

Module code: BMSK4004

Module: Problem Solving and Decision Making

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Introduction:

Communication in the context of a workplace refers to the exchange of information and ideas amongst employees of the company. No matter whether it is in-person or conducted over the internet, effective communication is an essential component of the internal communications efforts of any business and a pre-requisite for the completion of any work. Effective communication in the workplace helps to cultivate a positive culture, cuts down on unnecessary bureaucracy, and ensures that everyone gets the information they need to do their duties efficiently. In order to keep interpersonal relationships strong or to build them, good communication must communicate information in a manner that is both clear and succinct. Poor communication leads to a lack of understanding among team members, which in turn leads to ongoing conflict, poor morale, and ineffective teamwork. It is crucial to the success of any company that they be able to communicate effectively, and it is inevitable that all organizations will run into communication challenges at some time. The challenges that AXA has in communicating are the result of a broad range of issues, including those that are technical, psychological, and physiological in nature. It is feasible that AXA will be able to grow its earnings by carefully communicating with its customers, and it is also possible that the person who sends the message and the one who receives it will understand each other completely. Through this report, the researcher will analyse the impact of communication over their workplace. Moreover, this report helps to develop effective strategy for AXA company to overcome the communication problem.

Define a complex problem in the workplace including its scope and impact

Communication problem:

Communication is the act of permitting the sharing of ideas, data, or messages between individuals via the use of visual clues, spoken language, behavior, and written representations (Randolph, 2015). If the companies are able to communicate effectively, there is a possibility that they will be able to accomplish their goals within the allotted time. Communication might take place either nonverbally, as in the case of body language, or loudly, as in the case of direct conversation. Each and every business makes use of both of these methodologies. The verbal communication may be carried out using any term or language that is easily available. Language is a powerful instrument because, if used appropriately, it will unquestionably be of assistance in the transmission of information and knowledge, so contributing to the development of an appropriate relationship between space and time (Kang and Sung, 2017). This makes the use of language a formidable tool. The phrase nonverbal communication refers to a more general concept that encompasses the many ways in which information may be conveyed without the use of verbal language.

The AXA communication problem: Scope and impact of the complex problem

Impact of a communication issue at AXA:

- Mismanagement over operational process: AXA had a difficult time connecting effectively with the new personnel since even the top jobs had been reorganized, and unless the new executives took it upon themselves to do so, AXA had a difficult time interacting with the new staff. Because of this, the company was unable to make any more progress (Axaxl, 2021). It's probable that the organization as a whole was being negatively impacted by reasons such as inconsistency, undue stress, distrust in the new recruit, overly high demands, and mediocre performance. In addition to the prospect of losing customers and damaging its reputation, AXA runs the risk of incurring financial damages.

- Stress in the workplace: The fact that the AXA firm is experiencing conflict among its employees is a warning sign that its communication channels are broken. It's possible that when there are communication failures, it might create the impression that everything on a person's to-do list is an emergency and has to be done right now. This can lead to feelings of stress, urgency, and being overworked, all of which are negative outcomes. Anxiety, anxiety, and lower productivity are the direct results of a lack of predictability and stability in the situation, all of which are made worse by inadequate communication between the parties involved.
- Expectations remain unmet: Problems with internal communication at AXA stopped the company from reaching its objective. It is possible that clients may arrive unreasonably late for planned meetings, that teams will be unable to fulfil their deadline, and that individual members of teams will be unable to comprehend their tasks within the context of the wider project (AXA Group, 2021). Employees of AXA who are unable to make up their minds often make decisions that are not in the best interest of the organization because they are unsure of what should take priority. Due to a lack of communication, AXA's senior management has a tough time determining how to begin initiatives and how to bring them to a successful conclusion (Australian Financial Review, 2009). Internal communication that is either lacking or nonexistent in a company may have far-reaching repercussions, not just on the bottom line but also on the organization's business, marketing, and financial operations. Because of this, it is absolutely necessary to conduct a comprehensive review of the message before continuing the search for an answer that is viable.

Analyze information on the identified problem, to help inform the decision making process

When it comes to a firm that focuses on providing excellent customer service, communication is of the utmost significance. The majority of the time, problems arise when there is a breakdown in communication between employees of the same company, employers of employees of the same company, and employees of the same company and their clients. This can also lead to misunderstandings between employees of the same company and their customers. Therefore, in order to analyse the problem in a proper way Five Ws technicians needs to be used.

Five Ws: of problem identification

- **Who:** The AXA UK group of firms has an excellent reputation all over the globe for the superiority of the financial services that they provide. They currently do business in more than sixty-four countries, have more than sixteen thousand employees, and serve more than one hundred million consumers. Insurance firms in the United Kingdom provide its customers, who might be individuals or corporations, with a variety of services and products designed to safeguard them against a variety of risks. In addition, they are able to provide their customers with piece of mind by providing healthcare services at prices that are reasonable.
- **What:** It was said that the AXA UK was now facing the communication gap with a large decline in employee engagement as a result of a big change in the firm's management and organizational structure (The Guardian, 2022). This allegation was made after the AXA UK underwent a considerable transformation. There was a divide between the AXA UK management and the workforce, which might put the worker's credibility at risk.
- **When:** AXA's workplace culture is famously poor at networking, which adds to a substantial percentage of the organization's communication issues. Employees of AXA who lack strong communication skills are unlikely to be able to effectively express themselves (Covermagazine, 2022). Conflict may be a contributing element when the communication process deteriorates noticeably.

- Where: Poor communication at AXA causes a lack of consistency and stability in the workplace, which in turn creates an unsettling atmosphere for employees. It's possible that AXA workers won't be as productive and efficient since they won't have a firm grasp of their weekly objectives or won't know how to proceed with a certain project (The Guardian, 2022). Both AXA employees and management have a responsibility to encourage frank communication in order to establish a stable working environment in which employees can give their all every day.
- Why: Because of the AXA UK employee's new employer and the evident communication barrier that developed between the employee and the new employer, it was challenging to get the employee involved in the assignment. A breakdown in communication was the primary factor contributing to the considerable decline in total sales that was taking place. At some point or another, AXA UK will struggle with communication, and learning how to overcome that challenge is essential to making progress toward organizational objectives.

Root cause analysis:

- Realize the problem: The lack of open channels of communication among AXA workers has produced an uneasy climate in which individuals are less willing to take chances or engage in social activities. The bottom line of AXA suffers as a consequence of uninterested personnel that mistreat clients and prospective consumers (Reuters, 2012).
- Collect a sufficient amount of data: In the hectic setting of the AXA office, where queries and responses are handled via email and text message, it is possible that key specifics may be misplaced, forgotten, or misinterpreted. Problem also occurred at the AXA firm when an employee was unable to interact successfully with the company's new management and his or her former coworkers were reassigned to a different division.
- Identify the associated causal factors:
 - Wrong assumptions about a task: When AXA employees participate in group activities like brainstorming, group projects, or group

communications with the expectation that another member of the group would be held responsible for completing the assignment on the group's behalf, they run the risk of being misinterpreted by their fellow employees. When every member of AXA thinks that the other person will accomplish the assignment, there is a larger danger of internal conflicts, missing deadlines, blame, and finger-pointing (Arcticshores, 2022).

- Unprepared: AXA employees tempted to wing it when time is running short or when they are in a haste to go to a meeting without having prepared for it. Inadequate preparation will always result in misunderstandings, the breakdown of previously established channels of communication, and a diversion of focus away from the work at hand.
- Use of the wrong tool for communication: Under some circumstances, it is possible for an individual to make inappropriate contact with another person through telephone or electronic communication (Arcticshores, 2022). A breakdown in communication, uncertainty, and wounded feelings may also be the result of adopting the incorrect manner of expression or incorrectly interpreting the circumstances.
- Draw a conclusion: Maintaining open channels of communication between workers is among the most crucial factors in fostering productive teamwork. This not only helps to preserve and develop the bond, but it also frees up the company to try out some adventurous new ideas, which is a really positive outcome. When workers are relaxed and at ease in an atmosphere that encourages communication, they are far more likely to develop exceptional rates of new ideas.
- Implement any necessary changes: Members of the AXA team are urged by management to protect their own interests out of fear, which is one of the main reasons why they join AXA (Covermagazine, 2022). Managers at AXA need to work on fostering a sense of camaraderie among their staff if they are to prevail over their fears. People gain others' trust when they follow through on their promises.

Propose a range of alternative solutions to the problem

Depending on the topic, face-to-face communication may be more effective than phoning or many other ways. The effectiveness of AXA's overall communication hinges on its workers' knowledge with the many accessible channels. So based on the current situation the range of solution could be:

- Redevelop leadership management process: A transformative leader has the capacity to effectively communicate ideas. Because their comments are real, motivational, and consistent, their followers pay attention to them and support them through large organizational transitions and new initiatives (Wilhelmson, 2006). Managers at AXA who are really transformational leaders will be able to encourage fruitful conversation.
- Communicate more frequently: People will find it much easier to produce ideas on how to carry out a work efficiently if they participate in frequent, high-level communication. If people are permitted to freely speak with one another, they will ultimately create a common language, mature into a unique society with its own standards, and feel at comfortable inside that community (Sandeep Kashyap, 2019).
- Promote virtual communication: The practice of working and connecting with colleagues who are not physically present is known as virtual communication. Employers may hire people who live far away from the company's headquarters owing to virtual communication, which also allows for effective meetings and other types of collaboration (Adhyaru and Kemp, 2022). Clearly, robust virtual communication, including video conferencing, is critical if the whole AXA team is working remotely.

Obstacles or barriers to ensure effective communication:

There is a significant possibility that the initiatives made by AXA's management to engage in interpersonal contact will be unsuccessful. Some examples of common barriers to clear communication are as follows:

- Use of language with a more specialized focus
- Emotional and social norms may have built up as barriers (Abdin, 2018).
- being unable to pay attention, lacking interest in the subject at hand, being easily distracted, or not caring about the matter at hand are all symptoms of this condition.
- There are opposing frames of view and ways of seeing the world.
- Physical impairments, particularly those that interfere with hearing or communication
- Constraints imposed on body language as a result of physical barriers.
- The obstacles caused by people speaking various languages and having varying accents
- Inaccurate generalizations may be the result of faulty preconceptions and prejudices (Skillsyouneed, 2011).
- Various cultural variations. The social norms and recognized channels via which an individual is expected to convey their emotions are substantially different in different cultures.

Using a decision-making technique, evaluate a range of solutions to identify the most appropriate option

Considering all the facts, AXA need to develop their leadership approach. As transformative leaders, they understand that in order to build a strong firm, solid and healthy relationships must first be established. All healthy partnerships need open and honest communication. A transformational leader walks the walk, gaining the trust and respect of his or her team members. These leaders quickly grasp the team's needs and support team members in reaching their objectives, ultimately contributing to the company's growth. Transformational leaders are also skilled in identifying and assessing gaps in a company's vision, as well as developing a new vision when required (Rolfe, 2011). Because of their charisma, they are able to express their concept to their colleagues and get their support. In addition to working toward a shared goal and increasing employee self-esteem and job satisfaction, transformational leaders motivate their employees to keep moving forward by giving them the chance to face new challenges.

Communication Plan Gantt Chart

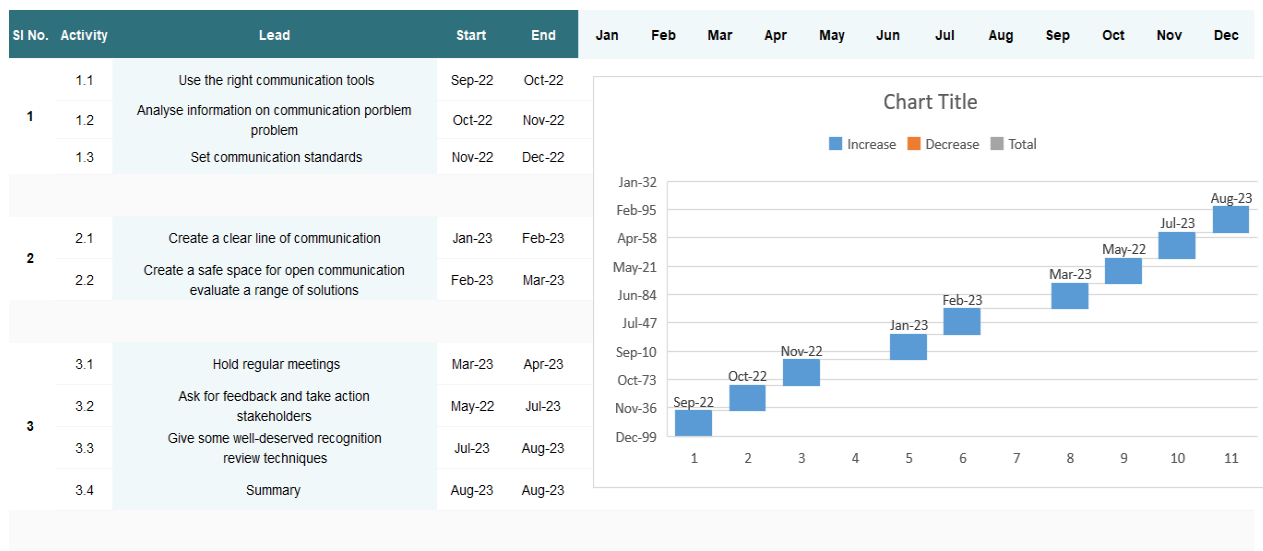


Figure 01: Gantt chart (Self-made)

Transformational leaders will develop an effective Gant chart to ensure the effective through the entire development process.

Develop a detailed plan for implementing the solution

Following the analysis, it became abundantly clear that the changes that were made to the organizational structure of the AXA as well as the adjustments that were made to the management team were directly related to the communication breakdown that the business was experiencing at the time (Sprimont, 2017). Because some of the workers were inexperienced in the insurance business and others were unfamiliar with the healthcare sector, the employees at AXA were unable to form bonds with their new colleagues. Because of this, the workers were unable to get acquainted with their new colleagues. Their starting position was one that was quite susceptible to attack.

- Use the right communication tools: The first thing that needs to be done to fix the communication problems that have been plaguing AXA management is to make sure that they are using the right communication tools. Popular communication platforms such as WhatsApp may be beneficial, but they are not built for professional use, have limited capabilities, and create distractions by blending personal and business contact. If you use these platforms for work, you should find an alternative. Instead, the management at AXA proposes using the employee communication management software that is already available. This software is designed to streamline, simplify, and maximize internal communication.
- Set communication standards: AXA might address the problem of inadequate communication by incorporating internal communication practices and standards into its corporate policy. The AXA policies should be readily available to all employees at all times. If the organization has clear and straightforward policies about internal communication, employees will have a far better knowledge of what is permitted and what is not.

- Create a clear line of communication: With a clear communication system inside AXA and for projects, AXA employees will know to whom they can turn for the necessary information and guidance to do their duties efficiently. Determining who is accountable for what at AXA and to whom promotes accountability and decreases ambiguity. Additionally, it promotes the effective transfer of high-level information to ensure worker performance.
- Create a safe space for open communication: If management at AXA wants open and honest communication amongst staff, they must first provide a safe space where employees may freely express their thoughts without fear of retaliation (Patel, 2019). In other words, employees at AXA should be able to talk freely without fear of repercussions to their reputations or jobs.
- Hold regular meetings: Holding weekly team meetings is a wonderful way to ensure that everyone is on the same page about new and ongoing project objectives, timetables, and tactics. In addition, it assists AXA management in grasping staff personnel, acquiring a broad viewpoint, and efficiently defining roles and responsibilities.
- Ask for feedback and take action: Using surveys and questionnaires, responses may be quantifiable, data may be easily evaluated and analyzed, and solutions may be located more quickly. Leaders might benefit from a qualitative approach that makes use of in-depth interviews, focus groups, and first-hand accounts (Lauer, 2020). It is much simpler to find genuine ideas and actual impediments for workers inside the organization by analyzing the body language and general attitude of those in attendance towards particular events.
- Give some well-deserved recognition: A simple method to enhance morale and productivity at AXA is to express gratitude for employees' efforts. This reduces employee turnover and boosts their motivation, job satisfaction, and engagement. As an extra benefit, AXA management fosters trust between employees and supervisors, which is essential for good workplace communication (Berens, 2007). AXA management thinks that by focusing recognition and praise, they can enhance staff production while also lowering stress.

Communicate the plan to relevant stakeholders

Problems in the AXA workplace may take many forms, including overt and covert forms of hostility, such as bullying, sexual harassment, and passive hostile behavior. This is not the only choice available since it restricts the AXA employee's capacity to learn about the position the customer is in and it does not give any information about the kind of service the consumer needs. Leaders at AXA UK may embrace transformational leadership to enhance morale and productivity by learning to interact with and convince their employees more effectively. The majority of their projects can only be done and finished with effective communication, making it important for them to do so (Mortvedt and Weisz, 2022). Leaders who recognize the need of clear and effective communication find it simpler to establish productive relationships, inspire their staff, and raise morale.

Communication plan with shareholders:

It's probable that the team's lower-ranking members won't feel safe voicing their opinions and suggestions. They advocate for open communication and encourage all team members to contribute to brainstorming sessions (Indeed, 2021). It's possible that at AXA UK, top-down communication is stifled due to a lack of transformative leadership from the top. To improve morale, trust, and a sense of ownership in the projects they work on, the executives of AXA UK may promote this form of communication. When the management and organizational structure of the AXA firm undergo changes, it may be challenging for upper-level managers to unite their staff behind a unified goal. In a manner similar to this, AXA observed a drop in income as a direct consequence of problems with team communication. If there are problems with communication, it is likely that these problems might have an effect on how the firm operates as a whole. Not only do workers communicate with one another via the AXA company's message or email system, but also through meetings and encounters that are less formal. Productivity in the workplace increases dramatically when employees are able to communicate with one another in a good and professional manner (Indeed, 2021). AXA exercises like roundtable discussions and formal presentations are examples of

activities that those in leadership positions within the organization are expected to use to encourage an open and productive debate among their fellow employees. In a perfect world, contact ought to result in advancement, but in reality, there are numerous challenges that emerge as a result of bad communication, and the efficiency and profits of the firm are lowered as a result of these issues.

Assess appropriate monitoring and review techniques to ensure successful implementation of solution:

It is essential for a leader to provide their full focus to the task at hand. All of the workers who are present at the gathering, regardless of whether it is a group meeting or a group discussion, need the complete and undivided attention of the leader at all times. The ability to communicate at higher levels will become less difficult as a result of this. When one focuses their attention on a particular topic, they are better able to recognize changes in the manner in which another person communicates and to react effectively to those changes (Vdovin, 2021). This is due to the fact that when a person's mind is entirely focused with anything else, nothing else can compete for that mind's attention. The AXA Company also held a party for its employees, which included an unstructured activity in which employees from various departments had the opportunity to mix and mingle with one another and get to know one another better. As a direct consequence of this, a greater number of individuals will cooperate in order to find solutions to issues, and the overall standard of education will improve (Patel, 2022). So in order to ensure effective monitoring and review techniques AXA management needs to consider the following techniques:

- Continuous and deliberate action is taken throughout the assessment stage. Every strategy for communication has to include some downtime for introspection and critical examination of efforts already made. It is not acceptable to leave this decision up to the discretion of each individual.
- An analysis of the future situation is carried out. To put it another way, it shows the AXA organization how to improve its performance in the years to come. It

simplifies the process of figuring things out, increases productivity, and leads to better judgments.

- Evaluation of management is a process that may be carried either officially or informally in order to aid in determining the activities that should be taken next.
- The findings of AXA's study are supposed to be helpful in determining appropriate courses of action. This strategy calls for the planning and implementation of many tiers. Rolling down planning and rolling up evaluation are two directions that might be taken along the same strategic axis (Patel, 2022).
- The establishment of measurable objectives at the commencement of a communication project is an essential first step that must be taken in order to pave the way for a fruitful review in the future.

Conclusion:

The purpose of this article is to use theories and concepts in order to analyse the communication problem in the organization, investigate its influence, and provide a workable solution to the challenges that have been identified as a result of the analysis of the communication problem. It's possible that the company may get an advantage over its rivals by maximizing the use of its communication resources. The company has to take measures to stop it and wipe it out totally. Due to internal reorganization, AXA has relocated its insurance sales expert to the healthcare sector. It has an effect on productivity. If the CEO of AXA notices a breakdown in communication between management and staff, he or she may step in and assign everyone involved with the problem a role that calls for joint responsibility.

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