The Effect Of Applying And Practicing Communication Skills In Promoting Organizational Performance An Application On Neelain University – Sudan

Dr. ABDULWAHID A. FADLALLH
Prince Sattam Bin Abdul-Aziz University, Collage of Science, Dept. of Management, KSA

ALBAGER A. ALBAGER
Al Neelain University Collage of Computer Science & Information Technology, Sudan

Abstract: Research conducted to identify the effect of applying and practicing communication skills in promoting the organizational performance in (Neelain University – Sudan). Research determined the relation, association and effect of communication skills (speaking, reading, listening, and writing skills) in promoting organizational performance. Total sample size of research is 39 (members of teaching staff and employees) from the university. The questionnaire was used for collecting the data, which has been analyzed by using SPSS program.

Research examined that there is a relationship between the communication skills and organizational performance. The research examined that the communication skills (speaking, reading, listening, and writing skills) are positively related to the organizational performance. Also research concluded that the application and practicing of effective communication skills have positive role in promoting the organizational performance.

Keywords: Communication Skills; Organizational Performance; Promoting; Sudan; Neelain University;

I. INTRODUCTION

Communication is the art and process of creating and sharing ideas. Effective communication depends on the richness of those ideas.

Communication skills are the tools that we use to remove the barriers to effective communication. These barriers could be things like different cultures, different expectations, different experiences, different perspectives, or different communication styles, to name just a few.

In a survey conducted by the Katz Business School at the University of Pittsburgh, organizations rated communication skills as the most important factor used in selecting their management staff. The study found that oral and written communication skills were important in predicting job success, as was the ability to communicate well with others in the workplace.

This makes sense when you think about it. If you can communicate well, you can get your message across to others in an effective way and they then have accurate instructions to complete their assigned tasks. If you are not able to communicate well, the messages you send get lost in translation. Communication breakdowns result in barriers against your ability to develop both professionally and personally.

II. OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of the study was to identify the effect of applying and practicing communication skills in promoting organizational performance.

The following specific objectives were considered:

• To identify the most effective communication skills that can help in promoting the organizational performance.

• To study about the application and practicing of communication skills among members of teaching staff and employees in Neelain University.

III. AN OVERVIEW

• The need to communicate

You might think we could all live quite happily without communicating at all. But no – we all need to communicate throughout our life. Communication is a fundamental part of human life. Unfortunately, quite often people fail to communicate in a way that you could understand.

Nowhere is effective communication more important than at work. Important information needs to be given, received, exchanged and understood hundreds of times every working day. Many business dealings go wrong simply because of poor communication between the people concerned.
Communication is the process by which we give, receive or exchange information with others. It can involve speaking, listening or writing. This information does not necessarily need to be hard facts. Something just a shrug of the shoulder can act as our means of communication.

The communication process involves multiple parts and stages. These are:

**Source:** The source of the message is the sender. The sender must know why the communication is necessary and what result is needed.

**Message:** The message is the information that you need to communicate. It is the reason communication is needed.

**Encoding:** It is the process of taking your message and transferring it into the proper format for sharing it with your audience. It requires knowing your audience and ensuring that your message provides all of the information that they need.

**Decoding:** It is a process of receiving the message accurately and requires that your audience has the means to understand the information you are sharing.

**Receiver:** You have expectations for a response from the receiver when you send a message. You can increase the chances of getting this result by addressing your audience’s concerns or addressing specific benefits as part of your communication.

**Channel:** The channel is the method of communication that you choose such as face-to-face, by telephone, or via email.

**Feedback:** Feedback lets you gauge how successful you were at communicating. It also offers a chance to adjust your communication process for the future.

**Context:** Context involves things such as your relationship with your audience, the culture of your organization and your general environment.

**Effective communication skills**

Communication means interacting with others. We do this through:

1. **Face – to – face communication:** It is the easiest. You can explain what you mean.

   a. If the person does understand, ask yourself:
      - Are you using the language they understand – not difficult but simple words?
      - Are your ideas going over their heads?

   b. Areas that matter in communication:
      - Words: what we say
      - Tone: how we say it

   - Body language: how we look when we are saying it

   c. Advantages of face – to – face communication:
      - People can see what you mean.
      - Eye contact helps you establish if the other person is listening and understanding.
      - Your body language can help them believe what you are saying.

   d. Disadvantages of face – to – face communication:
      - You can give away your true feelings.
      - The other person may not understand the words that you say.
      - They may not like the way you are saying the words.

2. **Listening skills:** The art of effective listening is essential to clear communication, and clear communication is necessary to managing success. Hearing is not the same as listening. We hear all sorts of noises during every waking moment but we do not listen to them. Listening is more than just ‘hearing’.

   - You often ‘hear’ what you want to hear.
   - Listening is the other half of communication.

   Johnson defines listening as "the ability to understand and respond effectively to oral communication." Thus, we can state at the outset that hearing is not listening. Listening requires more than hearing; it requires understanding the communication received. Davis states it this way: "Hearing is with the ears, but listening is with the mind."

   - **When listening:**
      - Give your full attention.
      - Do not assume what the other person is going to say.
      - Do not waste listening time thinking what your reply will be.
      - Show by eye contact and an interested expression that you are paying attention.

   - **Questioning techniques:**
      - To clarify point questions are needed.
      - There are categories of question, which can be used depending upon the type of information that you want in return.

   - **The telephone:**
      - When listening on the telephone, do not allow disturbances in the room to interfere with your listening abilities.
      - Use words or your tone of voice to communicate your understanding of what is being said.
• *Guides to effective listening*:

Here are some practical suggestions for effective listening which, if followed, can appreciably increase the effectiveness of this communicative skill:

- Realize that listening is hard work: It is characterized by faster heart action, quicker blood circulation, and a small rise in body temperature. Researchers have found that the higher we climb on the organizational ladder, the more difficult becomes. In day – to – day conversations, show the communicator you are interested by looking and acting like you are.

- **Prepare to listen:** To receive the message clearly, the receiver must have the correct mental attitude. In your daily communications, establish a permissive environment for each communicator.

- **Recognize your own biases:** Learn what your biases are and channel them properly. You can then keep them from interfering with the message.

- **Resist distractions:** Good listeners adjust quickly to any kind of abnormal situation, poor listeners tolerate bad conditions and, in some instances, may create distractions themselves. Take a clue from good listeners.

- **Keep an open mind:** A good listener doesn’t feel threatened or insulted, or need to resist messages that contradict his beliefs, attitudes, ideas, or personal values. Try to identify and rationalize the words or phrases most upsetting to your emotions.

- **Find an area of interest:** Good listeners are interested and attentive. They find ways to make the message relevant to themselves and / or their jobs. Make your listening efficiently by asking yourself: What is he conveying any workable approaches or solutions? "G.K. Chesterton once said, "There no such thing as an uninteresting subject, there are only uninteresting people.”

- **Show some empathy:** if we show some empathy, we create a climate that encourages others to communicate honestly and openly. Therefore, try to see the communicator’s point of view.

- **Hold your fire:** Be patient, don’t interrupt. Don’t become over – stimulated, too excited, or excited too soon, by what the speaker says. Be sure you understand what the speaker means; that is, withhold your evaluation until your comprehension is complete. Mentally arguing with a communicator is one of the principal reasons so little listening takes place in some discussions. Don’t argue. If you win, you lose.

- **Listen critically:** Good listeners delay making a judgment about the communicator's personality, the principal points of the message, and the response. Ask questions and listen critically to the answers. Then, at the appropriate time, judgment can be passed in an enlightened manner.

- **Judge contently, not delivery:** we listen with our experience. We do not understand everything we hear. It is not fair to hold the communicator responsible if we can't decode his message. One way to raise the level of our understanding is to recognize and assume our responsibility.

- **Exercise your mind:** Good listeners develop an appetite for hearing a variety of presentations – presentations difficult enough to challenge their mental capacities. Try it.

- **Capitalize on thought – speed:** Most of us think at about four times faster than the communicator speaks. It is almost impossible to slow down our thinking speed. What do you do with the excess thinking time while someone is speaking? The good listener uses thought – speed to advantage by applying spare thinking time to what is being said. Your greatest handicap may be not capitalizing on thought – speed. Through listening training, it can be converted into your greatest asset.

3. **Letter Writing:** In order to communicate effectively you must produce quality letters for your reader.

- **Planning your letter: Objective**
  - To give information?
  - To sell an idea?
  - To promote an action?
  - To clarify something?
  - To rectify a situation?
  - To promote yourself?

- **Structuring your letter:**
  - Greeting
  - Heading
  - Introduction
  - Information
  - Action
  - Conclusion

- **Writing your letter:**
  - Accurate
  - Brief
  - Clear

4. **Reportwriting:** Quite often you may be asked to prepare a report on the progress of your work, an ongoing project, or a planned activity. It is necessary to understand that your manager wants a report that is well thought of, well prepared, and is
effective. The following steps will help you in this task:

- **The first think you need to think of:**
  - Who is my reader?
  - What does he/she know of this subject?
  - What are the objectives of this report?
- **Planning the report:**
  - Consider how long it is until the report is required?
  - How long do you have to work on gathering information?
  - How long on preparing for and writing the report?
  - Perhaps even retyping the report?
- **Structure of the report (suggested):**
  - Title page
  - Contents
  - Summary
  - Introduction
  - Findings
  - Conclusion
  - Recommendations
  - Appendices, acknowledgements, references etc.
- **Presentation/Typing:**
  - Wide margins
  - Double spacing
  - Paragraphs and headings
  - Headings in different type face
  - Consistency in numbering system

5. Reading skill:
Reading for academic study can be different from reading for leisure. When reading a novel you would read the book from cover to cover but academic reading can be more of a selective process. You will often only read the chapters or pages that are relevant to the subject you are researching.

By reading effectively you will learn to question and survey the text you are reading to gain a better understanding of your subject. By improving your reading skills you can reduce unnecessary reading time and this will enable you to read in a more focused manner.

**Barriers to communication:**
There are many barriers to communication. In order to overcome these barriers and understand the true meaning of the message that comes through a particular communication, we need to filter the messages.

**Identifying communication filters:**
When we filter coffee the grounds are left on the filter paper and only the liquid goes into the jug. A similar thing happens with communication. There are three types of filters that only allow a proportion of the message to get through. As a result, we only receive part of the message and, often, only the part that we want to hear.

- **Attention filters:** Physical distractions such as:
  - Noise – other people talking, telephone ringing, traffic, music.
  - Environmental – too hot, too cold, poor lighting.
  - Interruptions – people, telephones.
  - Timing – trying to talk to someone when they are about to go somewhere or are in the middle of a job.

- **Emotional filters:** These are inherent in the speaker and probably unknown to the other person.
  - Prejudice – dislike of the other person, the way they are dressed, the message itself.
  - Status – the other person is higher or lower in status in the company, which can affect the way in which you speak and listen to them.
  - Experience – if previous communication with a person has resulted in an unpleasant experience, you will be hesitant when approaching them the next time, not wishing to repeat the experience.
  - Assumptions – assuming what the message will be and thus not listening properly.
  - Values and beliefs – we all have our own codes regarding morals, religion, and politics and so on. If the message contradicts these codes, we are likely to switch off.

- **Word filters:** Certain words and phrases can cause us to stop listening to the person who speaks them.
  - Criticism – few of us like to be criticized. ‘that was the wrong way to deal with the problem’
  - Moralizing - ‘you shouldn’t have done that;
  - Ordering – ‘ I want the report on my desk by Thursday afternoon without fail.’
  - Threatening - ‘if you don’t do what I say, you will be in Serious trouble.’
  - advising - ‘I suggest that you …’ people will only accept the advice that agrees with their solution. They will respond to advice with the phrase ‘Yes, but.’
  - Logical argument – It is too difficult to argue with logic.
  - Reassuring - ‘Never mind, everything will turn out right in The end.’
  - Diverting - ‘Yes all right, but as I was saying…’
  - Jargon – Unless the listener understands the jargon, they Will wonder what it means and will not be listening to the rest of the message.
IV. TOP 10 COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES TO SHARE WITH YOUR TEAM

Here are the top 10 certain principles common to all good team communication:

1) Time and attention are precious resources. Make sure your communication is focused and clear. Provide only as much detail as is needed to understand and engage in your message.

2) Practice and demonstrate active listening. Most of us take listening for granted and do not think much about developing our listening skills. However, passive, uncritical listening can become short and shallow. Poor listening habits sometimes carry over to conversations where careful attention is vitally important. The active listener makes the person speaking feel worthy, appreciated, interesting, and respected.

3) Choose the best medium for your message. Make careful decisions about whether your communication should be verbal or written, face-to-face or technology-aided, one-on-one, or in groups.

4) Check that your listener is engaged. If not, change the communication. Or save it for a time when you are both able to commit fully to the communication.

5) Choose the best format for your message. For example, instructions are best presented in a linear fashion (step 1, step 2, step 3, etc.). Gathering input and ideas may be best achieved through brainstorming.

6) Provide the background information. If your teammates need files, facts, figures, or other data to connect ideas or to make decisions, be sure they have them.

7) Don’t put your teammates on the spot. If they need time to process a message, be sure to give it to them before asking for a response.

8) Match your verbal and nonverbal communication. Your words, posture, gestures, and facial expressions should convey a consistent message.

9) Be clear about what you expect. Don’t beat around the bush. If you need or want something, say exactly what it is.

10) Become a meta-communicator, as an individual and as a team. Check on a regular basis how well your communication is going. Identify strengths, errors, and opportunities for improvement.

Handling conflict

Handling conflict at work is a never easy. It's something few people like to deal with, yet it is a vital aspect of the manager's role. Leaving conflicts unresolved can affect morale de-stabilizing the working environment. Not just for those at the Centre of the conflict but often for the team around them.

The first step in handling conflict is to be aware of the possible reason behind the conflict. There are numerous reasons why conflicts emerge, including:

- Personal clashes
- Misunderstandings
- Differences in values
- Poor communication
- Misuse of power
- Bullying behavior
- Feelings of injustice over real or perceived unfair treatment

By definition some conflicts are easier to handle than others. Some can be resolved with straightforward intervention. In other cases you may need the support of your line managers or HR team. To help you decide which route to conflict resolution is best, it's important to consider the different types of response.

Typical responses to conflict

There are a number of ways in which people instinctively deal with conflict at work. For example:

- Avoiding: But you will have to leave with the consequences.
- Giving in: May resolve the conflict but for how long, and at what cost.
- Smoothing over: A compromise which might leave neither side happy.
- Arguing: Responding argumentatively takes energy and is likely to be confrontational.
- Solving together: Working together to solve the conflict is a constructive, mutual way forward.

V. METHODOLOGY

This section identified the methodological strategy, which is based on both descriptive and analytic methods. Research targeted the (40) respondents (members of teaching staff and employees) from the Neelain University. The aim is to identify the effect of applying and practicing communication skills (speaking, reading, listening, and writing skills) in promoting organizational performance. The questionnaire was used for collecting the data. (40) questionnaires were dispatched to these respondents. A total of (39) filled questionnaires were received, which were used for data analysis. The questionnaire measured five groups, each group contained (3 items). Respondents were asked...
VI. DATA ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

In this section, the collected data which has been analyzed through (SPSS) will be discussed to shed light up on the effect of applying and practicing communication skills in promoting organizational performance in Neelain University In Sudan.

Speaking Skill- Element1:
I use suitable and correct words when speaking with others.

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<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<td>28.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>71.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
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</table>

As shown on the table and illustrated by the graph, 71.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that they use suitable and correct words when speaking with others, whereas 28.2% choose the Option (Agree).

The result acquired from analyzing the Speaking Skill – statement1, showed that the majority of respondents (71.8%) use suitable and correct words when speaking with others.

Speaking Skill- Element2:
I feel shy when speaking with others.

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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The responses to element3 are: 64.1% disagreed, whereas 17.9% strongly disagreed, 12.8% chose (Neutral) option, and 2.6 declined.

AS for element3, the majority of the respondents (64.1%) do not express their opinions freely when speaking with others.

Listening Skill- Element1:
Listening is important in workplace.
As shown on the above table and graph, 53.8% agreed to the option, 20.5% disagreed, 10.3% strongly agreed, 5.1 strongly disagreed, and 10.3% declined.

This result showed that 53.8% of the respondents agreed that listening is important in workplace.

**Listening Skill- Element2:**

The Organization promotes developing listening skills.

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<thead>
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<td>20.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>missed</td>
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<td>10.0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>39</td>
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</table>

As a response to element3, 74.4% of the respondents agreed, 15.4% strongly agreed, whereas 5.1% strongly disagreed, 2.6% disagreed and 2.6% neutral.

The majority of the respondents (74.4%) agreed that they are always trying to improve their listening skills.

**Writing Skill- Element1:** I rely on writing clear and simple words.

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<tr>
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<td>5.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
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</table>

The table and the graphs illustrate the responses to Element 3, where 64.1% agreed with the statement, 20.5% disagreed, 7.7% strongly disagreed, 5.1% stayed neutral, and 2.6% declined.
The table and the graph showed that 74.4% of the respondents chose (Agree), 15.4 chose (Strongly agree) 2.6% chose (Neutral), and 7.7% chose not to reply.

In response to this statement, the majority of respondents (74.4%) rely on writing clear and simple words.

**Writing Skill- Element2:**

I prefer verbal communication.

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<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
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<td>69.2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
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</table>

In response to this statement option 1: 79.5% agreed to it, 7.7% strongly agreed, 5.1% disagreed, 2.6% strongly disagreed, whereas 2.6% refrained.

The result acquired from analyzing the responses to writing skill – element3, 79.5% of the respondent agreed that they write skillfully.

**Reading Skill- Element1:**

I read only for knowledge.

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<tr>
<th>Options</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
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The table and graph showed that 69.2% agreed to the option, whereas 12.8% strongly agreed, 7.7% disagreed, 5.1% stayed neutral, and the remaining 5.1% preferred to decline.

The analysis for this statement showed that 69.2% agreed that they prefer verbal communication.
The table and graph showed that 41.0% of the respondents chose (Agree) option, 30.8% chose (Disagree), 20.5% chose Neutral), whereas 2.6% chose (Strongly agree), and 5.1 did not reply.

The responses to this option vary greatly, where 41.0% agreed that they read mainly for knowledge, whereas 30.8% disagreed, and 20.5% stayed neutral.

Reading Skill- Element2: I read only for fun.

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<th>Options</th>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23.1</td>
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<td>Disagree</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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In response to this statement element1, 51.3% disagreed, 23.1% agreed, 10.3% are neutral, 5.1% strongly agreed, 2.6% strongly disagreed, whereas 7.7% declined.

The result obtained from this analysis showed that 51.3% disagreed to the option (reading only for fun), whereas 23.1% agreed that they only read for fun.

Reading Skill- Element3: I cannot read well.

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The table and the Graph showed that 56.4% of the respondents disagreed, 23.1% agreed, 7.7% stayed neutral, and another 7.7% declined, whereas 5.1% strongly disagreed.

The result showed that 56.4% of the respondents disagreed to the option (I cannot read well), where 23.1% agreed that they cannot read well.

Organizational Performance- Element1:
There is a lack of effective communication Means.

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</table>

The table and the graph showed the responses to the statement above as follows:
71.8% of the responses are (Agree), 17.9% (Disagree), 7.7% (Neutral), 2.6% (Strongly agree).

The result obtained from analyzing organizational performance statement1: There is a lack of effective communication means showed that the majority of respondents agreed that there is a lack of effective communication means in the organization.

Organizational Performance- Element22:
I can easily communicate with my supervisor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>74.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>missed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As a response to this statement, 74.4% of the respondents replied with (Agree), 17.9% replied with (Disagree), 5.1% replied with (Strongly agree) and 2.6% did not respond.

From the above information, majority of respondents agreed that they can easily communicate with their supervisor.

Organizational Performance - Element3:
Communication Channels are efficient

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>69.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
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<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>missed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table and graph illustrated the responses to the statement as follows:
69.2% chose (Agree), 12.8% chose (Disagree), whereas 10.3% chose (Strongly agree), and 5.1 did not respond.

This result showed that the majority of respondents (69%) agreed that communication Channels are efficient.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

All members of teaching staff and employees strongly agree that effective communication skills (speaking, listening, writing, and reading) can help in promoting organizational performance, and lead to individual’s and management success.

Research recommends that organizations should realize the need for applying and practicing effective communication skills among employees, so as to assist in promoting the performance.

In future the research can be applied in different sectors.

VIII. REFERENCES

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