

Communication skills

CMM201

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Developing in the Workplace

Lecture 8



Lecture

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Section one

Interpersonal Communication at Work

Interpersonal Communication at Work

What is Interpersonal communication?

Interpersonal communication is the process of **exchange of information**, ideas and feelings between two or more people through verbal or non-verbal methods.

Is interpersonal communication important?

Did you know that interpersonal communication played an important role in human evolution?

Early humans who lived in groups, rather than alone, were more likely to survive, which meant that those with the capability to develop interpersonal bonds were more likely to pass these traits on to the next generation.

Interpersonal Communication at Work

Is interpersonal communication important?

Did you know that interpersonal skills have a measurable impact on psychological and physical health?

People with higher levels of interpersonal communication skills are better able to adapt to stress, have greater satisfaction in relationships and more friends, and have less depression and anxiety.

Importance of Interpersonal communication in workplace:

- (1) Your ability to relate with other people is central to achieving professional excellence.
- (2) Interpersonal communication helps you form professional connections with other coworkers, leaders, and clients.
- (3) Your interpersonal relationships at work provide a supportive social system that will increase your job satisfaction.

Interpersonal Communication at Work

Here's how good communication skills can help you as an employee improve productivity and enhance your career development in the workplace -

Solving problems - Good interpersonal skills are necessary as they allow people to discuss their issues and help them weigh the many pros and cons surrounding a topic. If you have good problem-solving skills, it becomes more effective as you can share your voice among people and help them feel involved.

Aligning with business goals - Poor communication between employers and employees can lead to unproductivity. When leaders and managers don't communicate clearly, team members become more disconnected and uninterested in work. Good interpersonal skills help employees receive a proper direction and goal towards which they can work.

Interpersonal Communication at Work

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Trust - Trust is one of the most critical assets in the workplace, and employees need to feel like they're trusted while also trusting others. If there's a lack of trust, it can lead to poor communication, especially among business leaders and the senior brass involved in ensuring a company's day-to-day affairs.

Company culture - When interpersonal relationships are executed the right way, it can lead to an organization thriving with the positive work culture. Employees who possess good interpersonal communication skills in the workplace can help an organizational culture become more positive and synergic. Negativity, conflicts, and confusion can lead to bad interpersonal relationships. Ultimately, it can ruin the environment at work and reduce productivity if not done the right way.

Interpersonal Communication at Work

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Employee recognition - Good interpersonal communication skills in the workplace can also drive recognition among employees. When employees have better interpersonal relationships and upper management, they will recognize the excellent work being done and provide quality feedback.

Workplace miscommunication - Managers who ensure that professionalism is maintained at the workplace are also seen as approachable. If you're a manager, make sure you always communicate how you're feeling with the team to know where they stand. It can also defuse any tension and help employees speak directly with you.

Interpersonal Communication at Work

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Personal relationships - It's vital to create meaningful connections in the office. As an employee, you spend more than half your life in the office, and your colleagues tend to be your friends outside of the office. Good interpersonal skills can help you build better teams at work and create relationships that can last for life.

Management and leadership - Fostering trust and great communication are some of the non-negotiable skills of an effective team leader. When a manager doesn't possess these interpersonal skills, they can confuse employees who begin to work less productively or lose motivation.

Development of the career - As more employers look for employees who have good communication skills, improvements in interpersonal relationships can also bring progression regarding many employees' careers.

Interpersonal Communication at Work

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Employee success - Employee success is another critical factor and is necessary for managers to help their team perform well. Leaders who can pass on crucial information and the right words of motivation will see their employees respond the same way and achieve the company's business goals much faster. These skills also get passed on to the employees who can use it as they progress as leaders.

Managing conflict - A good workplace will always have disputes from time to time as ideas and thoughts clash. What's important is that these conflicts are resolved quickly and smartly without bad blood or tension among the parties involved. Interpersonal communication is crucial for fixing these conflicts and softens situations, especially in stressful work environments.

Section two

Section two

Exploring Relationship Types at Work

Exploring Relationship Types at Work

Superior-Subordinate Relationships

In the language of the workplace, the superior (supervisor/employer) is typically the higher status person and the subordinate (employee) the lower-status person.

Communicating Information

The interpersonal communication between supervisors and subordinates is not limited to the relational layer, nor does it focus exclusively on conveying status.

After all, some content has to be communicated if any work is ever to get done.

Unfortunately, the status differences between supervisors and subordinates contribute to the creation of less-than ideal communication conditions.

Exploring Relationship Types at Work

Communication problems

Semantic information distance

Semantic information distance—a term that describes how employees and supervisors do not share the same view of some fundamental areas such as organizational issues or basic job duties.

Upward distortion

Upward distortion occurs when the messages sent up the chain of command, from subordinates to supervisors, are altered.

Messages are altered in one of four ways: gatekeeping, summarization, withholding, or general distortion.

Exploring Relationship Types at Work

Communication problems

Upward distortion

Messages are altered in one of four ways: gatekeeping, summarization, withholding, or general distortion.

Gatekeeping occurs when some, but not all, of the information is passed on to the supervisor.

Summarization occurs when the employee summarizes the message in such a way that emphasis is placed on certain aspects of the message.

Withholding occurs when information is not passed on to the supervisor.

General distortion, a close cousin to out-and-out lying, occurs when the message is changed to serve the subordinate's purposes.

Exploring Relationship Types at Work

Communication problems

Solution

As a supervisor, you must take steps to limit message alteration by doing some, if not all, of the following:

(1) Limit the number of people a message must travel through before it gets to you,

(2) go to the source of the message for clarification,

(3) keep communication channels open with subordinates and customers.

Exploring Relationship Types at Work

Communicating With Your Supervisor

To communicate effectively with your supervisor, you must

Evaluate him or her in the same way you evaluate everyone else.

Remember the power of communication; appropriate verbal and nonverbal behaviors often make or break your chances of being viewed positively on the job.

In terms of interpersonal communication in the workplace, it is important to consider the way a supervisor communicates with a subordinate.

For those seeking professional excellence, advocacy is the strategy of choice when communicating with supervisors.

Advocacy utilizes a simple persuasive technique. Specifically, you evaluate your boss's needs and preferences and then develop messages, arguments, and proposals that line up with those needs and preferences.

Exploring Relationship Types at Work

Communicating With Your Coworkers

To communicate effectively with your supervisor, you must

Although communication with your boss is important, effective interpersonal communication with your coworkers is equally important.

Coworker relationships may also be based on needs or, more accurately, the fulfillment of needs. These needs may be task related.

For example, if your computer is not working properly, you may need the expertise of the computer specialist, resulting in an interpersonal communication interaction between the two of you.

Coworkers can also fulfill the need for support on the job. Having coworkers who can help you complete tasks, provide professional advice, and laugh with you is a real plus to your professional development and stress level on the job.

Coworkers “who work in adjacent desks, cubicles, or offices are more likely to develop close relationships than people who work for the same company but on different floors or opposite ends of a building”.

Exploring Relationship Types at Work

Customer-Client Relationships

Customer service “is the interaction between employees or representatives of an organization or business and the people the organization sells to or serves”.

4 ways to build up strong client Relationship

1. Focus on Exceptional Communication

Timely, efficient communication should be a priority. Of course, communication with a single client should not consistently and unreasonably encroach on your personal time or negatively affect your productivity. However, being available demonstrates that your client's project and satisfaction are important to you.

2. Maintain a Positive Attitude

it's important to show a positive face to your clients. Exude the energy and confidence that you want your clients to feel about your work.

Exploring Relationship Types at Work

Customer-Client Relationships

4 ways to build up strong client Relationship

3. Acknowledge Your Client as an Individual

While your relationship with your client is of a professional nature, acknowledging that you see them as a person—that is, more than just a paycheck—can go a long way. The extent to which this personal connection is appropriate will vary depending on your industry, client type, and the individual client's personality.

4. Share Knowledge

While your relationship with your client is of a professional nature, acknowledging that you see them as a person—that is, more than just a paycheck—can go a long way. The extent to which this personal connection is appropriate will vary depending on your industry, client type, and the individual client's personality.

The Line between Professional and Personal

The Line between Professional and Personal

In order to develop professional excellence in the workplace, you must have a clear understanding of the line between personal and professional relationships, as well as what constitutes professional versus personal communication.

Romance in the Workplace

Having a sense of social belonging is a core motivational factor on the job. However, what happens when feelings between cohesive colleagues turn into something more?

Be forewarned that many organizations have norms and in some cases written policies that discourage or forbid romantic relationships in the workplace.

The Line between Professional and Personal

Romance in the Workplace

Why do such policies exist?

Distraction

Favoritism

A study found that of women who had been involved romantically with someone at work, 86% reported motives that were not job related, while 14% did report job-related motives. Clearly, the vast majority of those surveyed entered relationships for other reasons, but 14% with the wrong motive is more than enough to create problems in the workplace.

The Line between Professional and Personal

Sexual harassment

What is sexual harassment

Unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment

It happens when

- (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment,
- (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individuals,
- or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

The Line between Professional and Personal

Sexual harassment

What should we do if you are harassed?

Confront the harasser.

Report the behavior to a supervisor and/or your human resources department.

Keep written record of the behaviors and comments that you feel constitute harassment.

The Line between Professional and Personal

Professional etiquette

Professional etiquette means practicing the behaviors of social etiquette or good manners in a professional setting.

Introduce Yourself

When you make a call, dial into a phone conference, or are meeting new people, introduce yourself. State your name, your role and if the situation demands, your place of business.

Using Titles

Not everyone in the workplace needs to, or wants to, be addressed as Mr. or Mrs. How someone introduces himself or herself to you is how they expect to be addressed by you. As a general matter, if you are addressing someone who ranks highly in the company or a client, address him or her by the proper title.

The Line between Professional and Personal

Professional etiquette

Professional etiquette means practicing the behaviors of social etiquette or good manners in a professional setting.

Avoid Gossip

How you treat people says a lot about you. Don't make value judgments on people's importance in the workplace or speak negatively about your coworkers, even if you find yourself frustrated over a certain situation.

Professional Tone

Don't insult management or your co-workers, berate your employees or use profanity in the workplace. The office is not the proper place to casually vent your work-related grievances. Private emails can easily be forwarded to unintended parties, and private conversations may be overheard, resulting in your embarrassment and possible sanctions from your employer.

The Line between Professional and Personal

Professional etiquette

Body Language

Be mindful of body language. Keep good posture and maintain eye contact. Remember to respect personal space. Also, don't touch the person you are speaking with. Although you may not mind when someone touches your arm or shoulder when speaking, it may make others uncomfortable.

Using Speakerphone

Ask before using speakerphone. Most people will want to know if there are others, apart from yourself, on the line. If it's a one-on-one conversation, avoid using speakerphone.

Thank you