

Management & Communication Skills

Lecturer : Dr. Leul Girma



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Course & Class Information

Course: **Management & Communication Skills**

Program: **Business Administration / Management**

Credits: **6 ECTS**

Mode: **Onsite / Blended**

Class 2: Leadership and Communication Styles

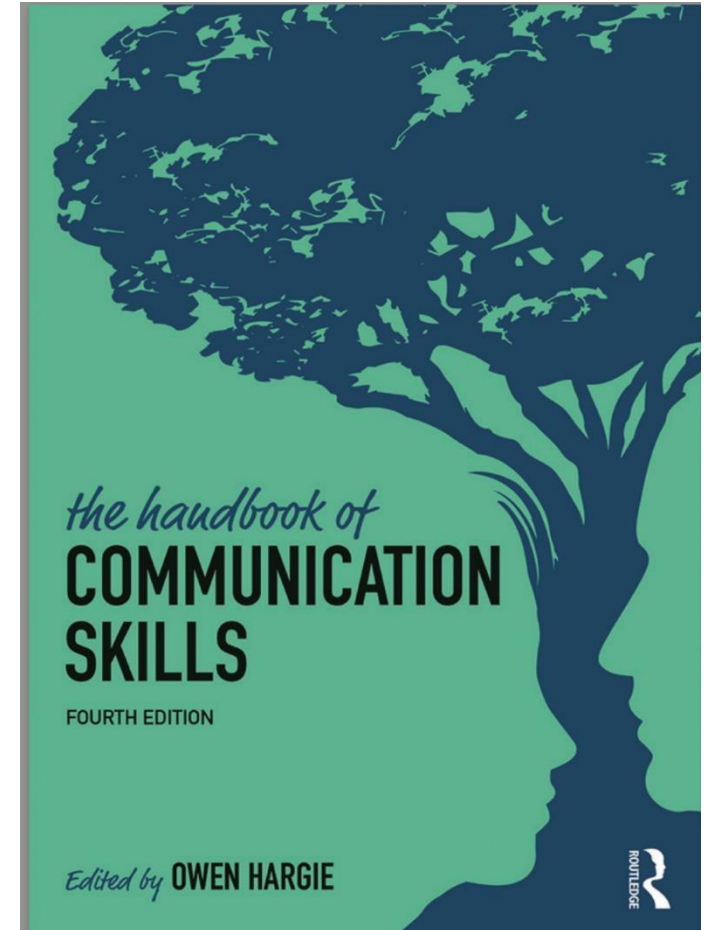
Instructor: **Dr. Leul Girma**

Main Teaching & Learning Materials

Core materials:

Tex book

- The Handbook of Communication Skills
Fourth Edition Edited by Owen Hargie
Published 2019 by Routledge
- Case studies and real-world examples
- Academic articles and selected readings



Objective and Learning Outcomes

Objective:

To develop understanding of leadership communication and its influence on team performance and organizational effectiveness.

By the end of this class, students will be able to:

- Explain the role of communication in leadership
- Identify different leadership communication styles
- Recognize which style fits different situations
- Apply leadership communication skills in professional contexts

What is Leadership Communication?

Leadership communication is the **process of influencing, guiding, and motivating** others through **strategic and interpersonal communication** to achieve **shared goals** (Northouse, 2021).

It focuses on:

- Distinguishing **leadership** communication from **general management** communication
- Using communication to **inspire** and **align teams**
- Building **trust** and **credibility** through **message delivery**

Types of Leadership Communication Styles

Leadership communication styles are the recurring patterns of verbal and non-verbal behavior that leaders use to exchange information, give instructions, provide feedback, and influence others across different situations (Clampitt, 2016).

- Different leadership communication styles exist
- Different teams and tasks require different levels of direction and support
- Employee maturity, skill level, and motivation vary across situations
- Organizational culture and crisis conditions demand adaptability
- No single style works for all people, goals, or contexts

The seven main leadership styles:

- 1. Autocratic**
- 2. Democratic**
- 3. Laissez-faire**
- 4. Transformational**
- 5. Transactional**
- 6. Servant**
- 7. Situational**

1. Autocratic Leadership Style

Autocratic leaders communicate using direct, top-down instructions with little input from team members (Robbins & Coulter, 2018).

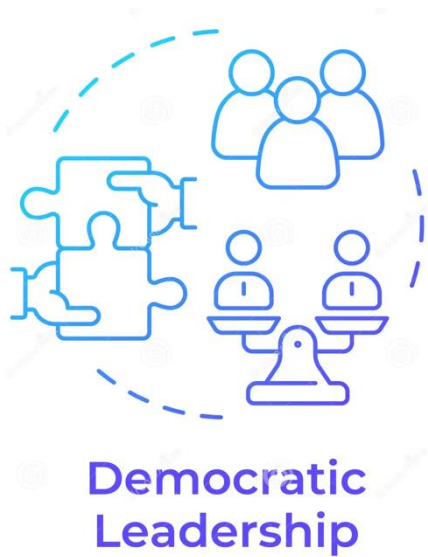
It focuses on:

- Clear, unambiguous commands
- Limited feedback or discussion
- Efficiency in crisis or high-stakes situations



2. Democratic Leadership Style

Democratic leaders communicate through open dialogue, active listening, and shared decision-making (Adler, Rodman & du Pré, 2013).



It focuses on:

- Encouraging team participation
- Using feedback loops for continuous improvement
- Building consensus through discussion

3. Laissez-Faire Leadership Style

Laissez-faire leaders communicate minimally, providing resources and autonomy while stepping back from daily guidance (Robbins & Coulter, 2018).

It focuses on:

- Delegating communication responsibilities to the team
- Being available for support rather than direction
- Trusting self-motivated teams to coordinate themselves



**Laissez-Faire
Leadership**

4. Transformational Leadership Style

Transformational leaders communicate vision, enthusiasm, and emotional connection to inspire change and high performance (Northouse, 2021).



It focuses on:

- Using storytelling and metaphors
- Expressing optimism and confidence
- Linking daily tasks to larger purpose

5. Transactional Leadership Style

Transactional leaders communicate through goal-setting, performance expectations, and contingent rewards (Robbins & Coulter, 2018).

It focuses on:

- Clarifying roles and task requirements
- Using feedback to correct or praise
- Linking communication directly to outcomes



6. Servant Leadership Style

Servant leaders communicate with empathy, humility, and a primary focus on supporting team member growth (Adler, Rodman & du Pré, 2013).



It focuses on:

- Active listening before speaking
- Asking "How can I help?"
- Building community through inclusive language

7. Situational Leadership Communication

Situational leaders adapt their communication style based on team competence, commitment, and task demands (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982).

It focuses on:

- Assessing team readiness level
- Switching between telling, selling, participating, and delegating
- Matching communication intensity to follower needs



Formal vs Informal Leadership Communication

Formal channels (memos, meetings) convey authority and structure; informal channels (hallway talks, group chats) build trust and speed (Robbins & Coulter, 2018).

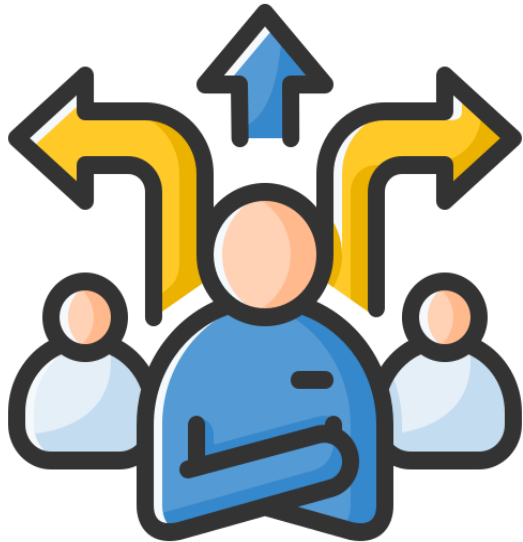


It focuses on:

- Knowing when to use each type
- Avoiding over-reliance on one channel
- Leveraging informal networks for change management

Overcoming Leadership Communication Barriers

Leaders can reduce barriers by modeling transparency, encouraging upward communication, and using multiple channels (Clampitt, 2016)



It focuses on:

- Creating psychological safety for feedback
- Repeating key messages in different formats
- Actively confirming understanding

Upward and Downward Communication in Leadership

Upward communication flows from employees to management; downward communication flows from management to employees (Robbins & Coulter, 2018).

It focuses on:

- Flow of information within hierarchy
- Role of feedback from employees
- Communication of instructions and goals



Self-Assessing Your Leadership Communication Style

Understanding your natural tendencies helps you develop adaptability and reduce blind spots (Northouse, 2021).



It focuses on:

- Reflecting on past feedback and reactions
- Identifying preferred style under stress
- Setting development goals for flexibility

Key Takeaways

- Matching style to people, task, and context
- Overcoming barriers through active adaptation
- Continuously learning from feedback and outcomes

Further reading

Adler, R. B., Rodman, G., & du Pré, A. (2013). Understanding Human Communication

Clampitt, P. G. (2016). Communicating for Managerial Effectiveness

Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2017). Organizational Behavior

Robbins, S. P., & Coulter, M. (2018). Management

Shannon, C. E., & Weaver, W. (1949). The Mathematical Theory of Communication

Thank you



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