

Business Communication in Today's Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Communication is a process through which two or more persons come to exchange ideas and understanding among themselves. These are important ingredients of communication. There is something which is transmitted like facts, feelings, ideas etc. There has to be a receiver so that communication can take place. Not only this, it would also emphasise the understanding element so that sharing can take place. The completion of this communication circle will take place only when message is understood by the receiver as it was intended to by the sender. Thus, the communication involves more than mere transmission of the message or physical receipt thereof. There are a variety of ingress opinions to make an effective study of communication. Business Communication is one of them. Not only is *communiqué* a requirement for social interaction, it is also an apparatus or system via which no organisation can survive. Communication is a feature which makes human beings different from other species. As human beings, we use language to communicate while other creatures are unable to do so. A complete and effective understanding human civilization, be it any subject, will be incomplete without a study of human communication. It also goes without saying that to achieve success, it is imperative to learn how to communicate properly and effectively. Due to the unparalleled reach of the English language, and its global recognition as a language which links us all, communicating in the same becomes de facto marketable. This paper tries to understand the basic tenets and modes of communication, how important it is to communicate effectively, and what are the tools to communicate well with special reference to communication in the business.

Keywords

Coding, Encoding, Receiver, Sender, Language, English, communicator.

1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is used to signify an interchange of facts and figures, sentiments and view points are transported from one person to another. The Latin Word *communicare* ("which means to share - information, ideas, emotions, knowledge amongst people - to share meaning) is said to be the root word for the current term Communication. Another Latin word *communis* which translates as "commonness" is another root word for communication. As fellow human beings, we all share the art of communication with each other, something which is common to all of us. Yet, whether we communicate or miscommunicate, this art of correspondence and exchange plays an extremely significant role in our lives every day; we spend a majority of our time sharing information. It is only through communication that we fulfil our different needs - whether they are personal, emotional, psychological, educational, social, financial, professional or cultural. It is almost unthinkable to survive in today's world without communication. Therefore we should be able to communicate effectively in a coherent, clear and concise manner as success

in our life depends on effective communication". Communication has been defined by many theorists and critics over the years. Communication theorist Frank Dance counted in 1970, more than a hundred distinct definitions of communication proposed by experts in this field. Drawing from these multiple definitions, communication can be defined as a systemic process in which people interact with and through symbols to create and interpret meanings. Generally we define communication as the process of transfer of information between two sources with the information being understood by both. The Communication Process is inconceivable without a minimum of two individuals' involvement – the Sender (Encoder) of the message, and the receiver (Decoder) of the message feedback. Usually there is some idea or thought in the mind of the sender which he wants to communicate to the receiver, so he translates his message or thought in words or sentences. Sometimes the sender may even use some gestures to transmit his message and some other time there may be an oral message. The receiver tries to decode so that he comprehends what the encoder means to convey or intends. If the encoder and the decoder share the same basis of encoding and decoding the sounds and symbols, then the communication process has succeeded. However, if the semantic base of the sender and the receiver is different, then it leads to miscommunication. Such hampered communication can also happen if appropriate channel or media is not used or if the communication environment is noisy. Communication is complete only when the decoder sends feedback to the encoder which tells the sender whether his message has been grasped or not.

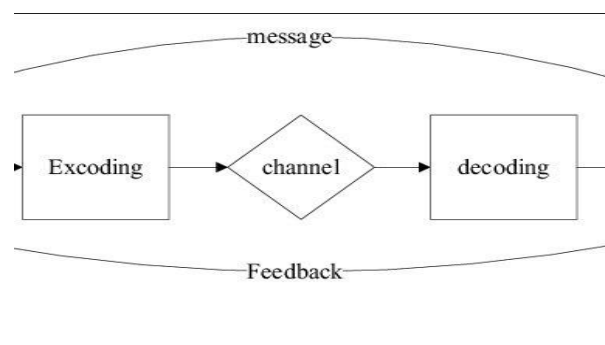


Figure 1: The Communication Process Model

Professionally also, effective communication influences our success to a great degree. It is by means of exchange of ideas that data is distributed, circulated and spread by and between people; it is through communication that all and any crucial judgements are made, apportioned and revealed to people within and outside any company, institute or organisation. For instance, many companies and industries communicate with their clients and customers, about their services and products by means of announcements, messages (oral or written) billboards, notices, commercials and the like. It's a fact that

the survival of any organisation is through effective means of communication.

2. BUSINESS COMMUNICATION IN TODAY'S PERSPECTIVE

In the absence of communication, a business system would only be a get together of physical resources. The planning, decision making process, controlling, co-ordination, motivation, facilitation of changes and maintaining of public relations will be feasible only through communication only. Nevertheless, conventional communication and professional communication differ due to their distinct purposes. To take a contemporary example, a majority of communication is done through the mobile phones today. In theory, though communication is a smooth process involving the transmission of information, ideas, emotions, meanings and feelings from one to another, where the intended message encoded by the sender is grasped by the receiver and he responds accordingly, yet in reality, failure of communication is taking place every second when the business is not able to communicate the desired information, knowledge or emotions. A faulty transmission may erupt due to the lack of a suitable language for every one working in the organisation at different levels as they may make the communication less effective and efficient. Not only this the use of technical words used by the highly technical persons or the specialised language may not communicate the proper meaning to the non specialist workers. In the field of business communication, the communication barrier or any unwanted interference between the speaker/encoder and the receiver/decoder which hampers the communication flow is termed as Noise. Noise here does not merely refer to the physical noise but to any barrier that prevents the flow of communication. If the barrier or the noise is of a technological nature then it can easily be avoided as technical snags can be corrected easily. Suppose, you are in a basement of a building where the reception of a mobile network is not very good and you receive a call, it is always advised that you move out of the basement to let the communication be smooth. But if the noise or the barrier is due to some human error, then it takes a long time and sustained effort to correct as the human errors are linked to one's habits and psychology. For example, if one has a problem of always assuming a sense of superiority whenever communicating, then it can easily become a deterrent for others to be attentive to her or his thoughts and emotions. The person's sense of superiority can lead others to feel that they are deliberately and consciously being underrated, leading them to be detached or indifferent to the message being communicated. The emotional and psychological barriers in inter personal communication may make the communication a half way communication, which will get half way response. The receiver of the message should be at the wave length of the communicator. The premature evaluation, pre-occupied minds, not paying attention to the messages, notices, bulletins, minutes and reports have a negative impact on the process and completion of communication. The organisational set up and its policies regarding communication have a direct impact on the success of communication. If the company's policies are not supportive to the flow of communication in different directions, communication flow would not be smooth and adequate. If any organisation wants to establish a smooth communication system, it must remove these barriers. When a particular communication fails to evoke any response or the desired response because of some noise or barrier to communication, then the following steps can help solve the problem: There is a need to have a positive and congenial environment for the smooth flow of communication. It may

happen that when oral communication is used, the noisy environment may make the message unclear and the receiver is not able to hear it properly. The noisy environment is a barrier to communication. It may also happen that two unknown persons accidentally meet and want to communicate but do not have a common language that can be the medium in which they can communicate. Or maybe when we are writing if our handwriting is illegible or we use very subject-specific jargon which the receiver has no knowledge of, then the communication would not achieve its desired goal. In these cases, illegible handwriting or the highly-specialized-jargonized language are barriers to communication. In short, it can be said that barriers to communication can simply be defined as anything that prevents the smooth exchange of meaning between a sender and receiver. The identification of the problem is the first step to make the communication effective. To identify the problem, it is necessary that one analyses the feedback or the lack of it carefully. Once the barrier is located, then one can figure out easily the cause of the barrier and can look for all possible solutions. The best solution should then be opted for and then followed consciously so that the barrier does not crop up again. It is thought that for effective communication there is a need to follow certain norms which are known as "7 Cs of Effective Communication." These norms apply both in written as well as oral communication. A message should be comprehensive and inclusive, which must carry all the facts required. Message should be brief, clear and effective, that will make it more appealing to the receiver. The sender should be specific in terms of quoting figures and facts as it makes communication more effective and trust worthy and there are less chances of message being misinterpreted. The sender should be courteous, should be polite and judicious and reflective. This way he can make the atmosphere positive for communication. Correctness in communication implies that there are no grammatical errors, no dubiousness in facts and figures. Correctness in communication builds up trust between the sender and the receiver and makes communication effective. Objective of message must be kept in mind, which is of utmost importance in official communication. When the objective is set, then the next step is to present our thoughts, emotions, feelings, etc. with clarity and integrity. If we are not able to present our thoughts clearly, then how can we expect the listener/s to understand and respond? The medium chosen for communication should be one both the parties are conversant with. For example, we must make sure that we communicate in a language in which the listener/s is/are comfortable. Moreover, we should also choose the medium depending on whether it is written or oral communication. An appropriate environment is also necessary for proper delivery of message. Communication is incomplete without a feedback. It is only through feedback that we can know whether the receiver has comprehended our message. One may get feedback in various forms like when paper presentation is going on and we see participants nodding their heads, one can understand that they are receptive to our view point. On the other hand if they are yawning, we are forced to believe that they are not interested and receptive. In a business environment, there should be clarity of communication, thereby facilitating exchange of ideas and avoiding unnecessary seeking and tendering of clarifications. There should be adequacy of message in-terms of coverage and quality of message. It must be ensured that the message reaches the receiver in-time. It should be well considered that effective communication is not an end in itself but a means to get some end. So it is suggested that communication to be effective should be persuasive and convincing so that receiver acts accordingly. Management should insist on two way

communication. The sender and the receiver must have continuous dialogue. While developing a system of communication, management must keep the needs, feelings and perceptions of the receiver in mind. This will not only make the communication system effective and impressive but also remove many of the misunderstandings. Organisation should also insist upon continuous dialogue and two way communication. The competence of management can also help improve the trust, believability and credibility of communication to be a successful communicator; he has to be a good listener also. In the process of such listening he can give a chance to the other to speak and get useful information for further communication. An efficient way in business communication is choosing the right channel (blog, in person net-working direct mail, conferences, newsletter and reports etc.) of communication, choosing the right content (personal stories, data rich analysis, emotional appeals). Knowing your audience is another important ingredient of it (idealistic, college students, government employees, conservatives, mid - level executives.) Ten points; stop talking put the talker at ease, show the talker that you want to listen to. Remove distractions, emphasise with the talker, be patient, hold your temper, go easy on arguments and criticisms, ask questions, stop talking (emphasised), without stopping talking you cannot listen to.

3. CONCLUSION

Communication is an exchange of words or sentences between two or more persons. No society can survive without communication. This communication has to go through a process to be completed. In the area of business, communication has a special significance as all the functions of business are directly dependent on this. The function of planning, organising, directing, controlling, motivation or even leadership will all be incomplete without the presence of communication. Easy said than done as there are many difficulties in the way of effective communication in the management, these may relate to the shortcomings of sender, receiver or the channel of communication. These may be linguistic issues or technical problems. But these shortcomings definitely make the communication less effective. Therefore it is imperative that management makes an effort to remove these obstacles to make the communication short, precise, meaningful, impressive and must insist on two way communication to complete the process.

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