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COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Executive Summary

The following report sheds light on communication skills and their different aspects. The report starts by defining communication and its importance in the world of work. The barriers to affecting the message and its consequences are also mentioned. After that, three different models of communication are discussed that follow different approaches to communication. Verbal, non-verbal, and listening communication skills are mentioned briefly with proper practical examples. The new form of communication that is known as information technology is also discussed in this report with special references to its benefits and limitations. The report concludes by summarizing the entire topic at the end.

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1. Introduction

Communication is the mode of giving or taking that can also be used for sharing information. Writing, reading, talking, and listening are also referred to as communication. Communicators who have good communication skills are careful listeners, read or write clearly, and respect others' opinions. In the world of work, communication is very important as it boosts teamwork and helps in better project collaboration. Communication in workplaces forms the core of internal communication, which ensures that the teams in the lower hierarchy are on the same parallel with the management. Another significance of workplace communication is that employee morale is boosted with its help, which can ultimately result in better employee engagement and productivity. The message in effective communication can be affected by misunderstanding and as a result, the intended communiqué gets disturbed or distorted. There are many types of communication barriers such as psychological, emotional, linguistic, cultural, and others. Businesses suffering from poor communication may face the consequences of frustration and confusion that even create a tense environment in the workplace.

2. Models of communication

2.1 Shannon and Weaver

Shannon and Weaver's model of communication is referred to as the ***“mother of all models”*** because it has gained immense popularity across the world. The model is also known as information theory due to its detailed description of every component of communication. The model is most significant in its ability to describe the mixture of messages and the way these can be misinterpreted during the process of sending and receiving the message (Al-Kinani *et al.* 2018). The communication model of Shannon and Weaver was developed in 1948 with the aim to follow the linear concept of communication in some simple steps. The important points of the model include sender, receiver, channel, decoder, and receiver.

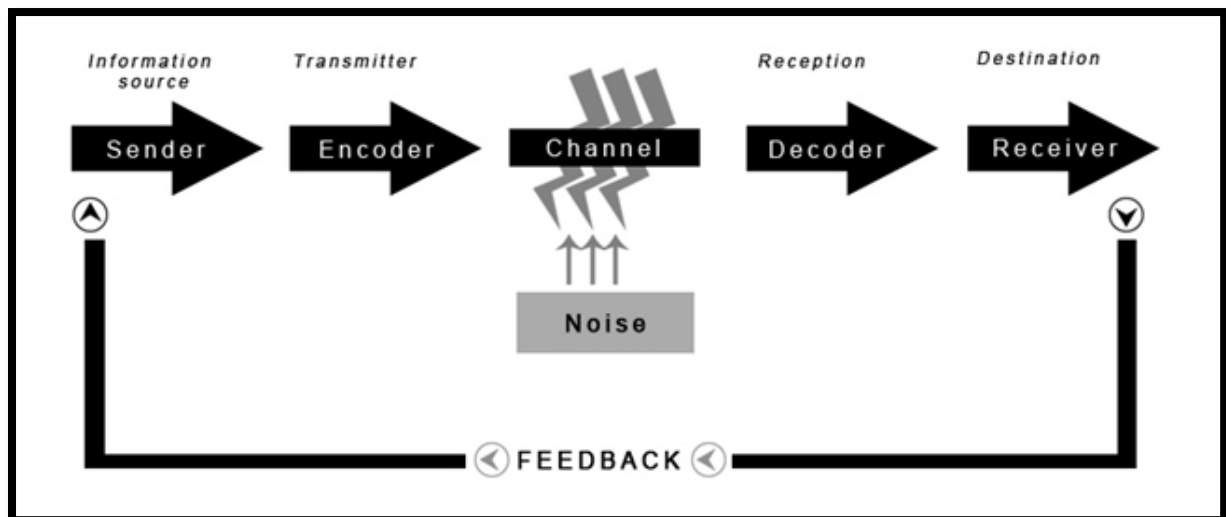


Figure 1: Shannon and Weaver's model of communication

(Source: Shannon and Weaver, 1948)

The sender is the first element of the model that is termed the information source. These persons hold the information to begin the process of communication. The process starts with the selection of the message that needs to be sent, the person to whom it will be sent, and a channel to send the message. The sender has multiple options to send a message such as orally, in writing form, or with the help of body language. **The encoder** is the next component that is also known as an encoder working as a machine to convert an idea to signals. These signals are then used to send information from the sender to the receiver. In the model, telephones and computers are referred to as encoders; however, it can also be a person to build spoken words from an idea (Al-Rahmi *et al.* 2020). **Channel** is the next most important component in this communication model that refers to the infrastructure for getting information from the sender and transmitting it to the receiver. **Noise** in this model acts as an interruption to the message being sent. It is used to interrupt the understanding of a message internally or externally. **The decoder** in Shannon and Weaver's model refers to the device used to decode a message received from the encoder. Devices like computers to decode binary numbers are examples of decoders. The next component of the model is **the receiver, which** is also known as the destination because this is generally the end of the communication process in the model (Back *et al.* 2020). The final component in the model is **feedback, which** refers to the response of the receiver to the sender after receiving the message. However, the concept of feedback was not introduced by Shannon and Weaver in their model, it was later included.

The communication model helps to avoid misunderstanding in a communication process by identifying the areas that need improvement for making the communication an effective one.

One example of the model in the workplace is when a CEO contacts his assistant over the telephone and cannot elaborate the message properly to him due to network issues. Here, the CEO is the sender, the telephone of the CEO is the encoder, the cable is the channel, the network issue is the noise, the telephone of the assistant is the decoder, and the assistant is the receiver (Coffelt *et al.* 2019). As the receiver fails to understand the CEO's message, he asks him to say it again which acts as feedback here.

2.2 Schramm

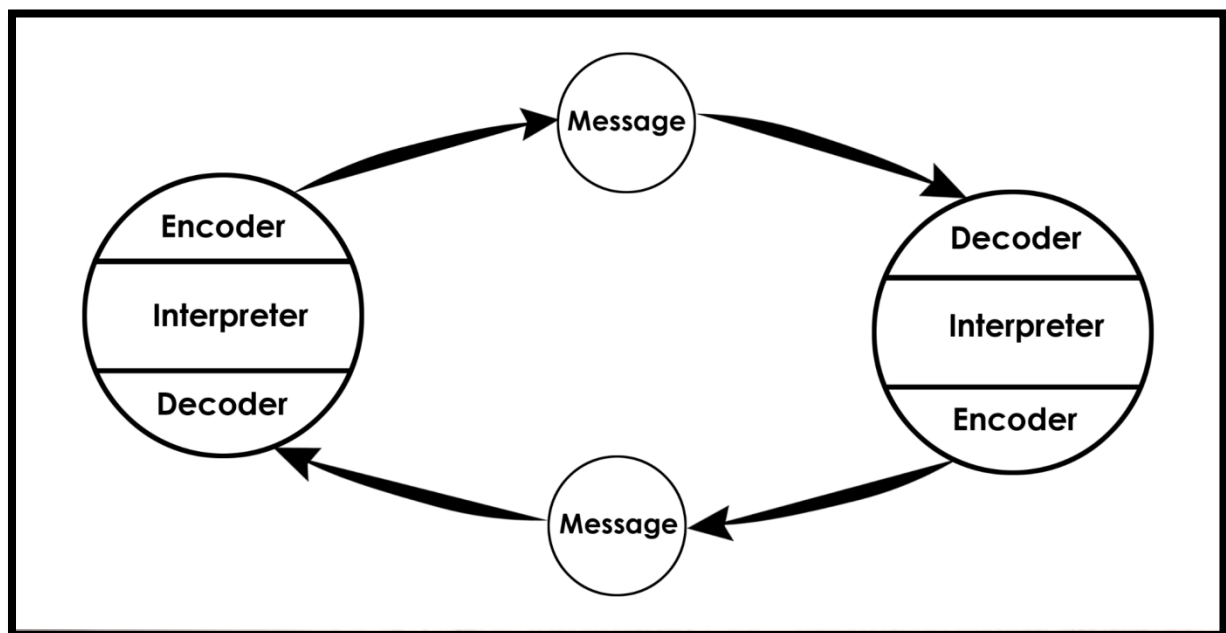


Figure 2: Schramm's model of communication

(Source: Schramm, 1954)

The Schramm communication model is a cyclical type of communication model of communication that contains the basic principles of communication. Unlike the linear approach followed by Shannon and Weaver's model, the communication model of Schramm delivers a classic approach to communication (Cummins *et al.* 2020). This approach proves to be effective in determining the process of communication between two persons in the context of sharing any information or ideas. The cyclical model believes communication to be a two-way street. This mode of communication defines that there are at least a sender and a receiver present in the exchange of information. There is at least another element as well and it is the message. Moreover, the communication process using this model follows a traditional path that consists of a wasteful sender and receiver. The recipient and the sender can be the same at times and when this happens, it is called intra-personal communication.

Interpersonal communication generally happens when the wasteful recipient is present there. The main difference between the Shannon-Weaver model and the Schramm model lies in the approach to communication. Shannon and Weaver used to believe that communication always follows the linear approach, whereas Schramm felt the importance of noticing messages in it (Demestichas and Daskalakis, 2020). Hence, the communication model of Schramm sees communication as a process of communicating information between the encoder and the decoder. As an example of this model, whenever a person hangs up the call, he promises the other person to talk again soon without being aware of the fact that they have already engaged in a two-way communication system.

2.3 Berlo

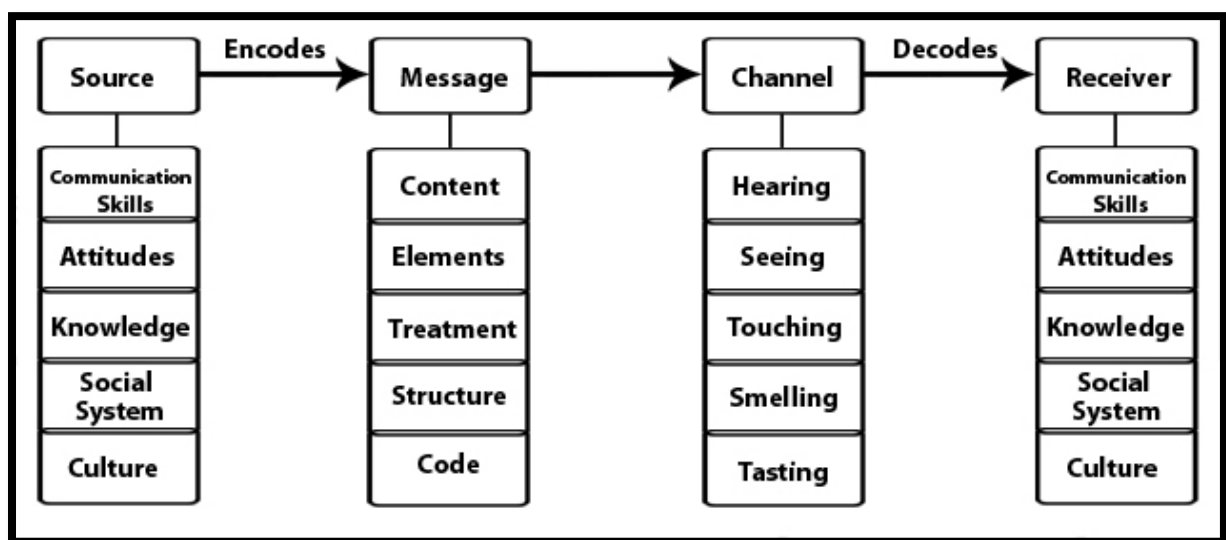


Figure 3: Berlo's SMCR model of communication

(Source: Berlo, 1960)

The SMCR communication model of Berlo puts emphasis on the emotional aspect of a message during the communication process which was absent in the other two models of communication. The communication model revolves around the SMCR model where **S** stands for the source, **M** for the message, **C** for a channel, and **R** stands for the receiver. The source is also mentioned as the sender from whom the thought originates (Hasanah and Malik, 2020). The sender is responsible for transferring the information to the receiver after gathering all the thoughts as words. The source transfers the information to the recipient with the help of certain factors. **Communications skill** is the first factor in this regard, as a person needs to possess proper and excellent communication skills to become an effective sender and create an impact on the recipients. A proper sender needs to possess the communication

skills of reading and listening along with the knowledge of language differences (Karasheva *et al.* 2021).

Attitude is something that if present in not anybody could stop him or her to be a superior source of communication. A person with very good speaking skills might fail as a sender in case he lacks the right attitude. The right attitude also helps to have a long-lasting impression on others. **Knowledge** is a factor that is not related to the educational qualification of the sender but the clarity of information that needs to be conveyed to the listeners. Apart from these three, there are two other factors of communication in the source, namely social system and culture (Mishra and Mishra, 2020). As an example, the news presenter is considered the **source** of the news to spread the information, whereas the news refers to the **message** here and television is the **channel**. Finally, **listeners** are audiences in this context.

3. Communication skills

3.1 Verbal

Verbal communication refers to the communication skill where words and language are used extensively to convey a message or information. It refers to a soft skill that represents leadership and this is the main behind businesses considering strong verbal communication very important. Moreover, the proper implementation of verbal communication in workplaces has the ability to make the business more efficient (Ratheeswari, 2018). Examples of such communication include any business representation or a call to any second party. Although verbal communication skills depend a lot on one is speaking skills, it also defines their ability to listen and present themselves in the practical world. The tone of voice and confidence level is closely related to verbal communication.

3.2 Non-verbal

Unlike verbal communication, non-verbal communication skills include facial expressions, gestures, eye contact, and body language of a person while communicating with others without using any words. Whenever anyone refers to the word communication, it might mean more than just the explicit meaning of words that are included in the conveyed message. It may include implicit messages whether it is intentional or not that can be expressed with the help of non-verbal behaviors of speakers in interpersonal communication (Richardson, 2019). The signs of non-verbal communication sometimes represent additional clues over the

conveyed communication. The implementation of non-verbal communication can be seen when appearing for an interview in a company or taking part in a meeting. The body posture of the person tells more about the personality than he describes in words.

3.3 Listening

Listening is considered as important as speaking in an effective communication process. A proper leader is a combination of both speaking and listening communication skills. Empathetic listening is a structured form of listening used to apply to questioning technique (Rusdi *et al.* 2020). This type of listening allows a person to develop or strengthen relationships with others by gaining a better understanding of the conveyed message. This procedure can be done both intellectually and emotionally. Someone may use ***“thank you for sharing this with me”*** as an example of empathetic listening to someone who shows vulnerability to that person by opening up.

4. Advantages and disadvantages of communication technology

When messages or information is transferred among people or machines with the help of technology it is called communication technology. The use of technology in communication helps to make better decisions, solve problems easily, and control machines effectively (Zhang and Zhang, 2019). Communication technology has many benefits when used properly. One such advantage is related to ***its low cost***. The actual cost of technology used in communication is much lower as compared to the slower means of communication such as the mail delivery system (Sokolovska *et al.* 2019). Although the cost of a traditional communication method like this is very low, the cost gradually increases due to a misplaced letter or lost efficiency. Hence, the use of technology in communication becomes beneficial. Communication technology is capable of ***easy archiving due to its smooth retrieval process***. With the implementation of inexpensive storage and important databases, the documentation and archiving process have become much easier and quicker.

Communication technology has some disadvantages along with these advantages. ***The lack of privacy*** is the most significant disadvantage of this as the recipient has the power to instantly share the email or message with others that the sender has sent previously in a private setup (Tugtekin and Koc, 2020). Whenever this occurs, the communication may become very embarrassing as well as damaging for both persons. There is ***a chance of misunderstanding*** in the communication technology as when the information is shared through computers or

cell phones there is no chance to include voice inflexion or body language that may cause misinterpretation of the conveyed information.

5. Conclusion

The above study has reflected on different aspects of communication skills. The study starts by briefly introducing the topic to readers. The discussion represents three different types of communication models and distinguishes them in terms of communication approach. A sender needs to have certain communication skills while communicating any information that is also discussed in this report. Several forms of communication skills with proper examples are described briefly. The report ends by providing the advantages and disadvantages of communication technology.

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