ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN BUSINESS

What is Communication?

Communication is the actionable transfer of information from one person, group, or place to another by writing, speaking, or using a medium that provides a means of understanding. Every communication consists of a minimum of one sender, a receiver, and a message. The transmission of a message from sender to recipient risks being affected by many things because communication impacts how people interact. These include the location, medium used to communicate, the cultural situation, and the emotions involved. However, communication helps people to interact and share various aspects of life.

Concept of Communication

Communication involves transmitting non-verbal and verbal information in a channel that includes a sender, medium of communication, and a receiver. The following are the essential concepts of communication;

Sender and Receiver

The person sending the information and the one receiving the information must be present for communication to be effective.

The Message

The information conveyed should be available for the sender to transmit to the receiver. Communication works when people hear, see, feel, and understand what a sender is trying to convey; this ensures that concentration and attention are given to important details, allowing for the smooth transfer of information. It is vital to understand that once a sender has granted information through a communication channel, it cannot be reserved; once the recipient receives the information, the sender cannot take it back.

The role of communication

The role of communication is no longer a mystery in any way. Still, we don't get to manage it the right way to achieve our objectives. Whether it is the role of communication in business or in our personal lives we assume things and usually listen to respond back. It is totally against the spirit of effective communication.

1. Exchanging Information:

Communication is important to exchange information between two or more parties. Whether it is your client or your supplier and employees, you'll need to share information with them to keep them updated. It is not essential for information purposes only. Rather you also need it for getting the right thing done in the right manner.

Imagine a scenario where you need an ABC product of a particular quality. You communicated the message to the supplier to provide you with ABC product but did not mention the quality required. In that case, there is a high probability that you won't get the required item. So, it would result in wastage of time and your financial resources too.

2. Goal Achievement:

If you are working with a group of people or anyone other than you, you'll need to share your opinion and goals to ensure that everyone else is on the same page. Without synchronization of your goals, you cannot expect results to go in your favour. Doubt this statement? Let's create a scenario to have a better understanding.

Have you set increasing the revenues by 5% as your business goal? But you haven't communicated the goal itself or the strategy that you wish to pursue with the other members of the team, then the chances are that each of the members would have a different goal and strategy in mind. Such a chaos would not help in the achievement of your goals. You'll have to communicate it in a way that you take others on board. Only then you can expect to achieve goals.

3. Decision Making:

The decision-making regarding the business is dependent on information that you would collect regarding the particular aspect of the business. How do you expect to collect this information and formulate strategy? You'll have to communicate with someone to collect information or discuss it for making strategies. Even if you think you can manage the process up till here on your own, you'll still need to communicate your decision to the others for implementation. So, there is no way out without realizing the role of communication in business.

4. Marketing Businesses:

Either you are selling a B2B product or a B2C product, you'll need to tell your customers about these products or services. This, in simple terms, is "marketing". It involves the communication of the right kind of message to the right audience. Without this communication, you cannot

expect to sell your products or reach your audience in an effective manner. Branding is another important aspect and you can know more about it through this article.

Channels Of Organizational Communication

Communication channels are simply different ways through which you can talk to other people. In a business context, that's usually to share information, ask questions, or provide answers to questions. That could be in-person as a face-to-face conversation, over the phone, or virtually over the Internet via email, social media, or instant messaging. These communication channels come under two categories: external and internal channels.

External channels are for communicating with people outside your company, like customers, prospects, vendors, and investors. Internal channels are, of course, for talking to your own teammates and other departments in your organization.

A communication channel is the medium, mean, manner or method through which a message is sent to its intended receiver. The basic channels are written (hard copy print or digital formats), oral or spoken, and electronic and multimedia. Within those channels, business communications can be formal, informal, or unofficial. Finally, communications can be rich or lean.

Channel richness refers to the amount and immediacy of information that can be transmitted. Face-to-face communication is very high in richness because it allows information to be transmitted with immediate feedback. For instance, a tweet is very low in richness because Twitter allows only 280 characters to be transmitted with no feedback. On the other hand, face-to-face communication is limited to one person communicating with a few other people in close proximity. In comparison, a tweet can reach thousands of followers around the world.

Major Types of Business Communication Channels

Oral communications

Build relationships and trust; accelerate decision making due to immediate feedback Spontaneous nature may lead to unwise statements; people are unable to refer to the communication once it is said unless a record is made.

Example: Face-to-face communication, Phone calls

Written communications

Message can be revised for exactness; can be archived for reference; can be studied. Appropriate for legal and formal business functions.

Message is static; sender does not receive immediate feedback. Hard for the sender to gauge if the receiver has understood.

Examples: Text Messages, Emails

Do use email….
- To send status updates to team members

- To share important documents (like business plans and contracts) with your team
- To provide employees with regular company updates

Don't use email…
- When it's just a quick question that you could ask in a message
- When it's a more complicated question that's better asked in a phone call or video conference

Electronic (Multimedia)

Instant, global, and adaptable to multiple targets.

Technical difficulties and hack attacks threaten the security of organizations and their customers/clients.

Examples: Live Chat, Social Media

What are the barriers of communication?

The barriers to communication can be physiological, geographical or psychological.

1. Lack of linguistic abilities/Semantic Barriers

This can be considered one of the biggest barriers of communication. These are also known as semantic barrier. If you lack proper language knowledge, you will not be able to speak fluently. You will take time to find appropriate words and may have difficulty fitting these words into a sentence. Lacking command of language will not hinder your speaking skills but also cause trouble understanding the other person. This will delay the time you will take to understand and answer the question. Overall, the communication will have no fluency.

2. Processing Time

This often happens with second languages. Since you do not think in that language, it takes time to think thoughts in your mother tongue and then convert them into the language. This affects your ability to communicate smoothly. To understand this barrier, you need to understand that while you speak in your native language, you think and speak in the same language. This saves you processing time, which ultimately builds fluency while you speak.

3. Lack of clarity in ideas

If you do not have clarity in ideas, there is a probability that you will not be able to vocalize them. Suppose you have to speak on a topic but you do not have solid ideas about it. This will, in turn, cause difficulties in building a flow and sentences. This will impact your fluency in communicating and ultimately hamper your dialogue.

4. Different Dialects

People with different dialects also face this issue. A person belonging to Madhya Pradesh will have difficulty communicating with people from North-west Uttar Pradesh or from Hariyana. Similarly, a person from the U.S. will have trouble communicating with people from Britain

since their English speaking accent is completely different from each other. Due to differences in the way of pronouncing words, there is confusion and thus, lack of fluency. It is, therefore, important to have a fundamental understanding of the pronunciation and dialect-specific words.

5. Physiological barriers

A person suffering from speech or hearing disorders will be unable to communicate properly with others. This is due to their inability to understand words or formulate words themselves. People with conditions like Autism, where they lack abilities to develop social skills, also suffer from the ability to communicate properly.

6. Psychological Barriers

There may be many underlying reasons behind psychological barriers of communication. Lack of confidence, fear, inability to express emotions or trauma are are parts of one's psychology that can cause difficulties in communicating with others. There is another cause behind them and psychological analysis is important to understand them.

7. Cultural Barrier

When people belonging to different cultures communicate with each other, there is a high chance of difficulties in proper communication. The reason is simple, certain words, terms and phrases may mean different in two cultures. A word may even have an inappropriate meaning in other cultures.

Verbal Communication

Verbal communication is perhaps the most obvious and understood mode of communication, and it is certainly a powerful tool in your communication toolbox. Put simply, verbal communication is the sharing of information between two individuals using words.

Spoken versus Written Communication

While we typically focus on speech while talking about verbal communication, it's important to remember that writing is also a form of verbal communication. After all, writing uses words too!

Formal versus Informal: We generally use spoken communication informally while we use written communication formally.

Synchronous versus Asynchronous: Synchronous communication is communication that takes place in real time, such as a conversation with a friend. In contrast, asynchronous communication is communication that is not immediate and occurs over longer periods of time, such as letters, email, or even text messages.

Recorded versus Unrecorded: Written communication is generally archived and recorded for later retrieval while spoken communication is generally not recorded.

Benefits of Spoken Communication

Spoken communication can be a conversation, a meeting, or even a speech. Spoken communication is powerful in that it allows for input from every part of the social communication model. You encode your thoughts into the spoken word and look to your audience to decode and take the message in. You can ask for feedback directly to confirm understanding of your message.

In a world where we do most of our talking by email and text, spoken communication is a breath of fresh air. Leverage the power of spoken communication to create relationships—you can establish a rapport and a sense of trust with your audience when you speak with them. Spoken communication allows you to bond on a more emotional level with your listeners.

Spoken communication also makes it easier to ensure understanding by addressing objections and clearing up misunderstandings: you can adjust your message as you communicate it, based on the feedback you're getting from your audience. Spoken communication allows you to walk away from a conversation with a higher degree of certainty that your message was received.

Nonverbal Communication

Body language can reinforce your spoken message or it can contradict it entirely. There's a myth that says that when you speak, only 35 percent of your communication is verbal and 65 percent of it is nonverbal. That's not entirely true because so much depends on the context and situation. It is, however, absolutely true that nonverbal communication can make or break your message.

Here are some types of nonverbal communication and the effects they can have on the success of your communication:

Facial expressions: Your teenage cousin we referred to at the beginning of this section might have told you he was happy, but his apathetic facial expression may have communicated different information. Facial expressions—happy, sad, angry—help you convey your message. Be aware of your facial expression when you talk and particularly when you listen, which is when it's easy to forget.

Gestures: When you speak, a gesture can make your message stronger. Pointing out something you want your listener to look at more closely is an example of nonverbal communication that makes your message understood. Motioning warmly toward a coworker who deserves special recognition, making a fist to show frustration or anger, such gestures help further engage your audience when you speak.

Proximity: How close you are to your audience when you speak sends a nonverbal message. If your size is imposing and you leave a very small distance between you and your listener, it's likely your nonverbal communication will be a bit threatening. On the other hand, giving someone too much space is an awkward nonverbal communication that might confuse your listener.

Touch: Shaking an audience member's hand, putting your hand on his shoulder: these are nonverbal cues that can affect the success of your message. Touch communicates affection, but it also communicates power. You can think about what kind of messages a job applicant may send through a weak handshake versus a firm one after having a job interview.

Eye contact: Making and maintaining eye contact with an audience when you're verbally communicating or listening communicates to the other party that you're interested and engaged in the conversation. Good eye contact often conveys the trait of honesty to the other party.

Appearance: Your clothing, hair, and jewellery are also a part of nonverbal communication. If you put a dachshund pin on your lapel each morning (because you have a pet dachshund), that says something about you as a person. Similarly, the quality and condition of your clothing, how it fits, if it's appropriate for the season—all of these things speak nonverbally about you as a communicator.

Cross-Cultural Communication

Cross-cultural communication is the communication between people who have cultural differences due to nationality, age, working style, gender, ethnicity, race, etc. It can be verbal and non-verbal and can include the use of words, gestures, eye contact, or body language when interacting cross-culturally.

Applied to a business-oriented context, cross-cultural communication refers to how well people from different cultures interact in a business environment. And how well they adapt their communication style to their co-worker's culture.

Cross-cultural communication is important because it enables you to create a positive work culture by bringing out the best from the cultural backgrounds of all team members. In a multicultural environment, developing solid cross-cultural communication skills is vital.

Diversity is an asset and a core value that all companies should hold. According to data, companies with racially and ethnically diverse leadership and executive teams have a 36% higher likelihood of financially outperforming companies with little or no diversity.

Examining this in greater detail can unearth many opportunities that managers can harness to increase a business's growth potential.

For example, hiring employees across different age ranges can provide valuable insights into a generation's habits and consumer preferences. From an organizational point of view, this can be extremely useful when considering the best ways to reach various target groups when conducting marketing initiatives.

The better a company understands its target audience, the greater the success it will have. This rule applies without exception, regardless of an organization's activity range or industry. Equally, the example and statement above remain applicable, whether related to age, gender, socio-economic background, etc.

Importance of Cross-Cultural Communication in Workplace

Different cultural methods of thinking, analyzing, hearing, accepting, and interpreting diverse things provide people different ways of thinking, analyzing, hearing, accepting, and

understanding different things. This means that in the United States, the same words or gestures will have distinct meanings for persons from other cultures.

Communication between cultures is now part of the bigger area of communication studies all over the world as a result of globalization. From companies to universities to schools, multiculturalism and foreign language education are becoming increasingly popular among people from all walks of life, cultures, and nationalities.

Barriers in Cross-Cultural Communication

In business, cross-cultural communication is crucial to successfully conduct business with teams and stakeholders from around the world. Everyone benefits from greater bandwidth, institutional knowledge, and competitive advantage when communication is effective. Ineffective communication, on the other hand, can offend, confuse, or deliver the wrong message, resulting in strained relationships with customers, partners, vendors, and staff. The following are some of the most common cross-cultural barriers:

1. Language

Those from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds confront communication obstacles because miscommunication is widespread among people who speak the same language. Misunderstandings can result from anything from a mispronunciation of a word to a lack of specificity. Despite the fact that English is the most widely used international business language, not every company in the world utilizes it on a regular basis. Employees may struggle to communicate in English, which can lead to misconceptions when it comes to receiving directions, determining the level of urgency, and addressing difficulties or concerns.

2. Stereotypes

These are generalizations about a group of people that are ascribed to individuals regardless of their personal traits due to their membership in that group. Positive, negative, or neutral stereotypes exist. Many stereotypes are negative or even hostile, and they create a severe communication barrier in the workplace. The stereotype is a concept that is utilized in a variety of situations. The uniqueness of Chinese cultural characteristics, for example, has been recognized in various ways. Chinese people are frequently described as emotionally reserved, introspective, serene, exceedingly courteous, socially cautious, self-restrained, and so on.

3. Body Language

Body language is a term that refers to all non-verbal communication. This includes how we welcome people, sit or stand, our facial expressions, clothes, hairstyles, tone of voice, eye movements, how we listen, how we breathe, how near we stand to others, and how we touch others. Body language exerts a strong influence in emotional situations, where body language frequently takes precedence over words. Kinesics is the scientific study of body language. Around the world, eye contact, posture, and facial expressions have distinct connotations.

4. Emotional Display

From culture to culture, what constitutes an appropriate display of emotion varies. In certain nations, expressing wrath, fear, or irritation at work is deemed improper in the workplace.

People from these cultures keep their feelings to themselves and simply talk about the facts of the problem. Participants in various cultures are expected to disclose their feelings during a talk. You can imagine the misconceptions that can occur when a businessperson expresses significant emotion in the presence of co-workers who believe that such behaviour is inappropriate.

5. Ethnocentrism

It is a tendency to criticize other groups based on one's own standards and ideals. Ethnocentric values not only operate as a barrier to communication, but they can also affect a student's mood and productivity. Ethnocentrism is the belief that one's own group's culture is good, right, and rational, whereas other civilizations are inferior. When presented with a different culture, people judge it according to their own standards, rather than attempting to comprehend and evaluate it from the perspective of its members. Racism, the concept that people may be categorized into various racial groups and that these races have a biologically based hierarchy, is sometimes paired with ethnocentrism. In principle, though, one might reject a distinct culture without implying that its adherents are inherently inferior. However, ethnocentrism can make it difficult to communicate with people from diverse cultures. It can also make you hostile to outside organizations and prevent you from seeing various points of view, values, or methods of doing things.

6. Prejudice

Prejudice emerges when someone's characteristics are 'prejudged' simply because they are classified as belonging to a certain group. It's frequently linked to negative attitudes about that particular group. This mental barrier can be disastrous for organizational communication since it can prevent entire groups of employees from receiving critical information.

How to improve Cross-Cultural Communication?

There is no other solution to the company's communication problem other than to increase cultural connectivity. As previously stated, it is extremely important in any industry that requires communication.

Whether you're in the maker's market or not, you'll need a well-established communication infrastructure. Many people are unsure of how to approach this issue and end up jeopardizing their work relationships.

The best techniques for improving for overall cross-cultural communication skills.

1. Prefer In-Depth Conversations

It is common knowledge that all talks had during working hours are quite significant. The organization hopes to promote meaningful dialogue among its employees. Even in interconnected cultures, the same situation exists. People from different backgrounds cannot communicate. This isn't the best method to advance or simply start a conversation. You should discuss and learn about employees from different countries. This technique, of course, will not be applied overnight and will take some time. However, the outcome would be beneficial to both the employees and the company.

2. Avoid Signalling

This may not seem like a significant deal, but numerous people, particularly those from foreign cultures, dislike being signalled. People can be offended by the usage of nonverbal communication channels on a frequent basis.

Open a direct communication account with them instead. Americans, for example, consider it usual to point to anything as a reference or direction. At the same time, other countries, such as Japan, are hesitant to make a similar gesture. They believe it is disrespectful to their culture, so they use their hands instead of their fingers.

3. Perception

It is best to get to know people who are part of the Cross-Cultural Communication program before dealing with them. There's nothing wrong with inquiring about their culture rather than causing problems later on.

You should have a fundamental understanding of their background and a personal perspective on it. The organization should focus on these issues and initiate group discussions. Employees' communication skills will improve as a result, and they will be able to grasp each other's feelings.

Interpersonal Vs Intrapersonal Communication

What is Interpersonal Communication?

Interpersonal communication refers to the exchange of information, ideas, emotions, and thoughts between two or more individuals. It involves verbal and non-verbal interactions, such as conversations, discussions, and negotiations. Interpersonal communication plays a crucial role in establishing and maintaining relationships, expressing feelings, resolving conflicts, and collaborating with others. It encompasses various aspects of communication, including active listening, empathy, assertiveness, and effective expression of thoughts and emotions.

Advantages of Interpersonal Communication

- Interpersonal communication facilitates the building of meaningful relationships.
- It enhances understanding and empathy between individuals.
- Interpersonal communication promotes effective collaboration and teamwork.
- It allows for the exchange of diverse ideas and perspectives.
- Interpersonal communication fosters mutual trust and respect.
- It enables individuals to express emotions and feelings to others.
- Interpersonal communication helps resolve conflicts and prevent misunderstandings.
- It enhances social and networking skills.
- Interpersonal communication contributes to personal and professional growth.
- It enables individuals to establish connections and create social support networks.

Disadvantages of Interpersonal Communication

- Interpersonal communication can lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretations.
- It may result in conflicts and disagreements.

- Interpersonal communication requires effective listening and communication skills, which not everyone possesses.
- It can be challenging to manage different personalities and communication styles.
- Interpersonal communication may be affected by cultural and language barriers.
- It can be time-consuming and require significant effort and energy.
- Interpersonal communication may involve emotional vulnerability and potential rejection.
- It can be challenging to maintain open and honest communication in certain relationships.
- Interpersonal communication can sometimes lead to information overload or overwhelming social interactions.
- It requires continuous effort and practice to develop and maintain effective interpersonal communication skills

What is Intrapersonal Communication?

Intrapersonal communication refers to the communication process that occurs within an individual. It involves internal dialogue, self-reflection, and self-analysis. Intrapersonal communication encompasses our thoughts, beliefs, emotions, and perceptions, as well as the way we communicate with ourselves. It is a solitary process in which individuals engage in introspection, self-examination, and self-awareness. This form of communication allows individuals to understand their own needs, desires, and motivations, fostering personal growth and self-expression.

Advantages of Intrapersonal Communication

- Intrapersonal communication promotes self-awareness and self-understanding.
- It allows individuals to reflect on their thoughts, feelings, and experiences.
- Intrapersonal communication enhances decision-making skills and problem-solving abilities.
- It provides a platform for self-expression and self-reflection.
- Intrapersonal communication fosters personal growth and development.
- It facilitates goal setting and self-motivation.
- Intrapersonal communication helps manage stress and emotions effectively.
- It allows individuals to clarify their values, beliefs, and priorities.
- Intrapersonal communication encourages creativity and innovation.
- It enables individuals to develop a positive self-image and self-esteem.

Disadvantages of Intrapersonal Communication

- Intrapersonal communication may limit exposure to diverse perspectives and alternative viewpoints.
- It can lead to self-doubt or over thinking in certain situations.

- Intrapersonal communication may lack external feedback, which can result in biased conclusions.
- It can be challenging to identify and address personal biases and blind spots without external input.
- Intrapersonal communication may not provide opportunities for negotiation or compromise.
- It may lead to a lack of social interaction and potential isolation.
- Intrapersonal communication can sometimes reinforce negative self-talk or self-criticism.
- It may be challenging to validate or challenge personal assumptions without external input.
- Intrapersonal communication may hinder the development of social skills and empathy.
- It can result in a narrow perspective and limited exposure to different cultures and ideas.

Similarities between Intrapersonal Communication and Interpersonal Communication

- Both intrapersonal and interpersonal communication involve the exchange of information.
- They play crucial roles in human interaction and relationship-building.
- Both forms of communication involve the expression of thoughts, emotions, and ideas.
- Intrapersonal and interpersonal communication require effective listening skills.
- They contribute to personal growth and self-awareness.
- Both forms of communication can influence individual behavior and decision-making.
- They require attention to non-verbal cues and body language.
- Intrapersonal and interpersonal communication involves the interpretation and understanding of messages.
- Both types of communication impact the quality of relationships.
- They can be improved through practice, feedback, and self-reflection.

Key Differences between Intrapersonal Communication and Interpersonal Communication

- Intrapersonal communication occurs within an individual, while interpersonal communication involves interactions between two or more individuals.
- Intrapersonal communication involves self-reflection and internal dialogue, while interpersonal communication relies on verbal and non-verbal interactions.
- Intrapersonal communication is a solitary process, while interpersonal communication is a social and interactive process.
- Intrapersonal communication focuses on internal thoughts, emotions, and self-analysis, while interpersonal communication involves the exchange of ideas, information, and emotions between people.
- Examples of intrapersonal communication include self-talk, thinking, and reflection, while examples of interpersonal communication include conversations, discussions, and negotiations.
- Intrapersonal communication enhances self-awareness and self-expression, while interpersonal communication focuses on building relationships and understanding others.

- Intrapersonal communication is limited to one's own perspective and experiences, while interpersonal communication involves multiple perspectives and diverse experiences.
- Intrapersonal communication does not require external feedback, while interpersonal communication relies on feedback from others.
- Intrapersonal communication is non-interactive, while interpersonal communication is interactive and dynamic.
- Intrapersonal communication is involved in internal decision-making and problem-solving, while interpersonal communication emphasizes collaboration and conflict resolution.