

COMPLEXITY IN THE WORKPLACE AND GUIDANCE FOR IMPROVING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

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Abstract: - Material and common understanding are sent from one person to another through the act of communication (transmission of information and common understanding). Communication between employees is essential for the establishment and maintenance of high-quality business relationships in organisations of all sizes. This article covers the communication process, as well as communication obstacles, and it offers recommendations for administrators looking to enhance the efficacy of communication.

Keywords: Administrators, Workplace, Guidelines, Communication, Effectiveness

Introduction

Communication is a method of conveying information to make known and understood by the other or those that is fundamental and essential to all administrative tasks (Sanchez & Guo, 2005). Effective communication is an art that must be performed at work for improved productivity and the successful accomplishment of an organization's objectives.

Administrators have significant communication challenges since they are accountable for delivering information that results in efficient and successful organisational performance. Communication is an essential subject to study since every administrative job and action includes some kind of direct or indirect communication. Administrators interact with and through others, whether they are planning and organising or leading and monitoring. This indicates that each individual's communication abilities have an impact on both personal and organisational performance (Brun, 2010; Summers, 2010). It is fair to infer that a lack of good communication is one of the most stifling factors to organisational performance (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2010). Good communication skills are critical for administrative success (Yate, 2009). As a result, it is critical for administrators to strive to become good communicators.

The purpose of this article is to explain the communication process and the significance of communication in the workplace, as well as to offer recommendations on how administrators may enhance their communication skills and effectiveness.

Communication

The process of transmitting information and mutual understanding from one person to another is known as communication (Keyton, 2011). Between the sender(s) and the receiver(s), it is the creation or exchange of thoughts, ideas, emotions, and understanding (s). It is necessary for establishing and maintaining professional relationships. Despite the fact that administrators spend the bulk of their time interacting (sending and receiving information), not all contacts are beneficial (Dunn, 2002). Many individuals believe that communication is complete after they send a note, letter, fax, or e-mail. Communication, on the other hand, does not begin until the sender and the intended receiver have exchanged information and understanding. Making oneself known in the way one wants to be known is an important part of communication. A receiver may be able to hear the sender but not understand what he or she is saying. An administrator's constant involvement in encoding and decoding messages does not indicate that he or she is a communication expert. Understanding is a matter of personal choice, and different people will interpret messages differently. Communication has not happened if the received idea is not the one intended; the sender has just spoken or written.

Process of Communication

The transmitter and the receiver are two essential components of every communication transaction. Figure 1 illustrates the concept and highlights the key components of the communication process (McShare & Von Glinow, 2003)

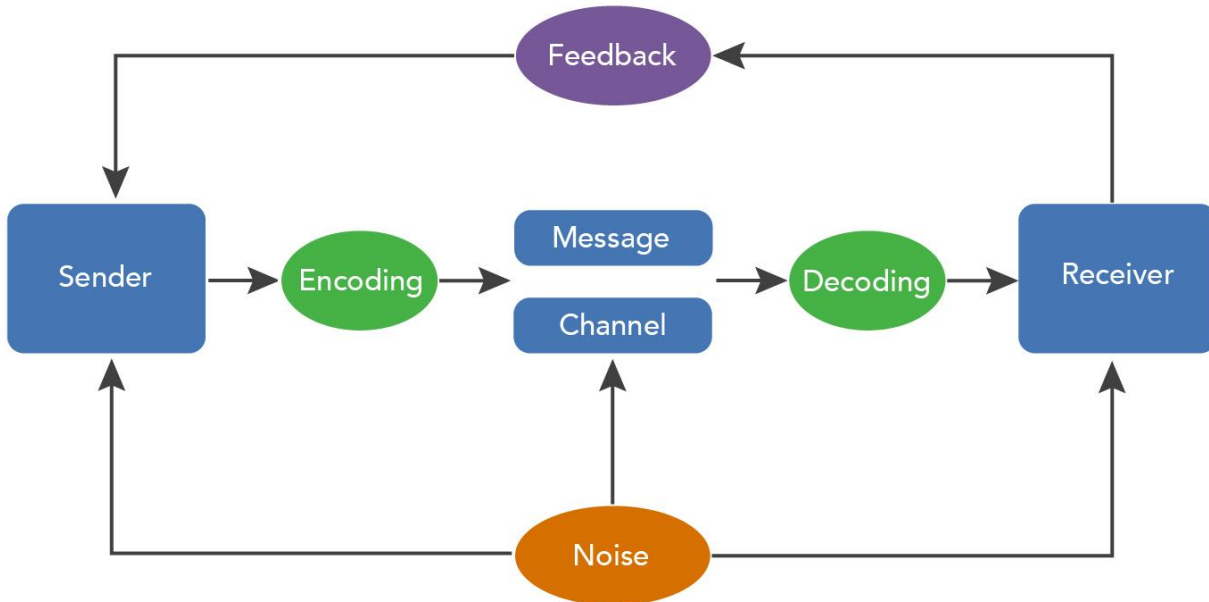


Fig. 1: The rudimentary process of communication

Process of Communication

The sender and the receiver are two components that are present in every communication transaction. Figure 1 shows a formalised paraphrase. The communication mechanism is shown in Figure 1. The sender starts the conversation. A sender use words and symbols to convey information to the receiver, the individual(s) receiving the message. In the workplace, the sender is a person who has a need or desire to communicate an idea or thought to others. In an organisation or system, the sender is a person, department, or unit that initiates the communication. The sender encodes the concept by using words, symbols, or gestures to create a message. The message is the result of encoding, which may be vocal, nonverbal, or written language. The person to whom the message is delivered is known as the receiver, and the receiver decodes the received message into useful information. The receiver's accurate decoding of the message is essential to successful communication. The more closely the deciphered message matches the sender's purpose, the more successful the communication. However, environmental and human obstacles may stymie communication. Anything that distorts the message is considered a barrier. Difficulties include different interpretations of the message, linguistic barriers, interruptions, emotions, and attitudes.

Finally, feedback happens when a receiver reacts to a message sent by the sender and returns the message to the sender. Feedback enables the sender to assess if the message was received and comprehended. The response of the destination to a communication is referred to as feedback (Certo, 1992). It is an essential component of communication since it enables information to be exchanged between the sender and recipient in a two-way conversation. The components of the communication process influence the communication's quality. A issue with any of these components may decrease the efficacy of communication (Keyton, 2011). defines and identifies the critical components of the communication process (McShare & Von Glinow, 2003).

Channels of Communication

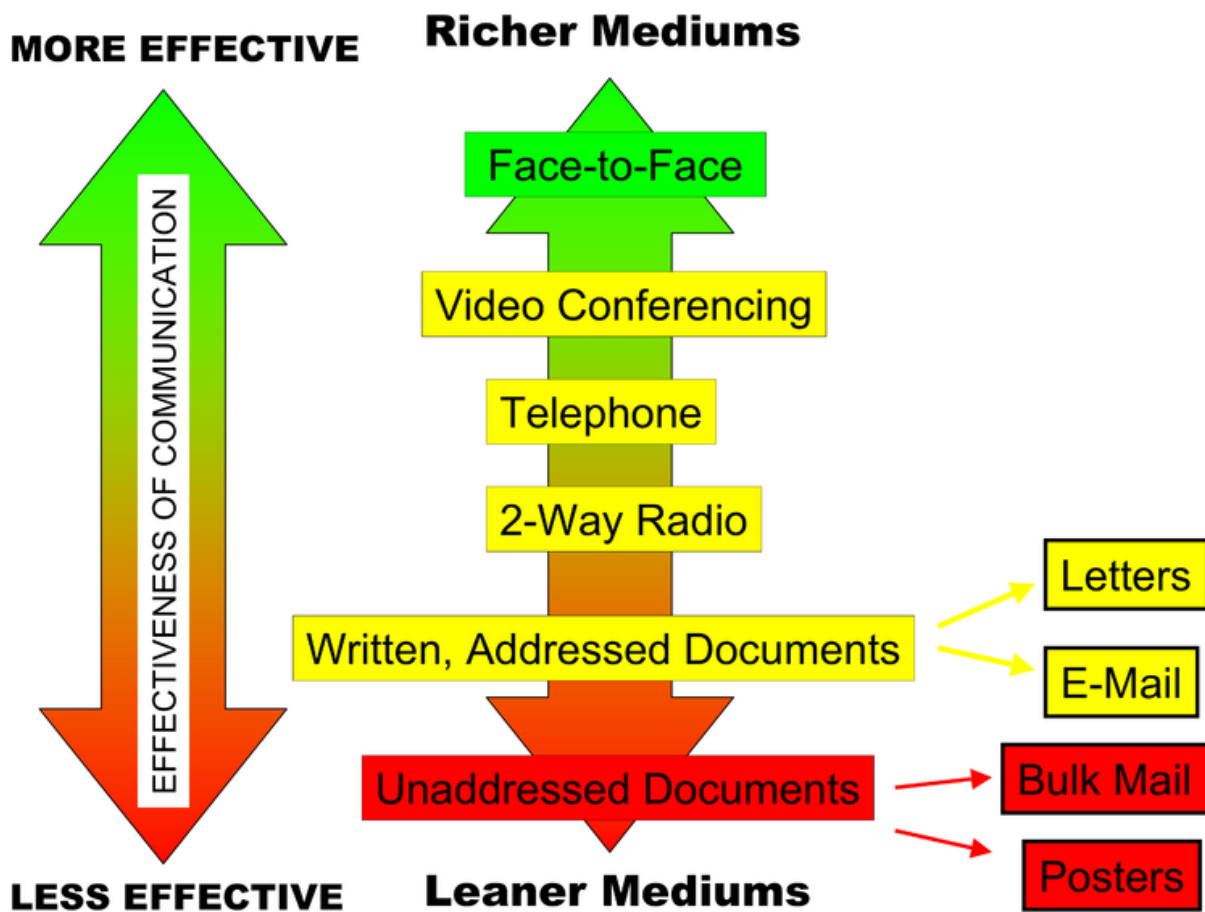


Fig. 2: Channels of communication

A message is sent through a medium or channel that acts as the communication's carrier. Because there are so many choices, deciding on the appropriate medium for disseminating information may be critical. Vocal, nonverbal, written, computer-aided, and electronic communication are all options. Administrators and other members of organisations have access to memos, letters, reports, bulletin boards, handbooks, newsletters, and other written media. Face-to-face communication, telephones, computers, public address systems, closed-circuit video, taped messages, sound or slide presentations, e-mail, and other kinds of verbal communication are all accessible. Information may be conveyed via nonverbal gestures, facial expressions, body posture, and even clothing. People decode information selectively (Keyton, 2010).

The Importance of Communication in the Workplace

There is no denying the importance of communication in the workplace, given that people from different walks of life and professions come together in an organisation to achieve the same goals. Administrators often overlook the importance of communication at work and, as a consequence, fail to properly convey their ideas, organisational goals, and vision, among other things. When a company's leaders fail to create an environment that promotes open and honest communication, it may have a negative effect on the company's culture and employee productivity. The importance of effective workplace communication is discussed in the following sections:



Fig. 3: Effective Business communication

Reduced employee turnover- Organizations that encourage open and easy communication between leaders and subordinates have reduced employee turnover. It motivates employees to work harder and helps them feel valued in the organisation if the work environment is pleasant and subordinates are encouraged to voice their views to their administrators regarding job-related issues, and their feedback is taken into consideration. As a result, effective workplace communication helps to the development of loyalty and trust, which leads to higher job satisfaction.

Fewer confrontations- Open communication in the workplace may help to avoid and resolve a variety of problems. Workplace conflicts may be easily resolved via open and honest communication as well as reciprocal discussions, which can lead to personal and professional growth.

Increases productivity- Effective workplace communication is the most important element in an organization's success or failure. Every company has a clear set of goals, objectives, and vision. If an administrator communicates well, his or her subordinates will know exactly what the organisation requires and will be able to meet it to the best of their abilities. As a result, the value of communication skills may be evaluated by how well it leads to better job performance and increased workplace productivity.

Open communication, whether between employees and administrators or between management and staff, helps to the establishment of stronger personal and professional relationships. Employees who feel genuinely cared for and appreciated are more likely to remain loyal to the company. This creates a nice working environment and strengthens working relationships, both of which are helpful to the job.

Proper resource utilization- When an organisation has problems, crises, or conflicts as a consequence of miscommunication among employees, it causes unnecessary delays in day-to-day operations. As a consequence, there is a waste of resources and a reduction in total job productivity. As a consequence, for any organisation to efficiently utilise its resources and increase output, a good communication environment is needed. Increase productivity and resources.

Impediments to Effective Communication

There is no greater duty for an administrator than to foster efficient communication (Pauley, 2010). So, why does communication fail? On the surface, the solution seems to be straightforward. Communication components such as the sender, encoding, message, channel, decoding, receiver, and feedback have been identified. If there are any obstacles in these components, full clarity of meaning and comprehension does not occur. The biggest issue with communication, according to Shaw (2011), is the illusion that it has occurred. As shown in Figure 1,

many types of obstacles may obstruct communication. Environmental and personal obstacles are classified as such by Rakich and Darr (2000). Both barriers may obstruct, filter, or distort the message while it is being encoded and sent, as well as while it is being decoded and received.

Environmental Obstacles

Environmental barriers are characteristics of the organisation and its surrounding environment. Competition for attention and time between senders and recipients is one example of an environmental barrier. Messages are improperly decoded as a result of many and concurrent requests. The communication is heard but not understood by the recipient. The recipient is not really “listening” since he or she is not paying attention to the message. Listening is a process that incorporates physical, emotional, and cognitive inputs into the search for meaning and comprehension. Listening is only successful when the recipient interprets the sender's messages as they were intended. As a result, the receiver does not understand the message if he or she does not engage in active listening.

Another impediment is time. Due to a lack of time, the sender is unable to carefully consider and properly structure the message, limiting the receiver's capacity to interpret the message and establish its meaning. Other environmental obstacles include the management philosophy of the organisation, numerous layers of hierarchy, and power or status connections between senders and recipients (Sanchez & Guo, 2005).

Managerial philosophy may either facilitate or obstruct successful communication. Managers that are uninterested in fostering intra-organizational communication or distributing knowledge downward will create procedural and organisational barriers. Lack of attention and care for workers is a symptom of a management style that limits communication flows by demanding that every communication follow the line of command. Furthermore, when subordinates meet administrators who do not act, they are hesitant to speak higher in the future since communication is not taken seriously. Managerial philosophy influences not just internal organisational communication, but also external stakeholder communication.

Power or status connections may also have an impact on message transmission. An unsatisfactory supervisor–subordinate relationship may disrupt the flow and substance of information. Furthermore, a staff member's past experiences in the job may hinder free communication owing to the fear of repercussions. A bad supervisor–subordinate relationship, for example, prevents the subordinate from reporting that the project is not going as anticipated. Fear of the administrator's authority and position is a frequent obstacle to dialogue.

Another environmental obstacle that may contribute to misunderstanding is the use of foreign language by the recipient or when communications are very complicated. Communication between individuals who use different language may be ineffective simply because various meanings are assigned to the same terms. As a result of unfamiliar language, misunderstandings may arise. Today's sophisticated organisational systems are extremely specialised; organisations have staff and technical specialists that create and use specialised language that only other comparable staff and technical experts understand, and if individuals don't grasp the terms, they won't comprehend the message.

Personal Obstacles

Personal obstacles emerge as a result of a person's frame of reference, beliefs, and values. They influence how signals are encoded and interpreted and are dependent on one's socioeconomic background and previous experiences. One may also participate in selective perception, either deliberately or subconsciously, or be affected by fear or jealousy. Some cultures, for example, believe in “do not speak until spoken to” or “never challenge elders” (Longest et al., 2000). These obstruct communication. Others take every communication at face value, without screening out incorrect information. Others offer information for self-promotion, deliberately conveying and misrepresenting signals for personal benefit. It is impossible to fully comprehend their message unless one has had their experiences. Beliefs, values, and biases, in addition to one's frame of reference, may change and block communications. Preconceived notions and biases are developed as a result of different personalities and backgrounds.

Status quo and assessing the sender to decide whether to keep or filter out communications are two additional personal obstacles. For example, an administrator would always disregard complaints from the receptionist since the receptionist has a tendency to exaggerate problems and occurrences. However, one must use caution while evaluating and distinguishing exaggerations from genuine information. When people like the current state, they are said to prefer the status quo. They purposefully block out negative information. For example, an administrator may refuse to inform employees of an imminent firing. To maintain the status quo and avoid chaos, the administrator postpones the message.

Lack of empathy, or insensitivity to the emotional situations of senders and receivers, is a last personal barrier. Empathy is the capacity to put oneself in the shoes of another. Empathetic people are able to view the world through the perspective of others. According to research, one of the main barriers to successful communication is a lack of empathy (Eisenberg, 2010).

8. Administrators need to communicate for tomorrow as well as today. Although communications may be aimed primarily at meeting the demands of an immediate situation, they must be planned with the past in mind if they are to maintain consistency in the receiver's view. Most important, however, communications must be consistent with long-range interests and goals. For example, it is not easy to communicate frankly on such matters as poor performance or the

Overcoming Communication Obstacles

- ◆ Recognizing the presence of environmental and human obstacles is the first step toward successful communication. By being aware of their presence, one may deliberately reduce their effect. Positive activities, on the other hand, are required to overcome these obstacles. Longest et al. (2000) provide some suggestions for addressing communication barriers:
- ◆ Environmental barriers are minimised when receivers and senders pay attention to their communications and spend sufficient time to listening to what is being conveyed.
- ◆ A management strategy that promotes open communication is beneficial.
- ◆ Reducing the number of connections (levels in the organisational hierarchy or steps between the sender and the recipient) minimises distortion possibilities.
- ◆ The power/status barrier may be broken down by deliberately modifying words and symbols to make communications comprehensible; reinforcing words with actions substantially enhances communication across various power/status levels.
- ◆ The use of many channels to reinforce complicated information reduces the possibility of misinterpretation.
- ◆ Personal obstacles to successful communication are decreased when senders and receivers make deliberate efforts to comprehend one other's values and views. People are prone to jealousy and fear because they participate in selective perception. Sharing empathy with people to whom communications are sent is the most effective method to improve communication.
- ◆ To promote communication, use methods that go beyond conventional organisational boundaries. The usage of diagonal communication, for example, that runs via task groups or committees, improves communication across the organisation.
- ◆ Use cross-organizational management methods rather than functional or departmental procedures. Implementing management procedures for information system design, control, and management improves communication.
- ◆ Use human resources policies and procedures (such as job training and job rotation) to improve collaboration among organisational members.
- ◆ To achieve successful communication, use management procedures to settle disputes in an equitable way.

Improving the Effectiveness of Communication

Once environmental and human obstacles are removed, the path is cleared for improved organisational communication. Effective communication is a two-way process that requires effort and talent on the part of both the sender and the receiver. Administrators will play all of these roles in the communication process at times. As a result, the following recommendations for increasing communication efficacy, including sender and receiver duties, are discussed:

Responsibilities of the Sender

Several communication theorists (Cheney, 2011; Keyton, 2011; Tourish, 2010; Lunenburg, 2010) have suggested ten excellent communication principles, which are especially relevant to the sender. These principles, together with a fundamental knowledge of the communication process, should offer a solid basis for establishing and maintaining an effective set of interpersonal communication skills that administrators may utilise while interacting with different stakeholders.

1. Before communicating, administrators should define their views. The more thoroughly administrators examine the issue or concept to be conveyed, the more apparent it becomes. This is the first step in establishing good communication. Many conversations fail due to a lack of preparation. Good communication planning takes into account the objectives, attitudes, and requirements of people who will receive the message as well as those who will be impacted by it.
2. Administrators must investigate the actual intent of each message. Before communicating, administrators must consider themselves what they really want to achieve with their message (get knowledge, start action, or alter the attitude of another person?) Administrators must determine their most essential aim and then tailor their language, tone, and overall approach to that particular purpose. Administrators should not attempt to achieve too much with each communication since the more focused their message is, the more likely it is to succeed.
3. Administrators must examine the whole physical and human environment. More than just words may communicate meaning and purpose. Many other factors influence the overall impact of a communication, and administrators must be aware of the overall context in which they communicate: the circumstances under which an announcement or decision is made; the physical setting, whether the communication is made in private or otherwise; and the social climate that pervades work relationships within the department and sets the tone of its responsibilities. Administrators must be continuously mindful of the overall context in which they interact. Communication, like all living organisms, must be capable of adjusting to its surroundings.
4. When preparing communications, administrators should consult with others as needed. It is often desirable or essential to seek the involvement of others in the preparation of a message or in the development of the facts on which the communication is to be based. Such consultation often adds depth and objectivity to the message. Furthermore, individuals who helped design the message will actively promote it.
5. Administrators must be aware of the overtones as well as the fundamental substance of the message while communicating. The administrator's tone of voice, demeanour, and seeming receptivity to the reactions of others all have a huge effect on people he or she wants to reach. These nuances of communication, which are often ignored, can influence a listener's response to a message even more than its fundamental substance. Similarly, the administrator's choice of language, especially his/her understanding of the subtle shades of meaning and emotion in the words employed, predetermines the responses of the listeners in significant part.
6. Administrators must seize every chance to provide assistance or value to the recipient. Consideration of the other person's interests and wants, as well as attempting to see things from the other person's perspective, often reveals chances to communicate something of immediate or long-term value to the other person. Staff members are more receptive to administrators whose communications are tailored to their needs.

7. Administrators must ensure that their message is followed up on. An administrator's greatest communication efforts may be squandered, and he/she may never know if he/she has succeeded in conveying his/her real meaning and purpose if he/she does not follow up to evaluate how effectively he/she has communicated. An administrator may do this by asking questions, encouraging the recipient to express his or her emotions, making follow-up contacts, and conducting a later performance evaluation. An administrator must ensure that every key message receives feedback to ensure full comprehension and proper action. A devoted staff member's flaws, but putting off tough conversations makes them more difficult in the long term and is really unjust to employees and the organisation.

9. Administrators must ensure that their activities complement their messages since, in the end, what administrators do is more compelling than what they say. When administrators' actions or attitudes contradict what they say, people tend to dismiss what they say. This implies that for every administrator, effective supervisory procedures such as clear assignment of duty and authority, fair rewards for work, and sound policy enforcement help to communicate more than all the talents of oratory.

10. Administrators must strive not just to be understood, but also to comprehend and listen well. When an administrator begins to speak, he or she often stops to listen, at least in the broad sense of being aware of the other person's unspoken responses and attitudes. Even more dangerous is an administrator's occasional inattention while others are trying to speak with him. Listening is one of the most essential, challenging, and undervalued communication abilities. It necessitates that the administrator focus not only on the obvious meanings that others convey, but also on the implicit meanings, unsaid phrases, and undertones that may be much more important. Thus, if an administrator wants to know the inner person, he or she must learn to listen with the inner ear.

Responsibilities of the Recipient

Communication is dependent not only on the capacity to transmit but also on the ability to receive messages. As a result, being able to properly listen improves the communication process significantly (Lunenburg, 2010). However, many of us are poor listeners. However, effective listening skills may be improved. Kneen (2011) offers 10 principles for effective listening:

1. Quit chatting. When you're talking, you can't listen.
2. Make the speaker feel at ease. Assist a person in feeling comfortable enough to speak out. This is often referred to as a permissive environment.
3. Demonstrate to a talker that you wish to listen. Look as if you're intrigued. Listen with the intention of understanding rather than opposing. Listening requires the use of two ears, one for meaning and one for emotion.
4. Get rid of all distractions. Maintain your concentration and pay attentive.
5. Feel empathy for those who speak. Try to see things from the other person's perspective.
6. Have patience. Give yourself plenty of time. Do not interrupt someone who is speaking. Do not try to open the door or walk away.
7. Keep your cool. An angry individual interprets words incorrectly.
8. Be kind with debate and criticism. People are placed on the defensive as a result, and they may clam up or get furious. Do not argue: you will lose even if you win.
9. Make inquiries. This promotes a talker while also demonstrating that you are listening. It aids in the development of points.

10. Quit talking. This is the initial and last guide since all others rely on it. You can't listen effectively if you're talking at the same time. Nature gives humans two ears but just one tongue as a gentle reminder to listen more than they speak. Administrators who do not listen have less information at their disposal to make good choices.

Conclusion

Workplace communication is essential for developing and sustaining excellent working relationships in organisations. Effective communication in the workplace is essential as a method of transferring information and shared understanding from one person to another since every administrative job and activity includes some kind of direct or indirect contact. As a result, in order to enhance communication efficacy, administrators must acquire an understanding of the significance of sender and receiver duties, as well as practise active listening skills. An administrator's capacity to be a successful leader will increase with effective communication skills in the workplace. Administrators should thus foster an atmosphere in which work-related concerns, plans, issues, views, thoughts, and ideas are addressed and managed in a professional, competent way via positive and effective communication.

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