

Effective Business Communication Competence

1. Introduction

Organizational communication competence is the judgement of successful communication where goals are met using messages that are perceived as appropriate and effective within the organizational context,' writes M. Condruz in his article on **Business Communication Competence**. Business communicative competence requires good knowledge of grammar, syntax, morphology, phonology and the other things of the like nature. Besides, communicative competence refers to social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately.

2. Seven C's of Communication

For effective business communication, a communicator requires to be competent in seven C's of communication. Bergin gives these 7 C's of communication as listed below:

1. **Completeness:** Every communication must be completed as incomplete messages create misunderstanding.
2. **Conciseness:** Relevant information should be conveyed briefly that saves time and energy of the sender as well as of the receiver.
3. **Clarity:** Message should be presented or communicated in familiar words so that the listeners will come out with the exact and correct meaning of them.
4. **Correctness:** Correct facts should be transmitted in correct language.
5. **Concreteness:** Message should be definite and properly communicated.
6. **Consideration:** All communication in business organizations should be listener oriented. The communicator has to take into consideration the needs, emotions and the comprehensive level of the receiver.
7. **Courtesy:** Always establish good relationship with the audience.

3. Importance of Effective Communication in Business

Today we talk of globalization when the entire world has come closer. Various countries have developed business relations with one another. Moreover, even within an organization itself, people have to talk to their fellow employees, juniors and seniors. They have to talk to their clients and suppliers who belong to different places. Hence they seek the help of different means of communication. Oral communication does not suffice the purpose. So oral as well as written communication has become indispensable.

Moreover, working in teams in an organization has become the need of the hour. While working in a team, all members have to communicate effectively so that they can work efficiently, solve problems quickly, make decisions effectively and achieve their target. In brief, effective business competence is indispensable to the people working in business organizations.

4. Types of Business Communication Competence

Effective communication skills are fundamental to success in many aspects of life. As communication is a two-way process, it involves two parties—sender and receiver. Since communication requires interpersonal skill, it can be mainly of two types :

1. Verbal
2. Non verbal

4.1 Verbal Communication

People use language to communicate their idea and messages in a language comprehensible to the other party. Verbal communication can be possible through **spoken words** or **written words**.

4.1.1 Oral Communication

Oral communication is supposed to be more popular medium of communication than the written one since speech precedes writing. In the course of development, human beings first learnt to speak then to read and write. Conversation or communicating in speech has become a tool of social interaction. In social, academic and professional situations, people communicate through spoken words. The study of the human behaviour shows that 70 per cent of our waking life is spent in communicating. Out of the total time spent in communicating, normally, 45 per cent relates to listening, 30 per cent to speaking, 16 per cent to reading, and 9 per cent to writing (P.D. Chaturvedi and Mukesh Chaturvedi). Thus, 75 per cent of our time is spent in listening and speaking. Hence each professional in the business world must pay special attention to inculcating¹ effective conversational skills for maintaining good relationships.

Thus, in brief, oral communication can be defined as verbal communication which involves the oral interchange of verbal messages between sender and receiver.

4.1.1.1 Advantages of Oral Communication

Choudhury et al sum up the reasons of our preferring oral communication to written communication in the following points:

1. **Spontaneous:** Oral communication is the most popular and convenient method of transferring the message immediately.
2. **Greater speed:** Oral communication has a greater speed because it is decoded as soon as the encoding takes place.
3. **Instantaneousness:** Any feedback or clarification is possible at the time of communication because the sender and the receiver both are present at the time of communication. Thus, in oral communication immediate feedback and clarification is possible.
4. **Persuasiveness:** Oral communication along with non verbal medium of communication like body language, paralanguage, becomes highly persuasive².

Midway correction possible: There is possibility of midway correction because the sender can read the responses of his audience.

Social function: It is evident that in business organizations, employees develop trust, companionship and team spirit by easy and frequent oral exchanges with one another.

Economical: As compared to other modes of communication, face-to-face oral communication is economical both in terms of time and money.

Informal: It is less formal and thus provides an opportunity to the sender to express himself freely.

4.1.1.2 Forms of Oral Communication

Oral communication may take a variety of forms. People may talk face-to-face or over the telephone. Shirley Taylor in her book **Communication for Business: A Practical Approach** talks about various forms of oral communication. She says that it can be:

1. a private discussion
2. a conversation over lunch
3. a gossip in the lift
4. a telephonic conversation
5. a chance meeting in the corridor
6. an informal gathering of staff
7. instructing subordinates
8. dealing with clients
9. formal meetings
10. interviews
11. training sessions
12. giving a presentation
13. conferences/seminars

Broadly speaking oral communication may take place:

1. face-to-face
2. through mechanical devices

4.1.2 Written Communication

When the views are expressed in written form, it is known as written communication. Writing is a way of communicating a message for a definite purpose. Like speech, writing is a reproductive skill. Writing reveals one's ability to think clearly and use language efficiently. Writing effectively is a skill which can be learnt with great efforts.

4.1.2.1 Importance of Writing Skills

Writing skills are essential for success in life. Not only a lawman but also a technocrat / businessman requires effective writing skills. Oral communication, no doubt, is a popular means of communicating the verbal message but this type of communication requires the availability of the sender and the receiver at the time of conveying the message whereas written communication imposes no such restriction. Nevertheless, oral communication does not always satisfy the purpose of the listener or of the speaker. The role of written communication can be summed up in the following points:

1. Written mode of communication is more effective and time saving method of communication.
2. Written documents can be preserved for future reference.
3. Writing is not merely meant to convey information from one person to another rather it is a storage mechanism for decisions in day-to-day life or in business world.

4.2 Non Verbal Communication

While defining non verbal communication, Raymond V. and John D. write, "By non verbal communication, we mean all communication that involves neither written nor spoken words but occurs without the use of words". Melvin, Patricia and Timothy define it as "the deliberate or unintentional use of objects, actions, sounds, time and space so as to arouse meaning in others". Thus, by nonverbal communication we mean all communication that involves neither written nor spoken words. It occurs without the use of words. It is the transmission of messages by non-linguistic means.

It is true that verbal and nonverbal systems work together. While speaking words and sentences, people modify their meanings with the use of host of non verbal cues. For a full understanding of the message, we should know what has been communicated through words and without them.

Difference between verbal and non verbal communication

Verbal communication	Non verbal communication
1. Verbal communication depends on written and oral forms of language.	Non verbal communication depends on non verbal cues like facial expressions, eye-contact, body language and so on.
2. Formal training can impart competence in the use of verbal communication.	It is less structured. There is no formal training to gain excellence; the use of non verbal means of communication.
3. Words are used with a definite connotation.	It is difficult to say what non verbal symbols mean. For example, smile on your face may be interpreted differently by different people.
4. The words of a speaker may not openly convey his actual meaning and feelings.	True feelings and intentions of the speaker can be read and understood by one armed with a knowledge of what non verbal signs really mean.
5. Sometimes words alone fail to convey message effectively.	Nonword cues support and supplement the message being conveyed in words. They can reinforce the meanings we intent in our verbal messages.

5. Significance of Non verbal Communication in Organizations

Non verbal communication generally reveal the feelings and emotions of the speaker, the professionals also recognize its significance/relevance in business organizations. Some common uses of non verbal communication are listed below:

6. Types

Nonverbal signals
Below are mentioned

- Body Language
- Proxemics
- Chronemics

[For details]

7. There as list

7.1 Linguistics

refers to the knowledge of the sounds and the phonology rules that govern meaning is con

1. Non verbal communication serves to **frame our verbalization**. As it is a silent means of communication, it is used when it is difficult to use speech. Nonword cues speak louder than words. One of the most common forms of non verbal communication is the use of gestures to complement what we are saying. We frame our verbal message with actions and expressions that convey meanings which reinforce and enrich our verbal messages.
2. Non verbal signals can be used by the leaders of group discussions and members of team presentations to **regulate the flow of verbal interaction**. For example, looking away from a person talking to a group and focusing on another individual tells the speaker, "OK, I listened to you, but now it is the next person's turn". Or nodding of head tells the speaker, "Sure, I know you want to say something, but wait a minute".
3. Knowledge of non verbal cues helps the managers or supervisors to know the attitudes and feelings of the employees working under their supervision.
4. Speaking as a mode of communication is often more effective than writing, it is because speaking includes non verbal cues that emphasize the meanings and speech becomes more effective.
5. Verbal mode of communication requires a lot of time whereas non verbal mode of communication economises time, energy and money also.
6. Non verbal communication helps people to convey message of persuasion. One's smiling, patting or touching lovingly, shaking hands, waving hands in appreciation and the like gestures, postures and expressions help the leaders to win people's heart and send message of power and persuasion. It is how to interpret nonverbal communication.

6. Types of Non verbal Communication

Nonverbal signals are sent through various ways.

Below are mentioned the types under which the nonverbal communication is classified :

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Body Language/Kinesics | 2. Oculistics/Eye Contact |
| 3. Proxemics/Space Language | 4. Paralinguistics/Vocalics |
| 5. Chronemics | |

[For details consult chapter 12]

7. There are some other areas of business communication competence as listed below

7.1 Linguistic competence

It refers to the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. "The grammar component includes the knowledge of the sounds and their pronunciation (i.e., phonetics), the rules that govern sound interactions and patterns (i.e. phonology), the formation of words by means of e.g. inflection and derivation (i.e. morphology), the rules that govern the combination of words and phrases to structure sentence (i.e. syntax), and the way that meaning is conveyed through language (i.e. semantics)."

7.2 Sociolinguistic competence

It includes the knowledge of sociocultural rules of use i.e. knowing how to use and respond to language appropriately. It indirectly means that the communicator has to know the codes of language of the other culture.

7.3 Discourse competence

Discourse competence deals with organizing words, phrases and sentences in order to create conversations. The communicator has to learn how to produce and comprehend oral or written messages. He has to follow the language structures in order to create conversations.

7.4 Strategic competence

“It is the ability to recognize and repair communication breakdowns before, during, or after they occur.” For example, the speaker may not know the meaning of a word in the target language. In such a situation, he has to ask the meaning of that word of the target language. Likewise, some external factor may hinder the free flow of his communication such as background noise or some other factor may hinder communication. The speaker in such condition should be able to know how to restore communication.

