

COUNSELING FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

In all cultures, communication is a lubricating factor of social life. This innate quality of man helps to foster integration and co-operation. Signs, symbols, words of mouth, sculpture, drawing and painting were the earliest media for communication. Writing and printing extended the frontiers of communication were as, the wireless (radio, television, telex and fax broadened the scope. With the introduction of the information communication technology (I.C.T) the world has been turned into a global village. The attendant problem of what to communicate, where to communicate, how to communicate and who, gave rise to the challenge of communication management. To enhance effective communication management, the paper concludes that the effective communication to take place, factors such as time, interest, value, and application environment ought to be considered.

Introduction

According to social scientists, man is a social animal with inclination to interest with on another, either as individuals, groups or organizations. This relationship is propelled by a covert or a overt interest either expressed or implied. This innate quality of man to relate with others make communication an indispensable tool.

Communication, simply put, is an art and/or a science of reaching out. Awotua-Effebo (1999) defines communication as “the impacting or conveying of information or knowledge from one person to another. It is a mutual exchange of ideas, thoughts, opinions, facts and or emotions”. Dictionary (Yahoo) see communication as (a) The exchange of thoughts, message or information, as by speed signals, writing or behaviour, (b) Inter-personal rapport”.

From the earliest time, many problems had been associated with the practice o communication. These include: Who to communicate, what to communicate and how n communicate. This is because communication takes both a direct or indirect form. In addition, there is also the problem of mis-direction, mis-understanding, interception, charity, comprehension am quarantine. All these impede the process of communication.

Non-the-less, effective communication aids decision making. Ipaye (1983), in corroboration holds that “the

The Frontiers of Communication

Communication which used to be regarded as Inter-personal report in the past, has come u include a wide range of activities today. Even science and technology has impacted seriously m the practice of the art. Today, communication is not just and art but include processes and principle* o human interaction. A profession and distinct field of study.

Speech or words of mouth is the earliest medium of conveying messages, thoughts, ideas opinions and feelings among individuals. This was in the era of direct relationship at that time; a mar was taken by his words. Till today, speech is still used as a medium of interaction, but other processes have been developed.

Communication may be verbal or non verbal. Gestures, facial expressions and symbols arc ah potent media of communication. Hayes (1994), contends that, “most, if not all human beings are experts in non verbal communication. The human faced conveys a lot of messages. Hayes (1994). writes that, “A shared glance with a friend can replace any amount of talking, but a glance exchange with a stranger might not convey any message at all”. Further he contends, that when we greet someone we like with a smile, frown if we puzzle or scold if we are angry.” He however concluded that human beings have a wide range for facial expressions.

Symbols and symbolisms remain a vital aspect of the communication process. According to the Webster Dictionary, messages ideas and feelings used to be embedded in signs and symbols as a **way** of passing on information from one person to the other. In such a circumstance, the sign or symbol to be used must have a general acceptable interpretation among the users. At any point such a

sign or symbol is seen, it will no longer be difficult to read its meaning. By this method, information gets communicated or spread. The talking drum and other musical instruments equally serve as instruments of relating messages from one source to another.

Human institution plays a significant in communication. The town crier is a potent medium of spreading information people go to him to deliver information to the public. Others go to get latest information if they were not around for some lime, [even his mere appearances with his drum or instrument, simply indicates that there is latest news in town.

As soon as the talking drum is heard, it does not only draw the attention of listeners but gets people to read the message, such sound conveys. Here one talking drum can be used to convey more than one message at different times depending on the drumming pattern. In such a circumstance. Un-people already know the different sounds of the talking drum and the message a particular sound conveys.

Similarly, Song (music) serves as a medium for conveying messages. For instance, a deige conveys the message of death. When the music is a love song, it means that something like marriage ceremony is going on somewhere. Every activity has one music or the other associated with it.

Drawing and painting provide other avenues of transmitting information from one point m another. Most times, artists express their thoughts, feelings and opinions through drawing. Here, cartoonists readily come to mind. Artists use the cartoon to appreciate, criticize, support, condemn o> convey their impression on issues of social importance.

Paintings, also play a significant role in transmitting information. Here we noticed that artists use painting to depict different situations. In this instance, the system painting of Michael Angelo readily comes to mind. Angelo used his paintings to discuss the events in the Roman Kingdom at his time. Even colours convey message when used. The colour of white signifies peace, green mean- love, blue stands for orderliness, yellow indicates warning, red depicts danger where as black connotes evil. At any time a war ship hoists a white flag, this means suing for peace.

All these and many more, projects the frontiers of communication before the era of technology. Pictures, books and other printed materials have also helped to expand the frontiers of information dissemination. While a picture gives us the exact image of the original object, book- serve as a storehouse of events, thoughts ideas, impressions of people and places over time. From books, we learn of events, which took place in the past, and borrow ideas, which will help to structure the future as postulated by the writer.

In all these, communication still remains an art. The carrier of information is not difficult u identify, here, the personal skill of the individual is a vital aspect in the practice. In these instances, even if money or other forms of remuneration change hands, such is usually optional. Further, in the above system of communication, the target audience is usually small. One effect of this is that the process is less cumbersome. Any problem which may arise is easily identified and settle and as a result, management does not pose any difficulty.

Science and Technology as Aid to Communication

The advent of science and technology has further helped to expand the frontiers of communication. Contacts considered impossible in the past are now performed with joy. However, Isiyemi (2003), opines that, “before the advent of telecommunication, technology, and other forms of communication, over a long distance will demand that the message be recorded and/or encoded m some media such as print, disk, audio or visual tape, hand written or photograph” with the development of science and technology all these have been improve upon.

The introduction of postal services in a way adds to the milestone achievement in improving the scope of communication. The post office handles processing and delivery of mails and parcels. In that exercise, the sender is no longer the carrier

The role of the post office introduces us to another sphere of communication. To facilitate the services of the post office, personnel’s are trained to be able to cope with the requirements of their office. In this instance, we have individuals who are specially trained to facilitate the communication process. Owing to the feat achieved in facilitating communication by the postal services, fax, telex, etc were evolved in a bid to expand the dynamics of communication. The wireless electronic devices assisted to broaden the dimension of information technology. Hitherto, it was possible to convex

words, writings, and pictures but not sounds. Radio, television and overhead projectors among others

came to facilitate the transmission of sounds, and images to distant places. The use of electronic gadgets facilitated the transmission of information to different people at different locations at the same time.

Newspaper, magazines, billboard, handbills and other print materials added to the growing dimension of information dissemination. This gives rise to another dimension in the communication industry as people began to market information materials. Here, communication became restricted to only those who can afford the means.

The introduction of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has made the information communication more dynamic than ever. Computer appreciation has helped to increase the scope and dimension of information dissemination. According to Bosebe (2003), "information technology means the creation, collation, collection, storage, processing, transmission, display and use of information by people and machine". As it were, the frontier of communication is no longer confined to inter personal interaction, which used to be the case before the ICT era.

With increase access to information communication technology (ICT) the world has been turned into a global village. The use of computer has contributed in ensuring a very efficient, cheap and simpler way of accessing information worldwide. With the aid of Electronic-mail (E-Mail) one can exchange information with someone very far away in a matter of minutes.

In the case of short messages, the "Short Message Services" (SMS) through the cellular phone can be of great assistance. In the case of large documents or images, such can be scanned and transferred with dispatch (Bosebe, 2003).

Counseling and Communication Management

Without mincing words, effective communication management is a necessity if humanity is to enjoy the benefits of communication. In this regard, the revelation by Denga (2005) that improper handling of information contaminates and constipates; must be taken very seriously. A well intended piece of information that is improperly handled is worse than a missile. Ipaye (1983) in corroboration holds that "information has no decisional significance of itself". In this wise therefore, we can only appreciate the benefits of communication when it is handled with wisdom.

Generally speaking, human behaviours is a direct response of their experience. Dollard (1950) as quoted by Ipaye (1983), contends that, "people behave largely in terms of the labels they place on each other and on events." If human communication is not guided, there is the danger that such may not be appropriately applied. In the event of this, the information, which was meant to serve a useful purpose, becomes an instrument of destruction.

The degree of relationship between individuals, groups or organizations determines the extent of success or failure of such relationship. While discussing "imprinting" Hayes (1994), concludes according to the law of effort, that the amount of effort a young animal (duckling) puts in following a large object, (the more), the stronger the attachment. Here, it is obvious that effective communication promotes the quality of relationship. A weak communication process is most likely to produce a very weak result as no one can rely on such communication for anything serious.

Effective communication is an indispensable tool for development. Mogbo (2003), assert that, "Information increase the productivity, capacity, of society and their political, economic, as well as their scientific institution." A well-informed individual is in a better position to contribute to 'die development of his society. Conversely, and uninformed person, gropes in the dark, such fellow will not know what to do, or how to go about it. This kind of uninformed individual, despite his intention to make meaningful contribution, all his effort will be met with failure.

For any information to be understood, such has to be properly coded Awutua-Efcbo, 1999 Denga (2005), argues that, correct information gives understanding and understanding gives knowledge." If the language of any communication process is vague or ambiguous, understanding will be hampered. The language of any communication process needs to be simple, sharp and appropriate.

For effective communication to take place, the person giving out the information must refrain from the influence of personal prejudice. Awolua-Efebo (1999), contends that, "in giving a message, the giver must guide against his personal prejudice and personal emotions." When the information we give is devoid of personal interest or bias, there is the tendency that the message we give, will be objectives, meaningful and purposeful.

The Way Forward

Since every information is geared towards satisfying a desire. The following will help to promote effective communication management among individuals and organization.

1. In communicating an information, such should be stated in a very simple and clear terms.
2. Some one in passion of public information should be in the right frame of mind.
3. To Grasp the core content of any information the receiver should concentrate on what the information is all about.
4. To appreciate the benefit of information dissemination people and institutions should maintain a broad mind devoid of prejudice.
5. People should be more interested in those information that promote personal development and communal harmony.
6. We should play down on those information that generates tensions bitterness and acrimony.

Conclusion

On a final note, communication is a vital forces under pines all social relationships. Similarly, it is one of the deadliest weapons if wrongly handled or misapplied. Effective Communication Bridge the gap between people and nations. It is one of the strongest instruments for development.

Through effective communication management, some ambiguities that result in conflict could be resolved. Communication strengthens the bond among peoples of divers' cultural backgrounds. It helps to build confidence in a society marred by mistrust, greed, hatred and confusion.

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