

Ethical Communication in the Workplace

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Ethical communication is important to an organization since communication remains one of the fundamental needs of life. Whether or not the organization's employees succeed in meeting objectives largely depends on communication between them (Adeel, 2012). The need for accurate and efficient communication constitutes basic requirements of ethical communication in the workplace. For instance, an employee should ask questions only after following instructions, say on the company's memo, and thoroughly read information therein (Root, 2013). This implies that presenting obvious questions clearly outlined in the company's documents qualifies to be unprofessional, giving an impression of a worker who does not follow instructions. Ethics is further a requirement during organization's meetings since things can get out of hand depending on how people communicate (Johnson, 2007). A description of such a situation is evident in the picture below, and is good for analysis to understand the importance of ethical communication.

From such an incidence, it is evident that employees as well as managers can easily lose their cool during meetings, hence the importance of an understanding of ethical communication. The above situation should be avoided at all cost, which prompts the need to understand what might cause such (Johnson, 2007).

Failure to Listen; one of the most unethical practice in workplace communication is failure of one or more people to listen effectively, or poor listening skills (Williams, 2012). Failure to do so happens for a variety of reasons, one being that a party is un-interested in the topic being discussed, or due to distractions when working in a noisy environment. Additionally,

there are further a couple of more reasons for poor listening skills, including; differences in opinion regarding the subject and taking a passive role during the discussion (Baden, 2012).

Communication in the workplace involves discussion of weighty issues, which when not taken in keenly can lead to infuriation to the other partner. Problem sets in when the un-listening person interrupts communication and insists on his or her point, when in deed he or she is wrong about everything. This can be one of the causes of what is seen in the above picture.

Making assumptions; a number of times people make decisions based on the assumption that something will happen in a certain way. This habit extends to the workplace and assumptions go a long way to influence a person's judgment of the other as they communicate. It is pretty clear that people should not make assumptions with workplace matters as they tend to speed up a task or process and mess up things (Nish, 2005). Further assumptions will ignore the precepts of communication causing misunderstandings and whatever one projects in the assumption fails to work. Apparently, the picture above shows a situation in which a person misses out on useful information only because he or she made assumptions (Baden, 2012).

Body Language; non-verbal communication has for a long time become part and parcel of workplace interaction. However, this comes with an unexpected potential of hindering effective workplace communication. Some negative body language, such as shaking the head, raising arms and waving are easily misinterpreted to mean things they do not (Groom, 2012). It is, therefore, all about how the other party interprets what one does. The impact is that it hinders workplace relationship other than hampering a person's willingness to take part in communication.

Inappropriate Questions; most central to the idea of ethical workplace communication is when a person asks questions that lack details. The entire issue about asking question should be to seek clarification or confirm what is already said (Baden, 2012). Asking the ideal kind of questions will improve workplace communication a great deal. Additionally, the person asking questions can ensure he or she uses open-ended questions as much as possible to allow respondent give answer freely.

Overload of Information; Furthermore, a number of times people in the workplace fail to exhibit ethics in communication due to information overload. For instance, one email containing the same information and sent from multiple senders can be a hindrance to ethical communication. A person practically gets fed up with such, not knowing to whom he or she should respond. Consequently, it is normal that many employees will ignore such emails however important they are. An ideal solution to such a problem is providing new emails rather than doing cc and forwarding to everyone whenever one sends emails (Baden, 2012).

Emotional Distraction; Emotions play a central role in realizing ethical organizational communication. For instance, external factors, such as poor health or illness can hinder a person's concentration (Baden, 2012). It gets worse when people with whom he is communicating do not understand the situation and mistake him or her for a poor listener. In some instances, the listener interprets the person communicating as, say hungry, which makes him or her react in a negative way. Moreover, most common in the workplace is when two employees of different sexes are emotionally attached to one another but differ in opinion regarding a subject (Sandra, 2009). Emotional attraction between the two can spark one to ignore or completely assume the other, even failing to listen to him or her. However, the reverse happens when the listener interprets a communicator to be happy, hence reacting positively to the message (Thompson, 2000).

Ethical workplace communication is, therefore, essential in determine whether or not workers succeed in realizing organization's objectives. Most significant to note is the need to be an effective listener. Most people are unimpressed when one asks unclear questions, which only show that he or she had not been listening (Thompson, 2000). Furthermore, people's reactions differ and what one may take lightly can be devastating to the other person. Other than being an

effective listener, communication is beneficial when one asks clear questions, especially those seeking clarifications from the communicator. It is easy to believe the situation in the above picture arises because someone asked a question that infuriated the other person. Apparently, the guy loses his cool and rages at the lady, which all amount to unproductive communication.

Additionally, employees as well as managers should understand that it is through communication that the organization realizes its goals. People have to communicate for other activities to flow as expected. Meetings, for instance, are places in which resolutions are drawn and workers outline different courses of action (Jason, 2013). Failure to do so efficiently wastes time and a lot of organization's resources used to organize meetings. A practical instance shown in the above picture clearly shows that such employees will not reach a consensus irrespective of time taken in the meeting. Furthermore, future communication after such a confrontation is difficult, especially if none of them apologizes.