

COMMUNICATE
2 CONNECT 

A Handbook on Communication

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Preface

Inspired by the wikibook Write 2 Teach in 3 Days, authored by my tutor Dr Sanjaya Mishra, I have ventured into this project. Though this book has been written and published on the wiki-educator in partial fulfillment of the requirements of PG Diploma in E-learning of Indira Gandhi National Open University, India, this has been both a challenging and rewarding experience for me. This has been a challenging experience because the technical knowledge required for this project has been newly learnt and rewarding because I have been able to make application of my theoretical knowledge obtained during the program. I have chosen Communication as the theme for my book as it is the most dominant topic in our times. With the rapid growth of globalization and corresponding technological advances in the world, opportunities have increased manifold but challenges have also multiplied. There is warlike situation in many of the countries, which has become a great threat to human civilization. In a scenario like this, communication can play a very significant role in shaping the future of human race.

Communication is the soul of life, the life force behind any successful organization. Some people become heroes because they are good leaders. They are good leaders because they are good communicators. Irrespective of the background, experience and qualifications a person has, s/he cannot achieve anything in life if s/he has no command over communication skills. At each and every stage in life, we are required to communicate with a large number of people with various backgrounds, abilities and experiences. No two people communicate in the same manner because they have different filters. The socio-psychological background, the level of knowledge, Communication Skills most of usually mean the ability to speak, but communication is a much larger concept than this and includes all tools, techniques, modes and modalities used to connect to people.

The whole book has been divided into five sections. The first section has been devoted to Introduction to Communication, the Process of Communication and the Basic Principles of Communication; the second section deals with Verbal Communication, the third deals with deals with Non-Verbal Communication, the fourth deals with Professional Communication and the last section deals with the Barriers and Gateways to Communication. Care has been taken to touch upon different dimensions of all the topics. But communication is such a vast area and it is not possible to include everything in a single book. Many important aspects might have been inadvertently omitted. Since it is on wikieducator, anyone can edit any part of the book or contribute new ideas. Qualitative contributions to the book will always add to its beauty and richness.

I solicit constructive suggestions from my readers for the improvement of the texture and structure of the book.

Abhilash Nayak

COMMUNICATION: AN INTRODUCTION

Definition, Nature and Scope of Communication

Talking is easy but communication is difficult. Effective communicators are successful in every walk of life whereas bad communicators are not. Many people talk but cannot connect to others. Some people do not talk but they are able to connect easily. So, let's try to understand what it is and what role it can play in our lives.

The word communication is derived from the Latin word *communicare* meaning 'impart, to participate, to share'. Hence it is the process of sharing or putting across a message, either an idea, a feeling or an attitude, from one/more individual/groups to one/more individual(s)/group(s). In other words it is the activity of transferring or transmitting information/idea/feeling/attitude from one source to another and facilitating feedback to ensure the successful transmission of the message. Since the beginning of civilization, communication has played a pivotal role in bonding people, strengthening relationships and sustaining the society. Wikipedia defines it as "sign-mediated interactions between at least two agents which share a repertoire of signs and semiotic rules." In order for communication to be successful, the sender and receiver must have common signs, words or signals so the sent message can be understood. It is the process which helps us express our thoughts, feelings and emotions before the people we care, the people we work for or the people we live with.

Key Elements of Communication

Social Contact Participants have to be in touch with each other.

Common Medium Participants must share a common language or means of communication

Transmission The message has to be imparted clearly

Understanding The message has to be received, properly understood and interpreted

Communication is not limited to human beings only. It can occur in the animal world as well as the plant world. But when we say communication, we usually mean the transmission of a message between human participants. This communication amongst the human participants can be effected through different formats like signs, symbols, graphs, charts, posters, pieces of art and sculpture but language is the most widely used means of communication. This act of human communication can be general or professional. General communication is mostly social in nature and can occur in any situation in our day to day life. Our communication with our fellow people in the social environment is general communication whereas the communication that occurs in our office environment or business environment is professional communication. Human beings, being more social than economic beings, need to communicate more in the social environment than in the business environment. Many of the principles of communication which hold true for general communication are also found to be true for professional communication. The only difference that one may come across is that the issues which are often ignored in general communication are highlighted in professional communication. Hence the

distinction between general communication and professional communication gets blurred. It is only a matter of degree, not kind.



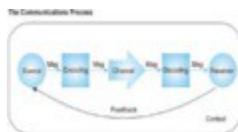
Activity

What are the key elements of communication? Write in 5-10 sentences

Process of Communication

In the act of communication, both the sender and the receiver play equally important roles. While sending a message the sender mentally converts the ideas into the words of a language, either in the written form or spoken form. This process is known as encoding and involves the act of putting the words together to form sentences and finally expressing them in the form of short or long messages. The units of information are selected from a raw set of information, organized for transmission and then transmitted through the appropriate format. The message that we send across can be a single word or a group of words, sentences or passages, or large discourses. The message can have different formats: letters, snail-mail, e-mail, word of the mouth, recordings on electronic gadgets and voice mail. Though we do not attach much importance to the form, communication is more effective when it is presented through attractive formats. That's the reason why poetry is more attractive and popular than prose. Often we use signals/symbols to convey a message non-verbally. Each signal/symbol has a fixed form and conveys a simple meaning.

Whatever message sender sends to the receiver, it has to focus on a topic (some idea, event, action, object, person, quality or theory). This topic may involve or exclude people, depending upon what is being talked about. In scientific writing, for example, neither the sender nor the receiver is more important: both are equally important. While encoding a message the sender uses a code or a set of symbols, guided by a set of rules, carrying the intended meaning which after decoding gets converted into a meaningful message. In other words we can say that the encoding of a message involves the selection of right codes and transmission of the message intended through the appropriate media. The traffic lights, for example, are associated with various meanings which the commuters are able to understand easily. In human communication, language is mostly used as the code. However, we have non-linguistic or non-verbal ways of communicating our thoughts, emotions and feelings.



Caption1

In spoken communication the encoded message is sent to the receiver through the sound waves which travel through the air and reach used as the code the ears of the receiver. In written communication, words are converted into visible marks made on paper or other surfaces, read by the receiver and then decoded. This encoding-decoding of a message or the ability to handle the sound meaning complex is unique to human beings. As Das rightly writes, “What a remarkable piece is the human being who can highly manipulate a highly complex set of psycho-motor functions by means of which meaning is encoded as sound and sound is decoded as meaning (Das, 2009, p.4). While decoding the message, the receiver converts the sounds or graphic images into meanings, originally intended by the sender. The decoding of a message involves the reception, identification and interpretation of a message, Like encoding, decoding also happens at two levels: at the level of listening or at the level of reading. Whatever we listen or read, should meet what we expect. If the intention/purpose of the sender does not match with the expectations of the receiver, then the communication is bound to fail. In whatever way the sender may pack the information/message/content, it cannot be transmitted to the receiver if s/he is not mentally prepared to receive it. In certain contexts, the receiver provides feedback to the sender on the quality of the message and hence there is a reversal of roles. Now the sender becomes the receiver and the receiver becomes the sender. Proper communication is said to have occurred only when there is scope for both the sender and the receiver to ask questions to each other and clarify doubts. If the receiver continues with a doubt and is not able to comprehend the full message, then communication remains incomplete.

Channel or the medium in the carrier of meaning from the sender to the receiver. In an act of speaking, for example, channel is auditory as the information is carried from the sender to the receiver through sound waves. This act of speaking, again, can be face-to-face, telephonic or microphonic. Hence the channels are different and also different are the skills required to transact the act of communication successfully. On the other hand, in written communication, the channel is visual as the receiver uses his ophthalmic sense organ(eyes) to see them, read them and decode them. The surface where the message appears may be a sheet of paper, the electronic screen of a computer monitor or the screen of a mobile where an SMS is displayed. The medium/agent of communication has undergone rapid changes over the years. Horses, pigeons and hawks have been replaced by electronic gadgets like radios, telephones, televisions, satellites, mobile phones and now interactive facilities on the internet. Now in 2010, when the whole world is expanding rapidly along the technological front, communication is not at all perceived as a challenge. With the click of a mouse, any person anywhere can send a message to anyone else anywhere in world instantly and inexpensively. Moreover, the use of satellite phones has succeeded in making virtually every location on the planet accessible.

The channel for the transmission of the information/content/message has to be clear and free from all interruptions. In an act of speaking, where communication is the most

important function, if the speaker has a throat problem or there is some problem with the microphone, then the message will not be heard properly. Similarly, external interruptions in terms of the noise coming from outside or people barging in without any schedule act as barriers and interrupt the decoding process.



Activity

Why is communication called a process? Explain in your own words.

Basic Principles of Communication

- **Communication is an important weapon for success in every sphere of life**

Communication is the breathe of life. Life without communication is stagnant and means death in life. Unless we remain connected to people, we won't understand our importance as social beings. But many of us do not understand this and take this for granted. But everything in life will come to a standstill if there is no communication among the participants in any community. With the growth of communities beyond national borders, now the importance of community is felt more vigorously than it was felt earlier. Each and every individual, irrespective of his/her location and vocation, should be aware of the potential of communication and create conducive environment for effective communication in the place where they are located to be successful in their lives.

- **Communication is a complex process**

Effective communication takes place when there is a combination of insights (knowledge), skills and values. The insights that go into effective communication can be put as:

(a) Psychological Insights: While engaging in an act of communication, one should try to understand the nature and behaviour of the participants. Unless the participants are in the right state of mind and have the propensity to communicate, they cannot be forced to communicate. Different people behave differently in different situations and positive interactions can bring about changes in their behaviour pattern.

(b) Sociological Insights: It is not enough if we understand the nature and behaviour of the participants; we must also understand the patterns of social organization. Our understanding of how societies are constituted and how social circumstances change our behaviour affects the way we communicate.

(c) Linguistic Insights: Linguistic insights or our understanding of language helps us to make appropriate choices in response to varying social circumstances and changing

behavioural patterns among the participants. The way we make a request at home will be different from the way we make the same request in an office; our pattern of communication will also differ when we are talking to a normal human being and an abnormal one.

(d) Cultural Insights: A sympathetic understanding of the prevailing culture in a society helps us communicate effectively with appropriate responses. Unless we are aware of the cultural nuances existing in a society, we won't be able to generate socially appropriate responses.

All these insights and corresponding skills become ineffective if we do not have right attitudes and values. A positive attitude to all social relationships and respect for participants boosts effective communication and proves that communication is essential for the sustenance of all societies, irrespective of the ends and purposes it serves. As social beings, all human beings possess an inherent desire to remain connected to some members inside their communities, despite the versatility in their values and vocations.

•Communication is mainly driven by an awareness of “Purpose” and “Audience”

(A)Purpose

We are aware that no communication is possible unless the participants have some purpose. We engage ourselves in the act of communication, both spoken and written, in order to satisfy our physical, emotional and psychological needs. Though the purpose of communication is decided by the sender mainly, it is often controlled by the receiver. Unless the receiver has the desire to receive a message, communication cannot be complete and effective.

If an act of communication is not driven by a purpose, it fails to reach the audience. The quality of communication improves when the purpose is made explicit but this too is culturally conditioned. Some cultures encourage openness and transparency whereas some other cultures prefer to keep their things away from the purview of the public. Usually we have the following purposes while communicating: (a) interact (b) inform (c) instruct (d) influence (e) motivate (f) entertain (g) record (h) find out (i) regulate

Apart from these, the speaker also has some other purposes while engaging in an act of communication: these purposes involve reinforcement of an existing attitude, reduction of dissonance, increasing the importance of an issue, calling attention to a problem, testing an idea, refuting an assertion, warding off a threat, establishing or maintaining status, etc. The communicative behaviour of a participant may be both offensive and/or defensive and depends wholly upon the purpose the person has in mind.

Not only the purpose but also the attitude of the speaker as well as his understanding of the subject control the act of communication to a great extent. The speakers' careful use of his/her voice and body also play an important role in modulating the message before it reaches the receiver. If someone says, “I am innocent”, it may simply mean that the

person is giving some information but if the same person says it aggressively, his statement is interpreted as an assertion, not a simple piece of information. If a speaker does not have a good command over the subject s/he deals with, s/he falters while connecting the ideas and causes confusion to the audience. Moreover, the voice becomes weak, unsteady, body becomes stiff, gaze is directed to the windows or ceiling and give an opportunity to the audience to form a bad opinion about his/her abilities. On the contrary our overconfidence in a subject may also lead to breach of communication as we tend to become overbearing, disregard the facts and figures and opinions of others, so as to create a negative impression about our personality and performance. The crux of the matter is that we should be careful in choosing a topic before we decide to speak on it, respect the audience and presume them to be mightier than us so that we do not tend to overestimate ourselves and become successful in communicating our ideas to the audience.

(B)Audience

Whatever is the purpose, communication is ineffective and incomplete unless the speaker has a clear idea about the audience for which the message has been designed. When the message is planned, the speaker has the aim of securing the attention, assistance, sympathy, help, guidance or support of the receiver or listener. In order to be successful in targeting the receiver, the sender has to design and deliver the message in such a manner that it satisfies the needs of the receiver. If an audience does not want to listen to a speaker, it won't pay heed to the speaker however well s/he may deliver the message.

A good speaker should be able to see things from the receiver's point of view and understand the receiver's interests, tastes, preferences and needs. Besides, the speaker also needs to take into account the age, level of education, familiarity with the subject or topic, anticipated responses from the receivers. This is applicable to both written and spoken communication. In spoken communication, the audience may or may not be physically present but in written communication the audience is either imagined or hypothetical, but it is very much there. It is not enough if we know the audience, we should also have respect for them and have the right attitude towards them in order to make communication effective. At the organizational level, this is done through the conduct of formal or informal audience research. After analysis of the audience needs, advertisements, newspapers, journals, books and literature for different products are designed, produced and released for the public.

•Communication should have long-term as well as short-term goals

Though most of the acts of communication pertain to the immediate needs of the senders and receives of messages, the communication goals can be short-term as well as long term. Both in private and public spheres, we need to pay attention to both the goals. In personal life, for example, we learn the life skills from our parents, friends and relatives through our day to day acts of communication. The relationship between a husband and wife can be taken as an example in this regard. The small and successful acts of communication occurring between both the partners add to the strength of their marital

life and makes life easy going. Otherwise, due to breach of communication in the initial stages, marriages dwindle into divorces or continue over a bed of thorns, making the hell of life. In the business sector, the long term and short term communication goals help the participants understand the importance of building lasting relationships with the customers or companies. Small and large companies invest their human and material resources in creating and building up communication networks to create a brand image in the market as the most honest and dependable agency/organization. Small misunderstandings between a company and its staff or clientele have the potential to spoil their future prospects.

•Communication should be positive

Whatever is the purpose of communication, it should always be positive. To communicate means to connect, to bridge the gaps between people in a community, society or organization. The main aim of every act of communication should be positive, even if it involves the transmission of negative, painful and unpleasant messages. The painful and unpleasant messages can also be presented in innovative ways to reduce their negative impact upon the receiver. For instance, while terminating an employee, the top management may simply issue the termination order but alternatively they can write a letter of recognition in appreciation of the services rendered by the person concerned and inform in a round about manner that his/her termination has become a necessity in view of the changing policy of the management. A promise for help in future may also be embedded into a letter of this kind to boost the moral of the person being terminated.

•Communication should be a collaborative activity between the sender and the receiver

Communication is a completely dialogic process. One cannot communicate anything to himself/herself. Even in a monologue, there is an assumed audience. The initiator of the message or the sender is not the only person responsible for the success or failure of an act of communication. Once the message is transmitted, either in the written form or the spoken form, the recipient/receiver of the message should be mentally ready to receive the message, decode it as per his/her needs and interpret it. Even interpretation is not enough, the receiver should be able to send the feedback to the sender in order to complete the process of communication. Hence close cooperation between the sender and the receiver is required for the success of any act of communication. It is the responsibility of both the sender and receiver to ensure the smooth transmission of the message from the source to the destination.

•Participants in a an act of communication should be aware of the barriers to communication and be prepared to take positive action to overcome them

All participants in an act of communication must understand that there might be barriers which may hinder communication or lead to the complete breakdown of communication.

Both the sender and receiver, being aware of these barriers, should try to remove these barriers and successfully complete the act of communication. Those who are able to connect to others are people who have an open mind to receive the opinions of others and have the patience to listen to others. If we are not ready to admit that there can be two views on an issue that we have initiated, we will end up in fighting with the disagreeing person and cause the breach in communication. Besides, other barriers like the linguistic and cultural barriers can also be disastrous to the success of communication. Foreigners coming to India as a tourists shall have problems in interacting with the people in rural India. People in rural India will be inaccessible to them for two reasons: both their culture and language would be altogether different. Not knowing a pinch of English or without having a glimpse of western culture they may shy away from the tourists and put them into trouble. The same thing is likely to happen to an Indian visiting a foreign country where a language other than English is spoken and the culture is entirely different. Hence in contexts like these the participants should try to understand the barriers, take measures to remove the barriers in any way they like and make the act of communication successful.

•**Communication should be strategized and not left to chance**

Communication, particularly formal communication, should be strategized, or planned in advance in order to save it from being disjointed and unsuccessful. Whatever is the purpose of communication, it should be properly planned so as to ensure its success. When we are responding to a letter, for example, we should keep the original letter in front to relate to every point in the letter and write the response accordingly. Likewise, while going for a debate we should prepare a blue print of the points to be covered and note down the important ideas that can be put under each of the points. Going to a meeting to give a speech extempore is just like cooking a dish without knowing the recipe. Apart from this, we must predict the problems or queries related to the topic under discussion and remain mentally prepared to face them. The queries that we may encounter depend upon the context where we are involved, our own background, the kind of people we interact with, their background and finally the environment where such interactions are likely to occur. An effective communicator should be able to read the minds of the audience and alter his moves to adjust with the changes from time to time.



Activity

How does the knowledge of audience help us in communicating effectively? Is this knowledge useful to us in satisfying our purposes? If your answer is 'yes, explain how it is useful.

Verbal Communication

From WikiEducator

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Verbal Communication

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Introduction

The act of communication among the human beings has been subject to consistent evolution and upgradation from time to time. In the pre-historic times, people used to communicate with their fellow beings through grunts, barks and roars just like the animals. But gradually they developed an elaborate set of sounds to express their feelings and convey their messages. Now it is a systematic use of language that differentiates human beings from animals. Only human beings have been blessed with the gift of language.

The different languages used by human beings do differ from the other codes used by them to communicate amongst themselves. Human language has the property of recursiveness and creativity which suggests that there are signals within signals within signals but each signal has its own significance. In any language, with a definite set of graphic symbols and their corresponding phonological symbols it is possible to form and communicate infinite number of messages. On the other hand, other codes only permit a limited number of messages. For example, animal system of communication allows only a few (five to six) messages because they emit a limited number of signals. Their messages include messages like “I am hungry”, “I have found some food; come and share it”, “There is danger; be careful”, “This is my territory; get out” or “I am ready to mate”. (Das et al., nd, 39). Among the bees, an interesting pattern of communication exists as regard collection of honey. When the Queen Bee locates the source of honey anywhere, she performs an intricate pattern of dance by making an angle with the sun to inform the other working bees to move in a particular direction at the same angle and reach the source of nectar.

Role of Language in Verbal Communication

Because of the various functions it can perform, language has a great role in communication. Whatever codes we use to convey our message within a fixed frame of reference in a given language, they serve different functions. The basic functions of language can be grouped into three categories: descriptive, expressive and social.

- **Descriptive Function:** Under descriptive function, we can include travel writing (description of places), biography, autobiography and writing about other people, diary and personal letters, technical and scientific works. We can also include the verbal description of people, places and things under this head. While attempting descriptive writing or speaking, it is essential that the writer or speaker has obtained all necessary information about the object of writing or speaking.

- **Expressive Function:** Under expressive function, we have interjections, exclamations, use of special words and phrases for emphasis. Using interjections, we can express satisfaction, excitement, surprise, pain, hurt and disgust. In order to lay emphasis, we either use a word with a stress or use an extra word/phrase to add emphasis (You have never been fair to us at all). We also use question tags, rhetorical questions, auxiliary

‘do’, fronted negation (Starting a sentence with a negative word: Never have I seen a fool like you) to put emphasis on a statement or a particular idea.

• **Social Function:** Under social function of language we can include functions like greeting people, bidding farewell to people, giving a command or order, asking a question, making a request, advising, offering a suggestion, expressing agreement or disagreement, accepting or declining an invitation, expressing wishes, thanks, apologies, regrets, condolences, sending seasonal greetings, offering help, giving instructions, expressing obligation, expressing the necessity for doing something, expressing certainty. Under each function, we have multiple sub-functions. For example, under the function ‘request’, we have ‘request for permission’, ‘request for help’, ‘formal request’, ‘informal request etc’. When we choose a particular language function, we need to use the code that is appropriate for that function. The words, structures and sentences used to perform a particular function do differ from the words, structures and sentences used to perform a different function. While expressing a polite request, for instance, we use ‘could’ or ‘would’ whereas for formal requests we use ‘may’ and for making informal requests we use either ‘can’ or ‘will’.

The word order in an assertive sentence is different from an interrogative or an imperative sentence. In an assertive sentence we follow the normal sentence pattern (Rahim is a sincere boy) but in an interrogative sentence we have an inverse order (Is Rahim a sincere boy?) and in an imperative sentence we do not have a visible subject (Do this work at this moment). Likewise, for sentences expressing suggestions we have quite different structures (Why don’t you go to the police station? How about joining a new party next week? Let’s have picnic at this weekend. You had better consult a doctor).

One more important point to be noted in regard to the use of language for communication. The language we use should be simple enough for the receiver to understand the message intended but at the same time it should not be jerky. Too many small sentences in a passage also spoil its beauty. If we use long and complex sentences with a lot of ideas packed into one sentence, the receiver/addressee will be confused and the message will not be properly transmitted. Therefore the best way is to maintain a balance between the two. Small sentences connected with suitable connectors impart clarity, conciseness and grace to a passage and make it worth reading/listening.

While performing a particular language function, we actually have a purpose in our mind. In order to see the purpose translating into action, we need to use the words, structures and sentences that are grammatically correct, socially acceptable and meaningful. Moreover, we must try to understand whether the receiver has the same competence as us to receive the message, process it, understand the import inherent in it and wherever possible, provide the necessary feedback to the sender regarding the effectiveness of the message being transmitted.



Activity

What are the different functions of language? Explain each of them with examples.

Receptive and Productive Language Skills

Within a linguistic community, one is said to be a successful communicator if s/he has mastered the basic language skills, the receptive and productive skills required to make effective use of a language for performing different activities and satisfying various purposes. Under receptive skills we have the listening and reading skills whereas under productive skills we have speaking and writing skills. To be a good communicator, one should be able to have a balanced knowledge both the receptive and productive skills. Unless we are able to listen to people with patience, we won't be able to be good speakers. In order to speak well, we must listen how individual words are pronounced, how sentences are pronounced with proper pauses and what tonal modulations are adopted in long speeches. These skills help us speak the words and sentences with proper accent, stress and intonation and make our speech intelligible to others. Not only this, listening to great people also helps us pick out the important ideas in the talk and filter out the irrelevant ones. Similarly, if we are not able to read well, we will not be able to write well. All good writers are voracious readers. Reading new books help us get new ideas, understand unique and attractive ways of presenting old ideas and integrating the new and old to bring out the best.

The receptive skills and the productive skills are interdependent. It is a general assumption among people that unless one is not a good speaker of a language, s/he cannot be a good communicator. But speaking skills are just one fourth of the set of skills required for the use of language for both personal and professional communication. Listening skills, reading skills and writing skills are equally important. In order to communicate properly, one should be able to use the language automatically in response to the needs of various contexts. This linguistic behaviour of ours is conditioned by the context where we are communicating with others to connect to them. While talking/writing to our own people, relatives, friends, we follow the rules of language but we are relaxed and do not bother to be polite. On the other hand, while talking/writing to our officers in the office, teachers at school and other people on official occasions, we try to be as formal and polite as possible so as not to offend the person we communicate with. The former situation is informal and the later is formal.

When a language is spoken over a large geographical area, it acquires regional variations to cater to the needs of people living in that particular area. These regional varieties of languages, known as dialects, share the original syntactic features of the language but as regard semantic and phonological rules, they show variations. The same word may have different names and may be pronounced in different ways in different dialects. This variation is the most distinct at the phonological level. That's the reason why people

using a particular dialect are not understood by people with a different dialect. This variation occurs not only at the level of dialect, it can also happen at the level of individuals because no two people speak the same language in the same way. The regional variations occur in the level of dialect or individual variations occur at the level of idiolect.

The language spoken by people of a particular profession is often marked by the presence of words and phrases peculiar to that language. A computer engineer, for example, may use the word 'booting' which an ordinary user of the language may not be able to understand. Similarly, an engineer may use the term 'oxidation' to explain the rusting of iron implements. This special use of the language to meet the requirements of a specific profession is called a register. Registers vary from each other as well as the standard language in terms of the profession-specific vocabulary items and some fixed expressions that are frequently used in that particular type of register. Of course, variations in regard to the rules of grammar often appear, but they are quite infrequent. Our knowledge of the dialects and registers used by the target group helps us improve our communication with them.

Need for Using Bias Free Language

Being sensitive to the context is not the whole thing. One also needs to be aware of the biases s/he might be susceptible to. When the act of communication is being transacted within a community, there is little chance of the message being misinterpreted or misunderstood. On the other hand, in case of inter-community or inter-cultural communication, there might be interruption in the transmission of the message due to socio-cultural biases like class/caste-based bias, racial/ethnic bias, disability bias and gender bias. Being the citizens of an open and globalised world, we should be sensitive to the issues which affect the lives of common people. Both in spoken and written communication we should avoid words and expressions that may hurt people belonging to a certain gender, caste, class, religion, race or ethnicity. It is always wise to use neutral language which does not favour a particular community at the cost of another. In stead of saying 'salesman' or 'saleswoman', it is better for us to use 'salesperson' which includes people from both the genders. Likewise, it is better to use the phrase 'all communities' than to use 'people belonging to the scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, general and other backward categories'. Now-a-days, a new trend has started coming up. Now we have started using the word 'actor' to mean both the 'actor' and the 'actress'. It is heinous to call people by the disabilities they suffer from. If we call someone blind, we directly attack his/her disability and remind him/her of the pain that he/she has been suffering from. But if we call the same person 'visually challenged', we just hint at his disability but with a lot of respect, in a more polite and mild tone. In the same manner, we can use 'hearing impaired' for the 'deaf' people, 'speech-impaired' for the dumb people and differently-abled for the 'physically handicapped' people.

Types of Verbal Communication

By verbal communication, we mean the type of communication which is rooted in language. Verbal communication among human beings is possible both at the spoken level and written level. Both in the spoken and written level, communication is possible through different formats

Spoken Communication

Spoken communication is either private or public. We can have the following kinds of spoken communication.

- (a) Private Speaking-1: Speaking to Oneself (monologue, self-recording)
- (b) Private Speaking-2: Speaking to One person (one-to-one communication: conversations, telephonic discussions)
- (c) Private Speaking-3: Speaking in Groups (one to many)
- (d) Public Speaking-1: Speaking to Oneself (Monologue on stage)
- (e) Public Speaking-2: Speaking to One(Personal interviews)
- (f) Public Speaking- 3: Speaking to Many (Films/ Documentaries/ Presentations/Speeches/ Teleconferences/ Audio-conferences/ Videoconferences)
- (g) Public Speaking-4: Speaking in groups (one to many)
- (h) Public Speaking-5: Speaking in groups (group-to-group)

Francis J Bergin finds oral communication more effective because it has several important features. It has to be candid, clear, complete, concise, concrete, correct and courteous. It is useful because it saves time, saves money and is more forceful than other modes of communication. With oral communication, it is possible to convey different shades of meaning, the listeners can get immediate clarification from the speakers and the speakers can get immediate feedback from the listeners. It can be effective in both face to face communication and public interactions or public speaking.

The disadvantages of oral communication often reduce its effectiveness. It is not possible to connect to distant people without the aid of technical devices. It is not possible to transmit long messages through oral communication. If it is not being recorded on any technical device like tape recorder or video recorder, it is not easy to reproduce the oral communication between two persons as evidence. That's why it does not have legal validity as people can keep on changing their oral versions from time to time. In case of any misunderstanding due to wrong communication, it is not possible to fix responsibility.

Written Communication

Written communication is possible through: (a) Private Correspondence-1: Writing about oneself (Diary writing) (b) Private Correspondence-2: One to One (Personal letters, personal notes, messages, letters of invitation/request/thanks/congratulations) (c) Private Correspondence-3: One to many (Invitations, pamphlets, posters, poems, stories, novels,

articles, books) (d) Official correspondence-1: One to one (Memos, Orders, Reports, proposal) (e) Official correspondence-2: One to many (Advertisements and hoardings, Notices, Agenda Notes, Circulars, pamphlets, posters) (f) Official Correspondence-3: Many to many (Government Orders, Gazette Notifications, Minutes of Meetings)

Most of the languages in the world exist both in the spoken and the written form. But in every language the spoken language precedes the written language. Initially people combine sounds in meaningful ways to make words and then sentences to convey their messages. Subsequently with the necessity of using the language in its written form, their invent a script to codify the language. Some sounds are there in all the languages but some are unique to each language. Hence when we combine sounds, we must know whether it is possible to combine these sounds in a particular language or not. This knowledge of right combination of sounds is natural with the native speakers but for the non-natives it happens to be the most challenging part in speaking the language in question.

It is not enough if we just have knowledge of the phonological rules of a language, rules that we need to combine to make meaningful words and sentences. We should also know the semantic rules to be able to organize and manage meanings in the same language. The frames of reference for different words would be different in a given language. The words used for kinship terms in the Indian languages are altogether different from the their counterparts in English. The word ‘uncle’ for example is used to denote multiple kinship terms in English (mother’s brother, father’s brother, mother’s sister’s husband, father’s sister’s husband, etc) whereas in the Indian languages we have different words for each of these relationships. Sometimes, it so happens that we have different meanings for a single word. The word ‘bank’ for example can be used to mean ‘the banks of a river’, ‘the place where we keep money’ and ‘depend upon’. A word does not have any meaning in isolation, it becomes meaningful in a context, within a frame of reference.

The way the words combine to form sentences is controlled by a set of rules called the syntactic rules or rules of grammar. These rules are very significant particularly when we are engaged in written communication. While communicating in English, we often tend to transfer the rules of our native language to English. Resultantly, we end up with hackneyed sentences. In all the Indian languages the basic sentence pattern is ‘SOV’, the object in a sentence is preceded by the subject and is followed by the verb whereas in English the basic sentence pattern is ‘SVO’, the Verb is preceded by the subject and followed by the object. This also happens at the phonological level. When we speak a particular language, we must know the sounds that are existent in that language. If we replace one sound of language A with another sound of language B, then there are chances of our not being understood or at least being misunderstood. The sound ‘ə’ in ‘about’ is often replaced by ‘e’ or ‘o’ by the Indian speakers as it is not there in the native languages. The use of the sound ‘bh’ in place of the English ‘v’ often sounds funny when the Oriya speakers speak English.

As we have already indicated, no single word is meaningful unless it occurs in a sentence, in a context. If we use a single word ‘fan’, it may mean both a ‘a very keen

supporter/follower of a sport, performing art or famous person' or 'an instrument for making a flow of air'. But when I put the word in a sentence, "I am a great fan of Katrina Kaif" we mean "I am a great supporter of Katrina Kaif". The totality of a word's meaning is visible only in a given context. Likewise, the other words in the sentence "I am a great fan of Katrina Kaif" like 'I', 'am', 'a', 'great', 'of', 'Katrina' and 'Kaif' do not convey any particular meaning. Each of them carry some meaning but in combination with Kaif) they give us a "Katrina of fan great a am fan" in a certain order (I complete meaning. They all together exemplify the fact that I am great supporter of Katrina Kaif. A slight change in the order of the words of the above sentence can also bring about a change in the form as well as meaning of the given sentence. If I say "Am I a great fan of Katrina Kaif?" I express my doubt regarding my support to Katrina Kaif. Similarly if I replace the word 'I' with 'You' my focus changes from me to the person I am speaking to. It is also possible to convey two different types of messages with the same forms or structures. If I utter two sentences, "Who can beat Sachin in cricket?" and "Who will inaugurate the match tomorrow?", I use the same form or structure (the interrogative one), but my intentions in both the sentences are entirely different. In the first sentence I want to assert that nobody can beat Sachin, though it looks like a question. In the second question, however, my intention is completely different. I simply want to have information about the person who is going to inaugurate the match tomorrow. The rules which help understand the purpose or intention behind an act of communication are called the pragmatic rules. Sometimes it may so happen that we use a single word in place of a full sentence to say what we want to say. For instance, if someone asks me "How are you?" and I answer "Fine", I really mean to say "I am fine". Of course, this meaning will not be obvious unless this word is preceded by the question "How are you?". In other words, unless the context is provided, a word does not acquire any significance or meaning.

If one knows how to use words only, s/he may not be a good communicator. In everyday speech, we not only use sentences, but also use sequences of connected sentences or discourses to express complex thoughts. This sequencing is not possible if we do not know how to logically connect sentences with the help of connectors. In this act of communication, where a sequence of sentences is to be used, the participant may be singular or plural. A single person can speak sentences one after another or two persons may engage themselves in a conversation where one responds to the other. A successful communicator should be able to know the discourse rules in order to put the sentences in right sequence so that they are organized in a coherent manner. The sentences put in a sequence should be logically and meaningfully connected to one another in order to be coherent and need to be linked through connectors like conjunctions, pronouns, possessives to remain coherent. Hence it is not enough if two sentences are just put one after another and there is some logical link between the two. There should also be some grammatical link between the two to show that one is the logical output of the other. Once again, we must remember that these rules for discourse are more significant for written communication than for spoken communication.

Dyadic Communication

Though it is possible for us to talk to ourselves, we hardly take recourse to such form of communication. Communication, as indicated earlier, is an act of sharing of some information/message/idea/feeling/attitude with another and getting the corresponding feedback. Unless we know how we are received by others, it is meaningless to think that our act of communication has been successful. Though it is possible for more than two people to engage in an act of communication, it is dyadic communication or communication between two persons that occupies an important position in our day-to-day communication. The exchange of meaning between the sender and the receiver is the highest in dyadic communication as it is marked by the highest degree of fidelity and allows reversal of roles. Face to face communication or inter-personal communication, telephonic conversation, interviews, instruction and dictation are a few important forms of dyadic communication.

Face to Face Communication

Face to communication or inter-personal communication, as the name suggests, is the direct face to face interaction between two persons for personal or social reasons, about a topic of mutual interest. This kind of communication occurs between friends, relatives, colleagues whom we come in contact with on a regular basis and like or trust them. While engaging in such type of communication, we need to check whether the participant is ready to participate in this or not, whether it is possible to initiate a discussion or not, whether there is mutual trust and respect or not. It may so happen that one of the participants may mar an act of communication by dominating the conversation by talking only about himself/herself, by having no respect for the time and interest of the co-participant, by being over-conscious about his/her own language (grammar, pronunciation and articulation), by giving less or no chance to his/her co-participant to give his/her views and having annoying mannerisms disapproved by others. When the conversation is going on, both the participants must take care that the conversation goes on. Besides, they should keep on adding and changing their views as per the requirements from time to time and maintain an environment of friendliness and warmth. The participants should be courteous and cheerful and show interest in each other's views. They should also avoid using unnecessary and superfluous words and phrases (like wow, wonderful, mind set, deadlock, bad habit etc) which they might be using frequently. Being extraordinarily polite one loses the attention of the co-participant as it mars the pleasant informal atmosphere. As soon as the conversation turns into an argument, the participants should become cautious and make all possible attempts to save the discussion being dogmatic and argumentative. It is better to wind up a conversation than to prolong it over an irrational argument.

Face to face communication involves expressions and gestures which make the act of communication very effective. It is suitable for discussions but unsuitable for large organizations and large gatherings. But the effectiveness of this type of communication depends upon the attentiveness of involvement of the listener. If the listener does not take interest, this communication may collapse all together.

Telephonic Communication

Telephonic conversations are the next important kind of dyadic conversation we perform in our everyday life. Though it does not involve the use of body language and eye-contact, it is the commonest and fastest means of contacting people and with the increasing use of the mobile phones, the best way to connect to people wherever they are. It can be both formal and informal. In telephonic conversation with official, we must choose the right time to talk to them. Making a call to an officer during busy hours will spoil everything as there is every likelihood of his/her getting annoyed. If the officer has got a PA, it is always wise to check from the PA if the officer is free or not. In formal telephonic conversations, one needs to be as polite and courteous as one is during face to face communication or direct contacts. Hence enough care should be taken to make the voice as clear as possible, the language as slang-free and clear as possible and the duration of conversation should be as minimum as possible. When required, the duration of the conversation should be increased with due permission from the co-participant as the other person may not be in a position to listen to us for more than particular spell of time. Apart from this, each and every word should be spoken very clear so as to avoid wrong interpretation or mis-communication of the messages. Most importantly, repeated calls should be avoided as much as possible to avoid the annoyance of the authorities. All these rules are equally applicable to the listeners also. While listening to an official call, we should reveal our identity, listen clearly to what is being conveyed to us, remain calm even if we are being told something that we don't deserve and wait for our turn. If the message is not directly for us, we should collect the name and contact number of the person we are listening to and write down the exact message being conveyed. If we are not able to understand, we should seek clarification with due permission. It is better to seek clarification and annoy a person for a minute than to convey a wrong message and create greater annoyance later on. In informal communication, one may not have to follow all these guidelines but being careful about these will improve inter-personal relationships and create space for successful future communication.



Activity

How is face to face communication better than telephonic conversation?

Communication during Interviews

An Interview, to go by its literal meaning, is the 'sight between' two persons. When any act of conversation happens between two persons, over purposes mutually agreed upon for the sake of eliciting information or providing information. This one-to-one interview may take place between an expert in a field and a person who has interest in obtaining

information regarding a particular topic of mutual or common interest. The purpose of the interview determines the type of interview. For example, a research scholar may interview a historian or a scientist on a particular topic and note down his views on the same for the benefit of the common people. Likewise, a journalist may interview a minister or a Secretary over a policy decision and take it to the common people through radio or television. In counseling interviews, the personal and private conversation between the educational psychologist, counselor or psychiatrist attains different forms in response to the gravity of the situation. It may simply have inputs for guidance and psychological support from the counselor or some corrective therapy recommended for the victim. In employment interviews, the situation is a little different though most of the guidelines remain the same. In such interviews care is taken to judge the suitability of a candidate for a particular job through the analysis of his/her sense of values, attitude to work, respect for fair play, sense of justice and honesty in discharging duties, positive personal qualities and dependability. All these qualities can be tested in various ways. Hence while planning to attend an interview, one needs to be very careful. The dress we wear, the hairstyle we have, our footwear, the way we walk and talk, our gestures and postures and on the top of it, our personal appearance should be pleasing. Good personal qualities like these can be learnt or imbibed from celebrities who have a high degree of success in social life. Artificiality in both language and behaviour should be avoided as much as possible. When the interview is going on, one should sit with right posture, listen carefully and then answer the questions. At the same time, trying to be over-smart in interviews may spoil the chances of getting selected for a job. Since our future depends upon an interview, we should do whatever we can to acquire all good qualities that go into the selection of a candidate in an interview.

Visual Communication

Visual communication occurs when we want to communicate with the help of visual aids like facial expressions, gestures, posters, slides, film strips, printed pictures etc. It is suitable for communicating elementary and simple ideas. Only visual communication is not very effective but when combined with other media it can be very effective.

Audio Visual Communication

Audio-visual communication is useful and effective for mass publicity and mass education. Telecasts, short films on the film screen, video tapes, are various channels which can be explored for audio-visual communication. The films and the slides have to be interesting to arouse and sustain interest among the public. Besides, the narration has to be clear, precise, lucid and understandable. The main disadvantage of audio-visual communication is that it requires technical expertise to produce the audio-visual materials and resources are also required to show them to the public. Only large organizations and governments can spare their resources to go for audio-visual productions. Small organizations, due to resource crunches, often manage with the traditional modes of communication. Another disadvantage of this medium is that unless it is very interesting, it fails to arrest and sustain the interests of people for longer durations. Hence the films and video clips produced for the purpose of mass publicity are kept very short. In the

recent past, audio-visual media, integrated with the print media, have been very effective in making the instructional transactions exciting and useful.

Dictation

Dictation is a purely official and formal kind of communication that occurs between an officer and a steno/PA. While giving dictation, one should be careful to pronounce each and every word clearly so that the person taking the dictation is able to hear properly. Besides, the officer should plan beforehand, at least mentally, what should go into the text. Extempore dictations often lead to improper communication or missing out on important aspects. Hence care should be taken to see that there is not any scope for information gaps. When corrections are made, both the officer and the steno should take care that there are no dangling words or phrases. Likewise, while taking notes one should try to listen carefully and note down each and every word being spoken. Officers being over-busy, often tend to miss out some parts and should be asked for clarification if something is missing. The most important part of a dictation is that both the officer and the PA concerned should check the proof thoroughly before the final print is taken. Once the letter goes out of the office, it is almost next to impossible to get it back and make the amendments. Anything that goes out in print is a documentary evidence for all the right and wrong that we have done. Hence it is better to be careful beforehand than to be ashamed when somebody points out the lapses.

Interview for Data Collection

When someone is holding an interview with an expert in order to collect data regarding a project, an event or an incident, necessary formalities are to be maintained in order to make the interview successful. Before going to interview somebody on a topic, one should have thorough knowledge about the different dimensions of the topic and have the questionnaire ready so that there are no digressions. The interviewer should be very clear about what s/he is planning to ask. While conducting the interview, utmost care should be taken to record accurate data verbatim, to avoid hot and long discussions over silly things, and to monitor the interview in the right direction so that it does not go off the track. If the interviewee is not ready or reluctant to answer a question, s/he should not be insisted upon. The interviewer should not hesitate to seek clarifications as and when required. As far as possible recording devices should be used to record the interview, to fall back upon them whenever there is some doubt or gap of information. When the interview is reproduced in the electronic or written format, it has to be clear, self-contained and complete in all respects so that it serves the purpose for which it had been conceived.

Technology Aided Communication

This is the age of information and technology. In every walk of human life, computers have brought significant changes. Hence it is no wonder that they have impacted communication of all kinds. Both in the official spheres and personal spheres we have

started using e-mails, fax, voice-mail, cellular phones, telephone answering machines, teleconferencing, video conferencing, webinars, cyber-conferencing for both synchronous and asynchronous modes of communication. Because of these technological interventions the whole world has now shrunk into a global village and we are able to connect anyone, anywhere, anytime.

Technology-aided communication is the quickest as it has conquered the barriers of time and place. Apart from this, it has enabled us to reduce expenditure on orientation programmes in terms of the travel and accommodation expenses as people can undergo orientation and training Programmes at their workplaces only. Hence they have replaced personal meetings in most of the cases. The data collected through such technological gadgets are easy to store and retrieve. With the availability of an international communication network, now transmission of information has become easier and hence beneficial for the business organizations to ensure the satisfaction of their customers. But it is also not without its weaknesses. In the developing countries, where 'food, clothes and shelter' are the main needs, technological advancement is the last priority. In many countries, communication and education through cyber network do not have legal validity. Most importantly, computer-mediated communication has the danger of breaking down when it is infected by VIRUS. Many governments and business organizations often lose precious data due to VIRUS infections.



Activity

What are the advantages of technology-aided communication? How is it different from human communication?

Non-verbal Communication

From WikiEducator

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Non-verbal Communication

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Introduction

While talking about communication, we talked about verbal communication as well as non-verbal communication. As we have already indicated, verbal communication takes place with the help of language and non-verbal communication takes place with the help of non-linguistic support other than the spoken or written words and includes body movements like its postures, gestures and facial expressions, use of space and distancing. Non-verbal communication is also possible with the help of different signs, symbols and other modes. It is more important than that of verbal communication because it constitutes 65% of the total communication transacted in our everyday life whereas verbal communication constitutes only 35%.

Different Types of Communication

Different forms of non-verbal communication are:

Personal Appearance

Before a speaker starts speaking, the audience or the listeners try to guess what the speaker is going to say. Most often, our appearance itself creates the first impression among the listeners. Unless the speaker is able to present himself/herself in an audience-friendly manner to induce them into a receptive mood, one of the pre-requisites for successful communication, proper communication cannot take place. If the appearance of a speaker is not audience-friendly, s/he may create hostility among the audience and be an utter disaster. The personality or appearance of a person is based upon many factors: the way s/he dresses up, his/her hair style, make up. Dress speaks of the group identity, oneness, mark of status and suitability for a formal occasion. The Chief Guest of a Convocation, for example, is never expected to be in loose pantaloons and slippers. The right dress code for such an august occasion would be a formal suit, preferably with a tie, though wearing a suit without a tie is also acquiring its importance among people on such occasions. This is the reason why many organizations go for a uniform dress code for their employees. This focus on appearance is more culture specific than universal as with the rapid strides in civilization and the increasing changes in lifestyle, people have started accepting informal dress patterns for formal occasions as well. Indian saints, for example, when invited by the foreign universities as guests of honour prefer to go in their traditional attires which seems very much acceptable to the audience there.

Gestures

By gestures we mean the different movements of the head, hands, legs, shoulders and other parts of the body to communicate different messages like 'yes', 'no', 'come here' 'go there' keep sitting', 'don't move' etc . Most interestingly, these gestures are often used to give directions to the pet animals and are equally applicable to animals. For instance, when we move our head up and down, we indicate approval or agreement, The shrugging of the shoulders may mean either 'I don't care' or 'I don't know'. The waving of the hand may be used either to say hello to somebody or to bid goodbye. If we raise the thumb of the right hand with all other fingers downward, we mean 'Well done' or 'Keep it up.' We also raise the index finger to the lips to say, "Be quiet!". The winking of the eyes is used to indicate that we are looking at something with much heed. Closing of eyes is very often associated with extreme happiness or excitement, very rarely helplessness of course. Even small gestures like scratching the scalp, playing with hair, playing with a key-chain, clasping one's hand, looking in other directions are indicative of various messages like 'absentmindedness', 'indifference', 'carelessness' etc and adversely impact effective communication.

Posture

Postures refer to the different positions or movements of our body and hands while sitting, standing, walking, talking, even sleeping. The movement of our body, positions of hands and other parts of the body show various traits of our personality and tell to the audience whether we are dynamic, dull, self-confident or nervous. In personal discussions

or group discussions, postures play an important part. In group discussions, we must be ready to play our parts actively. When our turn comes, we must sit in an upright position, not in a reclined one and talk to our co-participants with confidence and respect. While talking, our chin must be parallel to the floor. Drooping shoulders and stooping body indicate that we are casual, tired and disinterested. In an act of listening too these postures are important. When somebody is listening to us in an upright position, it is assumed that the person is attentive. If the same person slouches towards left or right, forward or backward, it indicates both indifference and carelessness. But at the same time, extraordinary stiffness or uprightness is unwelcome as it indicates the hostility of the person in the listening position. On the other hand, if a person stoops forward with his/her hands on the cheeks and eyes wide open, we interpret it as an attentive position.

Facial Expression

Face is the index of the mind. It is the objective correlative of our thoughts and feelings. Whatever we think and feel gets reflected on our face. An open smile indicates friendliness, a prolonged smile indicates crookedness, a laughter indicates openness, a frown indicates discontent and disapproval, raising of eyebrows indicates surprise, doubt and disbelief, tightening of the jaw muscles indicates hostility and antagonism and a wooden expression on the face may indicate indifference and prejudice towards the listeners. Biting the lips, scratching the nose or the ears, blinking of the eyes, moving fingers over the forehead indicate that the speaker's participation in the act of communication is either minimal or nil.

Eye Contacts(Oculesics)

Eye contact is one of the dominant aspects of non-verbal communication. Eyes, being the extension of the brain and window to the soul, reflect our thoughts and feelings, say what our mouth cannot and express the sincerity or casualness in both speaking and listening. Wide eyes speak of attention, static eyes speak of indifference, half-closed eyes may indicate the unpreparedness of the body for the act of communication and completely closed eyes may mean either 'complete concentration' or 'absence of the same. In art and literature, therefore, description of the eyes of the heroines occupies a pivotal position. So in order to ensure the active participation of the listeners, it is wise to have a watch, of course unconsciously, on the eye movements of the listeners, particularly people seating in the first few rows. This not only helps us improve our communication but also helps us improving the level of participation and sense of satisfaction among the listeners. While speaking, a good speaker can alter, adjust or reframe his message on the basis of the feedback s/he receives from the listeners.

Space Distancing(Proxemics)

The minimum distance to be maintained from the receiver or addressee is determined by the nature of the context where the act of communication is transacted. Care should be taken by the participants in a communication not to invade the personal territories. This

invasion of personal territory occurs when the participants are in a state of excitement or heightened state of mind (like anger, shock, danger, ecstasy, grief etc). In a formal social interaction, a zone of 4 to 12 feet is maintained, which is known as the Social Distance. The normal convention is that the person who is superior stands and others remain seated. On the other hand, in public speaking, this distance is between 12feet to 30 feet, depending upon various local conditions. In Middle Eastern cultures, it is said that the person sitting or standing close to a person at a distance of less than one meter is interpreted as a sign of friendliness and good will and if somebody sits or stands too far away, s/he is considered aloof and unfriendly. On the contrary, in western cultures, 'personal space' is very important and people do not prefer it to be invaded by others in an act of conversation. Moreover, majority people from the western cultures consider themselves more as individuals than as members of groups, hence give utmost priority to their individuality and personal space (Das et al, n.d, p.55).

Tactile Communication(Haptics)

Many messages can also be communicated through the ways our bodies touch each other. When we want to express our love or grief for somebody, we hug him/her; when we express our affection for somebody, we kiss on his/her forehead, when we express our liking for somebody, we kiss his/her palms or cheeks. When somebody pats us, we feel happy, excited and encouraged. The simple touch of hand, even a handshake, can convey strong messages. A cold hand indicates a cold relationship whereas a warm hand evokes love for the person initiating the communication. The way we shake hands with others is also equally indicative of our approach and attitude towards that person. In some countries, people touch each others' bodies, usually on the back, shoulders or arms, in a natural gesture of friendliness while talking to each other but it is avoided in some other cultures and often misinterpreted.

Body Language(Kinesics)

Body language is the shortcut that all of us have to tune ourselves to a new environment where communication is to take place. The social attitudes corresponding to the different cultures in different society are articulated through the body language of the participants. With the proper use of body language, we can turn the hostile things in our favour and make communication a success.

Time language

Attitude towards time, though taken very casually in the South Asian Countries, is very important in determining the success or failure of an individual or organization. In the western cultures, particularly in the German culture, punctuality is considered to be one of the most vital social traits. Respect to time should be a matter of mutual interest. It may so happen that the guest arrives at a place in time but the hosts are not to be seen around, which is indicative of nothing other than the indifference and/or disrespect of the hosts towards the guests. A guest treated this way would think hundred times before

accepting an invitation from people of this sort. The vice versa may also happen often. In either case, this shows the disrespect of the defaulter to the other party under consideration. People may get tired of waiting for person before s/he arrives. This is very much prevalent among most of the politicians in India who consider punctuality to be an oddity in their character, not a desirable trait.

Silence

Often it so happens that our silence becomes more eloquent than our speech. The silence we maintain after an argument may mean our anger or disapproval of the other person or his/her arguments. The silence after a tragedy is indicative of the emotional disturbance going on in a person's mind. The silence of a participant after a quarrel or failure may indicate that the person is planning to take revenge or sorting out ways and means to come out of this sorry state of affairs. In many cases, it also leads to suicide as the victim considers suicide to be the be all and end all of all disturbances in life.

Artefact and Environment

Graphs, charts, traffic lights, signs and symbols used in social and religious communication, the things we possess, the environment we maintain inside our houses are suggestive of many messages that we do not or cannot express through verbal communication. In the Hindu temples, for example, falling of a flower from a God's or Goddess's head is considered to be auspicious whereas falling of stone from a temple is considered inauspicious. Likewise, in the election of a new Pope, the religious leaders of the Roman catholic Church gather at St peters Basilica and wait for a column of white smoke coming out of the chimneys (Das, 2009, 19-20). In the Indian context, for example, if somebody plants a red flag in a field, it means 'reserved for a religious cause'. But if the same flag has a sickle and hammer in it, it is the flag of the Communist Party of India(M), indicative of the usurpation of the land for community purposes. Inside home or an office too, the environment is indicative of the mood or mind set of the inhabitants or workers. If the things lie in disorder, this indicates carelessness of the people; if there is utter silence at home, it indicates that some tragic thing has happened or there is absolute collapse of communication whereas utter silence in an office may mean perfect discipline or an atmosphere of fear and hatred, with communication relegated to backward position. Likewise, if there is chaos either at home or in an office, it may mean lack of discipline or lack of communication. But when there is noise but within a tolerable limit, it may mean that environment is vibrant and there is perfect communication and coordination among all members.



Activity

Repulsive physical appearances can be disastrous for candidates aspiring for jobs. Do you agree?

Give reasons for your answer.

Tips for Improvement of Non-verbal Communication

As already said, non-verbal communication is more important than verbal communication because we do not talk or write twenty four hours. Out of the twenty four hours in a day, we devote hardly five-six hours to verbal communication and the rest is conditioned by how we communicate non-verbally. Hence mastering the non-verbal communication skills is equally important.

The following tips are useful in improving our non-verbal communication skills.

- **Be neat in your personal appearance:** When we are going to attend any formal meeting or interview, we should be properly dressed, which should never mean ‘gaudily dressed’. Somebody who is ‘overdressed’ is likely to be a butt of fun and ridicule. Casual dresses are alright if the speaker and the listener are well known to each other.

- **Face the Listener:** While speaking to an audience, we should try to gauge the feedback of the listeners from their facial expressions as face is the index of the mind. The expressions on the face send out multiple signals which a good speaker should be able to discern and decode.

- **Focus on the Speaker:** If you are sitting in the listener’s position, focus on the speaker by maintaining eye contact with him. But prolonged eye contact or staring at somebody’s face may seem threatening and disrupt communication.

- **Position Yourself Properly:** Irrespective of the role we have in an act of communication, we should be aware of the body position we are required to maintain to facilitate communication. Both the speaker and the listener should stand and sit upright in order to look ‘involved’. Unless the body postures match with the expectations of the other person, one may tend to misguide the other in an act of communication.

- **Consider Past Experience:** While speaking to an audience, we can predict their behaviour on the basis of our experience with similar audience in the past.

- **Clarify from Time to Time:** If we cannot see any visible signs of comprehension or appreciation of our speech, we need to talk to the audience straight and clarify from them whether we are being properly understood or not.

- **Use Positive Gestures:** The gestures we exhibit should be friendly, caring and most importantly, non-threatening as aggressive gestures may drive the listeners away from a topic being discussed.

- **Keep a Reasonable Distance from the person you are addressing to:** While speaking, irrespective of the cultural context where we are located, we should maintain a safe and

reasonable distance from the person we are addressing to avoid being aggressive or aloof or unfriendly.

•**Eliminate Pseudo-Affective Communication:** Pseudo-affective communication takes place when there is a wide gap between what we say and what we do. We are not gifted to understand our lapses; it is others who decide what right or wrong things we do. Neither the speaker nor the listener is able to understand what hinders them from a successful act of communication. The mutual perceptions of the participants regarding this gap between words and deeds should guide people to control communication and contribute to the elimination of this undesirable mode of behaviour.

•**Improve the Personal Space and Environment:** How we decorate our surroundings and arrange our living places also determine the kind of impact that we may exert upon others and affect the act of communication. The desk, the chair, the table, the paintings on the walls and the music being played on can be good indicators of our personality traits and help a person understand us at first sight, which may in turn facilitate or hinder communication.



Activity

Is it essential to focus upon non-verbal communication? Why?

Professional Communication

From WikiEducator

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Professional Communication

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Introduction

In this age of globalization, business houses are expanding their business across national boundaries through a well-knit communication network. The management in all corporate bodies understand the importance of communication and rank it as the most desirable qualification for recruitment of people into their organizations. Organizations that have good communication networks are successful in their business whereas organizations with poor communication network are failures. Das reinforces this with the statement, “From among 1000 target employees in the United States, 96% reported that employees must have good communication skills to get ahead. A study concerning MBA applicants concluded that 85% of the recruiters held communication skills to be the most important skill sought.” (Das, 2009, p.99)

Professional communication, unlike general communication, is guided by professional ethics though they both are controlled by the same principles and share many common features. In general communication, we have two or more than two individuals but in professional communication one of the participants is a representative from the organization.

In a company, every branch depends upon a chain of communicative acts which may involve oral, written and computer-mediated types of communication. Oral communication includes the day to day interpersonal communication between the different hierarchies of management and the employees at different levels. Generally in big organizations the communication network is a top-down one, the flow of information is mainly from the top to the bottom. But bottom up approach to communication is also

equally important because unless the people in the lower echelons are able to communicate to the higher authorities problems will not mitigate and chances are there that they would aggravate. Moreover, good communication among all the employees boosts the moral of the employees, leading to quality involvement in work so that the output is also better.

Main form of Professional Communication

Professional Communication falls under three categories:

Personal Communication

Personal communication may take place in the form of giving orders, instructions (both spoken and written), oral exchanges between the employees, assembling and preparing reports, writing memos, e-mails etc).

Internal Operational Communication

Likewise, internal operation related communication may take place at various levels like the manufacture, quality control and sale of products, providing services to the customers and maintaining goodwill among the employees.

External Operational Communication

Under external operational communication involves work-related communication with external agencies for advertising, personal selling, writing messages, maintaining good rapport with the clientele as well as the partner institutions and retailers.



Activity

What are the three forms of communication that take place in a business organization? Explain each of them with suitable examples.

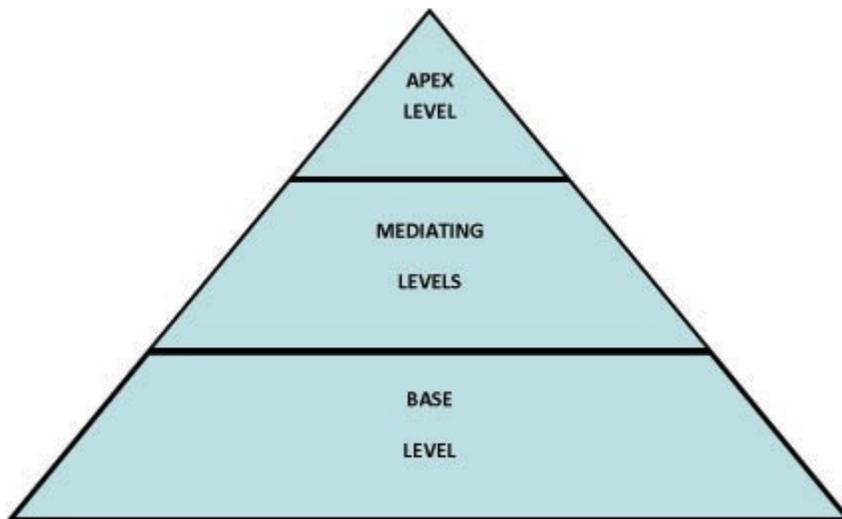
General Communication VS Professional Communication

Just like general communication in the other sectors, communication in the business sector goes through a process until it reaches the addressee. At the beginning the sender sends the message which enters the sensory world of the listener. After recognizing the message, the sensory nerves transmit the message to his/her brain, which then filters the

message. While filtering the message the brain uses all his/her experience, knowledge, biases, emotions, cultural background and interprets the message accordingly. Different people have different filters because of the differences in their experience, culture, language, and knowledge base. After filtering the message the brain then determines its meaning and sends the feedback, thus completing the cycle of communication.

Communication in the business sector occurs at all stages: the planning stage as well as the implementation stage. At the planning stage, communication is essential for studying the feasibility of launching a particular product, assessing the financial and human resources available for the launching of the product, surveying the market and making publicity campaigns. Similarly at the execution stage, communication always goes on between the manager and higher authorities, the manager and the subordinate employees in the form of reports, orders, circulars to keep the workers motivated and involved, to maintain a sense of discipline and to keep the moral of the employees high.

The communication network in a business organization can be represented in the form of a pyramid where the officers at higher levels of power and authority come at the top and the employees at the lower echelons come on the base. There is a mediating group of employees who are at the middle level and act like links between the top or apex level and base level. As one goes up in the pyramid, the amount of power and control increases and down the pyramid this amount of power and control diminishes. The few people at the top hold most power and authority and control a large number of people at the base level of the pyramid. But this control does not take place directly between the top level authorities and the employees at the base level. It is the officials at the intervening or mediating level who maintain this communication between the higher authorities and the subordinate staff at the base level.



Levels of Control in Business Organization (as cited in Das et al, nd, 58)

In general communication, as we have already discussed, the purposes for communication are mostly the purposes which language serves in our everyday life. In other words, the purposes are simple and easy to understand. But in business communication, the purposes differ in response to the needs of the organization as well as the clientele it serves. As business is the URL for all business organizations, the main purpose for all communications inside an organization remains mercantile, i.e. earning profits. The other purposes which drive companies to communicate are to create a brand image in the market and remain ahead of the competitors. In order to serve these basic purposes, they may devise various means and modes to serve the sub-purposes which ultimately lead to the satisfaction of the basic purposes. In order to serve the purposes, people at different levels need to understand the needs of their audience very well. At the top level, the Corporate authorities should be able to identify the right kind of companies who might be interested to invest in their company and also satisfy the norms and conditions laid down by the government. So for them, the immediate audience would be the investors and the government authorities. Similarly managers at each level should be able to know their workers well in terms of their backgrounds, working styles, oddities in order to handle them properly and adopt appropriate communication strategies to create an amicable work environment. People who manufacture products should be able to understand the needs of the customers and explore various means of communication to reach out to them and keep them happy in terms of the products.

When it comes to the question of code, business communication has to take care of the language of the group that it targets. English cannot be the language for communication all over the world. Whenever a multinational company starts an off shore business, it makes plans to reach out to the larger public in the target area through the adaptation of the language and culture of the local people. That's the reason why we find the advertisement for McDonald and NESTLE in Hindi, and for that matter in the regional languages in India. People who want to purchase a product definitely prefer to have a thorough understanding of the product in their local language, not an alien language. In general communication, one may not be required to communicate in more than two languages at best but in business organizations literatures for products and advertisements are designed, developed and produced in the local languages to cater to the needs of the target clientele. Use of profession specific registers or jargons may be appropriate for people working in a similar field but for communication with the customers who are not acquainted with this register/jargon, this may sound Greek. Hence care should be taken to use the appropriate code while communicating a message.

As regard the channel for the transmission of the messages is concerned, general communication and professional communication differ to a large extent. General communication is usually sporadic (irregular) but professional or business communication is non-sporadic and requires sustained attention. To put it in a different way, general communication may not occur all the time and there may be some gap. But this cannot happen in the business circle. In a business organization all kinds of communication should keep on happening as per requirement otherwise the company may come to a standstill and block the growth of communication. General communication usually has short term plans in order to meet the immediate needs of the

participants but in official communication both short-term and long-term goals are equally important. In general communication, word of the mouth, letters, or at best telephonic calls are used to transmit a message but the requirements of business organizations vary. The channels of communication, in business circles therefore, keep on changing: they may be oral, written or technology-mediated.

Various pattern of Communication in an Organization

In the pyramid of organization structure, as we have read earlier, main decisions are taken at the apex level for the large number of people working at the base level and the people at the mediating levels work like links between the top management and the people working at the base level. For the success of a company both upward and downward communication are equally important. Both these patterns of communication are called vertical communication.

Downward (Vertical) Communication

The pattern of communication in an organization depends upon the organizational structure. Earlier most of the organizations preferred to have a top down approach in which the decisions were taken at the higher levels and were implemented at the lower levels. Hence all organizations used to have strong leaders who could take clear and bold decisions to be implemented for all. This type of communication, initiated at the higher level and flowing down to the lower level is known as vertical or downward communication. In such communication, usually orders and instructions are issued at the headquarters and are implemented at the lower levels. With the advancement of time, this system of functioning has undergone changes. Now people at the higher levels feel that they need to involve the people at lower levels to increase their level of involvement. Hence there is greater sharing of information, greater participation of the employees from the lower levels and hence better outcome. Now the top level officers welcome the new recruits, justify their actions before their employees for level playing with them. Downward communication and upward communication are inter-related because those who give orders or issue instructions (in the form of downward communication) want to check whether their orders and instructions have been carried out or not, which is only possible through the feedback provided, in the form of upward communication.

Upward (Vertical) Communication

Upward communication is significant because it provides feedback to the superiors in the form of suggestions, ensures emotional release, makes policy changes more acceptable and promotes an atmosphere of good will and understanding. It is usually carried out through complaint and suggestion boxes, social gatherings, direct contacts, reports, counseling and training programmes, But the problem with upward communication is that most of the employees do not dare to come forward for the fear of being targeted. Moreover, there are chances for the messages to be distorted before they reach the real officers. Employees also resist this with the apprehension that their criticism of the

company policies might be perceived as their personal weaknesses and they may be victimized. In order to make this kind of communication effective, officials should try to get closer to their employees through different ways, keep such communications confidential and act upon the suggestions, complaints and grievances. This will increase trust among the employees and they will feel free to come forward and give their constructive criticism for the improvement of the company. Usually upward communication is made in the form of reports about the progress of work as a result of the orders, appeals and requests for help for sorting out problems at the lower levels.

Horizontal (Lateral) Communication

As the name suggests, Horizontal Communication occurs when the flow of communication is between people working at the same level. This being a communication network among peers, people at the same level, it promotes understanding and coordination among people in various departments. It is mainly transacted through face to face discussions, telephonic conversations, periodical meetings, memos. Small organizations do not need such type of communication as a single person often handles many responsibilities but in bigger organizations it is preferred. Some managers like to implement this mode of communication whereas others avoid it with the fear that too much of familiarity may breed contempt and ultimately lead to indiscipline among the staff. This fear sounds unfounded because too much of discipline and authoritarianism creates an ambience of bitterness and cause complete breakdown of communication. In 'top-down' organization structure, horizontal communication is often rare as people at the lower levels look up to the officers at the higher levels for guidance. In the Indian context, particularly in the government sector, where bureaucratic system of administration predominates, horizontal communication is hindered because all files are routed through proper channel. However, in the private sector more value is attached to collaborative work culture and 'team work' so that there is more scope for horizontal communication.

Diagonal Communication

Many of the modern business organizations have a flexible communication network where there is scope for the 'flow and exchange' of information at all levels, involving a sweet synthesis of both the horizontal and vertical modes of communication. This eclectic mode of communication, adopting an appropriate communication pattern as per the need of the context is diagonal communication.

Grapevine Communication

Sometimes it may so happen that more than one pattern of communication is adopted in an organization. This pattern of communication spreads like a grapevine in any direction, anywhere and spreads fast. Hence it is called grapevine communication. Primarily a channel of horizontal communication, it can flow even vertically and diagonally. The communication that takes place during appointments, promotions, retrenchments, even

domestic affairs can be included under this pattern. Under grapevine communication, we have four main sub-patterns: single strand, gossip, probability and cluster. In single strand communication, the communication process is very simple and flows like a chain. In the Gossip pattern, one person is responsible for informing or telling everyone. As per the probability pattern, random information may move from anybody to anybody as per situational needs and in cluster pattern of communication, as the name suggests, information moves through groups.



Activity

How is Vertical Communication different from Horizontal Communication? If you were the manager of a company, what kind of communication would you recommend?

Barriers and Gateways to Effective Communication

From WikiEducator

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Barriers and Gateways to Effective Communication

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Barriers of Communication

The success of an act of communication depends upon many factors like the choice of the appropriate message, understanding of the audience, preparedness of the sender and the receiver, selection of the right channel and code. But absence of barriers is the most important requirement for the success of all modes of communication. The barriers to communication include:

- Wrong choice of medium
- Selective Perception
- Defensiveness
- Physical barriers
- Time and Distance
- Semantic barriers
- Difference in the Comprehension of Reality
- Socio-psychological barriers
- Difference of knowledge level
- Lack of Common Language

Wrong choice of Medium

Whatever message we may want to convey, it has to be transmitted through an appropriate medium. If someone wants to send a message instantly to a distant friend, s/he cannot use the 'word of the mouth' in the face to face mode to do that. It has to be either telephonic, computer-mediated e-mail or tele-fax. Similarly a manager cannot use a letter to give a report of the Annual Sales Proceeds of his/her company; a specially designed report has to be submitted for this purpose. A telephonic information regarding a promotion is less important than conveying the message face to face. While dealing with a problematic employee, for example, one may resort to issuing memos but this should be the last resort as the memos pile up documentary evidence against the person and embitter his relationship with the sender. On the other hand, such disputes can be easily

sorted out through the word of the mouth or through non-verbal means, may be smile and a pat.

Selective perception

Different people have different perceptions of different things. When the receiver has a different perception from that of a sender regarding the idea or information being transmitted, then communication is bound to be adversely affected. Usually a receiver filters a message in accordance with his experience, interests, needs, motivations, background and other socio-psychological characteristics and has the potential to twist a message in his/her own favour. Differences in perspectives or perceptions leads to miscommunication as it results in the loss of symbols, distortion of the symbols and the creation of new symbols (Das, 2009, p.112).

Defensiveness

Often it so happens that the receiver finds the message threatening and thus unacceptable, and shows reluctance to receive the message. While filtering the message, the receiver therefore maintains a defensive stand and affects communication negatively.

Physical Barrier

Noise is the most notorious physical barrier which often disrupts communication. This is usually the case in places where noise from the machines or electronic gadgets hinders proper transmission of the message. Under noise we can also include all kinds of physical interferences like illegible handwriting, poor and inaudible telephonic conversation or recordings, smudged copies of duplicated typescripts, low level of light on the projector screens. In pubic speaking, the technical problem with the microphone often spoils the show.

Time and Distance

The time when a statement is made or information is conveyed can also make a difference. Often it is seen that some officers prefer to talk to the outsiders in the morning. There might be also communication gap among people working on different shifts. A person working on the day shift may not be able to understand the problem of a person on the night shift. The sitting arrangement in the places of meetings may also cause problems in getting the message across. A person sitting near the window may not be able to get a message clearly because of the external distractions. On the other hand a person sitting in the first row or the first few rows may get the right message.

Semantic Barriers

Sometimes there is breach of communication due to the different meanings that the sender and the receiver assign to a particular word or expression. In every language,

different words have a lot of denotative as well as connotative meanings and when the sender and receiver of a message attach two different meanings to a word, there is communication gap. This may happen due to the differences in the social, economic and cultural backgrounds of the participants. In order to avoid such barriers the speaker or the writer should use words which have clear meanings, are familiar to the sender and the receiver and words that have positive connotations.

Difference in Comprehensive of Reality

All human beings do not perceive the reality in the same manner. Some simply believe in themselves and do not accept anything that goes against their beliefs; some may try to understand reality when it is supported by documentary evidence; some draw inferences and some others get affected by others' opinions. In stead of being objective, we often go by subjective interpretations of reality. When our subjective interpretations dominate over the objective facts, communication is the worst victim.

Socio-Psychological Barriers

Socio-psychological barriers include the hindrances that arouse due to our attitudes, opinions, emotions, mind-set and other behavioural eccentricities. They can be enlisted as follows:

(i) Attitudes and Opinions: Our attitudes and opinions impact the way we respond to a person or a message transmitted by that person. If the person/message is favourable to us we respond positively but when it is not favourable to us, we react negatively and disrupt communication.

(ii) Emotions: A mind filled with emotions cannot be rational. Hence when we are either excited or agitated, we tend to block the transmission of a message and cause breach of communication.

(iii) Closed-mind: In order to receive and reciprocate a message, we need to have an open mind. A closed-mind is just like a closed door, obstructing the inflow of information.

(iv) Status-Consciousness: Being over-conscious of our higher or lower status, we do not express ourselves openly and thus block the proper transmission of a message.

(v) The source of communication: Our reaction to a message depends upon the source from which it has originated. We trust it if the source is reliable and do not trust it when it is not.

(vi) Inattentiveness: While listening to somebody, we often unconsciously remain inattentive when the idea being transmitted is new and our mind is not ready to accept it.

(vii) Faulty transmission: Sometimes a message is lost when it is not properly transmitted either due to a defective channel or due to the unpreparedness of the receiver.

(viii) Poor retention: Human memory has limited storage capacity and any message that is extraordinarily long or disjointed is likely to be lost. This is particularly the case with oral messages which are lost due to poor human retention.

(ix) Unsolicited Communication: Often it so happens that we receive a communication which we had never desired. In such cases, we either ignore such communications or respond to them in a lackadaisical manner

Difference in Knowledge Level

Communication gap may also occur when there is a gap in the knowledge levels of the sender and the receiver. If a speaker is speaking on Astrophysics to a group of students from humanities, s/he may not be able drive home the ideas. With no knowledge of astrophysics the students may struggle to make something out of the speech but majority of the message will go above their heads.

Difference in Language

When the frames of reference differ, it leads to communication gaps or miscommunication. This particularly happens when there is a difference of registers. A student of medicine will not understand what a professor of mechanical engineering speaks and the vice versa. Different words have different connotations in different cultures. The word ‘guru’ in the Indian culture is a spiritual guide who is supposed to guide people from darkness to light but now this word has gained currency in the western world as a synonym for an authority or expert.



Activity

How do the socio-psychological barriers disrupt communication? Explain with examples.

Gateways to Communication

In order to enhance the effectiveness of communication, we can focus on the following aspects:

- **Plan the message:** Before we decide to communicate an idea/information/message, we need to plan it properly. The message should match the purpose and should be transmitted through the appropriate format.

- **Use Proper language:** The language used for a message should be clear, lucid and appropriate. The density of words used should match with the level of maturity of the receivers.
- **Don't be evaluative:** If we listen to somebody with preconceived notions, we won't be able to receive, process and interpret the message properly.
- **Give proper Orientation:** All the employees should be given proper orientation regarding the objectives, policies, procedures, organization structure and work culture of an organization immediately after they are recruited. This helps in interpersonal communication as well as communication with the people at the higher and lower hierarchies.
- **Be an active listener:** Active listening is an art which very few people can master. Many of us confuse listening with hearing. But listening demands more attention and interest than hearing, hence very important in communication.
- **Have an unbiased attitude:** Any person with a biased mind will not be able to communicate properly with others. Hence it is necessary to train people to be unbiased through education, counseling and discussions to help them become good communicators. .
- **Respond don't re-act:** When we are dealing with a problematic situation or person, we must understand the facts properly and respond appropriately. If we react in a situation like this, our emotions and feelings take an upper hand and we end up as bad communicators. Our negative reaction to people in stressful situations will aggravate the situation and lead to total collapse of communication. We must respond mindfully rather than re-act emotionally. Though it requires self-knowledge and discipline, it allows us to be more effective in our communication.
- **Promote congruence:** Communication will not be effective unless and until people are willing to communicate. This willingness to communicate needs to be inculcated among people to keep them intact.
- **Use the grapevine:** The grapevine can be used to predict the responses of the employees regarding a particular issue. This is mainly useful for checking plans which are likely to be implemented in future. On the basis of the responses collected from people, appropriate decisions can be taken.
- **Transmit the message in Installments:** If too much of information is sent within too short a period of time, it will not be digested by people. SO it is wise to send the information/message in chunks. This makes the transmission of the message more effective and facilitates feedback. Information overload results in miscommunication or a complete collapse of communication.

- **Provide feedback:** In order to enhance the effectiveness of communication, feedback mechanism should be built into all communication networks so that necessary amendments can be made to enhance the quality of communication in future. Suggestions, clarifications, performance reports, surveys and emphatic listening are some of the feedback mechanism we use to ensure the success of communication.
- **Overcome bypassing:** When we receive a message, we must respond it appropriately and immediately. Bypassing it will hamper the transmission of the message.
- **Maintain semantic accuracy:** While using words with different connotations we must make it clear in its meaning by providing contextual clues. Semantic accuracy will improve the effectiveness of communication and will facilitate timely feedback.
- **Add some eloquence:** While presenting the facts, we should be able to present them in a seamless manner so that there is eloquence and the listener does not have any problem in comprehending the logical link between the facts. This in turn will positively impact communication.
- **Improve the ambience:** Improper ambience often mars the communication between two participants. If people fight in a meeting where a saint is giving a sermon on world peace, there is no necessity of his sermon. Similarly, if we are speaking in a crowded place with noises flowing in from all corners, we wont be able to drive anything into the minds of the audience. On the other hand, a calm atmosphere will be appropriate for such an act of communication.
- **Use proper etiquette:** Social etiquettes play an important role in ensuring successful communication. A person may be a master of his/her subject, but his/her lack of etiquette may mar his/her chances of a promotion. Likewise, proper telephone etiquettes are also essential for making an act of communication successful.
- **Watch your language:** We should opt for clear, positive language and sincerity to encourage shared understanding and earn the support of our group.



Activity

Do you think the gateways to communication given in this section are exhaustive? If no, suggest some more gateways which can improve the effectiveness of communication.