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Communication at my friend's workplace

Effective Teamwork and Communication

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In this essay I am going to analyse communication at my friends' workplace. There are many ways of communication which we use on daily bases. These include verbal and non-verbal way of communicating. All types of communication have its positive side and negative side. In this essay I will analyse my friends' workplace, the types of communication methods they use at work, and how communication at their workplace is effective and if not, how can it be improved?

Communication is an act of passing on information such as thoughts, ideas and emotions. This can be done in verbal, non-verbal way, written or visual way. For example, speaking is verbal of way communicating. On the other hand, gestures or eye contact is a non-verbal way of communicating. For example, action like winking indicate interest. Another form of non-verbal communication can be body language for example, smiling is a way of communicating to someone that you are happy. It may seem that, the main type of communication is verbal. However, studies have shown that, over 70% of communications is through a non-verbal way such as physical communication.

My friends place of work is a ship. Therefore, there are many ways people communicate with each other. For example; face to face, email, megaphone, radio transmitter, written communication, signs, symbols but also colour coding. Effective communication and teamwork are vital for the vessel operations to run smoothly. Therefore, it is important for the sender of a message to ensure that message gets to the receiver clearly. In case of emergency on board of a vessel the Captain announces colour coded signals throughout the vessel via megaphone to ensure it gets to the crew efficiently. The colour red indicates fire. "crew call, crew call- working party red, working party red" is an example of the way a captain would communicate an emergency of a fire to its crew on the vessel. This works perfectly, as it is through a loud megaphone and everyone on the ship can hear it. This is very similar to Shannon and Weaver (1949) theory of communication where the sender (captain) encodes the message and sends it to the receiver (crew members) through a technological channel (megaphone) the sender then encodes the message. In my example, the captain is the sender, who encodes in language used on the vessel. The mega-phone is the channel and the crew ears are the receptor their brain is the decoder and receiver. Although Shannon and Weaver (1949) theory was criticised, because of feedback to the sender not being as important in comparison to the message sent by the sender, in my example I show that in some situations it is not important for the sender to receive a verbal response from the receiver. In this case, the receiver communicates back to the sender by their actions. Which is like the Berlo's (1960) model of communication. In Berlo's (1960) model of communication the 'channel' are the 5 human senses. Which in my example would be hearing the captains crew call announcement and smelling the smoke which is coming from the fire. This communicates to the receiver (crew) that there is an emergency on board. The receiver(crew) then would use their knowledge to take appropriate actions. This in Berlo's (1960) theory would be decoding the message being sent. This also suggests that the training of the crew and the communication used was effective as all crew understand what to expect when such announcement is announced. The use of mega-phone is very effective. This is because the megaphone is loud enough to be heard throughout the whole vessel and all crew, receive the captains' message.

However, this does not suggest that the communication on the vessel is perfect. There is also a barrier to communication on the vessel. Crew on the vessel are from all over the world, different country, cultures and backgrounds. There are different age groups of people working on the ship and from different regions or countries which creates a language barrier. The younger crew members use language such as slang which is a barrier to communication on the vessel as the older generation do not understand the slang language. Another barrier to communication on the vessel, is people from different regions of the country. People from different regions of the country have different accents, some accents are stronger than others, however, it creates a barrier to communication, especially to the crew who come from a different country. This leads me to another barrier of communication which is a language barrier. Although, the main language used on the ship is English, not everyone sticks to the rule of speaking English. This creates a language barrier to other crew who do not understand the language spoken. Some barriers to communication will stay there. However, some can be changed. For example, the language barrier. Although, there is a rule on the ship to speak English already, not everyone sticks to it. Because it creates a barrier to communication it needs to stop. Therefore, I would suggest giving sanctions to people who do not stick the rules.

One of the biggest barriers on the vessel are physical barriers. These can be things such as; outdated computer, poor phone signal, background noise or poor lighting. The sea is known to be windy, noisy, rainy and even thundery. All these are known as natural physical barriers. Some crew members work out on the deck, their role is to load and unload vehicles. There are three floors for the vehicles where the vehicles stay throughout the voyage. Each floor has four to five crew members to ensure the right parking of the vehicles. To ensure, the process of loading and unloading the vehicles is smooth, the crew members of the deck communicate with each other through a radio transmitter. The background noise from the vehicles can prevent, two crew members from having a conversation out on the deck while loading vehicles. This is because when the crew member speaks a noise error occurs which prevents the other crew member of hearing the message. The radio transmitter method of communication is effective as it is an easy and quick way of passing on information to each other. On the other hand, this way of communicating can be influenced by the background noise from the vehicles. This can be improved by using Bluetooth headphones which have a microphone connected to it. This will allow the crew members to only hear the headphones and therefore, there will not be background noise. Furthermore, where possible crew members of the deck communicate face to face. As mentioned above, the sea is known for producing natural noise. For example, the noise from rain and wind can prevent two crew members from hearing each other. Because this type of noise is natural, it cannot be improved. However, the crew members can communicate via radio transmitter rather than face to face. This will improve the quality of their conversation. In this example the sender is; Crew member 1, encoder is the mouth, channel is the air, noise is the distraction in the voice, reception is the ear of the crew member and the receiver is crew member 2. Due to transmission noise, Crew member 2 has not been able to understand Crew member 1 messages. The noise has affected the communication flow between the two crew members.

Also, another big barrier on board of the ship, is extremely poor signal. Poor signal disables the use of mobile phones. If a sender would try to send a text message or a message via a social media, it would not be effectively completed due to the signal being poor. Although the internet signal on the ship is bad, it can be easily resolved by investing into better service provider.

Furthermore, background noise is a big communication issue. The vessel can transfer up to 2000 passengers, this would cause a lot of background noise when for example, a crew member is communicating with the captain via radio transmitter. This will disable the crew member to hear the captain. Therefore, the communication between the sender and receiver would not be effective. This can be resolved like I have mentioned above, by using Bluetooth headphones which will block the background noise.

According to Berlo (1960) a conversation can only be effective when the two people communicating have the same level of communication skills. Therefore, if two crew members, who work in different departments, and have different level of education, for example, Captain and a Steward who works in a restaurant have a conversation it will not be effective. This is because both individuals have different communication skills, but also because they do not have much in common.

Health condition can also be a barrier to communication. Although, crew who work on the vessel are medically checked every two years, they may still have some health conditions, which can prevent communication from being effective. This is known as a physiological barrier. For example, a person with a hearing aid will have difficulty hearing the radio transmitter. The radio transmitter is very important on the vessel, as it allows crew members who work on different levels of the ship to have a quick and easy conversations. However, if it is stopping communication from being effective because of the hearing aid than it can be resolved by having a face to face conversation. Another barrier to communication could be pain. This is because someone who is in pain, is less likely to have an effective conversation as the pain is reducing the concentration. This can be resolved by taking pain medication or seeing the doctor.

Tiredness can also be a barrier to communication. Every crew member on the vessel work 12-hour shift, sometimes the shifts can last up to 16 hours. Trying to communicate with a person who is extremely tired can be very difficult. Therefore, importing meetings should always take place at the start of the shift to ensure that the crew are alert and can concentrate on the information given to them. This issue can also be resolved by not giving the crew members full messages. Breaking the message into two parts and given them at different time may increasing the effectiveness of communication in a tired crew member.

Information overload is also be a barrier to communication on the vessel. In a meeting a crew member may struggle to take in all the information given by the Captain or the business leader. This is because, the meeting host may be giving too much information and options at a time which is hard to take all in at one time. This is particularly for crew member who are for example tired. Therefore, an easy option to solve this issue would be taking the meeting step by step and not overloading the crew by information. Also, it is very important for the

meeting to be taken at the start of the shift where the crew members are wide awake and ready for the day.

On board of the vessel, once a week there is a safety drill. This is to ensure all crew are familiar with their roles in case of emergency. All crew are assigned with a muster number. Muster number communicate to the crew what is their role in case of emergency and at what position it is. The muster list can be found in crew dining and sleeping areas. Muster list is written on paper and changes daily due to extra crew who joining the vessel on daily bases. The muster number is indicated to a crew member as soon as they join the ship. This is an excellent way of communicating the muster numbers to the crew. It causes no confusion to the crew in case of an emergency. However, if the musters numbers are incorrect or given to the wrong crew member, this will give the wrong message to the receiver (crew member) and in case of emergency, will indicate a wrong position and role which the receiver is not trained for. To ensure the muster number is given to the right crew member and there is no confusion in case of emergency, the person creating the muster list should always double check the muster list also, it should be checked by someone else to ensure the list is correct. At the safety drill, the business leaders use a printed muster list to check if all crew are present, which then must be reported to the captain via radio transmitter. Here, they use two way of communicating a message. Non-verbal via a paper where all crew are checked off and verbal via radio transmitter. This is also like Berlo's (1960) model of communication, where the 'source' is a muster list, 'message' is the muster number called out, channel is the hearing, and the 'receiver' is a crew member who checks off to the business leader.

Although, many factors that affect the communication onboard of the ship, cannot be improved, due to them being natural and unchangeable such as the noise from the rain or wind. Some can be improved. For example, communicating outside on the deck can be influenced by factors such as the noise from the wind. This can be easily resolved by having the conversation inside of the ship.

To conclude, communication is important for the vessel operations to run smoothly. Like mentioned above, there are many forms of communication used on the vessel such as, radio transmitter, megaphone, face to face etc. Therefore, it is very important for all crew members to acknowledge all the barriers to communication on the vessel. It is vital for the crew members to reflect on their skills and how the vessel environment affects their ability to communicate effectively with each other and passengers. Therefore, to improve the quality of communication on the vessel a training in communication would be recommended.

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In-class Exercises

THE PROFESSOR and THE VILLAGE PEOPLE

Lloyd b. 7/19

A Professor of English at a well-known Welsh University lived in a large house not far from a little village. He never went into the village, but shopped in the town near the University because he had nothing in common with the village people, who were largely uneducated and did manual jobs.

One night, the professor fell asleep while smoking his pipe and the pipe fell onto the carpet and started a fire.

When the professor awoke and saw the house on fire, he rushed into the village, screaming:

'The edifice is being consumed by a great conflagration!'

'The edifice is being consumed by a great conflagration!'

The village people looked at him and continued doing what they were doing

'Don't you understand?' He said. "The edifice is being consumed by a great conflagration!'

They ignored him.

When the Professor returned home, he saw that his house had been destroyed. He sat down on the ground and wept.

The next day, he went into the village crying. 'Why, oh why didn't you help me? My home has been destroyed by the fire. I came and begged you last night.' He wept.

'But Professor, why didn't you say that your house was on fire? We would have helped.'

Q: Why didn't the village people help the Professor?

Q: What should he have done to get them to help him?

Q: Whose model of communication do you think can explain this situation?

Q: Why?

1. The village people didn't help the Professor because the Professor was asking a question in a formal way of communication. The village people are less educated than professor, therefore, did not understand his request.
2. The professor should have put the question in a non-formal way of communication for the village people to understand.
3. Berol's (1960) model of communication.
4. Because people were not in same level of communication as Professor. According to Berlo (1960) the communication between people can only be effective when the people communicating are on the same level of communication skills. Because professor is highly educated compared to villagers, his communication skills are higher quality, therefore the communication was not effective.

In-Class exercise: Worksheet 3 – Week 9

Self-reflection about Assessment

Student Name: Tomas Adam

Student ID: 1917610

Module Name: Effective teamwork and communication

BMSK4002t1Gr1_2_3_4_5_6_7.18

Aims:

This exercise is aimed to help you record your reflection/understanding of module content and help you prepare your final assignment. Complete it as best as you can.

What did you learn in this module and how does it relate to your knowledge at the start of this term?

In this module, I have learned what different types of communication models there are. I have learned what factors can influence effectiveness of communication and how to overcome them. I have also learned the importance of time management. At the start of this term, I knew that it is important to manage time, but I never had to do it myself. This module has allowed it to experience it myself and therefore, allowed me to acknowledge the importance of getting something done on time. Furthermore, at the start of this module I did not know that there are communication models, and that there can be barriers to communication such as, cultural background.

Could you explain the structure of your assignment? You could include the title of your assignment, topics covered and a brief summary.

This assignment was produced for the effective teamwork and communication module. Topics covered in this assignment include; types of communication on board of ship, types of communication models used, how effective communication on board of ship is, what barriers are there to communication and how could they be improved. This assignment analyses the communication on board of a ship. It is focused on what types of communication are used and how effective they are. It also analyses the barriers of communication on the vessel, and how can they be improved for the communication to be effective.

What progress have you made on your assignment? You could include topics completed, topics in progress and topics yet to start.

This assignment is fully completed to the best of my knowledge. It has covered all the relevant topics such as effective communication onboard of the ship, barriers to communication and how to overcome them. It also includes the models of communication such as, Shannon and Weaver (1948) and Berlo (1960).

List any three references which are important to your assignment:

1. Gillstrom, K. (2015), *Effective Communication on Board*, Available at: <https://currents.bluewatercruising.org/articles/effective-communication-board/>, (Accessed: 22nd 2020).
 2. Jenkinson, P. (2013), *Communication Models: Basic SMCR Mode*, Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yUGW2d6nXe0>, (Accessed: 21st April 2020).
 3. University of Wales Trinity Saint David (2020), *Effective Team Work and Communication*, Available at: <https://moodle.uwtsd.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=7030>, (Accessed: 21st April 2020)
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Explain why you consider the references listed above important for your assignment.

These references are very important for this assignment because, they include models of communication used in my essay, and the communication onboard of a ship. These are vital for my assignment, as these are the main topics of my assignment.

List the employability skills you have acquired/developed by doing this assignment:

1. Communication skills
2. Formal writing
3. Time management

Your final thoughts and comments

This module has allowed me to get life lasting skills, such as communication skills and time management. These skills are vital for my academic and career development. I am proud of the work I have produced, and thankful for the knowledge I have gained by completing this module.

Important note: if a student fails to attend all three sessions when these worksheets are completed, they may be required to attend a viva in week 11 or 12.