

PUBLIC RELATIONS IN FOREST TECHNOLOGY: THE INTEREST OF THE FOREST VISITOR

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Abstract: *Doing Public Relations means transmitting considered information by an expert to a non-expert. A special challenge in this respect for the forester represents the sensitive field of forest technology. In this context the forester acts as sender and the forest visitor as receiver. The sender wants to attain desired effects so that the receiver is able to form an own opinion. This interaction is described as a communication process.*

Depending on the receiver and his/her personality, the forester gets the target message across. Amongst others the general knowledge about harvesting technology, emotions regarding harvesting technology, personal relation to the forest or other general personal properties (like age or gender) are characterizing the personality of the forest visitor.

A model about communicating forest technology (together with a forest-visitor-survey gathering data of the personal characteristics of forest visitors) was introduced by the contribution of DÖG and ERLER to FORMEC 2009 in Kostelec n. Č.l./Prague (Czech Republic). Following up on that article, the present contribution will focus on the results of the forest-visitor-survey. The survey is based on semi-structured interviews and comprises characteristics from nearly 500 interviewees. The contribution will not only summarize the results of the survey, but as well reveal the connection between personal characteristics of forest visitors and their interest in certain communication-topics. The analysis comprises six different topics of forest technology dealing with social, economic and ecologic issues. The particular interest in one certain topic varies pretty depending on the personal characteristics of the forest visitor.

Hence, the forester knows which personality he/she can affect by communicating a certain communication-topic. Thus, telling something about technical improvement of machines will accost only one special type of forest visitor. Furthermore, the forester is able to choose the right topic to get through to a receiver with precise personal attributes (e.g. negative or positive emotion compared with harvesting technology).

These findings will lead to successful and target oriented public relations about forest technology.