

Skills for the Workplace

Module Assignment Submission

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Effective Team Work and Communication

Introduction:

Communication is the backbone of every kind of relationship, be it formal or informal. From a couple to the largest organization in the world, a seamless communication is the key to ensure longevity of relationship between people and between the organizations. In this scenario if at any cost there is a gap in communication the resultant scenario can lead to unwanted repercussions and consequences. Here we are going to discuss about the importance of communication in a workplace and how it can help to improve the performance.

Communication:

In simple terms communication refers to the exchange of information by various methods including speaking, writing or using any other viable medium. Communication is used to convey a message from one entity to a single or various entity. Not only sending or conveying the information, communication also refers to listening and responding to a certain piece of information.

We all say that technology has made our lives easier, convenient and accessible. How it has converted the way we live, work, have fun, communicate, interact, love and learn. In true sense, technology may have increased the human efficiency to work and learn but it also has deteriorated the level and intimacy of communication that we use to have before the advent of the new methods of communicating with each other. Effective communication has been transformed and it is not as effective as it used to be. The reason being technology has removed the necessary elements of communicating and rendered the individual just a machine speaking from the other end without any expressions. The body language, the tone, the style of speaking, the emotions hidden inside every word, and the cadence of your speech everything hides behind the curtain of technology and what we get is a plain, emotionless interaction.

Workplace Communication:

The modern workplace is inherently collaborative, and this collaboration relies on effective communication among coworkers. Many communications tools email, blogs, wikis, Twitter, etc. have become increasingly available and are accepted in workplace communications. (Turner, Qvaforde, Biehl, Golovchinsky, and Back, 2010) In a workplace where emotions have to take the backseat, technology has improved the methods of communication and has also led to several benefits like increasing the efficiency and speed of work. It has also helped us improve upon the traditional methods of communication and reduced the scope of misunderstanding when everything within an organization is followed in writing. But still there are some elements that

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are missing, for instance courtesy, attentive listening, active participation and situation analysis. These are the elements that are only possible to observe and rely upon in interpersonal communication or a face to face conversation.

There are several benefits of an effective workplace communication:

1. **Team building:** the most eloquent feature of a good team is the communication skills that they all carry and use for their interaction. Effective communication has dual benefits, one it helps in a strong team building and another that it helps in strengthening a team when it has already been built due to effective communication. Hence it is an all-round development attribute that is necessary for every organization.
2. **Clearing things:** whether it is a meeting or a casual conversation when we follow the rules of effective communication it is always best for both the participants. The managers when talking to the employees should converse in a clear tone and convey what he expects from them. This can only be done if he follows the basic rules of effective communication.
3. **Problem Solving:** if an organization is marred by ineffective and bad communication it leads to birth of several conflicts in the company. The instructions are not followed properly, or the HR belittles employees without knowing the correct reason, all this is a significant marker of poor communication skills in the organization. However, if a company follows good communication skills and the employees are readily engaging in effective communication strategies the chances of a conflict reduce substantially.

Types of communication:

There are in general five types of communication:

1. Verbal communication: as the name suggests it refers to oral communication between two parties. This type of communication is direct, quick and conveys the right message.
2. Non-verbal communication: this type of communication is bereft of the verbal stimulus and conveys the message in an indirect manner. For instance, the face expression, body language and other impressions exhibited by the human all are the markers of non-verbal communication.
3. Written Communication: the written communication is performed through any written medium where the sender has to write the message on a piece of paper or like in the modern time on an email or even WhatsApp.
4. Formal and informal communication: all the official letters, memos, procedures, regulations, applications, reports and whatnot they all are the representatives of formal communication. On the other hand, informal communication in which there is nothing official and everything is done or conveyed in a casual manner.

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5. Visual communication: the informative videos, pamphlets, brochures and other material which try to convey a message with the help of media and other aspects is called visual communication.

Communication style at my Workplace National Health Service

The company I worked is as it is evident dealt in the health industry; I work in the administration department and to conduct a seamless job we needed an effective communication strategy and a good channel of communication.

The communication strategy had to be curated so accurately that I could execute a perfect job at delivering the right message to the internal as well as external stakeholders and members. In this scenario, we do not have a good communication policy at the company, one which could make a profound impact on how the organization operates and functions.

At the core of our communication policy was a constant interaction within the employees; it was done through weekly meetings and town hall meetings every two months. The weekly meetings usually had an agenda but when there was no fixed propaganda to hold the meeting we would just gather around and have a casual conversation as a single unit. This helped us in various ways:

1. It helped the employees muster their strength and talk to the management on the issues they are facing. Why we stressed the weekly meetings was because there are some employees who are a bit shy to express their concerns. But with weekly gathering they will be able to present themselves at some point of time and this was our sole motive, to let all the employees interact with each other and the management.
2. Moreover, with these meetings we saw a substantial decrease in the backbiting habit of some employees. Working in an organization you will realize that some employees indulge in back biting about other employees and management on every small issue. This all leads to a bad and ineffective communication policy and is a breeding ground for disputes and conflicts.
3. Thirdly, the constant touch between the employees and the management helped to create a smooth channel between them. The managers could easily express their policy changes, the aims and objectives to the employees in an understandable and friendly manner.
4. Lastly, it also helped the employees bring any issues in front of the management. The problems they are facing, if they something else from the company or not and other similar things which make this seamless relationship vulnerable and prone to damage.

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This was the whole communication scenario in the organization. When we talk about the exclusive communication policy between the employees it was also executed rather beautifully. The reason being that the employees almost knew each other from the regular meetings and other reason being that in every meeting I had to make sure to convey a positive message about the positive effects of effective communication. This helped them understand and execute these principles of a good communication policy in daily work routine.

Communication Theories and Models:

The most comprehensive ancient texts on communication to which we have access are those of the Greek and Roman societies. In both societies, communication is defined as synonymous with rhetoric, though that term was contested between Plato and Aristotle. (Eadie and Goret, 2011) The communication theories are developed to provide a systematic procedure and process to its followers. These theories provide a streamlined structure and explain the role of the different actors within an organization. From employees to the management, everyone comes under the ambit of these theoretical perspectives.

1. **Critical Theory:** this theory states that an organization is in a constant state of disruption and conflict. The employees are dissatisfied at the management and vice versa. According to the critical theory the management has to take a proactive role in conducting all types of communication with the employees. Not only is it relevant in solving conflicts, the critical theory is also propounded to prevent any kind of further conflicts.
2. **Post-Positive Approach:** Since an organization can survive only if it performs well, managers are ultimately forced to choose the course of action that gets the best results. Even when managers choose lesser options, the resulting performance deficit creates its own pressure to either correct the mistake or go out of business (Schmitz, 2012). In other words, this approach focuses on the strength and the power of the managers to set a certain course of action within the organization and this course of action has to be followed by everyone. The smooth following of this process is fine, but any discourse always invites disruption and conflicts within the organization.
3. **Interpretive Approach:** Just like when the post-positive approach says that one group of people who represent the organization decide how it works, the interpretive approach is the opposite of that. This theory propounds that the employees identify how the organization is run, this theory rounds up the organizational behavior after scrutinizing and understanding the collective behavior. This approach truly represents an organization and its communication policy through the eyes of the employee and not a specific group of people who want to drive the organization.

Things that need to improve at my workplace:

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Communication is in sync with collaboration and for an organization it is imperative to achieve one so that we are able to obtain the second objective that is of collaboration. In this scenario, organizations need to work in this area and ensure that they are following the cohesive policies and cohabitate the diverse ecosystem of an organization amicable through better communication.

1. **Social Intranet:** Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms are very powerful in driving the employees towards a more interactive approach for communication. These tools will help the employees interact with a higher intensity since they are already accustomed to using the social media. Hence, integrating this model into the organization can help you determine the important aspects of communication and also assist the employees in a persistent communication loop.
2. **Enhance the organizational culture:** If one thing that drives a millennial towards the organization is its culture. They are not enticed by money and brand power any more, these and several other factors do play a role, but the culture has overtaken them when it comes to deciding one's fate for the next few years. In this scenario, when the employees see that the company has an engaging culture, where they will be chained to their desks rather with the help of technology and effective communication tools, they can do a lot more. They will surely choose the culture over other parameters.
3. **Intermittent communication:** employees do not like it when they are bombarded with messages after every 2 months. This only confuses them and leads to a stage of conflict, because with so many previous and latest announcements or interactions, the employees are unable to keep up with it. Hence it is very important that the organizations adopt a lively communication culture which helps them drive towards a better interaction.

Benefits of this Improvement:

As for using technology in our everyday communication within the organization it is always stressed on using the better aspects of technology. Along with this the aim is inculcating learning and enabling behavior in the employees, along with allowing them to establish interpersonal connections. Usage of technology can eloquently impact the interpersonal relations in an organization; this is done after introducing communication tools like Skype and Microsoft Outlook to personify the importance of quick and agile communication in the organization. A study and research by Nardi 2005, explained that technology helps the employees develop a sense of communicative readiness, this means that they are more comfortable in interacting through the medium of technology rather than following the traditional approaches.

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Following his findings and from experience it is evident that the employees create communication channels within themselves which helps them better collaborate and integrate with each other. The teams and departments with their own Skype groups in which they were to share all the queries and questions regarding the given tasks.

Added to this this will allow the company to conduct a formal communication by using Microsoft Outlook, the sending and receiving of official messages, transcripts and policy announcement can be made through this formal channel. These both solutions covered the formal and informal communication in the organization giving way for an effective communication strategy and its implementation.

Conclusion:

In conclusion it is evident that a better and improved communication culture of an organization is imperative for its overall growth. Not just for the employees this communication is also important to maintain so that we are able to project an impressive image to our external customers and other stakeholders. Communication as an act has to be executed with utmost care and precision so that we are able to perform better under the given circumstances.

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