



Communication And Its Barriers In An Organisation

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Abstract:

As a feature of socially defined people, no one can live without communication. Everyone is having communication with the others in the social context. Whatever the topic, individuals should exchange and share thoughts, news, in some other words they should communicate. In this regard, especially in the organizations in which the both, formal and informal, communication exists, “communication within the organization” plays an important role in structuring the organizational activities, objectives, company policies and strategies.

Key Words: Communication, group network, barriers.

INTRODUCTION

Kreps (1990) defined organizational communication as the process whereby members gather pertinent information about their organization and the changes occurring within it. Generally organizational communication has two objectives. The primary objective is to inform the workforce about their tasks and the policy issues of the organization (De Ridder, 2003; Francis, 1989). Organizational communication is defined as “transmitting news about the work from organization to employees and through employees (Phattanacheewapul & Ussahawanitchakit, 2008; Chen et al., 2005). The second goal of organizational communication is to construct a community within the organization (Francis, 1989; Postmes et al., 2001; De Ridder, 2003).

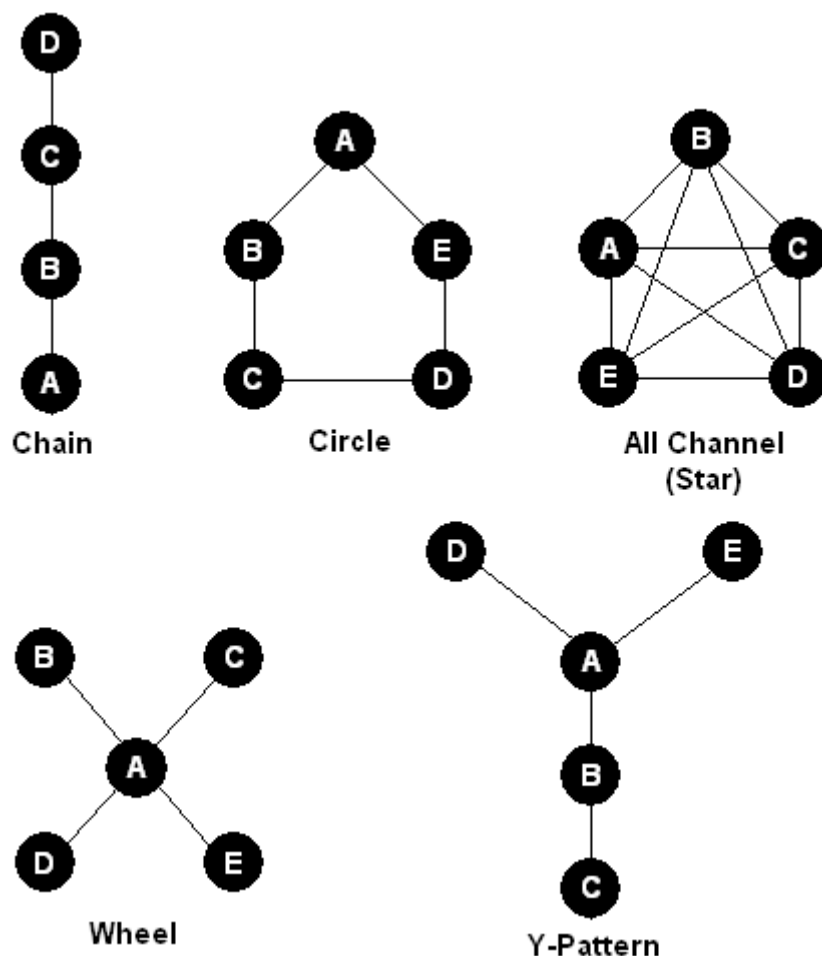
Communication can be defined as the exchange of an information, thought and emotion between individuals of groups; in other words, communication plays a fundamental role in balancing individual and organizational objectives. Communication is the activity of conveying information. Communication has been derived from the Latin word "communis", meaning to share. Communication requires a sender, a message, and an intended recipient, although the receiver need not be present or aware of the sender's intent to communicate at the time of communication; thus communication can occur across vast distances in time and space. Communication requires that the communicating parties share an area of communicative commonality. The communication process is complete once the receiver has understood the message of the sender. Feedback is critical to effective communication between parties.

TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

Communication within organizations is classified into two groups as formal and informal. The types of formal communication are “up to down”, “down to up”, “horizontal” and “cross” communication

COMMUNICATIONAL NETWORKS IN THE ORGANISATION

There are channels through which information flow, which is very important for analysing the communication as the element of organisational behaviour, and those are formal small group network and informal group network.



Formal small group networks:

There are five formal small groups' networks: chain network, circle network, wheel network, all Channel and Y Pattern. The differences between networks are in the basic features of each network. Chain network of formal small groups mainly follows the formal chain of command, whereas the circle network has the leader as the central person for conducting all communications within the group. As opposed to chain and circle network, wheel network is characterised by openness that enables the joint communication of all members of the group. If we compare the networks in small groups having in mind certain criteria as speed, accuracy, leader emergence and member satisfaction, we would conclude that in order to come to a conclusion, we have to wisely choose a particular form of the communication network depending on the aim we want to achieve. If we appreciate accuracy, then the chain network should be used. The small formal groups circle network is to be used if our aim involves some of its features: great speed, accuracy and high emergence of the leader. All Channel Network has no central leadership and no key point node whose removal might disrupt the entire organization This network is completely decentralized. The all-channel network is one of the most difficult to maintain as it requires a strong communications capacity to maintain ties between nodes. All Channel Network is similar to the free-flow of communication in a group that encourages all of its members to become involved in group decision processes. In Y pattern, it's more complicated pattern and also has the communication problem which appears in both circle and chain pattern. The group is separated into three and the group members can communicate with the other members group through leader only.

Informal groups communication network: "Informal communication in the organisation, in Anglo-American business culture known as Grapevine which is secondary and very complicated communication network that is based on personal contact, and opposed to the system of formal communication it does not follow a particular line settled in advance."

"Informal communication reflects the employees' perception concerning the organisation. It often carries or asks for information that the management, accidentally or deliberately, has not formally disclosed." (Fox; 2001, 47.) Grapevine consists of three main features. "Firstly, it is not controlled by the management. Secondly, most of the employees consider it more feasible and more reliable than the official notifications provided by the top management. And thirdly, it is mostly used for the self-interest of the people within it." (Robbins; 2003, 290.)

Barriers to effective human communication:

Communication is the key factor in the success of any organization. When it comes to effective communication, there are certain barriers that every organization faces. People often feel that communication is as easy and simple as it

sounds. No doubt, but what makes it complex, difficult and frustrating are the barriers that come in its way. Some of these barriers are mentioned below.

Barriers to successful communication include message overload (when a person receives too many messages at the same time), and message complexity.

Physical barriers:

Physical barriers are often due to the nature of the environment. Thus, for example, the natural barrier which exists, if staff are located in different buildings or on different sites. Likewise, poor or outdated equipment, particularly the failure of management to introduce new technology, may also cause problems. Staff shortages are another factor which frequently causes communication difficulties for an organization. Whilst distractions like background noise, poor lighting or an environment which is too hot or cold can all affect people's morale and concentration, which in turn interfere with effective communication.

System design:

System design faults refer to problems with the structures or systems in place in an organization. Examples might include an organizational structure which is unclear and therefore makes it confusing to know who to communicate with. Other examples could be inefficient or inappropriate information systems, a lack of supervision or training, and a lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities which can lead to staff being uncertain about what is expected of them.

Attitudinal barriers:

Attitudinal barriers come about as a result of problems with staff in an organisation. These may be brought about, for example, by such factors as poor management, lack of consultation with employees, personality conflicts which can result in people delaying or refusing to communicate, the personal attitudes of individual employees which may be due to lack of motivation or dissatisfaction at work, brought about by insufficient training to enable them to carry out particular tasks, or just resistance to change due to entrenched attitudes and ideas.

Ambiguity of Words/Phrases:

Words sounding the same but having different meaning can convey a different meaning altogether. Hence the communicator must ensure that the receiver receives the same meaning. It would be better if such words can be avoided by using alternatives. Individual linguistic abilities also important. The use of difficult or inappropriate words in communication can prevent people from understanding the message. Poorly explained or misunderstood messages can also result in confusion. We can all think of situations where we have listened to something explained which we just could not grasp.

Physiological barriers:

It may result from individuals' personal discomfort, caused—for example—by ill health, poor eyesight or hearing difficulties.

Presentation of information:

It is also important to aid understanding. Simply put, the communicator must consider the audience before making the presentation itself and in cases where it is not possible the presenter can at least try to simplify his/her vocabulary so that majority can understand.

Importance of Effective Communication:

No matter how brilliant and invaluable your ideas are, it is worthless unless you can share it with others. For this reason, effective communication is crucial at every level of an organization. However, the ability to communicate effectively does not come easily to many people, and it is a skill that requires practice. We begin practicing our communication skills even before we learn to walk. A newborn child communicates by crying, but it slowly learns to mimic its parents' speech. Eventually, the child discovers that certain speech patterns elicit different responses; one of the joys of parenting is trying to decipher the meaning behind certain "words." Does "baaaaaw" mean that the baby wants his ball, his bottle, or his blanket? Slowly, through trial and error, the child learns to manipulate sounds to get what it wants, and as the child develops, this active oral practice leads to more nuanced and fluid conversations. In short, the child learns effective communication. To effectively communicate a complex idea, however, requires skills beyond elementary conversation. There are two golden rules to remember and follow.

Organize thoughts before sharing:

One idea often prompts a torrent of others. In order to share your ideas, you must first shape them coherently. Organization is important, because it creates a pattern for your listener, allowing him or her to grasp the larger picture intuitively. This allows the listener to focus on the details of your message, without struggling to understand how you went from Point A to Point B.

Communication: Collaborative, not Competitive: Thrusting own idea on others decreases the beauty and integrity of conversation. Communication is in some ways like a dance; each partner plays off the other, basing his or her steps on the other person's, while simultaneously maintaining a certain amount of individuality. Communication is a two-way process involving an exchange of ideas. If try to make it one-way, it can prevent this exchange and will eventually frustrate the other person. Sender may also frustrate himself. The hallmark of effective communication is the coherent verbal projection of you ideas, so that your listener receives the message that you intend to send. We should reduce miscommunication and misunderstandings.