SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMUNICATION

The Significance of Communication

Organizations are totally reliant on **communication,** which is defined as the exchange of ideas, messages, or information by speech, signals, or writing. Without communication, organizations would not function. If communication is diminished or hampered, the entire organization suffers. When communication is thorough, accurate, and timely, the organization tends to be vibrant and effective.

Communication is central to the entire management process for four primary reasons:

- **Communication is a linking process of management.** Communication is the way managers conduct the managerial functions of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling. Communication is the heart of all organizations
- **Communication is the primary means by which people obtain and exchange information.** Decisions are often dependent upon the quality and quantity of the information received. If the information on which a decision is based is poor or incomplete, the decision will often be incorrect.
- **The most time-consuming activity a manager engages in is communication.** Managers spend between 70 to 90 percent of their time communicating with employees and other internal and external customers.
- **Information and communication represent power in organizations.** An employee cannot do anything constructive in a work unit unless he or she knows what is to be done, when the task is to be accomplished, and who else is involved. The staff members who have this information become centers of power.

The ability to communicate well, both orally and in writing is a critical managerial skill and a foundation of effective leadership. Through communication, people exchange and share information with one another and influence one another's attitudes, behaviors, and understandings. Communication allows managers to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships, listen to others, and otherwise gain the information needed to create an inspirational workplace. No manager can handle conflict, negotiate successfully, and succeed at leadership without being a good communicator.

BUSINESS PRODUCTIVITY

Productivity

Productivity–a ratio of production output to the input required to produce it–is one measure of production efficiency. Productivity is defined as a total output per one unit of a total input. Control management must implement control processes to maintain or improve productivity.

Productivity and the Firm

Productivity growth is important to a firm because more real income means the firm can meet its obligations to customers, suppliers, workers, shareholders, and governments (taxes and regulation), and still remain competitive or even improve its competitiveness in the marketplace.

Productivity is one of the main concerns of business management and engineering. Practically all companies have established procedures for collecting, analyzing, and reporting productivity data. The accounting department typically has the overall responsibility of collecting, organizing, and storing data generated by various departments.

Definition of Productivity

Productivity is a measure of the efficiency of production. It is a ratio of actual output (production) to what is required to produce it (inputs). Productivity is measured as a total output per one unit of a total input. Control managers in a given organization are concerned with maximizing productivity through process-oriented observations and improvements.

For businesses, productivity growth is important because providing more goods and services to consumers translates to higher profits. As productivity increases, an organization can turn resources into revenues, paying stakeholders and retaining cash flows for future growth and expansion. Productivity leads to competitiveness and potentially competitive advantages.

Benefits of measuring productivity
Measuring and monitoring productivity levels can have a number of benefits for small businesses. Alongside giving you the opportunity to see output levels within your business, it also allows you to keep track of the service levels that your team is providing your customers. This can help you to maintain a consistent level of customer service across your business.

Productivity measurement can also help you to identify particular areas or processes within your business that might be causing unnecessary delays to your team's workflows. This can help you to streamline the processes within your business to ensure that your team is able to get the most out of their working days.

Measuring workplace efficiency may also have benefits for the employee as well as the business. The use of productivity measurement tools may highlight particular times of the day when people are the most focused. Someone might be able to concentrate better in the mornings, for example, than they are past 3pm. This could mean that this particular person might favour a more flexible work schedule that allows them to start work earlier in the morning and leave earlier. This could benefit both the employee, as they are able to have a more flexible working structure, and the business, as they would be in the office during the time when they are the most productive.

INTER GROUP AND INTRA-GROUP CONFLICT

Intergroup conflict refers to disagreements that exist between two or more groups and their respective members. However, this can also reflect any type of formal or informal disagreements between varying groups such as political parties or activist groups. Intergroup conflict is in many ways the source of the out group bias that discriminates against those that are not part of the "in-group."

The causes of inter-group conflict are as follows:
(i) Lack of Communication:
Faulty communication leads to suspicion and a lack of trust.

(ii) Relative Deprivation:
It arises due to comparison when members of a group feel that they do not have what they desire to have or are not doing well in comparison to other groups.

(iii) Belief of being Superior from the Other:
It occurs when one party believes it is better than the other and every member wants to respect the norms of his/ her group.

(iv) Respect for Norms:
Conflict arises when there is a feeling that the other group violates norms.

(v) Harm done in the Past:
Some harm done in the past could be the reason for conflict.

(vi) Biased Perception:
Feelings of 'they' and 'we' lead to biased perceptions.

(vii) Competition:
Groups compete over scarce resources—both material resources e.g. territory and money as well as social resources e.g. respect and esteem.

(viii) Contributions:
If you contribute more and get less, you are likely to feel irritated and exploited.

Intra-group conflict refers to a specific kind of conflict that occurs between members of a group that shares common goals, interests or other identifying characteristics. Intra-group conflict can be small-scale, such as within a workplace or large-scale, such as between members of a specific population group. Though conflict is generally regarded as a problem, intra group conflict can also serve as a valuable tool in some contexts.

Intra-group conflict is distinctive in that it occurs between members of a group or team who are theoretically united over a common characteristic or objective. In contrast, intergroup conflict occurs between two competing or distinct groups.

Types of Intragroup Conflict Scenarios:

The two main forms of intra-group conflict are **relationship conflict** and **task conflict**. In an intra-group relationship conflict, members of the group struggle with interpersonal relationships regardless of the task or objects of the group. For example, two members of a marketing team may experience conflict because one member applies a diplomatic approach to communication, while another prefers straightforward and aggressive communication.

If a group is experiencing a task conflict, members of the group disagree about the best practices for achieving an objective or struggle to agree on an appropriate objective. For instance, a marketing team may struggle because some members support traditional direct marketing while other members want to experiment with a viral marketing campaign.

Consequences of Intragroup Conflict:

In all types of intra-group conflict scenarios, members are at risk for **damaging personal relationships** and **failing to achieve goals** or objectives. Intragroup conflict can distract group members from producing valuable results as outlined by a superior, which can place group members' jobs at risk.

High levels of intra-group relationship conflict increase group members' desire to leave their job or company and high levels of task conflict increase the likelihood that a group will experience relationship conflicts as well. Relationship conflicts also contribute to negative reactions that can cause emotional distress in group members.

Benefits of Intragroup Conflict:

Though the consequences of intra-group conflict can promote job dissatisfaction and diminish personal relationships, some degree of intra-group conflict can prove functional. In a functional intra-group conflict, the result of the conflict is **increased communication** that could translate to increased productivity. Functional intra-group conflict promotes careful discussion of a variety of ideas that can yield greater or more effective output. Functional conflict is typically task conflict and requires careful group management and communication to prevent the development of relationship conflict.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION:

Some of the conflict resolution strategies are:
(i) Introduction of Super-ordinate Goals:
A super-ordinate goal is mutually beneficial to both parties, hence both groups work cooperatively.

(ii) Changing Perceptions:
It can be reduced by altering perceptions and reactions through persuasion, educational and media appeals and portrayal of groups differently in society.

(iii) Increasing Intergroup Contacts:
This can be done by involving groups in conflict on neutral grounds through community projects and events.

(iv) Redrawing group Boundaries:
This can be done by creating conditions where group boundaries are re-defined and groups come to perceive themselves as belonging to a common group.

(v) Negotiations:
This refers to reciprocal communications so as to reach an agreement in situations in which there is conflict.

(vi Structural solutions:
Conflict can be reduced by redistributing societal resources based on equality, need and equity.

(vii) Respect for other group's norms:
In order to avoid events like communal riots between different groups, it is necessary to respect and be sensitive to norms of various social and ethnic groups.

Preventing and Resolving Intra-group Conflict

Prevention of intra-group conflict depends on the degree to which team members are equipped to identify, manage and navigate conflict situations. All group members should receive training in conflict management that promotes the use of active listening, clear communication and effective feedback loops that promote growth rather than punish errors.

Some intra-group conflicts require management from an external third party that provides guidance and input during group conflicts. In the event that intra-group conflict cannot be resolved within the group, a superior may choose to dissolve the group to avoid further losses to both productivity and team morale.

Intergroup Conflict vs. Intragroup Conflict:

An easy way to define intergroup conflict is to think about intergroup conflict vs. intra-group conflict: intergroup conflict is two teams fighting against each other, whereas intra-group conflict is two or more members of the **same team** fighting each other. Intragroup conflicts are most common in workplaces that divide employees into specific teams or departments.

An example of intra-group conflict would be members of a marketing group debating about the best way to launch a new product. If the group was experiencing intergroup conflict, the marketing team may argue with the technology development team about the launch. Intragroup conflict is marked by verbal disagreements between group members that could result ultimately in the fracturing of the group into distinct and opposing parts. Groups experiencing intra-group conflict may frequently solicit the input of superiors or show delayed progress in achieving a goal.

GROUP COHESIVENESS:

Meaning of Cohesiveness:
Group cohesiveness is one of the characteristic features of the groups, which is very important from behaviouristic point of view. Cohesiveness is the degree to which the group members are attracted to each other and are motivated to stay in the groups. Cohesiveness defines the degree of closeness that the members feel with the groups. It is understood as the extent of liking each member has towards others in the group and how far everyone wants to remain as a member of the group.

"Cohesiveness refers to the extent of unity 'in the group and is reflected in members' conformity to the norms of the group, feeling of attraction for each other and wanting to be co-members of the group." Attraction, cohesiveness and conformity are all intertwined. The more the members feel attracted to the group, the greater will be the group cohesiveness. The greater the cohesiveness, the greater the influence of the group members to persuade one another to conform to the group norms. The greater the conformity, the greater the identity of the members to the group and the greater the group cohesiveness.

Salient Features Affecting Group Cohesiveness

In business management studies, strategists and industrial personnel claim that cohesiveness increases productivity and dynamism and also is helpful in the retention of employees in the group. Vice versa the group supports the members to achieve much more than he would do on his own.

Groups as a comprehensive element with skillful working provide a conducive atmosphere to enhance ones interactive skills and abilities.

1) Like-Mindedness

A group should consist of like-minded individuals with similar tastes to a certain extent. Then only the group can achieve common goals.

The group selects individual members on the basis of some familiarizes with the group likings. People with different thought processes than the group's motives are generally rejected.

A common goal for the group is identified and it is understood that members will work for the group's interest inclusive of their own interest.

2) Dialogue

Logical communication between the group and the members is most essential. Thoughts should be verbally explained to reach a final conclusion.

Any kind of misinterpretation of words between members and the groups will lead to all sorts of trouble.

The member's mindset should be properly put across the table to avoid any miscommunication. This will also help in forging and strengthening the bond among the members and the group.

3) Background

Previous experiences of other groups and exposure to a different set of ideas are also very important. Different experiences bring different perspectives which help in enhancing the performance of the group.

New thoughts and views from varied sources give birth to newer ideas and create more awareness and productivity within the group. People from different backgrounds have fresh ideas from their previous experiences which helps in the growth of the group and in turn help in the group cohesiveness.

4) Confidence

Reliability and trust is an important element in group cohesiveness. The individuals in a group need to trust the team and its decisions to bring about a positive change.

Trust connects the group and the members so that decisions can be taken in unanimity.

5) Goals and Ambitions

Having an objective and a common goal sets the foundation for a positive outcome.

Most groups have a common aim in which they strive to deliver by their activities and social services. These positive aims help them in attaining goodwill in the market which furthers their future enhancements.

Consequences of Cohesiveness:
Group cohesiveness has only positive consequences. These positive outcomes are explained in detail as follows:

1. More Participation:
Higher the degree of group cohesiveness, closer will be the interpersonal relationships among the members. As a result members will participate actively in group affairs and activities. As the members consider the group as their own, just like a family, they will help other members of the group in times of need which will further strengthen their bonds. The turnover of members will be very low. If possible, all the members attend the group meetings and group activities and take active part in discussions relating to preparing of strategies for achieving individual and group goals.

2. More Conformity:
One of the factors which influence cohesiveness is similarity of attitudes and values. As a result, members tend to like each other and perceive themselves as similar. These characteristics lead members to be relatively dependent on the group for satisfaction and, thus, they are susceptible to being influenced. For example, if any member is getting involved in organizational politics for enhancing his personal goals, the group might put social pressure on him and make him comply with the group norms.

3. More Success:
Cohesiveness and success are mutually dependent upon each other. Cohesiveness makes the goal achievement easier and goal achievement adds to success. The reason for this relationship is that higher degree of cohesiveness leads to high degree of communication, participation and conformity to group norms. Such coordinated efforts result in agreement about the goals to be achieved, the methods of achieving them and finally achieving the final goals.

4. More Communication:
Members of cohesive groups communicate with each other more than the members of non-cohesive groups. Because the members share common ideologies, goals, backgrounds or attitudes, they are inclined to greater communicativeness. Such communication is reinforcing as it tends to foster and cement positive social relations as well as depth in personal relationships.

5. More Personal Satisfaction:
Members of cohesive groups are more satisfied as compared to members of non-cohesive groups. Thus is understandable because if members are not satisfied they will leave the group and join some other group. Members are more satisfied due to so many factors which include friendliness, respect, support, achievement, protection and a feeling of security.

6. High Productivity:
Cohesiveness may contribute to increased productivity because:
(i) People in cohesive groups experience fewer work related anxieties and tensions
(ii) Highly cohesive groups tend to have lower absenteeism and turnover and
(iii) Cohesiveness decreases productivity differences among groups.

Disadvantages of Group Cohesiveness

1. Lesser outcome

The teams have their own thoughts from similar fields which brings the creativity down. The end result is not very satisfactory in terms of innovation.

2. Lofty goals

Unrealistic goals and ambitions crush the identity of the group cohesiveness and the outcomes are not up to the mark. There is a greater rate of failure.

Managerial Actions for Increasing or Encouraging Cohesiveness:

A manager can follow any one or more of the following suggestions to encourage cohesiveness:

1. Make the group smaller

2. Encourage agreement with group goals

3. Increase the time members spend together

4. Increase the status of the group and the perceived difficulty of getting membership of the group

5. Stimulate competition with other groups.

6. Give rewards to the group rather than to members.

7. Physically isolate the group

8. Increase membership homogeneity

9. Increase interaction among members

Managerial Actions to Decrease or Discourage Cohesiveness:

Sometimes high cohesiveness adversely affects the productivity. In such cases managers have to reduce the cohesiveness of the groups. Following are some of the actions which can be taken by the managers:

1. Induce disagreement on group goals

2. Increase membership heterogeneity

3. Restrict interactions among members

4. Increase group size

5. Reduce the time members spend together

6. Allocate rewards to individuals rather than to group member.

7. Remove physical isolation

8. Disband the group

9. Introduce a dominating member

RELATIONSHIP OF COHESIVENESS AND PRODUCTIVITY:

Studies consistently show that the relationship of cohesiveness and productivity depends on the performance related norms established by the group. If performance related norms are high, a cohesive group will be more productive than will a less cohesive group. But if cohesiveness is high and performance norms are low, productivity will be low.

If cohesiveness is low and performance norms are high, productivity increases but less than in high cohesiveness-high norms situation. Where cohesiveness and performance related norms are both low, productivity will tend to fall into the low to moderate range.

The worst situation for the manager is a highly cohesive group with low performance norms. Here members are highly motivated to work for their personal satisfaction only not for the organizational goals. Here the success of the management will depend upon how to direct the activities of highly cohesive group towards the successful attainment of organizational goals.

These conclusions are summarized in the following figure:

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COHESIVENESS, PERFORMANCE NORMS AND PRODUCTIVITY

PERFORMANCE NORMS	COHESIVENESS	
	HIGH	LOW
HIGH	HIGH PRODUCTIVITY	MODERATE PRODUCTIVITY
LOW	LOW PRODUCTIVITY	MODERATE TO LOW PRODUCTIVITY