CHAPTER 2: COMMUNICATION SKILLS/DEMONSTRATE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

2.1   Introduction

Communication Skills/demonstrate communication skills is one of the seven basic competencies unit of learning/unit of competency offered in all the TVET level 6 qualifications. The unit covers the competencies required in meeting communication needs of clients and colleagues as well as developing, establishing, maintaining communication pathways and strategies. It also covers competencies for conducting interviews, facilitating group discussions and representing the organization in various forums. The significance of communication skills to TVET level 6 qualification is to enable learners get along well and avoid conflict in workplaces and organizations.

The critical competency to be covered includes communication strategies in organizations and communication pathways in workplaces. The basic resources required include: Access to relevant workplaces and relevant materials. The unit of competency covers seven learning outcomes. Each of the learning outcomes presents; learning activities that cover performance criteria statements, thus creating an opportunity for the trainee to demonstrate knowledge and skills in the occupational standards and content in curriculum. Information sheet provides; definition of key terms, content and illustration to guide in training. The competency may be assessed through written test, demonstration, practical assignment, interview/oral questioning and case study. Self assessment is provided at the end of each learning outcome. Holistic assessment with other units relevant to the industry sector workplace and job role is recommended.

2.2   Performance Standard

Meets communication needs of clients and colleagues in organizations and workplace and develops effective, efficient communication strategies and pathways in accordance to the organizational standards, procedures, message communicated and the time available.

2.3   Learning Outcomes
2.3.1   List of learning outcomes
   a) Utilize specialized communication skills processes
   b) Develop Communication Strategies
   c) Establish and maintain communication pathways
   d) Promote use of communication strategies
   e) Conduct Interview
   f) Facilitate group discussion
   g) Represent the organization

2.3.2 Learning Outcome No 1: Utilize specialized communication skills processes
2.3.2.1 Learning Activities

Learning Outcome No 1: Utilize specialized communication skills processes		
	Learning Activities	**Special Instructions**
	1.1. Identify and met the specific communication needs of clients and colleagues. 1.2. Use different approaches to meet communication needs of clients and colleagues. 1.3. Address conflicts promptly and in a timely way without compromising the standards of the organization.	Role play the use of different communication approaches. Simulate a conflict resolution mechanism.

2.3.2.2 Information Sheet No 2/LO1: Utilize specialized communication skills processes

Introduction

This learning outcome involves identifying the specific needs of the clients and colleagues, using different approaches to meet communication needs and addressing conflicts promptly and in a timely way without compromising the standards of the organization.

Definition of key terms

Communication: Communication refers to the process of sending and receiving messages between the sender and the receiver. The messages can be sent through verbal, non-verbal, writing, graphical representations, signals, sign and behavior.

Communication Process: Communication process consists of some interrelated steps or parts through which messages are sent from sender to receive. It is the sharing of meaningful information between two or more people with the goal of the receiver understanding the sender's intended message.

Mode of communication: It is the channel through which messages are passed and received. It is the medium used by the sender and the receiver to communicate.

Content/procedures/methods/illustrations

1.1   Specific communication needs of clients and colleagues are identified and met

For communication to take place there is need to understand the communication needs of colleagues and clients. This requires identification of the needs and meeting them. In order to identify needs, it is important to ask and record how colleagues wish to receive communication. This must be done upon first contact or later as soon as practicable. The communication needs must be identified opportunistically and proactively but not retrospectively.

Methods of identifying communication needs

- Self-definition of communication needs that clients and colleagues are asked to define their communication needs. This ensures reception of information in a format that can be best understood by the client/colleague.
- Asking for any communication or information support needs.
- Asking for a minimum of two options or ways in which they can explain their needs.
- Asking the clients or colleagues to advice the organization of their communication or information needs.
- Including a standard line in all correspondence in order to encourage people to contact the organization, should they have any information.
- Considering people who are unable to read letters or any information either blind or illiterate thus can be contacted through telephone.
- Using existing data about information needs to serve the clients and colleagues in the organization.

Therefore, in order to identify the communication needs and preferences of clients and colleagues, there is need to;

- Assess client's/colleague's information about language and communication needs.
- Use different strategies and sources to identify the needs.
- Observe the colleague's/client's behavior and get the communication.
- Pay attention to the colleagues/clients when communicating.
- Seek appropriate/suitable ways to understand/interpret client's/colleagues' communication.
- Record and report communication needs according to the workplace requirements.

NOTE: In order to meet the needs of the clients and the colleagues, effective communication must be realized. Effective communication refers to a communication where the intended information is delivered successfully and understood clearly by the two parties (sender and the receiver). Effective communication must therefore be clear, coherent, courteous, complete, focused, and sensitive to emotions and must be listened to keenly.

Communication process

For communication to happen, it must be composed of a sender, receiver, message, feedback, medium and contextual factors. The figure below illustrates the same;
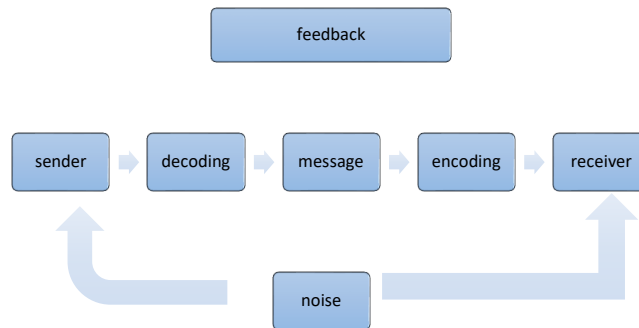

Figure 1. Communication cycle

1.2   Different approaches to communication

Effective communication builds relationships between colleagues, clients and organizations. Meeting communication needs of colleagues/clients is a sign of respect. The following approaches can be used to meet communication needs of clients/colleagues in an organization:

- One-on-one time with the client/colleague
- Total respectfulness i.e. demonstrates the respect you have for a person comprehensively.
- Writings/letters I.e. very powerful and are treated seriously.
- Clarification and bringing light to a situation i.e. it is important to clearly state what you/organization wants.
- Understanding the importance of others.
- Total listening i.e. this prioritizes the client/colleague and the issue at hand.
- Patience and calmness.

Means of communication

Communication simply refers to the creation and exchange of meaning. This can happen through the following means as illustrated in table below.

Table 2: Means of communication

Means of communicating	Examples
Verbal	Speech, oral communication
Non-verbal	
Written	
Graphical representation	Maps, charts, info graphics
Signals	
Signs	
Behaviours	

Modes of communication

There are three modes of communication namely:

i. **Interpretive communication:** Is a one-way communication without getting feedback for active negotiation of the meaning with the producer, speaker or the writer. The listener, viewer or the reader interprets whatever the speaker/writer wants the receiver to get/understand.

ii. **Interpersonal communication:** Is a two-way communication with active negotiation of meaning between the sender and the receiver. It is spontaneous, involves exchange of information and meaningful because of its two way, adjustments and clarifications are made accordingly.

iii. **Presentation communication:** Is a one-way communication meant for audience (viewers, listeners or readers). It does not involve exchange of information and there is no direct opportunity for active negotiation of meaning.

The following is a table showing the differences.

Table 3. Differences between different modes of communication

Interpersonal	Interpretive	Presentational
1. Two-way communication that allows active negotiation of meaning among individuals.	One-way communication without room for negotiation of meaning.	One way communication that is intended for an audience.
2. Spontaneous and involves information exchange, thus very meaningful.	There is individual interpretation of information from the sender by the receiver.	Information is presented and there is no exchange hence no negotiation for meaning.
3. Participants may monitor and observe one another for common meaning.	Interpretations differ depending on the receiver's understanding.	The presenter of the message gives direction.

1.3 Addressing conflicts using communication

Conflicts are inevitable at workplaces where people of different personalities and backgrounds meet daily. At workplace, conflicts may occur in different ways e.g. between two colleagues an employee and a client, teams of supervisor's etc. irrespective of the different ways/types of conflicts. The root cause of conflicts in an organization is poor communication. Therefore, conflicts can be solved/addressed amicably, promptly and without compromising the standards of the organization.

Types of conflicts in an organization

The following types of conflicts are likely to happen in an organization:

- Conflict within the individual e.g. role conflict, value conflicts etc.
- Interpersonal conflicts i.e. conflict between two or more individuals.
- Conflict between an individual and a group.
- Intergroup conflict e.g. between groups, departments etc.
- Inter-organizational conflict i.e. occurs between organizations.

Handling/addressing conflict in an organization

For day to day smooth running of organizations, the following steps need to be taken promptly to address conflicts if any:

i. Embrace conflict - We should not avoid conflict or pretend that it has not happened. We must deal with these uncomfortable issues as soon as possible to avoid bad

feelings and more problems. Colleagues should be encouraged to find a solution to their differences.

ii. Talk together - Create time and place to speak to each other. This should be in a place without interruptions and enough time should be spared for this.

iii. Listen carefully - Give full attention to the person speaking to you /you are talking to. Ask for clarifications for better understanding.

iv. Find agreement -Resolutions are always possible, when agreements are reached. Finding an agreement shows the willingness to establish common ground and build trust elements again.

v. Provide guidance -Give directions on the next step and suggest further actions after an agreement is reached.

vi. Be quick to forgive -With resolutions, no grudges/tension should be kept.

Barriers to effective communication

These include;

- Physical barriers
- Personal barriers
- Semantic/language barriers
- Status barriers
- Organizational structure barriers
- Barriers due to inadequate attention
- Premature evaluation
- Emotional evaluation
- Resistance to change

Conflict is addressed promptly and in a timely manner and in a way that does not compromise the standards of the organization.

Conclusion

This unit has addressed ways of identifying and meeting communication needs of clients and colleagues. It has also investigated ways of addressing conflict promptly and in a timely way in an organization.

Further Reading

Cheney, G ETAL (2004) Organizational communication in an age of globalization; Issues, Reflections, Practices. Long Grove IL: Waveland Press

Mutua R (1992) study and communication skills, London Macmillan Press Ltd

2.3.2.3 Self-Assessment

Written Assessment

1. Which one of the following is not part of the communication process?
    a) Sender
    b) Message
    c) Receiver
    d) None of the above
2. Which one of the following is a verbal means of communication?
    a) Speech
    b) Maps
    c) Signs
    d) Behavior
3. Identify among the choices given, what is not a mode of communication
    a) Interpersonal Communication
    b) Intrapersonal Communication
    c) Interpretive Communication
    d) Presentational Communication
4. The following are characteristics of effective communication except one. Which one?
    a) Coherence
    b) Clear
    c) Concise
    d) Shallow
5. Which of the following is not an approach to communication?
    a) Listening
    b) Writing
    c) Clarification
    d) None of the above
6. What is communication?
7. Explain an effective communication.
8. Name two ways of identifying communication needs.
9. Name two modes of communication you know.
10. Name three barriers of communication.

Oral Assessment

1. What is an organization?
2. How can you handle/address conflicts in an organization?

Practical Assessment

1. Using a diagram, illustrate the communication process in the workplace.
2. There has been a conflict between two colleagues in your workplace. Demonstrate the skills you will use to handle this situation.

2.3.2.4 Tools, Equipment, Supplies and Materials

- Desktop Computers/Laptops
- Internet Connections
- Projectors
- Telephone

2.3.2.5 References

Afeloyan, A & Newsum, H.E (1986) *The use of English Communication Skills for Univ. students*. London Language

Muchiri M (1993) *Communication Skills*, Nairobi Longman

Stanton N (1982) *Mastering Communication* Macmillan

2.3.3   Learning Outcome No 2: Develop Communication Strategies

2.3.3.1 Learning Activities

Learning Outcome No 2: Develop Communication Strategies		
	Learning Activities	**Special Instructions**
	2.1. Develop strategies for effective internal and external dissemination of information to meet the organization's requirements.	Provide samples of communication strategies.
	2.2. Consider special communication needs in developing strategies to avoid discrimination in the workplace.	Role play special communication needs.
	2.3. Analyze, evaluate and revise communication strategies where necessary to make sure they are effective.	

2.3.3.2 Information Sheet No2/LO2 Develop Communication Strategies

Introduction

This unit involves developing communication strategies that are effective in disseminating of information internally and externally, considering special communication needs while developing the strategies. The unit also involves analyzing, evaluating and revising communication strategies where necessary to make sure they are effective.

Definition of key terms

Communication: This is a process through which information is exchanged between groups, individuals etc. by use of common systems of symbols, signs or behavior.

Communication Strategy: This is the plan of achieving the set communication objectives.

Communication Pathway: This refers to an established connection between two endpoints, with each endpoint on a separate zone or server.

Content/Procedures/Methods/Illustrations

2.1   Developing Strategies for effective Communication

Communication strategy is the plan to achieve the set communication objectives. Strategies for effective internal and external dissemination of information are developed to meet the organization's requirements**.**

Characteristic of a communication strategy

- Brief summary of the situation analysis.
- Segmentation of audience.
- Theory informing the strategy development.
- Approaches to be used in achieving the objectives.
- The desired change's position.
- Benefits of the desired change.
- Communication channels to be used in disseminating information.
- The strategy implementation plan.
- The monitoring and evaluation plan to be used.
- Budget

Importance of a communication strategy

- Improves workplace communication.
- Increases employee/client satisfaction.
- Positively affect absenteeism and turnover rates at workplace.
- Sparks innovation.
- Improves employee productivity.
- Attracts top talents/ideas.

Developing a communication strategy

In order to develop an effective communication strategy, a ten-step process is undertaken. This involves;

  i. Analysis of the big picture: Understanding what has to be accomplished before embarking on the strategic communication plan.
 ii. Clearly define the goals of the organization: Before the planning stage, make sure the organization's goals are well defined in order to formulate a successful plan.
iii. Clearly define the individual program's goals in the organization: Program goals are more specific than the organization's goals and must be well defined.
 iv. Clearly define the specific means of each program's communication: Different programs may require different means, so clearly define the means of communication for each program.
  v. Clearly define the target audience: Clearly identify the groups/people/clients to be communicated to.
 vi. Clearly and carefully develop the messages/information to be portrayed: This will give the target audience a better understanding.
vii. Set a timeline: This gives an organization a strict guideline thus keeping it on track to execute its tasks in a timely manner.
viii. Develop an initial plan: This gives the organization a direction to proceed in. This is a step-by-step process that must be followed to achieve its objectives.
 ix. Implement the plan/ elements of the plan: Specific elements of the plan are put into action as they follow each other.

x. Assess/evaluate elements of the communication strategy: This helps to determine what is working and the adjustments to be made.

2.2 Consideration of Special Communication Needs

Special communication needs are considered in developing strategies to avoid discrimination in the workplace. When developing communication strategies, communication needs of different stakeholders of the organization must be considered.

- Group Dynamics. Consider different abilities and special requirements of different stakeholders. A special consideration to the interactions and forces that operate between the groups. This will enable a strategy to be very effective in communicating to a group of employees, clients
- Styles of group leadership. You must also consider the leadership styles employed by different groups. Thus, the group norms must be well understood when developing communication strategies. Consider authoritarian leadership style and its implications, democratic leadership style and Laissez-faire leadership style and their implications.
- Openness in communication. Communication strategies must be able to reveal information about organization/people, willingness to listen and react honestly. However, openness must be applied with caution.
- Flexibility in communication. Strategies sometimes have to vary messages based on the unique situations. Due to fact that people and things change, flexibility in communication is inevitable.
- Communication skills. Consider specific communication skills when developing strategies. These skills may include; clarity and conciseness, confidence, empathy, respect, open-mindedness, friendliness etc.

NOTE: When developing and implementing strategies, we must beware of bias and discrimination. Thus, different communication skills must be considered, the group dynamics, leadership styles, flexibility, openness among other factors must be considered. This will ensure effectiveness of the strategies.

2.3 Analyzing, Evaluating and Revising Communication Strategies

Communication strategies are to be analyzed, evaluated and revised where necessary to make sure they are effective. After an initial communication strategy plan has been implemented, it is good practice to analyze, evaluate and revise it for its effectiveness. Through this, all the elements will be assessed, and their visibility established. It will also necessitate adjustments for elements that won't work well.

Steps in analyzing a communication strategy

In analyzing a strategy, people/organizations must consider SWOT analysis thus measuring the strength, weaknesses, opportunities and strength of strategy.

- Identify the strength. Check on the level of engagement, the interests developed, attitudes and how people visit your organization/the sites. Consider this from both internal and external perspective and capitalize on them.
- Identify the weakness. Check on the weakness, faults and defects of the communication strategy.
- Identify the opportunities. Check on the development trends, possible changes in the market and alternative ways of combating the weakness identified.
- Identify threats. Identify the red flags and obstacles, competitors, technology, new requirements and demands and act on them appropriately.

Evaluating a communication strategy

After analyzing the communication strategy, evaluate it by measuring;

- Activity metrics i.e. check on what you/organization is doing to implement the strategy and process of disseminating information and its compatibility with the work plan and practices.
- Reach metrics i.e. check on the size of the audience and whether it is the right audience for the information.
- Engagement metrics i.e. check on the effects on the communication by checking the level of interaction.
- Impact metrics i.e. check on the behaviors and attitudes shifted.

Revising a communication strategy

After analysis and evaluation of communication strategy has been done, it is prudent to revise it and make it more effective and viable. Thus, the following should be checked;

- If the goals are realistic and achievable.
- Timeline set is realistic.
- The adequacy of the resources allocated.
- Make a comparison between actual and projected results.
- Check on the legal requirements and update.
- Internal reorganization in the organization.
- Product changes.
- Audit discoveries.
- Input from major stakeholders.
- Organization procedures etc.

Conclusion

This learning outcome effectively covered the intended aspects of strategies for effective communication including those that avoid discrimination in the workplace. Appraising the strategies to ensure they are effective in any given organization has also been covered...

Further Reading

Afoloyan, A & Newsum, H. (1986). The use of English communication skills for University students, London; Longman.

Stanton N. (1982) Mastering Communication. Macmillan.

2.3.3.3 Self-Assessment

Written Assessment

1. Which among the following factors should not be considered when developing a communication strategy?
    a) Business location.
    b) Target audience.
    c) Theory to be used.
    d) Group dynamics.
2. Which is not a significance of a communication strategy among the following?
    a) Improves workplace communication.
    b) Sparks innovation.
    c) Improves employee productivity.
    d) None of the above.
3. Among the following steps in communication strategy development, which one comes first?
    a) Revision.
    b) Implementation.
    c) Analysis.
    d) Evaluation.
4. Among the following, which one should not be considered when evaluating a communication strategy?
    a) Reach metrics.
    b) Impact metrics.
    c) Activity metrics.
    d) None of the above.

5. What is a communication? Communication strategy.
6. Briefly explain two significance of a communication strategy.
7. Name the steps in developing communication strategy.

8. Name four facts to consider when developing a communication strategy.
9. Briefly explain how to revise a communication strategy.

Oral Assessment
1. What is communication pathway?
2. Briefly explain how to develop a communication strategy.

Practical Assessment
1. Using a flow diagram, demonstrate the strategy communication process in communication.
2. Assess and evaluate any communication strategy of a company you know.
3. You can have been given a role to develop an effective communication strategy of an organization, demonstrate how you will consider the special communication needs of the stakeholders.

2.3.3.4 Tools, Equipment, Supplies and Materials
- Desktop computers/laptops
- Internet Connection
- Projectors
- Telephone

2.3.3.5 References

Cheney, G. et al (2004) *Organizational Communication in an Age of Globalization: Issues, Reflections, Practices. Long Grove, IL*: Waveland Press.

Ludlow, R. & Panton F. (1992) *The Essence of Effective communication*. Pretence Hall. London.

Muchiri, M. (1992) *Study and Communication Skills*. London: Macmillan Press Ltd.

2.3.4 Learning Outcome No 3: Establish and maintain communication pathways
2.3.4.1 Learning Activities

Learning Outcome No 3: Establish and maintain communication pathways		
	Learning Activities	**Special Instructions**
	3.1. Establish pathways of communication to meet requirements of organization and workforce 3.2. Maintain and review pathways to ensure personnel are informed of relevant information	Role play different types of pathways of communication

2.3.4.2 Information Sheet No2/LO3. Establish and maintain communication pathways

Introduction

This learning outcome involves establishing, maintaining and reviewing pathways of communication to meet requirements of organization and workforce.

Definition of key terms

Communication pathways: This refers to an established connection between two endpoints, with each endpoint on a separate zone or server.

Content/Procedures/Methods/Illustrations

1.1 Pathways of communication are established to meet requirement of organization and workforce.

Communication pathways involve ways of better engagement with colleagues and clients in an organization. Through communication pathways, a more inclusive and diverse workplace is realized. It is therefore important to establish internal communication arrangements on communication channels like messages, telephone calls and meetings among others. Such arrangements create structured connections between the organizations and the employees.

Importance of establishing communication Pathways

- To improve the effectiveness of the organization.
- To keep everyone informed of what is happening in the organization.
- To allow quick and efficient response to changes and emergencies.
- To create an openness in the organization.
- To promote collegiality thus making the organization a good workplace.

- To create a sense of ownership of the organization.
- To create equity and fairness within the organization.
- To show respect for every individual in the organization.

How to establish communication pathways.

Effective communication between the organization and its employees is essential to fully tap into the unique talents, insights and knowledge of people. The benefits of effective communication within an organization go beyond the profits. A strong community within an organization is realized thus allowing employees to be happy and confident. In such a state, it is possible to outperform the set expectations. In order to establish communication pathways, the following steps should be taken:

- Enabling organization's wide conversations i.e. creates ways through which employees can exchange information, ideas and questions. This can be realized through chat rooms and list servers. Through this, employees are empowered to seek answers from their colleagues thus strengthening their connections and transfer of knowledge.
- Improve both horizontal and vertical connections. In order to establish effective communication pathways, peer-to-peer communications must be improved i.e. horizontal communication. This can be realized through hip chat, slack and other internet retry chat services.
- Programs that connect employees at all levels must be put in place when establishing effective communication pathways i.e. vertical communication. Through these employees get empowered to voice their issues and topics that matter to them.
- Establishing vertical and horizontal communication pathways increases transparency and helps in tracking employee suggestions and harness the wisdom of the crowd. This also makes managers and owners to be more accountable upon investment of energy and time in brainstorming ideas. Also improves customer service
- Plan a budget. Communication pathways cannot be established successfully without resources. Thus, an evaluation must be done on how to build stronger relationships through sharing concerns and getting constructive feedbacks. An honest consideration on the use of these pathways must be taken.
- Measure the effectiveness and the impacts of the pathways established. Analyze the productivity changes, profits and sales realized. Check on the employee's satisfaction i.e. fulfillment at work and their happiness. Check on the retention rates of the staff.
- Create change through leadership. Through organization leadership, change in communication pathways can be realized. Top leadership of the organization should feel free to share rates, engage other workers and be transparent. They can also give direction and advice. Most employees feel free when they are engaged by the top leadership in a free and transparent manner.

Types of Communication pathways
There are two types of communication pathways in an organization, namely;
- Formal
- informal

i. Formal communication pathway
Communication takes place through the channels of message that are officially designated between positions in organizations. Types of formal communication pathways include;
- Downward communication (vertical communication)
- Upward communication. (vertical communication)
- Horizontal communication (lateral communication)

Downward communication refers to where information flows from upper level of organization to the lower level e.g. managers to subordinates.

Upward communication refers to where communication flows from the lower levels to the higher levels in an organization i.e. initiated by the junior staff to the senior staff in an organization.

Horizontal communication refers to the pathway where communication flows from one functional area to the other at the same level in the organization e.g from manager to manager etc.

ii. Informal communication pathway
This pathway involves episodes of interaction which do not follow the officially designated communication channels in an organization.
Involves 'grapevine' which emerges from personal and social interests of the employees.
This communication pathway creates a comfortable climate in an organization.

3.2 Pathways are maintained and reviewed to ensure personnel are informed of relevant information
Communication flow in an organization should be maintained and reviewed when necessary to foster productivity and effectiveness of the employees. This can be achieved by;
- Researching on the communication pathways in an organization and understanding them. In so doing, the effectiveness of each pathway must be a pathway determined. Thus, it is possible to review/adjust a pathway based on its effectiveness.
- Maintaining and reviewing communication pathways require clearly set objectives and plan. Thus, it is easy to determine whether a pathway is effective or not.
- It is also prudent to address the business problem in the communication pathways/flows. This will keep the employees informed and engaged in the problem-solving process. Through this means the communication pathways will remain active.

- There is need to identify and assemble the key champions and stakeholders in the pathways. The key stakeholders and champions of communication in an organization should be utilized to effectively reach communication aims.
- Understand the available communication tools. It is important to assess and understand tools at disposal that can be used for communication purposes. Insisting on communication pathways that require tools which are not at the organization's disposal won't be viable. Thus, maintaining communication flow channels require clear understanding and assessment of tools.
- Creating consistency in communicating i.e. obeying organizational standards and procedures. Thus, a sense of ownership among employees will be realized and maintained.
- Catering for two-way communications. Maintaining communication flows require feedback. This must be encouraged to make the pathways live and active.
- Ensuring the communication plan of an organization is inclusive. Through this, every employee is brought on board and their interests and differences are catered for.
- Aligning internal and external communication plans.
- Planning for emergencies i.e. contingencies and disaster. The communication flow in an organization can be maintained and reviewed as long as crisis has been catered for.

Conclusion

This covered establishment of communication pathways to meet the requirements of the workplace. It has also looked into the skills of maintaining and reviewing of the communication flows. It has equally demonstrated different types of communication pathways.

Further Reading

De Ridder, A. (2004). *Organizational communication and Supportive employees*. Human Resources Management Journal, 14(3), 20-30.

Dobos, J (1992). *Gratification models of satisfaction and choice of communication channels in organizations*. Communication Research, 19(1), 29-51.

Hoover, G (2005). *Maintaining employee engagement when communicating different issues*. Communication World Nov-Dec 25-27.

2.3.4.3 Self-Assessment

Written Assessment

1. Which of the following is not a formal type of communication pathway?
    a) Vertical communication.
    b) Grapevine communication.
    c) Upward communication.
    d) Horizontal communication.
2. One of the following is not a reason to have communication paths in an organization. Which one?
    a) To promote ownership and collegiality.
    b) To promote equity and fairness.
    c) To promote effectiveness of the employees.
    d) None of the above.
3. How can you establish a communication pathway in an organization?
    a) Planning a budget.
    b) Measuring the effectiveness of the pathways.
    c) Improving horizontal and vertical communications.
    d) All of the above.
4. Communication pathways are maintained and reviewed by?
    a) Researching on the communication pathways.
    b) Clearly setting the objectives and plan.
    c) Addressing the business plan.
    d) All of the above.
5. Which of the following communication pathways in wrongly defined?
    a) Downward communication-from bottom to top.
    b) Horizontal communication-between departments of the same level
    c) Grapevine-lateral communication
    d) Upward communication-from top to bottom
6. What is a communication pathway?
7. What is the difference between vertical and horizontal communication?
8. Mention two steps to take in maintaining communication pathways.
9. Name three formal communication pathways.
10. What is grapevine?

Oral Assessment

1. Name an example of informal communication pathway in an organization.
2. When can a pathway of communication be lateral?

Practical Assessment
1. Demonstrate how you will establish a communication pathway in an organization of your choice.
2. You have been asked to give tips on how to maintain communication pathways in a college. How will you handle this?

2.3.4.4 Tools, Equipment, Supplies and Materials
- Desktop computers/laptops
- Internet Connection
- Projectors
- Telephone

2.3.4.5 References

Bruce Berges (2008) *Employee/organizational communications*. Blog (institute for pr.org/employee organizational communication.

Lynn K. (2009) *Internal communication in Organizations an Employee Engagement. University of Nevada, Las Vegas*. Research Thesis.

2.3.5   Learning Outcome No 4: Promote use of communication strategies
2.3.5.1 Learning Activities

Learning Outcome No 4: Promote use of communication strategies		
	Learning Activities	**Special Instructions**
	4.1. Provide information to all areas of the organization to facilitate implementation of the strategy 4.2. Articulate and model effective communication techniques to the workforce 4.3. Give personnel guidance about adapting communication strategies to suit a range of contexts	Role play different types of pathways of communication

2.3.5.2 Information Sheet No2/LO4. Promote use of communication strategies

Introduction

This unit involves provision of information to all areas of the organization to facilitate implementation of the strategy, articulating effective communication techniques and guiding personnel to adapt communication strategies to suit in arrange of contexts.

Definition of key terms

Communication Strategy: This is a plan of achieving the predetermined communication objectives.

Effective communication: This is communication where both parties i.e. the sender and the receiver assign similar meanings to the intended message.

Content/Procedures/Methods/Illustrations

4.1 Provision of information to facilitate implementation of strategy.

Communication strategies are vital in realization of communication objectives. Therefore, communication strategies must be developed, implemented and evaluated for effective communication to take place. Before implementing the communication strategies, it is prudent for the organization to carry out three basic steps leading to the strategic decision making about the strategy. This include:

- Getting the right information.
- Making a good decision.
- Implementing the decision.

The information stage involves knowing the types of information needed for the decision making, finding the information and transmission of the information to the decision makers.

The information required /needed for the decision-making process involves knowledge of the organization, knowledge of the scope of operations of the organization and the competitors of the organization. However, gathering information alone is not enough. Infrastructure must be put in place to ensure that information reaches the decision makers. The decision makers must regularly meet in order to narrow on important issues. It is good practice to identify alternative courses of action. This is very crucial for decision making purposes. The implementation of a communication strategy should be planned in order to allow for appropriate resources to be secured. The following must be considered during the implementation phase:

- Adequate resources and facilitation must be provided to ensure full participation.
- All participating staff/employees must be trained and supervised.
- Need for exchange of common experience between organizations or experts.
- Setting of technical committees to guide the strategy implementation.
- Verification of data appropriate for the strategy.
- Obtaining feedback from stakeholders on the impact of the strategy.
- Periodical appraisal and adjustments of the strategy's needs and resources change.
- Getting information for strategic implementation.
- Look at both internal and external factors.
- Conduct a research on the implementation of the strategy.
- Getting primary data on implementation.
- Getting secondary data on implementation.

Implementation of the strategy

It does not just refer to the application or installation of the new strategies. Some old strategies that may need adjustments /reinforcement are also part of this activity. The basic activities in this stage include:

i.   Establishing the strategy objectives.
ii. Formulation of policies to execute the strategy.
iii. Allocation of resources.
iv. Leading and controlling of the performance of tactics and activities in the various organizational levels.
v.   Sometimes planning activities have to be done for implementation.

Factors that support implementation of a communication strategy

- People: Availability of the right and enough people to carry out the implementation will ensure a successful implementation.
- Resources: Enough resources must be allocated to ensure a successful implementation. This involves both financial and non-financial resources.
- Organizational structure: The structure should be well outlined with clear lines of authority, defined responsibilities and hierarchy.
- Systems i.e. tools, systems and capabilities in place to facilitate implementation.
- Culture i.e. the organizational culture and the general atmosphere of the stakeholders

Causes of failure in communication strategy implementation.

- Inadequate understanding of the strategy due to inadequate communication. This could be due to lack of ownership by the implementers or having a strategy that is confusing.
- A disconnected strategy i.e. when there is disconnect in budgeting, employee incentives and compensation etc.
- Little attention to the strategy by the organizational management.

Implementation process

The following steps are vital in ensuring successful implementation.

i. **Evaluation and communication of the strategy**. This involves: -
   - Aligning the strategy with the initiatives.
   - Aligning the budget with the objectives and goals.
   - Clarifying and communicating goals, objectives and strategies to members of the organization.

ii. **Developing an implementation structure**. This step involves: -
   - Establishing a link between /among departments.
   - Formulating work plans and procedures for implementation.
   - Determining tasks and responsibilities of the managers.
   - Determining task and responsibilities of operation.
   - Assigning tasks to different departments.
   - Evaluating the staffing structure.
   - Communicating the details to the organization's members.

iii. **Developing implementation support policies and programs**. This stage involves:-
   - Establishing a monitoring and tracking system of performance.
   - Establishing a management system of performance.
   - Establishing of information and feedback.
   - Communicating the policies and programs to the organizations members.

iv. **Budgeting and allocation**. This step involves: -
   - Allocation of resources.
   - Disbursement of resources.
   - Maintenance of a system of checks and balances.

v. **Discharging functions and activities**. This involves:
   - Continuous engagement of stakeholders.
   - Application of control measures.
   - Evaluation of performance at different levels.

4.2 Articulating and Modeling Effective Communication Techniques

Articulation and modeling communication techniques involve expressing an idea in an explicit and a clear manner. It establishes a very strong base of developing the core organizational processes, structure, capabilities, management system and workforce.

Rationale for articulating and modeling Communication Techniques

i. To translate and communicate the techniques/ strategies in the best form accepted by the stakeholders.
ii. To maximize the strengths and minimize weaknesses of an organization.
iii. To cover the purpose, scope and strengths of business.
iv. To establish a strong foundation of developing the workforce, capability, structure and the systems of the organization.

Effective communication Techniques

- Listening
- Expression
- Taking criticism positively
- Avoiding arguments
- Understanding the audience
- Getting feedback

How to articulate and model communication techniques

i. Understand the strategy /technique.
  - Be in a position to understand the rationale of the strategy
  - Understand the scope of the technique i.e. activities it involves.
  - Understanding the advantages of the organization in terms of maximizing its strength, minimizing the weakness and mitigating the challenges.
  - Understanding the present techniques /strategy used by the organization.
  - Understand the challenges and opportunities that the organization faces.
  - Conceive the dynamic environment of the organization.

ii. Summarize the strategy /technique.
  - Consolidate and distil the essence of the firms strategy /technique into a form that is easy to be understood and communicated.
  - Establish a readable and clear statement which communicates the organizations strategy /technique.
  - Establish the strategy /technique narrative which should be relatively brief.
  - Define the strategy in the eye of executives beyond the current /present position.

NOTE: Articulation of a communication technique requires a clear understanding or rationale for the articulation, a deep understanding of the strategy of the organization and ability to summarize the strategy into capturing the organization's essence.

4.3 Personnel are given guidance about adapting communication strategies to suit a range of contexts.

Personnel are given guidance about adapting communication strategies to suit a range of contexts. It is important for the organization to recognize the importance of adopting communication strategies for every employee and every situation. Ways of addressing one employee/colleague/situation at workplace vary depending on the employee /colleague /situation. Thus, by appreciating the unique personalities, understanding the organizational culture and learning a different communication technique, it creates a good workplace and improves performance. Guiding your personnel and adapting communication strategies require:

i. Knowledge of the colleagues/employees of the organization during the interactions. It is easy to establish the dos and don'ts of the colleagues /employees. However, in some organizations, the don'ts are clearly stipulated.

ii. Choice of the channel i.e. the channel of communication is also key in guiding the employees and colleagues in an organization.

iii. The best communication technique to be used; This allows swift and non-resistance to communication techniques.

iv. Effective communication is very critical in the event of change in organizations. Communications should be made regularly and clearly about the change. This should be done in a manner that is informative, user friendly, relevant and easy to access.

Considerations when adapting a communication strategy

- Honest, timely, consistent and accurate information about the strategy.
- Clear explanation of the plans, vision and the expected benefits and the progress of the strategy to be communicated.
- Issues and questions concerning the strategy must be addressed and captured well.
- Maximize the participation in the adoption process by involving everybody.
- Encourage discussions and dialogues about the strategy.
- Ensure the strategy adapted addresses the unforeseen issues.
- Ensure effective communication.

When guiding the personnel on the organization's communication strategy, the organization manager needs to:

- Keep the message simple though with deep meaning.
- When the relevance of the strategy is established by the employees, adapting it will be easy and fast.
- Build behavior based on the organization and clients' insights
- Use the; inspire, educate, and reinforce framework in mapping and delivering the strategy.
- Think broader than just guarding and stay with the employees /clients and never disappear.
- Be real in matters pertaining the strategy.

Conclusion

This unit has covered skills to provide information to all areas of the organization in facilitation of implementation of communication strategies, articulating effective communication techniques and guiding personnel to adopt communication strategies that suit a range of contexts.

Further Reading

Cornelissen, J (2014), *Corporate Communication* –A Guide to Theory and Practice, 4th Edition, Sage Publications

Cowan, D (2017) *Strategic Internal Communication, How To Build Employee Engagement And Performance* Kogan Page Ltd.2nd Ed.

2.3.5.3 Self-Assessment

Written Assessment

1. Which of the following is not a stage in the strategy development process?
    a) Formulation
    b) Articulation
    c) Interviewing
    d) Budgeting
2. The following must be considered at the implementation stage of a communication strategy. Which one is the odd one out?
    a) Adequate resources for implementation.
    b) Setting technical committee to steer the implementation.
    c) Feedback from the stakeholders.
    d) Summary of the strategy.
3. These factors are necessary for the implementation of the strategies .Which one is not?
    a) Politics
    b) Organizational structure
    c) Resources
    d) People

4. Among the following, which one of the following is not a cause of failure in implementing a strategy?
    a) Little attention by the management.
    b) Inadequate understanding of the strategy.
    c) An articulated strategy.
    d) A disconnected strategy.
5. Why do organizations need to articulate and model their communication techniques?
    a) To cover the purpose, scope and strength of the business.
    b) To establish a foundation of developing workforce.
    c) To minimize strengths and maximize weakness.
    d) All of the above.
6. Which of the following activities is necessary during articulation of communication techniques?
    a) Understanding the rationale of articulation
    b) Understanding the scope or articulation
    c) Conceiving the dynamic environment or articulation
    d) All of the above.
7. When adapting a communication strategy, which of the following is not necessary?
    a) Employing new employees.
    b) Effectively communicating about the strategies.
    c) Addressing issues and concerns about the strategy.
    d) Maximizing participation of the employees.
8. What is a communication strategy?
9. Name 3 factors to consider when implementing a communication strategy.
10. Identify 3 causes of failures in implementing a communication strategy.
11. What is the rationale of articulating communication strategy?
12. What should be summarized when articulating a communication strategy?

Oral Assessment
1. Briefly explain how to get information for implementing a communication strategy.
2. In developing an implementation structure, what are the considerations?

Practical Assessment
1. Demonstrate how you will articulate and model a communication strategy for implementation.
2. You have been asked as a communication expert to lead the implementation process of new communication strategy. How will you carry on the duty?
3. With adequate explanation, identify some of the effective communication skills you know.

2.3.5.4 Tools, Equipment, Supplies and Materials
- Desktop computers/laptops
- Internet Connection

- Projectors
- Telephone

2.3.5.5 References

Holtzhausen,D& Zerfass,A(2014).The Routledge Handbook Of Strategic Communication

Madu B,(2013)'Vision :*The Relationship Bewteen   A Firms Strategy And Business Model;*Journal Of Behaivoral Studies In Business.

Mckinsey & Compnay(2015)*Corporate Strategy* ,Web.14 Sep 2015.

2.3.6 Learning Outcome No 5: Conduct Interview
2.3.6.1 Learning Activities

Learning Outcome No 5: Conduct Interview		
	Learning Activities	**Special Instructions**
	5.1. Employ a range of appropriate communication strategies in interview situations. This may include; establishing rapport, eliciting facts and information, facilitating resolution of issues, developing action plans, diffusing potentially difficult situations. 5.2. Make and maintain records of interviews in accordance with organizational procedures. 5.3. Use effective questioning, listening and nonverbal communication techniques to ensure that required message is communicated.	Role play the interview situation and apply appropriate communication strategies

2.3.6.2 Information Sheet No2/LO5. Conduct Interview

Introduction
This learning outcome involves employing a range of communication strategies in interviews, making and maintaining interview records in accordance with organizational procedures and using effective questioning, listening and non-verbal communication techniques to ensure that the intended message is communicated.

Definition of key terms
Interview: It refers to a formal meeting where someone is asked questions in order to establish some issues related to them.

Non-verbal Communication techniques: These are gestures, tone of voice, facial expressions, eye contact, posture, body language and any other ways that people use to communicate without using language.

5.1 Communication Strategies in interview situations

A range of appropriate communication strategies (Establishing rapport, eliciting facts and information, facilitating resolution of issues, developing action plans, diffusing potentially difficult situations) are employed in interview situations.

There are several types of interviews i.e;
- Face-to-face interview i.e. between two or more people.
- Panel interview.
- Group interview.
- The case interviews.
- Telephone/Skype interview.
- Sequential interview.
- Lunch/Dinner interview.
- Competency based interviews.
- Formal/informal interview.
- Portfolio based interviews.
- Second interview.

Importance of interviews
- Helps in selecting the most suitable candidate or team.
- Helps in knowing a lot of details on the personality of the candidate.
- It gives the candidate a chance to know more about the job/course applied for and the organization.
- The interviewee and the interviewer get to know each other.
- Interviews are also helpful in promotions and transfers.
- Interviews increases goodwill.

Communication Strategies for interviews
i. Creating a rapport in an interview

Rapport refers to the connection between two people i.e. the spoken and unspoken words that elicit the feeling of being on the same page. It is important in an interview since the immediate impression of a person is very critical. It thus should be a priority to any interviewee. A good rapport creates more similarities and minimizes the differences.

Tips to developing a rapport;
- Smile.
- Establish and maintain eye contact.
- Deliver sincere greeting.
- Use the person's name (interviewer's name).
- Listen more and talk less.
- Check on your/mind your body postures.

NOTE: In developing rapport always remember that the first impression counts. Take a genuine interest in the interviewer, organization and the job. Remember to match the interviewer's style in language and talk.

ii. **Eliciting information and facts in interviews**
- Getting information and facts is the main idea behind interviews.
- Interviewers need to use the questions, language and means to get the right information and they should avoid sarcasm or obscure humor.
- Through use of questions, interviewers get the information they want and as well guide the interview along productive lines.
- Leading questions should also be avoided as they are not effective.
- Double negative type of interrogation should be avoided as well.
- In order to get the required information, interviews should be conversational and not confrontational. Thus, interviews should be welcomed positively.
- Careful reviewing of the interviewee's resume helps to know more about him/her. This helps in getting important information that can be explained further by the interviewer.
- As soon as the interview begins, it is prudent to explain the interview process well. This will allow the interviewee to know what is expected of him/her.

iii. **Developing interview action plans**
Interview action plans are beneficial and can help throughout the interview process. It needs to be carried out before any interview in preparation of the interview at hand. Interview action plans are beneficial as they give the interviewee chance to prepare for questions, look into the organization and sell themselves in the best way possible. Interview action plans require;
- Preparation for common questions (general questions).
- Researching into the company.
- Researching into the industry.
- Selling oneself.
- Revealing one's network.
- Prepare for any concerns i.e. if you anticipate any concerns.
- Prepare for the gist i.e. why you want the job/course/opportunity.
- Prepare for, "Any questions?" part of the interview.
- Close on a positive note i.e. to make the interview memorable.

NOTE: In interviews, non-verbal communication cues matter a lot. In addition to the spoken words, both the interviewer and the interviewee need to take charge of them and act appropriately. They include;
- Eye contact.
- Confident handshake if possible.
- Effective gestures.

- Authoritative facial expressions.
- Appropriate facial expressions.
- Initiating interactions.
- Voice tones.
- Giving full attention.
- Response to other's non-verbal cues.

5.2 Records of interviews are made and maintained in accordance with organizational procedures

It is necessary to document and keep the interview records. This should be done accurately and carefully in accordance with the organizational procedures. Maintaining interview records is important as it gives chance for follow-up on the employee even after he/she has been absorbed in the organization. It also gives chance for production should their records be required for exhibits.

5.3 Effective questioning, listening and non-verbal communication techniques are used to ensure that required message is communicated

In conducting interviews, questioning techniques is key. Interviewees answer questions that they are asked; therefore, should an interviewer ask a wrong question, he/she will get a wrong answer. Asking the right questions during an interview is at the core of eliciting facts and information required by the interviewer.

Tips to use in questioning during an interview.
- Use open ended questions in finding more details, opinions and developing conversations.
- Closed questions are good in frame setting, testing understanding and making conditions.
- Funnel questions should be used in finding more details about a specific point or when gaining interest in an issue.
- Use probing questions to gain clarifications and draw information.
- Leading questions should be used with care because they don't elicit much information.

NOTE: Listening during an interview is just as important as answering questions. Without being attentive, it is possible not to give the best response or not to get the question right. Listening skills are also very essential in building a rapport between the interviewee and the interviewer.

Tips to use in listening during an interview
- Listen to the hidden question.
- Listen to the actual question i.e. the actual thing being asked.
- Ask for more information i.e. when you actively listen, you will know when to ask for more information.

- Listen in order to get interviewer's/interviewee's attention.

Non-verbal communication plays a big role during interviews. This non-verbal communication matters as soon as one walks into the interview room and are sometimes even more important than verbal communication.

Tips to use in non-verbal communication during an interview
- Make/maintain eye contacts with the interviewer.
- Smile and nod appropriately. Do not overdo it.
- Listen.
- Be polite and stay calm.
- Use appropriate facial expressions.
- Initiate interactions if possible.
- Use of voice i.e. be audible enough.
- Give full attention to the interviewer.
- Sit upright, do not lean back.

Conclusion

This unit has covered skills of conducting interviews emphasizing on the questioning, listening and non-verbal communication techniques that are essential in communicating messages.

Further Reading
Gyrfaoedd Aber Careers (2014) *All about interviews*. Aberystwyth University
www.aber.ac.uk/careers

2.3.6.3 Self-Assessment

Written assessment

1. Which of the following is not a non-verbal communication for interview?
    a) Clapping
    b) Maintaining eye contact
    c) Listening attentively
    d) Smiling and nodding appropriately

2. Which among the following is not a type of interview?
    a) Face-to-face interview
    b) Panel interview
    c) Text interview
    d) Telephone interview

3. Why are interviews important for job opportunities?
    a) Increase goodwill.
    b) Both interviewee and interviewer get to know each other well.
    c) Chance to know more about the personality of the interviewee.
    d) All of the above.

4. One of the following practices is not appropriate during interviews. Which one?
    a) Asking for Clarification
    b) Recording interviews
    c) Perusing through your documents
    d) Listening keenly

5. Which of these is required by an interviewee before an interview?
    a) Researching into the company
    b) Researching into the industry
    c) Preparing for any anticipated question
    d) All of the above

6. Which of this type of question is not recommended for interviews?
    a) Leading questions
    b) Probing questions
    c) Close questions
    d) Open questions

7. Listening in an interview entail?
    a) Listening to the hidden questions
    b) Listening to the actual question
    c) Asking for clarification
    d) All of the above

8. What is an interview?
9. Give two reasons for conducting an interview.
10. Give three examples of non-verbal communication skills for interviews.

11. Briefly explain how you will develop a rapport during an interview.
12. Name any one thing that an interviewee should not do during an interview.

Oral Assessment
1. What are non-verbal communication cues?
2. How will you use listening as a skill during interview?

Practical Assessment
1. You have been invited for an interview. Briefly demonstrate how you will prepare for it.
2. As the human resource manager of Dalap investment, elaborate how you will get the required information/facts from your interviews.
3. As one of the candidates for an advertised post, you are required to develop a rapport. Elaborate how you will develop a rapport with your interviewer.

2.3.6.4 Tools, Equipment, Supplies and Materials
- Desktop computers/laptops
- Internet Connection
- Projectors
- Telephone

2.3.6.5 References

Abhinow K. (2002) 15 *Tips on how to nail a Face-to Face interview*. Pluralsight.com/blog/careers/

Dipboye, R. et.al (2012). *The selection interview from the interviewer and applicant perspectives: Can't have one without the other*. New York City: Oxford University.

2.3.7 Learning Outcome No 6: Facilitate group discussion

2.3.7.1 Learning Activities

Learning Outcome No 6: Facilitate group discussion		
	Learning Activities	**Special Instructions**
	6.1. Define and implement mechanisms which enhance effective group interaction, this may include; • Identifying and evaluating what is occurring within an interaction in a nonjudgmental way • Using active listening • Making decision about appropriate words, behavior • Putting together response which is culturally appropriate • Expressing an individual perspective • Expressing own philosophy, ideology and background and exploring impact with relevance to communication 6.2. Use Strategies which encourage all group members to participate 6.3. Set and follow objectives and agenda for meetings and discussions 6.4. Provide relevant information to group to facilitate outcomes 6.5. Undertake evaluation of group communication strategies to promote participation of all parties 6.6. Identify and address specific communication needs of individuals	Simulate group discussion activities

2.3.7.2 Information Sheet No2/LO6

Introduction

This learning outcome involves defining and implementing mechanisms that enhance effective group interactions, using strategies which encourage all group members to participate in setting and following objectives and agenda for discussions. It also involves provision of relevant information to group, undertaking evaluations of the group communication and identifying and addressing specific communication needs of individuals in the group.

Group discussion: Refers to the systematic exchange of ideas, views and information about a problem topic, situation or issue among members of a group who have some common objectives.

Group members: Refers to the people who typically belong to a specific group of people involved in attempting to achieve a common goal.

Agenda: Refers to a list of items that are discussed in a formal meeting.

Content/Procedures/Methods/Illustrations

6.1 Defining and implementing mechanisms to enhance group interactions.

Group interactions refer to dynamics of a team of people and the way they interact with one another. Due to different personalities and views, conflicts are inevitable in groups since certain individuals may have the potential of causing distractions to the tasks to be undertaken. Therefore, there is need to establish and arrange clear ways of working together in order to get things done. In defining group mechanisms, group members have to take the following steps:

i. Organize the effort i.e. they have to establish the protocols for decision making as well as conflict resolution.

ii. Support the member's i.e. They have to establish the protocols for decision making as well as conflict resolution. They also have to create a communication plan.

iii. Definition of group mechanisms is essential as it creates a collaborative team that is task focused and cohesive. When the group mechanisms are defined and adopted, the group members must implement them and adhere to them. Thus, they become a team with a common purpose. In so doing, the group members accept to:

- Identify and evaluate what is occurring amongst them in a nonjudgmental way. Members of the group must treat themselves equally and with respect.
- Use active listening skills when engaging in group discussions.
- Make decision concerning appropriate words and behaviors while engaged in group activities.
- Adopt response which is appropriate to the group.
- Make/Express individual contributions /give individual opinion concerning an issue.

6.2 Strategies that encourage group participation.

The need to improve group performance and interactions is of great concern to any group or organization. Group effectiveness can be improved by:

- Goal congruence i.e. members should develop the same goals that will pull them to the same direction.
- Deliberation i.e. members must learn to think, reflect and calculate in a creative but structured manner for effectiveness.
- Communication i.e. members should talk and listen actively and purposely.

- Information access i.e. members must be able to get information for group effectiveness.
- Distractions i.e. members should desist from interruptions especially when group businesses are underway.

In order to encourage group participation, the following strategies should be adopted to allow the group to tap into potentials, ideas and views of its members:

- Groups should develop and build teams with appropriate members. This will focus common purpose, strength and unity.
- Group should undertake techniques /steps that enhance and improve team creativity.
- Group members should be coached and trained to improve behavior, thinking and communication skills.
- Effective facilitations and interventions of group meetings and events should be planned.
- Group members should utilize the appropriate in attempts to improve communication, generation of ideas as well as group memory.
- Group members should know each other well thus knowing how to handle each other.
- Clear roles and responsibilities must be defined.
- Group members must break the barriers by asking, explaining or offering help whenever appropriate.
- Group members should pay attention keenly and with utter respect to group issues.
- The feelings of the group members must be acknowledged.

6.3 Setting objectives and agenda for group discussions.
For effectiveness to be realized, objectives and agendas of the meeting must be determined.

Importance of agendas/objectives
- To help group members to prepare for the meeting.
- To give the meeting structure.
- To allow the group leader to control the meeting/discussion.
- To give ways in which the meeting/discussions success can be measured.
- To allow group member to decide whether to attend or not.

How to set objectives/agendas of the meeting.
In setting the meeting's objectives/agendas, the following must be considered:
- Logistics i.e. the date, place and time of the meeting as well as the list of the expected attendees.
- Objectives i.e. clearly indicate the purpose of the meeting.
- Housekeeping i.e. welcome and introductions, apologies and approvals of the previous minutes. Any matters arising should be dealt with at this stage.

- Items i.e. the 'meat' of the agenda. Each item listed must be given a title, lead /presenter, time allocated,
- Any other business {A.O.B}
- Close i.e. the chair's remarks on the meeting, next meeting

6.4 Facilitating group outcomes

Facilitation is the process of guiding and directing key parts of the group work involving members like meetings, trainings and planning sessions. However small or big the group meeting is, it requires someone to take lead and guide the proceedings for the desired goals to be realized. Facilitation is different from chairing a meeting as it involves:

- Guiding people to move through a process together.
- Focusing on how people participate in the learning or planning process.
- Being neutral and never taking sides i.e. the facilitator.
- Making sure that there is a democratic decision-making process.
- Understanding the goals of the organization and the meeting.

How to facilitate a meeting.

- By focusing on the climate and the environment of the meeting i.e. it must be very conducive.
- By focusing on the room arrangements and the logistics of the meeting.
- By focusing on the ground rules of the group and of the meeting.

Focusing on the rules, environment and logics as mentioned above, facilitation should take the following steps:

Meeting should begin on time.

i. Facilitator should welcome everyone.
ii. Facilitator should make introductions.
iii. A review of the agenda, objectives and ground rules for the meeting should be done.
iv. Participants should be encouraged.
v. Members should stick to the agenda.
vi. Detailed decision-making process should be avoided.
vii. Each item should be brought to closure.
viii. Everyone's rights should be respected.
ix. The facilitator should be flexible in giving guidance.
x. Meeting results should be summarized and clearly state needs requring follow ups.
xi. The facilitator should thank the participants.
xii. The meeting should be closed.

Tips and skills for good facilitation.

For good facilitation, the facilitator should:

- Watch the body language of the group.
- Summarize and pause after every part/item is handled completely to allow people comprehend what has been said.

- Be conscious of his/her behavior.
- Focus on the group members and not the walls, blackboards or newsprints
- Be careful with his/her speech.
- Be conscious of your posture.

Intervening in case of disruptions in meetings.
- Let the group decide on the action to be taken.
- Make use of the ground rules and agenda to decide.
- Be honest and openly say what is going on without taking sides.
- Use humor to ease tension if any.
- Accept or legitimize a deal.

6.5 Evaluation of group communication strategies.

Effective communication is key to group development and realization of the predetermined goals and objectives. Thus, the group should spare time and evaluate the communication strategies and their effectiveness. Evaluating group communication strategies involves:
- Establishing the parameters to be measured
- Deciding on the type of evaluations to be conducted
- Carrying out the real evaluation

i. Establishing the parameters and boundaries of the evaluation. This involves:
- Picking one or two communication types to be evaluated
- Focusing on the aspect of study that makes evaluation more useful
- Establishing the stages of communication to measure
- Connecting the evaluation to the end goal
- Creating the baseline for the evaluation if possible
- Establishing milestones for the evaluation

ii. Deciding on the type of evaluation to be conducted. This involves:
- Using qualitative analysis to determine the scope of the communication strategy
- Trying surveys to figure the people getting the message
- Using consulting groups/experts to determine the effectiveness of the strategy
- Requesting informal feedback to get their perceptions
- Check the impacts of the strategy

iii. Implementing the real/actual evaluation. This involves:
- Measuring results against the set milestones
- Reevaluating and refocusing the milestones needed
- Establishing rewards for meeting targets/milestones set

Reasons for evaluating communication strategies.

- To improve communications process.
- To get reactions and suggestions necessary for improvement
- To track completed communication presentations events and reports
- To track feedback from audiences or stakeholders

6.6 Identifying and addressing specific communication needs of people.

Effective communication in a group requires that the specific communication needs of members are identified and addressed because prudent people have different communication needs. It is prudent to consider every member of the group and address their needs accordingly.

Identification of the specific communication needs must be done at the very initial stages of group engagement i.e. during the first meeting as soon as possible thereafter. This should happen proactively and opportunistically, though not retrospectively.

Having noted the specific communication needs of the members, the specific support required to address these needs must also be identified and provided.

In identifying these needs, there is need to abide by the existing legal requirements like the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the Protection Act 1998.

How to identify the communication needs.

- Asking for members to self-define their specific communication or information needs.
- Asking individuals about their communication needs by a member of the group upon meeting of the group activities.
- Giving people a minimum of two options of identifying/explaining their needs thus getting suitable way for the majority.
- Asking the members to advice the group of their information or communication needs via inclusion of a request in the 'generic' letter.
- Including 'standard line' as part of the correspondence in attempt to encourage all members to engage the group should they have communication needs?
- Using existing data about the group members to get the communication needs.

Conclusion

This unit has covered skills of defining and implementing mechanisms of group interactions, using strategies to encourage all group members' participation, setting and following the objectives and agendas set for the meetings and discussions. It has also covered skills of providing relevant information to facilitate outcomes, evaluating group communication strategies and identifying and addressing specific communication needs of individuals.

Further Reading

Elspeth M. and Andrew O. [2000] *Strategic Change Itentey Management College*, Greenlands.Strat.Change, a, 103-114.

2.3.7.3 Self-Assessment

Written Assessment

1. The following activities should be done by groups to ensure their existence except one, which one is it?
   a) Identifying and evaluating what is occurring amongst them.
   b) Making decisions on their behaviors and language use.
   c) Expressing individual contributions on an issue.
   d) None of the above.
2. The following ways encourage group participation in the activities except?
   a) Communication
   b) Deliberation of group activities
   c) Judging others
   d) Information access.
3. Why do groups need agenda and objectives of their meetings and discussions?
   a) To help the group members prepare in advance.
   b) To give the meeting /discussion structure.
   c) To help the group leader control the meeting/discussion.
   d) All of the above.
4. Which of the following is not a consideration in setting the group agenda?
   a) Lateness of members
   b) Logistics
   c) Items
   d) Housekeeping.
5. A group facilitator should not be
   a) Judgmental
   b) Democratic
   c) Focused on the agendas
   d) Understanding.

6. In case of interruption of group meetings/discussions, the facilitator should not
    a) Let the group decide.
    b) Make use of ground rules.
    c) Be honest.
    d) Take sides.
7. Which of the following is not a good practice in identifying specific communication needs of group members?
    a) Allowing members to self-define their needs
    b) Asking members to advise the group on their needs
    c) Recording of disabilities of the group members
    d) Including a standard line in all correspondence
8. What is a group discussion?
9. Why should groups define their mechanisms?
10. Mention 3 strategies that improve group participation.
11. What are some of the skills required for facilitation?
12. Briefly explain how to evaluate a communication strategy.

Oral Assessment
1. What defines a group?
2. Explain group dynamics.

Practical Assessment
1. You have been mandated to facilitate a group discussion. Demonstrate how you will go about this duty.
2. Demonstrate how you will use your skills to evaluate a group communication strategy.
3. As a communications professional, how will you advise a group on identifying and addressing specific communication needs of its members?

2.3.7.4 Tools, Equipment, Supplies and Materials
- Desktop computers/laptops
- Internet Connection
- Projectors
- Telephone

2.3.7.5 References

Briggs, R. and Nunamaker, J. [1996]. *Team Theory of Group Productivity and its Application to Development and Testing of Group Support System*. CMI Working Paper Series-96-1, University of Arizona.

Woodcock, M. [1979], *Team Development Manual*, Gower Publishing, Farnborough.

2.3.8 Learning Outcome No 7: Represent the organization

2.3.8.1 Learning Activities

Learning Outcome No 7: Represent the organization		
	Learning Activities	**Special Instructions**
	7.1. Appropriately research and present relevant presentation when participating in internal or external forums, in a manner to promote the organization. 7.2. Deliver a clear and sequential presentation within a predetermined time. 7.3. Utilize appropriate media to enhance presentation 7.4. Respect differences in views. 7.5. Apply consistent written communication with organizational standards. 7.6. Respond to inquiries in a manner consistent with organizational standard.	Activities can be carried out in groups or individually. Presentation, drills and simulations can be carried out

2.3.8.2 Information Sheet No2/LO7

Introduction

This learning outcome covers how employees represent the organization in different forums using appropriate media to enhance their presentation, apply written communication and respond to client inquiries in line with organizational standards.

Definition of key terms

Media: Means or method used to represent information.

Multimedia: Refers to any technology that utilizes both graphics and sound in a digital form e.g. use of power point presentations.

Content/procedures/methods/illustrations

7.1 Research and Delivery of Presentation

When participating in internal or external forums, presentation is relevant, appropriately researched and presented in a manner to promote the organization. Employees are the organization's ambassadors and representatives to the visitors and the society. They need therefore to maintain good relations with the internal and external stakeholders. The organization should have a clear, precise means of conveying information to the internal and external world. Internal communication is when members of the organization exchange

information with each other. It entails exchange of information and ideas within the organization. External communication involves exchange of information both within the organization itself and outside. It is when members communicate among themselves as well as with parties outside the organization.

Presentation techniques
The following should be considered when making presentations within and without the organization
- Portray positive image of the organization.
- The presentation should be relevant to the topic.
- It should be clear and concise in line with the objectives.
- It should portray good mastery of the content/subject matter by the presenter.
- The subject should be well researched.
- Maintain eye contact with the audience.
- Make use of facial expressions.

7.2 Presentation is clear and sequential and delivered within a predetermined time
The following aspect should be put into consideration when developing a presentation;
- Purpose of the presentation
- Who is the audience? In terms of characteristics like age, gender, needs, knowledge etc.
- Masterly of the content/subject
- Keep it simple.
- What are the most important parts of your topic for the audience to take away?
- The message should be simple and clear.
- Make use of illustrations to support your key points.
- Exhibit confidence and passion about what you are presenting on.
- Portray a sense friendliness and connect with the audience.
- The presentation should orderly and logical.
- Time allocated for the presentation should be adhered to.

The Structure of a Presentation
i. **Purpose:** Determine the learning objective and goal of the presentation. Focus on the main points the audience will gain from the presentation.
ii. **Know the audience:** In terms of characteristics like age, knowledge, background, seniority, gender etc.
iii. **Start with a bang:** Catch the audiences' attention and provide them with a reason to be interested in the presentation.
iv. **Body of Presentation:** Begin with the introduction, then main points and conclusion. All these should be directly linked to the purpose of the presentation
v. **Closing the Presentation:** Have a strong closing as it is the final impression you will leave with the audience.

7.3 Appropriate media is utilized to enhance presentation

The choice of media for the presentation is critical. You should select the media that best suits your message and is appropriate for your audience.

Presentation forums

- Meetings, seminars, workshops
- Printed media (newspapers, magazines, posters)
- Audio visual media (television, radio)
- Electronic media (internet, email, face book etc.)

Multimedia utilization in presentation

Multimedia is the use of different presentation medium at the same time. Multimedia involves use of a combination of text, sound, and/or motion. Multimedia includes any technology that utilizes both graphics and sound in a digital form e.g. use of power point presentations. The advantage of using multimedia in presentation is that the information being conveyed is easily understood by the receiver. The audience also gets a clear grasp of the concepts being presented. This is because it involves not just the use of narration/texts but incorporates the use of graphics.

Computer based media

These include presentation software such as power point. Interactive computer-based presentation aids are also used to enhance the effect of the presentation. These are handheld units used by members of the audience connected to a monitor to which the speaker has access. These interactive aids are useful for tracking audience responses to questions, and they have the advantage over asking for a show of hands.

Audio visual media

This involves the use of media that utilises both sight and sound e.g. videos. Videos help to clarify, explain, emphasize, or illustrate a key concept in your presentation. The considerations on choice of the appropriate media include:

- The characteristics of the audience
- The form of the message/content to be communicated
- The urgency of the message
- Organizational policy
- Security and privacy of the message
- Cost
- The venue of the presentation

7.4 Differences in views are respected

In an organization, different views are expressed by both the employees and the clients. This exhibits the diversity in humanity. It is therefore important to develop the skill of respecting other peoples' views and at the same time adopting what is right and in line with

the organizational objectives. The skills that one needs to adopt to ensure other views are include;

- Negotiation skills
- Agreeing and disagreeing politely
- Allowing others time to express their views
- Interrupting politely
- Openness and flexibility
- Showing empathy

7.5 Written communication is consistent with organizational standards
Communication skills relevant to client groups

Effective communication is based on how a message is delivered and how it is received. Miscommunication occurs when one person doesn't deliver information in the same pace or priority as the other person processes. When communicating with an audience, it can be difficult to address all the different communication styles in attendance, but it's imperative that you switch back and forth to ensure that all in the audience get the message you are presenting. In order to communicate effectively with the different client groups, you need to understand the message you need to communicate and then focus on the importance of connecting with others. This calls for you to adopt different styles to communicate with the different clients.

Methods of written communication

Handouts: Handouts are appropriate for delivering information that audience members can take away with them.

Letters: Letters are used to communicate to individual clients. They also contain information that is not meant for the public. The receipts in most cases are expected to make written responses.

Posters: These are used to communicate a variety of clients. They should be brief and precise and communicate the message in a simple way. They are often used for public information.

Banners: They communicate to a wide range of clients and can incorporate the use of graphics.

Circulars/Memo: These are used to communicate within the organization.

Written communication is often meant for literate audiences. It is however important to make the following consideration when preparing to communicate in written form;
- Level of literacy of the audience
- Urgency of the message
- Organizational policy
- Confidentiality of the message
- Appropriateness of the written media

7.6 Inquiries are responded in a manner consistent with organizational standard
Clients' responses should be addressed promptly, professionally and satisfactorily. This involves;
- Acknowledging the customer views.
- Listen carefully and keenly.
- Demonstrating your willingness to help the customer.
- Give the client assurance that you will make effort to address their enquiries.
- Encourage the customer to give all details about their enquiries.
- Reduce the response time by getting back to the customer promptly.
- Gather all the information needed to respond to the enquiry. This will ensure follow up enquiries are reduced to the minimum.
- Prioritize the customer enquiries by having a list of all the enquiries, the persons to be contacted and the time for responses.
- Ensure responses are responded to with speed and accuracy.

Handling client inquiries over the phone
- Pick the call promptly.
- Greet the client politely.
- Identify the organization by name.
- Inform the client to whom he/she is speaking.
- Find out the reason why the client is calling.
- Keenly listen to the client's enquiry.
- Take notes if necessary.
- Ensure you repeat the information to the client to show the customer you have understood the question.
- Offer the client a solution if in a possible to do it, or assure him/her when you will get back to them.

Conclusion
This learning outcome dealt with means of representing the organization through written and multimedia forms and handling of clients' enquiries according to organizational standards

Further Reading

Lauer, D. A., &Pentak, S. (2000). *Design basics* (5th Ed.). Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt College Publishers.

Pearson, J., & Nelson, P. (2000). An introduction to human communication: understanding and sharing. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

2.3.8.3 Self-Assessment

Written Assessment

1. The following are written forms of communication. Which one is not?
    a) Memos
    b) Letters
    c) Posters
    d) Videos
2. One of the following is a consideration when developing a presentation?
    a) Gender of the presenter
    b) leadership
    c) Weather
    d) The audience
3. Which of the following is a computer-based presentation?
    a) Power point
    b) handouts
    c) circulars
    d) posters
4. Which of the following is not a way to respond to client's enquiries?
    a) Listening keenly
    b) Asking the client to call later
    c) Asking the client to give all the details
    d) Being calm
5. Which of the following is not a form of written communication in the organization?
    a) Email
    b) Banners
    c) Speech
    d) Poster
6. Prompt response to client's enquiries gives a positive image of the organization
    a) False
    b) True

7. Use of multimedia enhances a presentation and appeals to the audience.
   a) True
   b) False
8. Outline 5 considerations that one should make before developing a presentation.
9. Discuss what comprises internal and external communication.
10. Explain the importance of incorporating multimedia in a presentation.
11. Discuss the structure of a good presentation.
12. What techniques are required to ensure that individual differences are respected in an organization?

Oral Assessment
1. Simulate a scenario of a client making a telephone enquiry to your organization and how the enquiries are responded to.

Practical Assessment
1. You are the human resource officer at Bidii Company. Lately there have been increased cases of employees missing duty due to stress related issues. Plan for a sensitization session for the employees and prepare a 20 minutes power point presentation on "stress management.
2. Design a handout that can be given to prospective clients giving details of your organization's vision, mission, key products/services and corporate social activities.

2.3.8.4 Tools, Equipment, Supplies and Materials
- Desktop computers/laptops
- Internet Connection
- Projectors
- Telephone

2.3.8.5 References

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McLean, S. (2005). *The basics of interpersonal communication*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Vocate, D. (Ed.). (1994). *Intrapersonal communication: Different voices, different minds*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.