

# Organizational communication concept and skills research paper sample

[Business](#), [Management](#)



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## **Organizational communication concept and skills**

Communication is the process of informing, giving direction, regulating, and persuading the recipient of the message to act in a certain way.

Organizational communication as a field of communication is concerned with the analysis of the role of communication in an organizational context

(Marques, 2010). The importance of effective communication in any organization cannot be overemphasized. Communication connects all the all parts of an organization into a functional unit. Ineffective communication creates confusion, brings conflict and disorganization. This paper limits itself to the discussion of efficient organization communication being a direct result of using the correct method and concepts of communication.

Communication is therefore extremely crucial to organizational success. All members of the organization participate in communication during the course of performing their duties. Top management has to relay the mission, vision and plans of the organization to middle level managers. The middle level managers have to translate these into tasks which will be performed by the low level employees in various departments. These tasks have to be designed in such a way that they contribute to the overall goals of the organization. Once this has been communicated to the lowest level of employees in the organization, other channels have to be available for feedback from the bottom up. Employees inform managers of their progress, challenges and successes (Marques, 2010). Top level management on the other hand can communicate changes in the initial plans and any additional information needed for the achievement of company objectives.

There are different methods of communication, which can be used in an organization. Communication can be classified into two broad categories. It can either be verbal or non verbal, written or visual. Each method of communication requires a certain level of skill to be effective in passing the message. It may also require specialized equipment such as computers or basic materials such as pen and paper. Different organizations have different needs which require different approaches in management. Similarly, different organizations will require different approaches to communication to meet all its needs. One method of communication may be effective in small organizations; large firms require a combination of these methods.

The correct method of communication cannot be successful if not together with other concepts of organizational communication. An excellent example would be a manager sending out a memo or notice with such a short deadline. The notice might reach the employees, but it will not be effective because it is not on time. Timeliness is an example of a concept, which has to be used together with the chosen type of communication.

## **Important Concepts of Communication**

### Leadership

All organizations are made up of people who work within its structures to achieve its goals and objectives. Management is the group of people who plan, organize, control and motivate the employees who make up part of the membership of the organization. Management provides leadership which is essential to organizational success.

Leadership in communication gives authority to the entire process. When communication comes with approval the top leadership, it carries more weight and employees will be inclined to cooperate. Leadership also determines what methods of communication will be appropriate for organizational needs, it also determines the channels which will be used and who will be responsible for initiating communication.

The management in the organization is responsible for determining the salient aspects of the organization's operations. Leadership is therefore the first step towards setting up an efficient communication framework for an organization. Leadership can be best incorporated into communication

during planning and implementation stages of company plans. When the top leadership is forming the overall company strategy, communication needs should also be planned for. During implementation of these plans, the management should be on hand to provide guidance, correction and adjustment to the plans as the need arises. The managers should have excellent writing and speaking skills. They should be able to pass their messages to their employees in a clear and understandable manner. The tone used may be urgent, friendly or reprimanding depending on the nature of the message being passed.

## **Timeliness**

The second important concept is timeliness. In the business world, time is money. If an organization is not able to foresee both opportunities and threats in time, it will not be successful. By incorporating timeliness into a communication model, an organization will be able to receive and send all messages within its structure and outside it. A message sent before its due time or too holds less value than information received on time.

Timeliness as a concept in the organization is therefore important for the overall value of the message. Timeliness gives value to information and allows organizations to get the fullest benefit and advantage from its communication systems.

The best way to implement timeliness in an organization is to ensure that the communication system in place is accessible to all its users. The messages sent should be easy to interpret. There should also be a proper alert system which the recipient will get when there is a message which

requires their attention. The ring of a telephone or the beep of an incoming email is a superb example of an efficient alert system, which makes the recipient act immediately by picking the call or opening the e-mail.

Timeliness also ensures that all feedback and subsequent communication are sent and received on time.

## **Organizational Culture**

Organizational culture can generally be described as the collective behavior of individuals within an organization. It is made up of organizational vision, values and norms (Julia C. et al., 2011). It also includes the systems, symbols and working language used within the organization. Organizational culture is usually strong enough to be taught to new employees as the way they are expected to act and think (Julia C. et al., 2011).

Since organizational culture guides employee behaviour, it can be adjusted to promote effective communication. Leadership has the responsibility of molding and adjusting organizational culture. The leaders of an organization are also responsible for ensuring that all members of the organization fit within the organizations' culture. Management should create a tradition of clear and concise communication where each takes responsibility for their actions. When employees are able to relate to the organizational culture they become more willing to undertake their roles within the organization properly (Julia C. et al., 2011). This includes communicating with their colleagues and supervisors properly about any issues they may have.

A productive organizational culture takes time and resources to create. Some organizations have a bad organization culture. This usually happens when there is no proper leadership or reinforcement of what is good or bad. The managers in an organization should ensure that each department develops healthy values and traditions. When put together, these sub cultures create one superior culture which will guide the people within the organization. A bad culture can be discouraged by leaders who set a better example for example by using both sides of a paper to reduce paper wastage. With time, positive habits become traditions which lead to better organizational culture. Reinforcement is also another way of implementing a good organizational culture. When an employee does something positive, their manager should compliment them verbally or in writing. Other forms of positive reinforcement include monetary rewards. When other employees notice this, they are compelled to act as expected to lead to an organizational change to a more productive culture.

### **Active Listening**

Once an organization has established a healthy culture, it is possible to put emphasis on specific aspects of organizational activities. Active listening is a tool used to promote better communication (Wheless, 1998). In listening, both the sender and the recipient engage in turns of paying attention and repeating the messages during the course of communication (Tyler, 2011). The receiver repeats what he/she has heard to the sender. While paraphrasing, the sender listens out for any inconsistencies with his/her

intended message. If there are any differences, the correction is made on the spot.

Active listening is important to building proper communication within an organization because it promotes interpersonal relationships. It helps both managers and employees to appreciate the importance of communication. All the participants during the process of communication learn how to hear the other person, as opposed to waiting for their turn to speak (Tyler, 2011). Active listening helps participants to build common ground, understanding and respect.

Active listening can be learnt by practice. All employees should be encouraged to employ the practices of active listening in all their communication. This will improve patience, cohesion and interaction among members of the organization. It will also eliminate instances of misunderstanding. Where parties cannot agree, it is possible for an amicable solution to be found without creating conflict.

## **Conflict Resolution**

One of the biggest issues in an organization is conflict resolution.

Unfortunately, regardless of how efficient a system is, conflict will always arise. Communication breakdown is usually the major culprit for most conflicts. When individuals within an organization fail to agree on issues, tension may arise leading to problems in meeting common goals.

An organization may hope to avoid conflict, but steps to be taken in case of a conflict should be planned for beforehand. Conflict resolution should be



factored into the communication processes because communication breakdown is what brings about most misunderstanding. Communication can also be used as a tool to solve conflicts.

Leaders within an organization should prepare for conflict resolution. Clear communication channels with effective feedback channels will limit the instances of conflict and even solve them whenever they arise. An example would be to set up system which sends an apology letter to a client who lodges a complaint with the company. With this, client is quickly pacified as the relevant department addresses the problem. Conflict within the organization can also be solved with an organized system of identifying conflict, reporting and addressing it.

The five major concepts for effective communication within an organization should be established by leadership and proper planning. The leadership has the responsibility of planning for the organization and guiding it in the correct path. The management is also responsible for creating the right culture which will bring about success. When a healthy business environment and culture is created, all members of the organization can employ better communication skills such as active listening while dealing with other members. Finally, proper communication will help to reduce conflict. Whenever conflict arises, incorporating conflict resolution into communication systems will help in solving the problems quicker without escalating the issues (Worrall, and Cooper, 2001).

Other concepts, which can be used to promote better communication within an organization, are formal and informal communication. Businesses are usually associated with formal communication. This is a form of passing a message where only the subject matter is addressed in an impersonal manner. Official language and proper grammar are used. The format of communication is also strictly adhered to. Informal communication is usually used in the interaction between acquaintances or friends. The language may include slang or incorrect grammar. Communication is often done for no particular purpose.

The other concept of organizational communication is human communication. This is a term that describes the combination of physiological and environmental factors which influence communication among people. It involves understanding the sensory mechanism such as hearing, speech and brain mechanisms. It also requires an understanding of the psychological factors which may affect or improve communication. Human communication is also influenced environmental factors which surround humans such as noise. For effective communication within an organization, the human component should be analyzed and understood. Different organizations require different things from their employees. Military organizations have different communications needs compared to other companies where employees can participate in decision making. In the disciplined forces, soldiers are trained and conditioned to take instructions without question (Ucok, 2006). In other organizations, employees feel the need to question authority.

## **Conclusion**

The communication concepts addressed in this paper is indispensable in creating an effective communication system for an organization. It is clear that one cannot employ just one concept and expect organizational success. Efficient communication is a continuous process that requires constant input and adjustment by both the leadership and employees of the organization. Some of the processes have to be in place from the beginning of the organization. The importance of proper leadership cannot be overemphasized. In addition to all these, the organization has to choose its communication channels properly. The proper channel when used within a proper framework will promote effective communication within an organization and bring about the achievement of organizational goals. A combination of verbal, non-verbal, written or visual communication should be employed where most appropriate.

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