Course: Business Communications (8410)
Semester: Autumn, 2021

ASSIGNMENT No. 1

Q. 1 Discuss and give examples on challenges in communication in a global context.

HR professionals and other business leaders need to be able to communicate as effectively with workers across the globe as around the corner. Yet that can be a challenge, because face-to-face communication is the preferred method for spreading news and information, experts say.

Face to face "is the method that humans have been using for as long as time," Sebastian Bailey, president and co-founder of corporate consulting and training company Mind Gym, Inc., wrote via e-mail to SHRM Online. "Humans convey so much in closer communication—a raised eyebrow, a wry smile, a flash of sorrow, a look of confusion. Well-crafted prose, or a snazzy website, certainly helps with scale and collation of data, but nothing beats the intimacy of a group of people entering into dialogue to describe problems," he observed.

"Nothing replaces [face-to-face communication], and nothing compares to it," Rachel Berry, a communications consultant based in Boulder, Colo., agreed. "If you don't have any face-to-face communication, the world's cleverest e-mail/intranet/newsletter is not going to have 'sticking power' because employees won't be able to connect it to a leader they know and trust."

However, for large companies with offices in multiple locations, face-to-face communication is not always feasible. Gilbert Manzano, chief administrative officer for ACI Specialty Benefits in San Diego, is a proponent of a "robust company intranet."

"The best [intranet websites] allow for basic employee information to be entered, such as name, organizational reports, location, contact information and a photo," Manzano, a Society for Human Resource Management member, explained. "Companies must invest in training staff on such tools and make it a part of the culture."

Employee communication specialists praised the use of Skype as an alternative when face-to-face communication is not possible. Yet they recommended avoiding the video function on Skype, in order to make employees more comfortable.

Steve Grubbs, president and CEO of technology communications company Victory Enterprises, Inc. in Davenport, Iowa, said he uses Skype texting—not video, as a primary way of "visiting" contract employees in India, Pakistan and China. "This gives me a chance to keep a record of the conversation while at the same time, letting [my colleagues] communicate at a pace that works for them."

Evelyn Castillo-Bach, founder of Miami-based UmeNow, said she conducts 99.9 percent of her communication with clients worldwide via chat, e-mail and Skype and describes the results as "outstanding."

"But the one thing I never do is turn on the camera," she noted.

HR experts and corporate communicators say it is important to be flexible and to take one's audience and work circumstances into consideration when selecting communication methods.

"Asking employees directly is not always helpful, because there's a really good chance you'll hear 'e-mail is fine' when they just haven't considered other methods," Gerry Matthews, a writer for Custom Mechanical

Downloaded From Tajassus.com

Systems Corp. in Indiana, wrote via LinkedIn. "Internal publications, poster campaigns, e-mails, intranet content, town hall meetings all have their place and always will."

The Social Network

A study by Towers Watson & Co. published in November 2011 found that more companies worldwide are embracing social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn to facilitate employee communication better.

According to the study:

- Almost two-thirds of survey respondents are more knowledgeable about using social media tools than they were in 2010.
- Around 69 percent of respondents said they plan to increase their use of social media—including leadership journals and blogs.

"The way companies handle employee communication is fundamentally changing, largely due to increased expectations, diversity and globalization, as well as the growth of social media and networking," Kathryn Yates, global leader of communication consulting at Towers Watson & Co., said in a statement. "Social media and networking clearly open an opportunity for dialogue, rapidly integrate employees into the company culture and create a sense of community."

'Culturally Competent' Workers

Although rapid changes in technology are impacting global communication, employees must be aware of linguistic, cultural, religious and social differences to build strong communication channels with colleagues and business contacts.

Neal Goodman, Ph.D., president of Global Dynamics, Inc., a cross-cultural training firm, said technology tends to race ahead of social norms. He added that it hides cultural differences between employees.

The solution, Goodman explained, is to train all employees, not just managers and CEOs who travel overseas, to be "culturally competent. Ideally, it should become second nature to all employees to adjust their style and work ethic on the fly when working with international colleagues."

But some cultural obstacles need to be addressed, Goodman added, particularly in face-to-face communication.

"Although eye contact is key in the United States, it can be overwhelmingfor people in some other countries," said Brigitta Toruño, president of UNO Translations and Communications in Northern Virginia. "Asians tend to avert eye contact as ameans of politeness and respect. Middle Eastern cultures tendto make more direct eye contact than what we are comfortable with in theUnited States."

Managers need to receive cultural awareness training so they knowhow to work best with employees of all cultural backgrounds, Toruño explained.

"When amanager sits down one on one with an Asian employee and they notice thatperson is not looking directly at their eyes, they should recognize this as asign of respect and not be surprised about this or think that

Downloaded From Tajassus.com

person isfeeling guilty about something," she added. "This comes from having been educated incultural awareness."

Goodman has drafted several strategies to develop cross-cultural competence among global offices, teams and indiv

iduals:

- **Be concise.** Office communication may be translated into several different languages. Keep the message to the point to preserve its meaning, no matter what language is used.
- **Avoid jargon, slang and localized expressions.** Outside of the United States, many employees would be baffled by sports analogies such as "hitting a home run" and "making a slam dunk." Use clear, simple language and expressions that "travel well."
- **Be respectful of cultural and religious differences.** Corporate communications should be edited so that they do not reflect a particular religious bias. Humor should be used judiciously; what one culture finds amusing, another might find offensive.

"Most people will forgive a cultural error as long as a leader is thoughtful, respectful, curious and polite," Bailey concluded. "It's a mindless approach and blundering behavior that tends to provoke dissatisfaction and anger. So, the first step is reminding leaders to adapt their style so that it resonates with different audiences and cultures while remaining authentic."

Q. 2 Write short notes on following:

a) Individual Cultural Variables

The individual cultural variables are following Ø Time Ø Space Ø Food Ø Acceptable dress Ø Manners Ø Decision making

Time is also an important factor in communication. For example, Germans are time-precise; rarely do you wait for an appointment in Germany. In Latin America cultures-, you may wait an hour; your host is not showing disrespect thereby, it is the example here in Pakistan. Just reflecting a different concept of time; arriving late is socially accepted custom here our country. How close May stranger stand to you? o What does it feel like when you are in a crowded? For example, most Americans feel uncomfortable if a stranger comes closer than 18 inches. o So body languages depend in communications in which cultural you are. Americans demands more room---buffer space---between themselves and other when speaking. To some other cultures (Arabs, Latin Americans), Americans who do not stand close seem cold and aloof. Conversely, some cultures consider those who stand close to you as intrusive, rude, pushy, and overbearing. Concepts of office space differ. In third-world countries, several people occupy the same office, even the same desk. Furniture is arranged according to alleged mystic powers. In Germany one's door is often closed; you knock before entering the room. You cannot assume that a western concept of space is accepted and understood throughout the world. Food It may be a good idea prior to visiting your host country to visit various ethnic restaurants in your home country. Then you'll have an initial idea as to the kinds of food available: how they are served, fix, or eaten. it is used to be the

Downloaded From Tajassus.com

only the tourists in London or Tokyo would rush off to the ubiquitous McDonald's or that those in Beijing would other a domino's pizza or a meal at Kentucky fried chicken. But now the natives in those countries also frequent such places. When we got off the beaten path, however, food---and its preparation---will vary. Pork is forbidden in Middle Eastern countries but is a path of the Asian diet and that of many other countries; beef is a hard to find in India; veal is plentiful in Europe; rice is eve-present in Hong Kong and china. Acceptable Dress Dress also has value in communication. When u have good dress then sound will be clear. So its very important when you are communicating in front of gathering, your dress should be perfect. It is the better to ask about the mode of dress for an occasion in your host country than to risk making an embarrassing mistake. In the Middle East long cotton coats are acceptable. In some situations you may see the Hawaiian muumuu, the Polynesian sarong, the Japanese kimono, the Iranian chador, or the Mao dark-blue jacket and pants. Manners Manners also have value in communication. So you should be aware of manners of cultural to whom you are communicating. Some cultural anthologists suggest that you observe children in foreign cultures because by watching them you learn the behavioral habits of elders. Children shake your hand in Germany, hug you in Italy, and often stay in the background in India. In fact, the ritual of the greeting and the farewell is more formal overseas with children and adults. You bring a gift when visiting most homes in Europe. If you bring flowers, you avoid gifts of Red Roses in Germany France, Belguim and Japan. In Saudi Arabia, you will learn that the junior prince is silent when a senior enters. Decision Making Patience above all is needed in intercultural communication, in doing business with other countries. American are typecast as moving too quickly in asking for a decision. give more thought to communication. Americans are accused of (blame) being quick; "we wish to get to the point fast." When one reaches Japan, decision time is held back as group consensus (compromise) moves toward a decision. As you can imagine much time is spent in reaching an answer. Thus patience-and your understanding of the decision process-adds to your success in dealing with a foreign environment. Verbal Communication Regardless of culture, a kind of verbal communication (body language) occurs when strangers meet, each seeking to determine which topics are acceptable and non-controversial (not in). Additionally, tone of voice of one's initial words can influence your initial perception of whether the meeting is positive or negative. We judge people to a great extent by their voice. Some native languages demand many tonal variations, giving the impression to a non-native of loudness, even superiority. Nonverbal Communication Many nonverbal symbols exist for every culture, even in subcultures. Knowing the major desirable and undesirable cues (signs) helps knowing both intended and unintended communication errors.

b) National Cultural Variables

An entire country may have a series of cultural norms/standards; individual ethnic/tribal groups within that country may accept most of those norms as well as adding their own. The National Cultural Variables are following Ø Education Ø Regulation Ø Economics Ø Politics Ø Social norms Ø Language Education You should be aware of the fact about the education level of the person which you are speaking. So communication lot depends upon education.

Downloaded From Tajassus.com

Laws and Regulations In both the under-developed and developed nations, various government regulations affect business communications and sale of products. The type of product to be advertised-for instance, "Cigarette" is restricted in Europe; also money spent on advertising is limited. Other countries such as France, Mexico and the province of Quebec also have restriction on the use of foreign languages in advertisements. Economics Availabity of capital and transportation and the standard of living per capita vary from nation to nation. The opportunity to borrow money, the rate of inflation (price raise), and the exchange rates influence business and a country's ability to communicate concerning that business. For example in Pakistan the competitors usually set their own prices. In contrast IEEE set their own standard for different computer equipments Politics Politics also effect our communication when we are doing business with our company can result even in personal harm. Even concepts of democracy will vary as interpreted in Korea, the Philippines, or Great Britain. Indeed, the sweeping political changes in Eastern Europe and its altered concepts of government will effect future business relations. Even the events Tiananmen square affected individual and business contacts with china; more changes will certainly occur in the future. All such events affect communication, understanding of a country, and a company's willingness to do business in an unclear political environment. Religion Religion in different areas of the world can effect the business and communications. Recent statistics have shown some religious have totally changed the style of business and even the structure of that specific country. e.g. In Afghanistan, Chechnya, Arabia, Iraq etc In various ways national environmental constraints, education, law and regulations, economics, politics and religion effect a nation's social norms. Also family boundaries may exist between persons, based on caste, class, age. So aware of a nation's social norms. Language Every body knows that knowing the language of a country is the most significant contribute to improved communication, on personal and business level. Your communication is good when both sender and receiver have same language. An important constraint that under girds all the preceding is language. English is a world language and to a major extent the language of business. But, you know some basic vocabulary of your host country. Each language has it is own sentence patterns and vocabulary. Thus, writing and speaking in a second language are more prone to errors. It is an easy take to find support for this assertion: language problems are often core to communication misunderstandings.

Q. 3 Write a detailed note on the planning and structuring of effective business messages.

Good internal communication is essential in engaging and motivating employees. It leads to a more effective workforce, directly boosting the bottom line. But it doesn't happen by chance. Here's a look at five steps to developing an effective internal communications program.

Step 1: Identify the goals

Communication for the sake of communication will achieve little.

It is essential to establish specific goals for an internal communications program. It's important to then link these goals closely to your business objectives to reflect the company's vision and mission statements.

Within the goals, address known problems such as internal rumors or lack of departmental communication.

Downloaded From Tajassus.com

Step 2: Know the audience

Central to any effective communications program is delivering the right message to the right person at the right time.

By knowing your audience, you can plan your strategy more effectively. And it may include more than employees. Corporate communication may involve stakeholders and even government agencies.

The geographic location of the audience also could affect how you distribute information. Are there cultural issues to be considered? Certain societies are less willing to express themselves openly than others. A particular social media platform may be popular in some locations but not others.

Sharing information digitally is often subject to legal constraints, particularly across borders. Consider logistical issues related to time differences or possible challenges posed by regional infrastructure.

Step 3: Create a strategy

To achieve the desired outcome, you will need to define a clear strategy, based on your goals and the audience. This lets you build detailed and measurable actions.

A SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) will help clarify potential areas of concern. These might cover staffing skills, budget constraints and timing demands.

Step 4: Confirm the understanding

When the strategy has been established and agreed on, the tactics for execution can be discussed. The delivery team will add the actions, dates and names of those responsible for each item to create a clear and measurable plan.

Unless senior management is committed to the plan, failure is often a risk. The same is true for all members of the delivery team. Do they fully understand their involvement? Have they bought into the need for an internal communications system and the plan for developing it?

It is often easy to obtain agreement but not necessarily commitment. Addressing this may require motivating people in a less formal environment.

Step 5: Review, reassess and refine

Measurable deliveries with clear due dates make it easy to monitor progress. But things change. By anticipating bottlenecks, delays can be avoided. Delivery team members should be encouraged to provide input and feedback as they implement the program.

Once fully implemented, monitor the program on a regular basis to ensure it is meeting the objectives. Reactions and comments from end users are important.

Today's employees are already bombarded by emails – internal and external. For the communications program to be actually used, it must deliver value to the audience. The hard-pushed employee will ask, "What's in it for me?" It's important to ensure that they know.

Downloaded From Tajassus.com

Metrics on usage and feedback are invaluable. But they shouldn't be simply a justification exercise to show ROI. Important insights can be gleaned from these performance and acceptance indicators. Be ready to use the information to make necessary refinements.

Q. 4 Describe the process of writing a bad news message denying a request.

The negative news message delivers news that the audience does not want to hear, read, or receive. Delivering negative news is never easy. Whether you are informing someone they are being laid off or providing constructive criticism on their job performance, how you choose to deliver the message can influence its response.Bovee, C., & Thill, J. (2010). Business communication essentials: A skills-based approach to vital business English (4th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. Some people prefer their bad news to be direct and concise. Others may prefer a less direct approach. Regardless whether you determine a direct or indirect approach is warranted, your job is to deliver news that you anticipate will be unwelcome, unwanted, and possibly dismissed.In this section we will examine several scenarios that can be communicated internally (within the organization) and externally (outside the organization), but recognize that the lines can be blurred as communication flows outside and through an organization or business. Internal and external communication environments often have a degree of overlap. The rumor of anticipated layoffs may surface in the local media, and you may be called upon to address the concern within the organization. In a similar way, a product that has failed internal quality control tests will require several more tests and improvements before it is ready for market, but if that information leaves the organization, it can hurt the business reputation, prospects for future contracts, and the company's ability to secure financing.

Communication is constantly present, and our ability to manage, clarify, and guide understanding is key to addressing challenges while maintaining trust and integrity with employees, stakeholders, and the public.

There are seven goals to keep in mind when delivering negative news, in person or in written form:

1. Be clear and concise in order not to require additional clarification.
2. Help the receiver understand and accept the news.
3. Maintain trust and respect for the business or organization and for the receiver.
4. Avoid legal liability or erroneous admission of guilt or culpability.
5. Maintain the relationship, even if a formal association is being terminated.
6. Reduce the anxiety associated with the negative news to increase comprehension.
7. Achieve the designated business outcome.

Let's examine our first scenario:

You are a supervisor and have been given the task of discussing repeated tardiness with an employee, Chris. Chris has frequently been late for work, and the problem has grown worse over the last two weeks. The tardiness is impairing not only Chris's performance, but also that of the entire work team. Your manager has instructed you to put an end to it. The desired result is for Chris to stop his tardiness behavior and improve his performance.

Downloaded From Tajassus.com

You can

1. stop by Chris's cubicle and simply say, "Get to work on time or you are out";
2. invite Chris out to a nice lunch and let him have it;
3. write Chris a stern e-mail;
4. ask Chris to come to your office and discuss the behavior with him in private.

While there are many other ways you could choose to address the situation, let's examine each of these four alternatives in light of the goals to keep in mind when presenting negative news.

First, you could approach Chris in his work space and speak to him directly. Advantages include the ability to get right to the point right away. Disadvantages include the strain on the supervisor-employee relationship as a result of the public display of criticism, the possibility that Chris may not understand you, the lack of a formal discussion you can document, and the risk that your actions may not bring about the desired results.

The goals include the desire to be clear and concise in order not to require additional clarification. This possible response does not provide the opportunity for discussion, feedback, or confirmation that Chris has clearly understood your concern. It fails to address the performance concern, and limits the correction to the tardiness. It fails to demonstrate respect for all parties. The lack of tact apparent in the approach may reflect negatively on you as the supervisor, not only with Chris but with your manager as well.

When you need to speak to an employee about a personnel concern, it is always best to do it in private. Give thought and concern to the conversation before it occurs, and make a list of points to cover with specific information, including grievances. Like any other speech, you may need to rehearse, particularly if this type of meeting is new to you. When it comes time to have the discussion, issue the warning, back it up in writing with documentation, and don't give the impression that you might change your decision. Whether the issue at hand is a simple caution about tardiness or a more serious conversation, you need to be fair and respectful, even if the other person has been less than professional. Let's examine the next alternative.

Let's say you invite Chris to lunch at a nice restaurant. There is linen on the table, silverware is present for more than the main course, and the water glasses have stems. The environment says "good job" in its uniqueness, presentation, and luxury. Your word will contradict this nonverbal message. The juxtaposition between the environment and the verbal message will cause tension and confusion, which will probably be an obstacle to the receiver's ability to listen. If Chris doesn't understand the message, and the message requires clarification, your approach has failed. The contrast between the restaurant setting and the negative message does not promote understanding and acceptance of the bad news or correction. Furthermore, it does not build trust in the relationship, as the restaurant invitation might be interpreted as a "trap" or a betrayal. Let's examine yet another approach.

You've written Chris a stern e-mail. You've included a list of all the recent dates when he was late and made several statements about the quality of his work. You've indicated he needs to improve, and stop being late, or else. But was your e-mail harassment? Could it be considered beyond the scope of supervision and interpreted

Downloaded From Tajassus.com

as mean or cruel? And do you even know if Chris has received it? If there was no reply, do you know whether it achieved its desired business outcome? A written message may certainly be part of the desired approach, but how it is presented and delivered is as important as what it says. Let's examine our fourth approach to this scenario.

You ask Chris to join you in a private conversation. You start the conversation with an expression of concern and an open-ended question: "Chris, I've been concerned about your work lately. Is everything all right?" As Chris answers, you may demonstrate that you are listening by nodding your head, and possibly taking notes. You may learn that Chris has been having problems sleeping, or that his living situation has changed. Or Chris may decline to share any issues, deny that anything is wrong, and ask why you are concerned. You may then state that you've observed the chronic tardiness, and name one or more specific mistakes you have found in Chris's work, ending with a reiteration that you are concerned. This statement of concern may elicit more responses and open the conversation up into a dialogue where you come to understand the situation, Chris sees your concern, and the relationship is preserved. Alternatively, in case the conversation does not go well, you will still keep a positive attitude even as you document the meeting and give Chris a verbal warning.

Regardless of how well or poorly the conversation goes, if Chris tells other employees about it, they will take note of how you handled the situation, and it will contribute to their perception of you. It guides their expectations of how you operate and how to communicate with you, as this interaction is not only about you and Chris. You represent the company and its reputation, and your professional display of concern as you try to learn more sends a positive message. While the private, respectful meeting may not be the perfect solution, it is preferable to the other approaches we have considered.

Q. 5 Write notes on following:

a) E-Mail

Electronic mail (**email** or **e-mail**) is a method of exchanging messages ("mail") between people using electronic devices. Email entered limited use in the 1960s, but users could only send to users of the same computer. Some systems also supported a form of instant messaging, where sender and receiver needed to be online simultaneously. Ray Tomlinson is credited as the inventor of networked email; in 1971, he developed the first system able to send mail between users on different hosts across the ARPANET, using the sign to link the user name with a destination server. By the mid-1970s, this was the form recognized as email.

Email operates across computer networks, primarily the Internet. Today's email systems are based on a store-and-forward model. Email servers accept, forward, deliver, and store messages. Neither the users nor their computers are required to be online simultaneously; they need to connect, typically to a mail server or a webmail interface to send or receive messages or download it.

Originally an ASCII text-only communications medium, Internet email was extended by Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions (MIME) to carry text in other character sets and multimedia content attachments. International email, with internationalized email addresses using UTF-8, is standardized but not widely adopted.

Downloaded From Tajassus.com

The history of modern Internet email services reaches back to the early ARPANET, with standards for encoding email messages published as early as 1973 (RFC 561). An email message sent in the early 1970s is similar to a basic email sent today.

b) Neutral Messages

Positive messages include messages where the audience is expected to react in a neutral to positive manner. Positive messages tend to consist of routine or good news. These messages might be items such as congratulations, confirmations, directions, simple credit requests, or credit approvals. Also included in this category might be denials that are somewhat routine or expected. This could be something like a parking lot closure that inconveniences employees, but in a minor way. As strange as this sounds, sympathy messages are in this category as well. Sympathy messages are routine since they will not be a surprise to the receiver.

Consider the message to be a positive message structure when:

- The receiver likes or expects this news (product shipped on time)
- The receiver needs little education or background to understand the news (travel arrangement for the conference)
- The receiver considers the message routine, even if not completely positive (parking lot closed for three days for new striping)

Downloaded From Tajassus.com