

Organizational Behaviour
Dr. M. P. Ganesh
Department of Liberal Arts
Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad

Lecture - 36
Communication - Part 1

Warm welcome to this lecture series on Organizational Behaviour. This is a chapter on Communication, and this is the 1st lecture in this chapter. I am Dr. M. P. Ganesh from IIT, Hyderabad.

Outline



- The process of interpersonal communication
- Communication Styles
- Paralinguistic and Non-verbal communication
- The communication climate
- Common information effect
- The hidden profile paradigm
- Managing team meetings



So, this will be the outline of the lecture. We will start with the process of interpersonal communication which means what are the components of communication and how communication happens. We will also look at communication styles, which means how different people vary in terms of the way they communicate. We will also look at a very important component in communication which is paralinguistic communication and also non-verbal communication.

At the organizational context, we will discuss about communication climate, and after that we will talk about specific concepts related to communication within teams. So, we will talk about common information effect, the hidden profile paradigm, and how to manage team meetings.

Process and components



- Sender and receiver
- Message: a purpose to be conveyed
- Encoding: converting a message into symbols
- Channel: the medium a message travels along
- Decoding: translating a sender's message
- Noise: any disturbance that interfere with the transmission, receipt, or feedback of a message



Communication plays a very important role in interpersonal relationships. Without communication interpersonal relationships cannot exist. In terms of organizational context, communication happens at various levels and in different directions. For example, communication happens from top to bottom which is in the form of orders, instructions, management decisions, things like that.

In communication, it also happens from bottom up, feedback from the ground or feedback from the assembly line, inputs from the subordinates, and also suggestions, all those things are bottom up communication. There can also be horizontal communication which involves people communicate with their peers. So, organizational effectiveness involves how well communication is carried out in the organization.

It is important to focus on communication and organizational context, because most decisions in organizations they depend on the information which is communicated within the organization. If the information which is communicated within the organization is not correct or which if it is insufficient, the decisions made within the organization may fail. That is why it is very important to understand organizational communication.

So, when we talk about communication, in a very general sense communication involves many components. So, for a communication to happen we need a sender and a receiver, at least two people we need. Sender means the one who has the information and passes on the information to the other person. Receiver is the one who receives the information. So, let us say if you want to you know tell your colleague about the new policy. So, you

are the sender and the one who receives or the one who listens to it is a receiver. They can be one sender and multiple receivers, they can also be multiple senders and one receiver, they can be multiple senders and multiple receivers. So, communication can happen between groups as well.

So, you may ask me do we need a receiver, can there be only one person who can be a sender and the receiver? There can be, but then you yourself are becoming two people, you know you are talking to yourself. So, in that sense there are two people who are within you who are talking to themselves. So, in a very strict sense, we need at least two people to communicate, ok.

So, these two people when they communicate there should be a message. So, it is not just two people standing there means they are communicating, there should be some message which should be passed on from one person to the other person the sender to the receiver. So, what is some message? Message is the purpose to be conveyed. So, what is the purpose of the communication is the message? If the message is not there, there is no need for communication.

Even if there even if we are not consciously communicating, sometimes we pass on certain message without even knowing we are doing it. For example, let us say in a classroom you know your body language as a student will convey certain message to the teacher. As a sender of the message the student may not necessarily be aware of he or she is sending that message. So, it can be unintentional also.

Message can be formal or informal, which means if message can be done through in a very systematic way also may be a written communication or you know a notice board in which communication is made through a typed content vis-a-vis you know a gossip which happens between two people or a friendly communication between two people. So, communication can happen formally, informally. So, there is a sender, receiver, message is something which passes on between the sender and the receiver without message there is no communication.

Encoding means there is a message; message means the purpose of the communication. The purpose of the communication is converted into symbols which means, for example, right now I want to convey my subordinate that I need a particular file. So, this is the

message I want to convey. So, this message I will converted into symbol in terms of language, language is a symbol.

So, for example, in this sentence I want this file. So, each one of it is an abstraction. So, what do you mean by I? What do you mean by want? What do you mean by file? So, this message I should convert it in way that convert it in a symbol such a way that the other person understands this.

In other words, the symbol should be common between two people. When I say symbol it means language. For example, I may think in my mother tongue, but if I want to convey this message to my subordinate, I have to convert it into a language which both of us can understand, and also use a vocabulary which both of us can understand. Sometimes language can be same, but vocabulary can be different, ok.

For example, you know reinforcement; you would have heard this term reinforcement in learning chapter. So, this word reinforcement has different meaning in different context. So, reinforcement even though it is an English word, for a civil engineer reinforcement means something to do with concrete mixture. For a psychologist reinforcement means something to do with you know learning.

So, based on our background we have different meanings for the same word, same vocabulary. So, encoding involves that converting the message into language which suits to both the parties and also selecting vocabulary which both parties will understand, ok. The fourth element in communication, so there is a sender, there is a receiver, there is some message and there is a language, ok. The message is converted into a language, converted in verbal cues. Symbols can also be written cues.

You know language also involves writing which is also symbol. Symbol means it represents something the word apple represents a through apple, ok. It is not just letters apple means there is something which is there which is a fruit, ok. So, symbol means something which represents the reality, but symbol per says not the reality, ok.

So, language involves lot of these complexities. Why? We need to talk about symbol is in communication sometimes same symbol may mean different things to different people; for like I said reinforcement, or chair. If I say chair for me in my understanding or experience with chair it might be something where be sit, it is a furniture, ok. But for a

university professor chair means a position chair professor. So, the same symbol different meanings may exist.

For example, if you say danger. What is the symbol for danger? In most culture it is skull and two bones, ok. But may be in some culture or context it means happiness; it can vary from different cultures. So, that is where symbols can sometimes cause confusion. So, in communication, when you are encoding the message it is very important to ensure you use symbols which are appropriate and understandable for both the parties.

The fourth element in communication is channel, which means the medium which we use; the medium, means how are we communicating, are you using email which is a electronic medium, are you using verbal communication, you are just telling people, or are you using you know textual communication may be something like a notice which you are putting in a notice board or letter or a magazine. So, channel can vary from face to face to you know video conferencing and things like that.

For example, right now I am communicating to you through video conference, through recorded video. So, this can be done through video conferencing also. Even though I converse with you through electronic medium it can be live also, we can do it through online medium which helps in live telecasting also, where you can ask feedback and things like that, ok.

So, channel understanding a which channel to use or which media to use is a very important decision, ok. It may sound very simple, but different channels or different mediums have different properties. So, if I ask you which channel do you prefer?

Let us say you want to communicate with someone, which medium do you prefer to communicate, do you want to send an email, do you want to talk to them, or you want to call them and talk to them or you want to meet them face to face. Do you want to do a Skype call, or do you want to record it and send it to them or you want to you know do a text message, like you know WhatsApp and other ways like that?

So, there are multiple options available. So, which option will you choose? Some of you will say face to face is best. Why? Because it gives you a sense of reality which means you see the other person and the other person is there, there is a personal connect.

But sometimes we prefer sending emails. For example, if you want to send a message to your boss or to your teacher or an official conversation official communication you want to put it in writing. You know, if there is an email, it means it is you know you can in future also you can take the team and say I have communicated this, now the other person has also said this.

It is more of a tangible written thing; email. But will you communicate through email with your friend who is you know whose there next to you? You will not. You prefer to talk or you know if the friend is in another city you prefer to call them and talk, ok. So, every medium has its own advantages and disadvantages. And depending on the nature of the communication, is it formal informal, is it you know is it personal or is it just official or is it urgent or it is not very urgent.

So, depending on many factors we chose the channel, ok. In fact, there are lot of work which has been done in terms of media usage in communication, which media we use and how that effects communication. And choice of media also depends on personality of the individual and also cultural context. What I mean to say is in some cultures, like countries like India, you would prefer to communicate with our boss through email or we want official communication to happen through email because there is some level of certainty in that.

But informal communication, we prefer to do it via face to face communication or telephone and things like that, ok. Similarly, some people who are introverts, they prefer to write an email rather than talking to people directly. They are very good in writing long letters and emails, extra words they prefer to talk, they prefer to meet face to face and talk. So, which channel we chose depends on many factors personality, context, you know culture which say belong to and things like that.

So, there is sender, message, receiver, encoding which is language, channel which is the media which we chose and also decoding which happens. So, encoding is you convert if you are sender, you convert that message into a particular form of text or a verbal communication and you deliver it through a channel. So, for example, if you want a file you can call your subordinate and tell your subordinate please bring that file or you can type an email and say bring that file.

So, you are encoding, choosing a channel and sending it to the receiver. The receiver again will decode it, decode it meant, decode it means he or she will try to understand the message and try to make sense out of it. So, you are typing your subordinate bring the file, ok, just what two lines and just send an email. So, this subordinate will not know which file where to bring all those things. So, he may make certain assumption.

Maybe in a last conversation we were talking about this file, so maybe he wants that file. Bring means probably he is there in his office, ok, so that we have to go there and give the file. So, even though the message sent by the sender is not complete we try to decode it as a receiver. Decode the try to understand it. Noise means things which are outside these 3 things, sender, receiver, and the message.

It can be you know things which may disturb the communication. For example, so noise cannot necessary may not necessarily be physical noise it can be physical noise also. Let us say we are communicating you are talking to someone over phone and there is a you know vehicle which goes on the road with a huge blaring of horn, or there is a construction work which is going on, it disturbs. So, whatever you said may not reach the other person completely. So, that is physical noise.

They can also be psychological noise; psychological noise means you are thinking about something or you know you are like disturbed in terms of there is some problem in your personal life. So, you may not pay attention. So, noise can be psychological also. Or you are hungry you know somebody saying something, but you are like hungry and not able to pay attention, ok.

And, or, it can be social noise also social noise means prejudice you assume that this is what the other person is trying to convey, ok, or you assume that may be you know this person is having some hidden message or you know he is not a good communicator. So, all those assumptions you make based on the social background you come from and the social background of the other person those are social noise, ok. So, noise can be physical, psychological or social.

So, what happens because of noises? It becomes a interference with the transmission receipt or feedback of the message. So, when the sender has some noise you know the sender has some physical problem or you know psychological pre occupation, he or she may not send the message properly. Similarly, receiver also can have problems, from

receiving end also they can be noise. So, noise is something which interferes with communication.

So, in a communication, we need to reduce the noise, and also encoding should be done in a way that the other person should understand it. So, when you are a good, if you are a communicator, if you are a sender you should ensure that whatever message I am sending the language I am using, or the symbols which I am using should be comprehensible by the other person, the other person should understand it.

Similarly, from the receiver's point of view, when you decode it you should not decode it in a hurry you know you should try to understand what the other person is saying, you should listen to the other person. So, the sender should empathize, the receiver should listen, only then communication will happen properly. And another important thing is channel, chose a channel wisely.

It is not like it is always better to use face to face; sometimes it is better to use online communication or video conferencing and all those things, ok. So, this is about the whole communication process.

Communication styles



- Driver – direct and task oriented
- Animated – enthusiastic and relationship oriented
- Amiable – supportive and avoids change and confrontation
- Analytical – accurate and detail oriented



So, in terms of individuals, people differ in terms of the way they communicate. You know like personality there are styles of communication which means, in most of the communications, if I am of a particular style, I will communicate in a certain way, ok. It is like introverts, extroverts. So, introverts; they do not socialize much in most of the

context. Extroverts they like to socialize they like to have more friends, in most of the context.

Similarly, communication styles also if you are having a certain style you tend to use that style in most communication, ok. So, there are 4 styles, the first style is driver. Driver means someone who is like very direct and task oriented, they do not talk about related things or things which are not directly connected to the communication. For example, you know you must be seeing some people who will not even ask how are you when they meet you, they will say I want this or this is the message.

They do not even ask how are you, what happened all those things, ok. The other way around is animated, somebody who is like very enthusiastic, very relationship oriented. So, some people you know instead of communicating, the core message they will talk about may things, personal things; did you eat? What did you eat? What is the latest movie you saw? You know, they will forget about the real message they wanted to convey, ok. So, those people are animated people.

You know these animated people are also people who use lot of non-verbal communication, they you know they use lot of hand movements, body movements, gestures when they communicate. They will not like stand still when they communicate. So, these people are animated communicators which is opposite of drivers. They are like very rigid, very focused, they will convey only the message, they do not worry about or they will not actually communicate anything about personal information. So, these people are drivers.

So, a driver and animator can also be depending on the cultural context. When I say cultural context, in some cultures, in some societies, it is very important to have relationship oriented communication. For example, you know in eastern cultures before we communicate even in formal communication or official communication, before we give the message we will ask many things how are you? How are your parents? Or, how are your children?

You know, how is there? Is it raining there? All those things. How is the economy? You know all those things. People communicate many things before coming to the message, because otherwise you will be perceived as very shrewd person. They will think why he is so unfriendly. On the other hand, some cultures, some nations nation cultures, if you

are very animated they will think why this person is not coming to the point, why is he wasting my time.

They will think this person is trying to hide something, that is why he is like beating the bush, ok. So, your style, communication style also depends on the cultural context. An appropriateness of a particular communication style depends on which culture you are exhibiting it, ok.

The third style is amiable style which means there are some people who are very supportive in communication, they are always say yes. You know they will say I understand, I agree, you know people who use those kinds of words when they communicate. And they also avoid change in confrontation.

They will not confront, confront means if they do not accept something they will not openly say I do not accept, they will say 'yeah yeah correct', but you know something like that they will say. They will be like roundabout in giving negative feedback. They will not like to disagree. So, these kind of people are amiable people.

Analytical people are similar to drivers, but they use lot of numbers, they use lot of facts, they will not say I think, they will say according to this report, ok, according to this research or this is what expert say. They will not say I feel, I think, I guess, all those things they will not say, ok. So, these people are analytical style kind of communicators.

So, again these styles, appropriateness of the styles depends on which context we are using. It is not like if you are you know particular style you will be successful. In some context it is good to be a driver, in some situation it is good to be analytical, in some situation you need to be animated, in some situation you need to be amiable, ok. So, it depends on the context.

Paralinguistic communication



- Very powerful mode of communication
- Major part of our communication is non-verbal
- Body language, Gestures, Facial expressions
- Vocal Cues, Tone of voice, Inflection, Pauses, Emphasis
- Punctuates verbal messages like exclamation marks, question marks, boldface



So, I will stop here. In the next lecture, we will talk about paralinguistic communication. It is a very interesting topic how non-verbal communication or how communication apart from verbal communication makes a difference and what are those. And they are called paralinguistic communication. We will talk about in the next lecture.

Till then take care. We will meet in the next lecture.