

Effective team work and communication: Report

Effective team work and communication BMSW4002

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INTRODUCTION

The models of communication are important in facilitating the processes of communicating in an effective and efficient way between two or more individuals. The primary function is to enhance the skills and abilities for a good communication process, but also to be helping in identifying the causes of disturbances and analyse the situation to further being able to overcome any type of barriers that can arise.

Communication is a process by which information is exchanged between two or more individuals through a system of using symbols, signs, behaviour and speaking. It can also

have different purposes such as to obtain answers to different questions, to give someone guidance, to express ideas or disagreements, but not limited to these.

As mentioned above, there are different barriers that can affect communication such as language, physical, perceptual, communication styles, inability to listen or conflicts in the workplace and not only, which can result in a poor communication that can easily be misinterpreted and very often creates a stressful environment.

Each day we communicate with people through conversation, expressions and body language, emails, messages, phone calls or social media accounts. Through communication we also ask for help, buy a car, plan holidays or simply talking to our bosses, colleagues, friends and family and if we do not communicate effectively, regardless of the environment, we can put ourselves in a difficult situation that could be harder to overcome.

This report will show how some of these barriers can affect business and using a case study studied in class but also from workplace, it'll show how a poor communication can be easily misinterpreted and decreasing productivity.

MODELS OF COMMUNICATION

This report will cover the main three models of communication studied in class which are : Shannon and Weaver (1949) , Schramm (1954) and Berlo (1960).

Shannon and Weaver (1949)

According to Research Gate, Shannon and Weaver model is a linear model of communication that provides a framework for analysing how messages are sent and received. This model it is known for its capacity to explain how messages can be misinterpreted in the process of sending and receiving a message. In his article titled " A Mathematical theory of communication " Shannon explained the goal of his model by stating that : " the fundamental problem of communication is that of reproducing a message sent from one point, either exactly or approximately, to another point " .

This particular model of communication follows the concept in a linear system from the sender to receiver : sender, encoder, channel, decoder, receiver and it was not focussed on feedback.

Sender (information source) is the person or thing that has the information to begin with. The sender starts by choosing the message, the person to send the message to and also the channel used for sending the message.

Encoder (which is the transmitter) is the person or tool that is used to send the message.

Channel is the instrument that gets the information from the sender and encoder to the decoder and receiver.

Noise interrupts a message that is on its way to the receiver.

Decoder is usually a device used for communication like a phone.

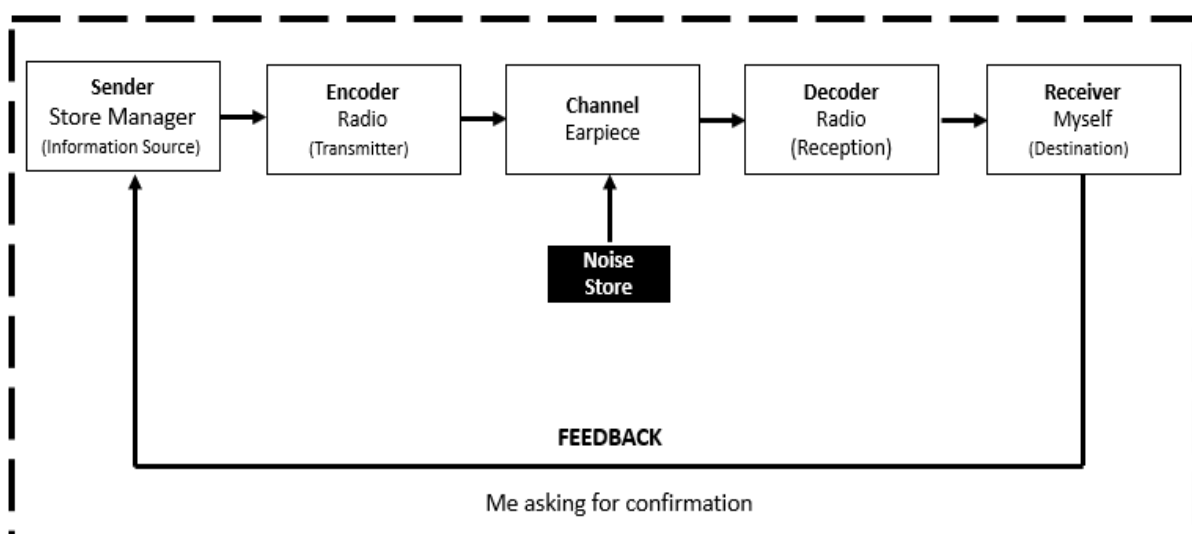
Receiver is the end point where the person gets the message.

This model of communication has shown that although there is a linear theory between a sender sending a message through an encoder which is decoded to make sense to the receiver, noise can distort the message as in the case study “ Maria and Pedro “ where the noise of the building site distorted Maria’s message and Pedro heard “ kitchen instead of “ chicken “.

A similar experience happened at one of my previous workplace where due to the big size of the store where there are many places where co-workers or team leaders can be assigned at any given point, we had to wear earpieces connected to an internal radio to be able to communicate between us when needed as going and finding the person needed would take a lot of time and would sometimes be difficult to find.

One day, the store manager called me on the radio and said to send one of my colleagues called Sarah on lunch as we were meant to start our lunches slightly earlier due to being Saturday and was predicted to be very busy and would make it harder to have our lunches on time.

While I understood his overall request, I did not get the name correctly due to the background noise in the store and sent another colleague called Cara on lunch while Sarah had to leave an hour earlier because she wasn’t able to have her lunch anymore due to the store being overwhelmingly busy.



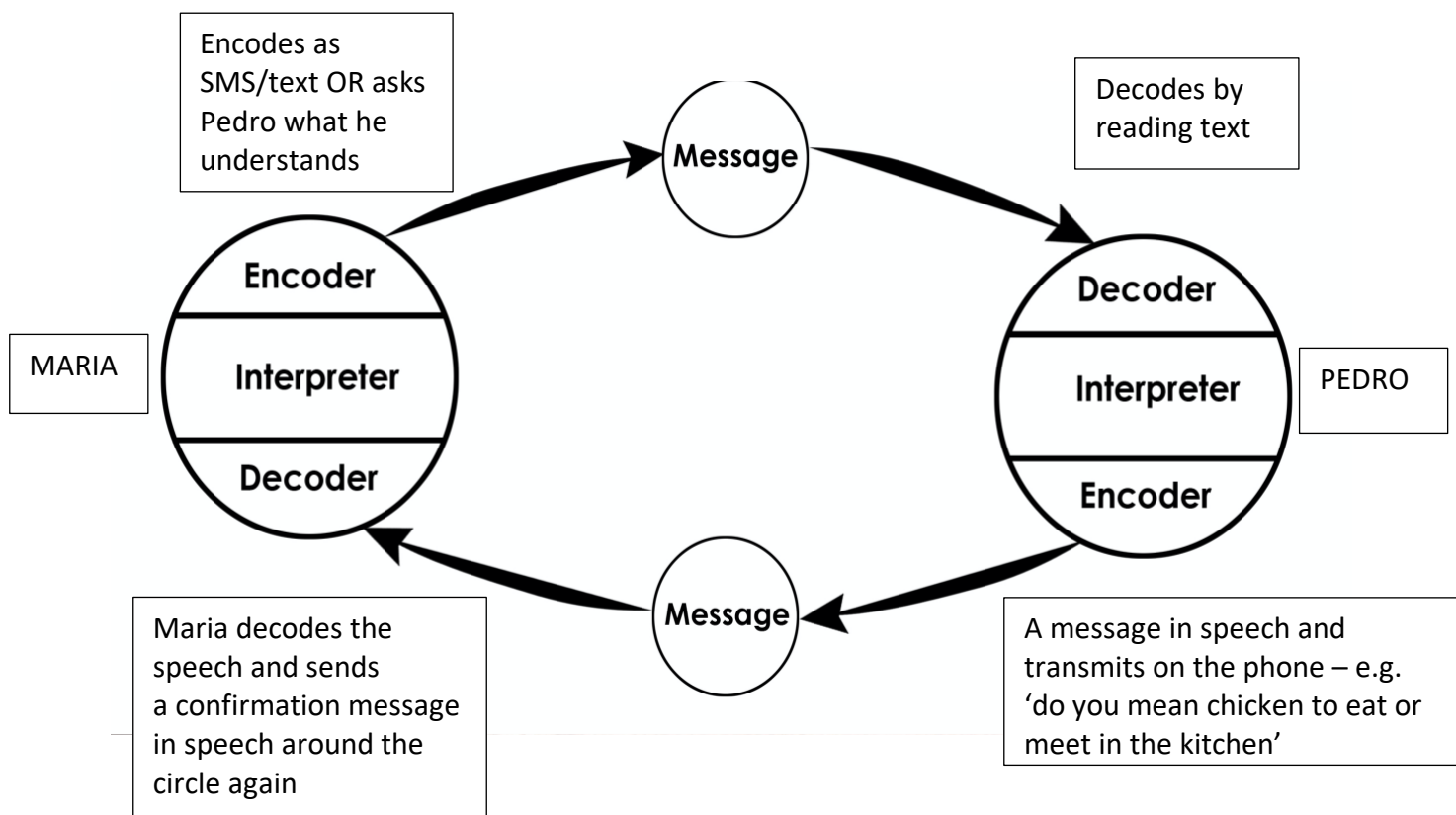
SCHRAMM (1954)

As Study.com agrees, this model involves circular communication between two people which means that each person can be a sender and a receiver. Therefore they are able to communicate to one another rather than only in one direction.

In this model, communication involves interpretation, but in the process of interpretation however, a lot of meaning can be lost due to barriers like values, beliefs and background knowledge that impacts how a person sends and how someone else receives messages.

It also states that the communication sequence requires encoding, decoding and interpreting for each person and makes it very different from Shannon and Weaver which sees communication between people taking the role of a “ sender “ or “ receiver “ .

Referring back to the study case of Maria and Pedro, their noise could've been avoided if Maria would have switched to text instead of calling and ask Pedro if he understood what she said as she heard some noise in the background, or if Pedro would have asked Maria to repeat what she said or Pedro could have gone away from the building site where it was quieter and ask confirmation for what he thought Maria said.



BERLO (1960 / 64)

While being similar to the other two models of communications like above mentioned, Berlo's model of communication equalizes both sender and receiver. Emphasizes the common understanding, there is no barriers or feedback. Here, the ideal communication happens when the sender and receiver have the same experience in communication skills, attitude, social system, knowledge and culture. Interference or "noise" might be caused after the message is sent and can disrupt the message and causes the receiver to partially receive the message or not at all. Factors that may influence the sender are also applicable to the receiver.

External noise, like in Shannon and Weaver's model, may be caused by background noise during a phone call, for example. As mentioned above, the ideal communication happens when both sender and receiver have the same communication skills, attitude and not only, but internal noise might be caused by the differences between these.

This model operates on the SMCR pattern : Sender, Message, Channel and Receiver.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

According to Maund, there are different types of communication such as verbal (spoken and written , choice of words, tone, pitch), non verbal (body language, posture, gesture, tone, signals), listening (active listening, empathetic listening). Communication skills are essential for leading to success any business as the teams need to ensure that they are able to take the ideas, perspectives, viewpoints and information to the individuals in an easy manner that can be easily understood and would be able to implement the tasks and functions successfully. Furthermore, people are able to enrich their lives when they improve their communication skills.

There are tools that can support these skills, such as S.O.L.E.R, proxemics, kinesics and personal awareness – K.E.Y.S. The latter is the acronym from know yourself, evaluate the professional context, your communication interaction with others and sit back and reflect.

S.O.L.E.R is an acronym which describes five behaviours that encourages a listening posture: S – square: Face the person squarely, O – Open: Open posture without crossed arms or legs, L – Lean slightly forward to communicate interest and engagement. Head nods and verbal encourages like " Yes " are also effective, E – Eye contact: Maintain direct eye contact according to appropriate social norms. R – Relax : Stay relaxed. Listeners should be comfortable with silence where appropriate and allow the conversation take place.

Kinesics refers to the non verbal messages such as feelings, emotions and attitude through the use of body movement such as gestures, posture, facial expression and eye contact.

When these behaviours are followed, listeners look more interested in what is being said.

In my previous work environments, the level of communication between management and employees was almost every time following the above tools as in the first example I will mention below.

Every morning the store leader would ask the morning team to gather into the meeting room and he would do something we used to call “download” which is mainly briefing everyone about the expectations for the day, have every member assigned to do a certain task or place, but he would never leave the so called download before everyone was clear about what we needed to do and he always asked for feedback or any questions anyone had at any point during his briefing. His downloads were clear, his tone of voice was calm, level of formality was familiar to the staff as he was not using any words that were not easy to understand.

In another place I used to work, things were not as simple as above due to the store leader being more strict, his level of formality was still easy to understand, but his kinesics was sending a different message than the one he wanted to transmit or what he wanted to achieve by what he was telling us. He used to have short meetings only with people who were underperforming and would not achieve the objectives pre-planned at the beginning of the month and as one of my colleagues was telling me her experience from one of these meetings, he would always express his disappointment without asking if there is any reason behind, he would have a piece of paper showing her the results up until that point and without any questions he would express his desire that she should improve her results until the month ends. She would not have any feedback regarding her work, what were the things she needed to improve on, if there was something that could make her work easier or if she could have had a bit more training. The communication throughout the company was lacking clarity as head office would send through emails or have new campaigns launches that would be different than the material we were receiving in the store and such as prices, leaflets etc and this was really making it difficult to work as it was confusing to know what were we meant to use as the right material, price or leaflets. This would result in customers coming back and being angry when they would see differences in what they would get in store versus the marketing campaign.

As seen in this report, communication between two individuals or more, regardless of the environment is very important and when defective, the message, can be easily misunderstood.

CONCLUSION

All points considered in this report, the models of communication covered and communication skills show that when the communication follows the right steps and tools, specially in the business or workplace environment can actually take the business to success and makes it easier for every member to understand their tasks, increase productivity, leave less space for confusion and misunderstandings.

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APPENDIX

1. THE PROFESSOR and THE VILLAGE PEOPLE

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 completely 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.'

2. MARIA AND PEDRO

Pedro works on a building site and Maria is his wife.

One day Maria phoned Pedro

" Hell, Pedro, when you're coming home, see if you can get me a chicken. "

" Okay", replied Pedro.

When he got home, Pedro took off his boots and coat and went into the kitchen.

" Maria, where are you?" He said.

" Here, in the sitting room, " she said.

When Pedro went into the sitting room, Maria said " Where is the chicken ?"

" What chicken? " asked Pedro.

"The one I asked you to get on your way home"

"oh no, I thought you said when I come home I will see you in the kitchen"