

UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION

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Introduction

Communication is an essential part of our everyday life. The necessary skills needed to be a good communicator cannot be learned overnight but can be developed over time. This essay will look at the definition and importance of communication, while presenting ways in which it can be improved. The different ways in which a person can communicate will be outlined. Along with that, an understanding of how communication works and the factors which can affect its flow. Listening is a very important element in the communication process, without that essential skill a person will find it difficult to communicate effectively. A detailed look into the aspect of listening will be looked at and ways in which this skill can be improved in order to become a good communicator. This assignment will show a detailed understanding of the communication process.

What is Communication ?

Communication is the process of exchanging information from one person, place or group to another. Having the ability to communicate effectively is an important aspect of everyday life. It allows people to pass information and gain an understanding of what has been said. Being a good communicator can impact both your personal and professional life as it gives you the ability to understand others better and to speak, listen, question and write in a clear and concise way. These qualities will be an essential commodity when applying for leadership roles. Communication surrounds a significant amount of activities. Reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing and creating images are all acts of communication.

Types of communication

Communication can be categorised in three ways. These include verbal, written and non-verbal communication. The verbal component of communication involves the combination of chosen words and the interpretation of the message. Speaking and listening effectively are essential to communicate verbally. Good speaking skills consist of three key points. These include the choice of words, how it is said and how it is strengthened with non-verbal communication. Listening effectively is a vital skill which is essential to good verbal communication. These can be improved by focussing the attention on the speaker and not the reply, getting a better understanding of what has been said and avoiding any noise disruption of the message that is been sent. All these factors play an important part in the transferring of messages, how it is received and understood by the receiver. Some of the ways in which verbal communication can be improved is by reinforcement, questioning and reflecting. Reinforcement is used to strengthen words through the use of

gestures such as head nods. Questioning plays an important role when trying to clarify areas that are not understood. Through reflecting, feedback is sent to another person relaying the understanding of what has been said.

Non-verbal communication is an important aspect of the communication process as it can have a significant impact on what is interpreted by the listener. Through non-verbal communication persons are able to strengthen or adjust the words that have been said. This type of communication involves the use of body language, gestures, tone of voice and facial expressions. Non-verbal communication is decided by the place and people concerned, as well as the culture. It can also be intentional and unintentional, due to the fact that the use of body language cannot be hidden. Communication may therefore bring across one message intentionally while at the same time another message is brought across unintentionally. Interpersonal skill (skills you need, 2020).

Written communication refers to the exchange of information and ideas from one person to another in a written form. Some of the ways in which we can communicate by writing is through the use of letters, emails and text messaging. The elements of a good written communication includes understandable language, structure, accuracy, direct speech, paragraph design, error free, senders attitude and personal and organizational image. When communicating to another person, an understandable language is essential as it will allow the recipient to interpret what has been said accurately.

The word that is chosen when writing a message places a significant impact on the way the message is received. Choosing the right words for the message relies on the audience you are writing to, therefore words that are used when writing a message to a friend will not be the same when writing a memo or a formal letter. Written Communication (The Business Communication, 2019).

Listening Skills

For a person to be a good listener they have to have the ability to receive and convert information accurately. People listen for a number of reasons which will depend on their situation and the nature of their communication. Some of the reasons people listen is to concentrate on the message which is being communicated, avoid interruption, avoid misunderstandings and obtain an accurate understanding of the points which are being communicated by the sender. To be an effective communicator he or she has to possess the ability to listen keenly. Without this ability messages can be easily misunderstood leading to a breakdown in communication. Listening needs to have focus and concentrated effort both in a mental and physical capacity. To be a good listener, it is necessary to direct your attention on what is being said, how it is being said, the language and voice used and how the other person uses their body.

7 C's OF COMMUNICATION

To be an effective communicator it is essential to follow the 7C's of communication. These include being clear, correct, complete, concise, concrete, coherent and courteous. It is very important to communicate messages in a clear way. This will enable the recipient to gain a good understanding of the point the sender is trying to make. When writing a formal message it is crucial to check for the correct spelling of words and the person's name who the message is addressed to. A complete message will allow the reader to have all the necessary information to be able to make an appropriate response. The information that is being sent needs to be accurate and to the point so being concise is essential. Words such as “I mean “ and “ basically “ should be avoided. The sender needs to believe in the message they are communicating. The receiver needs to know that the message is concrete so it is essential to include details that will attract the readers attention. Being courteous allows individuals to build relationships therefore it plays an essential role in communication. Arvind Rongala (2015) explained what the 7C's of communication was.

Models of communication

The three models of communication include Shannon and Weaver, Schramm and Berlo. The Shannon and Weaver model of communication was created in 1948 by Claud Elwood Shannon and Warren Weaver. This model focuses on the development of effective communication between the sender and the receiver. This model consists of a sender, encoder, channel, decoder, receiver and noise. The communication process begins with the sender who creates the message. The message is then sent through the encoder where it is transformed into signals. When the signal arrives at its destination it is reconstructed into understandable messages. This is known as the decoding process. The message is then received by the recipient. The communication process may be interrupted by noise or signal issues which will affect the accuracy of the information which is received. Communication models, Interpersonal communication (communication theory, n.d).

Schramm's model of communication was presented by Wilber Schramm in 1954. This model is less traditional than others because it directs its attention on the encoder and decoder rather than the message itself. Encoding begins the process of communication by transforming thoughts into content. It is then the receiver's responsibility to understand the message that has been sent. If the recipient is unable to understand the information then the message is meaningless. The Schramm model also believes that the communication process is not complete until feedback from the recipient is received.

The Berlo's model of communication was developed in 1960 by David Berlo. It includes a sender, message, channel and receiver. Throughout the communication process each of these elements can be affected by numerous factors. A person's communication skills and attitude can affect how the message comes across to readers. If the sender is an effective communicator then the message will be communicated better. The words

and non-verbal cues that go along with it can also affect the message. When it reaches the channel how it is heard or seen plays a vital role in the communication process. When the receiver gets the information, they need to have the necessary communication skills and attitudes as well in order to be able to gain the correct meaning of the message.

COMMUNICATION WITHIN A WORKPLACE

I examined the communication process at a friend work place and discovered that their main means of communication is through writing. Information on productivity is sent to managers in a memo, which is then passed on to workers on the notice board. I believe this method of communication is not effective as workers are not given the opportunity to discuss matters of productivity. As a result, workers do not feel that team spirit and do not respond as if they value their jobs. It therefore cripples productivity most of the time. Effective communication is crucial in the workplace as it helps to build a sense of trust and increase the productivity of employees. Poor communication in the workplace will inevitably head to unmotivated staff that may begin to question their own abilities in the organisation.

To improve communication within this workplace, I recommend that a different means of communication should be chosen. A monthly meeting can be held for all workers to get the opportunity to discuss any concerns that they have. Communication is a two way process and no company or individual will survive long if it does not encourage dialogue with each other. The company can also provide an opportunity for team building. Building an effective team is all about communicating and collaborating together, therefore personal relationships and trust will be builded through this method.

Everyone needs a voice and employee satisfaction can rely a lot on them having a voice and being listened to, whether it be in regards to an idea they may have or a complaint. Well established communication within this workplace will afford everyone the ability to communicate freely no matter their level.

CONCLUSION

Based on my understanding, communication is more than just the use of words, it is a combination of body language and tone of voice. A person can effectively use their voice tone and body language to bring their message across. Good communication skills are valuable as it helps to build and maintain relationships among each other, which is necessary for the sustainment of society. People tend to forget the importance of listening, instead they focus their attention on the reply they are going to give. Listening plays a crucial role in the communication process as it allows people to receive messages accurately in order to give an appropriate response.

I can conclude that communication is the foundation of all human relationships, it is needed everywhere, whether it is your personal life or professional life. Communication allows individuals to express their feelings towards people or things while at the same time it allows understanding of people's emotion and thoughts that are being revealed. Communication can usually be improved by carefully selecting the correct media. Communication skills is such a unique talent which may take individuals a lifetime to achieve.

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APPENDIX A

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GROUP 11

THE PROFESSOR AND THE VILLAGE PEOPLE

Lloyd's 7/19

A Professor of English at a well-known Welsh University lived in a large house not far from a little village. He never went into the village, but shopped in the town near the University because he had nothing in common with the village people, who were largely uneducated and did manual jobs.

One night, the professor fell asleep while smoking his pipe and the pipe fell onto the carpet and started a fire.

When the professor awoke and saw the house on fire, he rushed into the village, screaming:

'The edifice is being consumed by a great conflagration!'

'The edifice is being consumed by a great conflagration!'

The village people looked at him and continued doing what they were doing.

'Don't you understand?' He said. 'The edifice is being consumed by a great conflagration!'

They ignored him.

When the Professor returned home, he saw that his house had been destroyed. He sat down on the ground and wept.

The next day, he went into the village crying, 'Why, oh why didn't you help me? My home has been destroyed by the fire. I came and begged you last night.' He wept.

'But Professor, why didn't you say that your house was on fire? We would have helped.'

Q: Why didn't the village people help the Professor?

Q: What should he have done to get them to help him?

Q: Whose model of communication do you think can explain this situation?

Q: Why?

1/ because they didn't understand what he was saying.

2/ use ~~more~~ simpler words that would be understandable.

3/ Schramm's model of communication

4/ Because the information was of no use to the village people as they didn't understand what the professor was saying, which made the communication incomplete.

