

Communication is powerful

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Bedell and Lennox (1997) defined communication as the process of information transmission and exchange of ideas. Communication can also be defined as the process whereby people use signs, speech and action to pass information from one person to another.

According to Rosengren (2000), communication is the process of sharing common things among individuals (p. 1). Rosengren further argued that the parties involved in the process of communication increases their shared knowledge as well as their common sense since communication makes things common (2000). Communication is therefore a very important part of the community. Otherwise, without communication, society would not be complete.

The process and the outcome of communication significantly depend on the members of a particular organization. The outcome of the process of communication is determined by our prejudices, feelings, attitudes, thoughts and beliefs among other factors. In any organization, communication is a very important part in our day to day interactions. The goals and success of every organization is largely determined by how the communication process is organized. Poor communication structures are related with failures while clearly structured communication process is associated with success. For instance, an effective communication process is very important in the military.

Clear communication helps the military leaders to keep a solid and to make the leaders to remain informed at all times. Through effective communication, the commanders are able to know the position of every

soldier and hence act accordingly. Self-awareness and identity According to Philip (1997), it is very important to know something about ourselves in order to be able to help others (p. 48). People are engaged in constant monitoring of the events taking place inside themselves as well as among other people. Through out their lifetime, every person develops his or her own system of understanding and organizing of information which significantly affects their views of the world around them (Bedell and Lennox, 1997, p.

41). In other words, self awareness helps individuals in understanding the external and internal environment. Self awareness is an important part in the communication process. Our identity also affects our communication. Identity is the way we and others think we are and how we see ourselves (Philip, 1997, p. 48).

Self awareness requires the parties involved in the communication process to make critical observations of both external and internal factors related to an individual. Through this process, individuals are able to pass messages appropriately. There are several indicators which can reveal our inner experiences. One of these indicators is the facial expressions. Our facial expressions informs those whom we communicate with about our inner feelings. For instance, it is very easy to distinguish a cheerful person from an angry person.

Frowns and smiles also conveys about our inner feelings (Philip, 1997, p. 63). This in turn affects the communication between two parties. In an organization, this aspect is very important in the process of passing

information across the organization. The members of the staff for instance are able to examine the facial expressions of their leaders in the process of communication and then act accordingly. Facial expressions and the speech must match for us to have a successful communication.

If these aspects are not matching, then the results of communication will be confusing to the audience. For instance, if the platoon sergeant signals a soldier to come and then shouts at him to go at the same time is likely to be confusing. Similarly, if we frown and then tell our audience that we are cheerful, then we are likely to confuse them. It is very necessary for our expressions to express the content of our speech for it to be influential. Self awareness is one of the most important skills of effective communication.

Self awareness involves recognition, labeling and organization of individual's thoughts, behaviors and feelings (Bedell and Lennox, 1997, p. 43). People tend to simplify complex phenomena which help them to become aware. This process of simplification is very important in the communication process as it helps individuals to focus on the most important information giving less attention on irrelevant information. This concept is therefore very important in the communication process.

One of the basic elements of self awareness is thought. Thought assists individuals to make sense out different occurrences. Thought is information sent from the brain which conveys about wants. Expectations are one of the main components of thought that affects communication. Expectation is a conception that some event is going to occur some day in the future. Individual's expectations can affect his or her understanding.

If a person expects to be treated harshly, they tend to withdraw away from such interactions. However, if they expect a warm welcome, then they are likely to be attracted into such relationships. This will also affect the communication process between these two parties. Verbal and non-verbal messages

The process of communication can take place either through verbal communication, nonverbal communication or both. Messages conveyed through both methods of communication are more likely to be trusted than messages conveyed through a single process. This implies that these two forms of messages are very vital in the process of communication.

Communication process is very diverse and we adjust our verbal and nonverbal communication as we move from one place to another. Verbal communication

Verbal communication is a form of communication where we communicate verbally with other people through a presentation or a conversation. In our everyday lives, it is very important to choose the words we use in communication in order to have an effective communication. In verbal communication, words are used as the main tool of communication. Language is a very important tool of communication since it affects our perceptions.

Verbal communication is a very common method of communication in many organizations. In the military, verbal communication is mostly used to pass information across the organization. This is the most reliable form of communication as the sender of the message is able to get the feedback instantly. Words are very powerful tools of communication. The words we use in our day to day communication can influence our relationship with other people. According to Kanu (2008), words are symbols on which

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different meanings which referring to people, ideas, objects or events are attached.

Non-verbal communication Non-verbal communication is the process where information is passed from one person to another without the use of words. Non-verbal communication can have different meanings to different people from different cultures. This implies that non-verbal communication can be misunderstood if not used appropriately. Nonverbal communication includes the way we present the words we speak, the interaction patterns and the environment in which the interaction takes place. Languages are very diverse and so are the meanings of different words. Non-verbal communication helps in transmitting feelings, emotions and it assists in regulation of the interactions within an organization.

For instance, a soldier can be able to learn about the emotions and feelings of warrant officer as they speak and then act accordingly. Nonverbal communication is a very powerful tool in affecting the meaning of the message being conveyed. Relationship between Verbal and non-verbal messages Both the verbal and non-verbal messages are closely related. In most cases, verbal messages are dependent on the non-verbal messages . Verbal and non-verbal messages supplement each other in facilitating the process of communication. The combination of the two helps both the speaker and the listener to sustain a clear understanding of each other.

Barriers to effective communication Despite the fact that communication is a very important aspect in every organization, there are several barriers that hinder effective communication. Ineffective communication is a very

common problem in many organizations. Barriers of communication are those obstacles which lead to lack of understanding and inefficiencies in an organization. One of the main barriers of the communication process is the language. In most cases, the language used by individuals to convey a certain message can be an obstacle to effective communication.

For instance, if the speaker pronounces the words incorrectly, then the message intended to be passed is likely to be distorted. The multiplicity of organizational hierarchical levels is another barrier to effective communication. Organizations which have a multiple hierarchy levels are likely to face complications in their communication process. In such kind of structures, messages are likely to be altered as they are being passed from one level to another. This is a very serious problem since the distorted message may be having a very critical impact on the whole organization.

It is advisable for every organization to have a clear hierarchy to enable information to flow smoothly without distortions. Geographical distance is another obstacle that hinders the communication process. In this case, this is the distance between the sender and the receiver of the message. In situations where the sender and the receiver of the message are located at different places, face to face verbal communication becomes a problem (Tulsian, 2008, p. 24). For instance, the senior officer may intend to convey a very urgent message to his colleague but the physical distance between them makes it very difficult for them to communicate.

In most cases, the sender of the message may wish to know the reaction of the receiver. The reaction of there receiver of the message is very important

to the sender of the message. For instance, a person holding a conversation over the phone cannot exactly tell whether the person on the other side is frowning or cheerful. In other words, physical distance denies the parties involved in the communication process a chance of analyzing the emotions and feelings, which are very important aspects in the communication process. Another barrier in communication lies between the staff and the leadership personnel.

In many organizations, the members of the staff are given the impression by the leaders that leadership is unapproachable and can't be easily reached. This tradition adversely affects the communication process in any organization. In such organizations, the staff will be reluctant to identify the inadequacies of an organization. They will also be discouraged to report critical issues as they have the perception that their pleas will not be considered by the management. The staff will also be reluctant in contribution of any effort aimed at the improvement of the organization. Therefore, the leadership structure of any organization should be formulated in such a way that every member of the staff feels free to report issues and propose their ideas freely.

For instance, every officer in the military is a very important component of the institution. If the leading officers show their juniors that they are not important, the latter may withhold very useful information that may contribute to the success of the military if it was otherwise released. Leaders who just present new changes to the members of staff without involving them in the process of formulation end up affecting communication process in the entire organization. Such organization lacks open communication

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which is a very important factor which determines the success of any organization. Communication process in organizations also suffers from psychological and emotional barriers.

This obstacle comes as a result of the social values, emotions and attitudes. These aspects are likely to affect the decisions made by individuals concerned. For instance, people are likely to expel messages that affect them adversely. The psychological and emotional conditions are therefore very significant factors that affect communication in an organization. Gender differences in communication Sex difference is another factor that determines the communication process. According to Zelley and Marianne (2010), the cultural gender prescriptions for men and women lead to the differences in the attitudes and behaviors.

The gender differences in the process of communication have raised very critical issues in the process of communication. The field has raised very controversial issues. According to my views, gender differences are very significant in affecting the process of communication among individuals. In some societies, women are expected to receive orders from their husbands without questioning. These kinds of societies do not allow women to give any order to men. Women are meant to remain submissive to their husbands.

In an organization, men from such cultural backgrounds are likely to be affected by these cultural backgrounds. They are likely to reject views coming from their female colleagues not because their ideas are infeasible, but because they are from the mouth of a woman. These stereotypes affect the process of communication in an organization. It is believed that men

tend to be practical and informative in their interactions. In turn, they expect a more practical response.

These predetermined expectations affect the process of communication significantly. On the other hand, females are believed to disclose material that is more personal. Some cultures perceive that women tend to disclose their problems more easily than the men. The above discussion has clearly indicated that communication is very powerful in an organization. The communication process is a major factor which determines the goals of an organization.

Poor communication processes are likely to obstruct an organization from fulfilling its goals and missions. It is therefore advisable for every organization to remove all the barriers that hinders effective communication. Effective communication is very important in the military. For instance, a clear communication process helps platoon sergeant to monitor the soldiers and to know where they are at all the times.