

Lesson3

Business Communication and its scope for Management

"Teamwork is a make or break situation.

Either you help make it or the lack of it will break you." – Kris A. Hiatt

TEAM – DEFINITION

'Team' refers to a group of people with different skills and different tasks, who work together on a common project, service, or goal, with a meshing of functions and mutual support.

Almost everyone has worked in teams at some point in their lives. Within those teams, communication is crucial between all members, regardless of what role each person plays. Whether it is between two teammates on a sports team or two managers in a corporate office, communication is vital to success.

Importance of Team Communication Skills

Businesses have many different components ranging from owners to management to employees. Keeping the lines of communication between these groups open and working properly is one challenge that all businesses face. Fostering a team atmosphere and focusing on good communication among employees and between employees and management can open the doors to success.

Team communication skills are critical for ensuring the success of the team effort, whether the team is charged with creating a new product, making a process improvement, or planning the summer picnic. Strong team communication skills can help build relationships, ensure the sharing of new ideas and best practices, and benefit team members through coaching and counseling.

Good Communication

Recognizing and defining good communication is the first step in developing it. Good communication skills involve verbal, non-verbal, written and listening components. Ultimately, good communication is effective communication. It involves understanding what method of communication is best for a situation, clearly expressing your information, intent and goals and following up to make sure that it is understood. Practice good manners, take time to listen to employees, answer follow up questions and prepare ahead of time for involved conversations.

Teamwork

Small businesses are only as strong as the employees that make up the organization. Good communication encourages productive teamwork. Employees may come from a variety backgrounds

and have diverse perspectives. Good communication within a team will keep employees on the same page and working to reach common goals despite personal differences. Each person must understand the role that they need to play. This may start with a team meeting that outlines the goals of a project, assigns duties to leaders, delegates what needs to be done and sets a time line for completion. Be clear about the tasks at hand and let employees know who to talk to should any issues arise.

Cohesiveness

Effective teams need to work well together because team cohesiveness depends on building strong relationships among team members. Communication is critical and is driven by the team leader who will work with the team to establish ground rules and work to bring the team together so that it can accomplish its goals. All teams will go through expected stages of development, from forming to storming to norming and eventually, performing, according to business consultant Bruce Tuckman. Navigating through these stages effectively will help teams build relationships.

Sharing

When team communication skills are strong, it raises the chance that good ideas and best practices will be shared openly says Lin Gensing-Pophal, author of "Employee Management for Small Business." Team members can be hesitant to provide input for fear of being criticized or having their ideas dismissed, says Gensing-Pophal. Teams that can establish an open, positive and supportive environment among team members are in a better position to hear those good ideas and learn from the best practices of the group.

Professional Development

Effective team communication can lead to both personal and professional development. Team leaders will be influenced by the coaching and counseling skills of the team leader and, when the team leader is a positive role model, these insights can help employees improve their own communication skills. Strong team communication skills can also help team members learn how to manage conflict in positive ways, an important professional development skill, says Gensing-Pophal. "Too often, we can have a tendency to avoid conflict," she says. "By learning to respond to conflict in positive ways, both employees and companies can benefit."

What are the Benefits of Effective Team Communication?

In order to be able to function as an efficient team, you need to develop effective team communication. There are many benefits of effective team communication that can help your business become more productive. When a team is able to work together through good communication, it can bring more revenue to the company's bottom line.

Research has found that three or more people working together on a project are much more effective than a single person spending all of his time doing the same thing. However, without communication, the three-plus team members can be as useless as if the project went untouched.

Efficient Action

According to the online communication resource People Communicating, when a team is able to effectively communicate, it cuts down on time lost to misinterpretation. A message that is delivered poorly due to a breakdown in team communication can cause the receiver to take incorrect actions. That means the team has to stop, correct the problem and then try to move forward. When correct messages are received through an effective team communication network, the team can take proper and efficient actions to get projects completed on or ahead of schedule.

Encourages Input

The Los Angeles Westside Toastmasters suggests that effective communication fosters open communication. When there is an effective communication network in place, team members feel confident that their opinions will be heard. This encourages input from the entire team, and the team can then utilize all of its internal resources to solve an issue or get a project completed.

Encourages Dynamic Change

The business world is constantly changing, and effective team communication is important in allowing a team to keep up with the evolving workplace, according to the Wisconsin Business Alumni. An effective team communication structure can withstand changes in the business world, and as the marketplace gets more complex, the team is able to keep up because important information is shared efficiently. Information that the team needs in order to adapt to business changes reaches each team member quickly in an efficient team communication structure.

Creates Understanding

A business team is a collection of people, and those people have a variety of backgrounds that can be difficult to bring together with an inefficient communication system. When a team is able to communicate effectively, each member is better able to understand his teammates. Cultural diversity becomes a benefit, because the team communicates so well that mutual understanding helps to facilitate progress.

What Are the Challenges to Team Communication?

In order to be effective as a team, team members need to be able to communicate with each other. As a team begins to work together, several challenges to team communication begin to arise. In order to be able to work through these challenges, it is important for team members to be able to identify the communication barriers and find solutions to work through them.

Putting Position Ahead of Interest

According to the University of Colorado Conflict Research Consortium, team members can sometimes get so caught up in defending their position in a discussion that they begin to forget why they took that position in the first place. The desire to be right can take precedence over the interests of the group. Team members need to focus the good of the group and on solving group issues, not letting ego get in the way.

Experience

A team is made up of a diverse group of people all with their own unique set of experiences. Those experiences can be cultural, environmental, religious or educational. According to the small business informational resource BNet, all of these factors can become barriers to group communication if group members do not respect each other's point of view.

Develop an atmosphere of mutual respect within the group to overcome these barriers of experience. Make sure all opinions count and every voice is heard. A diverse group can work to the team's advantage because it offers many points of view on the same topic, but without mutual respect, those differing points of view can cause huge hurdles to effective communication.

Message Method

Email and written letters have no emotion, no voice inflection and no body language to help the reader understand the meaning. In certain instances, written messages can be effective for a team. In other cases, using a written message could cause a problematic misinterpretation of the meaning. Important issues within a team should be discussed face-to-face or over the phone. Quick messages can be sent in written form, but there should be some sort of verbal follow-up to insure the proper meaning was derived.

Rank

For a group to be an effective decision-making body, there needs to be a leader, and then all group members need to have an equal say on important issues. In some cases, a team may be made up of senior company members, managers and executives who feel that their opinions matter more than the opinions of the lower-ranking group members. Oppression by rank can cause group communication to break down.

Common Characteristics of Effective Teams

1. The purpose, mission, or main objective is known and understood by all team members.
2. Communication in the team is open, direct and honest.
3. Sufficient leadership is available in the team.
4. There is regular review of how well the team is performing toward achieving its purpose.
5. There is an agreed organizational structure to the team.
6. Adequate resources are available to permit the team to perform its function, including skills, tools, facilities, and budgets.
7. Synergy exists, so the team performs in a way that is greater than the sum of its parts.

On-the-job actions of successful teams

1. Seeking opinions and input before finalizing decisions or plans.
2. Being available to help teammates.
3. Volunteering information to teammates who need it.
4. Providing contributions on time.
5. Acknowledging other team members contributions to those outside the team.
6. Being non-defensive and receptive to ideas, opinions and needs of teammates.
7. Considering the impact of the team's plans on the rest of the organization (administration, accounting, etc.).
8. Not criticizing teammates when they are not present.
9. Coming to meetings prepared.
10. Expressing appreciation for helpful teamwork extended by another.
11. Identifying and helping with loose ends, even if it is someone else's area of responsibility.
12. Keeping teammates advised of changes, developments and new information.
13. Being supportive of the team's objectives, once they are set.
14. Pitching in when the whole team needs help in meeting a deadline, even if it is outside of your area of responsibility.
15. Trusting the team to be able to develop consensus, even though it takes extra time.

Why use teams?

1. More knowledge and skill is brought to the problem.
2. Information flow is more effective.
3. More people are aware of the full breadth of the problem.
4. Meetings are more productive and goal-oriented.
5. Better decisions are made.
6. Team problems are identified sooner and more clearly.
7. Team members learn from each other.

8. The team becomes more cohesive and develops a stronger sense of belonging to the organization.
9. Overall morale improves.
10. More is accomplished than is possible by equivalent individual efforts.
11. Productivity and time savings are achieved by eliminating duplication of efforts.
12. Absenteeism and missed deadlines are reduced.
13. Team members understand organizational issues better.
14. Management work is shared.
15. Teams set and achieve tougher goals than individuals.

Common misconceptions

1. Teams don't need leadership.
2. Teams must have a say in all decisions.
3. Some groups cannot be teams.
4. "Talking teamwork" will make it happen.
5. Managing teams is more difficult than traditional management.

Team Development Stages

1. Forming
2. Storming
3. Norming
4. Performing

FORMING

1. People are cautious, guarded, wondering.
2. Little visible disagreement.
3. Lack of identity.

4. Little investment in the group.
5. Watching to see what is expected of team members and what is acceptable from team members.

STORMING

1. Conflict occurs.
2. Work is not very productive.
3. High level of frustration and/or confusion.
4. Pairing develops.
5. Beginning of development of identity, purpose, and interest.
6. People take risks and get to know one another.

NORMING

1. Developing goals, roles, and relationships.
2. Learning to appreciate differences in people.
3. Conflict is about issues, not egos or people.
4. Communication is open and clear.
5. Sense of belonging develops.
6. Progress begins.
7. Work becomes enjoyable.

PERFORMING

1. Team acts on common goals, with synergy, high morale, and high productivity.
2. Easy shifting of roles from one to another.
3. Differences are valued.
4. Team members look out for one another's interests.
5. Spontaneous, collaborative efforts.

6. Sharing of all relevant information.
7. Conflict is frequent, but leads to problem solving.

Team Development Tasks

1. Define team purpose.
2. Review performance against purpose.
3. Define a team vision, a long term view of where the team wants to be in the foreseeable future.
4. Discuss the team's work norms and traditions.
5. Assess the current stage of team development and identify barriers to further development.
6. As a group, define the roles of team members.
7. Create team plans.
8. Evaluate performance to the plans.
9. Develop a process to obtain useful feedback from outside sources (customers, management, other groups).
10. Participate as a team in a team skill learning event.
11. Participate as a team in a challenging or enjoyable experience (cruise, bike trip, outdoor challenge, charitable fund raiser, etc).

TEAM DEVELOPMENT

	DON'TS	DO'S
1.	Brag	Straight talk
2.	Power plays	Manage conflict
3.	Authoritative communication	Honor commitments
4.	Public criticism	Appreciate differences

Team Meeting Ground Rules

1. Start on time.
2. Only one conversation at a time.
3. Listen for understanding.

4. Be open to new ideas.
5. Ask "Why?"
6. Everyone participates.
7. No rank.
8. Have fun!

To effectively communicate, we must realize that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others.

- [Anthony Robbins](#)

Assignment 3

Adjective or Adverb?

A. Choose the appropriate word.

1. She drives _____. (reckless/recklessly)
2. Mary is a _____ dancer. (good/ well). She dances very _____. (good/well)
3. Sam is a _____ employee (sincere/sincerely) and he always does his work _____. (sincere/sincerely)
4. The executive was reprimanded for his _____ performance. (poor/poorly)
5. He was performing _____ in school. (poor/poorly)

Pronouns

B. Choose the correct word from the ones in brackets.

1. Ravi has been ill. _____ will return to work tomorrow. (he/him)
2. The book is on the table. Please bring _____ to me. (it / its)
3. I am looking for my gloves. Have you seen _____. (them/ they)
4. The baby was lying on _____ stomach and crying. (its /it's)
5. I love eating dates. _____ are so energy packed.(they/it)

Verb Tense Shift

C, Correct the sentences by changing the tense of the verb that is underlined.

1. The employees met the new client and share information about their organization.
2. Smith is a disciplined person; he balanced his professional and personal commitments.
3. Last evening it rained heavily; so the roads are waterlogged.
4. This is a place of great historical importance; there were many monuments and other sources of history.
5. The President will arrive tomorrow; he stayed here for two days .

Degrees of Comparison

D. Choose the correct alternative:

1. Varsha is the _____ girl I know. (more happier/ happiest)
2. The yellow apple is _____ than the red apple. (sweeter/ more sweeter)
3. Chess is the _____ of the indoor games. (most tough/toughest)
4. Which of the four boys sells the _____ newspapers? (many/ most)
5. This is the _____ chapter in the whole book. (more important/most important)

Articles

E. Insert articles wherever necessary.

1. I gave him _____ thing he wanted.
2. You must fight like _____ hero.
3. He is _____ enemy of peace.
4. Give me _____ one rupee coin please.
5. I shall return in _____ hour.

Subject-Verb Agreement

F. Choose the correct alternative.

1. There _____ several reasons for his poor health. (is/are)
2. Harry and Tom _____ on a holiday every. Year. (go/goes)
3. The President, along with his two ministers _____ the city next week. (is visiting/are visiting)
4. Not one of the performers _____ was good.. (was/were)
5. Not only the students but also their coach _____ suffered injury. (has/have)