

University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Effective Team Working and Communication BMSW4002

Models of Communication and Communication Skills

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INTRODUCTION

Communication is a complex process that a person must master in order to function in everyday life. Is an essential skill that we cannot be without in our daily lives and workplaces as it helps people to exchange information, opinions and feelings and it brings us closer to each other. Maund (2017) refers to communication as being the exchange of thoughts, information, or ideas that leads to mutual understanding between two or more people.

Nowadays technology is used more when communicating and plays an important role in the way people communicate. People use more social media, phones, emails, and other tools to send their message to others, it is still done the same way between two or more persons but the messages or the information can sometimes still be lost on the way or misinterpreted. So, in order to be understood, different models of communications can be considered to help people send their message across properly.

The aim of this report is to look at different models of communication that together with the right communication skills will help a person to understand how to transfer a message across and how to receive and transmit information. I would also examine communication skills and poor communication in my workplace.

MODELS OF COMMUNICATION

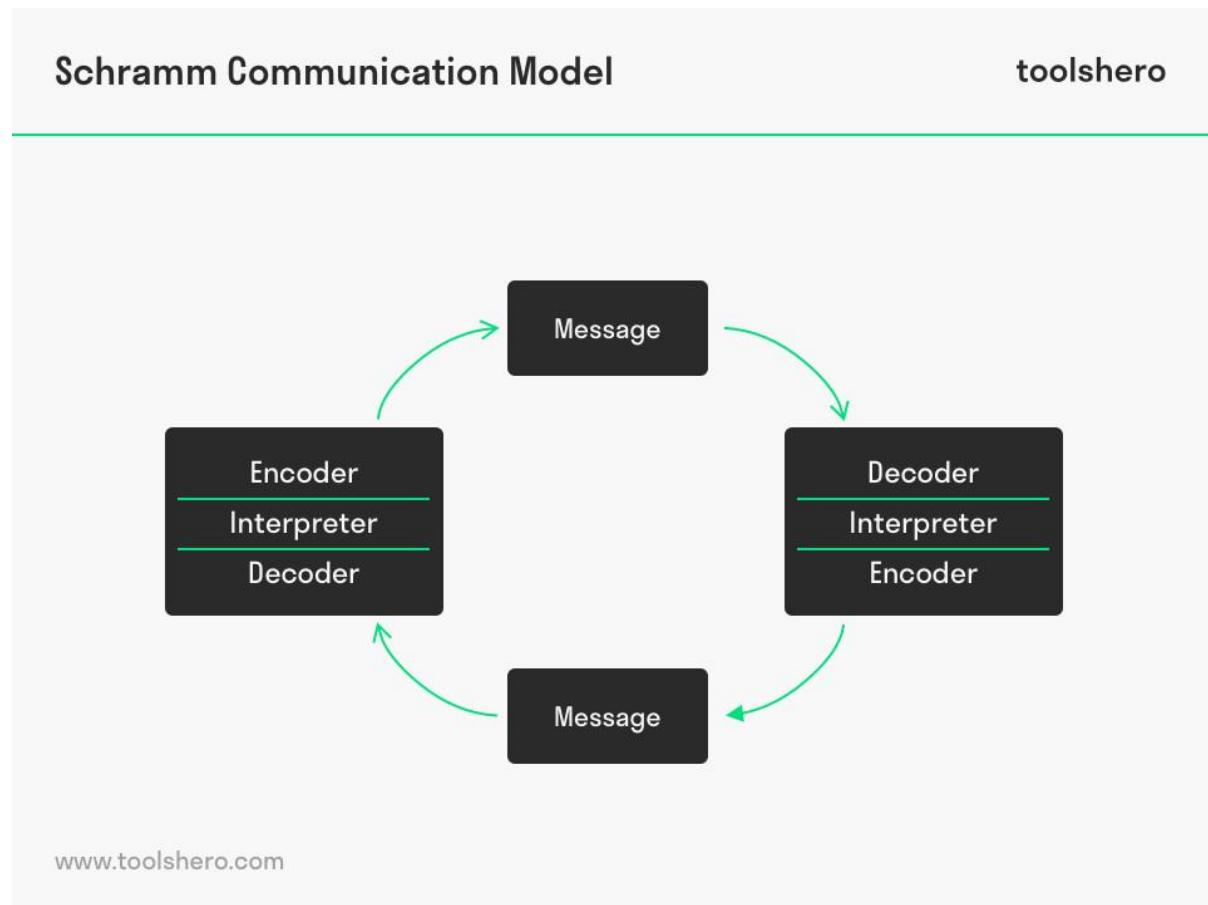
Communication involves more than just the transferring of information and has a sender, a message and the receiver. The sender encodes the idea before deciding how to communicate it, which could be through media, writing, speaking, or non-verbally. The communication must be decoded and understood correctly by the receiver; otherwise, problems may arise (Maund, 2017).

Effective communication can be achieved by using any of the following three models of communication:

Schramm model of communication

Two people transmit and receive a message in a circular communication system, with the message travelling between them. Is very common, and Wilbur Schramm proposed it in 1954. Because of noise, ideas, attitudes, and cultural beliefs, a lot of meaning might be lost during the process. The sender and the receiver need to transmit a clear message (encode it), use their talents to decode the message such that it makes good sense (otherwise it is useless),

and then interpret the message to understand its meaning. The sender must also get feedback for the message to be effectively completed (Kapur, 2020).



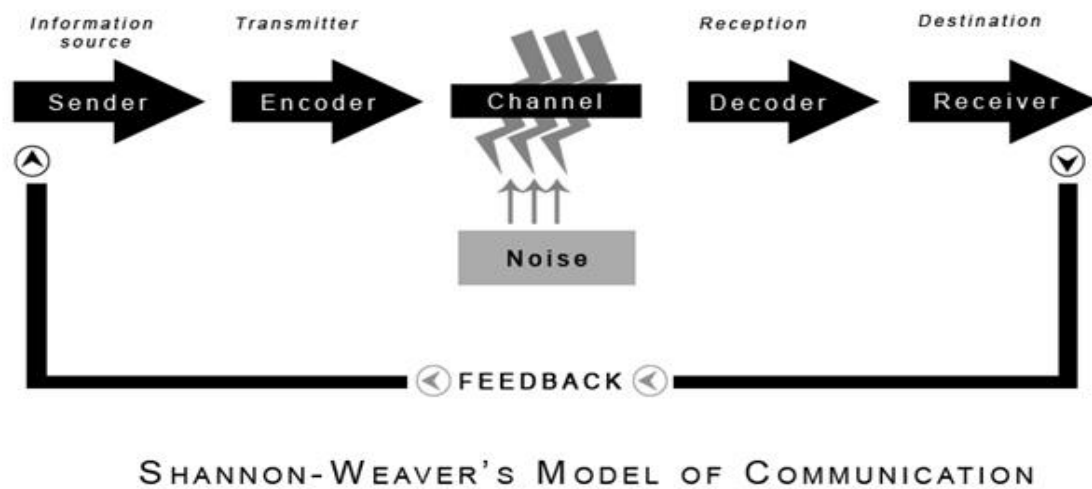
(Source: www.toolshero.com/schramm-communication-model, 2019).

An example to understand the use of this model is Billy and his servant, where Billy asks for a hot drink because he had a sore throat and instead of getting his hot chocolate, the servant gave him warm water. From where the servant is coming from is ok to have warm water with a sore throat and this caused for him to misunderstand the message as this is a practice in his culture. The cause for this message being misinterpreted is the servant's cultural background.

Shannon and Weaver model of communication

Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver, a mathematician and a physicist, created the model in 1948 with the goal of assisting technical communication at the time. Later, it was modified to assist with all forms of communication. The transmitter encodes a message and sends it through a channel to the recipient. Physical noise is present on the channel, which can sometimes interfere with the way the message is delivered. After the message goes across

the channel, the receiver interprets it to ensure that he understands it and offer feedback to confirm that the message got there fully (Kapur, 2020).



Source: (CommunicationTheory.org, 2010)

According to Richard (2013) there is some criticism around Shannon and Weaver 's model of communication stating that there are challenges that need to be considered like:

- the fact that communication is not a one-way process,
- that it is more effective in person-to-person communication than group communication,
- that the sender is more important than the receiver, and that feedback is less important. Although if the noise is understood properly, it will help solve the communication problems, he adds.

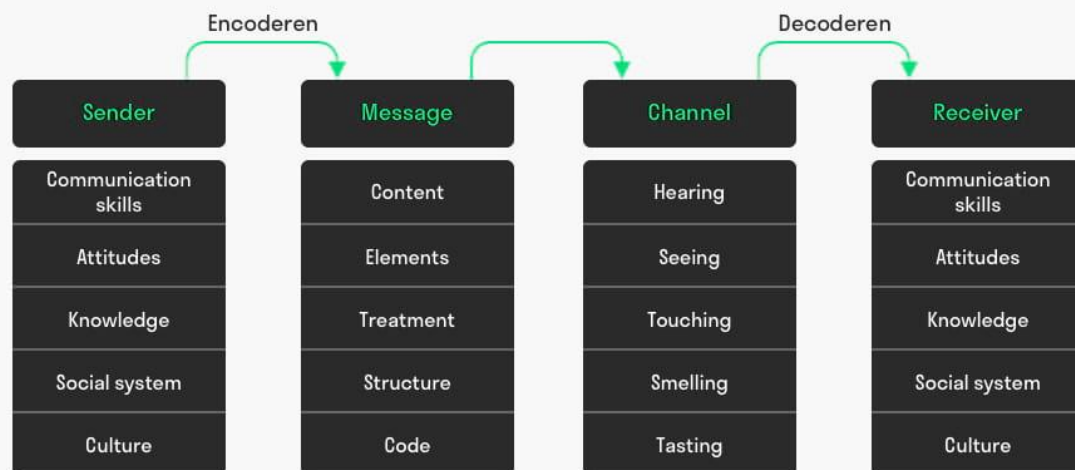
A good example is the case study of Maria and Pedro 's telephone conversation. Pedro was confused because he thought Maria had told him to buy a chicken on his way home from work. Shannon and Weaver's model of communication suggests that noise from Pedro's work interfered with his hearing and made it difficult for him to understand the actual message which was to meet Maria in the Kitchen when he gets home. He did not confirm if it was clear, so the feedback was also missing. So, if feedback had been offered, this may have been prevented.

David Berlo's model of communication

In 1960, David Berlo created the SMCR (Source, Message, Channel, and Receiver) abbreviation, which represents the four key components of the communication process, each of these four parts are influenced by specific factors (Janse, 2018).

Janse, (2018) explains that before reaching the recipient, the message (what needs to be sent) starts from a sender and travels through a channel (audience). The message's channel is the dimension through which it flows, and it might be auditory or visual, face to face, radio, television, or the internet. To get across the channel, the message must also be encoded, or put into words, graphics, or music. The receiver then decodes it to understand the meaning of it. Communication skills such as reading, speaking, and listening, influence the source or the sender and the message will be communicated effectively but only if these skills are accurate. At the same time the sender's attitudes can impact the message. The sender's ability to convey the message is influenced by the social system, which includes faith, beliefs, and values.

The message is influenced by some other factors like the content, the way is being transferred, nonverbal signals like facial expression and body language, and gestures. Communication skills, attitudes, information, social system, and culture all have an impact on the recipient; however, they must be quite similar.



www.toolshero.com

(Source: www.toolshero.com, (2018) *Berlo's SMCR Model of Communication*)

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Verbal communication

According to Maund (2017) verbal communication is the use of words to share information through speaking or writing adding that when we communicate, the words we use are key, which is why we require specific language abilities in order to transmit clear signals and understand what others are saying to us.

We communicate verbally in the workplace by giving and receiving instructions and information, making phone calls, participating in group discussions, and delivering reports. Some of the key things to look out for in order to communicate effectively is by showing sincerity and not pretend to be someone you are not, use simple language, show empathy and be nice, relax and maintain eye contact.

Writing effectively is the result of a person first figuring out who you're writing for and what their needs are. Long sentences are difficult to read, so keep them short. The next step is to

go over the entire text once more to make sure there are no errors (MindTools Videos, 2018).

Nonverbal communication

Refers to all the ways we communicate without using words. Body language refers to how we communicate with our complete body, including gestures, signs, signals, eye contact, emotions, tone of voice, and even how we dress. Body language communicates in a variety of ways; it can repeat, dispute, substitute for, or add to the definition of a message that was already sent verbally. Nonverbal communication is the main way that we use to convey our feelings and attitudes, and it has a significant impact on how others interpret what we're saying (Maund, 2017).

Listening

Maund, (2017) explains that due to the diversity and the setting in which we work, many people do not listen. In any business, being a good listener and communicator is critical, and we must improve our listening skills in order to do so. He adds that we don't listen for a variety of reasons like:

- external noise such as a phone ringing, background conversation, language differences, and level of technology communication.
- internal noise — when doing something, you should not listen to others around you.
- failing to pay attention and actively listen.
- our attitudes — excuses or refusal ("I don't need to hear that.")

Being an active listener, people should make some effort to understand what someone is saying to you and the whole idea they are expressing, pay close attention, and avoid being distracted by noise to become bored and try to focus more. Hearing and listening are sometimes misunderstood, but they are not the same thing. Hearing is the natural way to perceive noises, while listening is the way we understand verbal and nonverbal messages. This being a reason why listening impacting on our life and productivity.

Types of listening include *informational* – listening to get knowledge; *critical* – listening to decide; and *empathic* – being able to understand and put yourself in someone else's shoes. In the end motivation plays an important role when listening. A person must be motivated to listen not only for own goals but also for the speaker's motivation, paying attention to the speaker and engaging in dialogue by avoiding interrupting him or oneself.

Examples of Poor Communication in the Workplace

1. My workplace communication is mostly face to face, I use email sometimes to send messages to the office or my manager but mostly the phone. There are a lot of issues because working in a construction site there are lots of people from different cultures that speak different languages too and we have in common the work and English language. Sometimes I struggle to understand my manager because he is from Scotland and has a different accent when speaking English. And for example, when he gives instructions, he speaks fast as well, and I can't understand him, and it confuses me. One day he sent me to another site to bring a box of tools from the delivery that just came that day and I came back with just one tool because that is what I thought I heard from him. My fault was that I should asked and confirm what he said but I think I was too used with his accent that I understood everything. He could improve his communication by giving feedback if I understood or not his instructions and ask if all is clear for me.
2. Another example of poor communication is that some people, even me, don't speak English properly. For example, the guy in the lift is not speaking English or is afraid to speak, only the common "yes, no, ok..." and I communicate with him using more body language and face expressions. He understands me, and nods his head a lot, and smiles back but sometimes he sends people to different floors. I think people help him and tell him how to say things in English but is not enough and the company can give free courses to help.

Schram's model of communication relates to these situations because the cultural background of the workers is affecting the communication in my workplace the most.

CONCLUSION

As shown in the above, communication is not an easy process, and it affects someone's ability to work or interact with people because of the barriers that need to be looked at and eliminated. So, in order to communicate properly, a person needs to improve his/her communication skills and learn to listen, read and write so they can transfer information correctly through speaking, writing or to understand when listening or receiving information. This can be done with the help of communication models considered in the above report which are used in everyday contexts and demonstrate how and what communication involves.

The main goal of communication models is to help people improve their skills and abilities in order to communicate more effectively focusing on helping to identify any barriers that need to be eliminated. Even if using models of communication there still are some limitations that they come with, but these can be clarified and barriers that they bring with can be prevented in order to make good use of the models in the process of communication.

In my case I need to be more aware and improve my listening skills to avoid misunderstandings in the future because no matter where I work and with who, there will be people from different cultures that need to adapt to communicate properly and be understood.

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