



Module Title : Effective Team Working And Communication

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Module Lecturer Name : Akiusoye Aluko

Group : 2 Weekend

Student Name : Nicu Ile

Student ID Number : 1913388

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Introduction:

Communication refers to the methods of exchanging ideas as well as information among two or more individuals or groups (Bonaccio, et al., 2016). In this context, effective communication is essential for fostering cooperation among employees to meet organisational goals. In this study, I will represent my knowledge and understanding related to communication skills that I gathered and developed during a few in-class activities. The later section of the study will present an analysis of real-life incident of communication failure that occurred at my workplace, Acme Electric (Hubbell, 2020). The parent company, Hubbell, was established in the year 1880 to cater to the demand of manufacturing machinery at the time of the industrial revolution. Growth and innovation are the primary pillars of success for the company. The communication channel at my workplace is basically done through face-to-face communication, meetings, written communication etc. The analysis will be underpinned with the existing theories of communication that include Fredrick Taylor's Scientific Management theory and Berlo's SMCR Model of Communication. Based on the analysis, recommendations for the improvement of the respective workplace communication will be provided at the end.

Discussion:

In-class activities and demonstration an understanding of communication skills:

During the class in-class activities, we conducted several case study analysis and distributed emails for understanding the skill required for both verbal and written communication. The case study analysis during class activities helped me to learn about the verbal communication skills that accelerate workplace as well as organisational communication leading to improved stakeholder relations. The first and foremost communication skill that is required is interpersonal skills (Kaushal, 2014). Interpersonal skills are used for engaging in a communication that happens face-to-face between two or more people. While conducting the case study analysis, we were involved in identifying specific areas of case studies and then exchanging information with our teammates. While exchanging information, I learnt that listening is one of the most essential interpersonal skill that is required for communicating with other individuals (Modaff, et al., 2016). Here, it must be mentioned that it is not only about exchanging information in the form of speech but also about the body gestures which

we deliver while communicating. There were various conflict scenarios between many of our classmates because of high pitched voice tones and colloquial body language along with gestures.

While handling these scenarios of conflict, I understood that there are other varied aspects of interpersonal communication skills that include facial expressions, gestures, body language along with voice tones. I learnt that while communicating with a person, especially at a professional level, non-verbal behaviour is one of the most important aspects that assists in conveying added information that is underpinned with the mind-set and mental well-being of the listener (Muller, et al., 2014). Owing to my personal experience during the in-class activities, I understood that effective communication is characterised with the skill of non-verbal behaviour that primarily delivers emotional dialect behind the speech's content. From the case study activity, I learnt that it is very important to speak in an organised manner, and avoid too much elaboration or exaggeration, especially in the case of workplace communication. By culminating all of my understandings, I learnt that the speech that is used during communication must be simple and must be served with a professional and an accepting body language (Mumby & Kuhn, 2018).

Another kind of communication includes written communication that is used for transferring information and important declarations between different levels of the organisational structure. For the purpose of understanding the aspects of written communication, we were made to write emails to hypothetical board members of a stimulated business to cater to different issues that may arise at different organisational levels (Kaushal, 2014). The first skill that I learnt while writing an official email is related to the initial planning of the overall communication which is to be delivered in the form of a message. Further, during the process of writing my email to the HR about employee benefit issues, I observed that I was being very creative and instead of inculcating the key information, I was writing messages that were not important at that point of time. At this stage, my in-class professor taught me that while delivering an official message, it is also important to develop the skill of being straightforward. I learnt that trimming down the event into a powerful and impactful information is very important (Quintanilla & Wahl, 2018). Keeping the content simple is the primary key towards writing a perfect and professional email. Therefore, these

are some basic written and verbal communication skills which I have learned during the in-class activities.

Analysis of communication in my workplace with respect to theory:

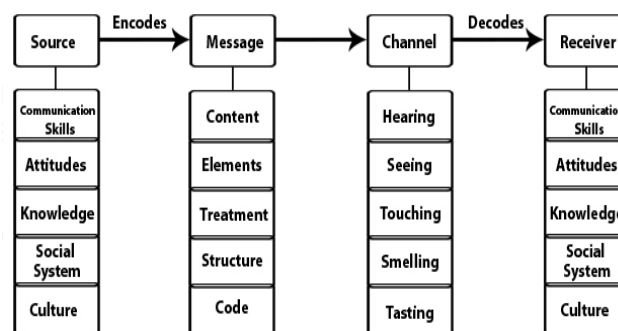
I have observed that my workplace primarily communicates by holding face-to-face meetings, by using emails as a part of written method communication, and also one-to-one communication. In this context I would want to highlight that I observed and heard about a communication failure that occurred prior a client meeting at my workplace. During my work tenure at Acme Electric, it was facing fierce competition from its rivals operating in the same market. Acme Electric incurred huge losses since past few years. However, electrical engineers in Acme Electric Company were making ceaseless efforts to research and develop innovative products. One of the new products they aimed to develop was a regulator which was designed to curb electric consumption. Therefore, to satisfy the increasing demand for devices restricting electric consumption, the company designed a special regulator. The regulator was capable of reducing electricity consumption by 35%. The team of engineers who made this regulator selected their marketing representative who would pitch their new product and represent the proposal to the client companies.

The major clients of Acme Electric were three major aluminium manufacturers. The marketing representative submitted a 120-page proposal. The first 87 pages of the proposal contained mathematical theory along with engineering designs behind this new regulator. The pitcher who was the representative of the engineering team elaborated the proposal accordingly. It has been mentioned in the previous section of the study and also according to Mumby & Kuhn, (2018), while communicating and delivering an information, the non-verbal aspects like body language and gestures have been recognised as one of the important elements. In this context, I would want to highlight that the marketing representative looked nervous, lacked confidence during the entire presentation and highlighted complicated points with mathematical terms. However, the engineers responsible for conducting a meeting to inform about the deliverables did not come up for the same which shows a glitch in the communication channel of my firm. The marketing pitch being delivered by the representative lacked clarity and confidence because of lack of information about the product that was made for attaining competitive advantage. Moreover, as per Bonaccio, et al., (2016) and based on the principle of face-to-face communication,

listening is also one of the most important communication skill. Here, it should be highlighted that it is also important for the person at the receiving end to be an active listener for the successful delivery of information. However, in the context of my company's delivery of marketing pitch, business clients were not paying attention and being unprofessional. Therefore, in the light of this scenario, the clients were observed to be uninterested and were confused about the feasibility of that new product idea. The representative was unnecessarily loud and standing with a slouch and fidget posture which reflected that she lacked confidence. Thus, in spite of an excellent and profitable idea of manufacturing energy efficient regulators, my company lost the contract due to poor and unprofessional communication during a meeting.

The above case study is analysed with the help of Berlo's SMCR Model of Communication.

Berlo's SMCR Model of communication



According to Berlo's Model, there are several elements which are essential for workplace communication. The components include Sender, Message, Channel and Receiver. The sender is one of the most important elements from which the message originates, and it has to be reliable (Savolainen, et al., 2014). The transparency of the entire communication process depends on the reliability of the sender. The positive attitude of the human source, in turn, evokes the reliability of the audience on the message transmitted. In this case of the client-meeting, the primary source were the engineers who did not craft up a meeting with the marketing representative who was responsible for pitching about the new product in front of the business clients. According to Modaff et al., (2016), the factors that are responsible for influencing the attitude of the sender, do not impact the receiver. Communication skills and attitude have been recognised as one of the two important factors in Berlo's Model which impacts the transmission as well as the interpretation of the message sent and

received by the sender and the receiver respectively. As per the scenario, the poor speaking skills, along with the negative as well as nervous attitude of the sender, was the reason behind the non-acceptance of the proposal by the receivers. Again, the lack of patience and listening skills from both the ends contributed to the failure of workplace communication. As per the model, knowledge, social system and culture are also identified as important factors that affect the sender (Turaga, 2016). In this case scenario, the speaker was unable to represent her knowledge effectively, and her culture and social beliefs were responsible for her negative attitude, nervousness and unorganised thinking. Although, both the receiver and the sender were familiar with the subject matter of the presentation, there was a lack of clarity.

According to Berlo's Model of communication, message is another component of an information that is identified as the content being conveyed from the sender to the receiver. This model indicates that the sender expects the message to be interpreted in a certain way by the receiver (Mumby & Kuhn, 2018). However, the model also displays that correct interpretation requires clarification and transparency in the message and content being delivered. As per the scenario mentioned in the above scenario, the sender was using technical terms along with mathematical designs which made the presentation unclear. This made the entire content complicated to the clients (Communication Theory 2019). Another factor that influences the message being delivered are elements which refers to the body language being used to transmit a message at the workplace. Complex terms, negative body language showing lack of confidence are the elements in this case study which contributed to the communication failure substantially. The packaging of the information or the way the message is transmitted is referred to as treatment which is recognised as another factor that influences a message. In this case study the way of transmission of the message was speech which lacked clarity and emphasis on important points. In order to be more effective as well as organised transmission of the message, the message is divided into a few parts. In the case of my company's marketing pitch, the messages to be transmitted were not structured or organised, and focus was laid more on irrelevant information (Prudencio, 2014). As per the model, coding, as well as interpretation of the message in this case study, was not clear due to unorganised as well as unstructured communication of the content (Turaga 2016).

Recommendations for improvements:

According to Kaushal, (2014), the Human Resource managers are also responsible for inculcating effective communication skills by providing them effective training and development sessions. This assists in enhancing the communication skills of the employees. There was lack of clarity in the message that was being delivered. The negative body language was also the reason behind the communication failure. It is important for the employees to develop confidence and learn professional body gestures in workplace communication. More specifically, prior to the meeting, if my managers would have made the strategies to foster effective communication, by emphasising on the use of simple language, confident representation, patience and positive body language; and elaborated them to the employees, this communication failure would not have occurred. Therefore, the HR managers of my company should have given training sessions to the marketing representative about the communication strategies and skills that was required for business presentation during the meeting.

Conclusion:

Based on the discussion above, it is observed that effective communication is responsible for building up stakeholder relationships both on internal and external level. From the class activity related to the analysis of the case study and email-writing, I have identified that both verbal and written communication skills are important in the context of organisational scenarios. Post the analysis of my workplace scenario, with the help of Berlo's Model of organisational communication; I realised that, both of the parties were responsible for this communication failure. The marketing representative could not communicate the proposal strategically. As per the model, both the sender and the receiver were not patient during the meeting and did not listen carefully until the end. Moreover, there was a lack of clarity in the message being delivered to business clients. Based on the analysis, it is recommended that the HR Manager of my firm should have trained its employees on how to pitch products and represent proposals using appropriate communication strategies. This would help them in avoiding any kind of communication failure in the future.

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