

MGMT2002 Course Notes (Textbook):

Chapter 1: Effective Business Communication

- Your anticipation, reaction and adaptation to the process will determine how successfully you are able to communicate
- Learning to communicate well requires you to read and study how others have expressed themselves and then adapt what you have learned to your present task

Chapter 1.1 Why is it important to communicate well?

- Business communication can be thought of as a problem-solving activity in which individuals may address the following questions:
 - What is the situation?
 - What are some possible communication strategies?
 - What is the best course of action?
 - What is the best way to design the chosen message?
 - What is the best way to deliver the message?

Communication Influences your thinking about yourself and others:

Communication – *the process of understanding and sharing meaning*

- You share meaning in what you say and how you say it, both in oral and written forms
- Being unable to communicate might even mean losing a part of yourself, for you communicate your **self-concept**
- Your communication skills help you to understand others – their tone of voice, non-verbal gestures or the format of their written documents provide you with clues about who they are and what their values and priorities may be
- Active listening and reading are also part of being a successful communicator

Communication Influences how you learn:

- You need to begin the process of improving your speaking and writing with the frame of mind that it will require effort, persistence, and self-correction.
- You learn to speak in public by first having conversations, then by answering questions and expressing your opinions in class, and finally by preparing and delivering a “stand-up” speech.
- Similarly, you learn to write by first learning to read, then by writing and learning to think critically.
- Take suggestions as challenges to improve

Communication Represents you and your employer:

- In both oral and written situations, you will benefit from having the ability to communicate clearly.

Communication Skills are desired by Business and Industry:

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, the following are the top five personal qualities or skills potential employers seek:

1. Communication skills (verbal and written)

2. Strong work ethic
3. Teamwork skills (works well with others, group communication)
4. Initiative
5. Analytical skills

1.2 What is Communication?

Defining Communication:

Communication – *process of understanding and sharing meaning* (Pearson and Nelson, 2000)

Breaking it down...

- **Process** – *dynamic activity that is hard to describe because it changes*
- **Understanding** – *to perceive, interpret and to relate our perception and interpretation to what we already know*
- **Sharing** – *doing something together with one or more people*
- **Meaning** – *what we share through communication*

Eight Essential Components of Communication:

1. Source
 - *Imagines, creates and sends the message*
 - First the speaker determines the message – what to say and how to say it
 - Then, they encode the message by choosing the right order or the right words to convey the intended meaning
 - Then, they present or send the information to the receiver or audience
 - Finally, they watch for the audience's reaction and the source perceives how well they received the message and responds with clarification or supporting info.
2. Message
 - *The stimulus or meaning produced by the source for the receiver or audience*
 - The message also consists of the way you say it – in a speech, with your tone of voice, your body language and your appearance – and in a report with your writing style, punctuation and the headings and formatting you chose.
 - Part of the message may be the environment or context you present it in
3. Channel
 - *The way in which a message travel between source and receiver*
 - Spoken channels include face-to-face, speeches, telephone conversations and voice mail messages, radio, public address systems and voice over Internet protocol.
 - Written channels include letters, memorandums, purchase orders, invoices, newspaper and magazine articles, blogs, e-mail, text messages, tweets, and so forth.
4. Receiver
 - *Receives the message from the source, analysing and interpreting the message in ways both intended and unintended by the source*
 - As a receiver you listen, see, touch, smell, and/or taste to receive a message

5. Feedback

- *When you respond to the source, intentionally or unintentionally*
- Verbal or nonverbal, all these feedback signals allow the source to see how well, how accurately (or how poorly and inaccurately) the message was received.
- Feedback also provides an opportunity for the receiver or audience to ask for clarification, to agree or disagree, or to indicate that the source could make the message more interesting.
- As the amount of feedback increases, the accuracy of communication also increases

6. Environment

- *The atmosphere, physical and psychological, where you send and receive messages*

7. Context

- *Involves the setting, scene and expectations of the individuals involved*
- Context is all about what people expect from each other, and we often create those expectations out of environmental cues

8. Interference

- *Anything that blocks or changes the source's intended meaning of the message*
- Psychological noise is what happens when your thoughts occupy your attention while you are hearing, or reading, a message
- Noise interferes with normal encoding and decoding of the message carried by the channel between source and receiver

Two Models of Communication:

Transactional Process – actions occurring at the same time

Constructivist Model – focus on negotiated meaning or common ground when trying to describe communication

1.3 Communication in Context:

Intrapersonal Communication:

Intrapersonal Communication – *involves one person (self-talk)*

- Your intrapersonal communication can be positive or negative, and directly influences how you perceive and react to situations and communication with others.
- What you perceive in communication with others is also influenced by your culture, native language, and your world view

Interpersonal Communication:

Interpersonal Communication – *normally involves two people and can range from intimate and very personal to formal and impersonal*

Group Communication:

Public Communication – *one person speaks to a group of people; and same goes for written communication*

- In a public speaking situation, the group normally defers to the speaker.

Mass Communication:

Mass Communication – *involves sending a single message to a group*

- Allows us to communicate our message to a large number of people, but we are limited in our ability to tailor our message to specific audiences, groups, or individuals.
- As a business communicator, you can use multimedia as a visual aid or reference common programs, films, or other images that your audience finds familiar yet engaging
- By choosing messages or references that many audience members will recognize or can identify with, you can develop common ground and increase the appeal of your message.

1.4 Your Responsibilities as a Communicator:

Communicator is Prepared:

As the business communicator's first responsibility, preparation includes several facets which we will examine: organization, clarity, and being concise and punctual.

- Being prepared means you have selected a topic appropriate to your audience, gathered enough information, put that information into a logical sequence and considered how best to present

The Prepared Communicator is Organised:

- Involves the steps or points that lead your communication to a conclusion
- Narrow your focus to a few key points and consider how you'll present them.
- You also need to consider how to link your main points together for your audience.
- Use transitions to provide signposts or cues for your audience to follow along

The Prepared Communicator is Clear:

- You need to have a clear idea in your mind of what you want to say before you can say it clearly to someone else.
- At an interpersonal level clarity involves considering your audience as you will want to choose words and phrases they understand and avoid jargon or slang that may be unfamiliar to them.
- Clarity also involves presentation.
- Technology also plays a part; if you are using a microphone or conducting a teleconference, clarity will depend on this equipment functioning properly

The Prepared Communicator is Concise and Punctual:

- Means brief and to the point
- Being prepared includes being able to state your points clearly and support them with clear evidence in a relatively straightforward, linear way.
- Being concise also involves being sensitive to time constraints

Communicator is Ethical:

Ethics - *a set of principles or rules for correct conduct.*

- Communicating ethically involves being egalitarian, respectful, and trustworthy—overall, practicing the “golden rule” of treating your audience the way you would want to be treated.
- The degree to which you consider both the common good and fundamental principles you hold to be true when crafting your message directly relates to how your message will affect others.

The Ethical Communicator Is Egalitarian:

Egalitarian – *to believe in basic equality; that all people should share equally in the benefits and burdens of a society*

- It means that everyone is entitled to the same respect, expectations, access to information, and rewards of participation in a group.
- Speak and write in a way that is comprehensible and relevant to all your listeners or readers
- Being egalitarian does not mean you have to avoid professional terminology that is understood by nurses or insurance adjusters.
- An egalitarian communicator seeks to unify the audience by using ideas and language that are appropriate for all the message’s readers or listeners.

The Ethical Communicator is Respectful:

- People are influenced by emotions and logic
- If your topic is worth writing or speaking about, make an effort to show your audience why it is worthwhile by speaking enthusiastically or using a dynamic writing style.
- Ethical communicator will be passionate and enthusiastic without being disrespectful

The Ethical Communicator is Trustworthy:

- Your goal as a communicator is to build a healthy relationship with your audience, and to do that you must show them why they can trust you and why the information you are about to give them is believable.

The Golden Rule:

- Treat others the way you would like to be treated.