

UCS1704 – Management and Ethical Practices

UNIT – II

Directing

Process of Communication, Effective Communication
& Communication and IT

Semester – VII

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Learning Outcomes

- Understand the importance of communication in the workplace
- Describe the process of communication, both verbal and non-verbal
- Identify the different communication channels and barriers to effective communication

Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate how changes in technology have affected communication within and between organisations and their employees
- Explain how to overcome potential problems in inter-cultural communication

Overview

- **Communication** is the sharing or exchange of information
- All individuals, groups and organisations communicate by sharing 'meaning' between each other
- Communicating is a two-way process, as it is also about being understood and belonging to a group
- Communication and organisational success are directly related
 - Good communication can have a positive and mobilising effect on employees
 - Poor communication can lead to strong negative consequences, such as the distortion of goals and objectives, conflict, loss of motivation and poor performance

What is the Purpose of Communication?

- People have always needed to communicate to live in social groups and to plan and coordinate activity
- No group or organisation can exist without sharing meaning in some way between its members
- When we communicate with others, we are usually trying to influence other people's understanding, behaviour or attitudes
- Core to most organisational activity is an understanding of the process of communication and how the use of different communication channels can impact on the messages delivered and received

How important is it in the workplace?

- Mintzberg (1990) describes the purpose of communication with others in the workplace as being able to inform, instruct, motivate or seek information
- From a top management perspective, the purpose of organisational communication is to achieve coordinated action
- The members of the organisation will not have a focus if they are not involved in effective communication with one another

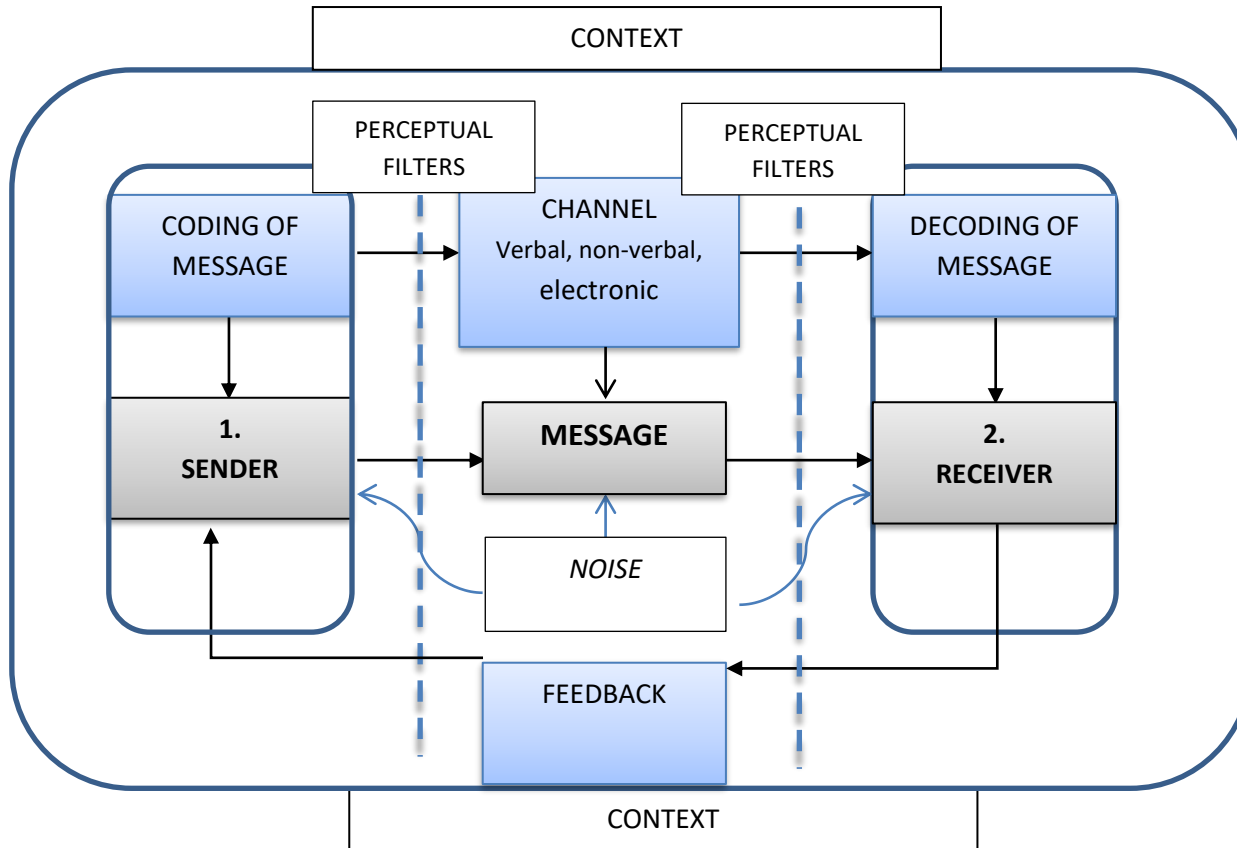
How important is it in the workplace?

- Employers expect employees to be effective communicators and rate employees for their communicative performances
- Communication is a key issue that impacts on planning effectiveness, organisational change and implementation
- It is pivotal to dealing with people and the workplace, and is fundamental to organisational success

How does the communication process work?

- Communication in organisations is crucial:
 - It may be deliberate in terms of a verbal instruction, an email or a written report
 - It may be more casual in terms of a chat at lunch
 - It may be unintentional in terms of body language observed at a meeting
- In order to get a message across accurately the following must be considered:
 - The message
 - The audience or receiver
 - How the message is likely to be received

The Communications Process



Developed and adapted from Shannon (1948: 348) & Huczynski & Buchanan (2014: 225)

Interpersonal Communication and Active Listening

- Listening has a major impact on job effectiveness, and on relationship quality with others
 - It is used to not only receive the message and obtain the information but to understand it and to learn from it
- **Active Listening** is a process of making a conscious effort to sense, process and respond actively to a communicated message
- Active listening would require that you sense (receive the message, for example a name in an introduction), process, (assign a meaning to the information transmitted) and then respond, (clarifying what you have heard)
- Active listening is not only consciously engaging in listening and being encouraging, but it also requires deferring judgement, letting the sender complete their point before asking questions

Communication Channels

- The choice of channel to communicate the message is very important in order to achieve understanding
- Communication can be **Formal, Informal or Quasiformal**
- **Formal communication channels:**
 - These channels are officially defined pathways that follow the chain of command or hierarchy in organisations
 - These channels being official and holding authority are used to send letters, emails, policy statements or announcements

Communication Channels

- **Informal communication channels**

- Some managers use these informal networks to facilitate formal communication channels or to gather information
- Management by Walking Around (MBWA) –
 - Can result in better information and communication exchange
 - Needs to facilitate genuine engagement by senior managers rather than looking like an opportunity to check up on employees' activities
- Takes a number of forms, such as unofficial networks that supplement the formal channels and the grapevine and gossip

Communication Channels

- **Quasiformal channels**

- Quasiformal channels are planned communication connections between holders of various positions within the organisation
- They are partly formal, and add additional channels between the formal and informal channels
- Project teams or product committees are often used to help encourage innovation
- This approach has been extended by the information age, which has provided organisations with new opportunities to link managers effectively through email, intranet and other electronic media tools

Communication Direction

- One may assume that information is flowing both upwards from the employees, and downwards from management
- These flows of communication in an organisation are important, but communication must also be able to move laterally
- **Downward communication**
 - Communication flows from one level of an organisation to a lower level
 - It is used to implement plans and goals, explain policies and procedures, offer feedback on performance and give directions or instructions regarding job specifications and duties

Communication Direction

- **Upward Communication**

- Communication flows from a lower level of an organisation to a higher level
- Provides information to management about what is happening at an operational level
- It is important as it facilitates feedback regarding performance and progress of plans and goals; it notifies management of problems or potential problems; and it passes on complaints

- **Lateral communication**

- Communication flows between members or employees in the same work group or department, or managers at the same level
- Serves an important function to facilitate coordination of the work undertaken

Modes of Interpersonal Communication

- **Oral communication**

- The main means by which we communicate with one another is through speaking
- This can include conversations, group discussions and presentations, 'word of mouth', video-conferencing and Skype

- **Written Communication**

- Written communications include letters, emails, instant messaging, magazines or e-zines and notices (including on electronic notice boards)
- A written communication can be useful to make sure the message is clear and verifiable

- **Non-verbal communication**

- Communication achieved by not just using words
- It is the process of coding or conveying meaning through behaviours such as facial expressions, gestures and body posture

Inter-Cultural Communication

- The process of communication doesn't fully account for cultural differences between the sender and receiver, other than through perceptual filters
- A study reported by McShane (2006) of cultural diversity in some of Toronto's major hotels found that language barriers made it difficult for managers to give non-English speaking employees effective feedback
- Some of these language barriers include:
 - **Semantics** – differences in meanings of words to different people
 - **Differences** in non-verbal symbols and signals
 - **Word Connotations** – words imply different things in different languages
 - **Tone Differences** – in some cultures tone changes depending on context
 - **Differences in Perception** – different world views

Impact of Technology on Communication

- A key purpose of communication technology is to facilitate effective communication between individuals or groups that are physically distant from each other, as well as providing it via cheaper and more efficient means
- Technology has enabled new forms of working patterns to evolve that include working from home and other locations
- The barrier of distance disappears, organisations are outsourcing many jobs overseas
- Video-conferencing has proved very effective in terms of cost savings through cutting down on travel and other costs

Impact of Technology on Communication

- Instant messaging is seen as a key communication tool in the business world, and will replace emails more and more over time as they are faster and allow for an instant response
- The volume of messages that managers as well as employees and customers receive has increased
- Due to email always being accessible and not being regulated by business hours, a culture has been created where senders expect an instant response

The Impact of Social Media on Communication

- Social media is termed “social” for a reason, as it enables communication
- Gives organisations direct access to their customers
- Companies have access to your email address, Facebook and Twitter accounts amongst others, and can utilise your preferences to monitor your buying, leisure and lifestyle habits to target you with specific ads online

The Impact of Social Media on Communication

As a tool for communication, social media has a number of characteristics according to Adler, Rosenfeld & Proctor (2012)

- ***Message richness*** – The information or message transferred via social media can utilise text, chat, visual images and links to ensure communication success
- ***Hyperpersonal communication*** – The social media environment can create ‘hyperpersonal’ relationships, where the individual experiences a level of closeness above that gained in a face-to-face context

The Impact of Social Media on Communication

- ***Asynchronous communication versus synchronous communication*** - During synchronous communication, multiple exchanges are completed in rapid succession. By contrast, asynchronous communication such as posting messages, limits the process to only small portions of an exchange at any given time
- ***Permanence of digital messages*** - Messages can be stored by both senders and receivers. Removing an image from a social media account may be too late, as it already has transferred beyond the creator's control

Mediated communication and relational quality

- In order to mitigate against the downside of social media use, Adler et al (2012) suggest a number of strategies to employ in order to communicate competently
 - Always be careful of what you post and be considerate of others in your on-line community
 - There is a need to balance social mediated communication with face-to-face time
- The Internet has become the most powerful driver of innovation the world has ever seen - new products can be developed and launched relatively inexpensively, potential customers and investors can be targeted, and markets can be quickly identified and tested
- No other mechanism provides such instant communication links between investors and their customers