Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this unit, students should be able to:

1. Discuss the results of effective workplace communication.
2. Distinguish between the three different types of communication media.
3. Discuss proper formatting for business letters and memos.
4. Determine basic telecommunication etiquette.
5. Explain the concepts of empowerment, responsibility, and accountability.
6. Explain how to deal effectively with your supervisor.
7. Identify inappropriate work relationships.
8. Identify basic workplace expectations.

Written Lecture

It is quite obvious in any setting that effective communication is necessary for workplace success. The ultimate goal of communicating is to create a meaningful, mutual understanding between the sender and the receiver. Whether written or verbal, thoughtful consideration must be given in lieu of the right words to express one’s thoughts. Ironically, listening and silence can also serve as effective tools for effective communication. Yet, certain barriers such as noise can negatively affect the way people share and receive information. When attempting to converse with others, remember that making eye contact and sending the right message through body language can improve the delivery of messages.

Formal communication should occur through the formal lines of authority. It should be timely and delivered to all appropriate parties. This information can flow either vertically or horizontally throughout an organization. However, information that is *informally* communicated can result in what is termed as ‘gossip’. This type of transference of information regarding an individual’s personal life can become hurtful and is inappropriate. Knowing how to effectively communicate and understanding what information should be shared versus what should be kept confidential is definitely the discretion of a true professional.

*Verbal* communication in the form of a highly developed vocabulary is wise; yet, can sometimes be intimidating to others. However, *nonverbal* communication is delivered by means of body language. Consequently, messages can be sent without a single word being shared. Keep in mind that providing eye contact and speaking clearly is very important. In addition, when hoping to portray an attitude that elicits attentiveness to another speaker, always be aware of the position of your entire body.

*Written* communication is an important aspect of business communication. It can be shared in the format of written notes and letters or electronic messages. Wise employees are cognizant of the importance of consistently presenting written correspondence in a professional manner, especially since electronic mail is the most common form of internal and external communications. Other forms of

**Key Terms**

1. Accountability
2. Business letter
3. Communication
4. Decoding
5. Documentation
6. Empowerment
7. Encoding
8. Feedback
9. Gossip
10. Responsibility
11. Sender
communication include presentations and telecommunication. With the increased use of technology in the workplace, the proper use of communication devices should be administered at all times.

A business letter is one form of written communication that can be sent as an attachment. This letter should be written in proper business format and often sent on company letterhead. The business memo; however, is used internally when communication is being relayed within an organization. Electronic mail (email) can be easy for most individuals; yet, it is still frightening for some. With email, messages can be typed directly within a subject line or text box. Another form of written communication is found in the form of a note, such as a thank you note. This type of communication serves as a powerful tool for establishing and building quality relationships. Written communication can also be found within a presentation. Three elements generally displayed are: (1) verbal content, (2) visual content, and (3) support content.

A difficult feat for some employees is to take responsibility for the job. The employee should be taking responsibility and accountability for the actions executed in any task. However, workers who feel empowered to make decisions for the benefit of the company through a direct contribution will generally perform better. All employees, no matter what status level, must strive to keep workplace friendships positive and remain professional and respectful at all times. Another important factor for employees to remember is to practice good etiquette at social functions that occur within the office. Following these measures will increase one’s chances for obtaining promotions and advancements.

**Supplemental Reading**

Articles listed can be located in the CSU Online Library:

