

Effective Team Working and Communication

BMSW4002

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Introduction

Definition

A definition of communication states that is “the process of understanding and sharing meaning” (Pearson, Nelson , 2000). Another way of analysing the definition of communication is through etymology observing the latin roots of the word “communicare” which means to share or in relation with (Cobley et al, 2013).

The major elements of communication are: the sender who intends to convey the message, the message which is the content to be conveyed, the receiver to whom the message is addressed, the channel which is the means of how the transmission takes place, the feedback which is the receiver’s response to indicate comprehension of the message, the noise which are the disturbances that can occur.

Types of communication

Communication can be verbal or non-verbal. Verbal communication is realist using words, written or spoken, but it includes use of voice, space, appearance. Written communication can be read multiple times if the reader wants to, but oral communication has to be grasped the first time. That is why oral communications should be concise and clear in order to be well understood. Non-verbal communications refers to the sum of external stimuli and symbols other than using words and it is labeled as body language. It supplements and reinforces verbal communication and has a great role in the communication (Agarwal, 2009).

The Importance of communication in the world of work

Communication was always important in every domain because it underpins all the actions, but in the world of work, nowadays is more conceptualised as communicating effectively is a core competence and is essential especially when working with people. Further that, information became a powerful tool in business dealings, product information, market, competition etc. In the workplace environment, communicating effectively is contributing to the success of the organisation. Through communication it is realised the

exchange of opinions, ideas, feelings etc with objectives such as training, education, order, instruction, decision making, but also motivating, counselling (Pearson, Nelson, 2000).

Barriers to communication

Barriers to communication occur when communication is not interpreted and understood in the same manner as intended by the sender. These barriers lead to a distorted message, defeating the desired objectives. The barriers can be related to semantics or **linguistics, psycho-social and physical-mechanical**. The semantics refer to the words and their meaning and this happens because of the confusions created by different usage of language and how a word can have different meaning. In a communication, the *language* has an important role for expressing the thoughts, but in some cases it can limit the capturing the fullness of the persons thoughts and innings. The psycho-social barriers refers to *inability to deal with noises* where from some reasons disturbance is impediment for communication, *distortion of verbal and non-verbal messages* that refers to the mismatch between the two types of communication, *selective perception* where the person, from various reasons, will reject anything that is beyond their established framework, *ineffective feedback, improper listening* which is one of the most common barriers. Physical-mechanical refer to *past experience* that can affect communication patterns, *situational context* that can dictate if the communication feels appropriate or not, *defects in the medium of communication* which are the technological faults when are used devices for communication, *deficient communication in organisation* when in hierarchal structures result in communication gaps (Agarwal, 2009).

Consequences of poor communication at the workplace

When barriers in communication occurs that could have a great impact on the business. In the workplace poor communication can create misunderstandings, affect the employees wellbeing or create a lack of trust , reduce profits, suppress innovation. Poor communication impacts negatively team work and collaboration (The Alternative Board, 2019).

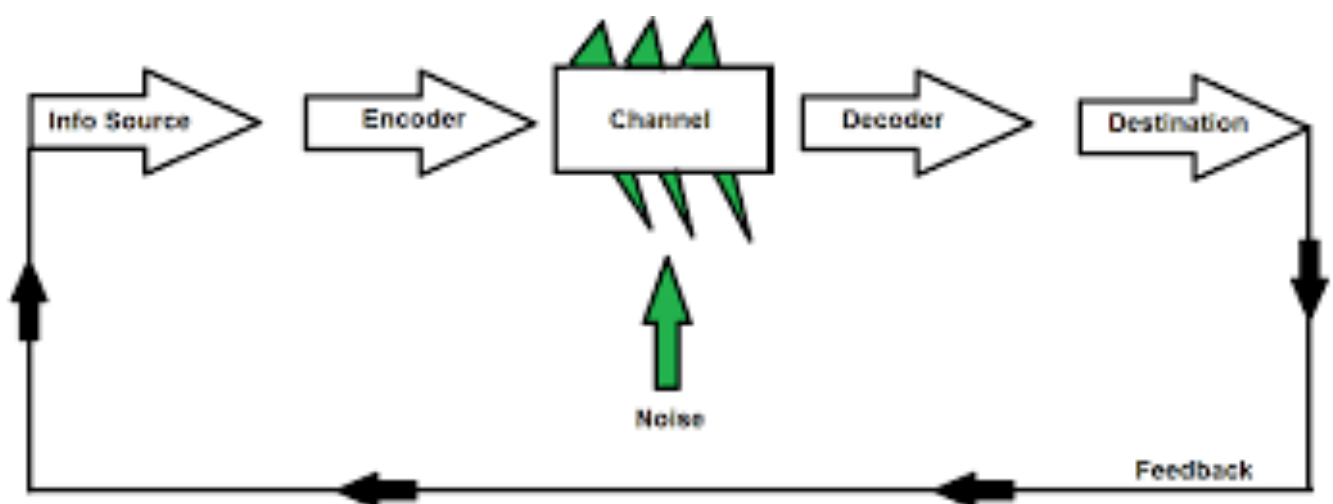
Models of communication

The communication concept was and it is a very interesting and complex process and many theories were proposed in order to understand the phenomena. Some of the authors that elaborated models of communication are Shannon and Weaver, Berlo, Schramm. Their proposed models of communication have similar elements such as the sender, the message and the receiver, but they also have different elements considered.

The Shannon-Weaver Model of communication

The Shannon-Weaver model of communication (1949) known as the transmission model, is a mathematical approach to making the communication process. As illustrated in Figure 1, the sender who is the information source encodes the message into signals whilst using a selected channel, the signal is receipted and decoded by the receiver who is the destination of the message sent by the sender. The feedback is given to the sender after the receiver decodes the message.

Figure 1 The Shannon-Weaver model of communication ,1949



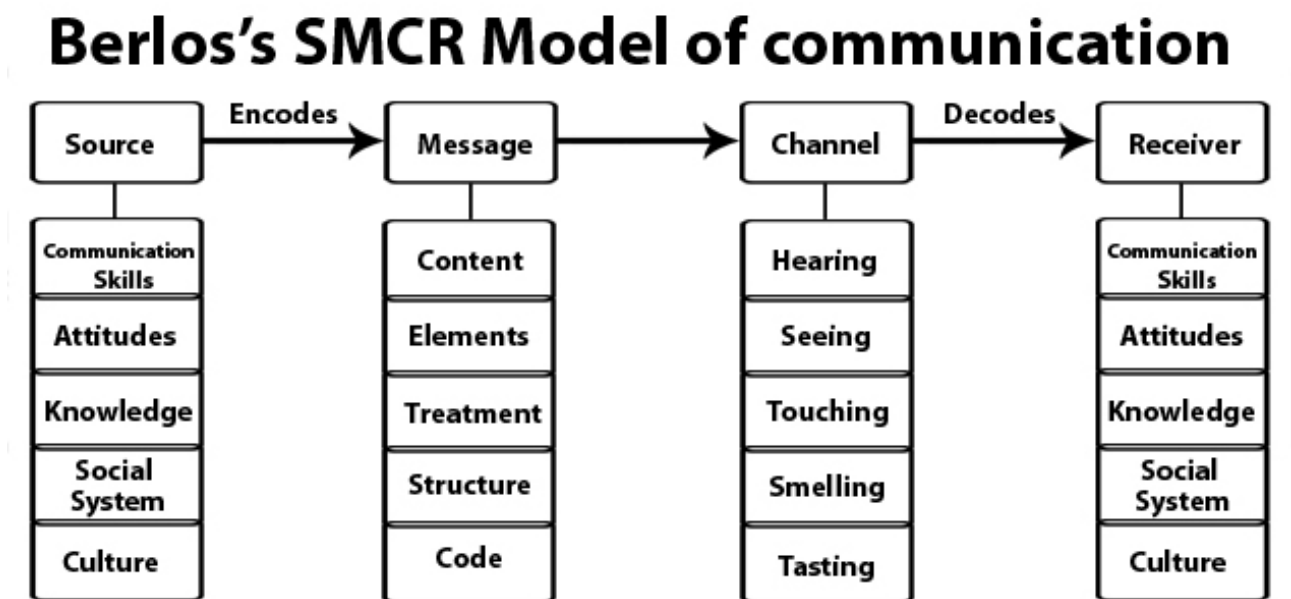
Berlo's Model of communication

Berlo's model of communication (1960) known as the SMCR model has similar components to Shannon-Weaver model, but it considers other aspects as essential for every component. In Figure 2 it can be observed the complexity of the model in comparison with the linear transmission model. *The source* and *the receiver* present a variety of factors such as communication skills which are the individuals own skills to communicate, attitude towards audience or themselves , knowledge on the topic or subject, social system where the communication takes place, culture or social system.

The Message has elements such as content which is the script, element which is the body language, treatment is the choice of conveying the message, structure which is the arrangement of the message and code which is the means and form.

The Channel through which the communication can occur: seeing, touching, hearing, smelling, tasting.

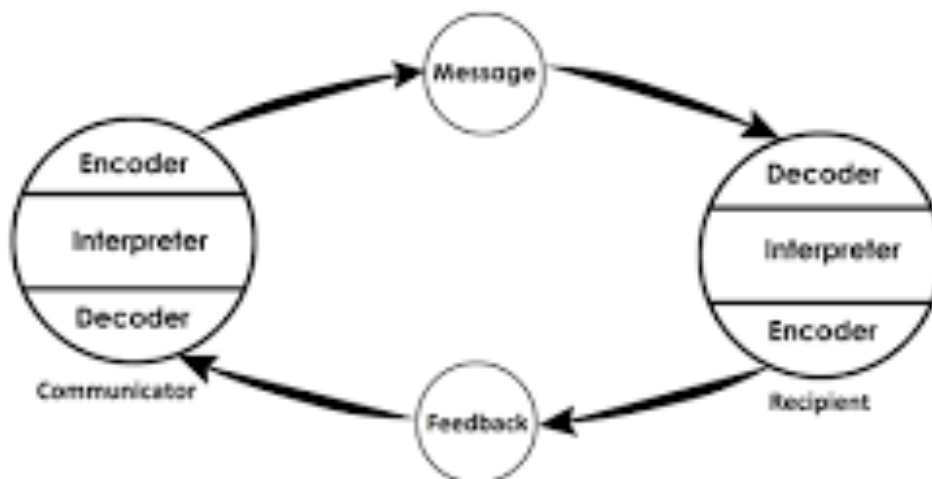
Figure 2 Berlos's Model of communication, 1960



Schramm Model of communication

Schramm's model of communication is based on the Shanon-Weaver model, but encoding and decoding are considered to be most important factors in the communication process. Also the communication is not complete until the receiver offers a feedback based on the message received and that is a two-way process as presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3 Schramm's Model of communication



Communication skills

Definition

According to a very successful job platform, communication skills are “the abilities you use when giving and receiving different kinds of information. Some examples include communicating new ideas, feelings or even an update on your project. Communication skills involve listening, speaking, observing and empathising (Indeed, 2019)”.

Listening

For an effective communication is important that the speaker conveys the message effectively, but it is also important that the listener listens effectively. The importance of this two aspects should not be undermined in the system of communication. In the workplace, both speaking and listening effectively are important skills in the organisational operations and lack of communication skills leads to problems.

Listening refers to the ways of receiving a communication and assumes more than hearing, It involves “reading between the lines” and free flow communication. Active listening refers to the attitude of the listener, it assumes that distractions are eliminated paying full attention. Teams are stronger and more cohesive when active listening is realised. It requires the creation of a promotional climate, patience, empathising. The empathic listening is the ability to identify with what the speakers conveys and appreciating his stand. It involves a less judgemental position towards the speaker thoughts and feelings.

Examples of communication

In order to apply the theoretical models this report will make use of a case study that presents a communication between two persons called Maria and Pedro. Maria calls Pedro and asks him to buy a chicken on the way back home, but when he returns he comes without the chicken and instead he waits for Maria in the kitchen as he believed that is what Maria said over the phone. For this type of communication it can be applied the Shannon-Weaver model of communication, especially because it is used the telephone to communicate for which this model was initially designed. The Information Source is Maria, the encoder is the telephone, the channel is the mobile network, the noise is the confusion over the meaning of the words, decoder is the telephone and the receiver is Pedro. There is an error in the transmission as Pedro did not understand that he has to buy a chicken, instead he understands that he needs to go to the kitchen. The semantic problem could have been avoided if another model of communication would have been applied. Schramm's Model of communication state that encoding and decoding are the most important factors in the communication process and that is not complete until the receiver offers a feedback based on the message received. This cyclical model would have assumed that Pedro would make sure he understood Maria's message by giving her a feedback. Maria would then noticed that Pedro did not understand her message accurately.

Communication is fundamental to any type of workplace. I work in the restaurant industry as a chef and even if we do not interact directly with the customer, we can communicate through our cooking and food presentation. With the current pandemic situation and lockdown we are only serving food for take away and home delivery. Sometimes poor communication can occur when customers ask for a meal to be prepared in a certain way and as a chef I fail to provide that due to poor communication. Similar to the phone communication presented in the case study above, some food orders in our restaurant are taken using the phone. Colleagues are taking orders over the phone and then communicate to the food preparation team what needs to be cooked. In order to assess the communication it can be used the Shannon-Weaver model of communication. It happened when the sender, the customer asked for their food to be prepared using only certain ingredients which was the message, the encoder was the mobile phone, the channel was the mobile network, the noise was the distraction in the voice due to transmission error, the receiver was my colleague. The communication registered noise and my colleague did not understand customer's message. In order to have an effective communication and

maintain our customers satisfied it should be applied Schramm's model of communication where the feedback and cyclical approach to the communication ensures accurate messages are understood (Figure 4.).

In relation to the situation presented above it has to be taken in consideration the communication skills of the team. Another example of communication at the work place is between the colleagues who are taking customers orders and the kitchen staff. When communicating what type of food is the customer asking for, the waiters could use verbal written communication with the chefs in order to maintain the effectiveness of the communication as it gets really busy in the kitchen. Written communication can be read and checked multiple times if required in order to ensure that the desired type of food and quantity is cooked and there are no mistakes due to external noise.

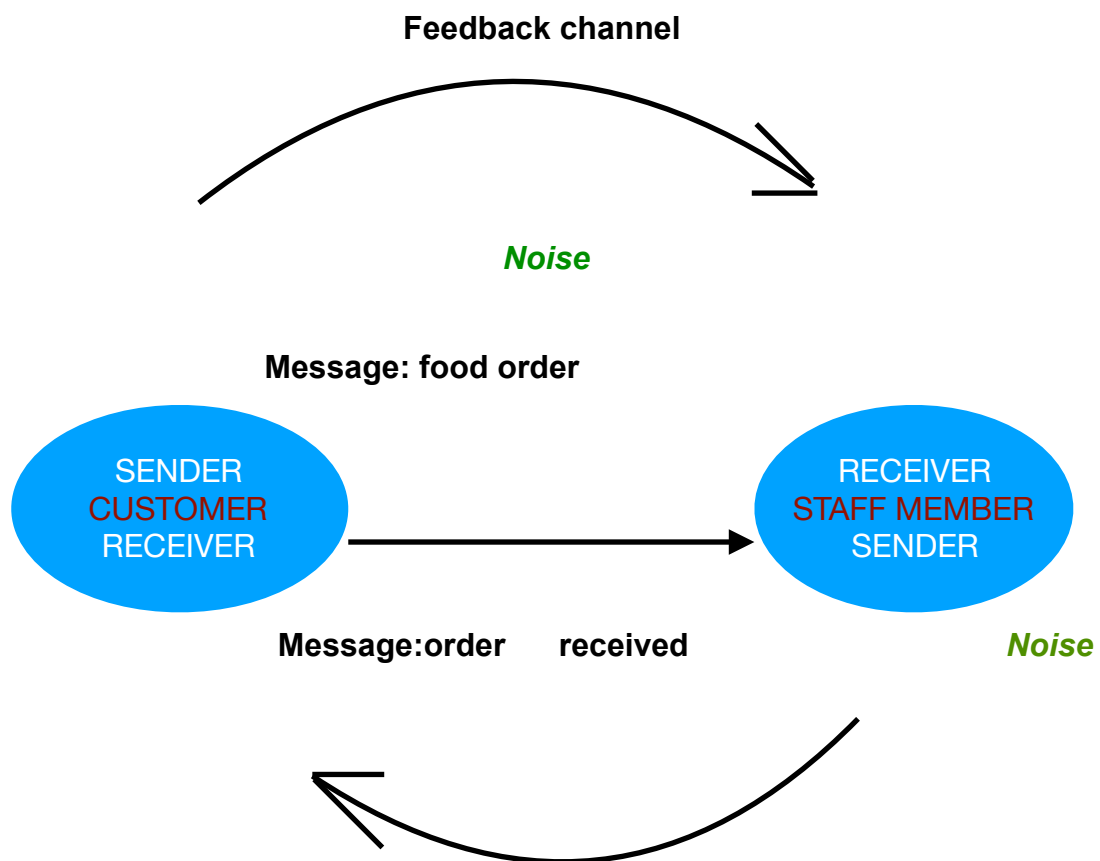


Figure 4. Schramm's model applied on poor communication at the work place

Conclusion

Communication is the modality of reaching others own thoughts and values, facts and ideas and it can be realised through multiple ways. Effective communication happens in certain frames and it involves skills that are required more and more in the working environment as well.

This report described and analysed the concept of communication and emphasised its importance in the work place. It presented three models of communication The Shannon-Weaver Model , Berlo Model and Schramm's Model of communication.

It exemplified through case studies representations and work related experiences some of the models, whilst suggesting for improvements for more effective communication.

In conclusion the process of communication is dynamic, reciprocal and it helps relationship development social and professional.

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