A Note on Communication Network

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Perspective

A communication network refers to the method that employees pass on information to other employees in an organization. Let's take a look at four different types: the wheel network, chain network, circle network, and all-channel network. The network is divided based on the number of people involved in the communication, organizational size and nature of the communication network. The common network patterns are Vertical Network, Circuit network, Chain network, Wheel network, and Star network. Transmission and reception of information is the basis of communication.

Vertical network

The communication which passes from one person or process to another person or process in a vertical pattern is called Vertical Network. It can happen either in the top to bottom or bottom to top format. This communication provides an immediate response as the receiver receives the information faster than any other network. We can call this network as a formal network. The best example is the communication between top level and bottom level employees. Miscommunication does not happen in this network as this is a type of direct communication.

Chain network

In a chain network individuals communicate in a set sequence. Communication starts at the top, like from a CEO, and works its way down to the different levels of employees.

This communication network is indeed like a chain in that the top of the chain has to go through each individual link before getting to the end. The CEO will talk to a manager who is next in the hierarchy but does not talk to a clerk at the bottom of the hierarchy. The chain network often takes up time, and communication may not be clear. This could cause people at the bottom to feel discouraged, but it could also give them the motivation to move up the chain.

Circuit network

When the communication between two people happens simultaneously in a circuit is called Circuit Network. Though it works like Vertical Network, there are no superiors or subordinates or at least not considered like them. Here the communication is a two-way communication. The messaging or information reception is continuous and the people involved can be at the same hierarchical level.

Spoke network

A wheel network is a style of communication where the leader is the only one to receive or give communication. The leader, usually the supervisor or owner in the company, is like the bright light in the middle of a Ferris wheel; the light starts in the middle then gets passed on to all the spokes at the ends of the wheel. This one person has to know everything about the business and relays all messages. Employees have an exact idea of how decisions are made and how communication is handled.

Star network

Several people are involved in this network and the process forms a star shape. This network enables people to communicate with each other or with people who are involved in the same process. This network can be considered as a development of a wheel network with no central person to control the way of communication. All are free to communicate with each other. No restrictions are present to block the communication between people in the process. Teamwork is built using this communication. A WhatsApp group which is related to work is a good example of Star Network.

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