

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

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Introduction

This course provides an overview of the principles and practices of organizational communication. Using familiar, real-world examples to help you connect theory to practice, the themes of systems, culture, power, and how to develop various communication skills for the workplace will be explored. Highlights of the class include: working on conflict management and leadership skills, dealing with crisis communication, understanding the nature of power in organizations, establishing confirming communication climates, enhancing creativity, and managing meetings. By developing an awareness of your own communication style and adapting that style to a variety of interpersonal communication settings in the workplace, it is the goal of this class for your organizational communication skills to improve.

Chapter 1: Introducing Organizational Communication



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Effective communication is a building block of successful organizations. In other words, communication acts as organizational blood.

All managers and employees need to be aware of how people behave in order to provide the best working environment. Organizational behavior is about how people may be motivated to work together in more effective ways. The interaction required to direct a group toward a set of common goals is called organizational communication.

In each of these interactions, we are occasionally satisfied but sometimes frustrated by incompetence, insensitivity, lack of coordination, and red tape, all of which result from ineffective organizational communication. A deeper understanding of

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communication permits us to better comprehend the factors that contribute to a successful organization.

It is difficult to come across a job advertisement which does not mention eligibility criteria such as “communicativeness” or “communication skills.” Concepts such as “organizational communication,” “corporate communication” or “business communication” long ago became key terms for management, entrepreneurship and human resources.

What is meant by “organizational communication”? What are its major functions and types? What are the most important communication skills in the workplace? What are the most common barriers and obstacles to contemporary organizational communication? The answers to these and other questions throughout this course will give you a better understanding of the phenomenon and process of organizational communication.

The importance of communication in an organization can be summarized as follows:

1. Communication **promotes motivation** by informing and clarifying the employees about the task to be done, the manner they are performing the task, and how to improve their performance if it is not up to the mark.
2. Communication is a **source of information** to the organizational members for decision-making process as it helps identifying and assessing alternative course of actions.
3. Communication also plays a crucial role in **altering individual's attitudes**, i.e., a well informed individual will have better attitude than a less-informed individual. Organizational magazines, journals, meetings and various other forms of oral and written communication help in molding employee's attitudes.
4. Communication also **helps in socializing**. One cannot survive without communication.
5. Communication also assists in **controlling process**. It helps controlling organizational member's behavior in various ways. There are various levels of hierarchy and certain principles and guidelines that employees must follow in an organization. They must comply with organizational

policies, perform their job role efficiently and communicate any work problem and grievance to their superiors. Thus, communication helps in controlling function of management.

An effective and efficient communication system requires managerial proficiency in delivering and receiving messages. A manager must discover various barriers to communication, analyze the reasons for their occurrence and take preventive steps to avoid those barriers. Thus, the primary responsibility of a manager is to develop and maintain an effective communication system in the organization.

So, organizational communication refers to the forms and channels of communication among members of organizations such as corporations, nonprofits or small businesses. Studies have found a strong relationship between the levels of communication in an organization and job performance and satisfaction. Organizational communication can be formal or informal, flow in various directions and make use of various media.

Directions of Communication

Organizational communication takes place upward, downward and horizontally. Downward communication flows from the managerial and executive levels to the staff through formal channels such as policy manuals, rules and regulations and organizational charts. Upward communication is initiated by staff and directed at executives; it frequently takes the form of a complaint or a request. Horizontal communication occurs when colleagues meet to discuss issues of common interest, resolve problems and share information.

Leading

In the book “Organizational Communication: Challenges of Change, Diversity, and Continuity,” William Neher (1997) identifies the five primary functions of business communication as leading, rationalizing, problem-solving, conflict management and compliance gaining. The function of leading is important to enable management to issue instructions in a clear, specific manner so that workers are able to follow them without difficulty. This is generally downward communication.

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Rationalizing



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This function enables management to explain the reasons for instructions in a way that workers can understand. In this context, it is downward communication; however, rationalizing is also important for enabling workers to bring issues to the attention of management, using upward communication to do so. If a worker identifies a motivation problem, for example, he may communicate this upward formally to management and use rationalization to highlight the potential impact of the problem on profitability.

Problem-Solving



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Most companies hold regular meetings to discuss issues such as production cycles, delivery times, price margins and other areas where unusual situations could arise that may affect the performance of a business. In these meetings, organizational communication plays an important role in tabling problems, brainstorming potential responses and finalizing solutions. In this way, a company obtains maximum benefit from the abilities of those involved in the communication, which flows horizontally and often informally.

Conflict Management



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Conflict in the workplace can lead to the loss of talented employees, the lodging of grievances and possibly lawsuits. Managing conflict by bringing all parties together to discuss their differences in a safe, moderated environment is an important function of organizational communications. This type of communication usually involves all

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three directions of communication, and, although discussions may be informal, the final decisions are usually communicated formally.

Gaining Compliance



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Gaining the compliance of employees is necessary for them to adhere fully to instructions. To do this, management needs to listen to feedback from the staff and to take account of their ideas and comments. Feedback or two-way communication can be both upward and downward or horizontal and may be formal or informal, but it is important for a company to enable open communication channels to motivate and achieve the best performance from employees.

TED Talk: Dan Ariely: What makes us feel good about our work?



A TED element has been excluded from this version of the text.
You can view it online here: <https://granite.pressbooks.pub/organizationalcommunication/?p=25>

This course will cover these areas and more as we move through each module. Looking forward to it!

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Questions of morality and ethics can be found at all levels of society. Ethical behavior is equally important in the workplace as it is in our personal lives. Everywhere business is conducted, ethics matters.

- Ethics
- Values
- Morals
- Integrity
- Character
- Laws

Ethics



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Ethics refers to a set of rules that describes acceptable conduct in society. Ethics serve as a guide to moral daily living and helps us judge whether our behavior can be justified.

Ethics refers to society's sense of the right way of living our daily lives. It does this by establishing rules, principles, and values on which we can base our conduct. The concepts most directly associated with ethics are truth, honesty, fairness, and equity.

While ethics is a societal concern, it is of critical importance to the professions that serve society. Because professionals such as physicians, attorneys, engineers, and property and facility managers provide services that affect our welfare, they develop professional codes of ethics that establish professional standards for behavior.

Examples of the types of standards found in professional codes of ethics include:

- An attorney or physician maintaining client-patient confidentiality
- An accountant not using client information for personal gain

GSC Library Article:

Treviño, L. K., Weaver, G. R., & Brown, M. E. (2008). It's lovely at the top: Hierarchical levels, identities, and perceptions of organizational ethics. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 18(2), 233-252.

<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=31883734&site=eds-live>

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Values



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Values are defined as the acts, customs, and institutions that a group of people regard in a favorable way. Statements of value typically contain words of approval, disapproval, and obligation. Some of these words might be good, bad, should, and should not. However, value judgments do not have to contain specific value words. “That is a lie” does not contain a particular word of disapproval, but the implication that a lie is wrong is understood.

Values are what really matter to us most—what we care about. For instance, family devotion, respect for the environment, and working hard for a day’s pay are three values that can evoke a response in many people.

Morals*CCO Public Domain*

Morals are a set of rules or mode of conduct on which society is based. Certain moral elements are universal, such as the laws forbidding homicide and the basic duties of doing good and furthering the well-being of others. With morals serving as the underpinning of society, there are four points we should remember, says philosopher Robert C. Solomon.

- *Moral rules are important:* In general, moral rules are rules that help society function in a civilized way.
- *Morality consists of universal rules:* They apply to everyone, everywhere, and are recognized by everyone as being necessary.
- *Morals are objective:* They do not consider personal preferences. Right is right and wrong is wrong.
- *Morality affects other people:* Morality involves considering the well-being of others as reflected by the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

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Integrity



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To have integrity is to be honest and sincere. Integrity is defined as adhering to a moral code in daily decision making. When people and businesses possess integrity, it means they can be trusted. On the other hand, companies that lack this quality and mislead customers with inferior products or false advertising will suffer the consequences.

Character



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Ethics is not just how we think and act. It is also about character. Character drives what we do when no one is looking. Each person has the ability to build, change, or even destroy his or her own character. We can build our character through the way we live—by thinking good thoughts and performing good acts. Similarly, bad thoughts and behavior can destroy our character.

A person with character has high morals and will act morally in all situations by choice, not force. A person with character will honor his or her commitments. Character pertains to organizations, as well. A company with high character is worthy of trust and respect, acts honestly, and stands by its promises.

Laws



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The law is a series of rules and regulations designed to express the needs of the people. Laws protect people from the most blatant and despicable affront to morality, such as murder, rape, and theft.

Laws frequently provide us with a sense of right and wrong and guide our behavior, but not always. While murder is against the law, the law does not always stop someone from killing another out of hatred, anger, or in defense of a personal philosophy.

Laws are instituted as notions of justice and tend to be specific, yet diverse within different societies. Laws have always had a strong connection to morality, ethics, and values. But, not all laws are ethical.

Laws have legalized slavery, segregation, sexism, and apartheid. Although these laws might have reflected society's values at the time they were enacted, they could not nor will they ever justify immoral behavior. Likewise in business, it is not unlawful to lie to a coworker or on a job application, but both are ethically wrong.

These six concepts—ethics, values, morals, integrity, character, and laws—form the foundation of trust upon which ethical business practice is built.

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Professional Codes of Ethics

Many professions and corporations have developed codes of ethics to address their unique business situations. In fact, 90 percent of Fortune 500 companies and nearly half of all corporations have codes of ethics that can be applied to all employees. By developing a code of ethics, an organization makes it clear that employees and members cannot claim ignorance as a defense for unethical conduct.

Benefits of a Corporate Code of Ethics

Codes of ethics help employees strike a balance between the ends and the means used to obtain them. This balance may be one of the most challenging aspects of being an ethical organization.

The Federal Sentencing Guidelines for Organizations provide an additional incentive for having corporate codes of ethics and ethics training. Companies that have made a strong effort to prevent unethical and illegal behavior are likely to receive less severe punishment should an employee be found guilty of breaking the law. The unethical conduct of just a few employees can affect an entire corporation.

Benefits of a Professional Code of Ethics

A professional code of ethics sets a standard for which each member of the profession can be expected to meet. It is a promise to act in a manner that protects the public's well-being. A professional code of ethics informs the public what to expect of one's doctor, lawyer, accountant, or property manager. As long as professionals adhere to these standards, the public is willing to have their professional associations create and enforce their ethical codes.

In cases where these codes are repeatedly and grossly violated, the public's likely response is to demand protective legislation. The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 was enacted in response to such violations and the ensuing public outcry. Most professionals would prefer to police themselves, rather than have an externally imposed set of regulations. That is a major reason why they create codes of ethics in the first place.

Successful Implementation of a Code of Ethics

Within a corporation, top-down support is critical. If senior management does not act ethically and support others who do, an organization's ethical code will have little meaning. It is critical for managers and executives to:

- act consistently with the company's ethical standards
- apply those standards in dealing with employees

Acknowledging and rewarding those whose behaviors are consistent with a company's code of ethics proclaims to all that ethical behavior is truly valued. On the other hand, promoting and providing bonuses to employees whose successes are due in part to unethical behavior sends an unwanted message.

Remaining ethical is not a static issue. It requires review and evaluation. Companies need to periodically review their priorities and make necessary adjustments. Otherwise, their standards and training become outdated.

Ethics are the principles and values an individual uses to govern his activities and decisions. In an organization, a code of ethics is a set of principles that guide the organization in its programs, policies and decisions for the business. The ethical philosophy an organization uses to conduct business can affect the reputation, productivity and bottom line of the business.

Creating ethical cultures in business: Brooke Deterline at TEDxPresidio



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://granite.pressbooks.pub/organizationalcommunication/?p=25>

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Chapter 2: The Critical Approach



The critical approach to studying and understanding organizational communication are nested in the idea that power is not equally distributed. This imbalance of power creates a hierarchy that can be seen in both society as a whole and in the workplace. The overarching goal of the critical approach is to uncover the reasons for the imbalanced power and bring those causes to the attention of the oppressed so that they can push for power equalization in their organization.

As someone who will be entering the job market in the near future,

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it is important to understand the critical approach to organizational communication. The traditional power hierarchy is still very common in the workplace. If you are capable of critically analyzing the communication in your workplace you may be able to improve the overall effectiveness of the organization's communication. Before you are ready to employ the critical approach, you must first have a grasp of the concepts that it consists of.

There are five key concepts to take into consideration when utilizing the critical approach. They consist of: power, ideology, hegemony, emancipation, and resistance. By breaking them down and understanding each of them, you can have a much better idea of how to employ the critical approach to organizational communication. It is important to understand all five of the concepts and how they work together because they often form somewhat of a step by step process and build off of one another.

The Pervasiveness of Power

Power is arguably the most important of the concepts as it is what drives the critical approach. Whoever is in the position of power can drive and control the organization. Corporate structure and relationships play a large role in creating positions of power. This is easily seen in the classic corporate hierarchy where everyone reports to someone else all the way up to the CEO who is in control of the organization. With these hierarchies the CEO is the person behind all of the decisions and he or she has the final say on everything in the organization. The end goal is to be the person with the power which can lead to cutthroat promotion hunting and great stress in the workplace.

Ideology

Ideology are the things that we take for granted on a daily basis and give very little thought to, even though they shape who we are and how we act. Ideology are what we use to determine good from bad, right from wrong, normal from strange and so on. There is common ideology that hierarchy is not only normal, but necessary for an organization to function. This gives rise to the supervisor-subordinate relationship that can be found in almost every organization. These relationships where someone has power over the

other are accepted because it is been instilled in them as an ideology.

The eventual goal would be to eliminate that ideology to disperse the power in the organization more evenly.

Hegemony

Hegemony is the idea that a group can instill an idea as the norm into a subordinate group. This is seen in the workplace when a group that supervises another group plants the idea that it is normal for the subordinate group to answer to the supervising group. The end result being the people in the subordinate group believe that they are supposed to be controlled by the group above them and they don't resist the idea because it feels normal.

Emancipation

Emancipation is the overarching goal of the critical approach. Emancipation occurs when the subordinate group is freed from unnecessary power relationships, oppressing ideologies, or false hegemony. If the emancipation is successful, the subordinate group will be able to communicate more freely about the power struggles and oppression that they may feel in the workplace. It does not mean that they are no longer in a subordinate position, just that their voices are heard and they carry some weight in decision making.

Resistance

Resistance is the way in which the subordinate group counteracts power relationships. On the large scale resistance consists of strikes and boycotts, but it happens more frequently on a small scale with things like sarcastic communication behind the scenes or witty office decorations that promote resistant concepts.

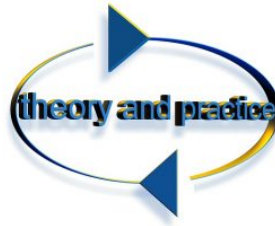
A short lecture on the role of the Frankfurt School in 20th century thought.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ULLZm_x_YE&feature=related&safe=active

An introduction to the basic concepts and influential theorists in the work of British Cultural Studies in the 1970s and 1980s.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zyUYG1J3tKI&feature=related>

Chapter 3: Scientific Management, Bureaucracy, and the Emergence of the Modern Organization



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What is theory? The word “theory” originally derives its name from the Greek word *theoria*, θεωρία, which roughly translated means contemplation or speculation. Modern understandings of the word “theory” are slightly different from the ancient Greeks, but the basic idea of contemplating an idea or speculating about why something happens is still very much in-line with the modern definition. A theory is a “group of related propositions designed to explain why events take place in a certain way. Let’s break this definition down into its basic parts. First, a theory is a “group of related propositions,” which is a series of statements designed to be tested and discussed. Ultimately, these statements propose an explanation for why events take place and why they occur in specific fashions. For example, Sir Isaac Newton (of the claimed apple falling on his head) created the modern theory

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of gravity to explain why the different planets and stars didn't go crashing into each other (very simplistic summation of his theory). While Newton's theory of gravity was pretty good, it couldn't account for everything so ultimately Albert Einstein's theory of relativity came on the stage to further our understanding of how gravity actually works. In both cases, we have two well-respected researchers attempt to understand a basic phenomenon of our physical world, gravity. Just like physicists have been trying to understand why the planets rotate and don't crash into each other, organizational scholars have attempted to create theories for how and why organizations structure themselves the way they do; why people behave the way they do in organizations; why leaders and followers interactions lead to specific outcomes, etc...

The way we talk about a problem directly influences the solutions we can articulate to address the problem. Theories of organization and communication should enhance our ability to articulate alternative ways of approaching and acting on practical issues." They further noted that theories have two basic qualities: metaphorical and historical. When theories are metaphorical, it means that theories provide a linguistic means of comparing and describing organizational communication and function. As you know from English, a metaphor is a figure of speech where a word or phrase is applied to an object or action, but the word does not literally apply to the object or action. In this overview, theories comparing organizational phenomena to machines and biological organisms will be examined. Theories that are historical show theories in terms of the period in which they were created and were popular. Theories are also historical because they are often a product of what was important and prevalent during that time.

The Classical Perspective

To understand classical theories, a brief history of industrialization is really necessary. Industrialization, or the industrial revolution, refers to the "development and adoption of new and improved production methods that changed American and much of Europe from agrarian to industrial economies. So, how did both Europe and American transform themselves from agrarian, or farming, based economies to industrial ones? To pinpoint a single event or invention that really created the industrial revolution is almost impossible. From

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approximately 1750 to 1850 a variety of innovations in agriculture, manufacturing (both iron and textiles), mining, technology, and transportation altered cultural, economic, political, and social realities. For the first time in history people stopped working on family farms or in small family owned businesses and started working for larger organizations that eventually morphed into the modern corporation. While there had been models of large organizations with massive influence, like the Catholic Church, these organizations had been very limited in number. As more and more people left the family farm or local weaver in hopes of bettering their lives and the lives of their families through employment in larger organizations, new tools and models for managing these workers had to be developed.

Perhaps, the most widely known theories of organizational communication are those during the classical period that stemmed out of the industrial revolution. The main idea of the classical perspectives of organizational communication is that organizations are similar to machines. Hence, if you have a well- built and well-managed machine, then you will have a very productive and effective organization. The assumption is that each employee is part of a large machine, which is the organization. If one part fails then the entire machine fails.

Fredrick Taylor's Scientific Management



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In 1913, Frederick Taylor published *Principles of Scientific Management* ushering in a completely new way of understanding the modern organization. Frederick Taylor was trained as an engineer and played a prominent role in the idea of scientific management.

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Scientific management is a management oriented and production-centered perspective of organizational communication. Taylor believed that the reason why most organizations failed was due to the fact that they lacked successful systematic management. He wrote that “the best management is true science resting upon clearly defined laws, rules, and principles, as a foundation. He further noted that “under scientific management arbitrary power, arbitrary dictation ceases, and every single subject, large and small, becomes question for scientific investigation, for reduction to law Taylor believed that any job could be performed better if it was done scientifically and created time and motion studies that resulted in organizational efficiency.

Working as a foreman at on for the Bethlehem Steel Works in the 1900s, Taylor observed how workers could do more with less time. He analyzed coal shoveling at the organization. He noticed several workers would bring different size shovels from home. Workers who brought small shovels could do more but it took them longer and workers who brought big shovels could do less but it was faster. He observed that the best size shovel was one that weighed about twenty pounds. Hence, he ordered the organization to provide all the workers with the same size shovel. He also provided pay incentives for workers who could shovel more coal. By making these changes, the organization was able to increase production drastically.

Bethlehem Steel Plant, 1896



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In order to have a more productive organization, Taylor believed that there were several steps involved. First, one must examine the job or task. Second, one needs to determine the best way to complete the job or task. Third, one must choose the most appropriate person for the task at the same time properly compensating that person. Lastly, one must be able to train the person to do the task efficiently. Taylor

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believed that by using these scientific steps, then organizations would have fewer misuses of human effort.

Taylor's idea of scientific management originated during the time in history when most training of workers was based on apprenticeship models. In an apprenticeship, a person would be taught and skilled by a more experienced person, who would illustrate the task so that the inexperienced person could model the behavior. Taylor believed that this was a very ineffective way of training because he felt that workers would differ in terms of tasks that were performed and the effectiveness of the tasks would be dependent on the type of training received. Taylor argued that there should be only one way to explain the job and one way to execute the task. He did not believe that it should be left up to the expert to train apprentices on the task.

Overall, Taylor felt that employees were lazy and needed constant supervision. He posited that "the tendency of the average [employee] is toward working at a slow easy gait." In other words, he noted that this tendency is called natural soldiering, which is affected by systematic soldiering, which occurs when employees decrease their work production based on input or communications from others. According to Taylor, systematic soldiering happens when employees feel that more production will not result in more compensation. In addition, if employees are paid by the hour and wanted to increase their income, then they might demonstrate that it takes more time in order to get compensated more than they would if they exerted more effort. Because Taylor believed that employees were inherently lazy, he felt that employees also impact the rate of production.

Taylor is known for his idea of time and motion. In other words, time and motion referred to a method for calculating production efficiency by recording outcomes and time to produce those outcomes. Taylor believed that if each task was designed scientifically and the workers could be trained, then production could be measured by timing the labor the workers performed. It was his intention to create a work benchmark that could be quantified to improve efficiency and production outcomes. Taylor's ideas on time and motion were ultimately furthered by the research of Frank Gilbreth who furthered

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the notion of time and motion by filming workers in action in an effort to gain a better idea of physical movements.

Taylor felt that if organizations were run like machines, then it would be ideal, because all tasks were clear-cut and simple. At the same time, these tasks typically did not allow for flexibility, creativity, or originality. In addition, there is a clear cut distinction between managers who think and workers who labor. Thus, this perspective does not account for work motivations, relationships, and turbulence in organizations.

Another key factor about Taylor's scientific method is the style of communication. Taylor did not feel the need to build rapport among workers. Rather, he felt that managers needed to communicate in a clear-cut and candid manner. Further, employees do not need to provide input, they just need to know how to execute their jobs.

While Taylor's ideas quickly took off like wild fire, they were not without their detractors. As early as 1912, the U.S. Commission on Industrial Relations was raising skepticism about scientific management or what many were just calling *Taylorism*:

To sum up, scientific management in practice generally tends to weaken the competitive power of the individual worker and thwarts the formation of shop groups and weakens group solidarity; moreover, generally scientific management is lacking in the arrangements and machinery necessary for the actual voicing of the workers ideas and complaints and for the democratic consideration and adjustment of grievances.

Bureaucratic Theory

Max Weber and Henri Fayol were also two theorists known for their work in the classical perspectives to organizational communication. These two theories focus on the structure of the organization rather than the organizational activities. Many of their ideas are still used today.

Max Weber



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Max Weber termed bureaucracy as the ideals in which organizations should aim for and aspire. Weber was influenced by socialist philosophy. He developed the idea of bureaucracy when he noticed several corrupt and unethical behaviors of leaders. He felt that organizational leaderships should center on task proficiency and impersonal relationships. Even though many people associate bureaucracy with red tape and ineffective organizations, this is not the outcome of bureaucracy. According to Weber, bureaucracy should be synonymous with order, consistency, reason, and reliability. In order to aspire to these traits, organizations need to have specific rules and emphasize impersonality. He noted that bureaucratic organization must have the following characteristics:

Specialization & Division of Labor

Specific set tasks allow employees to achieve its own objective. Thus, every worker did not have to do many jobs, but an exclusive task that was assigned to that worker. This helped to alleviate multiple trainings and increase production.

Rules & Procedures

Written policies help manage and direct the organization. Managers spend a majority of their time on how these policies help to guide and function in the organization. These procedures would serve as a guide and resource for the organization.

Hierarchy of Authority

Organizations need to have a chain of command that is shaped

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like a pyramid. There are levels of supervisors and subordinates. Each worker will answer to their corresponding superior. This would assist in having a direct line of communication and better efficiency in the organization.

Formal Communication

All decisions, rules, regulations, and behaviors are recorded. This information and communication will be shared in terms of the chain of command. Hence, everything is documented and accounted. There is no question in what needs to be done, because it is written down.

Detailed Job Descriptions

The organization has clear and concise definitions, directions, and responsibilities of each position. Each worker is aware of their task and how to employ.

Employment Based on Expertise

The organization will assign workers in positions that would fit their competencies. Hence, workers will be placed in the organization where they can maximize production.

Impersonal Environment

Relationships need to be impersonal and separate so that workers' personal thoughts or feelings would not affect bias or decisions. Workers just need to work and they do not need to interact with others. Interpersonal relationships may jeopardize the organization's outcomes.

Weber (1947) categorized three types of authority: traditional, bureaucratic, and charismatic. Traditional authority is related to the backgrounds and traditions of an environment. This leadership is usually passed down from one family member to another without little regard to who is more apt or capable. Thus, authority is given to another based on custom or tradition. Think of family owned businesses and how those businesses usually do not let outsiders infer with it unless they are related to the family.

Charismatic authority is founded on the idea that the best candidate for this position will be the one who can exert authority. This person is usually charismatic, hence the name. If this person ever leaves the position, then their authority does as well. According to Weber, charismatic leaders are ones that lead to insecure and unpredictable

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organization because there is a vague idea of who will replace their position.

Another type of authority is bureaucratic. Weber felt that bureaucratic was the best way to delegate authority in an organization. Bureaucratic authority is founded on set objectives and criterion. Hence, the best leaders were bureaucratic leaders because they were picked in terms of the guidelines set out for that organization's mission. Weber believed that bureaucratic authority was the ideal way to select authority because it neutralize thwarted ideas of nepotism, preferential treatment, prejudice, and discrimination. Hence, a candidate would be selected in terms of their job competency and not their lineage or personality.

Weber's Types of Authority

	Types of Authority		
	Traditional	Charismatic	Bureaucracy
<i>Based on</i>	Family lineage	Personality	Rules & actions
<i>Specialization</i>	None	Charisma	Technically qualified
<i>Hierarchy</i>	Seniority	Preferences	Authority
<i>Leadership Succession</i>	Family	Popularity	Most appropriate for the position
<i>Communication</i>	Depends	Depends	Is written and has numerous records
<i>Viewed as</i>	Nepotism	Partisan	Systematic

Henri Fayol

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Fayol's principles of management are similar to the military because there is unity in direction, unity in command, subordination of individual interests to the general interest, and order.

Henri Fayol managed a French mining company, called Comambault, which he was able to transform from almost a bankrupt organization to a very successful one. Originally, he worked there as an engineer then moved into management, and later leadership. Similar to Weber, Fayol felt that their needed to be division of labor, hierarchy, and fair practices. Fayol believed that there were principles of management which included:

Unity of Direction

The organization should have the same objectives, one plan/goal, and one person of leadership/authority.

Unity of Command

Employees should get orders from only one person. Therefore, there would not be a chain in command. One person would be the person in charge and be responsible.

Authority

Managers have the entitlement to provide orders and obtain compliance. No other individuals in the organization have the privilege of power.

Order

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The organization must have set places for workers and resources. These should be in the right place at the correct time.

Subordination of Individual Interest to the General Interests

The interest of the organization is most significant and not those of the group or individuals working for the organization.

Scalar Chain

There is a hierarchical order of authority. There is a sequence and succession to how communication is transferred from one person to the other. This is similar to horizontal communication where workers of the same level communicate with each other.

Even though Fayol's principles may appear to be strict, he was one of the first theorists to grasp the idea that having unconditional compliance with an organization may lead to problems. Hence, he also noted that each organization must determine the most favorable levels of authority.

All in all, communication in the classical perspective has two functions: control and command. Fayol believes that organizations must limit their communication to precise and explicit words for task design and implementation. Thus, communication is not spontaneous and is more centralized in a classical organization.

Fayol also believed there were certain management activities. He felt there were five activities that are applied to the administration unit of an organization. These activities included: planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and controlling and controlling. As explained by Fayol, planning is where managers create plans for the organization and predict future organizational needs. Next, organizing occurs when organizations employ people and materials to complete their plans. Commanding is what managers do to get the optimal output in production and efficiency. Coordinating is where managers bring together the labors of all of its employees. Last, controlling is to determine the accuracy of the organization's efforts and its plan. Fayol's impact still has a big influence on many of today's organizations' climate, structure, and leadership.

Tompkins and Cheney's Organizational Control Theory

Phillip K. Tompkins and George Cheney's organizational control theory is an extension of Weberian theory applied to organizations

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that are moving past the bureaucratic mode but are yet to be totally amorphous. **This theory holds that there are four kinds of control that determine how organizations exercise power within and they are simple, technical, bureaucratic, and concertive.**

In a way, these four types of control are defined according to the progression of the organization from very simple organizational models to pure bureaucracies to overly technical and finally an organization where everyone knows what is expected of him or her and has the purpose of the organization's mission and vision clearly etched within them. The point here is that Tompkins and Cheney posit a model where control and communication is more than what Weber had envisaged and less than what post modern theorists say about organizational control and communication.

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Deetz's Managerialism Theory

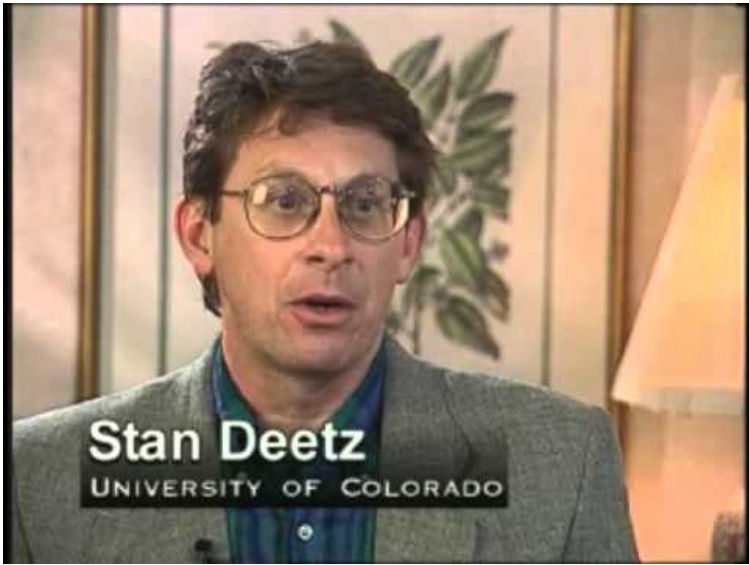
The evolution of organizational structure and models over the years has spawned theories that reflect the changing organizational norms and Stanley Deetz's Managerialism Theory is one such attempt to define how organizational communication and organizational control happens in the companies where classical notions are replaced with an acknowledgement of the political and economic interests as well as the need to represent and give voice to these diverse interests.

The highlight of this theory is that Deetz goes beyond fixed notions of organizations and instead, posits a view of organizations that take into account the democratic aspirations of the people and the power centers in the organization. This combination of recognizing the fact that meaning lies in people and not their words and to find out the interests behind these meanings is indeed a progression from the faceless and nameless bureaucratic model of Weber and the slightly improved control theory of Tompkins and Cheney.

The point here is that Deetz's theory arose out of the need to recognize the preeminence of the managerial class as a force to reckon with in organizations in the latter part of the 20th century and hence

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represents the natural evolution of organizational theory of control and
communication.

Stan Deetz on Critical Theory of Communication in Organizations



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://granite.pressbooks.pub/organizationalcommunication/?p=32>

Conclusion

The point to note about these theories is that they are representations of reality as seen by the proponents and also reflect the idealistic aspirations of these theorists. There is nothing to say that such structures alone exist or that they are not valid. Instead, a nuanced view of organizational theory that has emerged in recent years with the systems view of organizations is something that is contemporary and relevant to the agile and nimble organizations of the 21st century.

Indeed, these theorists discussed here were pioneers during their time and likewise the emerging crop of management experts now are taking the views of these theorists to the next level. In conclusion,

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all management theorists acknowledge the natural progression of organizational models and hence their contributions to the field of organizational control and communication are akin to each wave of theorists standing on the shoulders of giants who were there previously.

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Chapter 4: The Human Relations School



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The human relations theory of management began development in the early 1920's during the industrial revolution. At that time, productivity was the focus of business. Professor Elton Mayo began his experiments (the Hawthorne Studies), to prove the importance of people for productivity – not machines.

The human relations management theory is a researched belief that people desire to be part of a supportive team that facilitates development and growth. Therefore, if employees receive special attention and are encouraged to participate, they perceive their work has significance, and they are motivated to be more productive, resulting in high quality work. The following human relations management theory basics became evident during human relation studies:

1. Individual attention and recognition aligns with the human relations theory.
2. Many theorists supported the motivational theory.

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3. Studies supported the importance of human relations in business.

Elton Mayo: Human Relations Theory, Hawthorne Expts (UPSC Public Administration by Ashish)

This is the Part 1 of the two-part session on Elton Mayo, and deals with Hawthorne Experiments conducted by Mayo and his team over a period of 10 years. Link to Part 2: <https://youtu.be/8KY1RV0CBoE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bAcGFV3pk3U>

This is the official website for the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). This is the world's largest association devoted to human resource management. SHRM provides resources, global best practices and a network of valuable contacts to more than 5,000 members in over 140 countries.

<https://www.shrm.org/>

The Free Management Library provides free, easy-to-access, online articles to develop yourself, other individuals, groups and organizations (whether the organization is for-profit or nonprofit). Over the past 15 years, the Library has grown to be one of the world's largest well-organized collections of these types of articles and resources.

<https://managementhelp.org/humanresources/index.htm>

Chapter 5: Organizations as Communication Systems



Improving information management practices is a key focus for many organizations, across both the public and private sectors. This is being driven by a range of factors, including a need to improve the efficiency of business processes, the demands of compliance regulations and the desire to deliver new services.

In many cases, ‘information management’ has meant deploying new technology solutions, such as content or document management systems, data warehousing or portal applications. These projects have a poor track record of success, and most organizations are still struggling to deliver an integrated information management environment. Effective information management is not easy. There are many systems to integrate, a huge range of business needs to meet, and complex organizational (and cultural) issues to address.

‘Information management’ is an umbrella term that encompasses all the systems and processes within an organization for the creation and use of corporate information.

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In terms of technology, information management encompasses systems such as:

- web content management (CM)
- document management (DM)
- records management (RM)
- digital asset management (DAM)
- learning management systems (LM)
- learning content management systems (LCM)
- collaboration
- enterprise search
- and many more...

Information management is, however, much more than just technology. Equally importantly, it is about the business processes and practices that underpin the creation and use of information. It is also about the information itself, including the structure of information ('information architecture'), metadata, content quality, and more.

Information management therefore encompasses:

- people
- process
- technology
- content

Each of these must be addressed if information management projects are to succeed.

GSC Library Article:

Kupritz, V. W., & Cowell, E. (2011). Productive Management Communication. *Journal Of Business Communication*, 48(1), 54-82.

<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=63248735&site=eds-live>

Information Management Challenges

Organizations are confronted with many information management problems and issues. In many ways, the growth of electronic

information (rather than paper) has only worsened these issues over the last decade or two.

Common information management problems include:

- Large number of disparate information management systems.
- Little integration or coordination between information systems.
- Range of legacy systems requiring upgrading or replacement.
- Direct competition between information management systems.
- No clear strategic direction for the overall technology environment.
- Limited and patchy adoption of existing information systems by staff.
- Poor quality of information, including lack of consistency, duplication, and out-of-date information.
- Little recognition and support of information management by senior management.
- Limited resources for deploying, managing or improving information systems.
- Lack of enterprise-wide definitions for information types and values (no corporate-wide taxonomy).
- Large number of diverse business needs and issues to be addressed.
- Lack of clarity around broader organizational strategies and directions.
- Difficulties in changing working practices and processes of staff.
- Internal politics impacting on the ability to coordinate activities enterprise-wide.

While this can be an overwhelming list, there are practical ways of delivering solutions that work within these limitations and issues.

Ten Principles

Here are ten key principles to ensure that information management activities are effective and successful:

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1. recognize (and manage) complexity
2. focus on adoption
3. deliver tangible & visible benefits
4. prioritize according to business needs
5. take a journey of a thousand steps
6. provide strong leadership
7. mitigate risks
8. communicate extensively
9. aim to deliver a seamless user experience
10. choose the first project very carefully

Each of these is discussed in the sections below.

Principle 1: Recognize (and manage) complexity

Organizations are very complex environments in which to deliver concrete solutions. As outlined above, there are many challenges that need to be overcome when planning and implementing information management projects.

When confronted with this complexity, project teams often fall back upon approaches such as:

- Focusing on deploying just one technology in isolation.
- Purchasing a very large suite of applications from a single vendor, in the hope that this can be used to solve all information management problems at once.
- Rolling out rigid, standardized solutions across a whole organization, even though individual business areas may have different needs.
- Forcing the use of a single technology system in all cases, regardless of whether it is an appropriate solution.
- Purchasing a product ‘for life’, even though business requirements will change over time.
- Fully centralizing information management activities, to ensure that every activity is tightly controlled.

All of these approaches will fail, as they are attempting to convert a complex set of needs and problems into simple (even simplistic) solutions. The hope is that the complexity can be limited or avoided when planning and deploying solutions. In practice, however, there is no way of avoiding the inherent complexities within organizations.

New approaches to information management must therefore be found that recognize (and manage) this complexity. Organizations must stop looking for simple approaches, and must stop believing vendors when they offer ‘silver bullet’ technology solutions. Instead, successful information management is underpinned by strong leadership that defines a clear direction (principle 6). Many small activities should then be planned to address in parallel the many needs and issues (principle 5). Risks must then be identified and mitigated throughout the project (principle 7), to ensure that organizational complexities do not prevent the delivery of effective solutions.

Principle 2: Focus on adoption

Information management systems are only successful if they are actually used by staff, and it is not sufficient to simply focus on installing the software centrally.

In practice, most information management systems need the *active participation* of staff throughout the organization.

For example:

- Staff must save all key files into the document/records management system.
- Decentralized authors must use the content management system to regularly update the intranet.
- Lecturers must use the learning content management system to deliver e-learning packages to their students.
- Front-line staff must capture call details in the customer relationship management system.

In all these cases, the challenge is to gain sufficient adoption to ensure that required information is captured in the system. Without a critical mass of usage, corporate repositories will not contain enough information to be useful.

This presents a considerable change management challenge for information management projects. In practice, it means that projects must be carefully designed from the outset to ensure that sufficient adoption is gained.

This may include:

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- Identifying the ‘what’s in it for me’ factors for end users of the system.
- Communicating clearly to all staff the purpose and benefits of the project.
- Carefully targeting initial projects to build momentum for the project (see principle 10).
- Conducting extensive change management and cultural change activities throughout the project.
- Ensuring that the systems that are deployed are *useful* and *usable* for staff.

These are just a few of the possible approaches, and they demonstrate the wide implications of needing to gain adoption by staff. It is not enough to deliver ‘behind the scenes’ fixes.

Principle 3: Deliver tangible & visible benefits

It is not enough to simply improve the management of information ‘behind the scenes’. While this will deliver real benefits, it will not drive the required cultural changes, or assist with gaining adoption by staff (principle 2).

In many cases, information management projects initially focus on improving the productivity of publishers or information managers. While these are valuable projects, they are invisible to the rest of the organization. When challenged, it can be hard to demonstrate the return on investment of these projects, and they do little to assist project teams to gain further funding. Instead, information management projects must always be designed so that they deliver *tangible* and *visible* benefits.

Delivering tangible benefits involves identifying concrete business needs that must be met (principle 4). This allows meaningful measurement of the impact of the projects on the operation of the organization.

The projects should also target issues or needs that are very visible within the organization. When solutions are delivered, the improvement should be obvious, and widely promoted throughout the organization.

For example, improving the information available to call centre staff can have a very visible and tangible impact on customer service.

In contrast, creating a standard taxonomy for classifying information across systems is hard to quantify and rarely visible to general staff. This is not to say that ‘behind the scenes’ improvements are not required, but rather that they should always be partnered with changes that deliver more visible benefits. This also has a major impact on the choice of the initial activities conducted (principle 10). Tackle the most urgent business needs first.

Principle 4: Prioritize according to business needs

It can be difficult to know where to start when planning information management projects.

While some organizations attempt to prioritize projects according to the ‘simplicity’ of the technology to be deployed, this is not a meaningful approach. In particular, this often doesn’t deliver short-term benefits that are tangible and visible (principle 3). Instead of this technology-driven approach, the planning process should be turned around entirely, to drive projects based on their ability to address business needs. In this way, information management projects are targeted at the most urgent business needs or issues. These in turn are derived from the overall business strategy and direction for the organization as a whole. For example, the rate of errors in home loan applications might be identified as a strategic issue for the organization. A new system might therefore be put in place (along with other activities) to better manage the information that supports the processing of these applications. Alternatively, a new call centre might be in the process of being planned. Information management activities can be put in place to support the establishment of the new call centre, and the training of new staff. Avoid ‘silver bullet’ solutions that promise to fix everything.

Principle 5: Take a journey of a thousand steps

There is no single application or project that will address and resolve all the information management problems of an organization.

Where organizations look for such solutions, large and costly strategic plans are developed. Assuming the results of this strategic planning are actually delivered (which they often aren’t), they usually describe a long-term vision but give few clear directions for immediate actions. In practice, anyone looking to design the *complete* information

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management solution will be trapped by ‘analysis paralysis’: the inability to escape the planning process. Organizations are simply too complex to consider all the factors when developing strategies or planning activities. The answer is to let go of the desire for a perfectly planned approach. Instead, project teams should take a ‘journey of a thousand steps’. This approach recognizes that there are hundreds (or thousands) of often small changes that are needed to improve the information management practices across an organization. These changes will often be implemented in parallel. While some of these changes are organization-wide, most are actually implemented at business unit (or even team) level. When added up over time, these numerous small changes have a major impact on the organization.

This is a very different approach to that typically taken in organizations, and it replaces a single large (centralized) project with many individual initiatives conducted by multiple teams. While this can be challenging to coordinate and manage, this ‘thousand steps’ approach recognizes the inherent complexity of organizations (principle 1) and is a very effective way of mitigating risks (principle 7). It also ensures that ‘quick wins’ can be delivered early on (principle 3), and allows solutions to be targeted to individual business needs (principle 4). Successful projects require strong leadership.

Principle 6: Provide strong leadership

Successful information management is about organizational and cultural change, and this can only be achieved through strong leadership. The starting point is to create a clear vision of the desired outcomes of the information management strategy. This will describe how the organization will operate, more than just describing how the information systems themselves will work. Effort must then be put into generating a sufficient sense of urgency to drive the deployment and adoption of new systems and processes. Stakeholders must also be engaged and involved in the project, to ensure that there is support at all levels in the organization. This focus on leadership then underpins a range of communications activities (principle 8) that ensure that the organization has a clear understanding of the projects and the benefits they will deliver. When projects are solely driven by the acquisition and deployment of new technology solutions, this leadership is often

lacking. Without the engagement and support of key stakeholder outside the IT area, these projects often have little impact. Apply good risk management to ensure success.

Principle 7: Mitigate risks

Due to the inherent complexity of the environment within organizations (principle 1), there are many risks in implementing information management solutions. These risks include:

- selecting an inappropriate technology solution
- time and budget overruns
- changing business requirements
- technical issues, particularly relating to integrating systems
- failure to gain adoption by staff

At the outset of planning an information management strategy, the risks should be clearly identified. An approach must then be identified for each risk, either avoiding or mitigating the risk. Risk management approaches should then be used to plan all aspects of the project, including the activities conducted and the budget spent. For example, a simple but effective way of mitigating risks is to spend less money. This might involve conducting pilot projects to identifying issues and potential solutions, rather than starting with enterprise-wide deployments.

Principle 8: Communicate extensively

Extensive communication from the project team (and project sponsors) is critical for a successful information management initiative. This communication ensures that staff have a clear understanding of the project, and the benefits it will deliver. This is a prerequisite for achieving the required level of adoption. With many projects happening simultaneously (principle 5), coordination becomes paramount. All project teams should devote time to work closely with each other, to ensure that activities and outcomes are aligned. In a complex environment, it is not possible to enforce a strict command-and-control approach to management (principle 1). Instead, a clear end point ('vision') must be created for the information management project, and communicated widely. This allows each project team to align themselves to the eventual goal, and to make informed decisions

about the best approaches. For all these reasons, the first step in an information management project should be to develop a clear communications ‘message’. This should then be supported by a communications plan that describes target audiences, and methods of communication. Project teams should also consider establishing a ‘project site’ on the intranet as the outset, to provide a location for planning documents, news releases, and other updates.

Principle 9: Aim to deliver a seamless user experience

Users don’t understand systems. When presented with six different information systems, each containing one-sixth of what they want, they generally rely on a piece of paper instead (or ask the person next to them). Educating staff in the purpose and use of a disparate set of information systems is difficult, and generally fruitless. The underlying goal should therefore be to deliver a seamless *user experience*, one that hides the systems that the information is coming from. This is not to say that there should be one enterprise-wide system that contains all information. There will always be a need to have multiple information systems, but the information contained within them should be presented in a human-friendly way.

In practice, this means:

- Delivering a single intranet (or equivalent) that gives access to all information and tools.
- Ensuring a consistent look-and-feel across all applications, including standard navigation and page layouts.
- Providing ‘single sign-on’ to all applications.

Ultimately, it also means breaking down the distinctions between applications, and delivering tools and information along task and subject lines. For example, many organizations store HR procedures on the intranet, but require staff to log a separate ‘HR self-service’ application that provides a completely different menu structure and appearance. Improving on this, leave details should be located alongside the leave form itself. In this model, the HR application becomes a background system, invisible to the user. Care should also be taken, however, when looking to a silver-bullet solution for providing a seamless user experience. Despite the promises, portal applications

do not automatically deliver this. Instead, a better approach may be to leverage the inherent benefits of the web platform. As long as the applications all look the same, the user will be unaware that they are accessing multiple systems and servers behind the scenes.

Of course, achieving a truly seamless user experience is not a short-term goal. Plan to incrementally move towards this goal, delivering one improvement at a time. The first project must build momentum for further work.

Principle 10: Choose the first project very carefully

The choice of the first project conducted as part of a broader information management strategy is critical. This project must be selected carefully, to ensure that it:

- demonstrates the value of the information management strategy
- builds momentum for future activities
- generates interest and enthusiasm from both end-users and stakeholders
- delivers tangible and visible benefits (principle 3)
- addresses an important or urgent business need (principle 4)
- can be clearly communicated to staff and stakeholders (principle 8)
- assists the project team in gaining further resources and support

Actions speak louder than words. The first project is the single best (and perhaps only) opportunity to set the organization on the right path towards better information management practices and technologies. The first project must therefore be chosen according to its ability to act as a ‘catalyst’ for further organizational and cultural changes. In practice, this often involves starting with one problem or one area of the business that the organization as a whole would be interested in, and cares about. For example, starting by restructuring the corporate policies and procedures will generate little interest or enthusiasm. In contrast, delivering a system that greatly assists salespeople in the field would be something that could be widely promoted throughout the organization.

Seth Godin: How to Get Your Ideas to Spread



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Conclusion

Implementing information technology solutions in a complex and ever-changing organizational environment is never easy. The challenges inherent in information management projects mean that new approaches need to be taken, if they are to succeed.

Of course, much more can be written on how to tackle information management projects!

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Chapter 6: Communication, Culture, and Organizing



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One way to understand communication is to view it as a people process rather than a language process. If one is to make fundamental improvement in communication, one must make changes in interpersonal relationships. One possible type of alteration—and the one with which this paper is concerned—is that of reducing the degree of defensiveness.

Definition and Significance

Defensive behavior is defined as that behavior which occurs when an individual perceives threat or anticipates threat in the group. The person who behaves defensively, even though he or she also gives some attention to the common task, devotes an appreciable portion of energy to defending himself or herself. Besides talking about the

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topic, he/she thinks about how they appear to others, how they may be seen more favorably, how they may win, dominate, impress or escape punishment, and/or how they may avoid or mitigate a perceived attack.

Such inner feelings and outward acts tend to create similarly defensive postures in others; and, if unchecked, the ensuing circular response becomes increasingly destructive. Defensive behavior, in short, engenders defensive listening, and this in turn produces postural, facial and verbal cues which raise the defense level of the original communicator.

Defense arousal prevents the listener from concentrating upon the message. Not only do defensive communicators send off multiple value, motive and affect cues, but also defensive recipients distort what they receive. As a person becomes more and more defensive, he or she becomes less and less able to perceive accurately the motives, the values and the emotions of the sender. Defensive behaviors have been correlated positively with losses in efficiency in communication.

The converse, moreover, also is true. The more “supportive” or defense-reductive the climate, the less the receiver reads into the communication distorted loadings which arise from projections of his own anxieties, motives and concerns. As defenses are reduced, the receivers become better able to concentrate upon the structure, the content and the cognitive meanings of the message.

Categories of Defensive and Supportive Communications

Jack Gibb developed six pairs of defensive and supportive categories presented below. Behavior which a listener perceives as possessing any of the characteristics listed in the left-hand column arouses defensiveness, whereas that which he interprets as having any of the qualities designated as supportive reduces defensive feelings. The degree to which these reactions occur depends upon the person's level of defensiveness and upon the general climate in the group at the time.

Evaluation and Description

Speech or other behavior which appears evaluative increases defensiveness. If by expression, manner of speech, tone of voice or verbal content the sender seems to be evaluating or judging the listener, the receiver goes on guard. Of course, other factors may

inhibit the reaction. If the listener thought that the speaker regarded him/her as an equal and was being open and spontaneous, for example, the evaluativeness in a message would be neutralized and perhaps not even perceived. This same principle applies equally to the other five categories of potentially defense-producing climates. These six sets are interactive.

Because our attitudes toward other persons are frequently, and often necessarily, evaluative, expressions which the defensive person will regard as nonjudgmental are hard to frame. Even the simplest question usually conveys the answer that the sender wishes or implies the response that would fit into his or her value system. A mother, for example, immediately following an earth tremor that shook the house, sought for her small son with the question, "Bobby, where are you?" The timid and plaintive "Mommy, I didn't do it" indicated how Bobby's chronic mild defensiveness predisposed him to react with a projection of his own guilt and in the context of his chronic assumption that questions are full of accusation.

Categories of Behavior Characteristic of Supportive and Defensive Climates

Defensive Climates	Supportive Climates
1. Evaluation	1. Description
2. Control	2. Problem Orientation
3. Strategy	3. Spontaneity
4. Neutrality	4. Empathy
5. Superiority	5. Equality
6. Certainty	6. Provisionalism

Anyone who has attempted to train professionals to use information-seeking speech with neutral affect appreciates how difficult it is to teach a person to say even the simple "who did that?" without being seen as accusing. Speech is so frequently judgmental that there is a reality base for the defensive interpretations which are so common.

When insecure, group members are particularly likely to place blame, to see others as fitting into categories of good or bad, to make moral judgments of their colleagues and to question the value, motive and affect loadings of the speech which they hear. Since value loadings imply a judgment of others, a belief that the standards of the speaker differ from his or her own causes the listener to become defensive.

Descriptive speech, in contrast to that which is evaluative, tends to arouse a minimum of uneasiness. Speech acts in which the listener perceives as genuine requests for information or as material with neutral loadings is descriptive. Specifically, presentation of feelings, events, perceptions or processes which do not ask or imply that the receiver change behavior or attitude are minimally defense producing. On a side note, one can often tell from the opening words in a news article which side the newspaper's editorial policy favors.

Control and Problem Orientation

Speech which is used to control the listener evokes resistance. In most of our social intercourse, someone is trying to do something to someone else—to change an attitude, to influence behavior, or to restrict the field of activity. The degree to which attempts to control produce defensiveness depends upon the openness of the effort, for a suspicion that hidden motives exist heightens resistance. For this reason, attempts of nondirective therapists and progressive educators to refrain from imposing a set of values, a point of view or a problem solution upon the receivers meet with many barriers. Since the norm is control, noncontrollers must earn the perceptions that their efforts have no hidden motives. A bombardment of persuasive “messages” in the fields of politics, education, special causes, advertising, religion, medicine, industrial relations and guidance has bred cynical and paranoid responses in listeners.

Implicit in all attempts to alter another person is the assumption by the change agent that the person to be altered is inadequate. That the speaker secretly views the listener as ignorant, unable to make his or her own decisions, uninformed, immature, unwise, or possessed of wrong or inadequate attitudes is a subconscious perception which gives the latter a valid base for defensive reactions.

Ernesto Sirolli: Want to help someone? Shut up and listen!



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Strategy and Spontaneity

When the sender is perceived as engaged in a stratagem involving ambiguous and multiple motivations, the receiver becomes defensive. No one wishes to be a guinea pig, a role player, or an impressed actor, and no one likes to be the victim of some hidden motivation. That which is concealed, also, may appear larger than it really is with the degree of defensiveness of the listener determining the perceived size of the element. The intense reaction of the reading audience to the material in *The Hidden Persuaders* indicates the prevalence of defensive reactions to multiple motivations behind strategy. Group members who are seen as “taking a role” as feigning emotion, as toying with their colleagues, as withholding information or as having

special sources of data are especially resented. One participant once complained that another was “using a listening technique” on him!

A large part of the adverse reaction to much of the so-called human relations training is a feeling against what are perceived as gimmicks and tricks to fool or to “involve” people, to make a person think he or she is making their own decision, or to make the listener feel that the sender is genuinely interested in him or her as a person. Particularly violent reactions occur when it appears that someone is trying to make a stratagem appear spontaneous. One person reported a boss who incurred resentment by habitually using the gimmick of “spontaneously” looking at his watch and saying “my gosh, look at the time—I must run to an appointment.” The belief was that the boss would create less irritation by honestly asking to be excused.

The aversion to deceit may account for one’s resistance to politicians who are suspected of behind-the-scenes planning to get one’s vote, to psychologists whose listening apparently is motivated by more than the manifest or content-level interest in one’s behavior, or the sophisticated, smooth, or clever person whose one-upmanship is marked with guile. In training groups the role-flexible person frequently is resented because his or her changes in behavior are perceived as strategic maneuvers.

In contrast, behavior that appears to be spontaneous and free of deception is defense reductive. If the communicator is seen as having a clean id, as having uncomplicated motivations, as being straightforward and honest, as behaving spontaneously in response to the situation, he or she is likely to arouse minimal defensiveness.

Neutrality and Empathy

When neutrality in speech appears to the listener to indicate a lack of concern for his welfare, he becomes defensive. Group members usually desire to be perceived as valued persons, as individuals with special worth, and as objects of concern and affection. The clinical, detached, person-is-an-object-study attitude on the part of many psychologist-trainers is resented by group members. Speech with low affect that communicates little warmth or caring is in such contrast with the affect-laden speech in social situations that it sometimes communicates rejection.

Communication that conveys empathy for the feelings and respect for the worth of the listener, however, is particularly supportive and defense reductive. Reassurance results when a message indicates that the speaker identifies himself or herself with the listener's problems, shares her feelings, and accepts her emotional reactions at face value. Abortive efforts to deny the legitimacy of the receiver's emotions by assuring the receiver that she need not feel badly, that she should not feel rejected, or that she is overly anxious, although often intended as support giving, may impress the listener as lack of acceptance. The combination of understanding and empathizing with the other person's emotions with no accompanying effort to change him or her is supportive at a high level.

The importance of gestural behavior cues in communicating empathy should be mentioned. Apparently spontaneous facial and bodily evidences of concern are often interpreted as especially valid evidence of deep-level acceptance.

Superiority and Equality

When a person communicates to another that he or she feels superior in position, power, wealth, intellectual ability, physical characteristics, or other ways, she or he arouses defensiveness. Here, as with other sources of disturbance, whatever arouses feelings of inadequacy causes the listener to center upon the affect loading of the statement rather than upon the cognitive elements. The receiver then reacts by not hearing the message, by forgetting it, by competing with the sender, or by becoming jealous of him or her.

The person who is perceived as feeling superior communicates that he or she is not willing to enter into a shared problem-solving relationship, that he or she probably does not desire feedback, that he or she does not require help, and/or that he or she will be likely to try to reduce the power, the status, or the worth of the receiver.

Many ways exist for creating the atmosphere that the sender feels himself or herself equal to the listener. Defenses are reduced when one perceives the sender as being willing to enter into participative planning with mutual trust and respect. Differences in talent, ability, worth, appearance, status and power often exist, but the low defense communicator seems to attach little importance to these distinctions.

Certainty and Provisionalism

The effects of dogmatism in producing defensiveness are well known. Those who seem to know the answers, to require no additional data, and to regard themselves as teachers rather than as co-workers tend to put others on guard. Moreover, listeners often perceive manifest expressions of certainty as connoting inward feelings of inferiority. They see the dogmatic individual as needing to be right, as wanting to win an argument rather than solve a problem and as seeing his or her ideas as truths to be defended. This kind of behavior often is associated with acts which others regarded as attempts to exercise control. People who are right seem to have low tolerance for members who are “wrong”—i.e., who do not agree with the sender.

One reduces the defensiveness of the listener when one communicates that one is willing to experiment with one's own behavior, attitudes and ideas. The person who appears to be taking provisional attitudes, to be investigating issues rather than taking sides on them, to be problem solving rather than doubting, and to be willing to experiment and explore tends to communicate that the listener may have some control over the shared quest or the investigation of the ideas. If a person is genuinely searching for information and data, he or she does not resent help or company along the way.

GSC Library Article:

Bradley, G. L., & Campbell, A. C. (2016). Managing Difficult Workplace Conversations: Goals, Strategies, and Outcomes.

International Journal Of Business Communication, 53(4), 443–464

<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=118145612&site=eds-live>

Conclusion

The implications of the above material for the parent, the teacher, the manager, the administrator, or the therapist are fairly obvious. Arousing defensiveness interferes with communication and thus makes it difficult—and sometimes impossible—for anyone to convey ideas clearly and to move effectively toward the solution of therapeutic, educational, or managerial problems.

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Chapter 7: Power and Resistance at Work

When most people think of power, it's generally accompanied by dark images like Darth Vader. It's funny because power can be a good thing, too, like the power we have in a democracy. Generally, it's not power, but what people do with the power they have, that gives power a bad rap.



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In most cases, I like to believe people misuse their power because they have it and aren't even aware of it. As a manager or leader of an organization of any kind, you have positional power and you have a choice whether you increase or squander that power based on how effectively you lead your team.

Here is a list of the sources of power that may be found in organizations with further commentary

Formal authority

The simplest form of power is that vested in the position of 'manager'. A manager has subordinates who must do his or her bidding, only within legal and organizational rules. The basic employment transaction is 'we give you money, you do as you are told'.

Of course there are many more ways that power can be exerted, and

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in particular in motivating people more effectively such as is found in transformational leadership.

Control of scarce resources

Other than directing employees, managers control budgets and the assets and other resources that the firm holds, from technology to people. A part of this control is the ability to allocate these resources to projects and other work.

It is not unsurprising that many of the political battles in organizations is over control of resources and 'empire-building' is a classic game, with a significant risk that organizational goals get forgotten in the cut and thrust of winning and losing control of resources.

Use of organizational structure, rules and regulations

Organizations have hierarchies, departments, teams and other structures, often each with its own rules as well as the rules that govern the action within the organization as a whole. Many people do not know all of these rules, which makes them a source of power for those who care to take time to learn their detail.

Power can also be gained from quoting rules that do not exist or misquoting rules by overstating or understating their meaning.

Control of decision processes

Work is selected and resources are allocated by decisions, many of which are decided in some form by groups of people. By managing how decisions are made, for example by requiring consensus or senior-manager signoff, the power of some people may be curtailed whilst others gain the ability to shape decisions.

When decisions are made in committee or other meetings, the person who chairs the meeting or keeps the minutes may have notable power to control decisions.

Control of knowledge and information

Knowledge is power, as they say, and how you gather and distribute it is a source of power, whether it is technical or social information.

Experts often work in this way, protecting their elevated status by hiding the sources of their knowledge and exacting high prices (whether financial or social) for their learned opinions.

Control of boundaries

The structures and groups of the organization are only so because they have boundaries which people cross in order to access resources and meet people. Thus, for example, an executive's Personal Assistant may have disproportionate power in the ability to allow access or not to the executive. Likewise security guards, though not paid very much can allow, bar or hassle people crossing their boundaries.

Ability to cope with uncertainty

A quite different source of power is personal resilience, the ability to handle uncertainty and stress that might debilitate others. Such people can gain position by taking on work that others fear and is a common route for upwardly-mobile go-getters who seek early promotion.

Control of technology

Technology is (or should be) an enabler, providing data, analysis, information, access and other benefits. Those who control what technology is used by the organization or who gets the latest computers and software has significant power, and the person who used to be the 'IT Manager' may now be the 'Chief Information Officer'.

Having the latest technology can also be a status symbol, thereby giving the holder social power in the way they can show themselves to be influential and clever.

Interpersonal alliances, networks and control of 'informal organization'

Who you know makes a lot of difference. We naturally help our friends and those who have helped us in some way in the past. Social networks are the glue of organizations and those who build and work their informal associates can thereby gain significantly more power.

In the time when smoking was allowed but only in special 'smoking rooms', it was often said that this became a 'club' where the low and the high in the organization rubbed shoulders, which no doubt gave power to the lower people in the name-dropping they could use and help they might get.

TED TALK: Forget about the Pecking Order at Work

By Margaret Heffernan



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You can view it online here: <https://granite.pressbooks.pub/organizationalcommunication/?p=35>

Control of counter-organizations

Not to every organization is there an equal and opposite counter-organization, but in the battlefield of businesses, whole ecologies spring up, include local opposition to factory expansion, trade unions seeking ever-increasing pay and benefits and so on. If you can infiltrate or otherwise hold some sway over the groups who might oppose you, you may at least be able to decrease the danger of their power and possibly neutralize them in some way.

Symbolism and the management of meaning

We live a lot, more than perhaps we realize, in the sway of the symbols and semiotics of the workplace. If you can recognize the subtlety and understand the workings of how meaning is created, then you have a surprisingly powerful tool for change and influence.

Symbols and meaning-making is a particular pattern of culture, and those who would change the underlying culture of an organization can make use of these.

Gender and the management of gender relations

In a balanced workplace, around half the people are men and half are women. In practice, some women gravitate towards particular roles

whilst men seek other work positions. The 'glass ceiling' still exists in many companies and, perhaps due to life breaks such as having children, fewer women make it to the higher echelons.

This can lead to frustrations and energy that can be put to good and destructive use. If you can harness this, you have power. There is also the power of sexual attraction, and tall and shapely people continue to make good use of their physical assets.

Structural factors that define the stage of action

The 'stage of action' in organizations is set up by the organizational purpose, vision, mission, strategy and other high-level shaping activities that lead to scenarios of activity, from driving into new markets to struggling with organizational change.

If you can shape the direction of the organization, you have tremendous power to affect much of what it does and consequently the futures (and power) of others in the firm.

The power one already has

Last, but certainly not least, is the power of the individual. We can be charming, willing, obstinate and more. And we have feet we can use to leave the company at any time we choose.

So what?

So take note! If you are feeling powerless in an organization, think again and review the above list. Everyone has the ability to acquire and use more power than they might reasonably expect to have.

Here are some tips on how to ensure you use your power to build healthy, motivational, and productive relationships with people on your team.

- **Build healthy relationships.** As a leader, your continued influence and power is not only about your ability to get the job done but also about the relationships you develop in the workplace. If you finish your work but everyone dislikes you, your negative behavior will eventually take you down; even though you completed your tasks on time and on budget.
- **Don't play favorites.** It's natural and understandable that you will have favorite players on your team and people you naturally gravitate to as friends. Praise, when done privately

and judiciously, can be an incredible motivator and affirmation of a person's hard work. Praise done publicly can help align and motivate the team, but make sure to dole it out in a way that is even-handed. For example, if five team members pulled long hours to finish a project you need to recognize all five of them, even though two of them were slackers.

- **Remember that your words matter.** Your words as a boss weigh heavily, especially with anything that can be construed as negative. Choose your words judiciously when giving feedback. For example, if you don't like something you see you'd be better off commenting privately versus publicly or asking discrete questions. Instead of saying, "This slide is awful and needs to be cut," you could offer, "I noticed you had this slide. What idea were you trying to convey?"
- **Hold yourself to higher standards.** Be a good role model for your work team. If you want your team to be impeccable, ethical, and respectful of each other, then that good behavior has to start from the top. While it may be nice to massage your co-workers sore neck, think about how the recipient and others on the team will view your actions even if they are well-intentioned.
- **Have hard conversations.** The power you have as a manager is for you to make decisions thoughtfully and, at times, to use compassion to deliver hard messages. While it may be more convenient to avoid difficult news, dragging out a hard conversation usually hurts all involved.

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Chapter 8: The Postmodern Workplace: Teams, Emotions, and No-Collar Work



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David Grady: How to save the world (or at least yourself) from
bad meetings



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Conflict Management in Groups and Teams



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Morton Deutsch, a noted social psychologist, determined that how people in a team, group, or organization believe their goals are related is important in understanding how effectively they work together. The cooperative conflict theory is a powerful way to understand conflict. When people believe their goals are compatible, they recognize that, as one succeeds, others succeed. There is increased cooperation because

when one person is successful, others are helped in reaching their goals. This fosters a win-win environment, encouraging collaboration. Employees in cooperation share information, know each other's points of view, exchange resources, and assist and support each other. In this climate of trust, cooperatives can manage their conflicts productively by freely speaking their minds, revealing frustrations, and talking out areas of anger or concern. However, those who view goals as competitive foster the suspicion that people only want to look out for their own interests, even at the expense of others. This mistrust halts the group's ability to communicate by withholding information and resources, creating an unproductive environment. Members experience increased conflict and stress, as well as a decrease in morale and effectiveness. Because members of the group are caught up in a win-lose attitude, confrontations can be harsh.

When (not if) conflicts arise, it is important to work through them to mutual understanding. Conflicts may not always be resolved; however, they ought to be communicated to one another, and managed. Conflicts do not simply go away, but those involved should be made know as to which areas are in disagreement.

Being a team member provides employees with the opportunity to reach beyond the job being performed and become involved with achieving organizational goals. In addition, team involvement increases decision making, builds consensus, increases support for action, and provides a cooperative goal-oriented culture. Amason, et al (1995) explain, "Conflict can improve team effectiveness. The problem is that, once aroused, conflict is difficult to control. Sometimes it remains task focused, facilitating creativity, open communication, and team integration. In other instances, it loses its focus and undermines creativity, open communication, and integrated effort."

Conflict is constructive when:

People grow and change positively from the conflict.
The conflict provides a win-win solution.
Involvement is increased for everyone affected by the conflict.
Team cohesiveness is increased.

Conflict is destructive when:

The problem is not resolved.
It drains energy from more important issues.
It destroys the team spirit.
The team or individuals become divided.

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While conflict is a natural, healthy part of any organization, it can, however, be painful when not managed productively. Thomas Capozzoli describes the nature of conflict as neither good nor bad.

“Conflict is not something that is a tangible product but lies in the minds of the people who are parties to it. However, it does become tangible when it manifests itself in arguing, brooding, or fighting. The problem lies with the inability for people to manage and resolve it effectively. If managed effectively, conflict can be constructive. If not, conflict can be a destructive force in people and organizations.”

People have different viewpoints and, under the right set of circumstances, those differences escalate to conflict. How you handle that conflict determines whether it works to the team’s advantage, or contributes to its demise.

You can choose to ignore it, complain about it, blame someone for it, or try to deal with it through hints and suggestions; or you can be direct, clarify what is going on, and attempt to reach a resolution through common techniques like negotiation or compromise. It’s clear that conflict has to be dealt with, but the question is how: it has to be dealt with constructively and with a plan, otherwise it’s too easy to get pulled into the argument and create an even larger mess.

Conflict isn’t necessarily a bad thing, though. Healthy and constructive conflict is a component of high-functioning teams. Conflict arises from differences between people; the same differences that often make diverse teams more effective than those made up of people with similar experience. When people with varying viewpoints, experiences, skills, and opinions are tasked with a project or challenge, the combined effort can far surpass what any group of similar individual could achieve. Team members must be open to these differences and not let them rise into full-blown disputes.

Understanding and appreciating the various viewpoints involved in conflict are key factors in its resolution. These are key skills for all team members to develop. The important thing is to maintain a healthy balance of constructive difference of opinion, and avoid negative conflict that’s destructive and disruptive.

Getting to, and maintaining, that balance requires well-developed team skills, particularly the ability to resolve conflict when it does

happens, and the ability to keep it healthy and avoid conflict in the day-to-day course of team working. Let's look at conflict resolution first, then at preventing it.

Jonathan Marks: In Praise of Conflict



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Resolving Conflict

When a team oversteps the mark of healthy difference of opinion, resolving conflict requires respect and patience. The human experience of conflict involves our emotions, perceptions, and actions; we experience it on all three levels, and we need to address all three levels to resolve it. We must replace the negative experiences with positive ones.

The three-stage process below is a form of mediation process, which helps team members to do this:

Step 1: Prepare for Resolution

- **Acknowledge the conflict** – The conflict has to be acknowledged before it can be managed and resolved. The

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tendency is for people to ignore the first signs of conflict, perhaps as it seems trivial, or is difficult to differentiate from the normal, healthy debate that teams can thrive on. If you are concerned about the conflict in your team, discuss it with other members. Once the team recognizes the issue, it can start the process of resolution.

- **Discuss the impact** – As a team, discuss the impact the conflict is having on team dynamics and performance.
- **Agree to a cooperative process** – Everyone involved must agree to cooperate in to resolve the conflict. This means putting the team first, and may involve setting aside your opinion or ideas for the time being. If someone wants to win more than he or she wants to resolve the conflict, you may find yourself at a stalemate.
- **Agree to communicate** – The most important thing throughout the resolution process is for everyone to keep communications open. The people involved need to talk about the issue and discuss their strong feelings. Active listening is essential here, because to move on you need to really understand where the other person is coming from.

Step 2: Understand the Situation

Once the team is ready to resolve the conflict, the next stage is to understand the situation, and each team member's point of view. Take time to make sure that each person's position is heard and understood. Remember that strong emotions are at work here so you have to get through the emotion and reveal the true nature of the conflict. Do the following:

- **Clarify positions** – Whatever the conflict or disagreement, it's important to clarify people's positions. Whether there are obvious factions within the team who support a particular option, approach or idea, or each team member holds their own unique view, each position needs to be clearly identified and articulated by those involved.

This step alone can go a long way to resolve the conflict, as it helps the team see the facts more objectively and with less emotion.

Sally and Tom believe the best way to market the new product is

through a TV campaign. Mary and Beth are adamant that internet advertising is the way to go; whilst Josh supports a store-lead campaign.

- **List facts, assumptions and beliefs underlying each position** – What does each group or person believe? What do they value? What information are they using as a basis for these beliefs? What decision-making criteria and processes have they employed?

Sally and Tom believe that TV advertising is best because it has worked very well in the past. They are motivated by the saying, “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.”

Mary and Beth are very tuned-in to the latest in technology and believe that to stay ahead in the market, the company has to continue to try new things. They seek challenges and find change exhilarating and motivating. Josh believes a store-lead campaign is the most cost-effective. He’s cautious, and feels this is the best way to test the market at launch, before committing the marketing spend.

- **Analyze in smaller groups** – Break the team into smaller groups, separating people who are in alliance. In these smaller groups, analyze and dissect each position, and the associated facts, assumptions and beliefs.

Which facts and assumptions are true? Which are the more important to the outcome? Is there additional, objective information that needs to be brought into the discussion to clarify points of uncertainty or contention? Is additional analysis or evaluation required?

Tip:

Consider using formal evaluation and decision-making processes where appropriate. Techniques such as Quantitative Pros and Cons, Force Field Analysis, Paired Comparison Analysis, and Cost/Benefit Analysis are among those that could help.

If such techniques have not been used already, they may help make a much more objective decision or evaluation. Gain agreement within

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the team about which techniques to use, and how to go about the further analysis and evaluation.

By considering the facts, assumptions, beliefs and decision making that lead to other people's positions, the group will gain a better understanding of those positions. Not only can this reveal new areas of agreement, it can also reveal new ideas and solutions that make the best of each position and perspective.

Take care to remain open, rather than criticize or judge the perceptions and assumptions of other people. Listen to all solutions and ideas presented by the various sides of the conflict. Everyone needs to feel heard and acknowledged if a workable solution is to be reached.

- **Convene back as a team** – After the group dialogue, each side is likely to be much closer to reaching agreement. The process of uncovering facts and assumptions allows people to step away from their emotional attachments and see the issue more objectively. When you separate alliances, the fire of conflict can burn out quickly, and it is much easier to see the issue and facts laid bare.

Step 3: Reach Agreement

Now that all parties understand the others' positions, the team must decide what decision or course of action to take. With the facts and assumptions considered, it's easier to see the best of action and reach agreement.

In our example, the team agrees that TV advertising is the best approach. It has had undeniably great results in the past and there is no data to show that will change. The message of the advertising will promote the website and direct consumers there. This meets Mary and Beth's concern about using the website for promotions: they assumed that TV advertising would disregard it.

If further analysis and evaluation is required, agree what needs to be done, by when and by whom, and so plan to reach agreement within a particular timescale. If appropriate, define which decision making and evaluation tools are to be employed.

If such additional work is required, the agreement at this stage is to

the approach itself: Make sure the team is committed to work with the outcome of the proposed analysis and evaluation.

Tip:

When conflict is resolved take time to celebrate and acknowledge the contributions everyone made toward reaching a solution. This can build team cohesion and confidence in their problem solving skills, and can help avert further conflict.

This three-step process can help solve team conflict efficiently and effectively. The basis of the approach is gaining understanding of the different perspectives and using that understanding to expand your own thoughts and beliefs about the issue.

Preventing Conflict

As well as being able to handle conflict when it arises, teams need to develop ways of preventing conflict from becoming damaging. Team members can learn skills and behavior to help this. Here are some of the key ones to work on:

- Dealing with conflict immediately – avoid the temptation to ignore it.
- Being open – if people have issues, they need to be expressed immediately and not allowed to fester.
- Practicing clear communication – articulate thoughts and ideas clearly.
- Practicing active listening – paraphrasing, clarifying, questioning.
- Practicing identifying assumptions – asking yourself “why” on a regular basis.
- Not letting conflict get personal – stick to facts and issues, not personalities.
- Focusing on actionable solutions – don’t belabor what can’t be changed.
- Encouraging different points of view – insist on honest dialogue and expressing feelings.
- Not looking for blame – encourage ownership of the problem and solution.
- Demonstrating respect – if the situation escalates, take a break and wait for emotions to subside.

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- Keeping team issues within the team – talking outside allows conflict to build and fester, without being dealt with directly.

GSC Library Article:

Sackton, F. (1993). How to plan and conduct effective meetings. *Armed Forces Comptroller*, 38(4), 28.

<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=9410050793&site=eds-live>

Key Points

Conflict can be constructive as long as it is managed and dealt with directly and quickly. By respecting differences between people, being able to resolve conflict when it does happen, and also working to prevent it, you will be able to maintain a healthy and creative team atmosphere. The key is to remain open to other people's ideas, beliefs, and assumptions. When team members learn to see issues from the other side, it opens up new ways of thinking, which can lead to new and innovative solutions, and healthy team performance.

Groups and teams have a powerful influence on the success and failure of an organization. If the group perceives itself as being cohesive, it will be much more likely to succeed. The success of groups is influenced by group size and cohesiveness, status, values, and norms of members. The changing dynamics of today's global workplace creates an environment in which a mix of age, gender, nationality, and other demographics present a challenge for both an organization's employees and leadership.

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Chapter 9: Communicating Gender at Work



Gender at Work brings together new knowledge on deep structures of inequality and discriminatory social norms with innovative approaches and tools to transform them in organizations and communities.

<https://genderatwork.org/>

Women's rapid movement into the paid labor market over the past century has had an impact on child-rearing, marriage, gender equality, and the labor market itself. Whereas in the past most women devoted their time to caring for their families, women's life courses are now shaped by the combined influences of family and work. In the early 21st century, women in the workplace experience many opportunities, but there are still key issues and challenges.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/256737792_Gender_in_the_workplace

Michael Kimmel makes the surprising, funny, practical case for treating men and women equally in the workplace and at home.

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It's not a zero-sum game, but a win-win that will result in more opportunity and more happiness for everybody.

<https://www.ted.com/talks/>

michael_kimmel_why_gender_equality_is_good_for_everyone_men_included

Chapters 10 and 13: Communicating Difference at Work; Globalization and Democracy



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How would you deal with Japanese customers? How would you behave when invited to dinner by a Moroccan customer? Is there any kind of basic “international business behavior”? Would you be able to work for a German company? What about the American way of dealing with the working force? Any businessperson should have an answer for each one of these questions. Daily practice often shows professionals that working abroad or in an international setting is harder than expected beforehand and that academic contents do not seem basic in some specific situations, as in some of those expressed above. It is crucial to learn how to deal with difficult moments that many business people often have when working in an international setting. This week our readings should provide a simple introduction to the art of communicating effectively for business purposes.

By the end of the 20th century, 80 percent of U.S. products were

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competing in international markets. The direct investment of foreign-based companies grew from \$9 trillion in 1966 to more than \$300 trillion in 2002. Many products we assume are American, such as Purina Dog Chow and KitKat candy bars, are made overseas. Brands we may think are international, Grey Poupon mustard, Michelin tires and Evian water, are made in the United States.

For managers, having international experience is rapidly moving from “desirable” to “essential.” A study by the Columbia University School of Business reported that successful executives must have multi-environment and multinational experience to become CEOs in the 21st century. The ability to compete in the global economy is the single greatest challenge facing business today. Organizations will want to negotiate, buy and sell overseas, consider joint ventures, market and adapt products for an international market and improve their expatriates’ success rate. All of this involves communication.

Etiquette, manners, and cross cultural, or intercultural communication have become critical elements required for all International and Global Business executives, managers, and employees. As international, multinational, transnational, multi domestic, and global business continues to expand and bring people closer, the most important element of successful business outcomes may be the appreciation and respect for regional, country, and cultural differences.

Learning the skills of proper etiquette, manners, and intercultural communication is very important when conducting business in another culture. In recent years practitioners in a wide variety of fields—scientific cooperation, academic research, business, management, education, healthcare, politics, diplomacy, development, and others—have realized just how important intercultural communication is for their everyday work. Fast travel, international media, and the Internet have made it easy for us to communicate with people all over the world. The process of economic globalization means that we cannot function in isolation but must interact with the rest of the world for survival. The global nature of many widely diverse modern problems and issues call for cooperation between nations. Intercultural communication is no longer an option, but a necessity.

Because important decisions in business usually affect citizens of more than one nation, the question of whether communication between people of different nations is effective and whether all parties emerge with the same understanding is of crucial importance. Individuals who deal with people from other cultures want to learn how to improve their performance through improving their communication skills. Numerous resources have sprung up to meet this emerging market in the business, academic and international relations communities: leading authors have written books and articles on the topic; business services provide consultation for improving the conduct of international business; universities and other educational institutions offer programs or degrees in Intercultural Communication; and researchers have established international journals and academic societies specializing in research on intercultural communication.

Working in a global team and dealing with business partners or customers across cultures raises challenges and demands new attitudes and skills. Without the right approach, cultural differences greatly reduce effectiveness in the early stages of a relationship. But active management of the internationalization process and a conscious effort to acquire new skills will release fresh sources of competitive advantage.

In a world that is increasingly interconnected, the success of organizations and their people depends on effective cross-cultural communication.

In all these contacts, there is communication which needs to be as constructive as possible, without misunderstandings and breakdowns. Research on the nature of linguistic and cultural similarities and differences can play a positive and constructive role.

Lack of knowledge of another culture can lead, at the best, to embarrassing or amusing mistakes in communication. At the worst, such mistakes may confuse or even offend the people we wish to communicate with, making the conclusion of business deals or international agreements difficult or impossible.

Donnell King of Pellissippi State Technical Community College provides some examples from the advertising world of how simply

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translating words is not enough—deeper understanding of the other culture is necessary to translate meaning effectively.

Products have failed overseas sometimes simply because a name may take on unanticipated meanings in translation:

- Pepsi Cola's "Come Alive With Pepsi" campaign, when it was translated for the Taiwanese market, conveyed the unsettling news that, "Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the grave."
- Parker Pen could not advertise its famous "Jotter" ballpoint pen in some languages because the translation sounded like "jockstrap" pen.
- One American airline operating in Brazil advertised that it had plush "rendezvous lounges" on its jets, unaware that in Portuguese (the language of Brazil) "rendezvous" implies a special room for having sex.
- The Olympic copier Roto in Chile (roto in Spanish means 'broken')
- The Chevy Nova in Puerto Rico (no va means 'doesn't go')
- A General Motors auto ad with "Body by Fisher" became "Corpse by Fisher" in Flemish.
- A Colgate-Palmolive toothpaste named "Cue" was advertised in France before anyone realized that *Cue* also happened to be the name of a widely circulated pornographic book about oral sex.

This type of mishap is not an American monopoly: A successful European chocolate and fruit product was introduced into the U.S. with the unfortunate name "Zit."

Naming a product is communication at its simplest level. The overall implications of intercultural communication for global business are enormous. Take the case of Euro Disney, later renamed Disneyland Paris. For the year 1993, the theme park lost approximately US \$1 billion. Losses were still at US \$1 million a day in 1994-95. There were many reasons for this, including a recession in Europe, but intercultural insensitivity was also a very important factor. No attention was paid to the European context or to cultural differences in management practice, labor relations, or even such simple matters as preferred dining

hours or availability of alcohol and tobacco. Euro Disney signals the danger for business practitioners immersed in financial forecasting, market studies and management models when they overlook how culture affects behavior. Few things are more important to conducting business on a global scale than skill in intercultural communication.

For all these reasons, communication is crucial to business. Specialized business knowledge is important, but not enough to guarantee success. Communication skills are vital.

TED TALK: Valerie Hoeks: Cultural Difference in Business



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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How many multinational corporations can you name?
What is the potential impact of their product (s) in countries like China or India (or in other specific countries)?

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2. Can your workplace be considered multicultural? Why or why not?
3. At your job (now or in the past), how did you refer to your boss, and vice versa? Is this indicative of a low or high power distance value?
4. Can you think of any examples of differences related to individualism or collectivism leading to intercultural communication conflicts on the job?
5. How do you view work? Is hard work a virtue or a necessary evil?
6. How might different attitudes toward work lead to intercultural communication conflicts?
7. Have you communicated with someone with limited English proficiency? What strategies did you use? Are there any other strategies that you wish you had thought of then?
8. What did the authors mean when they said, “To have good intercultural business communication, people need to slow down and sneak up on information”?
9. How do the communication styles of honesty and harmony differ?
10. What are some of the etiquette roles at your place of business?
11. How do you feel about affirmative action policies? Do you think they are helpful or harmful to minorities?
12. What are some of the reasons companies address affirmative action and diversity issues?

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<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=59220340&site=eds-live>

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Chapter 11: Leadership Communication in the New Workplace and Crisis Communication



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A communication network refers to how information flows within the organization. Information within an organization generally flows through a system, rather than being a free flow. Communication networks are regular patterns of person-to-person relationships through which information flows in an organization. This means that the flow of information is managed, regulated, and structured. Communication networks may be formal or informal.

Formal Communication Network – A formal communication network is one which is created by management and described with the help of an organizational chart. An organizational chart specifies the hierarchy and the reporting system in the organization. Therefore, in a formal network, information is passed on only through official

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channels such as memos, bulletins and intranet (email within the organization).

The organizational chart implies that information can flow in any of three directions – vertically, i.e., upward or downward, and horizontally.

1. Upward Communication – This may be defined as information that flows from subordinates to superiors. Some of the reasons for upward communication include discussing work related problems, giving suggestions for improvement and sharing feelings about the job and co-workers.

This type of communication has both benefits and disadvantages. One of the biggest benefits is problem-solving. Once a subordinate has brought a problem to his superior's notice, chances are that the problem will not recur, since the subordinate learns from his superior how to tackle it the next time. Thus, his ability to solve new problems and therefore his managerial ability, improves. Another benefit that could arise from upward communication is that valuable ideas and suggestions may sometimes come from lower level employees. Therefore organizations should encourage this kind of communication. A third benefit is that employees learn to accept the decisions of management and thereby work as a team.

The biggest problem associated with this type of communication is that it may lead to “handing down” of decisions by superiors. When subordinates frequently seek the superior's guidance, the latter may adopt an authoritarian approach and merely give instructions, disregarding the subordinate's opinion completely.

Jim Hemerling: 5 ways to Lead in an Era of Constant Change



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You can view it online here: <https://granite.pressbooks.pub/organizationalcommunication/?p=50>

1. **Downward Communication** – This may be defined as information that flows from superiors to subordinates. The most common reasons for downward communication are for giving job instructions, explaining company rules, policies and procedures and giving feedback regarding job performance. A number of studies have indicated that regular downward communication in the form of feedback given to employees is the most important factor affecting job satisfaction. Therefore organizations today are trying to encourage more of this type of communication. There are both benefits and disadvantages associated with this type of communication. Downward communication that provides regular feedback will be beneficial if the feedback or review of performance is constructive. A constructive review is one where a manager “counsels” an employee, or advises him on how to improve his performance. On the other hand, a destructive review can destroy employee morale and confidence. Regular downward communication also creates a climate of transparency or openness, where information is passed on through official channels, rather than through

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rumors. Thirdly, downward communication boosts employee morale, since it indicates that management is involved in their progress.

The problems with this type of communication are the danger of doing destructive reviews, as mentioned, and that of “message overload.” This means that superiors many sometimes burden their subordinates with too many instructions, leading to confusion.

1. Horizontal Communication – This type of communication is also known as “lateral” communication. It may be defined as communication that takes place between co-workers in the same department, or in different departments, with different areas of responsibility. For example, Sales Managers and Advertising Managers in the Marketing department, or Marketing Managers and Finance Managers. The reasons for this type of communication are for coordination of tasks, sharing of information regarding goals of the organization, resolving interpersonal or work related problems and building rapport.

The biggest potential benefit of horizontal communication is the sense of teamwork that is created. Regular communication of this type ensures that all co-workers work together towards achieving a common goal in the overall interest of the organization. The biggest potential problem is that conflicts such as ego clashes are bound to arise, when co-workers at the same level communicate on a regular basis.

In spite of these problems, horizontal or lateral communication has become more important in today’s business scenario than upward or downward communication. This is because the “organizational pyramid” indicating the different hierarchies or levels in an organization has flattened. This is illustrated by the diagrams given below.

Informal Communication Network – Another name for informal networks is the “grapevine”. In this type of network, information does not flow in a particular direction, as we have seen with formal networks. The information is also not passed on through official channels such as memos, notices or bulletin boards. The information

need not be circulated within the organization, but could be passed on outside the work environment, wherever co-workers or colleagues meet socially. Thus, informal networks are based more on friendship, shared personal or career interests.

Example – Co-workers may meet outside the work environment at a company picnic, party or a car pool and discuss areas of common interest that may or may not be work related. Information may then be passed on to each other about happenings in the company, such as layoffs, the company's plans for acquisitions and so on.

This type of informal network is not just for idle rumors and may be useful in many ways. First of all, it sometimes fills in the “transparency gaps” left by formal networks. Such gaps usually occur during times of crisis such as strikes or layoffs. The strikes and layoffs may not be officially announced. Secondly, it may help to confirm important information, such as the fact that the company is going in for a major acquisition. Thirdly, the grapevine can be used for a constructive purpose by the organization.

Example – The government could get the press to publish news in the local paper that there is going to be a petrol price hike soon, just to test the reactions of the general public. If the reaction is negative, then the news may be withdrawn on the basis that it is just a rumor. Similarly, organizations could deliberately plant proposals in the minds of their employees, just to test their reactions.

Given that informal communication networks have their advantages, they should not be suppressed as rumors. On the contrary, competent managers should accept the informal network. At the same time, they should make efforts to counter false rumors and to ensure transparency through the formal network. This means making all types of information – both positive and negative, available to everyone in the organization through official channels.

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[http://search.ebscohost.com/
login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=4297575&site=eds-live](http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=4297575&site=eds-live)

Simon Sinek: Why Good Leaders Make you Feel Safe



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To conclude, it should be remembered that both formal and informal networks should be cultivated and allowed to co-exist, so that information of all types flows freely to all levels in the organization.

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A crisis is the ultimate unplanned activity and the ultimate test for managers. In a time of crisis, conventional management practices are inadequate and ways of responding usually insufficient. This author, a communications practitioner with global experience, details a well-managed crisis response that will leave stakeholders with a favorable impression and renewed confidence in the affected company.

GSC Library Article:

Kim, Y. (2015). Toward an Ethical Model of Effective Crisis Communication. *Business &*

Society Review (00453609), 120(1), 57-81.

[http://search.ebscohost.com/
login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=101349429&site=eds-live](http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=101349429&site=eds-live)

Few circumstances test a company's reputation or competency as severely as a crisis. Whether the impact is immediate or sustained over months and years, a crisis affects stakeholders within and outside of a company. Customers cancel orders. Employees raise questions. Directors are questioned. Shareholders get antsy. Competitors sense opportunity. Governments and regulators come knocking. Interest groups smell blood. Lawyers are not far behind.

As the ultimate unplanned activity, a crisis does not lend itself to conventional “command and control” management practices. In fact, some of the techniques for managing a crisis may fly in the face of conventional notions of planning, testing and execution. Preparation and sound judgment are critical for survival.

Since the Tylenol crisis of the 1980s (unknown parties tampered with bottles of the product), the concept of crisis management has become a specialized activity in the domains of communications and public relations. Companies have come to recognize crisis communications capabilities as a vital part of their risk management and business continuity strategies.

National Public Relations has been on the front lines of some of the highest-profile crises in Canada and beyond, for more than 30 years. We have devoted many more hours to helping companies avoid, manage and recover from a crisis. This information encapsulates our strategy for survival.

1. Crisis prevention: The case for issues management

The first task is to identify crisis risks or to recognize a crisis when it breaks out.

From a communications standpoint, a crisis is a business or organizational problem that is exposed to public attention, and that threatens a company’s reputation and its ability to conduct business.

A crisis can take on many forms, including natural or man-made disasters, environmental spills, product tampering or recalls, labor disruptions or criminal acts, to name a few. What makes them a crisis is the fact that they are the focus of intense media scrutiny.

Although some risks are beyond a company’s control, others can be foreseen. Research shows that the vast majority of crises arise when companies fail to identify a potentially contentious issue at an earlier, more benign, stage, and to develop a plan of action to manage the issue before the issue manages them.

An issue can fester for months, maybe years, until events and circumstances intersect and propel it to centre stage on the public agenda. In some cases, an issue may have been badly handled, and as a result, has escalated to the brink of becoming a crisis. Examples include:

- A major pharmaceutical company recalls a product that has proven to have adverse side effects. Relentless media attention reveals that the company had known for years about scientific studies that questioned those side effects.
- A brokerage firm, steeped in its own male macho culture, routinely subjects female employees to embarrassing or degrading working conditions, and ignores the most reasonable of complaints, until an employee launches a lawsuit and gains the support of women's organizations nationwide.
- A company's blue-chip board, having confidence in its high-profile CEO, rubber-stamps his recommendations, until a whistle-blower reveals shenanigans within the company that lead to a special audit and an OSC investigation.

A coordinated approach to issues management can help an organization effectively identify and anticipate potential issues, prevent crises from developing, and influence their evolution and outcome.

The first step is to conduct an issues audit— an inventory of a company's vulnerabilities and the critical issues it is likely to confront. The task for companies in highly regulated sectors, like energy or pharmaceuticals, is more obvious than for other, less visible enterprises.

Within the company, a series of interviews with senior management is conducted. Business plans, processes, relationships and previous experience are analyzed. Key contacts in the industry, media and oversight functions are identified, and existing communications plans inspected for relevance.

Outside the company, media analysis, legislative tracking, industry reports, polls and surveys all help to bring potential threats to the surface.

Once a framework is established, the critical issues should be identified and prioritized in order of magnitude and likelihood of occurrence.

After the communications audit is complete, an issues manual is developed. This document details critical issues, the history and context of company involvement with them, and the company's position on each one. If the issues have seeped into the public domain at any point,

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the level of visibility should be described, and allies and adversaries identified.

Some examples of issues that faced companies in recent years and escalated into crises include:

- Canadians' penchant for bank-bashing was the context in which the country's major banks unsuccessfully attempted to merge with each other;
- Advocacy groups raised red flags about unknown risks in producing and consuming genetically modified organisms before GMO-based products were sprung on the market;
- Heavy industrial emitters knew of Canada's intention to ratify the ill-conceived Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change years before they expressed their views on its economic impact;
- Labor groups and others had been advocating better working conditions in the Third World before ethical sourcing became a mainstream concern for retailers.

Creating a crisis communications plan

The issues audit becomes the front end of a company's crisis communications plan, and arguably, the most important document in the plan. As a complement to a company's emergency procedures, the crisis plan should contain detailed communications response procedures in the event that any of the potential crises identified in the communications audit, or unforeseen external events, come to pass.

The following is a checklist of the contents of a good crisis communications plan:

- Names and contact information of the crisis team/spokespeople. People need to know who holds responsibility for leading the organization through the crisis.
- Crisis triage. Understanding what level of "crisis" you're facing. Establishing criteria to decide when a minor incident has the potential to become a national crisis can be a challenge.
- "First response. What information has top priority? How will you initially respond to media?
- Alert/ notification procedures. Who needs to get

information, and in what order of priority? By phone, e-mail, pager or fax?

- Situation room. Assess the physical space that will be the nerve centre for managing the crisis, including the required hardware and software, staffing, location and layout.
- Stakeholder communications. How do you plan to communicate with customers, shareholders, employees, government and the media?
- Contact lists. Include the “inputs (which media outlets and Internet message boards should be monitored, which opinion leaders should be kept track of, etc.) and “outputs” (which journalists should be contacted, which newspapers and television programs should be approached, which media outlets need to hear your story).
- Template responses. Standardized format, language and protocol for all communications.

Access to the crisis plan is essential. Many companies now maintain both print and electronic versions for ease of access and remote retrieval.

Testing the plan

In order to ensure that the messages contained in the crisis plan are delivered effectively and with credibility, and that the plan can be carried out, it needs to be tested. This is where crisis training and simulations come in, as well as media training.

Crisis training is best delivered by outside trainers who take participants through crisis theory and its practical applications to their industry or company. The crisis plan is reviewed and implemented in a simulated crisis to assess the organization’s preparedness, and to identify areas that need improvement. Did the crisis response, when played out, escalate or solve the crisis?

1. Crisis Management: “Plan for the worst; hope for the best”

Despite the best planning and foresight, organizations inevitably find themselves in a crisis from time to time.

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- An oil company's head office receives a media call asking for its reaction to the bombing of its pipeline in Central America, before the company itself has even heard the first report from the field.
- A packaged goods company learns it is being sued by disgruntled consumers.
- A delivery truck driver for a hazardous waste company calls his dispatcher to report he's been in an accident and spilled his load of chemicals in a densely populated part of town.

Research has discovered common internal reactions when the issue first breaks.

The first casualty of a crisis is perspective. Characteristically, the pattern is one of escalation, with the initial response being surprise, itself the result of a lack of information.

Before the company knows about the incident, cameras are on the scene. In the absence of real information, an organization cannot respond meaningfully. However, that doesn't stop media from reporting on it live, minute by minute.

As events escalate, management senses a loss of control over the issue. Intense scrutiny by the media, regulators, stakeholders and competitors breeds a siege mentality, tempting a company to batten down the hatches and say nothing at the very time the media is pounding at their door.

Panic sets in. Business planning horizons change from years into hours. Management attention is focused entirely on getting through the next interview.

External reactions mirror these internal dynamics. Initially, an incident may attract the interest of only a small constituency.

- Reports out of a small town indicate residents are concerned about the quality of its water supply.
- An obscure illness begins to affect a marginalized group of citizens.
- A scientific journal questions the safety of technology used in a popular consumer product.

As the hours and days pass, media reports breed a wider concern as

other stakeholders become aware of the impact of the situation on them. Curiosity turns into concern and anxiety.

The absence of an adequate response by the players involved breeds anger and fear and invites a desire in others to retaliate for what is seen as wrongdoing. Stakeholders begin demanding answers. They want to strike back, with the view that someone has to “pay” for the consequences. Sooner rather than later, an organization loses the public trust and goodwill upon which its business has been built. Market share begins to erode. Stock prices drop. Government orders an inquiry.

Assessing a crisis

One of the most vital skills a company can possess is the ability to determine if, when and at what level of importance a crisis has struck:

- Is this a crisis, or is it simply a continuing business problem coming to the surface?
- Is it confined to a local area, or does it have the potential to become a situation of national or international importance?
- Has someone verified the incident or crisis?
- What are the legal implications?
- What level of resources will be required to manage it?

TED TALK: Melissa Agnes: The Secret to Successful Crisis Management in the 21st Century



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So what's to be done? Ten rules for crisis management

1. **Respect the role of the media.** The media are not the enemy; they have direct access to the audiences you need to reach. Rather than avoiding media, use them as a conduit to communicate key messages. Prepare a statement that includes the confirmed facts; communicate what the company is doing and provide background information.
2. **Communicate, communicate, communicate.** The first rule of crisis management is to communicate. Early hours are critical and they set the tone for the duration of the crisis. The media's first questions are likely to be simple and predictable:

- What happened?
- Where?
- When did you know of the problem?

Chapter 11: Leadership Communication in the New Workplace and Crisis Communication 101

- What are you doing about it?
- Who's to blame?
- Were there warning signs?
- How will life or property be protected or compensated?

Be as forthright as possible; tell what you know and when you became aware of it; explain who is involved and what is being done to fix the situation. Be sure to correct misinformation promptly when it emerges.

- In the aftermath of the 9/11 tragedy, New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani held a press conference in the ruins of Lower Manhattan that afternoon. In the coming days, he became the reassuring voice of calm for worried residents of the city.
- In the hours, days and months after the 1998 crash of Swissair 111 in Nova Scotia, the Transportation Safety Board of Canada held a series of media updates on the status of the crash investigation, and provided regular safety alerts to the international aviation community.
- When Pepsi-Cola heard first reports of syringes being found in soft drink bottles in 1993 — which turned out to be hoaxes — it launched a broad communications offensive to reassure consumers. Tactics included media relations and interviews, company open houses, video news releases, third-party endorsement and consumer hotlines.

Remaining silent or appearing removed, perhaps on the advice of legal counsel, tends to enrage the public and other stakeholders. A balanced communications strategy must be developed that protects corporate liability while satisfying the demands of today's information and media dynamic.

As demanding as the public may be, they are usually inclined to give an organization the benefit of the doubt in the early hours of a crisis. They judge a company and its leaders not by the incident itself — which they recognize is often beyond the control of those individuals — but by their response.

1. Take responsibility. One of the more controversial tenets of crisis management is that someone involved in a crisis

must be prepared to empathize, even publicly apologize, for the events that have transpired. This is different from accepting blame. Taking responsibility means communicating what an organization is doing to remedy a situation that the media and the public have determined involve that organization in some way.

2. **Centralize information.** A company needs to move quickly to gain control over information and the resolution of the crisis. Ensure that appropriate levels of management are updated with information from a wide variety of sources (media coverage, analyst comments, competitive intelligence, managers' first-hand reports, etc.).

3. **Establish a crisis team.** Create and train the crisis team before a crisis strikes, and establish a situation room. During a crisis, when everyone goes into action, be sure the team has access to the highest levels of management.

4. **"Plan for the worst; hope for the best."** Assume the worst-case scenario. Develop contingencies for the hours and days ahead, forecast possible consequences and determine plans of action.

5. **Communicate with employees.** Remember that employees are your front-line "ambassadors" in a crisis. Be sure they are aware of what the company is doing to deal with the situation.

6. **Third parties.** Use third parties to speak on your behalf. Third parties act as character witnesses and often carry more credibility than the organization at the centre of a crisis.

7. **Use research to determine responses.** Polling, market research and focus groups provide essential insight into the magnitude of a crisis and public attitudes about where hidden issues may lie. Monitor the Internet, chat rooms and blogs.

8. **Create a website** – If circumstances warrant, create a website to give quick, up-to-the-minute information and get the company's story out.

1. Crisis recovery: Regaining trust

As the crisis comes under control, a company should examine the impact the incident has had on its brand(s) and reputation. If the brand has taken a hit, a company may need to give consumers a reason to trust them again.

Companies should consider a broad range of potential communication initiatives to restore trust and loyalty.

- Following a recall of millions of cases of beer that may have contained a few bottles tainted with caustic cleaning material, a major brewery ran ads in newspapers across Canada, assuring consumers the problem was rectified and offering them coupons redeemable for a free beer.
- A major appliance company weathered controversy following the closure of a manufacturing facility that saw hundreds lose their jobs. The company ran a major public relations and advertising campaign to remind customers that it continued to have an active presence in the country, and was here for the long haul.
- An international mining company seeks to restore normalcy to an overseas site that has been occupied by demonstrators and attracted an international backlash. The company begins a real effort at stakeholder communications and engagement, learning to work with its staunchest critics.

An entire arsenal of public relations techniques can be called upon, from media relations, internal communications, and thought-leadership initiatives to comprehensive corporate social responsibility programs.

Public opinion surveys can track changes in attitudes towards a company in the weeks and months after reputation-focused programs are launched.

Weathering a crisis: The last word

Most lectures on crisis management point out that the Chinese expression for crisis, *wei ji*, is a combination of two words: danger and opportunity. While no company would willingly submit itself to the dangers inherent in a crisis, the company that weathers a crisis well understands that opportunity can come out of adversity. A well-managed crisis response, coupled with an effective recovery program,

will leave stakeholders with a favorable impression and renewed confidence in the affected company.

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Chapter 12: Branding and Consumption



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Lifestyle has a great impact on consumer behavior and brand preferences. Very often, consumers tend to choose brands that are considered “appropriate” for their self-image. Accordingly, companies will try to position their brands in order to fit into consumers’ lifestyle. In addition to expressing their identity through the everyday choices they make, consumers will often seek new ways in which they can express their personal identity. As a result, consumers can use brands as a relevant mean of self-expression and also as a lifestyle “beacon”.

Do mundane daily choices, such as what brands to buy in a supermarket, reflect aspects of our values and ideologies? Check out this article for research on this topic!

The Psychology And Philosophy Of Branding, Marketing, Needs, And Actions

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/work-in-progress/2014/03/05/the-psychology-and-philosophy-of-branding-marketing-needs-and-actions/#56f68299725a>

The following web resources will allow you to explore this topic area in greater depth:

1. This is the official website of the National Federation of Independent Business. This link is the Small Business Branding and Image resource site, which includes research, best practices and other business resources.

<http://www.nfib.com/business-resources/marketing-advertising/branding-image/>

2. This is the official website for the Association of Image Consultants International (AICI). The AICI is the leading and largest professional association of personal and corporate image consultants worldwide. A non-profit organization, AICI is dedicated to advancing the level of professionalism and enhancing the recognition of image consultants.

<https://www.aici.org/default.aspx>

The Future of Branding is Personal | Talaya Waller | TEDxPSU

Did you know the average employee has ten times the amount of followers as their company on social media? In a post-recession economy where innovation continues to disrupt the way we do business, corporations have turned to personal branding to help build consumer trust. In this engaging and insightful talk, personal branding expert Dr. Talaya Waller discusses the power that is unleashed when corporations and consumers alike develop brands that are authentic and personal. Dr. Waller is an award-winning marketing scholar and

international speaker whose mission is to help leaders share their story, leverage their expertise and make a positive impact on society. As founder and CEO of Waller & Company, Dr. Waller works with executives, entrepreneurs, and public figures from a variety of industries in the U.S. and abroad to develop awareness and credibility for their brand. She is featured in publications such as Forbes, Fast Company, The Huffington Post, Business Insider, and The Chronicle of Higher Education. Dr. Talaya Waller is an international personal branding consultant, speaker, and award-winning research scholar. Her consultancy helps thought-leaders build influence and credibility for their personal brand. Dr. Waller's mission is to help people share their story, leverage expertise, and make a positive impact on society. She has a Doctorate in Business Administration with a concentration in Leadership and is presently researching personal branding. Dr. Waller has an online presence of over 35,000 followers and is published in Forbes, Fast Company, and The Chronicle of Higher Education. This talk was given at a TEDx event using the TED conference format but independently organized by a local community.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qEHL8eLJCkc>

Chapter 14: Communication, Meaningful Work, and Personal Identity



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TED TALK: Sarah Magill: Opening New Organizational Communication Loops



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Organizations communicate in two directions: internally to staff and externally to clients, customers, shareholders, stakeholders, the media. Faulty internal communications can lead to mistakes, discouraged and unhappy staff, employees leaving the company. Poor external communications can jeopardize image and sales. It really is that simple. Any overall management strategy needs a communications plan or the whole operation might fail.

A communications audit analyzes an organization's practices to reveal how effective they are—throughout a whole company or in specified parts of the organization. It can pinpoint problem areas such as frequent misunderstandings, information blocks, information lacks, information duplication, misrepresentation. An audit could be part of a periodic health check but it is especially helpful at a time of change: a merger or acquisition, launch of a new product or service, entry into new markets, for example.

The exact nature of the audit will depend on the type of organization and its particular needs and problems. But it will certainly aim to identify target audiences: the external audience will have different needs from an internal one. It will need to identify the key messages that need to be communicated and the channels that exist for conveying them. It will look not only at the communications that the organization makes but also how it receives them.

But what might be going wrong, with external communications, say? Let me give an example here. My husband is a shareholder in a building company. Every year it produces a glossy Annual Report that it sends to shareholders. The report is extremely detailed and full of lavish photographs. It clearly costs a lot to produce and distribute. This makes my husband very angry. He doesn't want to read the full report and resents the money that is wasted on producing and sending a document that goes straight in the bin. What he would like is a leaflet summarizing the salient points about the company's performance and changes. Does the company realize that some shareholders feel this way? It is important to bear in mind that most shareholders are not able to attend shareholder meetings and may not know how to make their views known. This company has a two-way problem. The communications it sends out are wrong for some shareholders but it has not thought about a way of creating a channel for the shareholders to give their feedback. It is thus breaking a fundamental rule of effective communications: you must have feedback.

Or take an internal issue. The HR department of a company gives out a detailed instruction manual to new employees. Yet many of the newly hired people seem completely lost during their first weeks. Why might this be? Well, in the first place, the employees are mostly involved in manual work. They are not used to reading chunks of written material. Most of the manuals lie unopened in their lockers. A buddy scheme of some kind would probably be a much better way of easing the new people through the first weeks.

Another example comes from a small company in which everybody was under pressure to meet deadlines. The director of the company made a habit of telephoning staff for briefings at lunchtime because he knew they 'weren't busy' then. But that was the point. They were

having lunch. The amount of resentment he caused by this policy of disturbing people during the precious few minutes they had to relax was enormous.

Communicating is a complex process with potential pitfalls at each stage. Is the message clear? Is the medium for transmitting it appropriate? Has the recipient actually received it? If so, has it been understood? Has it had the desired effect? Does the recipient have a channel for feedback? Can the recipient understand how to provide the feedback? The old metaphor of the Chinese whisper holds true. You thought you said one thing but when you check you find that a totally different message was actually received.

The audit is a systematic approach that forces an organization to look at what it is really doing as opposed to what it believes it is doing. The audit will look at the people who send and receive messages; the means of communicating—which extend beyond the obvious use of the telephone, meetings, conferences, e-mail etc. to encompass dress code, office layouts, desk-tidy policies—in order to build up a comprehensive picture of what is happening. Every aspect of communication provides another piece of the jigsaw and, once this is complete, you have the basis for an evaluation.

The evaluation report will consider attitudes towards the communications (do people look forward to meetings or consider them a waste of time?); it will look at the needs of different groups (the most appropriate way to deliver training, for example) and it will provide evidence of any problems that need to be addressed.

However, it is important to evaluate the audit within a relevant framework. For this reason, key people will have to clarify the purpose for the organization's existence, its cultural values and its identity. For example, the communications strategy for a budget airline will be very different from one which targets business executives. The two companies will have different purposes, values and identities. They will know exactly who uses their service and why. They will also understand the key frustrations of their customers and must ensure they can use communications to deal with those frustrations effectively.

The audit is thus a valuable tool for enhancing internal motivation, loyalty and efficiency and for beefing up market position. It can be

handled internally but there are also benefits from using an external consultant. Employees might feel inhibited about expressing their real view to another company member, whereas an outsider, who guarantees their anonymity, will be less of a threat.

GSC Library Article:

Zwijze-Koning, K. H., & de Jong, M. T. (2015). Network Analysis as a Communication Audit Instrument: Uncovering

Communicative Strengths and Weaknesses Within Organizations. *Journal Of Business & Technical Communication*, 29(1), 36-60.

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Adam Grant: Creativity



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Once upon a time, in a faraway kingdom, there was a salesman who traveled the countryside, peddling his wares. Everyone loved his product except the evil king, who wanted to do away with it. One day the king said, "This product is ruining my kingdom and I want to destroy it. If anyone has a reason for why this product should live, let him come hither and speak now." Out of the crowd came a voice. "I think this product is great and I can prove it," said the brave salesman. "Then come to my palace tomorrow morning and prove to me why this is so," said the king. And so the salesman went home and prepared PowerPoint slide after PowerPoint slide filled with endless statistics and dizzying market projection graphs.

On the morrow, the salesman turned up at the palace. "Show me why I should spare your miserable product," said the king. The salesman opened his trusty laptop and started to plow through his heaping deck of slides. Starting with a company background, the salesman went on to show market trend graphs, customer case studies, and then analyst quotes. The king began to squirm on his throne. When a return on investment spreadsheet appeared on slide 47, the king finally had enough. "Off with your head," said the king.

“Originally, I only wanted to kill your product, but this presentation is criminal.”

Funny story, but you get the point. The point is a message was delivered using a story, not a statistic or an analyst quote.

Much has been written lately about the efficacy of storytelling in the workplace. Most of it is based on a general feeling that stories “work.” Persuasion is the centerpiece of business activity. Trying to convince people with logic is tough for two reasons. One is they are arguing with you in their heads while you are making your argument. Second, if you do succeed in persuading them, you’ve done so only on an intellectual basis. That’s not good enough, because people are not inspired to act by reason alone.”

But there’s more proof of storytelling’s effectiveness than just anecdotal evidence. For example, studies carried out by Melanie C. Green and Timothy C. Brock at Ohio State University have empirically shown that people’s beliefs can be swayed more effectively through storytelling than through logical arguments. The researchers posit that persuasion is most effective when people are “transported” to another place using a story.

People are always telling stories; why don’t they do it at work? It’s because they have been taught that at work you use logic and slides and statistics; this seems more professional. Telling stories seems too emotional and possibly manipulative. So people stick to facts and numbers. But the truth is that real emotions always work better, because that is the way to reach hearts and minds, and also people get to see the real you. It’s authentic.

While we are all intuitively storytellers, where should professionals most often need to focus when telling stories in the workplace? Here are 10 tips for becoming a more effective storyteller at work:

1. Plan your story starting with the takeaway message. Think about what’s important to the audience. The ending is the most important point of the story. This is the message we want to deliver, and the one that will linger with the audience.
2. Keep your stories short for the workplace. Three to five

minutes long is about what people can digest in today's world.

3. Good stories are about challenge or conflict. Without these elements, stories aren't very interesting. The compelling part of a story is how people deal with conflict—so start with the people and the conflict.

4. Think about your story like a movie. Imagine you are screenwriter with a goal to get your message across. The story has to have a beginning, middle, and end.

5. Start with a person and his challenge, and intensify human interest by adding descriptions of time, place, and people with their emotions.

6. Be creative. Create a storyboard; draw it out, while listening to music or reading something for inspiration. A good story always has ups and downs, so “arc” the story. Pull people along, and introduce tension, just like in a fairy tale. (“From out of nowhere, the wolf jumps onto the path...”)

7. Intensify the story with vivid language and intonation. Tap into people's emotions with language. Use metaphors, idioms, and parables that have emotional associations

8. When using a story in a PowerPoint presentation, use appropriate graphics/pictures to convey your message. Stay away from text and complicated graphics. A single picture interlaced with emotional language will go a long way to convey your message.

9. Most of us have not told stories in front of an audience since English class in high school. So you will need to practice. Tell your story in front of a friendly audience and get feedback. Gauge your pace, and take note of the story's length and your use of language. It will be a bit rusty at first, but underneath it all, we are all born storytellers.

10. The most important point is to make the switch within; because once you internalize that today's “left-brain” communication style doesn't work very well and you realize that stories are how people really communicate, you will find it a lot easier to proceed...because it's authentic. And that is what really persuades.

Finally, in the words of Ira Glass, “Great stories happen to those who tell them.” So tell them...and live happily ever after.

Linda Hill: How to Manage for Collective Creativity



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GSC Library Article:

Amabile, T. M. (1997). Motivating Creativity in Organizations: ON DOING WHAT YOU LOVE AND LOVING WHAT YOU DO. *California Management Review*, 40(1), 39-58.

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