**Effective Communication Skill: Need of Today**

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**Abstract**

As we know Communication is giving, receiving or exchanging ideas, information, signals or messages through appropriate media, enabling individuals or groups to persuade, to seek information, to give information or to express emotions. This broad definition includes body-language, skills of speaking and writing. Strong communication skills can help us interact both face-to-face and in the online world. Texting, chatting, and posting responsibly depends on understanding how words and images affect others. In our daily life, communication helps us build relationships by allowing us to share our experiences, and needs, and helps us connect to others. It's the essence of life, allowing us to express feelings, pass on information and share thoughts. We all need to communicate.

**Keywords:** communication, effectiveness, information, Language

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Communication requires full understanding of behaviors associated with the sender and receiver and the possible barriers that are likely to exit- there are also challenges with establishing the source of what is to be communicated since this is a pre requisite for any work success. Communication involves transmission of verbal and non verbal message. It consists of a sender, a receiver and channel of communication. In the process of transmitting message, the clarity of the message may be interfered or distorted by what is often referred to as barriers. Communication process can be classified in to two categories 1) mass media and 2) group media. Mass media focuses on reaching a wide audience while the group media reaches a specific group with clearly defined characteristics. Radio, television and internet are examples of mass media channels while drama, storytelling, music and dance fall under group media.

 Selecting a communication channel requires a completed understanding of the strengths, limitations and possible solutions related to each potential channel. We all know very well, in all education communication is most important. Those entrusted with developing health education interventions that require communication need to be aware of the limitations in order to identify other complimentary activities to be able to achieve desired results. The context in which communication takes place is a major determinate to achieving the desired results. First, there should be Situational analysis conducted which includes also an audience analysis and this could be a situational analysis conducted with includes also an audience analysis and this could be a rapid or comprehensive assessment. The findings of a Situational analysis are then fed into decisions regarding the appropriate message and channels to be applied. The situation analysis presents opportunities for implementing multiple communications where necessary.

 Communication is a base of good common health (public health). When good communication happens in public with each other then in society can mentain good relation and good public health with each other. In order to succeed in establishing effective health interventions using communication, the participation of intended beneficiaries throughout of the programme phases is a prerequisite. In other words, the intended beneficiaries should participate in setting objectives, selecting activities as well as monitoring of the effectiveness of the activities and participate in the planning and implementation. The beneficiaries should also be a part of establishing an environment that is conducive to delivering effective communication activities. In order to realize this goal in programme terms, policies and legislations that promote communication are required at national level. In many countries, mass media outlets such as television, radio, internet and newspapers are either a state monopoly or are under the ownership of private companies thereby making it hard for public service organizations to easily access them. The high fees levied for using these information outlets is quite prohibitive to most public health services organizations particularly those operation at community level. In some cases, public health problems encountered by the community are policy, economic or political related, and no amount of communication would influence change because there is need for a policy or political decision.

 Communication approaches that provide opportunities for interpersonal interaction are likely to yield desired behavior change. These interpersonal group communications include drama, song, storytelling and debate among others. The interpersonal communication can take into consideration social, cultural and behavioral factors that influence health outcomes unlike with mass media.

**Effective communication**

Effective communication is about more than just exchanging information. It’s about understanding the emotion and intentions behind the information. As well as being able to clearly convey a message, you need to also listen in a way that gains the full meaning of what’s being said and makes the other person feel heard and understood.

Effective communication sounds like it should be instinctive. But all too often, when we try to communicate with others something goes astray. We say one thing, the other person hears something else, and misunderstandings, frustration, and conflicts ensue. This can cause problems in your home, school, and work relationships.

For many of us, communicating more clearly and effectively requires learning some important skills. Whether you’re trying to improve communication with your spouse, kids, boss, or co-workers, learning these skills can deepen your connections to others, build greater trust and respect, and improve teamwork, problem solving, and your overall social and emotional health.

**Common barriers to effective communication**

Stress and out-of-control emotion: - When you’re stressed or emotionally overwhelmed, you’re more likely to misread other people, send confusing or off-putting nonverbal signals, and lapse into unhealthy knee-jerk patterns of behavior. To avoid conflict and misunderstandings, you can learn how to quickly calm down before continuing a conversation.

**Lack of focus**: - You can’t communicate effectively when you’re multitasking. If you’re checking your phone, planning what you’re going to say next, or daydreaming, you’re almost certain to miss nonverbal cues in the conversation. To communicate effectively, you need to avoid distractions and stay focused.

**Inconsistent body language**: - Nonverbal communication should reinforce what is being said, not contradict it. If you say one thing, but your body language says something else, your listener will likely feel that you’re being dishonest. For example, you can’t say “yes” while shaking your head no.

**Negative body language**:-. If you disagree with or dislike what’s being said, you might use negative body language to rebuff the other person’s message, such as crossing your arms, avoiding eye contact, or tapping your feet. You don’t have to agree with, or even like what’s being said, but to communicate effectively and not put the other person on the defensive, it’s important to avoid sending negative signals.

**Lack of Transparency & Trust**: - It is extremely difficult to communicate anything when there is a lack of transparency and trust. For example, if your staff believes you are holding something back, they will be anxious, some will speculate, and as a result, it will be more difficult for them to process any attempt you make to communicate with them.

**Cultural Differences & Language**: - It is important to understand the cultural differences in communication. But don’t just think international as in remembering that in Japan one’s surname precedes their given name. There can also be regional differences – for example, a northerner might not like the term "y’all" or even understand the more comprehensive version, "all y’all." While these examples may seem trivial, the point is that cultural differences can occur within the boundaries of the US, and when one does not recognize cultural differences, they risk offending the other person. It is in the offense that communication breaks down. We all should actively engage in reflecting on our own communication skills. The above list of communication barriers, is a great place to start. Reflection, empathy (putting yourself into the other’s shows), and practice will help you hone your skills. However, no one is perfect, so it is also important to recognize and acknowledge when you make a mistake, which is the first step in keeping the doors to effective communication open.

**Effective communication skill**

**1. Become an engaged listener**

Focus fully on the speaker. You can’t listen in an engaged way if you’re constantly checking your phone or thinking about something else. You need to stay focused on the moment-to-moment experience in order to pick up the subtle nuances and important nonverbal cues in a conversation. If you find it hard to concentrate on some speakers, try repeating their words over in your head—it’ll reinforce their message and help you stay focused.

Show your interest in what’s being said. Nod occasionally, smile at the person, and make sure your posture is open and inviting. Encourage the speaker to continue with small verbal comments like “yes” or “uh huh.” Hear the emotion behind the words.

**2. Pay attention to nonverbal signals**

Nonverbal communication, or body language, includes facial expressions, body movement and gestures, eye contact, posture, the tone of your voice, and even your muscle tension and breathing. Developing the ability to understand and use nonverbal communication can help you connect with others, express what you really mean, navigate challenging situations, and build better relationships at home and work.

Be aware of individual differences. People from different countries and cultures tend to use different nonverbal communication gestures, so it’s important to take age, culture, religion, gender, and emotional state into account when reading body language signals.

Avoid negative body language. Instead, use body language to convey positive feelings, even when you’re not actually experiencing them. If you’re nervous about a situation—a job interview, important presentation, or first date, for example—you can use positive body language to signal confidence, even though you’re not feeling it. Instead of tentatively entering a room with your head down, eyes averted, and sliding into a chair, try standing tall with your shoulders back, smiling and maintaining eye contact, and delivering a firm handshake. It will make you feel more self-confident and help to put the other person at ease.

**3. Keep stress in check**

How many times have you felt stressed during a disagreement with your spouse, kids, boss, friends, or coworkers and then said or done something you later regretted? If you can quickly relieve stress and return to a calm state, you’ll not only avoid such regrets, but in many cases you’ll also help to calm the other person as well. It’s only when you’re in a calm, relaxed state that you’ll be able to know whether the situation requires a response, or whether the other person’s signals indicate it would be better to remain silent.

Communicate effectively by staying calm under pressure. Use stalling tactics to give yourself time to think. Ask for a question to be repeated or for clarification of a statement before you respond. Pause to collect your thoughts. Silence isn’t necessarily a bad thing—pausing can make you seem more in control than rushing your response.

Make one point and provide an example or supporting piece of information. If your response is too long or you waffle about a number of points, you risk losing the listener’s interest. Follow one point with an example and then gauge the listener’s reaction to tell if you should make a second point. Deliver your words clearly. In many cases, how you say something can be as important as what you say. Speak clearly, maintain an even tone, and make eye contact. Keep your body language relaxed and open.

Wrap up with a summary and then stop. Summarize your response and then stop talking, even if it leaves a silence in the room. You don’t have to fill the silence by continuing to talk.Quick stress relief for effective communication

When a conversation starts to get heated, you need something quick and immediate to bring down the emotional intensity. By learning to quickly reduce stress in the moment, you can safely take stock of any strong emotions you’re experiencing, regulate your feelings, and behave appropriately.

**4. Assert yourself**

Direct, assertive expression makes for clear communication and can help boost your self-esteem and decision-making skills. Being assertive means expressing your thoughts, feelings, and needs in an open and honest way, while standing up for yourself and respecting others. It does NOT mean being hostile, aggressive, or demanding. Effective communication is always about understanding the other person, not about winning an argument or forcing your opinions on others.

 Value yourself and your options. They are as important as anyone else’s. Know your needs and wants. Learn to express them without infringing on the rights of others. Express negative thoughts in a positive way. It’s okay to be angry, but you must remain respectful as well.

Receive feedback positively. Accept compliments graciously, learn from your mistakes, ask for help when needed. Learn to say “no.” Know your limits and don’t let others take advantage of you. Look for alternatives so everyone feels good about the outcome.

**Types of Communication**

There are many ways that people communicate. language is deeply ingrained in culture and thus communication types and styles will vary. General types of communication include the following-

1. **Verbal**

This is verbal, spoken language and includes not only the language and words spoken, but the tone they are spoken in the cadence and speed, as well as formal versus informal language.

1. **Nonverbal**

This type of communication includes posture, facial expression, kinesics (gestures), and oculesics (eye movements and behavior). American Sign Language (ASL). Which is an officially recognized language also falls into nonverbal types of communication.

1. **Visual**

Social media has provided the world with a type of visual communication that has to connect us across the world. Zoom, Instragam , Twitter, Face book, and many other social media platforms have added a new dynamic to how we communicate with one another. Other kinds of visuals include signs and symbols that communicate a concept or use of audiovisual aids for presentations.

1. **Written**

This is communication that is written in many firms, from emails and texts to old-fashioned pen and paper.

1. **Active Language**

This is vital types of communication because it encourage and guides communication by reflecting back on what is being said and responding to the sender in a thoughtful and deliberate manner to indicate that the receiver is truly listening to what is being communicated.

**Principles of Communication**

Communication Professionals will sometimes refer to the 7 Principles of Communication.

**1. Effective**

Every communication should have a clear purpose and should achieve that purpose to be effective. This includes what is said, how it is delivered, when it is sent/published and why people should take notice. You need to communicate your message in the fewest possible words, have the consistency of tone, voice, and content so that you can save time. Short, punchy statements are often more effective than rambling prose. Diagrams and images provide impact and clarity. Visual design should provide a good UX, support the message and the brand and make it easy for people to engage and pick out the important elements. Each message must have a logical conclusion and a call to action.

The need for active communication, where important or urgent notifications are emphasized above general messaging 'noise' and so direct their attention, should be considered alongside passive 'Publish and Track' or 'For Interest' ('Publish and Forget') approaches. Active communications should be carefully managed to prevent overuse or abuse.

**2. Comprehensive**

People shouldn’t be left wondering if there is more to come. The information communicated should be adequate and complete. Where possible, it should fully address the purpose and provide enough that the recipients can take the required action without delay, confusion or a reduction in productivity or motivation. Where communication cannot be completed in a single message etc. then it should clearly indicate that there is more to follow, with requisite when and how. Links to supporting material are recommended

**3. Clarity**.

The purpose of messages should be clear; worded in such a way that the receiver understands the same thing which the sender wants to convey. Communications shouldn’t leave your team confused. Be clear of what format do you want to say it in. Be clear about your goal or purpose. It is also essential that the receiver is conversant with the language, inherent assumptions, and the mechanics of communication. Typically, sentences should be short, in the active voice and key elements stated it in separate bullet points.

**4. Attention and Style**

In good communication, the receiver’s attention is drawn to the message. People are different in behavior, attention, emotions etc. so they may respond differently to the message. This may require constructing different message formats for different roles and grades. Senior staff should be seen to be acting in accordance with the messages, using the messaging tools and supporting the messaging processes. Formal communication is generally used for transmitting messages and other information; however, sometimes informal communication may prove more effective. Informal communication can be helpful for assessing the reaction of employees towards various policies. Both types should embrace the organization’s ethos; commonly this is positive, honest, respectful, open and polite.

**5. Coherency**

Communication often takes place across multiple tools/formats and over a period of time. It’s important that communication remains logical, well-planned, and self-reinforcing across these. There should be a good connection with the main topic and, often linked to company values, principles, and mission. Equally, communication should be consistent with the policies, plans, programs and objectives of the organization and not in conflict with them.

**6. Timeliness and Urgency**

Communication should be done at proper time and with the appropriate level of impact and urgency, to ensure that messages can be understood and acted upon to achieve their objective. It should be possible to differentiate Urgent and Import information and understand the time scale for any actions. There should be confidence that communication reaches their audience when intended.

**7. Importance of Feedback**

Feedback is very important to confirm that communication has been effective and to resolve questions, allow challenge, clarify actions etc. Sometimes there is a compliance requirement or monitoring function that needs to be addressed via feedback or a ‘read receipt’.

**How to improve communication skill?**

There are specific things to do that can improve your communication skills:

1. Listen, listen, and listen. People want to know that they are being heard. Really listen to what the other person is saying, instead of formulating your response. Ask for clarification to avoid misunderstandings. At that moment, the person speaking to you should be the most important person in your life. Another important point is to have one conversation at a time. This means that if you are speaking to someone on the phone, does not respond to an email, or send a text at the same time. The other person will know that she doesn’t have your undivided attention.

2. Who you are talking to matters. It is okay to use acronyms and informal language when you are communicating with a buddy, but if you are emailing or texting your boss, “Hey,” “TTYL” or any informal language, has no place in your message. You cannot assume that the other person knows what the acronym means. Some acronyms have different meanings to different people; do you want to be misunderstood? Effective communicators target their message based on who they are speaking to, so try to keep the other person in mind, when you are trying to get your message across.

3. Body language matters. This is important for face-to-face meetings and video conferencing. Make sure that you appear accessible, so have open body language. This means that you should not cross your arms. And keep eye contact so that the other person knows that you are paying attention.

4. Check your message before you hit send. Spell and grammar checkers are lifesavers, but they are not foolproof. Double check what you have written, to make sure that your words are communicating the intended message.

5. Be brief, yet specific. For written and verbal communication, practice being brief yet specific enough, that you provide enough information for the other person to understand what you are trying to say. And if you are responding to an email, make sure that you read the entire email before crafting your response. With enough practice, you will learn not to ramble, or give way too much information.

6. Write things down. Take notes while you are talking to another person or when you are in a meeting, and do not rely on your memory. Send a follow-up email to make sure that you understand what was being said during the conversation.

7. Sometimes it’s better to pick up the phone. If you find that you have a lot to say, instead of sending an email, call the person instead. Email is great, but sometimes it is easier to communicate what you have to say verbally.

8. Think before you speak. Always pause before you speak, not saying the first thing that comes to mind. Take a moment and pay close attention to what you say and how you say it. This one habit will allow you to avoid embarrassments.

9. Treat everyone equally. Do not talk down to anyone, treating everyone with respect. Treat others as your equal.

10. Maintain a positive attitude and smile. Even when you are speaking on the phone, smile because your positive attitude will shine through and the other person will know it. When you smile often and exude a positive attitude, people will respond positively to you.

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