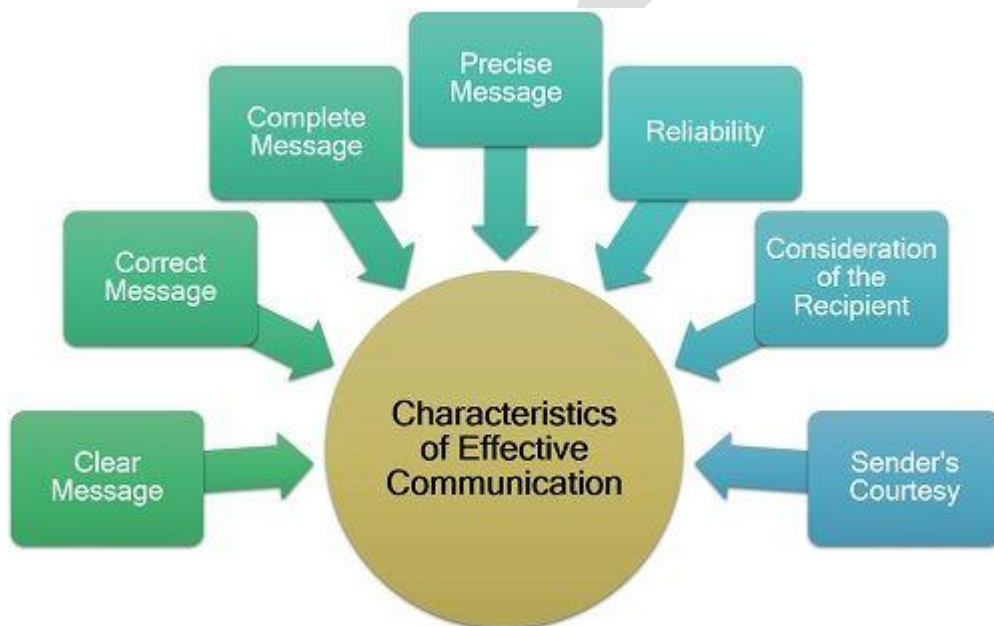


Effective Communication

Definition

Effective communication is the process of exchanging ideas, thoughts, opinions, knowledge, and data so that the message is received and understood with clarity and purpose. When we communicate effectively, both the sender and receiver feel satisfied. It's about understanding the emotion and intentions behind the information. For communication to be effective, it must be clear, correct, complete, concise, and compassionate.

Characteristics of Effective Communication



Clear Message: The message that the sender wants to convey must be simple, easy to understand and systematically framed to retain its meaningfulness.

Correct Message: The information communicated must not be vague or false in any sense; it must be free from errors and grammatical mistakes.

Complete Message: Communication is the base for decision-making. If the information is incomplete, it may lead to wrong decisions.

Precise Message: The message sent must be short to facilitate straightforward interpretation and take the desired steps.

Reliability: The sender must be sure from his end that whatever he is conveying is right by his knowledge. Even the receiver must have trust in the sender and can rely on the message sent.

Consideration of the Recipient: The medium of communication and other physical settings must be planned, keeping in mind the attitude, language, knowledge, education level and position of the receiver.

Sender's Courtesy: The message so drafted must reflect the sender's courtesy, humbleness and respect towards the receiver.

Benefits of effective communication

The benefits of communication effectiveness can be witnessed in the workplace, in an educational setting, and your personal life. Learning how to communicate well can be a boon in each of these areas.

In the workplace, effective communication can help you:

- Manage employees and build teams
- Grow your organization more rapidly and retain employees
- Benefit from enhanced creativity and innovation
- Build strong relationships and attract more opportunities for you or your organization

In your personal life, effective communication can lead to:

- Improved social, emotional, and mental health
- Deeper existing connections
- New bonds based on trust and transparency
- Better problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills

How to improve your communication skills

- Consider your audience.
- Practice active listening.
- Make your message as clear as possible – Clear, Correct, Complete, Concise, Compassionate
- Use the right medium or platform.

Effective Communication Skills



✓ *Become an engaged listener*

Tips for becoming an engaged listener

- Focus fully on the speaker.
- Favour your right ear.
- Avoid interrupting or trying to redirect the conversation to your concerns.
- Show your interest in what's being said.
- Try to set aside the judgment.
- Provide feedback.
- Hear the emotion behind the words.

✓ *Pay attention to nonverbal signals*

Improve how you read nonverbal communication

- Be aware of individual differences.
- Look at nonverbal communication signals as a group.

Improve how you deliver nonverbal communication

- Use nonverbal signals that match up with your words
- Adjust your nonverbal signals according to the context.
- Avoid negative body language.

✓ ***Keep stress in check***

Communicate effectively by staying calm under pressure

- Use stalling tactics
- Pause to collect your thoughts
- Make one point
- Wrap up with a summary

Quick stress relief for effective communication

- Recognize when you're becoming stressed.
- Take a moment to calm down before deciding to continue a conversation or postpone it.
- Bring your senses to the rescue.
- Look for the humour in the situation.
- Be willing to compromise.
- Agree to disagree

✓ ***Assert Yourself***

To improve your assertiveness

- Value yourself and your options.
- Know your needs and wants.
- Express negative thoughts in a positive way
- Receive feedback positively.
- Learn to say “no.”

Barriers to Effective Communication

There are certain obstacles which sometimes hinder the process of communication, making it less useful for the sender as well as the receiver. These barriers are categorised into three groups. Let us understand these in detail below:

Barriers Involving Words

Words play an essential role in the process of communication. Any disturbance or distraction in the way a message is presented may lead to miscommunication. Following are the different types of communication barriers related to words:

Language: It is a medium of communication. If the sender is making excessive use of technical terms, it will become difficult for the receiver to understand the message clearly.

Ambiguity and Overuse of Abstractions: Even if the message is presented in a non-realistic or vague context involving a lot of notions, the receiver won't be able to connect with the idea properly.

Disorganised Message: When the words are not organised systematically to form a powerful message, it loses their efficiency and meaning.

Information Overload: The effectiveness of communication reduces when a person keeps on speaking for an extended period. This leads to the receiver's exhaustion, who won't be able to keep track of everything that is conveyed.

Barriers Involving People's Background

People belong to different backgrounds, i.e., culture, education level, gender, etc. These attributes majorly affect the efficiency of the communication process. It involves the following related obstacles:

Attitudinal Differences: At times, people are resistant to understanding or changing their minds when they have set their views about a particular topic. Their attitude obstructs meeting the purpose of the communication.

Demographic Differences: The difference in age, generation, gender, status, tradition, etc., creates a lack of understanding among people and thus, hinder the process of communication.

Lack of Common Experience or Perspective: The experiences of a person develop their perspective of seeing things in a particular way. This perspective

varies from person to person. Therefore, it becomes difficult for a receiver to relate to the sender's experience or views as he might have never gone through it himself.

Jumping to Conclusions: Some people lack the patience of listening to others and often jump to conclusions between communications, thus neglecting the motive of the message.

Physical Barriers

These barriers can be experienced directly but are challenging to overcome. These include:

Physical Distance: When people communicate over long distances, they miss out on the non-verbal aspect of communication, since the gestures and expressions of the receiver cannot be interpreted.

Noise: The environment or the communication system sometimes involves unwanted noise which interrupts the process of communication making it inefficient.

Physiological Barriers: One of the most common barriers to effective communication is the physical disability of the people involved. Some of these are hearing impairment, poor eyesight, stammering, etc.

Organisational barriers: Organisational barriers are those barriers that are caused due to the structure, rules and regulations present in the organisation. Various types of barriers can be encountered due to superior-subordinate relationships where the free flow of communication is not possible.

Sometimes the complexity of the organisational structure and multiple managers make it difficult to convey information properly, and the information gets distorted leading to miscommunication.

Cultural barriers: Cultural barriers are those that arise due to a lack of similarities among the different cultures across the world. A term that can be harmless in one culture can be regarded as slang in another culture. Moreover, various beliefs can differ from one culture to another.

Thus, we can say that the significant purpose of communication is to pass on the information to the receiver in such a manner that it does not lose its significance. At the same time, the message must be received in its purest form.

References:

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/relationships-communication/effective-communication.htm>

<https://www.coursera.org/articles/communication-effectiveness>

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/relationships-communication/effective-communication.htm>

<https://theinvestorsbook.com/effective-communication.html>

ARC