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Oral Communication in Workplace

Ahmad Fawad Akbari & Yama Shams
UNITAR Afghan Resource Persons

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Definition

• The root of the word “communication” in Latin is *communicare*, which means to share, or to make common.

• Communication is the process of understanding and sharing ideas, opinions or information.

Introduction to communication

A communication model
Levels of communication

- Interpersonal
- Intrapersonal
- Small group
- Intercultural
- Organizational
- Mass communication

Methods of Communication

- **Nonverbal**
  - Less structured, harder to classify
  - More spontaneous, less control

- **Verbal**
  - More structured, easier to study
  - Conscious purpose, more control
Oral Communication in Workplace

- It is a vital, integral part of the modern business world.
- People in workplace spend over 75% of their time communicating
- Oral communication at organization level include: Staff meeting, Personal discussion, Presentations, Telephone discourse, informal conversation
- Out side the organization it take the form of face-to-face, meetings, telephone calls, speeches, telephone conference, audio/video-conferences.
What is Oral Communication

Oral communication is a process whereby information is transferred from a sender to receiver usually by a verbal means which can be supported by visual aid. e.g. discussions, speeches, conversations, questions/answers, through radio/TV/internet, telephone conversation/voice mails, VHF radios.

Receiver could be an individual, a group, or even audience.

Oral versus Written Communication

Written communication is...

• Formal
• Planned
• Detailed
• Official
• elicits a response after lapse of some time
• carries more authority and is proof of a transaction
Oral versus Written Communication

Oral communications is...

- more spontaneous
- more direct
- less formal
- elicits a prompt response of some kind.

Basic oral communication skills

1. Asking questions
2. Listening skills
3. Providing feedback that has impact
4. Receiving feedback with grace and dignity
(1) Asking question

Good quality questions lead to good quality information

1. Open questions
They typically begin with:

2. Closed questions
They may begin with;
( Did, Can, Are, Is, Have, Do, Shall .... )

(2) Listening skills

Active listening is making a conscious effort to hear not only the words that another person is saying but to understand the total message being sent.

- Look interested
- Inquire with question
- Stay focused
- Test your understanding
- Evaluate the message
- Neutralize your feeling
### Hearing and Listening

1. Hearing is a physical process that takes place naturally.
2. Listening is a mental process that requires effort.
3. Listening is wanting to hear and understand to get an accurate perception of what is being communicated.

#### Oral Communication in Work Place

### (3) Providing feedback that has impact

**Types of feedback**

- **Positive** – simple praise and reinforces why/how the other did well

- **Constructive** – how the other can do better, sensitively delivered, focus on observable facts (Feedback sandwich)

- **Negative** – describes a perceived negative behaviour without proposing a solution, destructive, happens accidentally or aimed at terminating relationship
(3) Providing feedback that has impact .......

- Focus on person’s behaviour not the personality
- Feedback should focus on issues not the person
- If possible, give feedback in private
- Feedback is useful when well timed
- Describe, don’t evaluate
- Be specific, not general

(4) Receiving feedback with grace and dignity

- Discuss the feedback with those whose opinions you respect
- Be attentive to the person giving feedback
- Take it as a sincere gift that will help you grow
- Take notes, record the words the giver used
- Ask for examples to support the point
- Avoid being defensive
- Stay calm
Means of Oral Communication

- Face to face talking
- Meetings
- Conference calls
- Phone calls
- Presentations
- Video or audio recordings
- Radio or TV
- Internet
- Other forms of oral communication

Basic communication styles

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<th>Aggressive</th>
<th>Passive</th>
<th>Assertive</th>
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<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Passive" /></td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Assertive" /></td>
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- Aggressive: Domineering, condescending & often sarcastic:
  - Puts others down
  - Thinks they are wrong
  - Pushes people around
  - "Know-it-all" attitude
  - Usually no appreciation
  - A strong urge to win arguments

- Passive: Apologetic, self-conscious, trusts others but not self
  - Does not express own wants & feelings & lets others make decisions for self.
  - Try to avoid conflict
  - Clam up when treated unfairly & complain instead of taking action
  - Tendency to avoid postponing things

- Assertive: Non-judgmental, trusts self & others, confident, self-aware, open, flexible, decisive, proactive
  - Action oriented, realistic in their expectations, fair & just, takes appropriate action in getting what they want without denying the rights of others.
  - Confront problems as they happen. Negotiate, trade off, compromise to solve problems.
Oral Communication Barriers

The communication iceberg

- Perception and language (different language, vocabulary, accent, dialect, semantic gaps, etc)
- Restrictive environments
- Distractions
- Deceptive tactics
- Information overload
- Cultural (age, education, gender, social status, economic position, cultural backgrounds, religious and political beliefs, values, etc)
- Psychological (emotions, anger, fearful...etc)
How to make Oral Communication Effective

- Be a good listener
- Give and receive feedback
- Be clear (should be crisp and to the point)
- Simplify language
- Constrain emotions
- Avoid digression (gives wrong impression)
- Know your audience (behaviour, culture, education etc)
- Play back for confirmation (stop for confirmation and verify what you understand)

Exercises (30 minutes)

Objective of the exercise:

- To practice oral communication
- To practice listening and comprehension
- To practice providing and receiving feedback

What to do –
Imagine that you have been hired to make “cold calls” to ask people whether they are familiar with a new restaurant that has just opened in your neighborhood. Write a script for the phone call. Ask a classmate to co-present as you deliver the script orally in class, as if you were making a phone call to the classmate. Discuss your experience with the rest of the class. Others will give feedback on your performance
Summary

• Successful communication ensures that the receiver interprets the message the same way as the sender intended it.

• As an agent of change, it is essential that your message gets across – otherwise your effort to change, will be wasted.

Thank you