

A STUDY ON SOFT SKILLS IN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

Communication is life and remains forever in every aspect of human life. The communication is an activity of conveying meaningful information mutually. 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 sender.

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1. Introduction

A variety of verbal and non-verbal means of communicating exists such as body language, eye contact, sign language, paralanguage, and media such as pictures, graphics, sound, and writing. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities also defines the communication to include the display of text, Braille, tactile communication, large print, accessible multimedia, as well as written and plain language, human reader, and accessible information and communication technology. Non-verbal communication describes the process of conveying meaning in the form of non-word messages. Research shows that the majority of our communication is non verbal, also known as body language. Some of non verbal communication includes gesture, body language or posture; facial expression and eye contact, object communication such as clothing, hairstyles, architecture, symbols info-graphics, and tone of voice as well as through an aggregate of the above. Non-verbal communication is also called silent language and plays a key role in human day to day life from employment relations to romantic engagements. Speech also contains nonverbal elements known as para-language. These include voice quality, emotion and speaking style as well as prosodic features such as rhythm, intonation and stress. Likewise, written texts include nonverbal elements such as handwriting style, spatial arrangement of words and the use of emoticons to convey emotional expressions in pictorial form.

2. Human Communication:

Human spoken and picture languages can be described as a system of symbols (sometimes known as lexemes) and the grammars (rules) by which the symbols are manipulated. The word "language" also refers to common properties of languages. Language learning normally occurs most intensively during human childhood. Most of the thousands of human languages use patterns of sound or gesture for symbols which enable communication with others around them. Languages seem to share certain properties, although many of these include exceptions. There is no defined line between a language and a dialect. Constructed languages such as Esperanto, programming languages, and various mathematical formalisms are not necessarily restricted to the properties shared by human languages.

3. Visual communication:

Visual communication is the conveyance of ideas and information through creation of visual representations. Primarily associated with two dimensional images, it: signs, typography, drawing, graphic design, illustration, colours, and electronic resources, videos and TV. Recent research in the field has focused on web design and graphically oriented usability. Graphic designers use methods of visual communication in their professional practice.

4. Oral communication:

Oral communication, while primarily referring to spoken verbal communication, typically relies on both the words, visual aids and non-verbal elements to support the conveyance of the meaning. Oral communication includes discussion, speeches, presentations, interpersonal communication and many other varieties. In face to face communication the body language and voice tonality plays a significant role and may have a greater impact on the listener than the intended content of the spoken words. A great presenter must capture the attention of the audience and connect with them. For example, out of two persons telling the same joke one may greatly amuse the audience due to his body language and tone of voice while the second person, using exactly the same words, bores and irritates the audience. Visual aid can help to facilitate effective communication and is almost always used in presentations for an audience. A widely cited and widely misinterpreted figure used to emphasize the importance of delivery states that communication comprise 55% body language, 38% tone of voice, 7% content of words", the so-called "7%-38%- 55% rule". This is not however what the cited research shows – rather, when conveying *emotion*, if body language, tone of voice, and words *disagree*, then body language and tone of voice will be believed more than words.

5. Written communication and its historical development:

Communication has evolved through progression of technology. Advances includes Communication psychology and media psychology an emerging field of the study. Researchers divide the progression of written communication into three revolutionary stages called "Information Communication Revolutions".

The 1st stage written communication first emerged through the use of pictographs. The pictograms were made in stone; hence written communication was not yet mobile.

2nd stage writing began to appear on paper, papyrus, clay, wax, etc. Common alphabets were introduced and allowed for the uniformity of language across large distances.

The 3rd stage is characterized by the transfer of information through controlled waves and electronic signals.

Communication is thus a process by which meaning is assigned and conveyed in an attempt to create shared understanding. This process, which requires a vast repertoire of skills in interpersonal processing, listening, observing, speaking, questioning, analyzing, gestures, and evaluating enables collaboration and cooperation. Barriers to successful communication include *message overload* (when a person receives too many messages at the same time), and the same leads towards *message complexity*. Misunderstandings can be anticipated and solved through formulations, questions and answers, paraphrasing, examples, and stories of strategic talk. Written communication can be clear by planning follow-up talk on critical written communication as part of the normal way of doing business. Minutes spent talking now will save time later having to clear up misunderstandings later on. Then, take what was heard and reiterate in your own words, and ask them if that's what they meant.

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