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Assignment title: Based as much as possible on your own / or friends real life experiences discuss how well employers perform at communicating. Using your own findings and what you know from theory, reach some firm conclusions as to how workplace communication and performance of employers can be improved.

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Table of contents

SL no	Contents	Page no
1	Introduction	3
2	Findings of the report	3-7
(a)	Communication	3
(b)	Different kinds of communication	3
(c)	Models of communication	4
(d)	Work place communication styles	4
(e)	Work place communication	4
(f)	A case study	5
(g)	What went wrong?	6
(h)	Communication needs to be addressed at work place	6
(i)	Things need to improve	6
(j)	How improvements can improve performance	7
3	Recommendations	7
4	Conclusion	7
5	References	8

Communication is one of the most important tools in succeeding both in personal and professional life. It paves the way to interact with people on different levels, from base level employees to executive level ones. This report will discourse thoughtful ideas or concepts of communication from an employer's point of view as well as employees' feelings of having such communication methods, models or styles. It will also elaborate on how communication performance of workplace can be upgraded and the potential impact of upgraded communication on employees and others.

To illustrate the theories of communication into practice, there will be some practical examples and a case study of work place communication. As I have been working as a team leader in a day care centre, namely Apasen, for learning disabilities as well as other disabled people for twelve years, I would like to investigate my knowledge and experiences in it. For this report, my line managers, senior managers and executive officers' involvements of communication with our team over the period will be reflected.

Findings of the Report:

Communication:

According to Maund, Schriek and Tinkler, (2017), Communication is not only talking but also transmitting or disseminating the underpinning information between people to reach in a common understanding. The procedure of communication demands a minimum two people (to work as sender or encoder and a receiver or decoder) to achieve its goal through using different means such as spoken, written, non-verbal or electronic.

Different kinds of communication:

Productive communication happens when all aspects of communication play around through body languages which is non-verbal behaviour, usage of voice techniques or tones which are para-linguistic cues or behaviours and the words people use face-to-face or written which are forms of verbal communication. The ongoing communication entirely depend upon the encoding and decoding of information where encoding encompasses intended outcomes, impressions and messages from the context of communication and decoding messages are subject to the interpretation of non-verbal behaviour, learning, contexts, channels and words used (as per Morgan, 2016). For example, health and social care employers communicate to their employees, stakeholders and service users by using written form of verbal communication such as emails or letters as well as face-to-face verbal communication such as interviews and meetings. However, there are some exceptional circumstances where managers use Makaton (British Sign language) as a non-verbal form of communication to communicate to their colleagues.

For instance, there was a review and planning meeting for one of our service users where my manager used Makaton (form of a non-verbal communication) to talk to the social worker. Due to his sensory loss and physical disability, his spoken communication was impaired which had been informed well before the meeting. This is one of the prominent examples that not all types of communication are appropriate for all people due to the barriers they face in real life situations (Calpin et al, 2014).

Active listening and assertiveness are considered as significant communication skills because both play an active role in communication to be understood easily. Even though active listening and hearing are not necessarily the same due to the nature of the effort and attention span. Therefore, Maund, Schriek, and Tinkler, (2017), emphasised on SOLAR listening strategies to make it fruitful (S= square O=open L=learn E=eye contact R=relax).

Models of communication:

Numerous communication models have been used in recent times regarding the nature of the service and size of the team. According to Windover et al, 2014, REDE model of communication emphasises on “teaching relationship-centred health care communication” where the establishment of relationship depends on building rapport, provoking concerns, negotiating and setting agenda with mutual collaboration. The development of relationship requires detecting problems and physical exams and the engagement of relationship relies on educating and shared decision making by both parties.

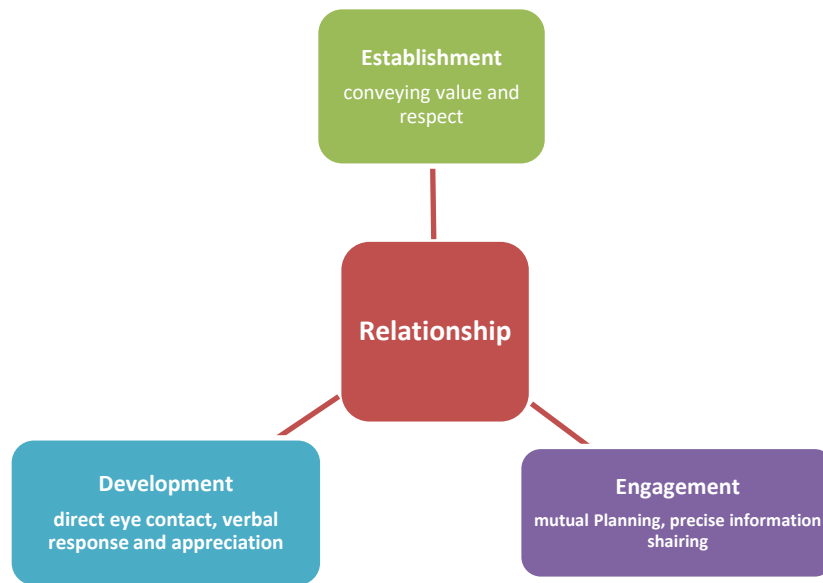


Figure 1: REDE model of communication

Even though the Association of Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International (2015) standards highlights on oral and written form of communication, modern employers make proper use of illustrations and electronic form of communication. When dealing with employees or potential employees, the contemporary employers associate communication skills not only with oral communication or written reports but also with examining reckonable data, having practical knowledge of a job role, decision making and problem solving (Cofelt, Baker and Corey, 2016). Moreover, Conrad and Newbury (2011) highlight that the oral communication skills included total seven elements of communication for both employers and employees: (a) active listening (b) building rapport (c) showing emotional self-control (d) building trust (e) deal with different background (f) showing respect (g) all related skills for trust building.

Work place communication styles:

In the health and social care sector, communication plays a vigorous role, more than in any other sector due to the nature of the service and involvement of vulnerable of people. As per Calpin et al, (2014), professionals share information about adjustments of company's policy on various matters to their key employees in a conference (verbal briefing) which are to be implemented and shared to workers and service users through myriads of methods such as emails or newsletters. To make the information interesting, simple, easy-to-read and written messages are produced with visual illustrations or graphical presentation for service users. Therefore, Argyle's cycle of communication demands six stages of message sharing for the

people of health and social care and hospital environment where messages need to be understood by both parties.

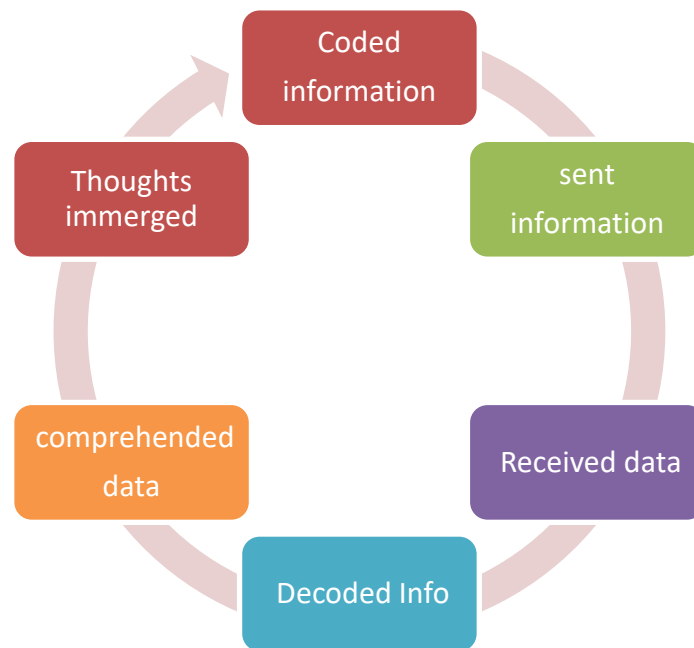


Figure 2: Argyle's communication cycle of data share

A case study:

Michael and Nasima were escort staff for our day centre setting for Learning disabilities and other disabled service users. Both members of staff were supposed to start pick up with van driver Peter at 8 am on Tuesday from Derby Road, West Croydon. Nasima was on time for the shift however, Michael did not turn up on time.

After waiting for Peter and Michael, Nasima made a phone call to Team Leader, Fatema at 8.15 to find out about the situation. Fatema made a phone call to Michael to investigate his lateness however, he did not answer the phone call. Fatema then informed the other Team Leader, Rofi to consider the matter.

Rofi called Peter and found out that Michael instructed him to go to South Croydon to pick him up instead of Derby Road, West Croydon without informing Nasima and the team leaders.

Michael picked one of the service users who was meant to be absent for the day without informing his parents, even though employees were told of his absence on the WhatsApp group chat. He picked up Nasima at 9:20 from Derby road instead of at 8 am, then started pick up for rest of the service users. Eventually he was running late for one hour and a half. All the parents and carers were extremely unhappy due to lateness.

Later, Nasima informed Fatema that Michael was busy with his phone and was frustrated about council penalty he was given.

What went wrong?

Verbal but written form of communication was made (Brindley & Raynolds, 2011) by the employer not to pick one of the service users up on Tuesday morning. Michael was late for 45 mins on Tuesday morning however, did not inform team leaders which was lack of communication from his part. However, employer role of communication was active at that point to some extent. Nonetheless, to make the communication fruitful and effective (Hussain, Z. 2013), the team leaders could have made another phone call to Michael to make sure the service was running smoothly.

Nevertheless, as an employer providing services for vulnerable people should have highly trained and efficient staff members to meet the needs of the service users (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009). Michael was to send for professional communication training to avoid any hurdles in providing the services. Because effective communication and relevant training arrangements from employer's perspective not only teach employees but also inspire them to change the company positively (Hussain, Z. 2013).

Even though both team leaders tried to contact him on the spot to rectify the problem, it was employer's responsibilities to communicate to Michael using mobile phones appropriately according to policy and procedure of the company or to take disciplinary action against him.

It was line manager's responsibility to communicate effectively to maintain professional performance at the standard level. Even though Michael had fallen below the professional standard in communication and other issues, he had personal issues as barriers of communication (Calpin et al, 2014). However, employers should implement the systems to overcome barriers.

Communication needs to be addressed at work place:

Work place communication is defined as gathering and transmitting appropriate data about the company and its modifications within the workforce as per (Hussain, Z, 2013). As a team leader, I can address our organizational existing communication systems and practices are very well-functioned, flawed and fit for the purpose for all professionals like Social Workers, District Nurses, Occupational Therapists, stakeholders and GPs etc. However, inhouse communication systems were not effective enough before. They tended to communicate in an oral form rather than written form with staff members in day to day dealings when I was working with my previous line manager. However, my new line manager is working very hard to change current mal-practices. He addresses all risen complaints effectively, endorses all new recommendations and proposals of service users with key staff members through verbal communications and encouraging colleagues to shares issues (Brindley & Raynolds, 2011) like, weekly strategy and planning meeting and monthly team meeting.

Things need to improve:

Apasen workers as well as executives are to address on all communication skills through carrying out all necessary inhouse steps like inductions, supervisions and appraisals. Also bearing in mind that written form of communication drives individuals to think more, refine their thoughts, promote self-enrichment and allow more time to express things interestingly (Berger & Lyenger, 2013).

All employers including Apasen should overcome all barriers of communications to improve communication practices efficiently such as physical barriers like disability, language barriers, physiological barriers like eye sight, cultural, personal and professional barriers, lack of motivation with incentives, lack of common experience, generation gaps, ambiguity, informational overload and jumping to conclusions etc. (Calpin et al, 2014).

How improvements can improve performance:

I believe that disability organizations such as Apasen can improve their performance by encouraging staff members to discourse their views openly, encouraging employees to use all communication tools, channels and systems (Berger & Iyenger, 2013). like telephone systems or electronic communication systems effectively and monitor them regularly.

The improvement in communication by my new manager has been driving the organisation in a positive way to improve performance. For instance, employees share a common vision to accomplish; they feel secure with their job than before therefore providing better commitment and trust; and they have increased partnership work by putting input into the content (Hussain, Z, 2013).

Recommendations:

Based on a case study and experiences I stood back and reflected (Morgan, 2016) to endorse some recommendations.

- To provide better interpretation and shared understanding, face-to-face verbal communication as well as written communication can be taken as complete form of communication (Morgan, 2016).
- To overcome communication barriers employers can follow complaint and compliment procedures strictly, they can have feedback from staff members and analyse the feedbacks critically to improve the services.
- They can arrange seminars, workshop and training for effective communication where they can talk face to face and see body languages.
- In Health and social care settings like Apasen, employers should endorse person-centred communication schemes by familiarising its own communication methods and styles.

Conclusion:

Personal experiences and a case study analysis have given vibrant but strong conclusions of this report. Whether or not a company in Health and Social care or any other sector is successful depend upon addressing its communication with great attention and its consequences upon culture (Brindley & Raynolds, 2011). Regardless of communication methods, styles, forms or channels, communication skills of our disability organizations' employers are at utmost level to improve tremendously to reach the ladder of the success and top standard. Because, the vulnerability of the life-long disable people and their families and employees of this sector are immensely affected by the communication skills of the employers.

Employers must ensure that the application of the standards of communication and development of current arrangements are always there to encourage effective communication through creating a community (Hussain, Z, 2013).

Employers must ensure staff members can use right communication channels or fit for the purpose communication. For example, depending on the situation, some communication should be done face-to-face and some should be done through emails or letters to the point with proper greetings/ formal communication (Berger & Iyenger, 2013).

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