

INTERACTIVE INNOVATION THROUGH INTERPERSONAL SKILLS LIKE NEGOTIATION AND DECISION MAKING SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

Interpersonal skills are crucial at work. It is necessary to have well balanced interpersonal skills that allows to one to handle any situation gracefully. Interpersonal skills are the tools people use to communicate with other individuals in an organizational environment. Images reflect or project the immediate effect of appearance, attitude, behavior, confidence, work ethics, life style, belief system, core values etc. of a person. It is said that it takes 7 second to judge a person after interaction which imprints the first impression. Well-honed interpersonal skills enable us to be optimistic, calm, confident and charismatic. A good and effective interpersonal skill improves many aspects of our life, professionally as well as socially to lead better understanding and established good relationship. It teaches us how to negotiate with others, broadening the way to have mutual respect, trust, understanding etc. In addition to that, it also explores and analyses various options to get sound decisions. It maintains the frame work at workplace to identify, define and solve many problems. To maintain good and firm relationship with others, the mutual understanding is needed and for this, mental state of a person plays a vital role. The different mental state is explained by Eric Berner's framework to determine the different ego state of parent, adult and child. These different state of mind exemplifies to bridge them together for harmonious state of being with a noble coordination amongst them. This later helps in building up a good rapport.

Keywords: *Negotiation skill, Decision making skill, Problem solving, Eric Berner's framework, Building rapport.*

INTRODUCTION

The meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemical substances; if there is any reaction both are transformed
— Carl Jun

The role of interpersonal communication in an organization can never be ignored. In fact, organizations with effective and efficient interpersonal communication among their employees have an edge over the other organizations because such a communication paves way for developing strong relationships within and outside the organization. Communication is as much a matter of human relationships as it is about transmitting messages. This fact is most appropriate to business environment because an organization earns its reputation not because of its buildings or other material possessions but because of its people. The organizational workforce is continuously facing challenges from pressure of workload working with groups, teams, stakeholders and changing workplace environment. Individuals with excellent interpersonal skills rise to the top in their personal effectiveness and organizational growth. Bonding among the various levels of employees needs to be strong and it is possible if the interpersonal communication in the organization is effective.

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Interpersonal communication generally refers to spoken communication between two or more individuals on a personal, face-to-face level to send and receive information. It can also stand for written and nonverbal forms of communication that involves two or more people. It is called dyadic (dyad=two) communication if there are two participants and small group communication if there are few more participants. Conversations, meetings, project discussions, sales visits, interviews, etc., are some forms which the interpersonal communication assumes in an organization.

Communication can be classified into three major categories: intrapersonal, interpersonal and mass. While intrapersonal communication refers to the communication within a person, interpersonal communication involves at least two persons. Though mass communication also is interpersonal in nature, it is between one on one side and many on the other side and hence interaction will be nil or meager. Mass communication needs a print, electronic or digital channel to communicate. As far as interpersonal communication is concerned, face-to-face is the best channel and the best form is oral. Meetings, group discussions, interviews, sales visits, etc., are forms of organizational interpersonal communication. However, the pervasive impact of technology has opened up several other forms such as emails, cell phones, discussion forums, video conferencing, etc., for interpersonal communication.

Interpersonal communication competence includes a set of skills, knowledge about communication and self-evaluation. Interpersonal Skills are necessary for the following functions of any firm or institution;

- to provide good customer service.
- to resolve conflicts and competitions between two (or more) workers.
- to work satisfactorily in team environments.

- to adapt well to changes in the workplace.
- to convey professionalism.
- to make good leaders.

It is very important for companies, because employees with good interpersonal skills work as team and generate a good working environment and a better output.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Both verbal (using words) and nonverbal skills are important for successful interpersonal communication. For instance, when the managers wish to influence their subordinates, they need to use persuasive and motivating words / phrases such as amazing, impressive, superb, can do , sure, potential, empower, interesting!, Wow!, etc. Similarly, when they wish to express their concern, they can use words / phrases such as, I understand, I feel bad, sorry, can't believe, let me understand, etc.

NEGOTIATION SKILLS

The word negotiation is originated from the Latin expression “Negotiates” which stands for to carry in business. So this is the skill which deals with setting the differences or an agreement between different parties with their interest and preferences. It is identified with various behaviors like; common skills, psychology, sociology, assertiveness and conflict management. Without negotiation, such conflicts may lead to argument and resentment resulting dissatisfaction. This point of negotiation skill tries to reach an agreement without constructing barriers to communication.

STAGES OF NEGOTIATION

In order to achieve a desirable outcome, a good and structured approach of negotiation is needed. It reaches the agreement to the best/required meets at the both side of the party/people. It deals with a true professionalism and builds up good future deal/relationships not only in professional but in personal life too. It adds certain parameters like; ability to have a good preparation, listen to the people, questioning and answering or satisfied discussions and to set the priority to get a fixed conclusion.

Therefore, the process of negotiation includes the following stages:

Preparation:

It is associated with creativity, spontaneity, and fun; rebellious child state is associated with hostility, defiance and argument and adapted child state tends to involve displays of compliance but can also lead to aware instrumental approach to get a reward.

Debate/ Discussion:

During this stage, individuals or members of each side include questioning, listening and clarifying. Both the parties have free will to present the thought and clear the doubts.

Propose:

This is the stage in which the opponent party put forth the terms and conditions or agreement.

Bargaining:

In this suggestion of all alternative strategies and compromises need to be considered at this point. Comprises are after positive and achieve higher benefits to the consent.

Final conclusion:

After bargaining, both the parties come to a final conclusive point devoid of any argument. This is the time of action has to be implemented to carry through the decision.

BATNA:

This is the acronym of the best alternative to negotiated agreement. It defines the agreement when to accept and when to reject. Therefore, when a proposal is better than batna - accept it. But adversely when a proposal is worse than batna – reject it. So, it is a measuring scale for proposal to its acceptance or rejection.

DECISION MAKING SKILLS

“Nothing is more difficult and therefore more precious, than to be able to decide.”

Napoleon Bonaparte

It can be regarded as the judgmental process in which a person must see the balance of positive and negative of each option along with the consideration of all possible alternatives. In order to make it more accountable, there are 3 C's to support the skill of decision making : Challenge (what are you facing) ; Choice (what you choose for you); Consequences (what the result you accomplish may be in positive/negative form)

Decision-making skills are used to solve problems by selecting one course of action from several possible alternatives. Almost any decision involves some conflicts so here, is the part of some conflict management too. Some of the tips can be adopted to assist in taking decision, they are:

- Identify the purpose: This indicates what the exact solution of problem is and should be needed to solve.
- Gather information: It tells the factors involved in creating problems.
- Identify the principle to judge the alternatives Clarifies the standard and judgment criteria to target the solution. This includes the possible solutions. It also determines the pros and cons of each possible alternative.
- Execution of plan into action: Under this point, the possible alternatives are transformed into specific plan of action.
- Evaluation of action plan: This involves the important step for further development of judgment with its targeting success.

Therefore, decision comes at every step of life whether it is personal or professional. Somewhere it is related to a critical thinking that how far we involve ourselves to have a good point of judgment. A good judgment skill makes a person smarter that how the decision is been taken effectively in less time. So, here time consumption and the quality of decision matters a lot to judge a holistic personality.

ERIC BERNE'S FRAMEWORK

The next idea we will introduce is a framework for assessing how relationships are established and evolve, based on the state of the mind of those involved in it. It is rooted in the work of psychologist, Eric Berne, from an idea proposed in the mid 1960's. Berne (1960) argued that everyone goes through shifting states of mind or 'ego states' as he called them based on the circumstances they find themselves in and the responses they have developed one time to these circumstances. The different state as shown in a framework is; parents, adults and child. If we have a good co-ordination amongst or between two of them, these would create good relationship amongst people to establish effective interpersonal skills. There are 3 basic ego states: Parent, Adult and Child;

Parent state:

As the name suggests, it is associated with the typical behavior of a parent towards their children. This could be authoritarian prescribing or admonishing as in "Don't do that", "Do it this way" or "That's wrong" described as a critical parent state. Alternatively, it could be sympathetic protective or cossetting which might be described as a nurturing parent state.

Adult state:

Associated with calm rational, objective behavior where the individual focuses on gaining better factual understanding of a situation. Someone in this state of mind told to ask the questions and check their understanding with. They could come across s thoughtful, ensuring and balanced.

Child state:

Associated with a variety of behavior which might be thought to be childlike. This time there are three possible types of child state: Force child state, which is associated with creativity, spontaneity and fun. Rebellious child associated with hostility, defiance and argument and adapted child state tends to involve display of compliance but can also lead to more instrumental approach to getting a reward.

It may be easy to jump the conclusion that some of these states of mind are right and others are wrong, but this was not Berne's intension. The main messages of his work are:

At any given time each of us is in one or other of the states of mind outlined. Sometimes the shift from one state to another can be very rapid.

One person will tend to respond to another's state of mind.

For example: If a manager approaches a member of staff in a critical parent mode, the staff member will tend to adopt a child state of mind, becoming perhaps defensive, dependent or argumentative.

Awareness of both our state of mind and the other person's can help to achieve more effective communication and to develop more positive relationships.

BUILDING RAPPOR

Rappor is a state of harmonious understanding with another individual or group that enables greater, easier and more effective communication. In other words rappor is getting on well with another person or group of people by having things in common. Sometimes rappor happens naturally, you 'hit it off or get on well' with somebody else without having to try, this is often how friendships and new relations are built. However, rappor can also be built and developed by finding common ground, developing a bond and being empathetic.

Rapport is important in both our professional and personal lives; employers are more likely to employ somebody, who they will get on well with their current staff. Personal relationships are easier to make and develop when there is a closer connection and understanding between the parties involved-i.e. there is greater rapport. It is important that appropriate body language is used; we read and instantly believe what body language tells us, whereas we may take more persuading with vocal communication. If there is a mismatch between what we are saying verbally and what our body language is saying then the person we are communicating with will believe the body language. Building rapport, therefore begins with displaying appropriate body language- being welcoming, relaxed and open. As well as paying attention to and matching body language with the person we are communicating with, it helps if we can also match their words. Reflecting back and clarifying what has been said are useful tactics for repeating what has been communicated by the other person. Not only will it confirm that you are listening but also give you opportunity to use the words and phrases of the other person, further emphasizing similarity and common ground. The way we use our voice is also important in developing rapport. When we are nervous or tense we tend to talk more quickly, this in turn can make you sound more tense and stressed. We can vary our voices. Pitch, volume and pace in ways to make what we are saying more interesting but also to come across as more relaxed, open and friendly. Try lowering your tone, talk more slowly; this will help you develop rapport more easily.

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