Among the statements ranked as essential was: maintain effective communication with personnel through regular conferences and meetings.

Mariampolski, Spears, and Vaden (1980) used a similar instrument to identify competencies needed by the commercial food service manager. The sample consisted of officers, past officers, and members of the National Restaurant Association (N.R.A.) and participants at an N.R.A. purchasing seminar. The questionnaire consisted of 62 statements classified as technical, human, or conceptual skills. Approximately one-third of the statements were specific to commercial food service and the rest were applicable to any quantity food production system. The respondents were asked to rate each competency statement as being not important in commercial food service management, not expected of the beginning manager, or essential for the beginning manager. The human skills
considered essential included effective communication with personnel. The human skill rated as desirable was delegation.

Abbey (1980) surveyed club managers attending an annual meeting of the Club Managers Association of America to determine what courses would prepare a student for the private club field and what problems club managers faced on the job. There were 147 respondents. The managers were asked to rate the importance of typical courses for the club profession using a 1 to 5 scale with 1 meaning unnecessary for club management and 5 meaning extremely important for club management. The subjects were then ranked from highest mean ranking to lowest mean ranking. Of the 13 courses listed, personnel management was ranked fourth highest with an average mean ranking of 4.26. Personnel relations was the concern cited by 24% of the respondents as being the biggest problem for new managers. The author concluded that studying personnel relations would help prepare hospitality graduates for club careers.

Arnaldo (1981) assessed training needs of hotel general managers. Eighteen general managers were randomly chosen from each of 15 of the 50 largest hotel chains in the United States. Those who responded were managers of a wide range of properties from New England to the Pacific and ranged from under 61 employees to over 600 employees. Of seven suggested
fields of study for newly appointed general managers, 42% gave first priority to personnel management.

Sapienza (1978) surveyed 30 Las Vegas, Nevada, hotel executives to determine the importance of various subjects in education. Thirty-six subjects that encompassed major courses in Hotel, Restaurant, and Institution Management (H.R.I.) were evaluated using a Likert style five-point response continuum. The response descriptors ranged from 5, extremely valuable to 1, extremely worthless. Among other topics, the executives rated labor management relations as being the most valuable with a mean of 4.6.

Powers (1980) stated that human skills were important at all levels of an organization but were crucial at the lower and middle levels. The author indicated that "one of the industry's major challenges today is to develop better human skills in its line management" (p. 41).

In 1979, Robert Brymer called attention to the lack of instruction in interpersonal skills in hospitality curricula in general. The author described a course that had been developed to fill that gap at the University of Denver. One of the topics covered in the course was communication skills, which included speaking, listening, and nonverbal communication.

A survey by the Cornell Quarterly (1982) asked several major hospitality firms what hotel and restaurant schools were
doing right or wrong. Excerpts from several responses were printed. Of those seven, four noted that graduates could improve in communications and people skills. One respondent noted that students could have benefited from more practical case studies in management.

Case Study Method of Instruction

The case study method of instruction has been growing in popularity since its beginning in the late nineteenth century. While dean of Harvard Law School, Christopher C. Langdell published his first casebook on contract law in 1871, and is generally credited with introducing the case method. The casebook served to substitute for lectures in various areas. While ridiculed at first, the case method came to be the predominant method of teaching in American law schools by 1948 (Galvin, 1973).

The Harvard Business School began using the case method of instruction sometime after its opening in 1908 and by 1924, due to the strong influence of Dean Wallace Donham, "over two-thirds of the instruction in the school was by the case method" (Copeland, 1958, p. 259). By the 1970s it was common for business schools to use the case approach to bridging the gap between theory and application (Schlacter and Ostrom, 1975).

The case method has spread from law and business administration to education and other professional fields
(Galvin, 1973). As of yet, few cases have been written that deal with problems specific to the hospitality industry (Haywood and Bauer, 1984). Most case studies have dealt with decision making and not with the communication of the decisions and plans.

Pigors and Pigors (1961) advocated the use of case studies in human relations areas as a method of learning how to do better in one's own relationships with people. The case method promoted the reason, appreciation, and practical judgment that was needed to be more effective in working with people.

Watson (1975) investigated the relative effectiveness of the case study and lecture methods on two types of learning: 1) knowledge and understanding, and 2) ability to apply management topics. The research involved undergraduate students enrolled in three different sections of an introductory management course. The groups were taught the same material by the same instructor. Groups I and II were taught using the case study method and Group III was taught using the traditional method. Two written examinations were used. One examination covered knowledge and understanding. The second covered the ability to apply management topics. The topics covered were goal setting, leadership, communication, and change. Students taught by the case method demonstrated significantly ($p \leq .05$) more knowledge and
understanding in the communication area. Students taught by the case study method demonstrated significantly (\( p \leq .05 \)) more ability to apply all five management areas than those taught by the lecture method. The author concluded that both methods were effective for producing knowledge and understanding but that the case study method was significantly more effective in teaching applications.

Case studies and simulations have been used with similar results in the health care field. Sheafor (1970) reported on the use of the case method combined with role playing to give graduate nursing students experience as colleagues working with peers. The purpose for using that method was to develop the students' skills in leading group discussion and participative problem solving. Emphasis was balanced between process and content. At the end of the semester, the students were asked to evaluate their experience. Most rated themselves as having improved in their ability to ask questions that obtained facts, to listen with an open mind, to not jump to conclusions, and to work out reasoned decisions. Students felt that case discussion was an effective way to develop leadership skills. The author stated that case discussion could produce changes in skills needed for reasoned group discussion perceivable to the student.

Novak (1971) reported on the inclusion of case studies in the teaching of clinical pathology. Students were required to
prepare a written analysis of the case before coming to class. During the class session, various faculty members from different disciplines made a presentation followed by a question and answer session. Next the results and findings were presented followed by a second question and answer session. The author concluded that the timing of the course at the end of the sophomore year as a key to its success and that the course was especially valuable in demonstrating the need for the various disciplines to work together.

A course in undergraduate neuroscience at McMaster University was taught using problem boxes as the basic learning unit (Barrows and Mitchell, 1975). Problems were presented to students in ways similar to the ways the physician encountered them. As the case developed the students were allowed to compare their approach with that of the actual clinicians. References available to the student included texts and manuals, audio-visual aids, resource faculty and in some cases, simulated patients. Students felt that working through the problems became easier because they developed neurological problem solving skills. Students also stated that they had been more motivated to search out the basic concepts and that their retention of the facts was enhanced. The authors concluded that students developed self-directed learning and problem solving skills with less frustration and more commitment. Students and faculty both
expressed enthusiasm for this method and it was later adopted throughout the entire undergraduate program.

Canter and Beach (1981) noted that while dietitians have need for personnel management skills, dietetic and food service management students were often prevented from participating in situations where experience could be gained. To meet this need, the authors modified four case studies for use in a coordinated undergraduate program. These case studies were developed into a computer assisted instruction program and implemented in an undergraduate program. Effectiveness of the strategy was assessed by means of pretests and post-tests. The three evaluation tools used were the Leadership Evaluation and Development Scale (LEADS), the Leadership Opinion Questionnaire (LOQ) and the Self-Perception of Confidence Scale (SPOC). The LEADS scale was used to assess changes in managerial decision making ability. The two LOQ scores measured the dimensions of leadership referred to as consideration and structure. The SPOC scale measured the students' confidence in their ability to handle personnel situations. Three significant increases in test scores were found. Food and lodging students increased significantly (p < .05) in confidence as measured by SPOC scores. Dietetic students increased significantly (p < .05) in managerial decision-making ability as measured by LEADS scores. The total class improved (p < .01) in confidence as measured by
SP~C scores. Students indicated that the simulated case studies were meaningful and realistic.

Finley (1979) evaluated the effectiveness of case studies in teaching decision-making to senior dietetic students. Comparison of mean pretest, post-test, and change scores on the LOQ and LEADS scores between control and experimental groups were used for evaluation. When LOQ consideration and LEADS change scores were compared there were no significant differences between the control and experimental group. However, the structure change scores were significantly (p < 0.002) different. Student opinions of the case studies were gathered by questionnaire. Feedback indicated that students valued the case studies and recommended that the case studies be used with subsequent classes. The author recommended that case studies be developed for all classes and for a wider variety of topics.

Steed (1975) developed an educational unit including simulations and incidents appropriate for an undergraduate dietetics curriculum or for continuing education to build dietitians' knowledge in the area of labor relations. Anonymous evaluations by the students reflected positive attitudes toward the educational unit.

More educators have been calling for the increased use of case studies in undergraduate curricula. Powers (1980) stated that interest in case methods and increasing academic rigor
was a constructive response to the changing environment of the hospitality graduate. The development of appropriate cases would require careful attention but the necessary effort would be amply repaid by more effective teaching.

Shaw (1982) stated that one benefit of using the case method in hospitality education was that the case study method helped develop the analytical and conceptual skills in the learner. Students were made more aware that management decision making was a complex process and the management functions were interrelated.

It has been stated that the case method especially lent itself to courses designed to develop analytical skills and the ability to deal with and defend alternative solutions. These courses should come after the student has developed an adequate theoretical base and is ready to develop managerial decision making expertise (Patterson, 1983).

Spizizen and Hart (1985) reported that students who were led to discover appropriate solutions for themselves rather than who were just told the answer should remember the process longer. Students who have to defend a position should study more thoroughly, which should also aid retention. According to the authors, the case study method was not the only method that should be used in hospitality education but could be used effectively if it were more readily available.
Development of Case Studies

Educators may find writing their own cases or modifying ones already in existence to be the most helpful. Several good references may assist in case development. Bauby (1972) described the different levels of dialogue that occur in modern business. Areas covered were listening, avoiding passivity, employing directness, respecting feelings, sharing, asking questions, giving feedback, and focusing on problems. Bauby also presented several case studies that demonstrated failure and success at each level.

Engel (1973) suggested that the case writer should choose a situation from the work environment that is familiar and job related. The writer should decide what the problem was and what principles the problem expressed. It would also be helpful to determine, if possible, how the situation was resolved. The writer should fictionalize the case by changing names, places, and times, and include additional data. The author suggested that the case writer begin by selecting a general principle to be illustrated as the instructional objective. Then the principle should be clarified and expanded. Explanation of the consequences to the job situation, if the principle is not followed should be included. The writer should then establish a problem situation including as many factors as could be realistically fictionalized. Feedback from associates at this point would
be valuable. The case should then be written into a format containing three to four parts. Engel suggested that these parts include: 1) warm up, introduction, and key background data, 2) the problem, real or perceived, 3) the predicament, that is, what prevents the obvious solution from occurring, the incident or climax, and 4) questions or the trainee assignment for working the case. The author recommended that straightforward language be used, that the characters and companies be identified by noncontroversial names and that cases be written giving shades of meaning so that thought is required rather than in a simplistic "all right-all wrong" style. Humor should be used only rarely and with great care.

Patterson (1982) stated that cases could be used for a range of purposes from merely introducing a subject to becoming the foundation for an entire course. The length and difficulty level should be adjusted to insure that the case met the stated objectives, Patterson described the concept of the case difficulty cube. The difficulty cube consisted of three dimensions, conceptual, analytical, and presentational difficulty. Each dimension was scored from 1 to 3. For example, in the presentation dimension, a difficulty level of 1 meant that a small amount of material was presented clearly. The reason for this was that the amount of information needed for analysis was fairly small. That was appropriate for introductory courses. A difficulty level of 3 meant that
large amounts of information were given, not always relevant or clearly. Some crucial information may even have been missing. This created a more difficult or longer case. The objective was to force the students to do their own sorting of information and to determine what additional information was needed before a decision could be made.

The Delphi Technique

Delbecq, Van de Ven, and Gustafson (1975) defined the Delphi Technique as a group process utilizing written responses rather than face to face contact. The authors noted that while there were many variations on the technique, the basic procedure described was a series of questionnaires. The first questionnaire asked for individual responses to broad questions. The questionnaires that followed built upon the responses to the previous rounds. This continued until a consensus was reached or sufficient information had been gathered.

The original application of the Delphi Technique was as a technical forecasting process (Linstone and Turoff, 1975). Project Delphi was an Air Force sponsored Rand Corporation study that began in the early 1950s. The purpose of the study was to seek to reach a consensus of opinion by various experts in the defense system. The study used a series of questionnaires and controlled opinion feedback. Use of the Delphi Technique has spread widely since that time but may still be
considered more of an art than a science. Although it had been used primarily as a forecasting procedure, there were a variety of areas to which it had been applied. These included, but were not limited to, gathering current or historical data not currently known or available, planning university and curriculum development, developing causal relationships in complex economic or social phenomena, and distinguishing and clarifying real and perceived human motivation. The authors stated that the Delphi Technique was especially useful when the problem was more appropriately answered by collective subjective judgment rather than precise analytical techniques, more individuals were needed than could effectively interact in a face to face exchange, or it was desirable to preserve the anonymity of the participants to prevent defensiveness, politics, or domination by strength of personality.

Huber (1980) summarized the general procedure as a series of six steps:

1. Define the problem to which the Delphi study is a solution and design the questionnaire.

2. Determine who should participate in the process and request that they participate.

3. Mail all of the appropriate background material and the first round questionnaire to the participants.

4. Tabulate and summarize the results from the first round questionnaire and design the second round questionnaire.
5. Mail all of the appropriate summaries, feedback messages and the second round questions to the participants.

6. Analyze the results of the second round. Steps 4-6 may be repeated for the number of rounds deemed necessary. A typical Delphi application involved three to five rounds.

For a Delphi investigation to be successful, adequate time, ability of participants to communicate in writing, and high participant motivation are needed. The three different groups participating in the process are the decision makers who want the information, the staff and support team who conduct the actual process, and the respondents whose judgments are being sought (Delbecq et al., 1975).

Linstone and Turoff (1975) provided a checklist of pitfalls that should be avoided when using Delphi. Discounting the future was a problem because of the human tendency to only be concerned with one's own time and space neighborhood. People tended to discount the possibility of occurrences that were removed from the present situation. As the uncertainty grew, the range of alternatives grew larger and the possibility of accidents and irrational events increased. The prediction urge was the inclination to prefer certainty to uncertainty. This led the users of the Delphi Technique to use studies that resulted in a high degree of convergence of opinion and to consider studies which revealed
wide differences of opinion unusable. The simplification urge was the inclination to prefer simple situations or scenarios to complex ones. The tendency was to take a few innovations and fit them into a familiar mental image, past or present, rather than to envision an entirely different future. Illusory expertise was the tendency of experts not to take into consideration the whole system. An example was the prediction by reciprocating engineer experts, made in the 1930s, that propeller aircraft would be the aviation standard until the 1980s. Economists, technologists and military experts have frequently misjudged and miscalculated future events. Linstone noted that sloppy execution may be either on the part of the analyst or the participant. Analysts have made poor selection of panel members, or have interacted poorly with the panel members to give the impression of "using" the panelists. Panelists have erred by giving hasty answers without adequate thought and allowing obvious contradictions to enter into the responses. Optimism-pessimism bias was defined as a basic lack of imagination. Respondents either anticipated no stumbling blocks or failed to recognize new approaches. Delphi has been oversold by some enthusiasts. Some analysts have erred in assuming that the user of the Delphi Technique wanted a more effective communication system than was already employed, that the more individuals involved in a Delphi study, the more effective it
would be, or that the goals of the organization were the same as the goals of the person within the organization who requested the study. Finally, the author noted that the Delphi process was not immune to being used for deception, manipulation, or use as propaganda. The anonymity of the process may even contribute to the ease of deception.

The definition of experts may depend on the subject matter. Welty (1973) compared the forecasts of 43 undergraduate sociology majors to the forecasts of a panel of high level scientists and science administrators. The subjects were asked to indicate the probable change in emphasis in the American culture in the year 2000 for 17 items. Respondents used a five point scale where 1 was greatly increased emphasis and 5 was greatly decreased emphasis. Ratings on only two items were significantly different between the two groups. The students put more emphasis on "spiritual" values and less emphasis on "material" values than did the scientists and administrators. The author concluded that technological subject matter required more care in the defining and identifying of experts for using the Delphi Technique than did subjects dealing with values.

The Delphi Technique has been used to identify future required competencies of administrative dietitians (Matthews, Mahaffey, Lerner and Bunch, 1975). The participants consisted of faculty and students from an educational institution as
well as community professionals interested in the coordinated undergraduate program. Three rounds of questionnaires were mailed out at approximately one month intervals. Responses from the first round were compiled and used as the basis for the second round. The researchers chose to conclude the Delphi process after receiving the results from the second round. The third round was summary and provided each participant with a compilation of all the issues and responses from the entire group. The information collected in that study was deemed by the researchers to be useful in planning clinical experiences and academic learning units. The authors concluded that the subjects to be developed extensively in the academic and clinical settings included communication, evaluation, and decision making.

Delphi applications have been used in higher education, particularly in the areas of educational goals and objectives, curriculum and campus planning, and development of evaluation criteria (Judd, 1972). One early application dealt with the curriculum development at a new branch campus of a liberal arts college (Judd, 1971). Topics examined by the study included objectives, curriculum, and methodology. The panel of experts was determined to be the entire faculty of the branch campus. Although the response rate varied from 30% to 50%, all faculty members received each round, which made it possible for some participants to skip one round yet respond
in a later one. The first questionnaire asked a question about each of six areas and provided space for open-ended responses to each area. A large number of individual statements was produced by the first round. In the second questionnaire, these statements were combined for a total of 82 statements covering the six areas, and the respondents were asked to rank the statements. The third questionnaire served two purposes. Feedback was provided to the faculty about the ranking each item had received in the second round. Faculty members were then asked to indicate which rankings they disagreed with and why. A final report was mailed, informing the faculty about item rankings and the degree of consensus among the faculty. The committee that was responsible for the study concluded that a compromise had been reached far more quickly and more pleasing to all involved, than could have been done by any other method, and that they would use the Delphi method again when faced with a variety of attitudes in an organization. The author concluded that the Delphi approach was amenable to planning problems at all levels of education, especially where consensus on goals and objectives was important.

Koppel (1978) used Delphi to assist in curriculum development for food service managers. Thirty-two executives, one half from the institutional segment and the other half from the commercial segment were selected to be on the panel.
The first round was an open-ended questionnaire that asked panelists to list the five most important roles a food service manager would perform in the future. From this round, 153 separate role statements were collected and condensed into 50. In the second round the participants were asked to rank each of the role statements using a five point scale ranging from 1 for no importance to 5 for extremely important. The ratings were summed and averaged, with the mean score considered by the researcher to be the consensus of the industry. A third questionnaire was sent to each participant. The questionnaire listed a comparison of each respondent's ratings to the average. Participants were offered the opportunity to reevaluate their rankings, and invited to make comments if their final assessment of the value of a role varied from the consensus. Ratings from the third round were summed and averaged. The participants ranked the role of training personnel in a manner that has a positive effect on productivity and morale as the highest with a mean score of 4.75. Establishing a climate to achieve the operation's objectives was ranked fifth with a mean score of 4.50.

Summary

Recruiters and educators have emphasized the need to give instruction in communication to future managers. Case studies have been used successfully to improve students' skills in other managerial roles. Before case studies could be written,
some consensus must be reached about problems that could be identified as communication problems. The Delphi Technique has been proven to be an appropriate method of determining that consensus.
PROCEDURES

The study was designed to survey and determine types and examples of communication problems as perceived by professionals in the hospitality industry. Recommendations for writing case studies were based on the information collected from a questionnaire. The procedures consisted of selecting the Delphi panel, developing the questionnaires for the panel, developing the final questionnaire based on feedback from the panel, sampling the population, and analyzing the data.

Delphi Panel

A panel of experts was established based on professional success, experience in communication skills, and geographic convenience. Two panel members were on the Hotel, Restaurant, and Institution Management graduate faculty. These panel members taught graduate and undergraduate classes in personnel management, directed the work of graduate students, and contributed to the research base of the field. Both had previous experience in institutional food service management. One panel member was the Extension Specialist in Hotel, Restaurant, and Institution Management. This panel member worked with managers of all types of food services, and provided information and direction in all areas of hospitality management, including labor relations. This panel member had
work experience in a variety of restaurants. One panel member was food service manager at a university residence hall which prepared an average of over 5,000 meals per day. Another panel member was a graduate student in Hotel, Restaurant, and Institution Management who worked full time as a food service director in a hospital. The final panel member was the manager of a family owned restaurant business.

Development of Questionnaires

The first questionnaire was developed by informally collecting incidents from people who have worked in food service. The examples of inappropriate communication were written in paragraph form. For each scenario, the panel members were asked if they had experienced that type of situation, what had caused the problem, and what they recommended as an appropriate solution. Questions asking for demographic data were also included. A cover letter which briefly explained the study and the role of the panel of experts was included. The second questionnaire was written after the responses from the first round were analyzed. One questionnaire was not returned from the first round. Based on feedback, six of the twelve scenarios were included in the second questionnaire. The panel members were presented with each of the scenarios in the second questionnaire. After each scenario, the participants were asked to identify the type of problem as communication, policy or procedure, management
Panel members were asked to define the type of communication problems. One question asked for possible consequences of the situation and another asked for an appropriate solution. Also, participants were asked how frequently that type of scenario occurred. The questions asking for demographic data were revised and the panel members were asked to evaluate that section of the questionnaire for readability and completeness. The cover letter which was included thanked the panel members for participating and explained the different responses required by the second questionnaire. Panel members indicated that three of these scenarios were examples of communication problems that occurred frequently and that one additional scenario was a communication problem that did not occur frequently.

Final Questionnaire

The third questionnaire was written based on analysis of the responses from the second round. The third questionnaire consisted of four scenarios that were identified in the second round as being communication problems and one question from the first round that was not labeled by the panel as being a communication problem. The same questions that were asked in the second round were included following each scenario. The section on demographic data was revised based on feedback from the second round. Additional questions asked participants to define problems in communication, the consequences that
usually occur with communication problems, and the appropriate solution. The final questionnaire was sent to a random sample of practitioners and to the panel members. Separate cover letters were written to the panel members and to the practitioners. The cover letter to the panel members expressed appreciation for continued participation and asked the panel member to complete the final questionnaire. The cover letter to the practitioners briefly explained the purpose of the study and asked for the respondents to complete and return the questionnaire. A follow-up letter was mailed to those who had not responded within two weeks. Copies of all cover letters and questionnaires are included in the appendix.

The Iowa State University Committee on the Use of Human Subjects in Research reviewed this project and concluded that the rights and welfare of the human subjects were adequately protected, that risks were outweighed by the potential benefits and expected value of the knowledge sought, that confidentiality of data was assured and that informed consent was obtained by appropriate procedures.

Selection of Population and Sample

The population of practitioners was defined as food service license holders in 37 Iowa counties. Members were identified from a list provided by the Iowa Department of Agriculture. One group of 8 counties was from western Iowa,
one group of 14 counties was from central Iowa and one group of 15 counties was from eastern Iowa. There were a total of 1,455 license holders. The license holders were classified by the researcher into seven categories. The categories and number in each were: fast food, 315; family restaurant, 369; fine dining restaurant, 179; hospital or health care, 22; college and university, 47; school, 475; and in-plant, 48. The sample included the population of all license holders in the hospital or health care category, a random sample of half of the license holders in the college and university and in-plant categories, and a proportional random sample of the other categories. The names in each category were numbered by a two or three digit system, depending on the size of the population. A table of random numbers (Snedecor, 1956) was used to select the required numbers for each category. The facilities with the selected numbers were chosen as the sample for each category. The number sampled in each category was: fast food, 31; family restaurant, 36; fine dining restaurant, 18; hospital or health care, 22; college and university, 23; school, 46; and in-plant, 24. There were 200 facilities in the final sample.

Data Analysis

Of the 200 questionnaires sent to practitioners, 62 were returned and usable for a final response rate of 31%. All five questionnaires sent to panel members were returned, for a
100% response rate. The responses were coded for statistical analysis and the data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSSx). Programs for frequencies, means, and chi square were used for analysis.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to identify communication problems as perceived by Iowa hospitality industry experts and practitioners. Two hundred questionnaires were mailed to food service managers randomly selected from a list of Iowa Department of Agriculture food service license holders. Of the 64 questionnaires returned, 62 were usable for a 31% rate of return. All five questionnaires sent to the panel of experts were returned.

Demographic Data

Nine questions requested background information about the person completing the questionnaire. Respondents were asked to identify the type of food service, the number of employees they supervised, their current position, and career path. Other questions asked for the length of time in the current position, length of time in food service, and if the respondent was professionally registered or certified. Responses to demographic questions were analyzed comparing the panel of experts to the practitioners. Frequencies and percentages for responses to respondent characteristic questions are presented in Table 1.

Panel of experts

The panel of experts managed a variety of types of food service. One (20.0%) managed a family restaurant, one
Table 1. Demographic characteristics reported by practitioners and expert panel

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<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Practitioners</th>
<th>Experts</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
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a $n = 67$.
b $n = 62$.
c $n = 5$. 
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<td>Years in current position</td>
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<td>20 or more</td>
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Table 1. Continued

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<th>Total Percent</th>
<th>Practitioners Number</th>
<th>Practitioners Percent</th>
<th>Experts Number</th>
<th>Experts Percent</th>
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<td>196.8</td>
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\[d\] Respondents were asked to check all that applied.
### Table 1. Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
<th>Total Percent</th>
<th>Practitioners Number</th>
<th>Practitioners Percent</th>
<th>Experts Number</th>
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</table>
(20.0%) managed a hospital or health care food service, and one (20.0%) managed a university food service. Two (40.0%) of the panel members were not currently managing a food service. One of these was an educator and the other was an Extension Specialist. The number of employees in a unit ranged from 0 to 217 with an average of 53. The number of employees reporting directly to the respondent ranged from 0 to 29 with an average of 10. Two (40.0%) of the panel members were female and 3 (60.0%) were male. The title of one (20.0%) expert was indicated to be supervisor and two (40.0%) indicated their title as manager or director. Time in current position ranged from 3 years to 14 years with a mean of 7.8. Length of food service experience ranged from 5 years to 30 years with a mean of 15.0. Three (60.0%) of the panel members indicated they had worked their way up in the organization to their current position. Two (40.0%) of the panel members indicated previous experience in food service. Four of the expert panel (80.0%) had both degrees and advanced degrees in food service management or related fields. Three (60.0%) of the panel members were Registered/Licensed Dietitians and two (40.0%) had no professional registration or certification.

Practitioners

The practitioners managed a wide variety of types and sizes of food service. The number of employees in a unit ranged from 0 to 165, with an average of 33. The number of
employees reporting directly to the respondent ranged from 0 to 55 with an average of 12. The question asking for the sex of the respondent had a large number of incorrect responses. This was due to the fact the question was poorly written. The statement was Sex and was located immediately following the question asking for the number of employees reporting directly to the respondent. Some respondents interpreted this to mean sex of employees and gave numbers of each. Of the respondents that responded correctly, 34 were female and 12 were male. The title of 56.7% of the respondents was manager or director. Nearly 15% identified themselves as supervisor and the same number identified themselves as owner/operator.

Respondents indicated length of time in present position and the food service field. The minimum time a respondent had been in the present position was 2 weeks and the maximum time was 34 years with a mean of 7.12 years. The minimum and maximum length of time reported for employment in the food service field were 1 year and 40 years respectively, with a mean of 15.12 years.

An indicated in Table 1, a majority (71%) of the respondents indicated no professional registration or certification. Nine respondents (14.5%) were Registered/Licensed Dietitians in the state of Iowa. Seven were employed in hospital or health care facilities, and two were in college and university feeding. Eight of the 13 school food service
managers that responded were certified as school food service managers or supervisors. One was certified by the American School Food Service Association. Six were certified by the Iowa School Food Service Association and one was certified by the Cedar Rapids Food Service Association. One respondent was a certified hotel administrator by the American Hotel and Motel Association.

Nearly one-third (30.6%) of the respondents had degrees in food service management or related areas. A smaller number (8.1%) had an advanced degree in food service management or related areas. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents had worked their way up through the organization. Over one-third (40.3%) had previous experience in food service before accepting their current position.

**Definition of Communication Problems**

In an open-ended question, respondents were asked to define problems in communication. When asked to define problems in communication, the respondents gave a variety of answers. The definitions given by all respondents are listed. Of these, twelve (17.9%) implied that communication problems were due to the message itself. The common theme in all these statements was that usually there was not enough information given. The definitions were:

- Not explaining good enough or demonstrating.
- Misinformation, information too technical.
Direction not clear enough, misunderstanding because of this.
Incomplete directions and/or demonstrations.
Not discussing areas of concern.
I think most problems in communication are caused by not communicating at all or by not being explicit enough.
Insufficient information communicated.
Too fast, too much at one time, impatience.
Insufficient detailed information.
Unit personnel do not receive enough information.
A lack of understanding between two or more individuals based on either a lack of information, poor information, or information being interpreted differently.
Lack of information between departmental employees - both at peer level and management level.
Nine (13.4%) respondents stated that communication problems could be attributed to the sender. The statements were:
Inability to relate effectively the problem, solution, or situation.
Understanding the problem before the communication is needed, listening to one another, are you available when needed, being open even if it is not the answer. Making someone else understand how you would do something. Lack of communication with employees, lack of experience.
Not able to communicate their needs, wants, desires.
Either a lack of effort to communicate or miscommunication resulting in a service problem to a guest.
The difficulty of conveying thought processes to other individuals.
The ability to convey a message to another person.
Unable to convey message to employees.

Nine (13.4%) respondents tended to place the responsibility for communication problems with the receiver. These statements seemed to imply that the attitude of the listener affected comprehension of the message. Those statements were:

Inability of one person to understand what another is telling him.
The lack of understanding of what a person is trying to express to another individual or group.
Not getting the job done to the standards set by management.
Usually as a lack of reading instructions given thoroughly or not thinking things through.
People don't understand completely what is expected of them, but claim they do.
Indifference and lack of comprehension.
Not listening, not fully understanding the problem.
People don't listen.
I am 100% responsible to make sure you are understood by me.

Seven (10.4%) statements attributed the responsibility for communication problems to either the sender or receiver. They were:

Both talking and receiving the same image, two way understanding.
Not listening or not stating clearly what is needed.
When the sender is unable to provide the receiver with a clear efficient message or when the receiver is unable to receive such a message.
Situations where the message was encoded or decoded improperly.
Not being able to exchange thoughts.
Communicator and listener don't actually communicate properly.
Being unable to compromise on disagreements.
Five (7.5%) statements implied that the problem lies in the channel or with noise in the channel. Those statements were:

Physical or mental barriers that prevent or completely inhibit messages from being received and understood.
Breakdown in channels of communication.
Breakdown in chain to the top or bottom.
Problems occur when there's a breakdown in oral or written messages.

Too many here say things said and it gets blown out of proportion.

Six (9.0%) statements referred to the environment in which the communication was attempted. Comments relating to the environment focused primarily on lack of training or documentation of policies and procedures. The statements were:

- Inability to inform people of things they can change in a timely manner.
- Changing policies or procedures midstream/causing insufficient or conflicting direction.
- Insufficient training of job.
- In a large hospital setting, it's really hard to get to see your boss.
- Lack of written policies and procedures, inconsistent procedures or answers.
- Jobs change before people really understand what they are supposed to be doing.

Three (4.5%) statements did not relate to only one component of the model. They were:

- We have very few problems in communications.
- Analysis of each situation for problems with sender, receiver, feedback or interference.
Related communication to one on one as an individual and yet have your workers working as a whole.

Communication Problems and Solutions

Included in the questionnaire was a section that asked for information from the respondents related to communication problems in general. The results appear in Table 2. Nearly half (49.3%) of the respondents indicated that incomplete comprehension was the most common type of communication problem. One-fourth (25.4%) of the respondents indicated that insufficient downward communication was the cause of communication problems.

Nearly two-thirds (65.7%) of the respondents indicated that loss of good will with customers and personnel was the consequence that resulted from communication problems. Over one-third (37.3%) indicated that communication problems resulted in higher labor costs and one-fourth (25.4%) indicated that loss of income was the result. Sixteen (23.9%) indicated that higher inventory costs would occur.

For the appropriate solution to communication problems, the majority (50.7%) recommended changing communication. Over one-third (35.8%) indicated that changing management style was correct and nearly one-third (32.8%) indicated that a change in policies and procedures was appropriate.
Table 2. Perceptions of communication problems reported by total, group, and type of facility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Communication Questions</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Experts</th>
<th>Practitioners</th>
<th>Profit</th>
<th>Nonprofit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%^a</td>
<td>No. %^b</td>
<td>No. %c</td>
<td>No. %d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause of problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incomplete comprehension</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>2 40.0</td>
<td>31 50.0</td>
<td>13 59.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient downward</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>3 60.0</td>
<td>14 22.6</td>
<td>5 22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much information</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>10 16.1</td>
<td>4 18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient upward</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>10 16.1</td>
<td>2 9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>6.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>4 6.5</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>110.5^f</td>
<td>5 100.0</td>
<td>69 105.4^f</td>
<td>24 109.1^f</td>
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<td>Consequences of problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of good will</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>2 40.0</td>
<td>42 67.7</td>
<td>14 63.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher labor costs</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>3 60.0</td>
<td>22 35.9</td>
<td>7 31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of income</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>1 20.0</td>
<td>16 25.8</td>
<td>6 27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher inventory costs</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>1 20.0</td>
<td>15 24.2</td>
<td>9 40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>1 20.0</td>
<td>5 8.1</td>
<td>3 13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>161.3^f</td>
<td>8 160.0^f</td>
<td>100 161.3^f</td>
<td>39 177.2^f</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^a_n = 67.  
^b_n = 5.  
^c_n = 62.  
^d_n = 22.  
^e_n = 40.  
^f Respondents were allowed to select more than one response.
### Table 2. Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Communication Questions</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Experts</th>
<th>Practitioners</th>
<th>Type of Facility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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<td>%a</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate solutions</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Change communication</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change management style</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change policies and procedures</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>123.8f</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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</table>
Comparison of practitioner and expert responses

Responses to questions were analyzed by comparing the panel of experts with the practitioners. The percentages of responses were similar for both experts and practitioners. No statistical analysis was conducted because of the small number (5) of experts.

In response to the questions concerning communication problems in general, the experts selected insufficient downward communication and incomplete comprehension as the top two causes of communication problems. These same causes were selected by the practitioner group, but in reverse order. Practitioners more frequently selected incomplete comprehension followed by insufficient downward communication. A majority of the experts (60.0%) indicated that higher labor costs was the most common consequence of communication problems. Only one-third (33.9%) of the practitioners selected the same consequence. A majority of the practitioners (67.7%) indicated loss of good will was the most common consequence of communication problems which was similar to the percentage of the experts (40.0%). Similar percentages of experts (60.0%) and practitioners (50.0%) indicated that changing communication was the appropriate solution to communication problems.
Comparison of practitioner responses by type of organization

Responses to the general questions were compared by classifying organizations as profit and nonprofit. Fast food restaurants, family restaurants, and fine dining restaurants were included in the profit category. Hospital or health care, college and university, school, and in-plant or employee feeding were included in the nonprofit category. Responses were received from 22 profit and 40 nonprofit organizations.

In response to the question about common types of communication problems, more profit (59.1%) than nonprofit (45.0%) respondents selected incomplete comprehension. Approximately two-thirds of the profit group (63.6%) and the nonprofit group (70.0%) indicated that loss of good will with customers and personnel was the consequence that usually occurs with communication problems. Over half (59.1%) of the profit group recommended change in communication as being the appropriate solution. The answers from the nonprofit group were more evenly divided with nearly half (45.0%) indicating change communication, and equal proportions (40.0%) indicating change policies and procedures and change management style. None of these differences were statistically significant when analyzed using chi-square tests.

Comparison of responses by sex

Responses to all questions were compared using sex of respondents. For this analysis, there were 36 females and 15
males. Over half of the females indicated that incomplete comprehension was the usual communication problem and one-fourth indicated that insufficient downward communication was a problem. Males selected all four alternatives more equally than females. None of the response differences were statistically significant. Over two-thirds of the females indicated that loss of good will with customers and personnel was the usual consequence of communication problems, while only one-half of males indicated that loss of good will was a consequence. Males more consistently chose loss of income and higher labor costs as consequences; whereas, females selected loss of income and higher labor cost less often. Females more frequently chose changing communication as an appropriate solution than males. Males more frequently chose change in management style as an appropriate solution than females. While this may indicate that females tend to be more concerned with interpersonal relationships than males the differences were not statistically significant.

Evaluation of Scenarios

The respondents were presented with five scenarios and were asked to identify the type of problem described in each. Respondents who identified communications as the problem were then asked to identify the type of communication problem. All respondents were asked to indicate the probable consequence of the situation and the appropriate solution. Respondents were
allowed to select more than one response. Opinions on how frequently each scenario occurs were requested. A comparison of the responses to questions for each of the scenarios revealed no differences attributable to sex of the respondent.

**Scenario A**

The first scenario related an incident in which a new employee was told to wash leaf lettuce. The employee filled the sink with soap and water to wash the lettuce. Results to questions related to Scenario A are presented in Table 3. Three-fourths (76.1%) of the respondents identified the problem as being one of communication. Other responses were: need better explanations, lack of common sense, and all of the above. The type of communication problem was almost evenly distributed between insufficient downward communication with 33 responses (49.3%) and incomplete comprehension with 27 responses (40.3%). The respondents indicated that the consequences of this type of problem were about equally distributed among loss of income, higher inventory cost, higher labor costs, and loss of good will. Other responses were: all of the above and decreased productivity. Again, 51 (76.1%) of the respondents indicated that a change in communication was the appropriate solution. However, while only 11 (16.1%) indicated that there was a management style problem, 17 (25.4%) indicated that a change in management style was an appropriate solution. Other responses given
Table 3. Responses to Scenario A reported by total, group, and type of facility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Type of Facility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>Experts</td>
<td>Practitioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of problem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>51 76.1</td>
<td>4 80.0</td>
<td>47 75.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management style</td>
<td>11 16.4</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>10 16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies and procedures</td>
<td>6 9.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>6 9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6 9.0</td>
<td>1 20.0</td>
<td>6 9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74 110.5</td>
<td>5 100.0</td>
<td>69 111.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of communication problem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient downward</td>
<td>33 49.3</td>
<td>3 60.0</td>
<td>30 48.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incomplete comprehension</td>
<td>27 40.3</td>
<td>2 40.0</td>
<td>25 40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient upward</td>
<td>5 7.5</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>5 8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much at one time</td>
<td>1 1.5</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>1 1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>66 98.6</td>
<td>5 100.0</td>
<td>61 98.4</td>
</tr>
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</table>

\[ a_n = 67. \]
\[ b_n = 5. \]
\[ c_n = 62. \]
\[ d_n = 22. \]
\[ e_n = 40. \]

\[ f \text{ Respondents were allowed to check more than one response.} \]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<td>Most likely consequence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher inventory cost</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher labor cost</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>50.7</td>
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<td>40.0</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loss of good will</td>
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<td>Loss of income</td>
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<td>31.3</td>
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<td>60.0</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>7.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>191.0 f</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>160.0 f</td>
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<tr>
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<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change management style</td>
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<td>40.0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change policies or procedures</td>
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<td>11.9</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>7.5</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>81</td>
<td>120.9 f</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p ≤ .05.
were: be more selective of people hired, proper training of supervisor, show the employees how, give better explanations, and never assume employees know what to do. When asked how frequently this problem occurs, three respondents indicated never, 31 indicated sometimes, and 26 indicated frequently.

Comparison of practitioner and expert responses
Similar percentages of practitioners (75.8%) and experts (80.0%) identified the scenario as a communication problem. The distribution of responses for the type of communication problem were similar for the practitioners and experts. Insufficient downward communications was selected by 48.4% of the practitioners and 60% of the experts while incomplete comprehension was selected by 40.3% of the practitioners and 60.0% of the experts. Change in communication was selected as the solution to this problem by a majority of the practitioners (77.4%) and experts (60.0%).

Comparison of practitioner responses by type of organization
For scenario A, approximately three-fourths of the profit (77.3%) and nonprofit (75.0%) group indicated that the incident was a communication problem. Equal proportions of respondents in both profit (50.0%) and nonprofit (47.5%) groups indicated that the type of communication problem was insufficient downward communication. Similar percentages of profit (40.9%) and nonprofit (40.0%) respondents indicated that the problem was one of incomplete
comprehension. Nearly two-thirds (63.6%) of the profit sector indicated that the most likely consequence was higher inventory costs. Nearly one-half (45.5%) of the practitioner group indicated that loss of good will with customers and personnel would also occur. The responses from the nonprofit group were more evenly divided with over half (60.0%) indicating higher labor costs as the most likely consequence and nearly as many (57.5%) indicating that higher inventory costs would result. Almost half (45.0%) of the nonprofit group indicated loss of good will would result. Most profit (72.7%) and nonprofit (80.0%) respondents indicated that change in communication was the appropriate solution. Many of the profit group (40.9%) also indicated that changing management style was appropriate; only 15% of the nonprofit group did so. A chi square test was performed and the difference between the percentages of responses on changing management style was significantly different (p < .05).

**Scenario B**

The second scenario described a situation in which a new manager trainee is assigned to set up the salad bar for lunch. Half way through the task, the trainee was shown that the task was not being done correctly. Results to questions related to Scenario B are presented in Table 4. Three-fourths (76.2%) of the respondents identified this scenario as presenting a communication problem. The type of communication problem was
Table 4. Responses to Scenario B reported by total, group, and type of facility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Total (N=78)</th>
<th>Experts (N=4)</th>
<th>Practitioner (N=72)</th>
<th>Type of facility</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of problem</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management style</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy or procedures</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Insufficient downward</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insufficient upward</td>
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<td>19.4</td>
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<td>20.0</td>
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<td>Incomplete comprehension</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Too much at one time</td>
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<td>1.5</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>89.5</td>
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<td>80.0</td>
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\[a_n = 67.\]
\[b_n = 5.\]
\[c_n = 62.\]
\[d_n = 22.\]
\[e_n = 40.\]

\[f\] Respondents were allowed to check more than one response.
Table 4. Continued

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%a</td>
<td>%b</td>
<td>%c</td>
<td>%d</td>
<td>%e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most likely consequence</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher labor cost</td>
<td>36 53.7</td>
<td>4 80.0</td>
<td>32 51.6</td>
<td>13 59.1</td>
<td>19 47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of good will</td>
<td>35 52.2</td>
<td>2 40.0</td>
<td>33 53.2</td>
<td>9 40.9</td>
<td>24 60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher inventory cost</td>
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<td>3 60.0</td>
<td>21 33.9</td>
<td>9 40.9</td>
<td>12 30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of income</td>
<td>8 11.9</td>
<td>2 40.0</td>
<td>6 9.7</td>
<td>2 9.1</td>
<td>4 10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>6 9.7</td>
<td>1 4.5</td>
<td>5 12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>109 162.6</td>
<td>11 220.0</td>
<td>98 158.1</td>
<td>34 154.5</td>
<td>64 160.0</td>
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<td>Appropriate solution</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>4 80.0</td>
<td>41 66.1</td>
<td>15 68.2</td>
<td>26 65.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change management style</td>
<td>21 31.3</td>
<td>1 20.0</td>
<td>20 32.3</td>
<td>7 31.8</td>
<td>13 32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change policies or procedures</td>
<td>15 22.4</td>
<td>1 20.0</td>
<td>14 22.6</td>
<td>7 31.8</td>
<td>7 17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>5 8.1</td>
<td>1 4.5</td>
<td>4 10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>86 128.4</td>
<td>6 120.0</td>
<td>80 129.1</td>
<td>30 132.2</td>
<td>50 125.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
identified by a majority (52.2%) of the respondents as being one of insufficient downward communication. This was despite the fact that the person who caught the error and did the correcting was an employee and not a manager senior to the trainee. However, 13 (19.4%) respondents did identify the type of problem as insufficient upward communication. Over half (53.7%) of the respondents indicated higher labor costs, and 52.2% indicated loss of good will with customers and personnel would be consequences of this situation. Other responses were: employee dissatisfaction, the change could have increased business, and all of the above. Two-thirds (67.2%) of the respondents indicated that a change in communication was the appropriate solution, although 31.3% indicated a change in management style, and 22.4% indicated that a change in policy and procedures would be appropriate. Other responses given were: give employees opportunity to grow and take orders from management not employees. When asked how frequently this type of problem occurs, 3 respondents indicated never, 37 indicated sometimes, and 20 indicated frequently.

Comparison of practitioner and expert responses

Comparable percentages of practitioners (74.2%) and experts (80.0%) identified the scenario as being a communication problem. The majority of both practitioners (51.6%) and experts (60.0%) selected insufficient downward communication
as the type of communication problem. Percentages of practitioners and expert responses differed slightly as to the probable consequences. Practitioners were evenly split between loss of good will (53.2%) and higher labor costs (51.6%). More experts (80.0%) indicated higher labor costs but the percentages of experts who chose the other responses were higher also. Change in communication was selected by a majority of both practitioners (66.1%) and experts (80.0%) as a solution to the problem.

Comparison of practitioner responses by type of organization For scenario B, nearly three-fourths (72.7%) of the profit and three-fourths (75.0%) of the nonprofit groups indicated that the incident was a communication problem. Over one-fourth (27.3%) of the profit and 20.0% of the nonprofit group also indicated that management style was involved. The majority (59.1%) of the nonprofit sector and nearly half (47.5%) of the profit sector indicated that the most likely consequence was higher labor costs. A greater proportion of the profit group indicated that loss of good will would result. The differences in responses between the profit and nonprofit groups were not statistically significant for this scenario.

Scenario C

The third scenario described a situation in which a catering luncheon was delivered to the wrong room. The person
who had received the message about the change in location had not relayed it. Results to questions related to Scenario C are presented in Table 5. Most of the respondents indicated that this was a communication problem. The majority of the respondents defined the type of communication problem as being one of insufficient downward communication; however, over one-fourth (26.9%) indicated that the problem was one of insufficient upward communication. The respondents were also unanimous (97.0%) in indicating that loss of good will with customers or personnel was the most probable consequence for this type of situation. Nearly three-fourths (75.8%) of the respondents indicated that change in communication was the appropriate solution. In addition, over one-third (38.8%) of the respondents indicated that change in policy and procedures was appropriate. The other response was: not a change but an adherence to procedure. When asked how frequently this type of problem occurs, 7 respondents indicated never, 37 indicated sometimes, and 8 indicated frequently.

Comparison of practitioner and expert responses

Similar percentages of practitioners (90.3%) and experts (80.0%) identified this as being a communication problem. The same percentages of practitioners (59.7%) and experts (60.0%) indicated that the type of communication problem was insufficient downward communication. The highest percentage of both practitioners (96.8%) and experts (100.0%) indicated
Table 5. Responses to Scenario C reported by total, group, and type of facility

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<th>Type of facility</th>
</tr>
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<td>Too much at one time</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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\*a\*n = 67.
\*b\*n = 5.
\*c\*n = 62.
\*d\*n = 22.
\*e\*n = 40.
\*f\*Respondents were allowed to check more than one response.
Table 5. Continued

<table>
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<th>Nonprofit</th>
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<td>No. %c</td>
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<td>23 37.1</td>
<td>11 50.0</td>
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<td>10 16.1</td>
<td>5 22.7</td>
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<td>81 130.6f</td>
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</table>
that loss of good will was the most likely consequence. Most practitioners (75.8%) indicated change in communication as the appropriate solution followed by change in policy and procedures (37.1%). The responses of the experts were in reverse with 60.0% of the experts indicating change policy and procedures and 40.0% indicating change in communication as appropriate solutions.

**Comparison of practitioner responses by type of organization**

For scenario C, 81.8% of the profit and 95.0% of the nonprofit respondents indicated that this incident was a communication problem. Over half of the profit (54.5%) and nonprofit (62.5%) respondents indicated that insufficient downward communication was the type of communication problem. Nearly all of the profit (95.5%) and nonprofit (97.5%) respondents indicated loss of good will with customers or personnel was the most likely consequence. Most of the profit (68.2%) and nonprofit (80.0%) respondents indicated a change in communication was the appropriate solution. The differences between profit and nonprofit responses for this scenario were not statistically significant.

**Scenario D**

The fourth scenario described a situation at a restaurant in which the manager told the cook what to put in the fry basket. A few minutes later the manager realized that what was in the basket was different than what was asked for.
Results to questions related to Scenario D are presented in Table 6. Over three-fourths (76.1%) of the respondents identified this scenario as being a communication problem. A majority (58.2%) defined the problem as being one of incomplete comprehension; however, nearly one-fourth (22.4%) of the practitioners also indicated that this was a problem of too much information at one time. The possible consequences of the problem were very evenly divided among the alternatives. The consequences of the problem were identified as: loss of good will, 58.2%; high inventory costs, 53.7%; and loss of income, 44.8%. Appropriate solutions were a change in communication 62.7%; and a change in policies and procedures. Other responses were: don't change anything based on one incident, get communication straight, have the information repeated back, and call in different order. When asked for frequency of occurrence, 2 respondents indicated never, 27 indicated sometimes, and 18 indicated frequently.

Comparison of practitioner and expert responses
Similar percentages of practitioners (75.8%) and experts (80.0%) identified the scenario as being a communication problem. Nearly identical percentages of practitioners (58.1%) and experts (60.0%) indicated that incomplete comprehension was the type of communication problem. Responses to appropriate solution were more widely distributed for both practitioners and experts. Practitioner responses
Table 6. Responses to Scenario D reported by total, group, and type of facility

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<td>Policy or procedures</td>
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<td>12.9</td>
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<td>95.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>95.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Type of communication problem | | | | | | |
| Incomplete comprehension | 39 | 58.2 | 3 | 60.0 | 36 | 58.1 | 11 | 50.0 | 25 | 62.5 |
| Too much at one time | 15 | 22.4 | 1 | 20.0 | 14 | 22.6 | 5 | 22.7 | 9 | 22.5 |
| Insufficient downward | 10 | 14.9 | 1 | 20.0 | 9 | 14.5 | 4 | 18.2 | 5 | 12.5 |
| Insufficient upward | 4 | 6.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 4 | 6.5 | 1 | 4.5 | 3 | 7.5 |
| Other | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Total | 68 | 101.5f | 5 | 100.0 | 63 | 101.7f | 21 | 95.4 | 42 | 105.0f |

\[a_n = 67.\]
\[b_n = 5.\]
\[c_n = 62.\]
\[d_n = 22.\]
\[e_n = 40.\]
\[f_Respondents were allowed to check more than one response.\]
Table 6. Continued

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
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<td>No.</td>
<td>%a</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%b</td>
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<td>Most likely consequence</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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were fairly evenly divided between loss of good will, 56.5%; high inventory costs, 54.8%, and loss of income, 45.2% as consequences for this problem. Loss of good will was the most frequently selected consequence by experts (80.0%), but responses to high inventory cost, (40.0%); and loss of income, (40.0%) were comparable to practitioners. Most practitioners (62.9%) and experts (60.0%) indicated that change in communication was the appropriate solution.

Comparison of practitioner responses by type of organization For scenario D, 63.6% of the profit and 82.5% of the nonprofit groups indicated that the incident was a communication problem. Nearly two-thirds (62.5%) of the nonprofit group indicated that the type of communication problem was incomplete comprehension. Only 50.0% of the profit group indicated that incomplete comprehension was the type of communication problem presented. Nearly identical proportions of profit (22.7%) and nonprofit (22.5%) respondents indicated that the problem was one of too much information at one time. One-half (50.0%) of profit respondents and over three-fourths (77.0%) of the nonprofit respondents indicated that changing communication was the appropriate solution. Many (40.9%) of the profit respondents and nearly one-third (30.0%) of the nonprofit respondents also indicated that change in policies and procedures was
appropriate. None of these differences were statistically significant.

**Scenario E**

The fifth scenario described a situation in which a manager sent several people home for the night for disagreeing with him. Another employee was frustrated by that action. Results to questions related to Scenario E are presented in Table 7. The majority of the respondents (89.6%) indicated that this was a problem of management style rather than communication. This result was expected and consistent with the finding of the panel of experts in earlier rounds of the survey. Although this was not identified as a communication problem, over one-fourth (28.4%) of the practitioners indicated that there was a problem of insufficient downward communication. Over three-fourths (82.1%) of the respondents indicated that loss of good will with customers and employees was the most probable consequence, however, 43.3% indicated loss of income would occur, and 40.3% indicated that higher labor costs would be involved also. Other responses were: loss of business, lawsuits from former employees, and all of the above. As anticipated, nearly all (92.5%) indicated that change in management style was the appropriate solution. When asked for frequency of occurrence, 6 respondents indicated never, 23 indicated sometimes, and 15 indicated frequently.
Table 7. Responses to Scenario E by total, group, and type of facility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Experts</th>
<th>Practitioner</th>
<th>Profit</th>
<th>Nonprofit</th>
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<td>No. %b</td>
<td>No. %c</td>
<td>No. %d</td>
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<td>Type of problem</td>
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<td>Management style</td>
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<td>Policy or procedures</td>
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a n = 67.
b n = 5.
c n = 62.
d n = 22.
e n = 40.
f Respondents were allowed to check more than one response.
Table 7. Continued

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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change management style</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80.0</td>
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<td>13.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>111.9f</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>71</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Comparison of practitioner and expert responses

Similar percentages of practitioners (90.3%) and experts (80.0%) indicated that this scenario was a management style problem. Nearly one-third of practitioners (30.6%) indicated that the problem was one of insufficient downward communication. None of the experts responded to the question. Responses to possible consequences were nearly identical for practitioners and experts. Loss of good will was most frequently indicated by both practitioners (82.3%) and experts (80.0%). Most practitioners (91.9%) and experts (80.0%) indicated that change in management style was the appropriate solution.

Comparison of practitioner responses by type of organization

For scenario E, 86.4% of the profit and 92.5% of the nonprofit groups indicated that this was a management style problem. Nearly identical proportions of profit (81.8%) and nonprofit (82.5%) respondents indicated that loss of good will with customers and personnel was the probable consequence. Nearly all of the profit (95.5%) and nonprofit (90.0%) respondents indicated that change in management style was the appropriate solution. Nearly one-fourth (22.5%) of the profit group also indicated that change in communication was appropriate while none of the profit respondents selected the response. These differences between profit and nonprofit group responses were not statistically significant.
Summary

Of the five scenarios presented to the participants, four were identified as being communication problems. The fifth was identified as being a management style problem. The respondents indicated that the appropriate change for the management style problem was a change in management style. For the four communication problems, the respondents indicated that a change in communication was appropriate. For two of the communication problems, strong emphasis was also placed on change of management style. For the other two problems, strong emphasis was also placed on changing policies and procedures. Three of the four communication problems were found to be problems of insufficient downward communication and one was incomplete comprehension. This was consistent with those definitions of problems in communication given by the respondents, which referred to either the information itself or to the lack of training and documentation of policies and procedures.

Conclusions

Based on responses from the survey, it may be concluded that it is possible to distinguish between the management concepts of communication skills, policy and procedures, and management style. This could be helpful for the purpose of analyzing communication problems and training managers to communicate. Four of the five scenarios presented in the
questionnaire were identified by the respondents as being communication problems and one was identified as a management style problem. This was consistent with findings from the first two rounds of the survey in which the panel of experts identified those same four scenarios as communication problems and the fifth scenario as a management style problem. No statistically significant differences between the responses when compared by sex, or type of food service indicated that the scenarios were evaluated similarly by different groups within the industry.

Lack of comprehension was selected as the most common type of communication problem encountered by managers. The next most frequently selected type of communication problem was insufficient downward communication. The most common communication problem may be a combination of these two: that is, lack of comprehension by the employees, may result from incomplete information being communicated on the part of the manager. When the respondents were presented with specific examples of communications problems, three of the four scenarios were defined as cases of insufficient downward communication and one was defined as incomplete comprehension.

When asked to identify the usual consequence that occurred with communication problems, nearly two-thirds (65.7%) of the respondents chose loss of good will with customers or personnel. Of the four examples of communication problems,
one, Scenario C, was selected by the respondents as having a most likely outcome of loss of good will. The outcomes for Scenario B and Scenario D were high labor costs and high inventory costs, respectively. The responses to Scenario A were more evenly divided among all the options indicating that the respondents perceived a wider range of consequences for that type of incident.

When respondents were asked to recommend an appropriate solution to communication problems in general, 50.7% recommended changing communication. However, a fairly high number also indicated that a change in management style (35.8%) and a change in policies and procedures (32.8%) were appropriate. This may indicate that management style and communication style are interrelated. Written policies and procedures are a vital means of communicating the managerial decision to the employee. Although it is possible to separate concepts of communication, management style, and written policies and procedures, it is not very likely that one concept can be changed without having a direct influence on the status of the others. When asked how often each of these types of incidents occur, the respondents indicated that all of them happen sometimes. Respondents indicated that Scenario A happened more frequently than any other scenario. As Scenario A described a training situation, one recurrent problem in the hotel, restaurant, and institution management
field that may need to be addressed is poor training procedures.

Recommendations

One of the objectives of the study was to make recommendations for the development of case studies covering communication problems. Several recommendations can be made based on the findings of this study. These recommendations cover the questionnaire used, areas for further study, and development of case studies for use in an undergraduate curriculum.

Some changes in the questionnaire are recommended. The question that asked for the sex of the respondent should be rewritten as "Your sex". The multiple response questions should be written so that the respondent can choose only one of the distractors, rather than selecting as many as appropriate. The question that asked the respondent to indicate how frequently each type of incident occurs should be written as a multiple response question with options and definitions.

It is recommended that further studies cover topics such as reasons for communication problems, constraints put on the manager by the system that led to communication problems, and ways undergraduate courses could have prepared better communicators. Since the results of the survey would be used in hotel, restaurant, and institution management undergraduate
curricula, the population should consist of those who are graduates of such programs. The sample could then be asked how well the curricula they completed prepared them to communicate. The Delphi Technique appears to be a good technique to use with hospitality managers and experts when determining communication problems.

It is recommended that the four scenarios that were indicated to be communication problems by the respondents be developed into case studies for use in an undergraduate hotel, restaurant, and institution management curriculum. The writer could rely on the resources listed in the review of literature as well as other resources for assistance. The writer could begin by first determining what problem was expressed by the scenario, and what principles needed to be covered in the discussion of the case (Engel, 1973). In developing scenarios into cases, the writer should consider the different aspects of communication in business. Details could be added to cover such areas as listening, asking questions, and giving feedback (Bauby, 1972). The case difficulty cube (Patterson, 1982) would be helpful in determining the desired difficulty of analysis, conceptualization, and presentation for each case.

Scenario C could be used as a beginning or introductory case, because the least amount of material is needed to present the problem. There was a higher rate of consensus among the respondents about this scenario than the other three
communication scenarios. It could be noted that changes in communication could involve a change in procedures. This scenario could be expanded to demonstrate loss of good will as a consequence of poor communication if so desired.

Scenarios B and D should be used to illustrate how poor communication leads to higher labor cost and higher inventory cost, respectively. These cases could be rewritten with additional details to present a more complex and challenging problem to the student. Another possibility would be to omit some key details from the expanded case so the student could determine what additional information would be helpful.

Scenario A should be developed to show how poor communication in the form of poor training procedures leads to all the consequences of communication problems. This would appear to be especially valuable since many of the general definitions of communication problems given by respondents referred to poor training or lack of written policies and procedures. Once written, these cases should be introduced into an undergraduate hotel, restaurant, and institution management curriculum and evaluated.
SUMMARY

The importance of teaching communication skills at the undergraduate level to future managers has been reported by researchers. The types of communication problems encountered by hospitality managers has not been established. Case studies and simulations have been demonstrated to be useful in the teaching of management skills to students. Due to lack of information on communication problems encountered by hospitality managers, the objectives of this study were to identify communication problems, their types, causes, and potential solutions, and to make recommendations for the development of case studies for use in undergraduate hotel, restaurant, and institution management curricula.

The Delphi Technique was used to develop a questionnaire. The final questionnaire was mailed to 200 food service managers as well as to the Delphi panel of experts. The sample was randomly selected from a list of establishments holding a food service license with the Iowa Department of Agriculture. A follow-up letter was mailed to those who had not responded within two weeks. Questionnaires were returned from 69 managers and experts; 67 were usable and analyzed.

The questionnaire contained 38 questions and was divided into two sections. Part 1 asked questions to collect demographic data. Part 2 presented five different scenarios and after each scenario asked questions about the type of
problem, the consequence, and the recommended solution. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences programs for frequencies, means, and chi square analysis.

Respondents supervised a variety of types of food service. There were responses from 10 fast food restaurants, 8 family restaurants, 13 hospital or health care facilities, 8 college and universities, 13 schools and 7 in-plant or employee feeding units. The number of employees in a unit ranged from 0 to 217. The number of employees reporting directly to the respondent ranged from 0 to 55. There were 36 female and 15 male respondents, and 16 respondents who misinterpreted the question asking for sex. This was due to the way the question was worded and placed in the questionnaire. More than half (56.7%) of the respondents indicated their title as being manager or director. Ten (14.9%) indicated that their title was supervisor and nearly as many (9) indicated they were owner/operator.

The time respondents had been in their present position ranged from 2 weeks to 34 years with a mean of 7.12 years. The time respondents had been in the food service field ranged from 1 year to 40 years with a mean of 15.12 years. A majority of the respondents were not professionally certified or registered. There were 12 Registered/Licensed Dietitians. Eight respondents were certified by a school food service
association and 1 was certified by the American Hotel and Motel Association. Over one-third (34.3%) of the respondents held degrees in food service management or related areas. There were 9 respondents with advanced degrees; 4 of these were on the expert panel.

Respondents were asked questions about communication problems in general. Responses were analyzed for content and categorized using a communication model. Twelve respondents defined communication problems as being due to the message itself; 9 referred to the sender; 9 to the receiver; 7 to both the sender or receiver; 5 to the channel; and 6 to the environment. Respondents indicated that incomplete comprehension and insufficient downward communication were the most common communication problems. Loss of good will with customers and personnel was the consequence most indicated by respondents as being a result of communication problems. However, higher labor costs, loss of income, and higher inventory costs were also indicated by at least one-fourth of the respondents. The majority (50.7%) of the respondents indicated that changing communication was the appropriate solution to communication problems. Approximately one-third also indicated changing management style and changing policies and procedures were appropriate solutions.

Responses to scenarios were analyzed comparing the panel of experts to practitioners, profit to nonprofit
organizations, and male to female responses. A chi square
analysis was conducted comparing percent responses for profit
to nonprofit respondents. Only one statistically significant
difference was found. Most respondents indicated that the
appropriate solution to Scenario A was change communication.
However, 40.9% of the profit respondents and 15.0% of the
nonprofit respondents also selected changing management style
as an appropriate solution. This was the only statistically
significant ($p < .05$) comparison of response in the study.

When differences by sex were compared using chi square
analysis, no significant differences were found. When asked
about communication problems in general females tended to put
more emphasis on loss of good will and males tended to put
more emphasis on loss of income. No trends were observable in
the responses to the scenarios.

Of the five scenarios, four were identified by the
respondents as being communication problems. The fifth
scenario was identified as a management style problem. The
respondents indicated that the appropriate solution for
communication problems was a change in communication and that
the appropriate solution to the management style problem was a
change in management style. For two of the communication
problems respondents also selected changing management style
as a solution. For the other two communication problems, the
respondents also selected changing policies and procedures as a solution.

Recommendations were made for development of case studies covering communication problems. It was recommended that the four scenarios indicated by the respondents to be communication problems be developed into case studies. It was recommended that Scenario C be used as an introductory case because the least amount of material would be needed to present the problem. Scenario C could be used to demonstrate how poor communication leads to loss of good will with customers and personnel. Scenarios B and D should be used to demonstrate how poor communication leads to high labor cost and inventory cost, respectively. These cases could be written with increasing complexity. Scenario A could be developed to show how one incident of poor communication can lead to all of the listed consequences of communication problems. It was recommended that once written, these cases should be introduced into an undergraduate curriculum and evaluated. Recommendations were also made for revisions in the questionnaire and areas for further study.
REFERENCES


ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to my major professor, Dr. Dori Finley. Not only were her direction and supervision indispensable, but her encouragement and mentoring were above and beyond the call of duty. Special thanks are also expressed to my committee members, Dr. Thomas Walsh and Dr. Irene Beavers, for their direction and assistance, and to Il-Sun Kim and Beth Ruiz for their assistance with statistics.

The financial support of the Home Economics Research Institute is gratefully acknowledged as is the time and effort of my panel members.

Special thanks are expressed to Miss Robson, Dr. Walsh, and other faculty members for their vote of confidence by letting me be an instructor in HRI 380L.

Special honor goes to my parents for loving me unconditionally, and to all my family members for their enthusiasm and encouragement. I would like to thank my very best friend, Anne Zeff, and Mary Harrington, and the other saints for the support and encouragement, for sharing my laughter and tears, and for helping me keep life in perspective.

Most of all, I thank Jesus Christ. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." Proverbs 9:10 NAS.
APPENDIX

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September 16, 1986

Dear Foodservice Professional:

We are conducting a study to determine the communication problems that exist in the hospitality industry, their causes and effects. The procedures that will be used include establishing a panel of experts. You were specifically selected to be on the panel of experts for this study. It is planned that the panel of experts will be presented with 10-12 scenarios and asked to identify the type of problem presented, possible causes and potential solutions. Second and third revisions of the scenarios are anticipated. Each review should take approximately 30 minutes of your time. This study will be conducted over a period of three months.

We will use the information gained from this study to assist in curriculum development in Hotel, Restaurant, and Institution Management at Iowa State University. All individual responses will remain confidential; the results will be reported only in summary form. You may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time. The return of the enclosed survey packet will indicate your plans to participate.

We will be happy to answer any questions you may have concerning the study. You may write to either of us or call 515/294-1730.

Thank you for your time and interest.

Sincerely,

Signature redacted for privacy

Esther Walker
Graduate Student

Dori Finley, Ph.D.
Associate Professor

/vvv
encl
FOODSERVICE MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION SURVEY

Directions: Place an X in the blank preceding the answer that best applies OR fill in the blank with the information requested.

1. What type of foodservice do you manage?
   - 1) fast food
   - 2) family restaurant
   - 3) fine dining restaurant
   - 4) hospital or health care
   - 5) college and university
   - 6) school
   - 7) in-plant
   - 8) other, specify ____________________

2. How many full and part-time employees are in your unit or department? ________ (number)

3. How many employees report directly to you? ________ (number)

4. Your sex: ___ Female ___ Male

5. What is your current position or title?
   - 1) supervisor
   - 2) assistant manager or assistant director
   - 3) manager or director
   - 4) owner/operator
   - 5) other, specify ____________________

6. How long have you been in this position? ________ years

7. How long have you worked in foodservice of any kind? ________ years

8. What has been your career path in foodservice management? (In the blank to the left, number the responses that apply to you in chronological order. In the blank to the right, indicate number of years in each.)

   - Worked up through organization
   - Previous work experience in foodservice
   - Vocational training in foodservice management
   - Academic training in foodservice management
   - Degree in foodservice management or related area
   - Other academic training
   - Other degree
   - Advanced degree in foodservice management or business administration, please indicate

   - Other, specify ____________________

9. How many years of school have you completed? (Circle the appropriate number.)
   8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 other ____________________

10. Are you registered, licensed, or certified with any professional foodservice organization? Please identify and state type of credentials. ____________________
Directions: Read the paragraphs listed below. For each one, answer question 1. by placing an X in the appropriate space. For questions 2. through 4. write your answer in the space below the question. If you need more room, you may use the back of the page.

1. You run a large catering service at a university. You hire many students from all majors to work part-time setting up and serving banquets. Tonight, they were to assemble individual gelatin salads on lettuce lined salad plates. You pointed one of the first-timers, an engineering major, to the box of leaf lettuce and the sink and said, "Wash the leaf lettuce for the salad." He promptly walked over, filled the sink with soap and water and proceeded to wash the lettuce.

1. To get a feel for the type of experience base you are using for your answers to questions 2-4, please indicate whether an incident similar to this one

   ___ has happened to you.

   ___ has happened to someone else you know.

   ___ has not happened that you know of, but could probably happen sometime.

   ___ other (explain) _____________________________________________________________

2. In your opinion, what caused this problem?

3. What would you recommend as an appropriate solution to this problem?

4. What other comments would you like to make?
2. As you hang up the phone, you stare in disbelief. You have been working as a waitress for 3 years at a family restaurant. Recently the rumor has been floating around that your unit, one of three for this chain here in town, has not been doing well and your manager may lose his job. Now, on a Saturday morning, two hours before you are scheduled to work, the district manager calls you at home to tell you that the store where you work is closed. He suggests that you call the manager at one of the other units and see if you can transfer. He won't guarantee anything.

1. An incident similar to this one
   ____ has happened to you.
   ____ has happened to someone else you know.
   ____ has not happened that you know of, but could probably happen sometime.
   ____ other (explain) ________________________________________________

2. In your opinion, what caused this problem?

3. What would you recommend as an appropriate solution to this problem?

4. What other comments would you like to make?

3. The freshman was first put to work on the serving line. One of the entrees today was batter dipped fish portions. The manager told the student that some of the guys (the football players, of course) would try to talk him into extras by complaining about the size of the portions. "Don't let them talk you into it," the manager said as he left the line. The first 30 minutes went smoothly. Then a man in a suit, approx. 30-35, wanted two pieces. The student refused. "You don't know who I am, do you," the man said. "I own this building." The student shrugged in disinterest. He was just doing his job. About three minutes later, the manager came out and said shortly, "You need to use some common sense. If the pieces are small, give them two." The student just nodded his head but you could tell he was furious.

1. An incident similar to this one
   ____ has happened to you.
   ____ has happened to someone else you know.
   ____ has not happened that you know of, but could probably happen sometime.
   ____ other (explain) ________________________________________________

2. In your opinion, what caused this problem?

3. What would you recommend as an appropriate solution to this problem?

4. What other comments would you like to make?
4. It's bar rush again on the Friday night graveyard shift at the Burger Box. You just hate working the drive-through register but you always get stuck with it. Worse yet, your manager is a mealy-mouthed jerk. You turn from the window in time to hear him say to the cashier at the register next to you, "Punch out and go home. I don't need you if you can't work harder than that." The person bagging drinks for you starts to protest. "You disagree with the way I handle things? You can go home too," the manager continues. And yet another time, a third person goes home for the night. You are tempted to get in on the action. You've got better things to do and places to be. With your luck, however, you'd have to stay anyway, especially now that you're short of help. The drive-through bell rings again and with great difficulty you remember to put the smile in your voice as you say, "Welcome to Burger Box. May I take your order please?"

1. An incident similar to this one
   ___ has happened to you.
   ___ has happened to someone else you know.
   ___ has not happened that you know of, but could probably happen sometime.
   ___ other (explain) _________________________

2. In your opinion, what caused this problem?

3. What would you recommend as an appropriate solution to this problem?

4. What other comments would you like to make?

5. It's your first week as an assistant manager at this institution. You're excited about the chance to demonstrate your creativity as well as your leadership skills. The manager suggests that as part of your training you should set up the salad bar. At 10 AM you start. Halfway done, you are thinking about how nice it looks; color, shape, this salad bar has it all. On the way out to break, the salad head stops to say, "Oh, but you're not supposed to do it that way." She then proceeds to dig out the set-up list that shows that you should have one protein item, three vegetables and two additional toppings. It also specifies the arrangement. She then shows you the leftover shelf with the items you were supposed to use first. You hurriedly throw your items back in the cooler and pull out the old stuff. You will have to hustle to be done by 11:00.

1. An incident similar to this one
   ___ has happened to you.
   ___ has happened to someone else you know.
   ___ has not happened that you know of, but could probably happen sometime.
   ___ other (explain) _________________________

2. In your opinion, what caused this problem?

3. What would you recommend as an appropriate solution to this problem?

4. What other comments would you like to make?
6. Your people are working as fast as they can to get the 650 sack lunches ready. It's a regular assembly line, almost. As line supervisor, you are keeping them supplied and busy. About one-fourth of the way through, one of your kitchen helpers tells you that there are no more boxes of apples in the cooler. You walk around the corner and tell the assistant manager that you are running out of apples for the sack lunches. "Oh no," she says confidently as she walks off. "I ordered enough."

1. An incident similar to this one
   ___ has happened to you.
   ___ has happened to someone else you know.
   ___ has not happened that you know of, but could probably happen sometime.
   ___ other (explain) ________________________________________________________

2. In your opinion, what caused this problem?

3. What would you recommend as an appropriate solution to this problem?

4. What other comments would you like to make?

7. You are a shift supervisor in a restaurant. The owner is considering investing more money by expanding the storeroom. Some of you on the day crew had been discussing this idea and generally agreed that personally, you thought that investing in the customer flow area would bring a quicker return in terms of profits. In this context one of the shift supervisors commented to the assistant manager that the owner had the right idea but the wrong end of the store. That was the only part of the conversation that got passed on. By the time it got to the owner, it was fifth hand. He perceived the comment as being disrespectful and fired that supervisor. The fired supervisor plans on filing for unemployment.

1. An incident similar to this one
   ___ has happened to you.
   ___ has happened to someone else you know.
   ___ has not happened that you know of, but could probably happen sometime.
   ___ other (explain) ________________________________________________________

2. In your opinion, what caused this problem?

3. What would you recommend as an appropriate solution to this problem?

4. What other comments would you like to make?
8. The hotel restaurant you work at does a lot of business with tour busses, especially during the summer. A couple of weeks ago, a tour group of 70 on its way west made reservations for its return trip. This was neither cancelled nor confirmed. Today, at noon, the room was set, the food was ready, and the staff was waiting-- and waiting. Finally, at one o'clock the manager called the bus company and sure enough that tour group was not scheduled to be there for lunch. You now have 70 steaks to get rid of and all that labor invested for nothing.

1. An incident similar to this one
   ___ has happened to you.
   ___ has happened to someone else you know.
   ___ has not happened that you know of, but could probably happen sometime.
   ___ other (explain) ____________________________________________

2. In your opinion, what caused this problem?

3. What would you recommend as an appropriate solution to this problem?

4. What other comments would you like to make?

9. The hotel where you work has about 125 employees on its payroll, of which 70 are part-time. From time to time there are mandatory all-employee meetings where the past year is reviewed and future plans are discussed. The last few times attendance hasn't been very high although the employees are paid their hourly wage for the time. Your boss wants to insure that attendance at the next meeting is higher. He told you to post notices on the employee bulletin boards that whoever did not attend the meeting would not be given any vacation the next year. You finished that this morning. This afternoon while you were at the water cooler around the corner from one of the boards, you heard a couple of part-timers reading the notice in disgust. One of them made a sarcastic remark about the fact that part-timers don't get vacation anyway so it was no big loss. Other derisive comments burned your ears as you slipped down the hall to your office and shut the door. It's your guess that attendance will be low again, and somehow, you will be to blame.

1. An incident similar to this one
   ___ has happened to you.
   ___ has happened to someone else you know.
   ___ has not happened that you know of, but could probably happen sometime.
   ___ other (explain) ____________________________________________

2. In your opinion, what caused this problem?

3. What would you recommend as an appropriate solution to this problem?

4. What other comments would you like to make?
10. You are the foodservice director in a 550-bed hospital. In addition to patient meals, and employee and guests cafeterias, your department handles all in-house caterings, from coffee and doughnuts to banquets. Today, at 12:15 PM, Dr. Jones called from the doctor's library wanting to know where the luncheon was scheduled for today. You asked the staff member responsible for this one what the problem was. She said that there was no problem. The luncheon was in the doctor's dining room where it always was. She did not know that location had been changed. When you approached the assistant manager who had handled the reservation, her records showed that the luncheon was booked for the library room. She had not passed that information on.

1. An incident similar to this one
   ___ has happened to you.
   ___ has happened to someone else you know.
   ___ has not happened that you know of, but could probably happen sometime.
   ___ other (explain) ________________________________

2. In your opinion, what caused this problem?

3. What would you recommend as an appropriate solution to this problem?

4. What other comments would you like to make?

11. During the lunch rush at your restaurant, you frequently work in the kitchen calling out orders to the cooks on either side of you. You all work quickly and smoothly and always try to establish a new record for the number of orders served in one hour. You call out to the meat and fry cook, "I need a four, a fish and a fry down." A minute later you look around and there are no four-to-one burgers on the grill. However, the fry basket looks full. As you lift the basket, you see one order of fries and four portions of fish almost ready to come up.

1. An incident similar to this one
   ___ has happened to you.
   ___ has happened to someone else you know.
   ___ has not happened that you know of, but could probably happen sometime.
   ___ other (explain) ________________________________

2. In your opinion, what caused this problem?

3. What would you recommend as an appropriate solution to this problem?

4. What other comments would you like to make?
Dear Foodservice Professional:

Thank you for participating in the first round of our study to determine the communication problems that exist in the hospitality industry. Your prompt response in the first round was greatly appreciated. Your responses were very helpful and have been incorporated in the questionnaire that is enclosed. In this second round we are asking you to complete Part I and critique Part 2 of the questionnaire. The results of this round will be used to further refine the questionnaire to its final form. All individual responses will remain confidential; the results will be reported only in summary form.

Please return the completed questionnaire by December 8, 1986. We anticipate sending out the final questionnaire by January 5, 1987.

Sincerely,

Esther Walker
Graduate Student

Dori Finley, Ph.D.
Associate Professor

November 21, 1986
FOODSERVICE MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION SURVEY

PART 1

Directions: Respond to the following situations by checking the appropriate answers.

A. You supervise a large catering service at a university. You hire many students from all majors to work part-time setting up and serving banquets. Tonight, they were to assemble individual gelatin salads on lettuce lined salad plates. You pointed one of the first-timers, an engineering major, to the box of leaf lettuce and the sink and said, "Wash the leaf lettuce for the salad." He promptly walked over, filled the sink with soap and water and proceeded to wash the lettuce.

1. Is this problem one of
   a. ___ communications (go to number 2)
   b. ___ policy or procedure (skip number 2)
   c. ___ management style (skip number 2)
   d. ___ other, explain (skip number 2) ____________________

2. In your opinion which of the following best describes the communication problem in the situation?
   a. ___ too much information
   b. ___ incomplete comprehension
   c. ___ insufficient upward communication
   d. ___ insufficient downward communication
   e. ___ other, explain ________________________

3. What possible consequences could this type of situation most likely have?
   a. ___ loss of income
   b. ___ higher inventory costs
   c. ___ higher labor costs
   d. ___ loss of good will with customers or personnel
   e. ___ other, explain ________________________

4. What is an appropriate solution?
   a. ___ change in communications
   b. ___ change in policy or procedures
   c. ___ change in management style
   d. ___ other, explain ________________________

5. Based on your experience or the experience of others you know, how frequently does this type of situation occur?
B. As you hang up the phone, you stare in disbelief. You have been working as a waitress for 3 years at a family restaurant. Recently the rumor has been floating around that your unit, one of three for this chain here in town, has not been doing well and your manager may lose his job. Now, on a Saturday morning, two hours before you are scheduled to work, the district manager calls you at home to tell you that the store where you work is closed. He suggests that you call the manager at one of the other units and see if you can transfer. He won't guarantee anything.

1. Is this problem one of
   a. ____ communications (go to number 2)
   b. ____ policy or procedure (skip number 2)
   c. ____ management style (skip number 2)
   d. ____ other, explain (skip number 2)

2. In your opinion which of the following best describes the communication problem in the situation?
   a. ____ too much information
   b. ____ incomplete comprehension
   c. ____ insufficient upward communication
   d. ____ insufficient downward communication
   e. ____ other, explain

3. What possible consequences could this type of situation most likely have?
   a. ____ loss of income
   b. ____ higher inventory costs
   c. ____ higher labor costs
   d. ____ loss of good will with customers or personnel
   e. ____ other, explain

4. What is an appropriate solution?
   a. ____ change in communications
   b. ____ change in policy or procedures
   c. ____ change in management style
   d. ____ other, explain

5. Based on your experience or the experience of others you know, how frequently does this type of situation occur?
C. It's your first week as an assistant manager at this institution. You're excited about the chance to demonstrate your creativity as well as your leadership skills. The manager suggests that as part of your training you should set up the salad bar. At 10 AM you start. Halfway done, you are thinking about how nice it looks; color, shape, this salad bar has it all. On the way out to break, the salad head stops to say, "Oh, but you're not supposed to do it that way." She then proceeds to dig out the set-up list that shows that you should have one protein item, three vegetables and two additional toppings. It also specifies the arrangement. She then shows you the leftover shelf with the items you were supposed to use first. You hurriedly throw your items back in the cooler and pull out the old stuff. You will have to hustle to be done by 11:00.

1. Is this problem one of
   a. _____ communications (go to number 2)
   b. _____ policy or procedure (skip number 2)
   c. _____ management style (skip number 2)
   d. _____ other, explain (skip number 2) _____________________

2. In your opinion which of the following best describes the communication problem in the situation?
   a. _____ too much information
   b. _____ incomplete comprehension
   c. _____ insufficient upward communication
   d. _____ insufficient downward communication
   e. _____ other, explain ____________________________

3. What possible consequences could this type of situation most likely have?
   a. _____ loss of income
   b. _____ higher inventory costs
   c. _____ higher labor costs
   d. _____ loss of good will with customers or personnel
   e. _____ other, explain ____________________________

4. What is an appropriate solution?
   a. _____ change in communications
   b. _____ change in policy or procedures
   c. _____ change in management style
   d. _____ other, explain ____________________________

5. Based on your experience or the experience of others you know, how frequently does this type of situation occur?
D. You are a shift supervisor in a restaurant. The owner is considering investing more money by expanding the storeroom. Some of you on the day crew had been discussing this idea and generally agreed that personally, you thought that investing in the customer flow area would bring a quicker return in terms of profits. In this context one of the shift supervisors commented to the assistant manager that the owner had the right idea but the wrong end of the store. That was the only part of the conversation that got passed on. By the time it got to the owner, it was fifth hand. He perceived the comment as being disrespectful and fired that supervisor. The fired supervisor plans on filing for unemployment.

1. Is this problem one of
   a. _____ communications (go to number 2)
   b. _____ policy or procedure (skip number 2)
   c. _____ management style (skip number 2)
   d. _____ other, explain (skip number 2) ___________________ _

2. In your opinion which of the following best describes the communication problem in the situation?
   a. _____ too much information
   b. _____ incomplete comprehension
   c. _____ insufficient upward communication
   d. _____ insufficient downward communication
   e. _____ other, explain ___________________________ _

3. What possible consequences could this type of situation most likely have?
   a. _____ loss of income
   b. _____ higher inventory costs
   c. _____ higher labor costs
   d. _____ loss of good will with customers or personnel
   e. _____ other, explain ___________________________ _

4. What is an appropriate solution?
   a. _____ change in communications
   b. _____ change in policy or procedures
   c. _____ change in management style
   d. _____ other, explain ___________________________ _

5. Based on your experience or the experience of others you know, how frequently does this type of situation occur?
E. You are the foodservice director in a 550-bed hospital. In addition to patient meals, and employee and guests cafeterias, your department handles all in-house caterings, from coffee and doughnuts to banquets. Today, at 12:15 PM, Dr. Jones called from the doctor's library wanting to know where the luncheon was scheduled for today. You asked the staff member responsible for this one what the problem was. She said that there was no problem. The luncheon was in the doctor's dining room where it always was. She did not know that location had been changed. When you approached the assistant manager who had handled the reservation, her records showed that the luncheon was booked for the library room. She had not passed that information on.

1. Is this problem one of
   a. _____ communications (go to number 2)
   b. _____ policy or procedure (skip number 2)
   c. _____ management style (skip number 2)
   d. _____ other, explain (skip number 2) ____________________

2. In your opinion which of the following best describes the communication problem in the situation?
   a. _____ too much information
   b. _____ incomplete comprehension
   c. _____ insufficient upward communication
   d. _____ insufficient downward communication
   e. _____ other, explain __________________________________________

3. What possible consequences could this type of situation most likely have?
   a. _____ loss of income
   b. _____ higher inventory costs
   c. _____ higher labor costs
   d. _____ loss of good will with customers or personnel
   e. _____ other, explain __________________________________________

4. What is an appropriate solution?
   a. _____ change in communications
   b. _____ change in policy or procedures
   c. _____ change in management style
   d. _____ other, explain __________________________________________

5. Based on your experience or the experience of others you know, how frequently does this type of situation occur?

________________________
F. During the lunch rush at your restaurant, you frequently work in the kitchen calling out orders to the cooks on either side of you. You all work quickly and smoothly and always try to establish a new record for the number of orders served in one hour. You call out to the meat and fry cook, "I need a four, a fish and a fry down." A minute later you look around and there are no four-to-one burgers on the grill. However, the fry basket looks full. As you lift the basket, you see one order of fries and four portions of fish almost ready to come up.

1. Is this problem one of
   a. communications (go to number 2)
   b. policy or procedure (skip number 2)
   c. management style (skip number 2)
   d. other, explain (skip number 2) 

2. In your opinion which of the following best describes the communication problem in the situation?
   a. too much information
   b. incomplete comprehension
   c. insufficient upward communication
   d. insufficient downward communication
   e. other, explain 

3. What possible consequences could this type of situation most likely have?
   a. loss of income
   b. higher inventory costs
   c. higher labor costs
   d. loss of good will with customers or personnel
   e. other, explain 

4. What is an appropriate solution?
   a. change in communications
   b. change in policy or procedures
   c. change in management style
   d. other, explain 

5. Based on your experience or the experience of others you know, how frequently does this type of situation occur?
FOODSERVICE MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION SURVEY

PART 2

Directions: Do not complete these questions but rather evaluate this section of the questionnaire for readability and completeness.

1. What type of foodservice do you manage?
   __ 1) fast food
   __ 2) family restaurant
   __ 3) fine dining restaurant
   __ 4) hospital or health care
   __ 5) college and university
   __ 6) school
   __ 7) in-plant
   __ 8) other, specify ______________________

2. How many full and part-time employees are in your unit or department? ______ (number)

3. How many employees report directly to you? _________ (number)

4. Your sex: ______ Female ______ Male

5. What is your current position or title?
   __ 1) supervisor
   __ 2) assistant manager or assistant director
   __ 3) manager or director
   __ 4) owner/operator
   __ 5) other, specify ______________________

6. How long have you been in this position? ________ years

7. How long have you worked in foodservice of any kind? ____________ years

8. What has been your career path in foodservice management? (In the blank to the left, number the responses that apply in chronological order beginning with 1.)
   __ Worked up through organization
   __ Previous work experience in foodservice
   __ Vocational training in foodservice management
   __ Non-degree academic training in foodservice management or related area.
   __ Degree in foodservice management or related area
   __ Degree in a non-related area
   __ Advanced degree in foodservice management or related area
   __ Advanced degree in a non-related area

9. Are you registered, licensed, or certified with any professional foodservice organization? Please identify and state type of credentials. ______________________
February 26, 1987

Dear Foodservice Professional:

Thank you for your continued participation in our study to determine the communication problems that exist in the hospitality industry. Your prompt responses in the first and second round were greatly appreciated. In this third and final round we are asking you to complete Part 1 and Part 2 even though they are very similar to previous questionnaires. This will make it easier for us to compile the information we receive. As always, all individual responses will remain confidential; the results will be reported only in summary form.

Please return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelope by March 13, 1987.

Your participation has been most helpful to us. Again, thank you for your time and effort.

Signature redacted for privacy

Esther Walker
Graduate Student

Dori Finley, Ph.D.
Associate Professor

/ / /
February 26, 1987

Dear Foodservice Manager:

We are conducting a study to determine the communication problems that exist in the hospitality industry, their causes and effects. You were randomly selected to participate in this study. We would appreciate your cooperation in taking a few minutes to read and complete the attached survey form. Because we are sending out a limited number of questionnaires, your participation is very important.

This questionnaire was developed with the assistance of a panel of hospitality experts. We will use the information gained from this study to assist in curriculum development in the Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Management program at Iowa State University. All individual responses will remain confidential; the results will be reported only in summary form. We will be happy to answer any questions you may have concerning the study. You may write or call either one of us at the number above.

The return of the completed survey packet in the enclosed envelope will indicate your plans to participate. We would like to receive all responses by March 13, 1987.

Thank you for your participation.

Signature redacted for privacy

Esther Walker
Graduate Student

Dori Finley, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
FOODSERVICE MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION SURVEY

PART 1

Directions: Place an X in the blank preceding the answer that best applies or fill in the blank with the information requested.

1. What type of foodservice do you manage?
   - 1) fast food
   - 2) family restaurant
   - 3) fine dining restaurant
   - 4) hospital or health care
   - 5) college and university
   - 6) school
   - 7) in-plant
   - 8) other, specify ________________

2. How many full and part-time employees are in your unit or department? ________ (number)

3. How many employees report directly to you? ________ (number)

4. Sex: ___ Female ___ Male

5. What is your current position or title?
   - 1) supervisor
   - 2) assistant manager or assistant director
   - 3) manager or director
   - 4) owner/operator
   - 5) other, specify ________________

6. How long have you been in this position? ________ years

7. How long have you worked in foodservice of any kind? ________ years

8. What has been your career path in foodservice management? (In the blank to the left, number the responses that apply in chronological order. Use 1 to indicate your first position.)
   - ___ Worked up through organization
   - ___ Previous work experience in foodservice
   - ___ Vocational training in foodservice management
   - ___ Non-degree academic training in foodservice management or related area.
   - ___ Degree in foodservice management or related area
   - ___ Degree in a non-related area
   - ___ Advanced degree in foodservice management or related area
   - ___ Advanced degree in a non-related area

9. Are you registered, licensed, or certified with any professional foodservice organization?
   - Yes ___ No ___
   Please identify and state type of credentials. ________________________________

______________________________
Based on your experience

1. How do you define problems in communication?

2. What is the most common type of communication problem in foodservice management (check one)
   a. _____ too much information at one time
   b. _____ incomplete comprehension
   c. _____ insufficient upward communication
   d. _____ insufficient downward communication
   e. _____ other, explain ________________________________

3. What is the consequence that usually occurs with communication problems?
   a. _____ loss of income
   b. _____ higher inventory costs
   c. _____ higher labor costs
   d. _____ loss of good will with customers or personnel
   e. _____ other, explain ________________________________

4. In general, what is usually the appropriate solution to communication problems?
   a. _____ change in communications
   b. _____ change in policy or procedures
   c. _____ change in management style
   d. _____ other, explain ________________________________
FOODSERVICE MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION SURVEY

PART 2

Directions: Respond to the following situations by checking the appropriate answers.

A. You supervise a large catering service at a university. You hire many students from all majors to work part-time setting up and serving banquets. Tonight, they were to assemble individual gelatin salads on lettuce lined salad plates. You pointed one of the first-timers, an engineering major, to the box of leaf lettuce and the sink and said, "Wash the leaf lettuce for the salad." He promptly walked over, filled the sink with soap and water and proceeded to wash the lettuce.

1. Is this problem one of
   a. communications (go to number 2)
   b. policy or procedure (skip number 2)
   c. management style (skip number 2)
   d. other, explain (skip number 2) ____________________________

2. In your opinion which of the following best describes the communication problem in the situation?
   a. too much information at one time
   b. incomplete comprehension
   c. insufficient upward communication
   d. insufficient downward communication
   e. other, explain ____________________________

3. What possible consequences could this type of situation most likely have?
   a. loss of income
   b. higher inventory costs
   c. higher labor costs
   d. loss of good will with customers or personnel
   e. other, explain ____________________________

4. What is an appropriate solution?
   a. change in communications
   b. change in policy or procedures
   c. change in management style
   d. other, explain ____________________________

5. Based on your experience, how frequently does this type of situation occur in foodservice operations?
B. It's your first week as an assistant manager at this institution. You're excited about the chance to demonstrate your creativity as well as your leadership skills. The manager suggests that as part of your training you should set up the salad bar. At 10 AM you start. Halfway done, you are thinking about how nice it looks; color, shape, this salad bar has it all. On the way out to break, the salad head stops to say, "Oh, but you're not supposed to do it that way." She then proceeds to dig out the set-up list that shows that you should have one protein item, three vegetables and two additional toppings. It also specifies the arrangement. She then shows you the leftover shelf with the items you were supposed to use first. You hurriedly throw your items back in the cooler and pull out the old stuff. You will have to hustle to be done by 11:00.

1. Is this problem one of
   a. _____ communications (go to number 2)
   b. _____ policy or procedure (skip number 2)
   c. _____ management style (skip number 2)
   d. _____ other, explain (skip number 2) ___________________

2. In your opinion which of the following best describes the communication problem in the situation?
   a. _____ too much information at one time
   b. _____ incomplete comprehension
   c. _____ insufficient upward communication
   d. _____ insufficient downward communication
   e. _____ other, explain ______________________________________________________

3. What possible consequences could this type of situation most likely have?
   a. _____ loss of income
   b. _____ higher inventory costs
   c. _____ higher labor costs
   d. _____ loss of good will with customers or personnel
   e. _____ other, explain ______________________________________________________

4. What is an appropriate solution?
   a. _____ change in communications
   b. _____ change in policy or procedures
   c. _____ change in management style
   d. _____ other, explain ___________________________ __

5. Based on your experience, how frequently does this type of situation occur in foodservice operations?
C. You are the foodservice director in a 550-bed hospital. In addition to patient meals, and employee and guests cafeterias, your department handles all in-house caterings, from coffee and doughnuts to banquets. Today, at 12:15 PM, Dr. Jones called from the doctor's library wanting to know where the luncheon was scheduled for today. You asked the staff member responsible for this one what the problem was. She said that there was no problem. The luncheon was in the doctor's dining room where it always was. She did not know that location had been changed. When you approached the assistant manager who had handled the reservation, her records showed that the luncheon was booked for the library room. She had not passed that information on.

1. Is this problem one of
   a. _____ communications (go to number 2)
   b. _____ policy or procedure (skip number 2)
   c. _____ management style (skip number 2)
   d. _____ other, explain (skip number 2)

2. In your opinion which of the following best describes the communication problem in the situation?
   a. _____ too much information at one time
   b. _____ incomplete comprehension
   c. _____ insufficient upward communication
   d. _____ insufficient downward communication
   e. _____ other, explain

3. What possible consequences could this type of situation most likely have?
   a. _____ loss of income
   b. _____ higher inventory costs
   c. _____ higher labor costs
   d. _____ loss of good will with customers or personnel
   e. _____ other, explain

4. What is an appropriate solution?
   a. _____ change in communications
   b. _____ change in policy or procedures
   c. _____ change in management style
   d. _____ other, explain

5. Based on your experience, how frequently does this type of situation occur in foodservice operations?
D. During the lunch rush at your restaurant, you frequently work in the kitchen calling out orders to the cooks on either side of you. You all work quickly and smoothly and always try to establish a new record for the number of orders served in one hour. You call out to the meat and fry cook, "I need a four, a fish and a fry down." A minute later you look around and there are no four-to-one burgers on the grill. However, the fry basket looks full. As you lift the basket, you see one order of fries and four portions of fish almost ready to come up.

1. Is this problem one of
   a. _____ communications (go to number 2)
   b. _____ policy or procedure (skip number 2)
   c. _____ management style (skip number 2)
   d. _____ other, explain (skip number 2) ____________________________

2. In your opinion which of the following best describes the communication problem in the situation?
   a. _____ too much information at one time
   b. _____ incomplete comprehension
   c. _____ insufficient upward communication
   d. _____ insufficient downward communication
   e. _____ other, explain ____________________________

3. What possible consequences could this type of situation most likely have?
   a. _____ loss of income
   b. _____ higher inventory costs
   c. _____ higher labor costs
   d. _____ loss of good will with customers or personnel
   e. _____ other, explain ____________________________

4. What is an appropriate solution?
   a. _____ change in communications
   b. _____ change in policy or procedures
   c. _____ change in management style
   d. _____ other, explain ____________________________

5. Based on your experience, how frequently does this type of situation occur in foodservice operations?
It's bar rush again on the Friday night graveyard shift at the Burger Box. You just hate working the drive-through register but you always get stuck with it. Worse yet, your manager is a mealy-mouthed berk. You turn from the window in time to hear him say to the cashier at the register next to you, "Punch out and go home. I don't need you if you can't work harder than that." The person bagging drinks for you starts to protest. "You disagree with the way I handle things? You can go home too," the manager continues. And yet another time, a third person goes home for the night. You are tempted to get in on the action. You've got better things to do and places to be. With your luck, however, you'd have to stay anyway, especially now that you're short of help. The drive-through bell rings again and with great difficulty you remember to put the smile in your voice as you say, "Welcome to Burger Box. May I take your order please?"

1. Is this problem one of
   a. ____ communications (go to number 2)
   b. ____ policy or procedure (skip number 2)
   c. ____ management style (skip number 2)
   d. ____ other, explain (skip number 2)

2. In your opinion which of the following best describes the communication problem in the situation?
   a. ____ too much information at one time
   b. ____ incomplete comprehension
   c. ____ insufficient upward communication
   d. ____ insufficient downward communication
   e. ____ other, explain

3. What possible consequences could this type of situation most likely have?
   a. ____ loss of income
   b. ____ higher inventory costs
   c. ____ higher labor costs
   d. ____ loss of good will with customers or personnel
   e. ____ other, explain

4. What is an appropriate solution?
   a. ____ change in communications
   b. ____ change in policy or procedures
   c. ____ change in management style
   d. ____ other, explain

5. Based on your experience, how frequently does this type of situation occur in foodservice operations?
March 17, 1987

Dear Foodservice Manager:

About two weeks ago you received a mailed questionnaire entitled "Foodservice Management Communication Survey." The initial response was good, but we need your response to ensure that our sampling is representative. We would appreciate it if you would complete and return the questionnaire at your earliest convenience. If you need another questionnaire, please call me at the above number. If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, please disregard this reminder.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Esther Walker
Graduate Student

Dori Finley
Associate Professor