

Effective Team Work and Communication (BMSW4002)

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Contents

Introduction	3
Communication skill	3
Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication	3
Formal and informal	4
Barriers to communication	4
Models of Communication	5
Example of poor communication	6
How to improve workplace communication	6
Case Study: A Day with the Chief	6
Case Study: Maria and Pedro	7
Conclusion	7
References	8

Introduction

I will be looking at the different communication skills that I have learnt throughout the module and how they are used in the workplace. There are a number of modes of communication such as speaking, emails and phone calls that we use to interact with others in the workplace or in a professional environment. I will explore the different models we have looked at during class and also explore situations where this takes place. I will also be exploring verbal and non-verbal communication, the Shannon Weaver model, Berlo's model of communication. This report also covers examples of poor communication at a workplace as well as how communication can be improved by using different literature theory. I will also use case studies to show examples of poor communication.

Communication skill

Communication is simply the act of transferring information from one place, person or group to another. There are different types of communication. Normally it involves a sender who sends a message to a receiver. This takes place a lot in a professional environment.

Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication

Verbal communication is known as communication by the words that are spoken or written, whereas non-verbal cues are ways to communicate through body language or hand gestures. Both are very important in the workplace and in a professional environment as they go hand in hand. Some examples of verbal communication in the workplace are answering phone calls, giving and receiving instructions and giving a presentation. [HelpGuide]

For example when giving a presentation it is important to come across sincerely to your audience. Communication with the audience or with your colleagues must be effective so that your words come across clearly, sincere and relaxed. This can be done by keeping eye contact, posture and a good appearance. Being sincere means you are being yourself and not copying others. The words you choose to use are also important and should be picked so that it is clear and not confusing to the other person. (Nonverbal Communication and Body Language - HelpGuide.org, 2021)

Non-verbal communication refers to things we don't say but are shown through our movements. E.g. posture, clothing and expression. In the workplace it is important to communicate with your managers and colleagues in the right way. It is not good to and will give a bad impression to your manager if you come to work with dirty clothes, or with a frown or sit with arms crossed. This will make you antisocial and not wanting to communicate with others. You can also tell if someone is lying or not telling the truth due to little eye contact, sweating or biting fingernails.

Formal and informal

There are two different types of communication. Formal and informal. Formal communication is known as official language which could be like work emails. Formal communication is important as it keeps a professional relationship between people. I have used formal language when speaking in the workplace before or for example when I have communicated with the university with emails. Informal communication is different and is mainly used when communicating with friends or colleagues in a light manner. Words can include slang or jokes. It is important to have a balance of informal and formal communication. In the group work I have done for this module there have been times where I have used informal language to speak with my group members. *(10 differences between formal and informal language)*

Barriers to communication

There are a number of barriers to effective communication whether it is verbal, non verbal or in written form. It is important to communicate with others or properly to make sure the right message is sent to other person. There are 6 main common barriers that occur and it is important to get rid of these barriers as much as possible. (6 Barriers to Effective Communication - Goodwin College of Professional Studies, 2021)

- **Dissatisfaction with job** - being unhappy makes it hard to communicate with others effectively because effort levels drop
- **Inability to listen to others** - not listening to others means you can't engage right
- **Lack of transparency and trust** - if you do not trust the person you are talking to then it is hard to be genuine in your communication
- **Communication Styles** - everyone has different style of communicating and sometime it is hard to match the style, eg. slang or formal language
- **Conflicts in the workplace** - conflicts between people sometimes makes it hard to communicate as personal feelings come in
- **Cultural differences and language** - different cultures have ways of communicating that are more acceptable, this can be in the form of body language or gestures

Models of Communication

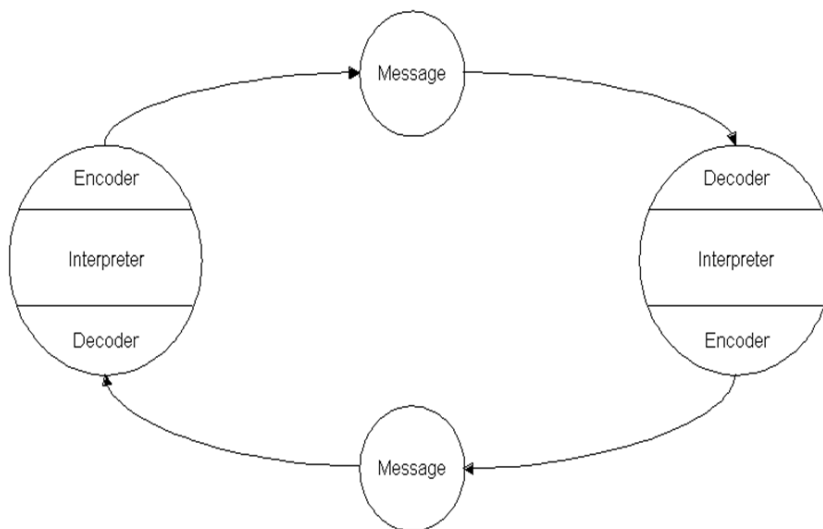
There are different models of communication as suggested by Berlo, Shannon-Weaver and Schramms. The first step in a channel for communication is for the sender to formulate a message. This can be in the form of a verbal cue, telephone, email or letter. The message is sent to the receiver who decodes the messages and then formulates feedback which is sent back to the original sender.

Berlo's model of communication (S-M-C-R Model) needs a message to be sent from a source. This can be through communication, attitude, knowledge and culture. The message contains the contents of the code which is then sent through a channel. This channel could be through hearing, seeing, touching, smelling or tasting. Once it is sent through this channel it is decoded by the receiver. This process is repeated. (BERLO'S SMCR MODEL OF COMMUNICATION, 2021)

Schramms Model of Communication, 1954 uses a similar model. The encoder is also the interpreter and decoder who sends a message to another decoder. The cycle continues.

The Shannon-Weaver Mathematical Model, 1949 is a similar model which takes an information source, transmits the message through a channel to a receiver who decodes the message. (Communication Theory. 2021)

Schramm's Model of Communication, 1954



Example of poor communication

An example of poor communication when i was working was when i had to manage bookings at my restaurant. Normally bookings would come through via telephone. Often because of the noise in the restaurant it is hard to hear properly. On one occasion a customer asked for a table with 5 people however they turned up with 8 people. This misinterpretation led to problems as there were more people than was expected. The way this can be avoided is to speak clearly and make sure information is communicated properly.

How to improve workplace communication

To improve workplace communication it is important to understand what the barriers of communication are. To improve the six barriers must be eradicated and done by understanding what they are. To make sure you communicate properly you must be able to listen to others. This makes things clear. It is also important to understand everyone's cultures to know what is acceptable and not acceptable. When i have worked before, there were times where there were barriers speaking to colleagues and to managers. And often there were conflicts between people. To ensure we communicated properly everyone would have to come to an understanding to both us and the company. This included positive body and language and smiling. It is also important to listen to people carefully and make sure you understand what is being said.

Case Study: A Day with the Chief

In this case study it shows how important effective communication is in order to interpret the situation correctly. In this situation Mark was nervous to meet the CEO of the company as he was told that she was intimidating and did not like communicating with people. She is very abrupt and straight to the point. Because of this Mark was nervous and this showed in body language. He was shaking and avoiding eye contact. However when he met the CEO she was the opposite of what he expected. She greeted him with a warm and friendly smile and as a result Mark felt at ease. These were non-verbal cues that told Mark that she appreciated that he was there. She then asked him how his time with the company was and slowly he became more and more easy.

However Mark may have evaluated the context wrong. He mistook her friendliness in the wrong way and started to undermine his own supervisor and tell her that he had failed on many occasions. In this context as he was speaking to the CEO, this was not the right thing to do. He should have kept it professional and focused on himself. He also mentioned that he should be paid better and in this context he shouldn't have. As a result her attitude changed. Non verbal

cues such as squinting of eyes shows that she was not impressed and she also spoke in a gruff voice. In this case Mark was wrong and forgot the situation he was in and the fact he was talking to the CEO.

Case Study: Maria and Pedro

The case study on Maria and Pedro is also an example of poor communication. They are husband and wife where the husband works on a building site. His wife has called him and asked him to bring her chicken back home. However Pedro has misheard this as 'I will see you in the kitchen' and as a result his wife is not happy. This could have been avoided if Pedro listened more clearly or went to a quieter place so that there isn't background noise. His wife could have also been more clearer when talking or could have communicated in a different way like through a text or picture. This would have been a better mode of communication. This example is similar to times where I have done the same and misheard things.

Conclusion

To conclude, there are many communication tools that individuals must use to operate in the workplace and in a professional environment. In order to manage conflict, people must know how to communicate with each other to solve problems. I have experienced many of these tools in my own time at work. It is important to know how to talk with others to make sure everything goes smoothly. The case study shows how important it is to interpret the correct body language cues as in this case he read it wrong.

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