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| LECTURE | : | 8 |
| TOPIC | : | THE NEED FOR COMMUNICATION IN BUSINESS. EVALUATION OF THE DIFFERENT METHODS OF COMMUNICATION |
| AIM | : | TO UNDERSTAND THE BASIC CONCEPTS OF COMMUNICATION TO STUDY THE DIFFERENT MODES OF COMMUNICATION USED IN BUSINESS AND EVALUATE THEM. |

LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion of this lesson, you should be able to

1. Have a fundamental idea of communication.
2. How useful communication is so useful in business?
3. The different methods of communication used in business and evaluate them accordingly.

TOPIC OUTLINE

1. Introduction.
2. Methods of communication in business
3. Evaluate of the methods.

INTERROGRAMS

1. Identify a business situation in which each of the above methods would be used for communication information and make recommendations about the best way to ensure feedback.
2. Many managerial problems in an organisation are the result of poor or non-existent communication.
3. Identify and comment as what you consider to be the principal barriers to effective communication.

Introduction.

Communication is said to be the “life blood” of any business, and it is a valuable requirement for most careers. A recent study indicated that 340 jobs in 30 different field

required the ability to communicate effectively is essential for promotion and communication can be said to be the most valuable subject that you have studied.

In the United States of America, 7419 newly promoted Vice – presidents, Presidents and Chief Executive Officers choose Business Communication as their first choice from among a list of subjects.

It is easy thus to see why effective communication is the “life blood” of business, but what is communication?

Communication is the transmission or exchange of information. It is a universal human activity, which is directed at:

- a) Initiating action – to request, to instruct or to persuade.
- b) Making known needs or requirements.
- c) For the exchange of information, ideas, attitudes and beliefs.
- d) Establishing understanding.
- e) Establishing and maintaining relationships.

Therefore communication embraces a wide spectrum of activities in an organisation, both in the way an organisation as an entity communicates or “projects” itself to customers, and the way in which people within and around communicate with each other.

Importance of communication in an organisation:

1. For providing information, for planning, co-ordination and control of the activities of managers.
2. For providing information about organisations and its services to people from the outside world.
3. For encouraging the formulation, surpassing and testing of ideas. In fact communication in forums such as quality control circles and brainstorming sessions contribute effectively to innovation and flexibility in an organisation in the face of organisational change.
4. For the co-ordination of the activities of interdependent sub-systems of the organisation.
5. For fulfilling the needs of employees for information about task, standards expected, how performance measures up to standard set.
6. For creating developing and maintaining interpersonal relations between subordinates, supervisors, peers and customers or suppliers

Methods of communications:

A) Oral communications

This is communication by speech or word of mouth. This face-to-face oral media includes

- a) Conversations
- b) Interviews
- c) Meetings
- d) Public Address and briefings

Advantages of oral communication:

- a) It is swift and direct, where there is no time lapse.
- b) It is suitable for interactive communication, exchange of ideas, opinions and attitudes. Decisions can be taken quickly and ideas can be exchange.
- c) Greater flexibility is created circumstances and attitudes can be changed more easily since notice and manner of the parties involved can be employed on persuasion and motivation.
- d) Instant feedback, to enable the clearing of doubts and misunderstanding and to ascertain immediately if the message has been received and correctly interpreted.
- e) An added advantage is that one can see and hear the other party and verbal meanings can be reinforced and feedback can be given by facial expression or gestures.
- f) This method also allows for sensitive handling of personal messages, for example a reprimand or bad news.

Disadvantages of oral communication:

- a) Technical noise- background sound or a bad telephone line.
- b) Untrustworthy memory as our perceptions may differ as such, written communication for confirmation will be required.
- c) Time- There is less time available for planing a message, the content and exact wordings are made on the spot.
- d) Strong personalities may swamp as weaker ones however valid their respective ideas. Clash of personalities my cripple the effective of communications.
- e) Where there is a large number of people involved, communication becomes difficult to control and may be ineffective.

Note to Remember – Verbal communication can be carried out despite remoteness of the sender and receiver by a) the telephone, b) intercom and c) audio and video tape recordings.

B) Non Verbal Communications.

Communication without the use of words is known as non-verbal communications. This includes the way we stand our positions, tone of voice, gestures and facial expressions.

We may use many of them deliberately, instead of using the spoken words i.e., walking out of a meeting, or pointing at something or nodding to confirm something.

A good communicator can control the use of non-verbal communication in various ways. He may yawn or applaud to send a feedback, or create an impression by dressing smartly. The non-verbal methods of communication can be used to reinforce the spoken message, with indications of how the listener's interest, seriousness or feelings are engaged, disapproving frown or sparkling eyes etc.

In learning to recognise non-verbal messages, we can also

- a) Receive feedback and modify our message accordingly.
- b) Recognise people and feelings when words are constrained by formalities, for example with an excited look etc.
- c) Recognise existing or potential personal problems i.e. angry silence etc.
- d) Read situations in order to modify our own communication or respond strategy.

References

1. Communications for Business-Shirley Taylor – A Practical Approach (3rd Ed) Pitmans Publishing 1999.
2. Business communication – David Nickson and Suzy Siddons – Heinemann.
3. Communication for Business and Secretarial Students – LA Woolcolt and UR Unrin – Macmillan Press Ltd.
4. Business Communication for Secretarial Certificates – John Sutherland and Diane Conwell – Heinemann.

Tutorial Questions – Week 9

1. Identify a business situation in which each of the above methods would be used for communication information and make recommendations about the best way to ensure feedback.
2. Many managerial problems in an organisation are the result of poor or non-existent communication.
3. Identify and comment as what you consider to be the principal barriers to effective communication.