

COMMUNICATION IN NEGOTIATION

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Abstract: Generally, communication can be defined as a process in which there are messages transmitted and received, which contain information. It is one of the main instruments of decision taking and of problem solving characteristic to negotiation, agreement or business. In the same time communication can be the source determining the start of a negotiation, discussion, agreement or business.

1. Concept and forms of communication.

By the communicational process it is tried to reach some objectives as: being heard (read or heard); to be understood; to be accepted; to provoke a reaction. If these are not done, neither of these objectives is realized, it means that the communication was defective, fact which can often lead to frustration or resentments.

In the human relationships, communication happens from the daily activity, having different forms like current communication or hierarchical communication. Current communication takes place in the daily activity of the individual, of the institution. Communication consists of listening to what the colleagues relate in formulating the requests of collaboration and effort coordination in order to finalize them. Hierarchical communication is made in accordance with the established reports inside the firm's organigram, of the place and function occupied by each individual inside the organization.

The main forms of hierarchical communication existence are related to:

- Assuring of human resources in the organization, respectively hiring personnel necessary for it. Here we have to take into consideration the communication of the job's existence, of conditions requested from candidates, the organization of competence or exam for personnel selection, presentation of the winning person for leadership and the future collaborating persons;
- Professional integration of the newly hired, respectively his assimilation in the professional environment. The efficiency of the integrating process will be assured by the respectation of some communicational requests referring especially to clear definition of conditions and tasks support for the new-comer in order to accommodate with the job's requests giving confidence to the institution, especially in its capacity to fulfill the tasks of the job for which he was hired;
- Evaluation of performances is another modality of communication consisting of each employee's capacity to present his activity and the way of realizing his objectives. The leaders of the firm make systematic information using the discussions with each employee, after which they make up evaluation reports for each employee concerning their performances;
- Other forms of communication refer to which assure the relation to institutes and the exterior environment of it, respectively the partners (suppliers, clients, etc.), with public, governmental, or non-governmental institutions

1.1. Oral or written communication in negotiation.

In the category of oral and written communication there are included the messages used to transmit or receive information. The practical modalities by which the communication is assured are speaking and writing.

Almost all actions taken related to another person are based on an orally expressed message. Communication by speaking differentiates from the written one by offering more expressing tools of the information towards the interlocutor. In the same time such a communicational form offers the possibility of correcting the expressed things when the negotiating or discussion partners did not understand the message, to emphasize some parts of it to clarify some things and to express attitudes. The easiness of oral expression of an individual depends on his personality, his vocal qualities, especially on his way of enouncing and pronouncing. The personality in expression is the result of some essential characteristics, respectively clarity, accuracy, empathy, sincerity, etc. The vocal qualities of the individual are the results of speech mechanisms, height and voice intensity, volume of voice, diction and accent, expression speed, etc.

Writing is a much more pretentious way of communication, which does not offer so much freedom as the oral one. Expression in writing does not need time to develop and practice a new personal style, requesting more creativity than speech. Among the communication tools by written messages, the most frequently used are the following: request and offer; letters and contracts; curriculum vitae; letters and messages addressed to those outside the institution (informing, thank you letters, telegrams, faxes, etc.); reports (having internal or external regime); internal or external organizational and functional norms (brochures, catalogues, leaflets and other promotional messages of the firm).

1.2. Non-verbal communication in negotiation.

In accordance with some research made in the domain, more than 65% of communication among individuals are communication without words, respectively non-verbal communication. Such a communication comprises any expression modality except spoken or written words. It can sustain, inform or substitute a message expressed through words. There is a multitude of nonverbal communicational tools, concerning face expression. (a smile or frowning), gestures (movement of hands or body, of eyes etc.), the position of body, orientation, position towards interlocutor, proximity (distance from the interlocutor, standing or sitting), visual contact, body contact (a slight touch on the shoulder), exterior aspect (physical or dressing), speech (its non-verbal aspects), writing (the same non-verbal expressions) etc.

The non-verbal aspects of communication, also called metacommunication, something more than communication, presents a great importance in transmitting messages. The main types of non-verbal communication are:

- Communication by dresses, position and body movement represents a main source of information referring to the person. It accompanies communication without words, being accepted that facial expression, gestures accompanying conversation, looking and the way a discussion is coordinated, are suggestive elements offering information about individuals and their thoughts;
- Physical characteristics represent serious sources of information concerning the personality of a person. We refer to aspects like height, weight, hair length, hair style etc. Remarkable is the fact that some fashion trends (hair length for men, fashion of mini or maxi for women, punk fashion, rock, hippy etc.) had and have considerable effects in what human relationships are concerned inside the institutions, organizations etc. As a special remark, we have to mention for example

that the young people who wore a trendy dresses few years ago were marginalized. As always, fairness is somewhere in the middle, such a non-conventionalism contributing to the creation of some unfavourable images for the institution;

- Personal behaviour, respectively a distant or familiar attitude is a way of communication, by which each person proves the way in which he can report to a communicational situation. Thus, the imposing of a distance towards the persons is a suggestive means of communication of the attitudes towards them, while a smile, a warm handshake, a ability generally are ways of eliminating obstacles imposed by the novelty of the situation, by the necessity of knowing and its presentation in front of some persons;
- Verbal habits are gestures accompanying messages expressed verbally. To this we have to add intonation, having an important role in realizing communication. Usually expression has to be natural, in concordance with the level and type of relationships between partners of discussion, of negotiation, and business;
- Dressing also represents a form of communication. Accessories offer some information about the personality of an individual and are directly related to the esthetic education of each person;
- Environment, ambiance created around the organization, contributing to the realization and completion of communication in negotiation, discussions, business. In the same time the way decoration is presented, the apartment the brand and the taking care of the car, the way of it driving complete the non-verbal communication tools;
- The way of using time represents useful information represents a useful information about the own personality. Punctuality, the way a meeting is organized, a manifestation, a business, time given to expression of ideas, the time given to the interlocutor for arguments and counterarguments are tools by which one can communicate with the business partner information which should be taken into consideration when making a deal;
- Non-verbal messages from the written materials are transmitted through the paper, text arrangement on the page, the writing itself (typed, or hand-written), - word choice, quality of expression, all these are informational sources which have to be taken into consideration, giving life to the wanted message.

In conclusion, all that we do is a communication, and in most cases actions talk better than words, but generally we have to remark the verbal message transmitted together with the non-verbal. In conclusion, tot ceea ce întreprindem este o comunicare, cu mențiunea că, de cele mai. In the same time we have to remark the fact that if the meaning of the non-verbal message does not meet the verbal one, there is the tendency to believe the non-verbal one. Psychologically well-trained, we can detect a nervous person hiding behind fine humour, we will recognize a solid marriage in spite of arguments, and we will differentiate worrying, the fight of an employee to come into evidence in spite of an apparent disinterest.

2. Obstacles in front of communication.

One of the most discouraging experiences in negotiation is that of not being understood. When this happens, it has as a consequence the appearance of frustration and contradictory discussions. No person hears the other.

In negotiation the communication process is often blocked or frustrated, when one or more parties use risky answers. These types of answers include: imposing to others to do something or to stop doing something, threat or referring to use of force; moralizing phrases to the partner; judging or negative evaluation of the other party; familiar

addressing, usage of stereotypes, creation of a climate, where the others feel bad; distraction of attention from problems of the other party.

An other obstacle in the way of communication is the listening process – understanding – acceptance. The essence of this process will be discussed in the following. People can receive different messages given by others. In different studies (47) it is shown that less than 50% of what is said can be reproduced the same way by those who listen. The experiment continues, showing that by reading a message by more listeners only a third of it is understood, the second third partially understood, and a third is not even listened to.. During communication, there are the following obstacles:

- what is said, cannot be heard because of some physical obstacles: noise, lack of concentration, deafness, disturbances in transmitting if negotiation and communication take place over the phone voice-mail, etc.;
- what is heard cannot be understood, this appears in case when the listener can hear, but what he hears is influenced by education, technical knowledge or vocabulary;
- What is understood cannot be accepted, this appears when the listener understands, but cannot accept because of some psychological factors, like his attitude towards negotiators or towards the firm represented by them, his feelings towards the discussed subject, his experience related to another negotiation with this firm or referring tot hat product, prejudices (for example not negotiating with persons wearing a beard), etc.;
- The speaker cannot discover whether the listener heard/understood/accepted, consists of the fact that the speaker supposes that hei s perfectly understood, and the listener is concentrated only on his succesive movements.

3. Improvement of communication during negotiation

Effective negotiation depends on the way communication goes. It has to go beyond differences of points of views, as weel as the natural obstacles of the communicational process. There is a number of basic rules which can help the realization of a more efficient communication. The following 5 rules are the most important:

- The communication process is a bidirectional process. People communicate with people. Thus, before starting communication, the elements which lead to the growth of enthusiasm have to be analyzed, what makes them interested, what bothers them, which are their sensible points;
- We have to know exactly what we want to say. Still attention has to be given to the way other persons interpret and react when they are confornted with our objectives. We should not forget the fact that other negotiators have in mind questions like: „how will this negotiation affect me?” or „What do I gain from this negotiation?”;
- Many times it is more important the way we say something than what we say. If other persons do not accept our way of behaviour, they probably will not accept the message. . Communication is realized not only with words, but body movement, facial expression and vocal inflexions;
- We have to look on the person we address to. We do not have to manifest our habits, which could draw the attention from the subject. The attention is maintained by looking into the eyes of the interlocutor;
- The way we organize our message affects its impact on the listeners. It is about: using arguments and questions logically and coherently, avoiding adjectives like :

„good”, „bad”, „irrational”, „scandalous”, „dishonest”, usage of short and simple messages, avoiding the use of generalizers like: „always”, „never”, „constantly”, etc. For the improvement of communication during communication there have to exist the following phases:

- Ordering in time of negotiation phases. The ability of understanding what is said is being influenced by the time the subjects are exposed in the discussion. During discussion there is a sort of time scale, which is recognized as accepted by both parties. Otherwise there will be subject to much discussed by a party, in the detriment of the other. An intervention in a dialog should not last more than 2 minutes. In case of a monologue there is a partition of time accepted by both parties, as in case a party presents a detailed problem. It should not last more than 5 minutes;
- Preparation and effective presentation of information. This supposes that before starting negotiation, the speaker has to have the priority of realizing an efficient communication, even in the detriment of elegance. It is nice to talk, but not enough. What matters is to be understood. In order to assure that our message is understood, our movements have to be prepared carefully. While presenting the situation it is indicated to be very concentrated at the beginning and in the end: at the beginning we are going to make an enumeration of the key words, then we are going to solve each point. Finally, we are going to mention the points presented at the beginning. In the same time we will be careful to the reaction of the others. We will use an adequate mimic. We will use visual materials: figures, graphics, underlining.
- Active listening. It is indicated to be competent listeners, being necessary an effort to listen and understand the perspective of the other party negotiating with us. For this it is necessary to take notes, to ask questions to clarify misunderstandings, and in the end there will be made a resume of what was understood. In contrast, those who do not listen will not concentrate on what is presented, they will only think of their own movements or comments and will interrupt the speaker before he ends his idea. In addition they will make no effort to improve their way of understanding others, they will remain blocked with their own thoughts and perspectives, without wanting to adapt to the points of view presented by others.

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