



ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR MANAGERS

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ABSTRACT

Education is vital for India's competitiveness, economic growth and social stability. Today India has the largest higher education system in the world in terms of the number of students. It is observed that the rapid and constant pace of changes in technology in creating both opportunities and challenges for higher education. Nowadays, technology affects practically all activities in our life including education.

The new digital technologies have permeated economy, politics, workplaces, the ways we communicate with each other as well as operation of all levels of education from kindergarten to doctoral studies. Learning is using technology to deliver training anytime, anywhere where the learners receive the content at real time or the learners can pace their own learning. Utilizing the internet to deliver e-learning initiatives has created expectations both in business market and in higher education institutions. This idea of engaging with people through technology is cost effective. E-Learning is an adaptive learning method which is learner centered and also promotes social and collaborative learning. It provides a way to better management of large group of students, while maintaining increased retention and a stronger grasp on the subject. Its major role is to provide greater flexibility of access.

The objective of the present paper is to explore the role of language skills in English for professionals particularly the managers in the 21st century.

KEY WORDS: *Communication Skills, Professionals, Managers Emotional Intelligence*

INTRODUCTION

Language is a medium of communication and communication skills-speaking, listening, writing and reading - are undoubtedly fundamental ingredients of our survival and growth in any profession. Expression is an activity which involves a systematic and continuous process of dissemination, listening and comprehension. Sound communication skills comprise conciseness, concreteness, clarity, correctness, courtesy, consideration, intonation, standard and authentic articulation of words/ sentences. We come across good communicators who are often competent persuaders as they keep the essential elements i.e. body language, voices, words in congruence to make their expression logical, believable and influential. The real enthusiasm in acquiring communication skills in English has always been deeply indebted in our subconscious as non-native speakers. Self-confidence, knowledge, sincerity, emotional balance, accuracy, fluency, reasoning, sympathy, open-mindedness, humility, humour, spontaneity, tact, intelligence and common sense etc are some of the key-features required to be an effective and efficient communicator. We learn and teach how to overcome the mental barriers, the time and space barriers, semantic barriers, perpetual barriers, distrust, inhibition etc in order to create better impression while expression.

Effective communication is an essential component of organisational success whether it is at inter-personal, inter-group, intra-group, organisational or external level. Communication is the essence of

organisational effectiveness and acts as social glue that keeps an organisation together. The socio-economic changes in the new millennium and the competitive and diverse global market has made it a must for technocrats and engineers to have best communication ability, both oral and written for professional success. The vitality of English language skills has earned it as the status of *lingua franca*. Language, as a tool for communication is an effective means of exerting power, as asserted by Michel Foucault, 'power is nothing but a strategy'. It is the power of language communication that provides the knock and knowledge to use the language as a strategy of power in society. The importance of English language is described by Dr. Radhakrishnan that, "English, however must continue to be studied. It is a language which is rich in literature – humanistic, scientific and technical."

In this age of globalisation, English is the most widespread and accepted language at international level. English is simple, systematic, effective and appropriate for the present day global engineers to interpret and ideate various technical skills and inter-cultural communication. The communicative approach to the learning of English can develop the capacity of engineers to communicate easily for their academic, social and professional growth with fluency and competitive ability. The success of an organisation is pivoted around the quantity and quality of information that flows in the form of technical communication. In the present arena of technocrats and engineering advancements, technical communication acts as a stimulant for engineers to be persuasive, expressive, influential and competent.

The greater the communication skills of a person, better the status. Art of communication elevates an individual to an honourable position in society. It is a sine qua non for every engineer who wants to enjoy academic applause as well as social position in an age of liberalization, privatization and globalization, where everybody wants to communicate but does not know how to communicate. It is the only means of preventing ourselves from isolation and we will act unwisely if we allow ourselves to be enveloped in the folds of a dark curtain of ignorance. It is essential for an engineer to be technically competent, productive and effective having one goal in mind, of convincing audience to take desired action. Communication skills determine to a great extent how effective we are and up to what extent appealing our behaviour is. Successful presentation of ideas helps us to tackle the needs and nature of audience that determines the content and customer focused approach and design the communication according to the academic, social and professional situations.

Completeness is one of the key attributes of successful communication. Engineers have to deal with business situations with less time, so they could control and capture the attention the employers and convince them with confidence. By skilled communication, an engineer can convey a sense of confidence and composure to maintain competence and practicality by exhibiting his professional expertise culminating into powerful place in society. To communicate effectively, one must realise that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others. Canale and Swain have recognized 'the four important components of communicative competence'. The first is 'grammatical competence'. Grammatical Competence combined the traditional structural competence what Halliday calls 'systematic competence'. The second component is the 'socio-lingual competence'. It includes the sensitivity to understand the factors like status, role, attitude, purpose, degree of formality, social communication etc. The third component is 'discourse competence' which includes the ability to combine meanings with unified and acceptable texts indifferent genres. The fourth component is 'strategic competence'. It relates to verbal and non-verbal strategies which a learner requires to enhance the effectiveness of communication.

Proper communication skills can have numerous dimensions and intricacies. It increases the proficiency, improves the attitude and gives a willingness to stand apart and make an impression. It enables an engineer to have empathy and capacity of looking at different situations from vivid perspectives. Good communication skills make an engineer sustained and effective in understanding and giving views efficiently. It gives proper intellectualism to be more effective. Engineer must be creative in communication so that he

has the capacity to read the hidden message and unsaid consequences and further give a response to make situations under his advantage.

In engineering field, inter disciplinary education approach has been adopted by a number of universities and institutions which offer technical studies in the present millennium. For an engineer both verbal and oral skills make the baseline because in present arena of cut-throat competition, for professional success, they need to be sure of the audience's attention and must speak at a reasonable pace and volume with variation in tones to influence and bring a feeling of interest in the audience. An engineer must be free from shyness, hysterics and fear of speaking in public otherwise it would be understood that communication done by him is suffering from linguistic constipation. Engineers have to deal with both passionate work addicts and bobble head employees, so they got to provide a new wave of emerging leader and make people more receptive to their words. Proper work and training is must because sometimes there might be a sense of urgency and in such cases establishment of pattern with sub-ordinates becomes necessary. An engineer must be a good listener as well and should be able to interpret what is being communicated in the conversation.

Being a good listener makes a good communicator. Enhancement in communication skills helps an engineer to convey information that will enable decision making and prescribed suitable action, then good listening precedes effective communication. It can be done by being responsible, having a good attitude towards work and ability to remain calm under crisis situations. Having good communication skills gives an engineer an edge in getting job, managing workload, confidence of presenting himself in a professional manner and ensures that the growth chart of his career as a professional is always rising. Engineers should never hesitate, though, to seize any other opportunities to improve their skills when they find a training course or other learning possibility. The process of learning new skills for career and become better at them should be continuous as with professional development comes opportunities and success.

Communication skills are a way to portray the image of an engineer that helps them to determine their quality. Plato has rightly said "If the intelligent do not want to rule, they have to be prepared to be ruled by fools." Lack of communicative and leadership power lowers the profile of an engineer. An insufficient communication skill not only lowers the employability but also reinforces the negative sides of the engineer. Furthermore, lack of sociable communication contributes to degradation in technical skills as well. Proper speaking and writing skills must be utilised and incorporated to demonstrate the technical knowledge. The golden rule is; Be democratic in decision-making and dictatorial in implementation. The need of the hour is good people with cultivated minds. If an engineer has a different, serviceable and accessible style of communication, the chances of engagement and employability increase. In this era of competitive market, self- actualisation of the speaker and proper communication is ranked as one of the prime characteristics of employable engineer. Listening and understanding, speaking clearly and directly, negotiating responsively, empathising and understanding needs of internal and external customers, ability to persuade, establishment and use of network as well as speaking and writing in English makes an engineer a favourite of the employer as he gains the required technical and communication skills to qualify perfectly for any assignment/ profession.

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