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PRODUCING EMPLOYABLE TEACHERS: PROSPECTS, CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES



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Communication Skills: The Base for Employment

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Introduction

Communication leads to community, that is, to understanding, intimacy and mutual valuing - *Rollo May*.

Communication skills are ranked the FIRST among a job candidate's "must have" skills and qualities, according to a 2010 survey conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers. All employees need good communication skills in order to provide quality products or services, satisfy customer needs, and help make profits. Exchange of information, thoughts, and ideas among supervisors, co-workers, and customers is important for achieving company and personal objectives. Improving communication skills is easy with a little know-how and practice.

Why is Communication Important in Employment?

As individuals mature and become working adults, communication competence continues to be essential. Communication skills are required in most occupations. Employers identify communication as one of the basic competencies every graduate should have, asserting that the ability to communicate is valuable for obtaining employment and maintaining successful job performance. The communication skills essential in the workplace include basic oral and writing skills, and the ability to communicate in work groups and teams with persons of diverse background, and when engaged in problem solving and Communication skills

are important to everyone - they are how we give and receive information and convey our ideas and opinions with those around us.

Skills Needed for Effective Communication

Conciseness of Answers: Nothing turns an interviewer off more than a meandering, overlong answer to an interview question. Long answers show that a candidate is nervous and may have missed the point of the question, possibly trying to substitute volume for substance. Such an answer is discourteous, wasting the interviewer's valuable time with stories that don't address the issue being discussed. A concise, structured response to a question indicates organized thinking and demonstrates that you have command of your subject matter and know how to communicate it.

Logical Flow of Information: Logic is the means by which we make reasoned arguments to support our views-connecting ideas, providing evidence and drawing conclusions for a persuasive message. When you speak logically, people can follow your reasoning and see why you have arrived at your views.

Eye Contact: It's a fundamental fact of interpersonal communication that making eye contact increases the sense of rapport, engagement and mutual trust. Looking at the person to whom you are speaking communicates that you respect him or her and are giving your undivided attention.

Good eye contact does not have to be constant, as no one wants to feel stared at. But, it should be interrupted only occasionally and briefly. If you find making eye contact difficult, be sure to practice this skill.

Clarity of Speech: Few things ruin a good first impression as quickly as careless, mumbled or slurred speech. These make people think you don't care if anyone hears or understands what you are saying, and a listener will soon stop trying. Sometimes unclear speech indicates shyness or lack of self-confidence.

What are the benefits of effective communication?

It is important to develop a variety of skills for both communicating TO others and learning how to interpret the information received FROM others.. To an employer, good communication skills are essential. In fact, employees with good communication skills rank at the top of the list in the race of potential employees. The following are the benefits tasted by the employees with an effective communication skill.

1. *Engaged Employees:* If people are communicated to regularly and in an effective manner they are much more engaged with the company/team and have a more positive attitude towards their work and their customer.
2. *Ensures Consistency:* If everyone understands what the company/team is trying to achieve and their role within it, you will get a much more consistent approach and less tendency for people to come up with their interpretation of what they think something means.
3. *Promotes to Way Feedback:* Regular and effective communications invite people to engage in discussion and provide two way

feedbacks between management and employees and departments and colleagues. This in turn promotes a culture of sharing ideas and knowledge.

4. *Ensure Compliance with Regulatory Bodies:* Effective communication and training information ensures that our employees are compliant with all regulatory requirements and aware of all the company guidelines/policies and/or where to find them.

5. *Ensure Common Understanding of Strategy and Goals:* Employees understand how their work fits into the bigger picture and what the team/company as a whole is trying to achieve.

6. *Promotes a Positive Attitude Towards Change:* Employees who communicate effectively have the ability to change the response much more positively to it. Communication can also identify champions within the company/team willing to help embed change.

Challenges Faced In Effective Communication

1. Emotional barriers that hinders the expression of their emotions.
2. Lack of attention, interest, distractions, or irrelevance to the receiver.
3. Differences in perception and viewpoint.
4. The use of jargon. Over-complicated, unfamiliar and/or technical terms.
5. Physical disabilities such as hearing problems or speech difficulties.
6. Physical barriers to non-verbal communication. Not being able to see the non-verbal cues, gestures, posture and general body language can make communication less effective. Language differences and the difficulty in understanding unfamiliar accents.

Disadvantages of Lack of Effective Communication

Poor communication has several adverse effects, which can lead to confusion in the workplace and lost business. Failure to communicate will lead to a negative shift in any or all of the above benefits. This could have a serious detrimental effect not only on your company's operational efficiency, but also customer satisfaction and ultimately your profits and market share.

If an employer has poor communication skills, chances are that the employee can misunderstand his expected duties. Likewise, if employees lack good communication, they are less likely to ask for needed clarification or assistance. Poor communication leads to misunderstandings, which often leads to mistakes being made on the job.

Conclusion

Communication is not only important for normal livelihood but also for employment. In fact the chief ability for employment is effective communication. As in any relationship, communication is a key to a strong business relationship. This can be the relationship between business and customer, or, equally as important as the internal relationships among different employees within the company. So, effective communication is the base for employment.

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