

Problems in Communication

While promoting acceptance of new ideas leading up to adoption, many abstraction, can enter in the channels. These are often referred to as NOISE, that is, some obstruction that prevents the message from being heard by or carried over clearly to the audience. Noise emerges from a wide range of sources and causes. The following are some of these:

- (1) Failure of a channel to reach the intended audience. Usually no one channel will reach the entire audience. Some examples: Meetings-all people cannot or may not attend. Radio -all people do not have access to a receiving set, or may not be tuned in if they did. Written Materials - many people cannot read and others may not.
- (2) Failure on the part of the communicator to handle channels skillfully. In a meeting, when everyone cannot hear what is said, and see what is shown, they cannot receive the message.
- (3) Failure to select channels appropriate to the objective of a communicator. If the objective were to show a certain group of people how to do something -dig a compost pit, build a sanitary latrine, cook vegetables, etc., radio, circular letters, or news papers would not do the job. The channel suitable is a method demonstration meeting.
- (4) Failure to the channels in accordance with the abilities of the audience.
- (5) Failure to avoid physical distraction. The physical distraction includes people moving in and out loud noise in or out of the group, heat, lighting, crowded conditions and many other forms of distractions.
- (6) Failure of the audience to listen or look carefully.
- (7) Failure to use enough channels in parallel. The more channels a communicator uses in parallel at about the same time, the more channels he has for the message getting through and being properly received. No single channel will ordinarily reach all people who need to receive a message.
- (8) Use of too many channels in a series. The more the channels used in a series, the less chance a communicator has of getting his message thoroughly to the intended audience.

Measures to Overcome the Problems

To overcome the above, one should take the following factors into consideration:

- 1) The specific objective of the message.
- 2) The nature of the message, the degree of directness, versus abstractness, level of difficulty, scope, timings. Etc.
- 3) The audience- size, need, interest, knowledge of the subject, etc.
- 4) Channels available that will reach the audience or parts of it.
- 5) How channels can be combined and used in parallel.
- 6) How channels that must be used in a series can be reduced to the minimum and those used made effective without fail.
- 7) Relative cost of channels in relation to anticipated effectiveness.
- 8) Time available for communicator and audience.
- 9) Extent of seeing, hearing or doing that is necessary to get the message through.

A Few Basic Tips for Effective Communication

Developing communication skills on the part of administrators, managers, and in fact, all incumbents are a prelude to a good relationship and performance; one cannot do much in want of this in one's career. Some of the basic truths of communication between or among individuals within an organization or without are:

(1) People attach meaning according to their taste and liking, necessarily the communicated messages: This needs hardly any elaboration. Unless the individual is rational and fair, he will not relish even bitter truths, for they don't suit him. A man with integrity, sincerity and devotion, with strong will and desire, can overcome this personality lacuna. .

(2) For effective communication the common frame of reference between the communicator and the receiver is a sine qua non: This is another well-established truth. This, in fact, is the core of the education system and has been utilized since time immemorial in teaching -learning contexts. In order to communicate with students, the teachers must bring themselves down to the level of knowledge, understanding and comprehension of the students. This is all the more important when one is involved in an adult teaching - learning complex such as in extension education. In order to do a better job of communication with the farmers, one has to be at the grass root level. From the village level onwards, in all hierarchies in organization, there naturally

exists a gap between the two categories of personnel (communicator and receiver) in terms of their knowledge, background and understanding, and this must be duly recognized in day-to-day communication relationships.

(3) A better communicator is one who has respects for the facts and is willing to share them - with people who can make good use of those facts. A successful communicator must have ideas and facts to extend or talk about, otherwise it will be communication without content; it will be empty talk -a waste of time. However, there are also people who have the facts but cannot part with them. Both are indeed miserable. A blending of the two is essential for better utilization of innovations and ideas for the good of the people and the society at large.

(4) A well established communication network is not a guarantee of effective communication: Organizations generally are satisfied with the structural arrangements for giving or receiving information. But such a communication network is nothing better than a building blue print; in fact, it is the cement, bricks, etc., the skilled hands of the workers, which will ultimately make the building. So, merely holding frequent conferences and meetings, or sending out so many circulars and reports cannot help the people their knowledge, attitude and willingness alone can make the communication fail or succeed.

(5) Informal communication can be a great source for maintaining the health of the administration: It is negative approach for administrators to question why someone talked with someone else the way he did. In fact, such information can be utilized by the authorities to examine the background for it and to take the necessary measures to improve relations, and to educate the incumbents or become educated by them. For the coherent and coordinated working of the departments, the higher-ups should look forward to informal communication through recreational get-togethers, picnics, social calls, tea clubs, coffee counters, etc. Much information, which can be gathered through informal sources, cannot be made available through the formal one.

(6) A good communicator is a listener too: Culturally, we are a talkative people; we would like to talk and without letting people share their ideas and views or the time to clarify their confusions. As a matter of fact, in order to do justice to the communication cycle, one must develop a habit of listening to others as much as one would like to communicate to them. Listening is a great art and one must have patience for it.