

Communication Styles

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Table of Content

1. Introduction.....3

2. Types of Communication4

3. Oral/ verbal Communication 4-5

4. Non Verbal Communication5

5. Written Communication6-8

6. Communication Skills9

7. Barriers to Effective Communication9-10

8. Communication Feedback11

9. Conclusion12

10. Reference13

Abstract/Introduction

Communication is the process of exchange of information from one person to another through a carefully chosen medium of exchange. Communication is, therefore, the process of meaningful interaction among human beings, where meanings are perceived and understandings are reached among people. Communication can also be described as the exchange of meanings between individuals through a common system of symbols. It is a network of interaction involving the sender and the receiver who keep on exchanging roles.

Communication plays a major role in the lives of human beings at all levels, that is, at social level, business level and even globally. This paper will be interrogating the different styles of communication, communication skills, barriers of communication and feedback.

Types Of Communication

There are different way of communication depending on the nature of information and the circumstances under which one needs to communicate. Some of the types of communication styles are discussed below. (www.khanacademy.org)

A. Oral/Verbal communication

Oral/verbal communication is mainly used in face to face conversation and it requires a speaker and a listener who use words and sound to express themselves. Oral/verbal communication can also be described as a speech or a process of sending and receiving messages with writing since verbal communication is a language which can be presented in words, oral or written or presented in an agreed way. Verbal communication can be applied as follows;

1. **Intrapersonal communication** - This is the communicator's use of thought, where one communicates with oneself. It is a conversation in the mind of an individual where one would envision on conversation occurring in a model which contain a sender, receiver and feedback loop. It involves speaking and reading aloud and reporting what one hears.
2. **Interpersonal Communication** -This communication takes place between people who are inter-dependent and have knowledge of each other. It can be between two people, for example an employer/employee or it can be between a group of people.

(<https://www.skillsouneed.com/ips/barriers-communication.html>)

3. **Small group communication** -This is conversation in small groups consisting of three or more people who share a common goal with an aim of achieving their common goal. This type of communication can be used in analyzing data, deciding and providing possible solutions or procedures while dealing with complex issues in small group. It is also used in corporate meetings and study groups.
4. **Public Communication** - This method of verbal communication is used when individuals and groups engage in dialogue in the public sphere in order to deliver a message to a specific audience.
5. **Videos** – videos are mostly used on radio conferencing and tutoring.
6. **Phone calls** – The use of the telephone is very common both in social and corporate world. The telephone has made it very easy to communicate both locally and globally.

B. **Non-verbal Communication**

Non-verbal communication is a communication behavior and events that do not use spoken or written language but use non-linguistic means of communication to transmit information. This form of communication is normally spontaneously subconsciously involving non-linguistic behaviours which is expressed in many non-verbal behaviors.

The non verbal behaviours include body or kinetic behaviour which involves gestures, body movement, facial expression, eye contact and postures. Others include physical qualities such as touching, behavior, Para-language, artifacts, environment and time.

It is, however, important to note that, non-verbal communication may not be understood by people across cultures. This is because each culture interprets non-verbal communication differently since signs have different meaning to different cultures.

Non verbal communication is very important since it reinforces or modifies what is said in spoken words. For example, nodding the head vigorously when in agreement, conveying information about the emotional state, defining or reinforcing the relationship between people by holding hands or smiling. Non verbal communication also provides feedback through smiling and nodding and helps in regulating the flow of information by emphatic nod, firm closing of eyes, making eye contact or nodding slightly.

C. Written Communication

Written communication is the most common and important form of communication. It can be described as a form of communication that uses a set of visible marks that are related by convention to some particular structural level which represents a language.

Written communication is the preferred method of communication for correspondence that involves important facts and figures since it renders permanence to the information.

Written communication has many advantages. A written document allows for editing hence eliminating any errors, either factual or typing errors. It also allows to review messages, as a result giving enough time to provide appropriate feedback. Written

communication improves customer/client satisfaction, improve inter-organizational efficiency and enhance the image of the organization.

There are many types of written communication some of the described below:

1. **Business Communication** – This is the sharing of information between people within and outside a company. Management and employee; use business communication to reach organization goals. Examples of business communication are:
 - a. **Business letters** - This is a letter from one company to another or between organization and their customers, clients or other external parties used to transact business.
 - b. **Contracts** - A contract is a legally binding document that recognizes and governs the rights and duties of parties to the agreement according to the law. A contract involves the exchange of goods, services, money or promise of any of those.
 - c. **Proposals** - A business proposal is a written offer from the seller to a prospective buyer. Business proposals are often a step in the complex sales process.
 - d. **Statistical Documents** - These documents constitute a record of the statistical activity, including the concepts, definitions and methods used to collect, process and analyze data and produce statistical products intended to promote effective and informed use of data.

- e. **Emails** - This is an electronic mail method of exchanging messages between people using electronic devices.
- f. **Memos** - This is a short official note that is sent by one person to another within the same company or organization.
- g. **Faxes/facsimile/telecopying/telex** - This is the telephonic transmission of scanned printed material, normally to a telephone number connected to a printer or other output device.

The list of written communication is not exhaustive but the main methods have been discussed. (<https://blog.udemy.com/typ-of-commesunication>)

C. Intercultural Communications

Intercultural communication is a discipline that studies communication across different cultures. It refers to the effects on communication behaviors, when different cultures interact.

Different cultures formulate their language according to their cultures, beliefs and the way they interpret words and idioms depending on their environment. Language is defined by the different ways of interpreting reality brought about by generations that developed that language. Since different cultures do not share a language, their perception of reality is different, reflecting their cultural dissimilarities. This makes it difficult for people for people across cultures to understand one another in communicating.

It is therefore important to learn about a culture you intend to interact with. This would be overcome by learning key phrases of the host culture to enable clear communication. It helps to study the culture of the person you wish to communicate with appreciating the cultural differences.

D. Communication Skills

Communication is complex and therefore important to acquire the relevant skills to enable effective communication. Communication skills are not only important in communicating information from one person to another but it is also a vital skill in everyday life in articulating issues.

For effective communication, one should identify their goal and state it clearly. When writing or talking, correct tone and suitable voice should be used since doing so would convey the correct message. Proper grammar, punctuations and word choice should be observed. In any communication, clarity and conciseness is paramount since it helps the reader to understand what you are saying by writing in simple language and sticking to concrete, specific information. Communicated information should be well connected and clear. Finally, it is important to proof-read the written work to make sure what was intended is what is being communicated.

E. Barriers of Communication

Communication involves different skills and sometimes it may not always be effective due to barriers that affect proper communication. Suitable sentences should be

constructed using properly constructed sentences, suitable words and syllables and avoiding use of jargon and overcomplicated and/or technical words.

The right model of communications should be identified which involves the transmitter, the channel and the receiver.

In an office situation, there should be proper planning of the office space to enable ease of movement. Designated areas for distinctive functions should be identified to facilitate action of the human body.

Cultural diversity constitutes to communication barriers in that, norms of social interactions vary greatly in different cultures. The choice of words and language differ from culture to culture creating barriers to intercultural communication. This can be overcome by learning language and customs, language, accent and idioms of the other culture. Regional differences differ in dialect, accent and use of idioms contributing to barriers to communication.

Other barriers to communications are;-

- i) Emotional barriers -This is brought about by shame or eagerness to fit with other people in social situations and finding it difficult in expressing themselves.
- ii) Active listening - People tend to find it difficult to listen.
- iii) Physical barriers - This involves models of communication such as telephones and emails - A physical instruments is susceptible to breakdown.

- iv) Message overload - This happens when there is too much communication going on.
- v) Noise and hearing problems - This may be brought about by lack of attention, interest, distractions or irrelevance to the receiver.
- vi) Differences in perception and view point.
- vii) Physical disabilities such as hearing problems or speech difficulties.

(<http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/barriers-communication.html>.)

F. Communication Feedback

Feedback in communication serves to provide response to the communication. It serves to ascertain that the receiver has understood the message and evaluates the effectiveness of the message. Feedback helps the communicator to have an idea of how the message has been received and whether it needs to be modified. Feedback is either negative or positive and this encourages the communicator to either improve or modify the communication.

It is important that, in written communication, the receiver should give proper feedback without coating in order to initiate improvement. In public speaking, feedback is instant through constant interruption and injects while face to face there is continual respond to one another.

Conclusion

This research paper has discussed issues that lead to effective communication. The paper has brought out the different types of communication, communication skills and feedback.

Communication is the backbone of the business world and the social structure and there is need to learn all communications in order to communicate effectively.

What has come out from my research is that the world cannot do without proper and effective communication. In the corporate world, business is carried out through communication. In this era where the world has become a global village, effective communication is very crucial. People transact business across the globe every day and without proper communication they cannot move their businesses. In the social circles, proper communication enables people to understand each other and to live in harmony. It is, therefore, important to learn communication skills in order to communicate effectively.

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