

BMSW4002

Effective Team Working and Communication

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1.0 Introduction

Throughout decades, communication has been an important aspect of human beings and has played a major role within the society and in the corporate world. Therefore, various forms of communication have to existence with the development of societal standards and technology.

Communication is the process of moving or sending a specific message from one place to another via communication channels. Communication is the exchanging of any information, feelings, or ideas between two or more people through a verbal or non-verbal medium (Luhmann, 1992). In a good communication, there needs to be at least one sender and receiver. Even though communication looks like a simple task on the surface, it is a more complex subject.

In this report we will be discussing about various models of communication and communication skills that are necessary to maintain a good communication. Thereafter, a set of real examples of poor communication and various suggestions on how communication can be improved are discussed.



2.0 Communication Models

2.1 Shannon Weaver Model

This is a linear communication model also known as the mathematical theory of communication that was introduced by Shannon (a mathematician) and Weaver (a scientist) in 1948. This model is considered the mother of all other models. The model is demonstrated in Figure 2.0 (In Appendix). The Shannon Weaver model was designed to encourage effective communication between sender and receiver. It also speaks about various factors that affect the channel known as “Noise”. (Li, 2007).

Concepts of the model

- Sender: The person who generates a specific message that needs to be communicated to the receiver.
- Encoder: Also known as the transmitter is the machine used by the sender to convert the message into binary codes.
- Channel: This is the medium that is used to transmit the message.
- Decoder: This is the machine that is used to decrypt the binary codes back to the message formerly sent by the sender.
- Receiver: The recipient of the message sent by the sender.
- Noise: Physical disturbances that can affect the clarity of the message sent by the sender to the receiver.

According to this model, the sender encodes the message and sends it to the receiver using a telephone or telegraph in a code format that only machines will understand. The coded message is then passed through a medium. At the receiver's end, the receiver then decodes the message before interpreting or understanding it. The Noise within a channel can create problems in the communication to an extent where the receiver will have difficulties in decoding (Shannon and Weaver Model of Communication - Businessstopia, n.d.).

2.2 Schramm Model

This is a communication model introduced by Wilbur Schramm in 1954. It is a circular model and proposes that communication happens in a circular nature. It breaks the traditional theoretical demonstration and involves a more practical way for communication (Bowman and Targowski, 1987). Figure 3.0 (In Appendix) demonstrates the Schramm model of communication.

According to this model, the sender encodes and sends a message to the receiver where the receiver will decode and interpret the message sent. After interpreting, the receiver will then encode a feedback message and send it to the sender who will recode and here the feedback response. Schramm believed that communication is incomplete if a feedback is not provided to the sender by the receiver.

According to the Schramm model, communication is not merely done to one way, but it is a two-way process or a two-way interaction between the sender and receiver (OSGOOD-SCHRAMM MODEL OF COMMUNICATION, n.d.).

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2.3 Berlo Model

Berlo's communication model which is also known as the SMCR model is a model that was developed by David Berlo in 1960 by using the Shannon Weaver model of communication. In this model, Berlo introduces four main components which are the Sender, Message, Channel and Receiver (Stead, 1972). Figure 1.0 (In the Appendix) shows the Berlo's model. The four components of the model can be described as follows.

Sender (S): This is the source or the origination of the message. This component is where the correct use of communication skills, right attitude, cultural diversity and understanding, and the knowledge is very useful.

Message (M): The message is the encrypted information that is provided by the sender. Factors such as the content, non-verbal elements that enhance the clarity of the message, treatment, structural integrity, and the code it is sent can influence on the quality of the message.

Channel (C): Channel is referred to as the medium that is used to transmit the information from the sender to the receiver. Even though with technical advances such as TV, broadcasting tools are found at present, in general we regard the five senses (hearing, seeing, touching, smelling, and tasting) as the channels of communication.

Receiver (R): The receiver is the final recipient of the message sourced by the sender. This is the end of the process and thus the receiver must have good listening skills to clearly get all the.

This model also focuses on encoding and decoding of messages sent by the sender and received by the receiver. This model believes that all the factors of each component must be in sync for the communication to be efficient and effective and to deliver it in the intended manner from sender to receiver (BERLO'S SMCR MODEL OF COMMUNICATION, n.d.).

3.0 Communication Skills

Communication is an important aspect for everyone in the modern world because it allows people to share thoughts and ideas as well as to interact with others. However, everything we communicate will not be effective due to various personal and environmental factors. Thus, communication skills and improving them are very important. Communication skills help to communicate more efficiently and effectively. A few communication skills that help in good communication are given below.

3.1 Non-verbal skills

Non-verbal skills are the communicational skills that do not involve the use of words. It is communicating with another party using only gestures or expressions that are often shown through body movements or facial expressions. Non-verbal communication is also often the eye contacts held while communicating and even the tone of speech. These are other aspects that add value and clarity to what is communicated.

Nonverbal communication is just as crucial as verbal communication when applying for a job or engaging in a conference. Our nonverbal communication abilities can make a constructive (or negative) impact. Arms crossed can appear defensive. Poor posture will give the impression that you are unprofessional. A downward focus or avoidance of eye contact will distract from your perceived confidence (Doyle, 2021).

3.2 Verbal skills

The degree to which a person can interpret words, phrases, written texts, verbs, adjectives, as well as comprehend concepts, create synonyms and antonyms, know the meaning and usage of words, full sentences with words missing depending on word sense, and have an analytical view of written speech is referred to as verbal skills. Verbal skills are partly inborn and are sensed in each person through the fluency of their mother tongue and the livelihood they spend.

Verbal communication skills assist a person to communicate with clarity because it helps to assemble and interpret the message in an understandable and meaningful way. (Chastain, 2013).

3.3 Written communication skills

Similar to verbal communication skills, writing skills also play an important role in communication. Written communication is the process of transmitting and conveying a specific message using written word. Good writing skills can come in handy when communicating especially in a formal surrounding because it allows communicating the message much more clearly and with a more structured manner than a verbal communication medium (Yate, 2021). Writing skills are essential when it comes to report writing, lettering for major contracts or very important work. Good writing skills are also important because they can help you express your knowledge and professionalism.

3.4 Empathy

Empathy is simply the ability or art of looking at the world through the eyes of another. It is the ability to understand other's feelings and actions and make sense as to why it might have been said or done (Empathy and Understanding Others - Improve Your Social Skills, n.d.).

Empathy is very important because it helps us to communicate in a way that others will understand us and will help us to make sense to what others are saying. It makes the interactions between colleagues and even customers easier and much more meaningful. In the customer service industry that I am employed in, it is very important to ensure that I have empathy while communicating because customers who are an important stakeholder will be much more satisfied if I use empathy as a skill in communication. It will also help to build a good image about myself as well as the company I work in.

3.5 Active listening

With the business of modern life, listening to others have been limited because people are very busy doing multiple tasks at the same time. Due to these stressful workaholic behaviours, people lack interpersonal skills and having a good communication have become very difficult. Thus, many people have had difficulties in maintaining active listening skills. Active listening is in simple terms listening with undivided attention to what is being said rather than passively hearing. It is about giving your full concentration to listen, understand and interpret what is

been said or delivered by the speaker. It involves listening with all the senses and giving the fullest attention.

According to scientific investigations and research, it is proven that people tend to remember and understand what they hear than what they read or write. Apart from that, active listening makes it easier to interpret the message in an appropriate way and there is less chance for misunderstandings and all it allows the receiver to provide appropriate responses and feedbacks on a verbal platform (Active Listening | Skills You Need, 2021).

4.0 Maria and Pedro case study

The Maria and Pedro case study consists of Pedro who works at a construction site and his wife. The case study focuses on one of their phone calls where Maria asked him to bring chicken on his way home which he understood as meet her in the kitchen when he gets home. Here it is clear that there is a misunderstanding and lack of clarity in the communication because Pedro has misunderstood what Maria told him over the phone.

Because they followed the Shannon and Weaver model where there was noise in the transmission due to the noise created at the construction site and their lack of using communication skills. This communication process would have been more successful if they had used the Schramm's model where Pedro would have given a feedback or response to what Maria had told him. If he asked her to repeat herself or confirmed the message by repeating it, this situation would not have occurred. Apart from that Maria could have used written communication skills and sent him a text and used Schramm's model to get a confirmation that Pedro understood what she said. Thus, it is clear why it is important to select the model and skills appropriately according to the situational factors.

5.0 Examples of poor communication

Poor communication is the discrepancy or misinterpretation that can occur when a message is communicated. This can occur at the senders or the receivers end and can create misunderstandings and other problems in the communication channel (How to Address Poor Communication in the Workplace, n.d.). There are various situations where poor communication can be seen that I have personally come across are as follows.

The most seen example of poor communication is the misunderstanding or unconfirmed understanding. In workplaces, especially in the customer service sector I work in, there do various problems that occur due to unconfirmed understandings and misunderstanding that

has brought in negative consequences. Another problem is the incorrect use of body language used by various individuals within the organization. For example, if you do not use polite body language when dealing with customers, they will create a negative feeling towards the organization.

Another example of poor communication is failing to listen. When the workforce fails to listen to other colleagues and even the management, there is going to be poor communication and failure. Another thing is, as a person who work with customers daily, not listening to the customers' feedbacks can also be an example for poor communication.

Another example that I have personally experienced regarding poor communication is the lack of knowledge about what you communicate. I have seen at my workplace, instances where my colleagues have had issues with answering the questions asked by customers and even top management. This can lead to dissatisfaction of the receiver which is an example for poor communication.

6.0 Suggestions to improve communication.

It is important to create and maintain good communication practices in a workplace to have a clear and understandable communication channel. For this, there are various measures that can be followed which are as follows.

- Firstly, it is important to listen carefully and clearly to what the sender is saying. If you do not understand the first-time round, ask them again and clear out any doubts before formulating a response. Another thing is to focus on one communication process first and give undivided interest to it (Patel, 2019).
- Use appropriate body language. Ensure that you not only communicate properly with your words, but also your hands, eyes etc. that you use to communicate should be used properly (10 Ways to Improve Your Communication Skills, 2015).

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Appendix

Case Study Reflection

1. The professor and the village people case study

This case study includes an incident between an English professor and people of a village. According to the information, he had less to no communication or relationship with the villagers because they were not as educated as he was. However, one day his house was on fire and he ran to the village seeking for help and screamed in very formal English which the villagers did not understand thus did not volunteer to help. The reason here was that the villagers were not as educated as the professor and therefore could not understand his formal and advanced words. It was a problem of understanding what is being communicated from one to another. Here what the professor should have done is used English in a much more beginners' level so that the villagers could understand what he said. The Berlo's model was used here and that is why the communication was incomplete. If the sender (professor) used proper communication skills and transmitted the correct content in a proper structure to the receiver (villagers), then the villagers would have understood him and helped him save his house.

2. Day with the chief case study

This case study is about Mark who is rewarded a chance to visit the CEO and parent company in California since he is the top salesman of a computer manufacturing firm in London. Although he is excited about the visit, he is nervous about meeting the CEO because rumours say that she is a rude person. However, he meets the CEO who turns out to not be what he had heard about her. So, he gets comfortable while talking to her and talks about how things could change in London and that wages could be raised. This created a bad environment as the CEO asked him to leave. According to the incident, Mark should have not spoken about the managerial and financial aspects and changes that should occur since the organization has a horizontal power and authority line. But the main issue here was the changes that happened in his nonverbal communication methods. As he was more comfortable, he loosened his tie and crossed his legs which are very unprofessional since Mrs Brown is the CEO of the organization. This is what led to the dissatisfaction of Mrs Brown. What is should have done is to maintain his professionalism throughout the meeting and used proper body language and formalities.