



EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION - CRITICAL FOR ORGANIZATION SUCCESS

Mr. Syed Afroz Ahmed

Founder & President, (Chief Trainer/Facilitator) Magic Solutions & Services, Kolar Gold Fields, India.

Abstract

Everybody everywhere communicates, whether it be communication as simple as Intrapersonal (communication within oneself) or Interpersonal (communication within others) or in front of people (public communication). Being able to communicate with others is one of the best life skills a person can develop. Someone who can effectively communicate thoughts, ideas, and feelings is better equipped for success both on the job and in personal relationships.

In organizations the barriers in communication go a long way in distortion of the message and the information does not reach in its desired form. Barriers to effective communication could cause roadblocks in our professional and personal life and it could be one of the major hurdles in achieving Organizational goals. If Barriers in communications is such a critical factor, shouldn't we not examine the barriers of communications and ascertain how it affects Organization success?

Yes, my topic is also connected to communication only. I have sincerely attempted to offer a brief introduction on Communication in Organization, Types of communications, Communication Barriers viz. Sender Related Barriers, Situation Related Barriers & Receiver Related Barriers.

Based on the above work, with my limited knowledge, I have proposed how to overcome such barriers, and have also offered my findings and the key objective being to suggest that "Effective Communication is indeed critical for organization success".

Keywords: Communications, Barriers, Overcoming, Success.

1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is the essence of management. The basic functions of management (Planning, Organizing, Staffing, Directing and Controlling) cannot be performed well without effective communication. In early times, communications in organizations was limited to paper-work, telephone calls etc. But now with advent of technology, we have cell phones, video conferencing, emails, satellite communications etc. As communication is a two way process the message sent by the sender should be interpreted in the same way & terms by the receiver/s because effective communication is a building block of successful organizations". In other words, effective communication acts as organizational blood. A communication should be free from barriers so as to be effective.

2. OBJECTIVES

- To ascertain in detail Communication and its Impact on Organization Success
- To evaluate types of communication barriers
- To emphasize how to overcome communication barriers
- To suggest how Effective Communication - is critical for Organization Success

3. COMMUNICATION DEFINITION

Communication is commonly defined as "the imparting or interchange of thoughts, opinions, or information by speech, writing, or signs, which can be perceived as a two-way process in which there is an exchange and progression of thoughts, feelings or ideas towards a mutually accepted goal or direction".

4. MEANING OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is derived from a Latin word "Communicare" meaning "to share" understood as the process of using words, sounds, signs, or behaviors to express or exchange information, ideas, thoughts, feelings, etc., between two or more persons in order to convey or receive. In other words imparting or exchanging of information by speaking, writing, or using some other medium.

5. TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

There exists two types of communication in Organization Context Viz.

1. Oral Communication - An oral communication can be formal or informal. Generally formal means of communication are: meetings, interviews, group discussion, speeches, seminars, presentations etc. An example of Informal communication is – Grapevine which stretches throughout the organization in all directions irrespective of the authority and levels.
2. Written Communication - Written means of communication includes – Inter Office Memos, Circulars, Business Letter, reports, manuals by way of Handwritten, Typed, or Electronically.

6. COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

There are several barriers that affect the flow of communication in an organization. These barriers interrupt the flow of communication from the sender to the receiver, thus making communication ineffective. It is essential for management to overcome these barriers. The main barriers of communication are classified into three:

6.1 Sender Related Barriers

The sender is responsible for encoding ideas, thoughts and feeling, when this is not appropriately discharged; communication is bound to be ineffective.

- a. **Communication Goals:-** There must be a goal or objective in any kind of communication, lack of goal or objective can lead to incoherent (confused) messages.
- b. **Communication Skills:-** This refers to the clarity, word usage, correct spelling or pronunciation, body language and delivery of message, absence of these make it difficult to understand the message clearly.
- c. **Interpersonal Sensitivity (segmentation):-** The sender may convey the message correctly, but the receiver fails to get intended results, this may be either the message is not segmented to the receiver or it has not motivated the receiver to respond.
- d. **Differing Frames of Reference:-** The sender and receiver must use the common mode / field /way of expression which both are conversant with i.e the sender and the receiver should have similar means of communication.
- e. **Non Verbal Signals:-** Tone, voice modulation, facial expression and body language can help or hinder communication. e.g. quarrel at home may make boss behave indifferently
- f. **Fear:-** a person under the influence of fear is likely to lose balance and his message will be affected adversely, though he may be prepared well and good at communicating.
- g. **Sender Credibility:-** The amount of faith the receiver places on the message depends on the evaluation of the sender towards reliability or trustworthiness of the sender.

6.2 Situation Related Barriers

Situation also plays a major role in distortion of the communication, though the sender and receiver have done their part fairly. The communication may become ineffective for some of the following reasons:

- a. **Jargon:-** means words or talks which is familiar only to a group, when these words are used out of the group it becomes a barrier e.g. legal terms., medical terms. etc.
- b. **Information Overload:-** If you receive a message with too much information or lots of information is termed as information overload which can also be a big hindrance in effective communication.
- c. **Time Pressure:-** may prevent the sender to provide adequate required information to the receiver.
- d. **Culture Climate:-** if it prevails in the atmosphere of trust and confidence. It is likely to provide a positive response or vice versa.
- e. **Noise:-** Noise refers to the interference or distraction that is in the environment in which the communication is taking place.
- f. **Emotions:-** communication is engrossed in emotions for some reason. In such cases, we tend to have trouble listening to others or understanding the message conveyed to you. A few of the emotional interferences include hostility, anger, resentment etc.
- g. **Stress:-** At the time of stress, our psychological frame of mind depends on our beliefs, experiences, goals and values. Thus, we fail to realize the essence of communication.
- h. **Complexity in Organizational Structure:** Greater the hierarchy in an organization (i.e. more the number of managerial levels), more are the chances of communication getting destroyed. Only the people at the top level can see the overall picture while the people at low level just have knowledge about their own area and a little knowledge about other areas.

6.3 Receiver Related Barriers

The receiver is responsible for decoding ideas, thoughts and feelings, when this is not appropriately received; communication



is bound to be ineffective. The communication cycle may break down at the receiving end for some of these following reasons:

- a. **Lack of Interest:-** If a message reaches a reader who is not interested in the message, the reader may read the message hurriedly or listen to the message carelessly. Miscommunication may result in both cases.
- b. **Lack of Knowledge:-** If a receiver is unable to understand a message filled with technical information, communication will break down.
- c. **Lack of Communication Skills:-** Those who have weak reading and listening skills make ineffective receivers.
- d. **Physical Distractions:-** If a receiver of a communication works in an area with bright lights, glare on computer screens, loud noises, excessively hot or cold work spaces, or physical ailments, that receiver will probably experience communication breakdowns on a regular basis.
- e. **Selective or Poor listening :-** This refers to the receivers tendency to hear only to what, when, whom, where he is interested, and wants to disagree other information i.e. the receiver may not be a projective and active listener.
- f. **Evaluating the Source:** the receiver has the tendency to evaluate the sender not the message, if the receiver don't like the person, he may not like what he is saying, thou it may be good and correct.
- g. **Perceptions:**
 - **Stereotyping:-** perceiving a communication or message based on some salient features of the sender e.g. Age, region, religion, gender, etc.
 - **Halo effect:-** refers to the tendency of the receiver, perceiving the sender in terms of good and bad, i.e. showing interest and responding to the sender whom the receiver likes and vice versa.
- h. **Lack of Responsive Feedback:-** Non response or inappropriate responses discourages the sender of the message, which hurts the ego and feelings of the sender.

7. FINDINGS

80% of problems in the workplace are communication related; communication and conflict are present in all human interactions and affects each of us in different ways. Miscommunication is probably the biggest single cause of Organization foul-ups. Many social psychologists opine that there is 50% to 70% loss of meaning while conveying the messages from a sender to a receiver, no matter how good the communication system in an organization is, barriers can and do often occur problems arise at every stage resulting in distortion of communication, which may be caused by a number of factors as detailed above.

Many people are of the opinion that communicating is easy, but the fact is it's not always easy no matter how good and effective a communicator maybe, yet the fact is that one does face certain barriers, from time to time, irrespective on professional front or personal front, which forces them to work on becoming even more effective in their skills to communicate.

8. SUGGESTIONS

The employees are the assets for any organization and the profitability of any organization is directly proportional to the labour put by its employees. Putting labour does not mean getting involved in hard physical work or digging the gold mines, it actually refers to the smart work done by employees, transparency between the team members, free flow of information from the Top level management to low level workforce. How does free flow of information happen? How is the transparency between the team members achieved? Through Communication and not only through communication but effective communication.

Recognizing barriers to effective communication is a first step in improving communication in the organization. There should be effective communication between superiors and subordinates in an organization, between organization and society at large (for example between management and trade unions). It is essential for success and growth of an organization.

9. CONCLUSION

Communication is fruitful if and only if the message sent by the sender is interpreted with same meaning by the receiver. If any kind of disturbance blocks any step of communication, the message will be destroyed. Due to such disturbances, organization faces severe problems. There is a lot of communication barriers faced these days by all. The message intended by the sender is not understood by the receiver in the same terms and sense and thus communication breakdown occurs and results in chaos, break in relationships, strikes, riots, wars etc. Thus the management must identify such barriers and take steps to overcome them.



An effective and efficient communication system requires managerial proficiency in delivering and receiving messages. Management must discover various barriers to communication, analyze the reasons for their occurrence and take preventive

steps to avoid those barriers. Thus, the primary responsibility of successful organizations is to develop and maintain an effective communication system in the organization by creating a climate of trust and openness, develop and use formal information channels in all directions, encourage the use of multiple channels both formal and informal communications and the organization structure should be such that it should fit communication needs. Therefore it is essential to deal and cope up with these communication barriers so as to ensure smooth and effective communication because Effective communication helps in building goodwill for an organization and also critical for Organization Success.

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