FEEDBACK TUTORIAL LETTER

2nd SEMESTER 2019

ASSIGNMENT 1

ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION
(OCO521S)
QUESTION 1

Discuss the use of registers in organisations in Namibia and explain ways in which their use can be linked to organisational conflict. 50 marks

Answer

The question needed your knowledge about how you perceive registers as important in maintaining peace and tranquility in organisations thus promoting the achievement of organizational objectives. You were equally required to explain how inappropriate use of registers is associated with organizational conflict.

Information about register is in the study guide (pp. 56-58). The information is in point form as follow:

A good definition of Register

Register refers to appropriateness of language. The level of the language must be entirely suitable in relation to the purpose of the communication. Register changes not only to suit the subject matter, but also to suit the communication situation.

2. Emphasis on degree of formality

Register is mainly a matter of deciding on the appropriate degree of formality or informality in a specific situation. The skilled communication in an organisation is able to decide exactly how formal or informal he/she may be. Consistent register at the appropriate level shows that the speaker/writer is in control of the communication situation. If you work in an organisation where situations require a formal register, you should nonetheless avoid vocabulary that is pretention and sentence structure that is necessarily complex. You must always aim at logical, clear, succinct expression.

3. Suitability of Language and Concepts

The following questions must be considered by both the employer and employee in any organisation:
At whom are you aiming your communication? (Your audience)
What are you communicating (Your subject matter)
Why are you communicating? (Your intention or motivation)
Let’s deal with each question and see how it helps in organisations or even beyond.

WHOM (YOUR AUDIENCE)

It’s essential to group the communication level and range of your audience in order to ensure an appropriate level of register
Sometimes you have to address several people at once, and this could also affect your register. An audience in a hall would, furthermore tend to control your register more strictly than a group of people in a room. Be aware of the ages, education, positions and interests of your audience; for instance a group of academics, “struggle kids” – (Namibian context), semi-skilled employees, managers, waiters etc.

**WHAT (YOUR SUBJECT MATTER)**

The content of what you have to say influences how you will say it. As awareness of individual learning styles flows, skilled communication are increasingly taking account of the need to present their information to audiences or workshop groups in different ways. Although auditory presentation remains the primary method, this should be supplemented as far as possible by visual back-up and, where applicable, handouts for future reference.

Subject matter is constantly affecting our decisions about our mode of communication.

**WHY (YOUR INTENTION OR MOTIVATION)**

Your reason for communicating affects the way you communicate. If you are angry about your employees your tone will reflect this. It is always recommended that employees use a persuasive or supportive tone. The tone will tell listeners all they need to know about the manager’s intention.

Having analysed the whom, what and why question, it’s of paramount importance to think of the vocabulary used by employees and employers in any organisation. It is inappropriate to utilise verbose and bombastic terminology when a suitable alternative would be to: “Keep it simple". Often the complex word will not be understood. Further is, the listener is distracted by inappropriate vocabulary, then less attention is paid to the meaning or to the information you wished to convey. Furthermore, attached to the vocabulary is the tone of your written or verbal communication.

Ordinarily organizational conflict is associated with a number of causes as explained below.

**Task interdependencies**

This is when your task depends on the task of another colleague. For example, if you work at a bakery your one depends on a performance of a number of people in the organization. The buyer needs to order baking ingredients on time. If they do not do so, you will not have production going on. Suppose the buyer does but the driver delays because he was not told on time that he needed to go and obtain a truck – load of ingredients from the supplier, this obviously would hamper production processes. If you look closely at these problems you can see that they all happens due to communication failure. If people were to communicate on time using appropriate registers as explained earlier, these problems would be minimized if not eliminated completely.

**Overlapping authority**

You would find that in organisations, if job description is not explained properly, people will end up performing other people’s responsibilities. This is a potential cause of conflict. For example, the nurse would not take it lightly if a nurse-aid performs her duties. Think about a Deputy School Head who performs the duties of the School Head when the School Head is there. Surely this would cause conflict between the two. Tasks and responsibilities have to be properly communicated.

**Scarcity of resources**

Resources are always inadequate in organisations. Most organisations do not have enough attractive cars for people in management positions, office space, transport for staff and other benefits. Such scarcity of resources need to be properly communicated. People need to be informed about the criteria used to distribute such resources. For example, people can be told that the distribution of cars can be based on seniority. If the criteria is communicated, and is seen to be rationale and fair no employee will have problems with that.

**Jealous**

Jealous can be a product of laziness and ignorance. Employees need to be informed say about existing opportunities for funding for further studies so that they do not become jealous of those who would have improved on their qualifications due to exploitation of such opportunities. In addition, criteria for availing such
opportunities to people should be clearly communicated. It should be seen to be fair. Those with an inclination towards laziness should be educated so that they see the importance of embracing hard-work within the organization.

**Incompetence**

Incompetence may be a product of lack of skills and knowledge. Opportunities of such skills and knowledge need to be communicated to employees so that they make informed choices about their lives. Junior employees need to be informed about opportunities for short courses which could make them improve on their skills.

**Incompatible goals and time horizons**

This refers to a situation whereby people in Departments do not agree on targets and the time in which such targets need to be completed. For example, the engineer might instruct that the technicians need to have completed wiring the new building in two weeks’ time, while the supervisor of the technicians will be of the opinion that his subordinates should have completed repairing electricity faults in the existing buildings first in a week’s time. Departments and responsible individuals need to communicate, in order to clearly indicate to all when certain targets are to be met.

**Unfair reward systems**

In organisations there need to be transparency. This means communication is vital in informing people about the existing reward systems.

In order to meaningfully tackle this question you needed to give specific example from your organization as was demanded by the question.

Therefore your task was to explain how good communication skills/good use of registers would prevent conflict from happening in organisations as a result of any of the above causes.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, you were expected to highlight the link between conflict and failure to use registers appropriately in organisations.

**Prepared for you by**

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