

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS-A ROAD MAP, FOR SUCCESS

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ABSTRACT

Effective communication has become a qualitative merit, to ascertain a person's ability. It would not be wrong to call it as a benchmark of success nowadays. Communication is a systematic way of making the process of interaction, through both the verbal and non verbal measures. The prerequisite for any communication is the proper communicative environment. Without a communicative environment, or to say without the sender and receiver the communication process cannot work out. It is an emotionally and intellectually groomed process, which needs sensible and semantically correct deciphering. The symbols and the cues used in communication are modifiable, reinterpretable, infinitely extendable and modifiable, based on the conditioned effect of a communicative environment.

KEYWORDS: Qualitative Merit, Benchmark, Verbal, Nonverbal, Communicative Environment, Emotionally, Intellectually, Modifiable, Reinterpretable, Extendable, Modifiable

INTRODUCTION

The word communication has been derived from or Greek word *communiqué*, which means to share. On this note it can notably be said that the first and the foremost aspect of communication is "to share" or as a matter of fact "sharing of Ideas". These ideas could be an outcome of our interactions, aspirations, expectations and our perceptions collectively enforced as our experience in one or another way. In India we have people hailing from many socio-cultural religious backgrounds but still they conjoin at one front with a "Common level of understanding." This "Common level of understanding" is a consensus, which is labeled as national language, national identity and national integration. So, this way it can easily be said that communication has two important parameter of support which are : (i) sharing of ideas (ii) common level of understanding.

Communication is all about emphasizing and empathizing a point of view. This emphasis is based on the intonation, stress and selectively delivering language corresponding to the references. While, empathizing refers to a level headed emotional state, where the sole aim is make the message comprehensively reachable.

Process of Communication

The process of communication gets registered, by way of encoding; process which refers to the incorporation of message codes, which can be verbal or non-verbal, in nature. The encoded message is produced by the speaker, writer, actor in the form of utterances, written syntax and body actions or paralanguage respectively. This encoded message is produced by the speaker viz. producer for a receiver viz. listener, spectator or a reader. The encoded message quite expectedly should reach the receiver, but in practical terms it never happens like this. The encoded message has to cross certain hurdles before it is finally decided by the receiver or interpreted by the receiver.

The hurdles mentioned above are termed as barriers which could be linguistic barriers, physical barriers, psychological barriers, myth driven or common beliefs, superstitions and pre-suppositions. When the encoded message passes through these barriers and gets affected at the level of decoding. The amount of interpretation is determined by way of “feedback” or the reaction of the receiver. The amount of loss in meaning during this process on account of different barriers is called “Semantic gap.”

Manifestation of Communication in Our Society

Communication is relation to the social and professional world has many forms. Broadly speaking it can flow in ‘x’ ‘y’ and ‘z’ axis. In the ‘x’ axis form of communication flow of information or message is in the horizontal or lateral form. Such type of communication is also labeled as lateral communication or horizontal communication. This type of communication takes place in a peer-group, or in a level headed empathetic environment. The ‘y’ axis form of communication has its flow in a vertical direction, in a top-bottom flow or bottom to top flow labeled as downward communication and upward communication respectively.

The downward communication basically can be understood in the form of abiding by the instructions from the higher authority to the subordinates or lower authority both professionally and socially. In our social set up such kind of communication can be in the form of obedience to our elders while professionally these instructions can come out as an advice or order from the higher authority. Many corporate use it as a medium to spread across their message to their expected clients or customers. This setup of communication can be a sheer obedience to instruction called hard skills or advertisement of exceptional traits called soft-skills.

The bottom to top flow of communication as mentioned above is called upward communication. Underneath this the first postulate which may help in its understanding is called “open door policy”. It refers to the friendly mingling of the levels of commands to make the interactions more amiable with permeable boundaries. Infosys Technologies Ltd is a good example of such kind of communication. This corporate giant has done away with the aspect of salutations and cabins or offices of any kind. There is a uniform communicative and work environment for all, diluting all hierarchies.

At the ‘Z’ axis communication can be labeled as “diagonal communication”, or interdepartmental communication in such communication the flow of message is both from top to bottom or bottom to top but not at the level of same professional setup, but at the level of professionally two different segments. There can be a “multidimensional” form of communication also labeled as “grapevine”. Such kind of communication as the name suggests spreads across the message in all directions in a split of second. It can also be referred as informal or unofficial mechanism of communication. It has a drawback also that is, it lead to the spread of rum- ours sometimes.

Inter-Relational Aspects of Communication

Communication can be either “Extra personal” “Intrapersonal” “interpersonal”, Group Communication, or Mass Communication. The extra personal form of communication is basically beyond one’s personal self. It can be in the form of a communication cord with some supernatural energy sometimes. Such kind of communication appears in the form of a person’s interactions with his own sub-conscious self in the state of solitude mostly. The intrapersonal communication is realistic and conscious in structure in comparison to extra personal communication interpersonal communication is a limited form of communication which takes place predominating among trustworthy members. A good example of it can

be the sharing of ideas and information among family members, within the boundary walls of a home. The interpersonal form of communication is more refined in comparison to intrapersonal communication. Such types of communication are just like the lateral form of communication which is spread across within a peer groups, friends of two different families. Their communication has empathetic in nature, since it takes place where the emotional and psychological states are level headed.

The next communication is the group communication. Such type of communication can flow top to bottom or bottom to top or may flow diagonally. This type of communication is totally professional in nature and may take place colleagues of a particular organization. A good example of this can be taken in the form engineer trainees from different engineering colleges, selected in the same company. Such entities otherwise hail from different colleges but professionally they interact in the form of colleagues. The fourth aspect of communication can be in the form of mass communication. Such kind of communication can take place among strangers. This communication can turn out to be one-way communication also. The grapevine communication understandably is a good example of such type of communication.

Common Communication Shortcomings

Communication in the organizations is activity oriented and not result oriented. Too many organizations view communication as something “ought to be done” losing sight of the impact their communications should have. Sometimes managers in the professional setup use it as more or less a one way mechanism of channelizing information without bothering about the reactions viz. feedback.

Sometimes, it has been observed people who implement communication systems lack the proper communication skills themselves. For example department meetings cannot be effective if the department heads conducting them lack meeting leadership skills. Communication is not responsive to the employee needs, which again is a shortcoming. This shortcoming is observed during the flow of messages through downward communication where the reactions, aspirations and expectations of the target receivers is not kept in mind.

CONCLUSIONS

Learning to function effectively in an organizational setting requires considerable understanding of organizations and their structures. There lies a need of developing communication skills that will contribute to the professional and social success of the communicators. Whether a person is working as a marketing analyst, a teacher, a chef, or an executive. Whatever the organization or the specific function one fulfills, the total productivity, contentment and pleasure are based on the quality of one's communication, which is must for survival in today's time.

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