

Effective Classroom Communication Skills in Teaching

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Abstract—Communication is the act of conveying meanings from one entity or group to another through the use of mutually understood signs, symbols and semiotic rules. Communication means not only transfer of message, but transmission of understanding and ensuring that the receiver understands the same is same sense and spirit which the sender intends to convey. Teaching is generally considered as only fifty percent knowledge and fifty percent interpersonal or communication skills. Studies have indicated that adults in a variety of occupations spend about 70% of their daily time in one of the four communication activities. Approximately, they spend 42% of their time in listening, 32% in talking, 15% in reading and 11% in writing. In actual practice, most of the people are relatively poor listeners. Communication effectiveness depends on several factors. Some of them are: Credibility, Context, Content, Clarity, Continuity and consistency, Channels and Capability of audience. Barriers of communication depend on several factors. Some of them are: Complexity of ideas, Difference from accustomed patterns, Competition with prevailing ideas, Vested interests, Do not satisfy felt need, To overcome the barriers of communication, Increasing frequency of exposure to the new idea.

INTRODUCTION

Communication with other is more than just transfer of information. Communication means not only transfer of message, but transmission of understanding and ensuring that the receiver understands the same is same sense and spirit which the sender intends to convey. Every communication involves two important components; content of the delivered message and emotion impact of the message on the receiver. Communication gap, provocation of reactions and misunderstanding occur when there is no bridge or connection between the content and emotion impact. To ensure whole communication that involves bridge between the content and emotion impact of the message, one needs to fine tune one's communication message and the way of communicating. An individual need to polish his or her communication skills to be more effective and to have positive impact and influence upon others.

The art of communication involves listening and speaking as well as reading and writing. Teachers need to be highly skilled

in all these areas to excel in their profession. Proficient communicators receive information, understand and synthesize it and express themselves at a high level.

Relevance and implications for teachers

Teaching is generally considered as only fifty percent knowledge and fifty percent interpersonal or communication skills. For a teacher, it is not just important to give a quality lecture but it is more important for the presentation of a lesson or lecture in class. Communication skills for teacher are thus an important as their in-depth knowledge of the particular subject which they teach. The most important attribute of an effective teacher is that he/she is should be effective communicator.

Teacher should be aware of the importance of communication skills in teaching. They must also realize that all students have different level of strengths and weakness. It is only through communication skills that a teacher can introduce creative and effective solutions to the problems of the students. Thus, a teacher can enhance the learning process.

Following are some of the communication skills that a teacher must possess so that they interact properly with the students.

1. Oral communication and Presentation skills
2. Technical Skills
3. Listening skills
4. Writing skills
5. Body language skills
6. Electronic communication skills
7. Emotional intelligence
8. Positively personal attitude
9. Negotiation and conflict resolutions skills
10. Time and stress management

Oral Communication and Presentation Skills

Oral communication is important part of communication. No individual or organization can exist and function without oral communication. People usually judge others by the way they speak. From the quality of one's voice and the manner of saying things, people deduce a great deal about one's personality in general and feelings at the particular moment of time. Whether a person is feeling confident or shy, it is clearly judged from the way one speaks. Therefore, one should master the oral communication skills. These oral communication skills are usually used in face to face communication with others, group communication, speeches and presentations, etc.

Technical Skills

It is also important that teacher should be up to date with all the latest teaching aids like computers, video conferencing and especially the use of internet. This will also help the students to keep up their interest in the learning process.

Listening Skills

Listening skills is one of the most important communication skill that plays dominant role in understanding customer needs, others opinions, and building the team spirit. Listening is not a passive activity. In fact, listening is a dialogue, not a monologue where the speaker speaks and the listener merely listens. Listening requires the use of our eyes, mouth, brain, body and ears. We need our eyes to notice the expression s and body language of other persons, our mouth to acknowledge and clarify, our brain to assimilate the message, our body to indicate openness and understanding and our ears to hear the words and how they are spoken.

Writing skills

Writing skills affect person's effectiveness in influencing people, winning friends and gaining professional expertise. One may be highly intelligence and wise, but his or her inability to express the intellect and wisdom takes away much of his or her credit as an intelligence and wise person. Errors committed while writing circulars, reports, agenda or memo considerably spoil the image of the writers. To make the written message effective, the writer should pay adequate attention to certain principles like unity, emphasis completeness, conciseness, clarity, sequencing accuracy, readability etc.

Body language skills

Researchers have shown that total impact of a message is about 7% verbal (words only), 38% is vocal and 55% is non-verbal i.e., communication without use of written or spoken words like body movements, voice patterns, time touch etc. Actions speak louder than words. When the audience does not understand the verbal contents of the message they rely on the body language of the communicator. Therefore, the body language of the communicatory should be positive.

Electronic Communication Skills

With phenomenal expansion of internet, e mail has become the most popular medium of communication. E-mail is becoming popular because of its cost effectiveness and the speed of transmission of the message. Now because of present social shift to eculture, e-mails are becoming more frequent than letters and other forms of written communication.

Positive Personal attitude

Positive personal attitude is some important communication skills that contribute towards one's effectiveness. While dealing with others and communicating with them, one's positive personal attitude dominates a lot. A man of positive attitude can convey the message clearly with transmission of understanding, listen to others' point of view emphatically and objectively, perceive other persons friendly and build the environment of openness and trust.

Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence refers to a person's ability to be self-aware of feelings, to manage emotions, to motivate one self, to express empathy, and to handle relationships with others. Emotional intelligence helps an individual to work with other persons, win their confidence with decent behaviors and to overcome the negativity among oneself as well as among others.

Negotiation and conflict resolution skills

For negotiation and conflict resolution, one should be able to describe the other person's position as well as his or her own. With this, he or she can draw the other party to come to win/win situation. For negotiation and conflict resolution, the person should be flexible enough to mould the decision accordingly.

Time and stress management

In the present competitive environment, various executive and employees have to work in the conditions of stress for long hours to perform multitasks. They must know the way to manage their time and stress in effective way. Studies have shown that those who have mastered the art of time management are high achievers, in all their endeavors, Good time management accomplishing greater tasks within the limited amount of time available. It involves prioritizing the work and scheduling the time accordingly. Important work should be allotted more time and taken up first and secondary works should also be done within time schedule.

Listening in Communication

Studies have indicated that adults in a variety of occupations spend about 70% of their daily time in one of the four communication activities. Approximately, they spend 42% of their time in listening, 32% in talking, 15% in reading and 11% in wiring. In actual practice, most of the people are

relatively poor listeners. A listener is different than mere hearing.

There are three levels of listening.

Non-hearing: The individual does not listen at all. He simply looks at the speaker or may even utter remarks that seem to imply attention such as 'OK', 'YES', etc. but there is really no listening.

Hearing: Here the person hears what is being said and even remembers it. But he does not allow any idea to penetrate beyond the level of memory.

Thinking: Here, the listener not only hears what the speaker is saying, but also thinks about it. The listener evaluates and analyses what is being said. It is the third level of listening that is considered as real listening in communication.

Guides of Effective Listening:

- Listening is not a passive activity
- For active listening, one has to act like an active listener
- Listen for total meaning, listen with empathy, listen with an open mind and listen critically.

Communication Effectiveness

Communication effectiveness depends on several factors. Some of them are:

Credibility: The receiver must perceive the sender of information as trustworthy and competent.

Context: the message must conform and not contradict the context.

Content: The message must have meaning for the receiver and relevant for the situation. It must be compatible with the receiver's value system.

Clarity: The message must be simple and clear to the receiver.

Continuity and consistency: Repetition is necessary to the communication to get through to the people. It should also be devoid of contradictions.

Channels: The established channels of communication which the receiver uses and holds in high esteem should be used.

Capability of audience: The capability of the receiver to obtain, understand and use the message, determines effectiveness of communication.

BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

Complexity of ideas: Complex ideas take more time to understand and adopt.

Difference from accustomed patterns: Ideas different from accustomed patterns, are not easy for the people to accept.

Competition with prevailing ideas: competition of new ideas with the prevailing ones, develop resistance in the minds of the people.

Vested interests: Vested interests can slow down the process of diffusion of new ideas.

Do not satisfy felt need: If new ideas do not satisfy the felt need of the people, these are likely to be rejected.

To overcome the barriers of communication, one has to be careful about selection and preparation of the message, selection of communication channel, and treatment and presentation of the message, keeping in view the needs, interests and value system of the target audience.

Increasing frequency of exposure to the new idea, demonstrations, increasing understandability of message and taking precaution against distortion of message and taking precaution against distortion of message are some of the methods to sustain audience interest and enhance communication.

Conclusion

- Effective communication is essential especially in the present era of globalization, internet revolution, complex organizational structures, human relations movement, public relations, etc. For an individual communication skill plays a decisive and dominant role in the success of every profession. A person's high intelligence and creativity cannot guarantee success without communication skill.
- To ensure whole communication-communication of intellectual as well as emotional content of the message, the sender should choose the appropriate information, identify the audience and select the appropriate way to deliver the message.
- Effective communication skills also boost the morale of the individual and motivate him to work better. Their skills not only make him a good professional but also promise to provide him a growth oriented carrier.
- Effective communication skills enable a person to understand the mindset of others and grasp the situation easily. It helps an individual get desired results even in an unfamiliar situation.
- For a communication is essential to express oneself, build teacher-student relations and to achieve success in one's career.
- Effective communication skills make excellent teachers because they are able to transmit knowledge, skills and values at the same time they communicate their caring for the students entrusted to their care. They help motivate students to learn.

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