

“Barriers of Communication at Mc’donalds”

Alankar Gupta
B.B.A.LL.B
Indore Institute of Law

Abstract

Communication is the process of transfer of information which involves exchange of ideas, facts, feelings, expressions, etc between two or more people to reach common understanding. McDonald’s was established by two brothers in 1948 and with the passage of time in the early 21st century it was operating around 35000 outlets in more than 100 countries.¹ Generally in McDonald’s there are two types of communication i.e. verbal and non-verbal. There are various barriers like role of a person, status, power etc between employees and the manager. The main barrier between the employee and customers is the barrier of language. There is a process of communication between the employees and the customers which involves customer, encoding, channel of message, decoding, receiver and the response given by the employee.

There are also various plans to overcome the barriers of communication internally and externally which includes –

- Active listening
- Simple language
- Clarity in thoughts
- Convey Important things
- Proper Feedback

Introduction

The term communication is derived from the Latin word ‘communis’ which means common.² Communication plays key role in the success of an organization. The professional knowledge and intelligence becomes useless if the manager is unable to communicate his knowledge properly. It is important to enhance variety of skills for both, to communicate the feelings, ideas and expressions to others and also to interpret what others want to communicate.³ Communication plays a vital role in decision making, to form well developed plans for the betterment of the organization, to form a sound organizational structure etc.

Good communication always leads to nourishment of employees, involvement of employees and to have a better understanding of their jobs.

¹ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, **McDonald's** American corporation, Encyclopaedia Britannica, 18/07/2018 05:58 P.M., <https://www.britannica.com/topic/McDonalds>

² Sandeep Garg, Business Studies Class 12th 7.17, (4th ed. 2015)

³ 17/07/2018 04:09 P.M., <https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/Communication.pdf>

Without proper communication between employer and employees it's very difficult for employees to know the objectives of the business which will lead to lower the productivity of the organization.

McDonald's is a one of the largest fast food chain which was established in 1948 by two brothers Maurice and Richard in San Bernardino, California. In 1963 McDonald's introduced a clown for its publicity which was better known as Ronald McDonald. In the early 21st century McDonald's was operating around 35000 outlets in more than 100 countries.⁴

Definition of Communication

Communication is the process of transfer of information which involves exchange of ideas, facts, feelings, expressions, etc between two or more people to reach common understanding.⁵

Types of Communication In McDonald's

Normally there are two types of communication in McDonald's namely:

- ❖ Verbal Communication
- ❖ Non-Verbal Communication

Verbal Communication

Generally verbal communication is the communication which is done through words written or spoken. For example – In McDonald's when a manager directs his subordinate towards some new policy or when a subordinate sends feedback to his head in words i.e. either in written form or spoken form it leads to a verbal form of communication.

Non-Verbal Communication

Generally Non Verbal form of communication is the communication which is done through body posture, expressions, clothing, silence, Para language etc. For example in McDonald's when two employees communicate by expressions, posture etc it leads to a non verbal form of communication.

Different Types of Non Verbal Communication

- **Body language:** It includes the various body movements, gestures, facial expressions, eye contact etc.
- **Clothing:** By wearing same t-shirts the employees express that they belong to the organization.
- **Silence:** Whenever a person asks for acceptance or rejection for something and another person shows silence towards him it communicates the acceptance, rejection, confusion, respect, sadness, etc towards another one.

⁴ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, **McDonald's** American corporation, Encyclopaedia Britannica, 18/07/2018 05:58 P.M., <https://www.britannica.com/topic/McDonalds>

⁵ Sandeep Garg, Business Studies Class 12th 7.17, (4th ed. 2015)

- Para language: Whenever a person communicates through laughter, or through vocal qualifiers like intensity, pitch to another person. For example: Loudness indicates strength or anger of the speaker.

Communication Barriers between Employee and Manager in McDonald's

In every type of organization there arise various types of barriers which reduce the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization. Various barriers between employee and manager in McDonald's are:-

❖ Role of a person: -

It indicates the work of a person. Whatever work is assigned to the employees either work of distribution, preparation, paper work etc. In any organization information will flow systematically if the relations between the employees are good.⁶

For example:- In McDonald's the relations between the employee and the manager were not good as the manager having a higher post didn't speak to his employee firmly, because of which a tray full of Burgers made by the employee was spoiled as it was baked for long. According to the rules of McDonald's if any such incident happens, employee is said to inform his manager. But as their interpersonal relations were not so good employee didn't inform his manager that such incident took place.

❖ Status:-

Status means rank that an individual holds in an organization. The rights, duties, and lifestyle of an individual based upon the honor or prestige of the individual. Status of a person in an organization becomes barrier to the motivation of the employees.⁷ Some employees avoid speaking to other employees because of their status. They have fear to talk to another employee like manager as he is of higher status compared to the employees of the organization.

❖ Power⁸:-

⁶ Essays, UK. (November 2013), Analyzing the communication process in McDonalds, 15/07/2018 05:18 P.M
<https://www.ukessays.com/essays/management/analysing-the-communication-process-in-mcdonalds-management-essay.php>.

⁷ Essays, UK. (November 2013), Analyzing the communication process in McDonalds, 15/07/2018 05:18 P.M
<https://www.ukessays.com/essays/management/analysing-the-communication-process-in-mcdonalds-management-essay.php>.

⁸ Essays, UK. (November 2013), Analyzing the communication process in McDonalds, 15/07/2018 05:18 P.M
<https://www.ukessays.com/essays/management/analysing-the-communication-process-in-mcdonalds-management-essay.php>.

Power means authority of a person in an organization. When a person exercise too much power over another, it seems so much frustrating for another person which again leads to the barrier in communication.

❖ **Mixed Messages:-**

It is the type of conversation in which mixed reaction of verbal and non verbal communication is given by the person.

For example:- In McDonald's when the manager asks to an employee for some paper work, the employee immediately replies in a positive way to pay respect to the manager but his body language appears as he was not willing to work at that time.

In this type of conversation it's a dilemma for the manager if the employee wants to work or not.

Communication between Customers and Organizations Employees

The most of the employees dealing with customers are found females in McDonald who are well trained by the organization so that they can understand what a customer wants.

The main type of barrier which is faced by the organization while dealing with different customers is Linguistic Barrier.

Linguistic Barrier:-

It is a barrier in which the two speakers don't have a common language. One Speaker is unable to understand the language of another.

For Example:- A foreign customer wants to order a burger and French fries but he is unable to communicate to the worker in McDonald's as English is an alien language for him. To overcome this barrier they also consist of employees who knows different languages.

In any type of conversation there are 3 types of messages –

- ❖ What the communicator thought he communicated?
- ❖ What he actually Communicate?
- ❖ What the receiver heard?⁹

Communication between Manager and Staff Members

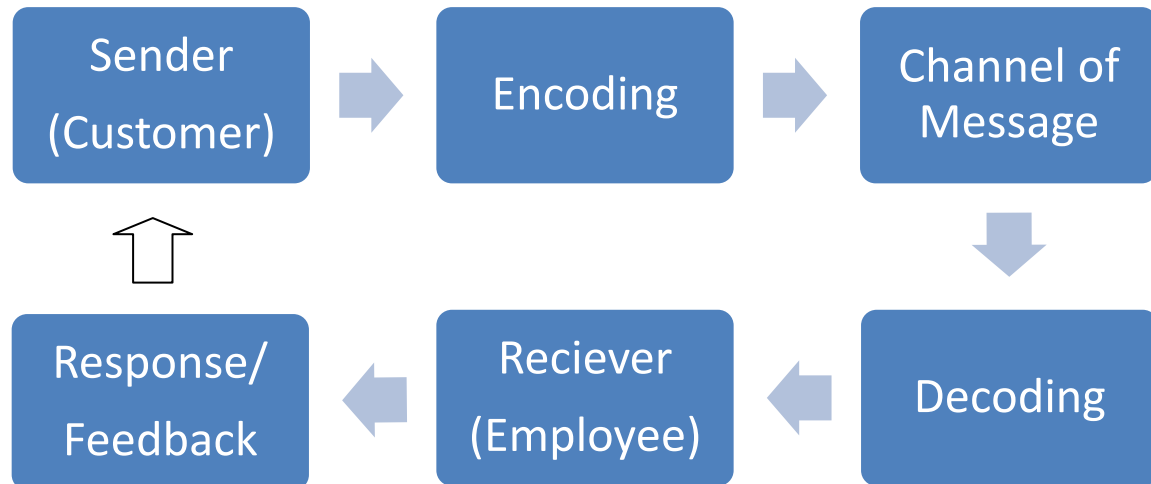
After the research on McDonald's it was found that the staff members employed by the organization are well experienced and trained but as they belong to different backgrounds and

⁹ Robert H. Stagg, Linguistic barriers to effective communication, 18/07/2018 04:16 P.M., <https://www.crisisprevention.com/Blog/October-2010/Linguistic-Barriers-to-Effective-Communication>

countries they differ on the ground of their language. So whenever the manager of the organization had a meeting with his employees language is one of the barriers. ¹⁰

The Process of Communication between Customers and Employees in McDonald's

The process of communication between customers and employees involve:-



❖ **Sender**

The customer who communicates the store to order for some food is the sender in this process.

❖ **Encoding**

Encoding is the process of conveying the thoughts through words and encoder is the person who conveys his thoughts through meaningful words.

❖ **Channel of Message**

It is the mode through which sender/customer sends his order. The mode can be telephonic i.e. the customer can give order by making a call at McDonald's or he can even order online or he can even visit the store to make his order.

¹⁰ Essays, UK. (November 2013), Analyzing the communication process in McDonalds, 15/07/2018 05:18 P.M <https://www.ukessays.com/essays/management/analysing-the-communication-process-in-mcdonalds-management-essay.php>.

- ❖ **Decoding**
Decoding is the process of giving meaning to the encoded message i.e. translating the encoded message into employee's language.
- ❖ **Receiver**
Receiver here is the employee of McDonald's to whom message has been transmitted by the customer.
- ❖ **Response/Feedback**
The last element of this process is Response/Feedback. Feedback enables the sender to understand whether the receiver is able to figure out his demand or not.

Does McDonald's Have Some Plans to Overcome the Barriers Internally and Externally?

- ❖ **Active Listening**
To overcome the barrier of misunderstanding the employees must listen what has been directed to do. They must also listen to the customer actively so that he could feel easy to communicate.
- ❖ **Simple language Should be Used**
Simple language should be used by the manager towards his employees so that they could figure out properly what their manager wants to convey. The employees should also interact with the customers in the language to which the customers feel feasible to.
- ❖ **Clarity In the Thoughts**
The manager must have clarity in his thoughts so that it could be easy for him to convey his message to his subordinates.
- ❖ **Manager Must Convey Important Things**
The manager should convey only those things to his subordinates which would not create confusion in their mind.
- ❖ **Ensure Proper Feedback**
Manager should have proper response from the employees that are they able to figure out what the manager actually wants them to understand or not.
The Employees should also give proper response to the customer which enables the customers to understand whether the employee is able to figure out his demand or not.

Conclusion

Communication is the process in which a person expresses his thoughts and ideas to another person verbally or non-verbally. A person full of knowledge and intelligence is of no use for the society if he is unable to communicate his ideas and expressions to the society. Hence a good communicator is one who is able to transfer his ideas and knowledge to others. McDonald's is one of the largest fast food chains which were established in 1948 and which has various barriers of communication between manager and employee like Status, Role of a person, power vested with him etc and the main barrier between the employee and the customers is the barrier of language. all these barriers can be overcome by having proper feedback, active listening, conveying important things etc.