

Effective Team Working & Communication

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Introduction

Communication can be termed as a procedure by which any person can convey information, feeling, facts and such aspects to another person or a group of persons. In other words, it is the impartment or exchange of information with the aid of writing, speaking or by another medium. Every communication consists of a sender, a message and a recipient. Communication is also used in organisations to facilitate operational activities (Douglas *et al*, 2018). “Workplace communication” is vital in the execution of the activities in the company and for achieving the company goals. In this report, in-class learning and theories of communication will be illustrated. The issue related to communication in the workplace and the measures to improve the same will also be emphasized in this study.

In-class learning on communication

We have conducted a group discussion in my friend’s house about communication and its various aspects. From the conducted group discussion, I have realised that communication is much more important in our daily lives and in the workplace than we can imagine. Without communication, not a single task can be carried out in this world. In the academic context, communication is vital. It benefits both the teacher and the student. I have realised that communication makes learning much easier and helps the academicians to achieve their objectives. Communication creates bonding between the teacher and the students. It strengthens the trust between the parties and also helps in preventing or resolving any personal or professional conflicts. With the help of effective communication, the engagement in any activity increases and becomes livelier.

I have learnt from the group discussion that communication helps in the enhancement of productivity in the workplace, as employees can convey their perspectives, information and receive healthy feedback by the means of effective communication. Good communication helps people who are working solo to a great extent. The people who are working solo have to report to their higher authority. This would not be possible without communication. Besides, communication facilitates teamwork to a great extent. In teamwork, employees have to work towards a collective goal. The employees must communicate with the other employees of the team, as lack of communication will not give the desired results. The team members have to help each other and give healthy feedback with the help of communication. The employees can share their opinions, thought or feeling in the workplace by good communication. This increases the

motivation of the employees as the employees feel that their opinions are counted and they are listened to.

Analysis of some communication-related issues in the workplace

I was previously working at Marshfield Bakery. The working culture was not that healthy in that organisation. There were many employees who were favoured by the manager of that company. I was not one of them. I have tried to communicate with the manager and give some feedback about some of the employees who were not punctual in their daily routine. The manager of the organisation commanded them to act according to the decorum of the company. However, after a few days, the employees again started acting in a lethargic manner (Mikkola and Valo, 2019). There was not an effective means of communicating with the owner of the company and this has lead to many other issues including this one. In Marshfield Bakery, there was a lack of communication between the team members. One of the reasons for this is interpersonal differences. This company requires good communication measures as it is a bakery company and every process in the organisation is interrelated.

I had noticed that the lack of effective communication in the workplace had begun affecting the quality of bread and cakes that this company manufactures. The customers do not prefer to buy our products, as the quality of our products was degrading with the passage of time. I have seen many quarrels and physical aggression in the workplace, which is not at all tolerable in any organisation. However, our management of this company was not getting information about workplace culture. This was again due to the lack of proper communication between the management and the employees. Once a big fight took place among three employees and this was due to the lack of effective communication. The fight resulted in a serious physical injury of an employee, who was involved in that fight. Many accidents have also been reported in the organisation, as there was no proper communication among the team members. The personal differences and lack of communication were reflecting in the behaviour of the employees and everyone was getting irritated in small matters. The employees of the finance department were looting money and other valuable items. Lack of communication among the various departments was enabling them to steal the assets of the company. The objectives of the company were also not being met within the stipulated time due to lack of effective communication.

Theoretical underpinnings and practical implication

“Weber’s Classic organisational theory of fixed structures”

Max Weber is an icon in workplace communicational context and this theory is developed by him. This theory has given meaning to the organisational communication process. It has also defined the organisational structure. This theory states that organisations have responsibilities and roles that are defined by the higher authority. Hence, communication is clear, structured and hierarchical.

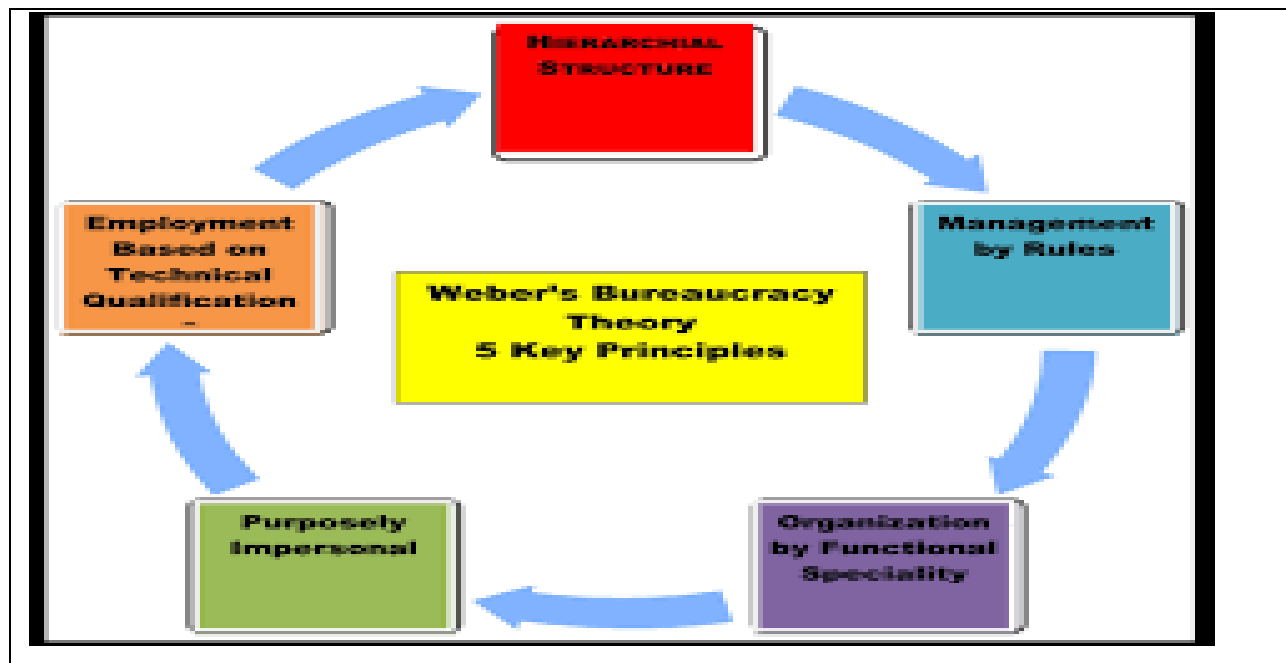


Diagram 1: “Weber’s Classic organisational theory of fixed structures”

(Source: Vuori *et al*, 2020)

In this context, there seems no confusion in the information or messages that are sent from the top of the hierarchy. Marshfield Bakery lacks in this context and there is no proper means of communication from the top authority or from the employees to the management. The illegal activities that were conducted in the organisation should have been eliminated if proper means of communication was implemented in Marshfield bakery. The disputes of conflicts in the organisation would also have been resolved in a peaceful and friendly manner in this the communication strategies involved Weber’s Theory,

“Tomkins and Cheney’s Organisational Control Theory”

This theory can be considered as an extension of the above theory of Weber. This theory states that simple, bureaucratic, technical and conservative are the four elements that are required to

control and communicate effectively within the organisation. The management can also exercise its power on the subordinates due to the implication of this theory. Marshfield Bakery needed this theory to be implicated in the organisation. This aspect would have facilitated the execution of managerial orders in a transparent way. All the employees in the organisation would have been bounded by the company's decorum and this would have enabled a healthy and productive work culture within the organisation. The quality of the products would be enhanced to a higher degree and this would generate huge revenue for the organisation. The antisocial activities would have been promptly reported to the management and strict measures would have been introduced for this kind of behaviour. This would have saved the costly tools of the company and the financial fraud will also have been caught in no time.

Belbin's Team Roles Theory

This theory was developed by Meredith Belbin in 1981. It is the most applicable tool for facilitating team building and working collaboratively. The role of the team members was illustrated to predict and define the potential success that management team holds. It has been stated in this theory that the strongest teams have various personality types and diversity is reflected in the teams. When this theory is used wisely, it can give extraordinary results for the team and the organisation. Belbin illustrated that a team role as "a tendency to behave, contribute and interrelate with others in a particular way." there are total nine roles and the roles are further divided into three sub-sections such as "action-oriented roles", "people-oriented roles" and cerebral roles (LI *et al*, 2018).



Diagram 2: Belbin's Team Role

(Source: Karabeleski and Avdic, 2018)

The team roles reflect a behaviour pattern that differentiates a person's behaviour with another person's behaviour. This approach facilitates the accessibility of self-knowledge and the members can adjust their personal behaviour according to the requirements of the situation. The team role of the individuals is established by conducting "self-perception inventory". It includes a set of questions to manifest the most preferred manner of working in a team. This aspect would have been beneficiary in the context of Marshfield Bakery, and the motivational quotient of the employees would have been much higher. This would have ignited the dedication in their work. Illegal and lethargic activities would also have been dissolved by the implication of this theory. The revenue figures would have been increased with more dedication and efficiency. When the organisation would have maintained the nine-team roles of this theory, all the employees would have performed their job role with utmost responsibility and dedication. The whole communication process of the company would have been channelized in a proper and effective way.

Suggestion on improvement

The measures that should be taken to improve team building and communication in Marshfield bakery are as follows:

- ***To have an open-door policy-*** An open-door policy is helpful for the employees, as anyone can ask about their doubts and queries provide opinions and innovative ideas at any time. It helps to build trust among the employees working together. The elimination of physical barriers will create mutual trust and this will facilitate the exchange of information and ideas between them (Lancaster, 2019). The problems arising in the organisation can be resolved instantly by this measure. The employees could have taken steps when they saw that immoral and illegal activities were being carried out in the organisation.
- ***The employees should be open-minded to healthy feedbacks-*** “Constructive criticism” is helpful for the employees as the employees of this company are provided with healthy and positive feedback and suggestions. They can work to improve their shortcomings and this will enhance the efficiency of the employee (Foltz, 2018). Since, the employee is part of a team and an organisation; this aspect will contribute to the development of many attributes within the organisation and help in achieving organisational objectives.
- ***The employees should be clear about their tasks and know their responsibility-*** An assignment of Marshfield bakery cannot be completed if employees are not sure about their responsibilities. The manger should ascertain that all the employees are aware of the projects’ scope and the expectations of each member. The manager should communicate regularly with the employees to check their progress and address any queries or issue that they are facing. This will enhance workplace communication and increase this company’s productivity.
- ***Communication training:*** This measure can highly impact in enhancing the group communication. It does not only cover “basic conversational skills” but also develops business communication skills, presentation skill and managerial skills (Curran, 2018). The employees of Marshfield Bakery can develop these skills and help in upgrading their company’s reputation. This will lead to the generation of more revenue for the company. The employees can communicate more effectively with each other. This will develop good professional bonding between the team members.

- ***Understanding issues related to diversity:*** When people from different ideologies, races, languages and nationalities work in a collaborative team, unique and effective ideas are bound to be evolved. Aspects of diversity such as dialects, accents and “cultural colloquialisms” can hamper communication in many instances. In order to combat these hindrances, the manager must encourage equality and diversity concepts in the organisation (Wiltshire *et al*, 2018). He ought to brainstorm the employees regarding this matter. This will enhance team collaboration in Marshfield bakery and the cultural and personal differences will be diminished to a great extent.

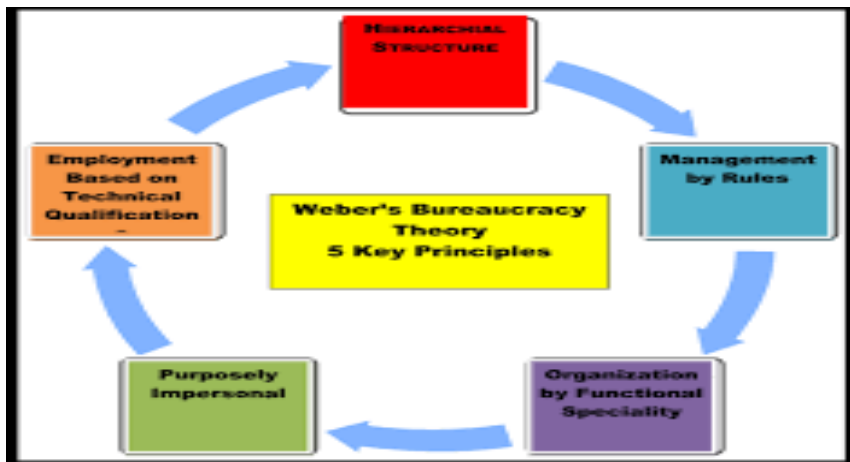
Conclusion

This report lays emphasis on the meaning of communication and its implementation in the workplace, to contribute to the organisational aspects. The learning that the student has gathered from the group discussion has also been portrayed in details in this report. A company named Marshfield bakery has been taken as a suitable example to demonstrate the ill effects of lack of effective team collaboration and organisational communication. Some theories have also been illustrated in this context. The effective implementation of these theories and some stated suggestions can develop the workplace communication of this company and will enhance team collaboration to achieve collective goals in this company. Hence, it can be concluded that workplace communication plays a vital role in the upliftment of the employees’ morale and generate higher amounts of revenue for the company.

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Appendix [snippets of some in-class activity]



Key Roles in Team Building



Open Communication

- ✓ Respect for individual differences
- ✓ Open communication environment among team members

Clear Roles & Responsibility

- ✓ Rapid response to the team's problems
- ✓ Effective management to change in the internal and external environment