

Emotional Intelligence And Its...

Emotional intelligence and its role in interpersonal relationships.

Basically, when we talk about emotional intelligence, we are merely referring to the ability to identify and control emotions irrespective of whether they are your or someone else's on the other hand Interpersonal relationship refers to an association or connection between two people. Interpersonal relationship may be based on different things for example love, liking and or limerence. It may also vary in context and settings such as family, workplace, clubs, neighborhoods or churches and other places of worship. Despite human beings being social creatures, they are not always encouraged to get into interpersonal relationships as not all of them are healthy. Examples of unhealthy interrelationships include co-dependence and abusive relationship where one is threatened or physically and psychologically abused. The greatest indicators of an abusive relationship may include jealousy, intentionally withholding intimacy, emotional withholding, infidelity, broken promises, physical violence and power plays (Saunders & Hargie, 1994).

Nevertheless, not all relationships are bad. All relationships irrespective of the type involve some kind of interdependence. People have the tendency to influence each other as they share their thoughts and feelings whilst engaging in activities together. As a result of this something that affects one person in a relationship will automatically affect the other though not in the same magnitude. In every relationship, communication is the key to ensuring durability in the relationship. Communication is a necessity in life as people always need to express themselves to others. Therefore, it is mandatory for one to build emotional intelligence skills in order to boost and enrich our relationships. Therefore, one major attribute of emotional intelligence is its ability to help people to properly communicate their emotions and opinions to others as well as helping one to respond appropriately towards other peoples emotions. This helps to build a solid foundation in relationships hence strengthening the relationship. Therefore, emotional intelligence is a skill that one acquires and helps one to distinguish between damaging and effective communication.

Communication alone is not enough; rather one should strive to ensure the communication is effective and appropriate at all times. In general, communication is used to educate, inform, share emotions and correct others. However, if communication is administered recklessly and ineffectively, it may hurt or confuse the listener. Communication may either be verbal or non verbal. Non verbal communication may include gestures, facial expressions and vocal tones whereas verbal communication entails the use of words to communicate some information. However, one ought to be cautious when using both types of communication as they might end up contradicting and weakening the message. However, if both are used correctly, they strengthen the message (Augustine, 2002).

Communication must always be viewed as a two way process where one party gives information while the other party receives it irrespective of the channel used. During communication, one must learn to filter the information based on their own opinion and feelings and decipher what the message means. However, one must be cautious not to let their opinion and ideas cloud the actual meaning of the message. It must be noted

that emotion is the major drive in our entire decision making. Emotion is the back bone of communication as inured for one to motivate and communicate with people; you must first touch their emotions. It is therefore important to first establish an emotional bond with the listeners to improve the way they will receive and perceive the information communicated.

Basic Principles of Communication

In summary, the major basic principles of communication entail knowing what you want. This basically means that before commencing to communicate, you must establish the purpose and objective of the communication clearly. This is ought to be done in the very beginning before getting into deeper details of the information. Secondly, the person communicating must consider the type of the audience they are dealing with. The channel and method used should be appropriate for the target audience to avoid instances of miscommunication. To reduce instances of miscommunication, the writer or speaker should use clear and precise language. This helps to reduce chances of multiple understandings.

The audience must in one way or another be connected to the information you are conveying. This is because communicating something to someone who does not find it relevant enough to care about is the same as not communicating at all. To spark the interest of the audience, it is important to first show them how the information applies to their lives. The speaker must always make an attempt to reach out to touch their feelings hence hooking them to what you are communicating. This is because when someone cares about what you are communicating, they are more likely to act on it as well as tell someone else about it and they are more likely to respond positively to the information.

Finally, it is very important to confirm and reconfirm the information being communicated. This eradicates any room for assumptions in the listener as far as interpreting the information is concerned. By adhering to these principles, one is able to reduce errors brought about by miscommunication.

Misconceptions about Communication

The primary misconception about communication to this date is the fact that most people tend to assume that effective communication basically means telling one what you feel. However, this is not true. Communication is not just about giving information like a machine, it entails using the information to exert some influence on the target audience. Communication is guided by psycho-logic where it is not simply about telling rather it is about acting hence causing the behavior of the audience to change and comply to what we say to them. Another misconception about communication is that communication once broken can be repaired. This is not entirely true since once communication breaks, information is distorted completely and the only option would be to start the entire communication process afresh (Trenholm & Jensen, 2007).

Some people also assume that communication success can only be measured in legal terms. The people assume that once they have communicated some information there is no need to follow up and communicate again as they will have met their legal obligations. This misconception is not true as the purpose of communication is to influence others. If one fails to follow up and communicate again to their audience they will not have lived up to the true meaning of communication. Therefore for one to effectively communicate, they must ensure they communicate consistently and constantly follow up on their audiences. They must stop assuming that communication is passive and realize that communication is a continuous process and is essential in every day's life.

Barriers to Effective Interpersonal Communication

Barriers to effective interpersonal communication are those things that hinder effective communication. Barriers may arise from the different languages that exist in the world resulting in miscommunication. What one word means in one language might mean something entirely different in another language. This results in misinterpretation of information.

Cultural barriers are as a result of different and varying cultures among people. Effective communication requires one to understand the basic values, aspirations, and assumptions that operate across cultural lines. Due to some differences across cultures, the chances for miscommunication in cross-cultural situations are enormous.

Individual barriers are as a result of the individual's opinion about the speaker as well as their emotional attachment to the communicator and the information. If the audience dislikes, undermines or distrusts the speaker, they will not be receptive to the information as expected. This is the greatest barrier of all since effective communication is entirely based on emotional perspective of the audience.

Channel barrier involves using unreliable channels. This may include poorly connected telephone lines, unreliable postage and maybe slow and interrupted internet connectivity resulting in poor transmission of information. Although these are not all the barriers that may hinder communication, they are the major barriers and if not put into consideration when communicating can result in very poor and misunderstood communication (Anderson & Lapp, 1999).

Strategies for Active, Critical and Emphatic listening

Listening helps one to acquire useful information that at one point will enable them to solve various problems. To be a good listener, one must strive to always repeat what the speaker says. This helps them to always remember what was said and internalize it. Next, always take short notes during the conversation to ensure you don't forget the key issues discussed. Be keen during the talk and try maintaining eye contact with the speaker as much as possible. Also providing non verbal cues to the speaker helps. Try as much as possible to avoid outside distractions as this will interfere with the flow of thoughts. This could result in forgetting important points of the conversation. Make a habit of always

listening from the heart as this will help you listen more clearly since you will not be thinking about anyone else at the time and finally try as much as possible to always practice the above listening skills each time someone talks to you.

Overall, to be a good listener starts with you. You must be able to tell the difference between listening and hearing. Once you learn to listen rather than hear, then and only then will you be able to learn more about yourself and to appreciate the power listening has.

References

Anderson, P. & Lapp, D. (1999). Language skills in elementary education. London, Macmillan publishers.

Augustine, J. (2002). Handbook of interpersonal communication. South Africa, SAGE publishers.

Saunders, C. & Hargie, O. (1994). Social skills in interpersonal communication. Finland, Routledge.

Trenholm, A. & Jensen, A. (2007). Interpersonal communication. Virginia, Oxford University Press.