

Effective Team Working and Communication

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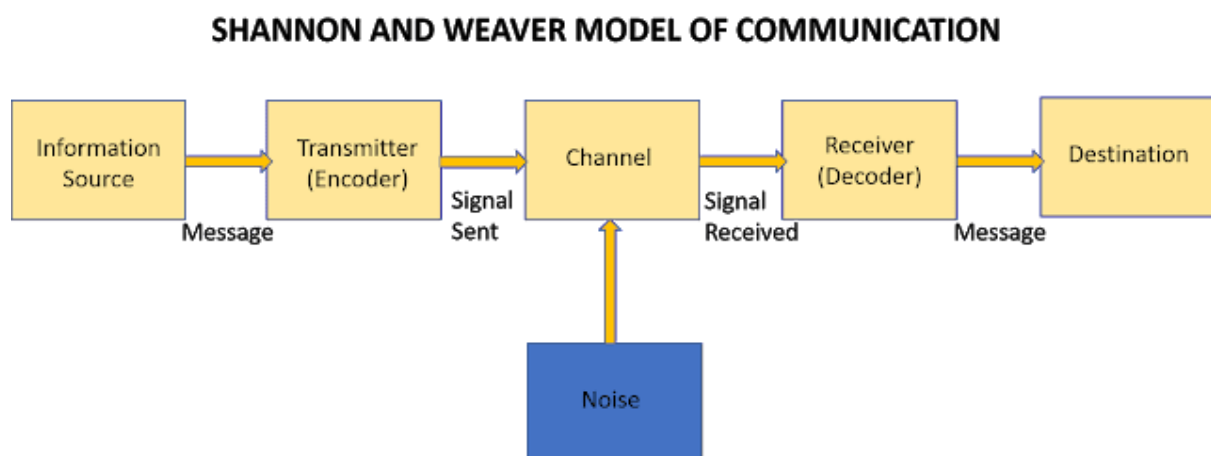
1. Introduction

Communication is the process of transferring information from one person, place or group to another and involves at least one sender, some kind of message and a recipient. (Brown, 1996) Communication is used every day when giving and receiving different kinds of information which can be broken down into categories:

2. Models of Communication

2.1. Shannon and Weaver's Model (1948)

The Shannon and Weaver is the most well-known formal model of communication developed in 1948 by Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver. It is a linear or one way model that provides a framework for analyzing how messages are sent and received and is best known for its ability to explain how messages can be misinterpreted. It consists of five elements: an information source, which produces a message; a transmitter, which encodes the message into signals; a channel, to which signals are adapted for transmission; a receiver, which decodes (reconstructs) the message from the signal; a destination, where the message arrives. A sixth element, noise, is any interference with the message travelling along the channel which may lead to the signal received being different from that sent. (Oxford reference,2020)



<https://michellemathiasfsp.blogspot.com>

In our case study we had the situation of Maria (Sender) and Pedro (Receiver), where Pedro through the physical building noise (Noise) was unable to hear that his wife asked him to buy chicken for dinner, instead of chicken he heard "kitchen". The teacher tried to explain how right communication without distraction can be avoidable in common life situations. In this particular situation noise affected the successful delivery of the message. As with the linear model, noise can affect the communication. It might even be affected by one person feeling hungry or having gotten into an argument with a family member. (Crawley, 2019) Shannon and Weaver's model clearly demonstrates why even the simplest communication can be misunderstood.

The way that a message is communicated is best understood from the receiver's perspective, not through the communicator or the messenger itself (Beamer, 1992). This is proved from Shannon- Weaver model as communication takes place once the receiver can repeat what the sender has originally communicated. Distractions can prevent the communication being understood, such as physical noise, uncomfortable environment or physical position..

As a case of study I can give you an example in my workplace which was misleading and led to misunderstanding:

A client phoned the salon and wanted an appointment for the following week on 10th of August. The technician advised her that we were fully booked until 11th September and we could fit her in on 12th. The client accepted the appointment. She arrived for her appointment on 12th of August, but technician meant 12th of September. This could of been avoided if the technician had confirmed the appointment verbally with all the detail, for example, "OK, we look forward to seeing you on 12th September at 2pm"

Advantages of Shannon and Weaver's Model

Firstly it is broken down into simple understandable parts.
It explains the barriers to effective communication very well as it shows us the concept of noise which allows us to identify areas for improvement.
And it has been used to explain probably all forms of communication.

Disadvantages of Shannon and Weaver's Model

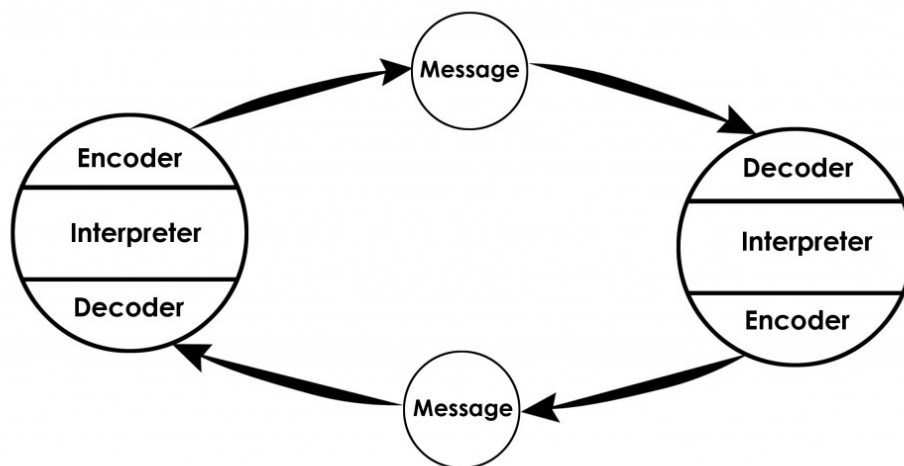
Firstly it's a linear model and the original 1948 blueprint had little regard for feedback, however feedback was actually added by Weaver at a later date.
It does not account for social relationships and identities of the people communicating.
<https://helpfulprofessor.com/shannon-weaver-model>

2.2. Schramm's Model (1954)

Schramm's model of communication(1954) actually has its roots from the Shannon Weaver model itself. Schramm developed straightforward communication. (Beamer, 1992). The model always requires three elements - the source, the message and the destination.

Ideally, the source encodes a message and transmits it to its destination via some channels, where the message is received and decoded. It can be used to determine how communication between two people works when they exchange information.

Schramm model of communication



As you can see on the diagram above, this model is a circular rather than linear. It involves a sender, who encodes a message, and a recipient who decodes it. Schramm states that the communication between the sender and recipient is incomplete unless the sender receives feedback from the recipient accordingly.

Schramm argued that the circular feature of the model is different from other linear models. When

"In fact it is misleading to think of the communication process as starting somewhere and ending somewhere. It is really endless. We are really switchboard centers handling and re-routing the great endless current of information." (Schramm, 1955)
<https://helpfulprofessor.com/osgood-schramm/>

In Schramm's model encoding and decoding are two factors that are very important but he also was insistent a message should be interpreted in order to be understood. A lot of meaning could be lost or misinterpreted in the process. This he called "semantic noise" caused by "semantic barriers" which include things like knowledge, values and a person's background which could impact how a person sends or receives a message. However because this is two way communication going in a circular pattern, this noise would be reduced as the two people communicate further and clarify their understanding (Pfeiffer, 1998)

Both participants of the communication are able to encode, decode and interpret in this model, therefore it views them as equal participants. This model works very well in understanding face-to-face conversations or text conversations where both members of the conversation have a circular or back-and-forth discussion.

This equal communication model is different to many others, which see people taking the role of either 'sender' or 'receiver'. By contrast, Schramm's model sees the participants as both sender and receiver of messages.

"The Osgood-Schramm model reminds us that the communication of information is never a simple one-dimensional process whereby the message is encoded, transmitted and decoded as intended." (McCabe, 2009, p. 27)

Advantages of Schramm's Model

This model explains cyclical feedback, other models fail to account for feedback and dialogue. In this model, the speaker can get feedback therefore as the cycle continues the communication becomes more clear.

It recognises communication can be a complex process by accounting for encoding, decoding and interpretation showing that we can mishear or misunderstand.

It also shows us as being active communicators, we are not just recipients because we are active in interpreting the information.

Disadvantages of Schramm's Model

This model does not recognise communication may not be equal. For example a person in authority talking to a person where the person would not be able to interpret and understand the message.

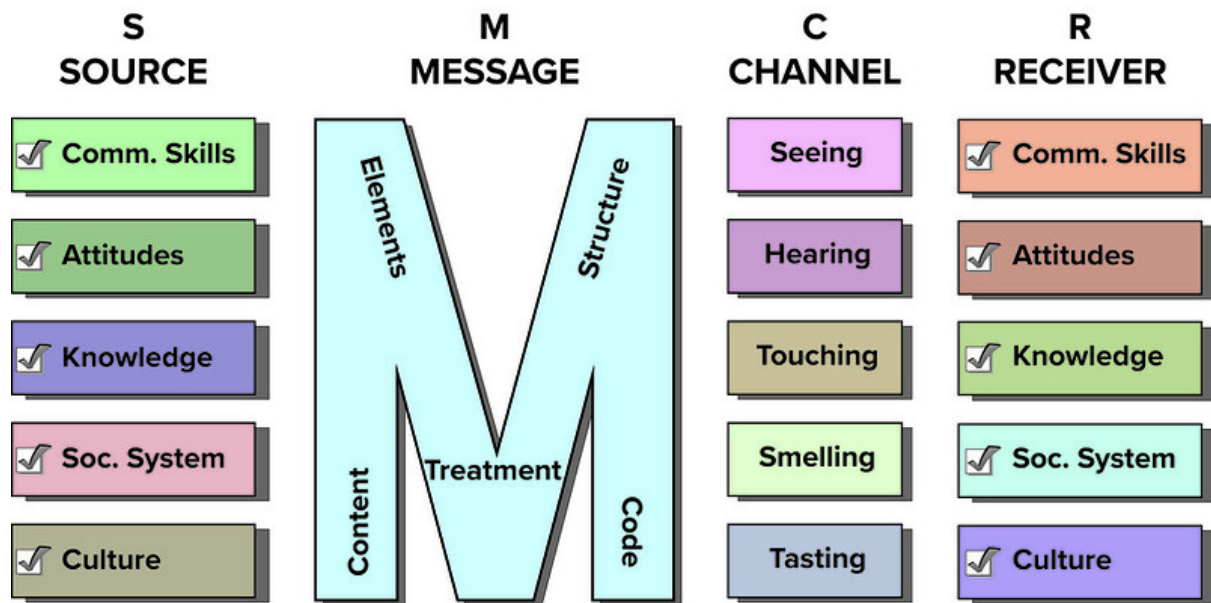
It does not work for mass communication as it's a one to one cyclic model which is unsuitable for multiple receivers and senders.

2.3 Berlo's model of communication (1960)

The Berlo communication model is also not too different from the Shannon Weaver model. Constructed by David Berlo in 1960, this version takes the Shannon Weaver model a step further and considers the factors that can affect each of the model's components.

<https://learn.g2.com/communication-theory>

His SMCR model, (Sender, Message, Channel, Receiver) which he believes makes communication more efficient is clearly illustrated in the diagram below:



The Source & Receiver components have the same factors as Berlo believes that effective communication can be achieved if the sender and the receiver are on the same level. In mass communication we use telephones, computers and other machines but here Berlo details the 5 senses for the channel

Advantages of Berlo's Model

Although it looks complicated, it is straightforward and includes all the primary factors which are part of any communication process and also the factors which affect them.

This model is still being used in some cases of purer forms of communication like person to person.

Disadvantages of Berlo's Model

There is a lack of feedback.

There is no mention of barriers to communication.

There is no room for noise.

It relies on people being on the same level for effective communication, which is not too common in everyday life.

In 1960, David Berlo postulated the SMCR communication model from the Shannon-Weaver model. He described components making communication more efficient, also it focuses on encoding and decoding which happens between sender and receiver and before the receiver receives the message respectively. (Alley-Young,2013)

3.Communication skills

3.1 Verbal Communication

Verbal communication is when we speak with others and can be face to face, over the telephone, and more recently Skype or Zoom. Some are formal such as in the

workplace and others informal such as chatting with friends over lunch. The conversation itself is not the only important aspect, the complexity of the words, sentence structure, tone, pitch and speed are all factors in effective communication. We often think that verbal communication is just talking but written communication is also part of verbal communication. When you read an article or magazine you are decoding the authors' written verbal communication (Duck and McMahan, 2020). Written communication can be in the form of a letter, but in today's age of technology is more likely to be an email or note on facebook or twitter. We write things in order to convey a message in a clear and concise manner, but if this is poorly done with errors and mistakes then it could lead to confusion or even drastic consequences in the medical or legal environments for example. A very important factor to remember is written communication on electronic devices is there forever and can be shared endlessly, so you must take this into account before finalizing anything.

In the case study of Barry, he experienced barriers in his communication as the employees he managed were from four generations of different cultures, ethnic backgrounds and English was not the primary language for many of them. This resulted in poor health and safety standards. Barry had put up signage, but he could have created signage in the employees native language and even learnt some of the key words in their language.

3.2 Non Verbal Communication

Signals and signs are components of the communication process found all over the world in all cultures and highly likely began development in prehistoric man before any vocal skills.

The purpose of a signal is to make a change in the environment to attract attention and transfer a meaning, for example Red Indians using puffs of smoke on a mountain, tapping your pencil in a meeting or screaming in a critical situation.

A sign is usually some kind of illustration, but also a person holding up their hand to gesture "stop" or forming the "o.k." gesture with their finger and thumb also serve as signs.

When we speak we actively and/or subconsciously use body language which can add emphasis to the conversation, this includes facial expressions, eye contact, arm movements and posture. This non verbal communication can often mean more than the spoken word. For example, you could be having a conversation with your partner who is agreeing with what you say, but their body language may indicate the opposite.

In the case study of "A Day with the Chief," Mark was surprised the CEO was not as bad as he had been told, she was welcoming, polite and attentive, showing interest in Mark. Mark had become relaxed which would have been her intention to help him open up. But he was too relaxed, he had loosened his tie and crossed his legs which would look unprofessional, especially in front of the CEO. In becoming too

comfortable Mark then also proceeded to provide negative comments on other people and the business prompting the CEO's facial expression of displeasure and then having him shown out.

Mark should have remained professional, sitting up, showing positive body language and keeping his attire looking sharp and presentable whilst keeping negative comments about his colleagues to himself.

3.3 Active and empathic listening

Empathic listening is derived from the word "Empathy" which is the capacity to understand or feel what another person is experiencing from within their frame of reference, that is, the capacity to place oneself in another's position. *Wikipedia*

Being an empathic listener is showing you are being attentive and responsive to the other persons or peoples input during conversation. In listening empathically you will make an emotional connection with the other person and associating their experiences with similar ones of your own will enable you to give a more genuine response. In doing so and showing sincere understanding of other people's values, opinions, and ideas. you will be showing the person that you care about them. Empathic listening will allow you to tune in with a person on an emotional level in turn making them feel heard.

An empathic listener lets the speaker know they understand their problem and how they feel about it. They show respect, interest, patience and do not judge. In acknowledging the speaker with body language and summarising their words you will create confidence within the speaker, reduce any tension and gain trust.

In the case study of Max, he showed poor listening skills which resulted in confusion with the date for a party of 150 guests, upsetting Tamara and possibly affecting his future business. Max was trying to keep costs down by not employing any assistance, in this case he did not remove obstacles such as another simultaneous phone call and so forgot to note a date change in his diary.

Conclusion

Good communication is an essential tool in the workplace. It can help improve productivity and build strong working relationships at all levels. This has proved to be important since the Covid-19 outbreak as many employees had to work from home remotely. Organisations that invest time, resource and effort into establishing clear lines of communication will be able to build trust among their employees and in turn this leads to increased productivity and morale. On the other hand, poor communication could lead to low morale and trust in the organisation as well as misunderstanding and conflict.

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