

**Soft Skills**  
**Dr. Binod Mishra**  
**Department of Humanities & Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee**

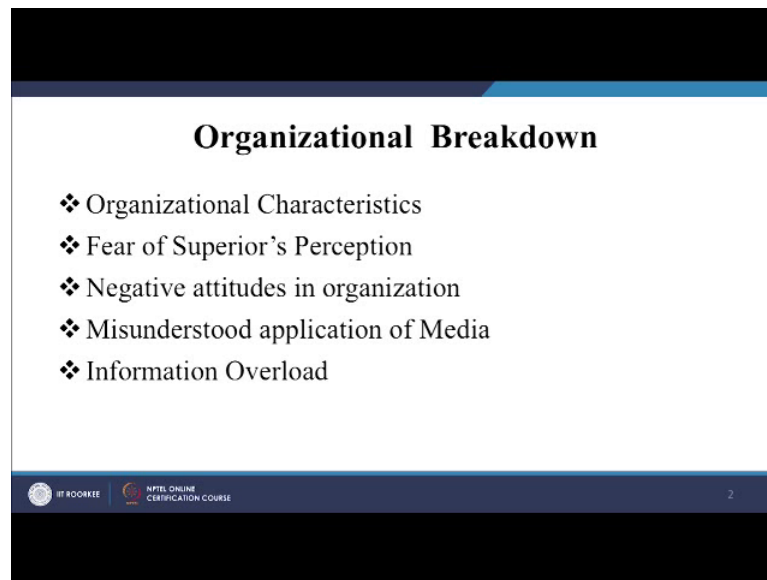
**Lecture – 22**  
**Communication Breakdown Part II**

Welcome back to the second lecture on communication breakdown. In the previous lecture we talked about the various types of communication and we also saw how there can be communication barrier at the source meaning thereby from the sender's level which we may call interpersonal communication barriers. Next to that we also talked about communication barriers between people which we may call interpersonal communication barriers.

Now, in this lecture we will be talking about communication barriers in organizations because majority of time as professionals we spend in organizations and when we communicate in the organizations we communicate with a purpose. So, the need of being careful in organization while communicating becomes utmost. Now what are the various types of communication barriers in organization and why do these barriers or breakdown or communication road blocks arise at the workplace.

You have already read that every organization has a network of communication and then it has certain characteristics as we have discussed you start initially as an employee and in times to come you move up the ladders and also adopt different roles. So, because of the organizational characteristics also communication barrier arises. Moreover we have another communication breakdown which is because of the fear of superior's perception in the previous lecture we have talked about perception and we have said that no two people have the same perception, but when you communicate at the workplace and since you communicate with people of different levels people at different posts.

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**Organizational Breakdown**

- ❖ Organizational Characteristics
- ❖ Fear of Superior's Perception
- ❖ Negative attitudes in organization
- ❖ Misunderstood application of Media
- ❖ Information Overload

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So, when you are communicating with a senior person because most of your activities are guided watched and monitored by him since he is the leader of your organization or since he is the head of your particular division is which you are working.

So, because of the fear perception you are not able to communicate and of course, in many organizations it is seen that not everyone can communicate with everyone especially in organizations where there is no candid communication, so these problems arise. People at the lower level despite the fact that know that they know certain things they are not able to communicate only under the weight of the fear of superiors post.

Then there are negative attitudes in the organization and organization as discussed earlier is a group of people and this group of people from different backgrounds different cultures different faiths and different states sometimes. So, what happens when people work in the organization and they tend to create groups? Sometimes a particular decision may affect and in an individual or a particular group. So, naturally you develop a sort of attitude if things are not going the right way in your case you develop a negative attitude. Moreover the manager also sometimes because of some reasons may develop a sort of impression about you which may not be true, but then he also tends to develop an attitude or an impression which is negative about you. So, these negative attitudes actually destroy the candor in organization the candid atmosphere in the organization and

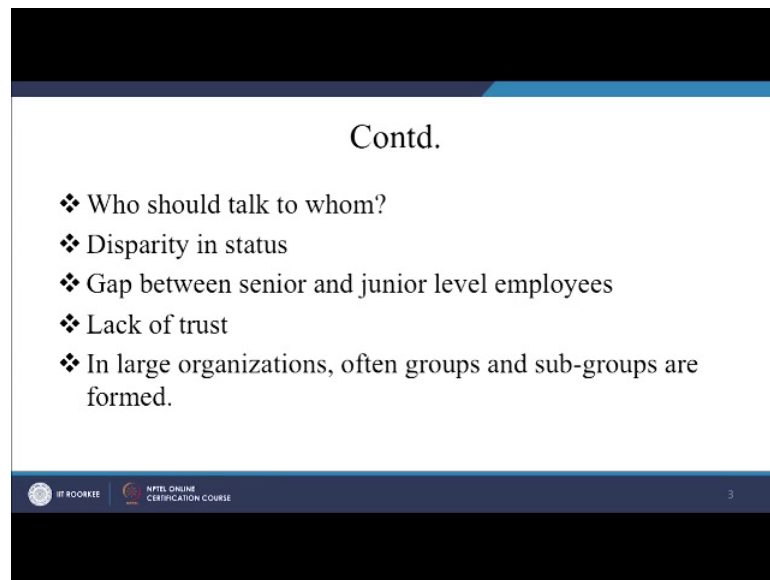
you are not able to communicate effectively and hence then comes the misunderstood application of media and information overload.

Now, how to be aware of these organizational breakdowns and what to do? I mean it is the status that matters most in organization and when a person at the top level communicates with the person at the lower level because the lower level people often do not get the opportunity of communicating with the higher people. Even if they have some new idea they are because there is a sort of restrictive environment in many organizations which do not permit you to communicate with your seniors or with your bosses that is why you will find that if you have to say something or if you have to write say something you have to go the use the word like proper channel. By this proper channel we mean they there are certain norms you have to follow straightway you cannot talk to or you cannot communicate with the person at the top.

You have to follow certain norms you have to go initially to your controlling officer in many organizations where there are different sections especially large organizations. So, majority of organizations you will find they are having a tall structure where they will be different units, different divisions, different subunits and every unit will have a chief. So, you will have to report you will have to communicate your grievances to your head and naturally it will be passed on to the higher ups.

On occasions it has been found that there exists a sort of gap between the senior and the junior level employees.

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- ❖ Who should talk to whom?
- ❖ Disparity in status
- ❖ Gap between senior and junior level employees
- ❖ Lack of trust
- ❖ In large organizations, often groups and sub-groups are formed.

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And this is actually the reason why grapevine is formulated and as we said in the earlier section that grapevine cannot be negative all (Refer Time: 08:09), it actually it works as a sort of purgatory force I mean people they often convey their hidden their suppress desires through grapevine through whispering with their friends with people who are from the same groups. And this lack of trust even in larger organizations will also find even enlarger units also you will find there is found to be a sort of lack when it comes to trust this is this is also because of their positions and this lack of trust also arises because of the poor communication levels also you know no two people even if they are at the same posts sometimes they try to avoid communication with their p a groups only because they feel that their poor communication skills will be exposed.

But then when we are working in an organization we have to understand that coordination comes from trust and when you do not trust a lower level employee we perhaps cannot aim at productivity. In large organizations people create employees create groups and subgroups they actually do that based on their preference the preference, sometimes of religion, sometimes of faith, sometimes of some other likeliness sometimes on of interest. And these subgroups actually at times become threatening to the organizational channel.

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**Too many transfer stations**

- Message gets twisted
- The message sent is not the message received.

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In many organizations you will find there are too many transfer stations what are these transfer stations you will find that if because there is a hierarchy of information flow or communication as we have said who should talk to whom. So, what happens you give a message to somebody and that message is passed on to somebody and again that message will be passed on to somebody and since we are all humans we are all individuals what actually we do is we try to frame the message and while framing we try to reframe the message and while reframing what we do is we actually destroy the message.

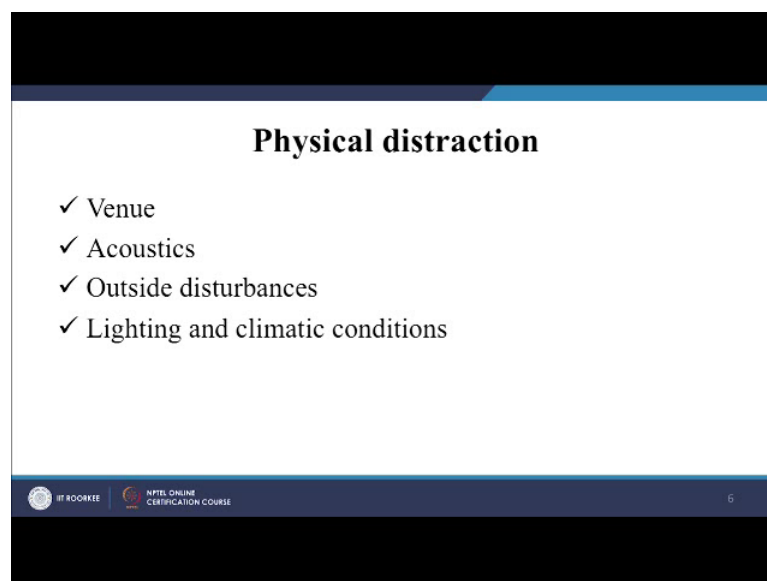
That is why the message sent is not always the message received let me give you a very small example on one occasion one employee because he is give going on some personal leave or he is going on some personal requirement. So, he tells his colleague see one of my friends is passing away and I want to meet him, so if the boss comes please tell him that I will be returning in the late afternoon and if I do not return considered me on leave. Now while this colleague met the boss or his head he said mister x told me that is friend was passing away so he thought, he should actually meet him and should have a discussion before he goes and finally, and he also said that if it is not return it should be understood that he was on leave.

Finally, when it went to the boss the boss told his secretary if anyone calls for or if anyone wants mister x tell him that he is no more. Now if you look at this entire piece of

information you will find the choice of words which was made was actually in a way and since this information passed from one information to other this actually became distorted actually the meaning of passed away is to die. And then since he was in a hurry he simply wanted to convey that one of his friends was passing this way and he wanted to meet him and he said one of his friends was passing away and he wanted to meet him and finally, he had also said that if you did not return it should be understood that he was on leave and in hurry the boss said that he was no more meaning thereby the boss also said that perhaps he died. Now, this is actually a case of how so many transfer stations actually distort the message and that is why we say the message sent is not always the message received.

On many occasions when you want to communicate a message you choose the wrong channel. Nowadays since you have a variety of channels at your disposal you actually want to make the maximum use of channels which are available to you and which are at your disposal this is call media richness.

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**Physical distraction**

- ✓ Venue
- ✓ Acoustics
- ✓ Outside disturbances
- ✓ Lighting and climatic conditions

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But please do remember that while deciding the media or why deciding the channel one should also have a let sort of sympathy for the person on the other end meaning thereby looking at the background age and sex of the other person.

So, when you decide to give a message through telephone or through electronic mail please ensure that the other party is having these facilities. On majority of occasions

people who are at the lower level may not be having all the facilities which a person at the high higher level enjoys. So, and at times technical in objective messages you know these are lean media, I mean people bother least about some technical pieces of information and that is why when you are formulating that message, when you are formulating that information you actually need to be extract causes and never treat that the other person also has the same knowledge about the subject on which you are talking about. Meaning thereby that if you are talking on a difficult subject on a technical subject and you being an expert in that you are deliberately using the technical jargons without realizing the fact that when it goes outside or when it goes to the other person it may not be considered in a nice manner.

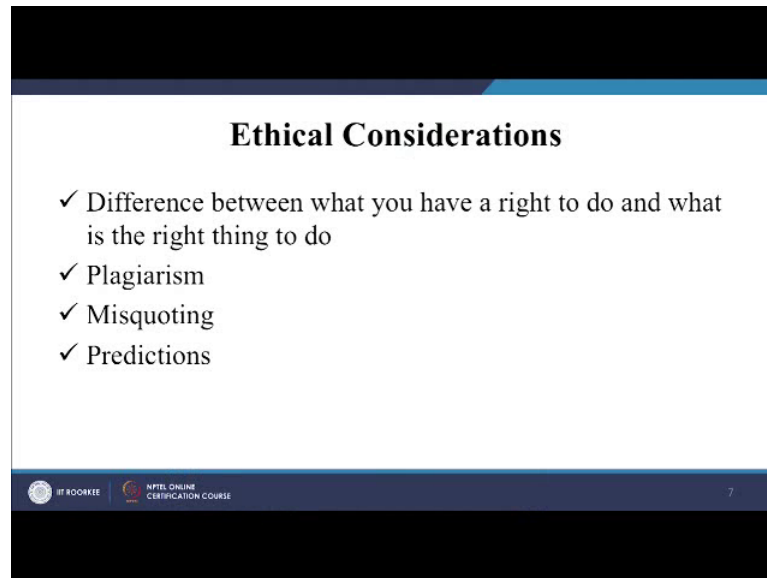
It may create a sort of challenge for the other person to receive and interpret this message then at times in organizations. Because nowadays we are living in a world where there are organizations where there are offices in every nuke and corner and on majority of occasions we feel that because of some physical distractions communication faces a lot of challenge, proper communication does not take place either because of the venue if your office is in a market place and you do not have the proper facilities to ensure that silence prevails naturally people often find it difficult to make use of even the resources that have been provided to them.

Then at times the acoustics they also create a problem for example, one I am delivering a talk to you I ensure and I expect that everything goes to you quite successfully, but then this sort of expectation comes to me because I feel the acoustics and the gadgets which have been provided that they are working they are working quite efficiently. But then there are moments when the voice may not come clearly their movements when the voice may come as a muffled noise and then outside disturbances you can always anticipate. So, when you are communicating these things actually hinder the smooth flow of communication.

Moreover at times you are not able to communicate properly because of the poor lighting facilities because of the climatic conditions suppose you are writing a report and at the same time when you were discussing the very crucial matter and suddenly you find that there is an electric cut naturally you feel embarrassed and all and this actually leads to a sort of communication failure.

Then there are also cases of ethics when once you are in organization please see to it that you do not utter something you know we are leaving, in a very small world, as we are living in a global world everything may go you know because it is a digital world where things may go viral and the problem arises when whatever you have said or whatever has been said by others is being misquoted.

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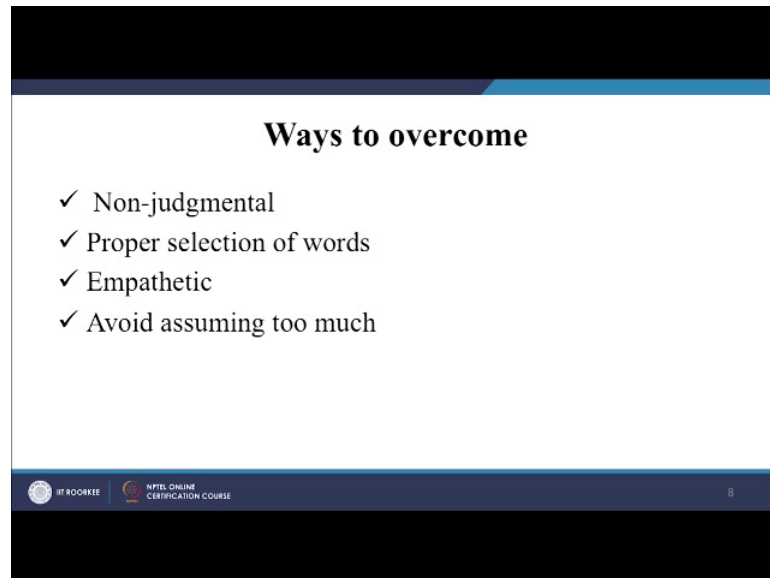


So, when you are communicating please see that your messages or others messages are not misquoted you often come across situations when you may if you are asked you may say I never did. So, especially you will often find the leaders saying something and the reports coming in a different way and when asked they say I never said like that it was actually a sort of misquoting.

So, as a careful communicator and since we are communicating in an organization and communication leads to some decision see to it that we are not misquoting, we are not making of our future predictions at time people make far future predictions and these actually pass because they are also made informally they pass from one person to another and hence it starts appearing as a while fired that may actually hardness that may actually harm your own image also.



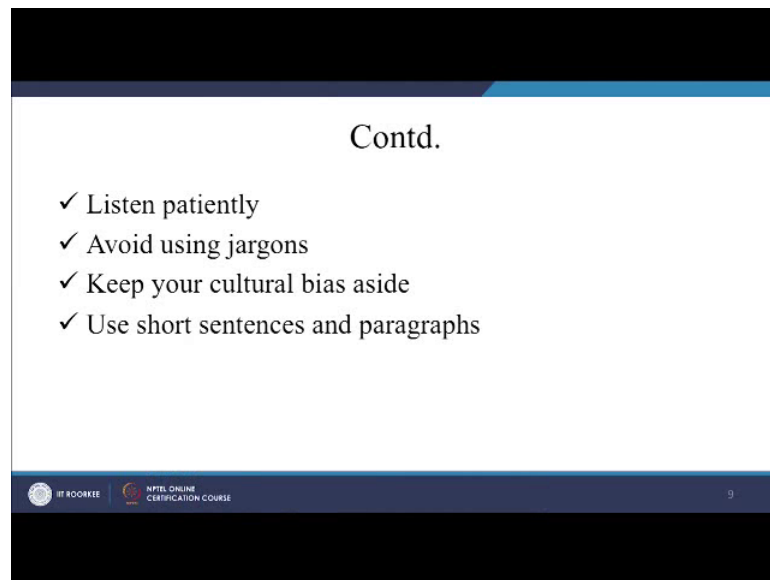
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So, please see to it that you have to understand and ensure a difference between what you should say and for whom you should say. There has been many examples where people have not said that and then it has actually lead to a sort of confusion and it has often lead to a sort of misinterpretation and a sort of miscommunication. Please see to it that you avoid such a situation and create efficient messages which are going to benefit not only you, but also the organization because when you are working in an organization you have to ensure that your communication is going to be very effective and it is going to be for the welfare of the organization.

But then when we are leaving in such an age where information can be found at every push of the button and communication can be done as fast as it can be let us see that we do not communicate which actually makes us judgmental because if organizations have to thrive today they have to thrive on the basis of the communication that actually the organization displays. So, there are certain ways which can help us overcome these hindrances, and one of the way is becoming non judgmental.

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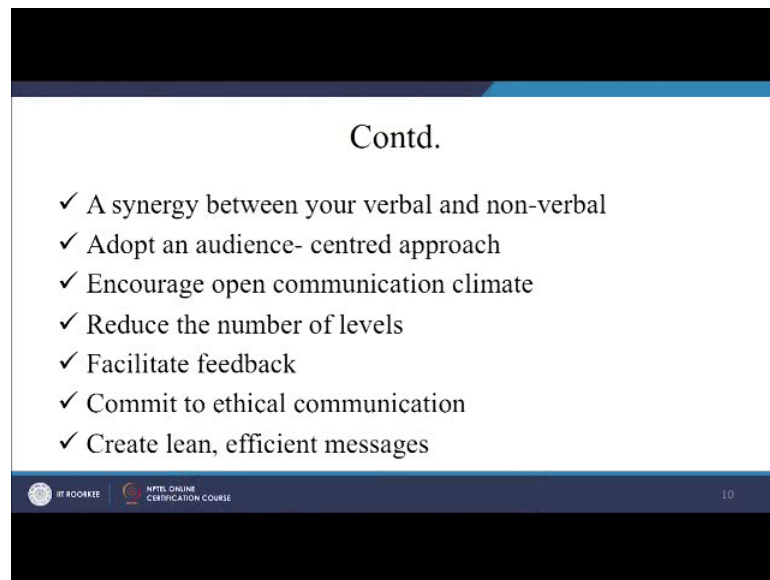
- ✓ Listen patiently
- ✓ Avoid using jargons
- ✓ Keep your cultural bias aside
- ✓ Use short sentences and paragraphs

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You know you should not or you should never while communicating become a judge or say something which can be judgmental and this can be done with the choice of words that you use you know never pass any statement which is going to destroy your image as well as the image of the organization. Because when you are working for an for an organization you are actually trying to give a sort of message to the outside world as to why are you belong and what you are.

Say to it that while you select words you select words with proper question you select words with proper control and you also see that the word does not have any other meaning and the word can be taken in a different manner. While communicating say to it that you put yourself in other source meaning thereby if you receive this message if you receive this communication what will happen how will you react what will your reactions. So, the need is to be empathetic, need is an at times people actually start assuming more than what is being said never make more assumptions sometimes you make more assumptions and then finally, you lend yourself into trouble.

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- ✓ A synergy between your verbal and non-verbal
- ✓ Adopt an audience- centred approach
- ✓ Encourage open communication climate
- ✓ Reduce the number of levels
- ✓ Facilitate feedback
- ✓ Commit to ethical communication
- ✓ Create lean, efficient messages

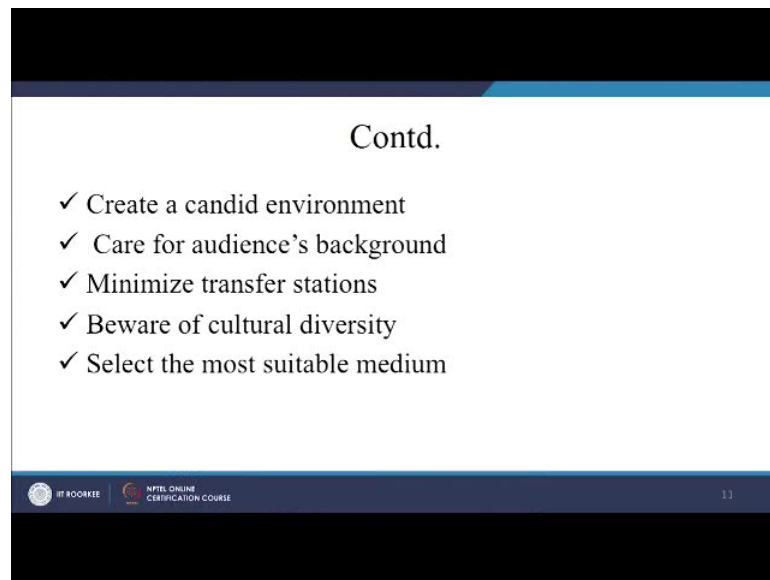
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One of the major factors of avoiding communication breakdown or barrier especially in organization is please try to be a very good listener. We have already discussed in our lecture on listening what actually is meant by proper listening what actually is meant by effective listening.

If you are communicating with the outside world and specially to the people because you know you communicate through different ways and different means, but if you are communicating especially for a desired impact see to it that you do not make use of too much jargons. Since you will not be communicated you will not be communicating with your people only, but you will be communicating with people of other countries of other cultures please see that your cultural buyers does not come in and between and destroys communication to a great extent. If you are making use of written communication see to it that whatever you right has to be understood and for this we shall be discussing when we discuss in our lecture on writing we shall discuss how we can make our writing more effective to the point more specific and also we can make use of short sentences and paragraphs. So, that people on the other side receive the message well.

In addition you should also see that have you been able to if it is a sort of spoken communication you are going to have a sort of result out of it, say to it as we discussed in our lecture on negotiations skills what is being said how it is being said how this nonverbal thing has been taken into consideration.

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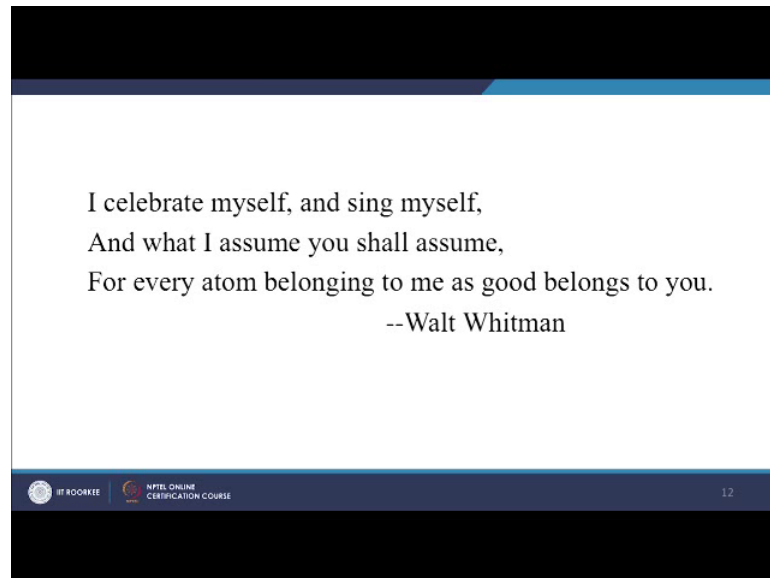
- ✓ Create a candid environment
- ✓ Care for audience's background
- ✓ Minimize transfer stations
- ✓ Beware of cultural diversity
- ✓ Select the most suitable medium

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Sometimes you will find people make undue meaning out of your nonverbal behaviour if words are not used also see to it that you maintain a sort of audience centered approach meaning thereby looking at a message from the you point to view what will happen if you were in place of the receivers if you were in place of the other party. Also see that the communication environment is very open as I said most of the organizations follow a very restrictive environment, but if you compare organizations where there is a open communication channel where there is an open communication atmosphere business thrives like anything.

Because of the existence of various transfer stations care has to be taken that you reduce the number of levels whenever you feel it is of utmost significance it is better to communicate directly or allow a direct communication rather than coming by so many channels. When you have communicated in order to understand the effectiveness of your communication and to see that everything has gone well please try to facilitate immediate feedback. As I said in the beginning by taking continuous feedback you can not only empower yourself in making or making yourself a better communicator, but also help yourself becoming successful. Also commit to the ethical communication and avoid making judgements avoid becoming too much you know extreme when it comes to giving statements and all and please create effective efficient and lean messages.

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Select the most suitable medium please see when you are communicating and if you look at the background of your audience you will of course, because when you are formulating your message it is there that you think of the background of your person. Naturally when you are giving a talk to a small group of new entrepreneurs or to a newly recruited managers actually the words that will be chosen will be with utmost consideration. Moreover when it is a discussion amongst people at higher levels naturally you may be more selective you may be using jargons, but not with those people who have just joined your organization.

When we communicate we perhaps most of the time assume that whatever we say whatever we do they are actually true the world over, but this is not a case I am actually reminded of an incident of how a woman who was waiting at a square and the women while waiting at the square suddenly saw a person having two young children and a small baby. Now while she was standing there she could watch she actually wanted to see the little babe because the babe was very cute and then she was there waiting continuously though she was waiting for the bus, but the other person who was having her having his baby and two young children suddenly realized that he was being looked at and then he said are you waiting for me. Now this was actually a case of wrong assumption though in fact, what the lady replied had lot of messages she said I also have a small baby at my home and that is why it reminded me of my own baby. The just of the

entire episode is people often misconstrue messages because they do not understand the assumption of other people the perception of other people.

Now to put in a word of advice I am reminded of what a famous American poet said: I celebrate myself and sing myself and what I assume you shall assume for every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you. The meaning is that when you communicate please see to it that how if you were a listener if you are a receiver how it will affect you. That is why what I assume you shall assume, think that if you were in the in the place of the other person will you understand the same, if you take a considerate look on what you have written or what you have said I think you will be in a position to have a better communication and you will be in a position to avoid the several hindrances that make your communication more abstruse make your communication more challenges makes your communication more destructive and it creates breakdowns.

Breakdowns maybe there not only in life, but in communication, but then we need to overcome these breakdowns and to overcome these breakdown we need to be very selective when we are using words we need to be very considerate when we are looking at the background of the other person, we need to be very careful in using the medium and also we need to be very careful keeping into consideration how this will have a reaction.

If you take all these things into consideration you will feel that you will learn more and more day by day by communicating by taking feedback and then communicating again communicating for betterment, communicating for success, communicating for prosperity and ultimately communicating for satisfaction. I hope if you take all these things into consideration you will become an effective communicator who will see that no breakdown appears and if breakdown appears it also has some solution, it also has some alternative.

Thank you very much.