

Effective Teamwork and Communication

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Contents

Introduction	5
The models of communication.....	5
Communication skills required in the workplace	8
Strategies to effective teamworking and group dynamics	9
Poor communication in a workplace and how it can be improved.....	11
Conclusion	13
References.....	14

Introduction

Communication in a workplace is considered to be one of the most important factors for productivity, performance, employee engagement, better competitiveness, quality customer service etc. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the required communication skills and the ways by which poor communication is eradicated in the workplace. Also, understanding of the different models of communication helps in getting in-depth ideas about literature and theory of communication.

Teams are an integral part of the organizations which are the groups of individuals having complementary expertise to fulfill a common or shared goal. An effective team can be called the group in which members are committed to the team, supportive with each other and able to achieve their individual targets or tasks (Sarangi, 2017). It is necessary for organizations to find out suitable team structures and strategies by which effective teamwork is facilitated, which in turn would fulfill their internal and external needs.

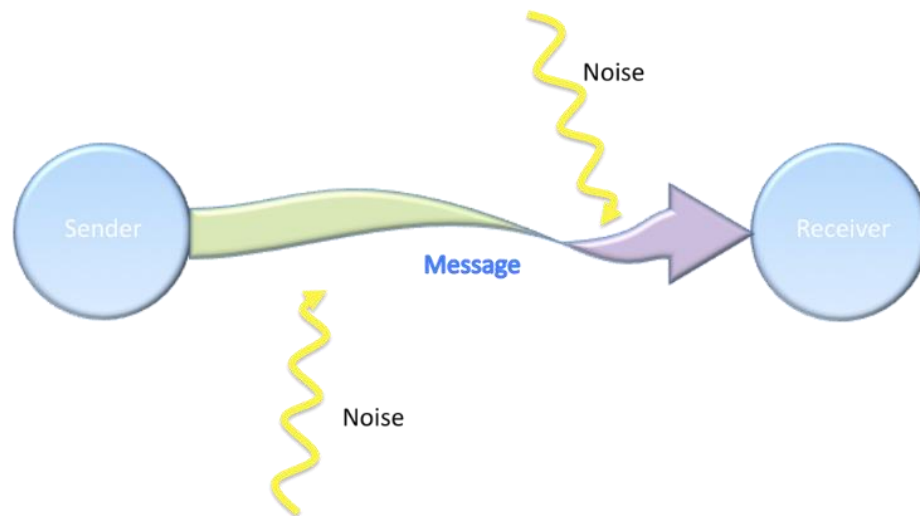
The models of communication

The communication models help to understand the distinct aspects of communication by which it works. Here different communication models are presented:

- **Linear model of communication**

This model is based on the one-directional movement of communication where the message encoded and sent by sender is decoded and received by the receiver and the message passes through certain channel of communication. The noise can be present, which is basically the factor which interferes with the encoded message and can change it (West, 2015).

Linear

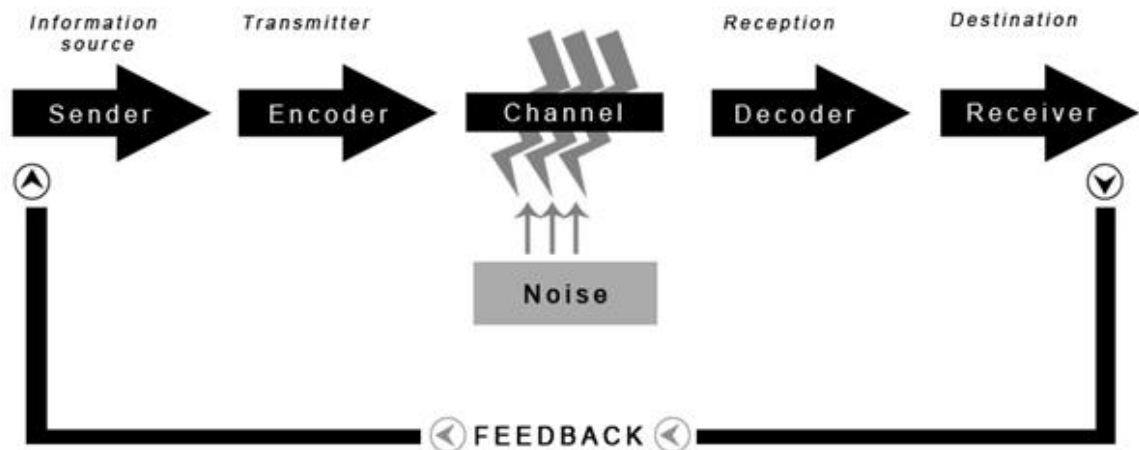


Linear communication model

Source: (Al Zain, Vasilache and Incze, 2018)

- **Shannon-Weaver model of communication**

This is an effective communication model, first proposed by American Electronic Engineer Shannon and scientist Weaver in 1948, to develop technical aspects and mathematical framework for understanding better communication between the sender and receiver. A linear fashion of communication is maintained between sender and receiver where the sender acts as the information source and the receiver is the destination. An encoder which acts as a transmitter is placed for translating the message into signals, such as in binary digits or radio waves. A communication channel is used to transfer the message, which acts as the medium. Noise is the interrupting force, which can be of internal and external type where internal noise refers to the noise occurring during the encoding or decoding of the message. External noise is the external factors such as environmental sounds, impeding the message. The decoder in the destination works as recipient by which the message is decoded from the received signal. While the original concept of this model was linear, this was the main source of criticism because of the lacking of practical communication which is non-linear. Therefore, in later years, the concept of feedback is introduced with this model. Feedback is the result of the response of the receiver to the sender upon receiving the message.



SHANNON-WEAVER'S MODEL OF COMMUNICATION

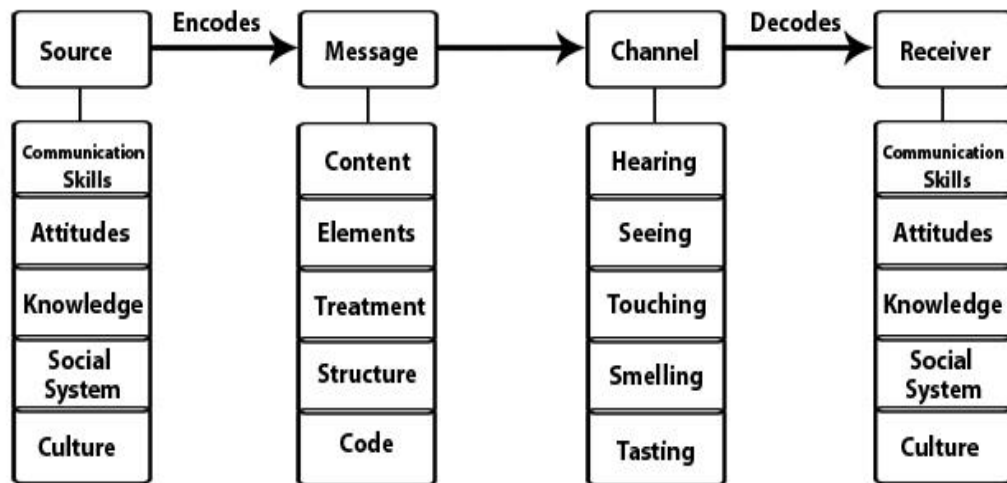
Shannon-Weaver model

Source: (Kumar R. and James, 2015)

- **Berlo's model of communication**

This communication model has come into play when David Berlo has introduced the SMCR model by expanding on the Shannon-Weaver model in 1960. In this model four components play vital role in the communication process and different factors can influence these components. The components are: sender, message, channel and receiver. The factors that can influence on the source are: communication skills, attitude, knowledge, social systems and culture. The influencing factors working on the message content, element, treatment, structure, and code. The channel or medium also has some factors that can influence on the channel, such as the human sensory system, vision, sound etc. Some factors like disrupted communication, loss or distortion, noise etc. can influence the receiver prints recoverins (Lőrincz, 2019).

Berlos's SMCR Model of communication



Berlo's SMCR model

Source: (Bal and Teo, 2017)

Communication skills required in the workplace

The communication skills of the staff members are considered to be the employability skills that are incredibly important for the necessary achievement of organizational goals and objectives. Here are some required communication skills:

- **Listening skill**

A good communicator possesses the necessary listening skills by which an individual tends to be able to understand what he/she is being asked to do. This skill can be developed by paying close attention to the things other person is telling as well as asking clarifying questions or rephrasing the other person to have a better understanding (Carmichael, 2011).

- **Nonverbal communication**

Nonverbal communication such as body language is very important for maintaining necessary behavior and attitude within an organization. Body languages like hand gestures, voice tone, eye contact etc. needs to be appropriate in terms of the mode of communication happening: formal or informal. For example, proper body language like open arms, friendly voice tone, looking into the eyes etc. can transmit positive signal to the other persons by which they can be comfortable (Yang, 2019).

- **Clarity and concision**

This comes with good verbal communication skill where the individual is able to convey the required message in clear and concise manner. Without clarity, the listener can be unsure of what is needed.

- **Friendliness**

Smiling, friendly tone, asking personal question etc. comes with the friendliness skill by which the listeners would be more engaged to the conversation. Not only for face-to-face conversation, but also this skill enhances the written communication where personalized messages can go a long way.

- **Confidence**

Confident and firm tone ensures for the listeners that the individual talking knows about the subject. For example, statements that are sounded like questions might not be taken as confident by others. However, the speaker must be careful in not sounding arrogant.

- **Empathy**

Empathy comes with respecting others' perspectives and viewpoints. This is developed by active listening in which not only the aspect of the talking is discussed, but also the feelings of other people.

- **Open-mindedness**

Being flexible and open-minded is highly important for starting and maintaining a proper conversation. Just getting the own message across may not be effective, but willing to get into dialogues and having honest conversations that boost productivity is required.

- **Feedback**

Both giving and receiving feedback are necessary for effective communication. Constructive feedback within the organizations assists a lot for the employees. The management should also be encouraging feedback from their employees.

Strategies to effective teamworking and group dynamics

The effective teams have some characteristics which make them effective, such as having common shared team goals and objectives. Also, communication plays a crucial role in maintaining the effectiveness of teamwork. Therefore, open, and clear communication strategies can be adopted by the team leader. Furthermore, it is also important that the diversity within the team is maintained by which different opinions and ideas are generated. Members within a team coming from divergent backgrounds can not only provide different viewpoints, but also bring diverse skills, expertise, and experience to the table. This enhances the team's capacity or capability in overall. It is also necessary that the team members trust each other,

otherwise they would not be comfortable in sharing their thoughts with each other. Thus, developing trustworthiness and mutual respect can be an important strategy. The team members are required to be engaged with different activities of the team. They should also be able to collaborate with each other despite their differences. Utilization of resources is also an important aspect of effective teamwork. Furthermore, an effective team demands good leadership by which the overall coordination and management of the team would be suited. Without good leadership, different challenges can arise such as delivery delays, work overload for specific members etc. However, common ownership observed within a team can be highly productive and successful. Also, the teams where goals and objectives are widely understood and joint responsibility in achieving the goals are seen, can be in line with the team effectiveness (What Constitutes Effective Team Communication After an Error? 2020).

Group dynamics is the concept of influences of dissimilar roles and behaviors observed on others within a team. Each of the team members comes with their individual skills and knowledge, which makes them appropriate in dissimilar roles within the team. Without identifying the roles of individual members, the team might not be successful in achieving its goals. Organizations want to have positive group dynamics rather than poor group dynamics where the positive refers to the effective teams where members are responsible, accountable, able to trust others and sharing goals etc. The negative group dynamics is where the work disruption can be observed due to individual behaviors and effective decisions are not taken (Dixon, 2012). Different strategies can also be followed to improve group dynamics for an organization. Along with the identification of individual roles within a group, it is also important to address their needs. Every member has their own needs and requirements which must be considered. Without addressing the dissimilar needs of the team members, they might lose motivation. Therefore, the leader must know his/her team properly. The leader should also enable a feedback process where the members can reflect on their conditions. In this way, most of the problems like collusions between members can be tackled effectively (Crick, 2014). Different team-building exercises can help the group to get to know each other and break down barriers. It is also necessary to not only define the individual roles, but also their responsibilities ahead. As per Belbin's team roles, nine dissimilar roles with their responsibilities are identified which can be used for developing and managing the group dynamics.



Belbin's team roles

Source: (Dunn, Doughty and Walker, 2012)

Poor communication in the workplace and how it can be improved

Poor communication within a workplace can develop frustration and confusion among the employees, by which the overall working environment becomes frictional and tense. Also, the staff members lack of motivation. Some general causes behind poor communication are non-clear objectives, poor leadership, workplace discrimination, demoralized employees, personal problems of individuals working etc. (Dulek, 2014). Workplace conflicts occurring among the employees or between the employees and management can be caused by different other reasons such as false impression, communication gap, non-responsiveness, adoption of distinctive styles of communication, technical issues, undefined communication system etc.

The ways to improve the condition of poor communication in the workplace are given here:

- **Establishing communication standards**

Communication standards by which the organization communicates internally or externally must be established on a solid foundation. The standards should follow the organizational vision, requirements, and structure.

- **Creating safe space**

It is necessary for the employees to comfortably share their opinions within a workplace. Thus, creating a safe communication environment on different levels is necessary to eradicate communication gaps and encourage employees to offer their ideas or report issues.

- **Developing consistency**

Consistent communication tends to be more effective than inconsistent ones which involve the utilization of consistent channels or mediums. Employees should have the right to know regarding big changes and sources for getting updates or announcements (Green, 2014).

- **Setting clear norms and expectations**

Proper communication norms and expectations must be set for the employees. Expected body language and other nuances can be communicated by which the overall customer service can be improved as well.

- **Seeking feedback**

Actively seeking feedback from employees is an effective way by which the leaders and management of an organization can increase employee engagement and motivation as they feel valued and respected. Employees have different inputs, and their feedback can help develop two-way communication.

- **Leveraging technology**

Modern technologies such as email, document sharing platforms etc. help in reducing costs and facilitate in having environmentally friendly business practices. Employees should be guided with where they can find their required information such as internal documents for different policies (Samuel and Matthew, 2021).

- **Breaking down silos**

Individuals who focus on their own roles, requirements, responsibilities, and objectives are not considered collaborative enough. Different individuals need to be part of the conversation to accomplish the big picture goals.

Conclusion

The report has discussed about the different models of communication such as linear model, Shannon-Weaver model and SMRC model. Different communication skills required in the workplace are also mentioned in the report. Also, strategies to follow to develop effective teamworking and group dynamics are focused. Lastly, the concept of poor organizational communication and the ways to improve poor communication are mentioned.

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