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Estilo de Comunicación de los estudiantes de la carrera de Administración y Gestión de Recursos Humanos

Communication style of the students of the Human Resources Administration and Management career

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Resumen

Este documento nace como la experiencia de siete años de aplicar la prueba "Mi sistema de comunicación" en el curso de reclutamiento y selección de personal de la carrera de administración y gestión de recursos humanos (AGRH) de la Universidad Técnica Nacional (UTN). Esta prueba se utiliza en procesos de selección de personas en las diferentes organizaciones del país y por el Programa de Habilidades Blandas Empresariales (PROHABLA) de la Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica. El objetivo es conocer el estilo de comunicación de los estudiantes de AGRH para el establecimiento de estrategias organizacionales que se ajusten a sus necesidades. Metodología: Las

investigadoras deciden aplicar esta prueba a cuatro grupos de estudiantes utilizando la herramienta Google form, y se utiliza la triangulación en el análisis de los datos. Resultados: La mayoría de las personas participantes son kinésicas y/o kinestésicas, sobresalen los sentidos del tacto, gusto y olfato. Discusión: Los resultados se considera buenos pues la metodología de la Universidad está basada en el "saber-hacer" por tanto al aplicar los sentidos del tacto, gusto y olfato el estudiantado fortalece la comunicación basada en a través de actividades que se basan en las experiencias vivenciales (ejecutar y vivir cada situación). Conclusiones: Una vez que se conocen los resultados se dan dos situaciones a saber: 1) El profesorado puede diseñar las actividades de clase con las estrategias que favorecen la comunicación. 2) El estudiantado reconoce las fortalezas en sus sentidos y aprovechan estos recursos para potenciar otros sentidos y comunicarse de forma integral.

Palabras clave: Capacitación; Educación; Equilibrio; Necesidad de desarrollo; Organizaciones; Prueba de reclutamiento; UTN.

Abstract

This document was born as the experience of seven years of applying the test "My communication system" in the course of recruitment and selection of personnel of the administration and management of human resources (AGRH) career of the National Technical University (UTN). This test is used in the selection processes of people in the different organizations of the country and by the Business Soft Skills Program (PROHABLA) of the National University of Costa Rica. The objective is to know the communication style of AGRH students for the establishment of organizational strategies that fit their needs. Methodology: The researchers decided to apply this test to four groups of students using the Google form tool, and triangulation was used in the data analysis. Results: Most of the participants are kinesthetic and / or kinesthetic, the senses of touch, taste and smell stand out. Discussion: The results are considered good because the University's methodology is based on "know-how", therefore, when applying the senses of touch, taste and smell, the student body strengthens communication based on through activities that are based on experiential experiences (execute and live each situation). Conclusions: Once the results are known, there are two situations: 1) Teachers can design class activities with strategies that favor communication. 2) Students recognize the strengths in their senses and take advantage of these resources to enhance other senses and communicate in an integral way.

Keywords: Balance; Education; Need for development; Organizations; Recruitment test; Training; UTN

1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is a competence that is demanded in the labour market. For this reason, it must be clear, basic, so that the people who interact with each other can understand each other in such a way that they can carry out their functions and participate in activities, projects or programmes within the organisation.

In this sense, it is said and ratified by experts that communication is inherent to the person and that it can be done through orality, gesticulation and writing. This is strengthened through formal training actions or in spaces that seek to place the individual in situations or contexts that require the development of the ability to achieve the most efficient communication possible.

Nowadays, communication in the company is of great vitality, because the communication process takes place every day in any type of circumstance, be it in personal, work or business life. Interaction and integration processes in an organisation can only be possible through communication. This is why within the changes that are made in companies, communication strategies must always be used in order to make known, for example, the institutional positions, the changes that can be made, the integration that is desired, thus achieving institutional synergy, always remembering that communication is characterised by being dynamic, irreversible and complex.

In this sense, it can be said that communication is a soft skill desirable in people and sought after by companies, considering that a soft skill refers to interpersonal competences, which are focused on the socioemotional part and personal traits, Kautz et al. (2014) mention about these skills that:

> Researchers and practitioners use a variety of terms to describe these types of skills: 'soft' competencies, social-emotional skills, social and emotional skills, character skills or personality traits, although the current literature tends to deliberately avoid referring to them as 'traits' since it is assumed that traits generally remain unchanged, while skills can be developed (p.8).

In this way, it highlights the added value that communication has, especially when the labour market demands it as a differentiating and outstanding competence within a competitive market and human resources departments are obliged to facilitate the spaces for its development, as well as being promoters and achieving a good level in the dynamics of the organisation, in validating the effectiveness and veracity of what is communicated.

In other words, for human resources areas, communication becomes a strategy that promotes spaces for feedback and feedback to collaborators, favouring the achievement of objectives through negotiation and consensus, as well as maintaining or improving interpersonal relationships and intervening in conflict situations.

From management skills, supportive communication "seeks to preserve or foster a positive relationship between people when they are trying to solve a problem, give

negative feedback or deal with a difficult issue" (Whetten and Cameron, 2016, p. 193), it is a vital aspect for people who must give feedback to others, and in this sense the human resources profile fits perfectly.

Therefore, it is important that all actions are backed up with assertive and purposeful communication, where the individual expresses what he/she feels, considering his/her rights and those of other people.   At this point, it is necessary to refer to assertiveness, where Herrera (2020) indicates that this refers to:

> The perception of our value, abilities and achievements; the view, positive or negative, we have of ourselves. In terms of communication, it refers to a way of communicating honestly, clearly, directly and respectfully, in a way that allows us to express what we think without hurting others and allows us to express our ideas in an open and respectful way (p.62).

Thus, by putting assertiveness into practice in communication processes, a healthy environment is created in which people feel safe to express their thoughts, emotions, as well as what they believe, validating their rights and respecting those of others (Herrera, 2020).

Now, in primary education processes it is very normal to stimulate the senses facilitating the interaction of students where communication can be successful, however, in secondary and university education these practices are being lost, so that some of the students who enter the labour market have a lack related to communication. This encourages companies to design the training process focusing on communication activities applicable both internally and externally.

In addition to the above, the incidence of assertiveness in young people who are part of the university student body is valued, hence Quiñonez and Moyano mention that:

> Based on this, it is necessary to reflect on the importance of assertiveness as a style of communication in university education, seeing it fundamentally from the point of view of interaction and the freedom and security that it offers students, as this paves the way to understand, comprehend, differentiate and relate assertiveness to effectiveness, as well as to recognise each of the factors involved in communication, including perception, values and purposes, in addition to the freedom and security to express ideas with responsibility and critical sense (2019, p. 70).

In the context of AGRH students, assertive communication provides them with a group of attributes or principles that according to Whetten and Cameron (2016) can be reinforced in people for their development. These attributes are:

➢ Congruent, not incongruent

➢ Descriptive, not evaluative

➢ Problem-oriented, not person-oriented

➢ Valid, not invalid

➢ Specific, not global

➢ Conjunctive, not disjunctive

➢ Proprioceptive, not indirect

Supportive listening, not unilateral listening (p.197), thus highlighting that communication is one of the skills most in demand by employers in certain types of industries. In Costa Rica there are more than 274 customer service centres in various clusters or business areas. An example of these are the "search service human resources", where some of the graduates of the career, find possibilities to work in companies such as: IBM, P&G, INTEL, Gillette and offices of foreign banks that have centralised Human Resources areas in Costa Rica.

Taking into account the above, from the AGRH career, and specifically from the recruitment and personnel selection course, a test is applied for the detection or validation of the way in which the person communicates through their five senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch) and with the results of this, training and training actions are proposed for the students, thus promoting continuous improvement and the strengthening of communication skills. In addition, participants are made aware of the value of recognising their communication style, how they can apply it in different environments (social, academic, work) and how to make the most of it so that it flows properly.

This is how this course considers a topic developed by Neurolinguistic Programming and which refers to the systems of representation of information, key in the process of learning and communication. On this point Marambio, Becerra, Cardemil and Carrasco (2019) mention that according to the Blander and Grinder Model, neurolinguistic programming or VAK (visual, auditory and kinesthetic) and postulated in 1988, people have three systems of mental representation on the information they receive, the following table details each of them:

Table 1 Mental information representation systems

Visual	Auditory	Kinaesthetic
Used when recalling concrete and abstract images (numbers and letters); visual subjects plan much better than other styles, as this style captures a lot of information quickly.	Sounds, music and voices are recognised in the mind (such as remembering someone's voice). These subjects learn best when they receive oral explanations and when they can speak and explain the information to others. This system uses a sequential and ordered form of representation, the subject needs to listen to their mental recording step by step, without forgetting any words, as they do not know how to follow.	This system is used when remembering the taste of food, or when listening to a song or performing a physical manoeuvre, and what is learned through sensations and movements. With this system, information is processed more slowly, but much more deeply, making it difficult to forget, and, being in this way, these subjects need more time than others to achieve their learning. Sometimes it refers to the sensations associated with a piece of knowledge rather than the physical manoeuvre related to this new information.

Source: Marambio, Becerra, Cardemil and Carrasco, 2019, pp. 405-406. Own elaboration.

With regard to table 1, Espinoza, Miranda and Chafloque indicate that this model "is based on the fact that the person tends to have a produced and programmable behaviour, where the emotional state will be determined by sensory perceptions, evidenced through communication that can be verbal and non-verbal" (2019, p.386). The above is relevant because, through the identification of these systems in students, it is possible to establish strategic actions aimed at strengthening their profile.

In addition to the above, strategic and organisational communication defines the appropriate channels for information to flow and be validated in the company. Human resources areas use this system to reinforce internal communication with employees, promote the employer brand, encourage productivity levels and continuous improvement, through the development of competencies or skills that are consolidated through training and coaching programmes. To this end, it must be considered that the ways in which people communicate within the company are related to the habitual way of communicating. In this sense, it is necessary to ensure that the information provided is that required by the company and that it allows the achievement of the established objectives and functions.

2. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this work is: To detect the communication style of the students of the AGRH course in order to strengthen the profile of the participants.

This objective allows the identification of the students' communication strengths as well as the possibility of drawing up a training plan through which the students can develop their communication skills and generate empathy with the people around them, thus facilitating the communication process when they enter the labour market in the organisation.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this research, the mixed method is used as "a potentially useful resource at different stages of the research: one, more focused on the construction of the data, another in the instance of analysis, and another in relation to the theoretical articulation in interdisciplinary contexts" (Santos, Pi Puig and Rausky, 2018, p.266), triangulation is also used, as it is not limited to "the convergence of data (the original sense proposed by Webb et al.) but it also reaches researchers, theories and methods" (Piovanni, 2018, p. 441). In this sense, triangulation validates and achieves a better understanding of a phenomenon because it is approached from different perspectives (Piovanni, 2018). In this way, "triangulation is a reference that may involve the use of different sources of qualitative or quantitative data, and does not necessarily involve the crossing of both approaches" (Santos, Pi Puig and Rausky, 2018, p.261).

In order to achieve the established objective and comply with the aforementioned methodology, a questionnaire is used as a data collection instrument on the Google platform, which is based on the test called "My Communication System". This test consists of 16 structured questions, with a single answer that selects from three options: a), b) and c), each option is equivalent to one point, which at the end are added together, assigning a higher score to one of the systems.

The form can only be filled in once per person. A value is given to each option. Once the data has been collected, it is analysed using the possibilities offered by Excel, in which qualitative and quantitative approaches are taken into account. From the data, the graphs are generated automatically with the intention of not manipulating the results at any time.

It is worth mentioning that the technique used is the use of tests of the speciality of human resources, in this case a test that is valid at an international level by recruiting companies that provide recruitment and selection services to all types of organisations. In the following tables, the possibilities of response by a person using one sense to the extreme are shown. For example: in table 1 we have the visual extreme and

antagonistically a person who is not visual[1].

Table 1. *Score focused on option A. A 100% visual person*

Option A	Option B	Option C
16	0	0
15	1	0
14	2	0
13	3	0
12	4	0
11	5	0
10	6	0
09	7	0
08	8	0
07	9	0
06	10	0
05	11	0
04	12	0
03	13	0
02	14	0
01	15	0
0	16	0

Source: My Communication System Tool.

Table 2. *Score focused on option B. A 100% hearing person*

Option B	Option C	Option A
16	0	0
15	1	0
14	2	0
13	3	0
12	4	0
11	5	0
10	6	0
09	7	0
08	8	0
07	9	0
06	10	0
05	11	0
04	12	0
03	13	0
02	14	0
01	15	0
0	16	0

Source: My Communication System Tool.

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[1] It is necessary to make the clarification that this applies to people who have all five senses abilities and do not have any kind of disability in these.

Table 3. *Score focused on option C a 100% kinaesthetic or kinesthetic person*

Option C	Option A	Option B
16	0	0
15	1	0
14	2	0
13	3	0
12	4	0
11	5	0
10	6	0
09	7	0
08	8	0
07	9	0
06	10	0
05	11	0
04	12	0
03	13	0
02	14	0
01	15	0
0	16	0

Source: My Communication System Tool.

The tables presented here are the extremes of scoring. However, it is normal for the person filling in the form to score in all three options.

There is a training profile which is as follows.

Table 4. *Balanced score on the three options*

Option A, B, C	Option A, B, C	Option A, B, C
5	6	5
5	5	6
6	5	5

Source: My Communication System Tool.

This picture shows the commodity situation and is a product of the constant use of all the senses by a person. In the business world this is a comparative advantage that favours the communication process because it is easy to establish work and personal relationships with this profile.

The selection criteria of the population are:
- Each student is selected on the basis of their relationship with the researchers and their relationship with other previous and future courses.
- Having taken the training and development course with Professor Kattia Vasconcelos Vásquez and the willingness of the students to take and answer the test within a specific time.
- Another requirement is to be an active student of the Human Resources Administration and Management course during the second semester of the

AGRH course.

The population that meets all the selection criteria is 156 students.

These results are discussed in class with the different groups in order to design a strategy for continuous improvement in the course of the lessons. So, when further tests are to be carried out in the recruitment process, the types of communication are considered in order to maximise the results and the learning process.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Number of participants

The following table shows the distribution of persons participating in the application of the form.

Table 2. *Gender composition of the population*

Number of participants	Women	Men
156	124	32

Source: Form applied to students.

The Human Resources Administration and Management programme at the National Technical University is characterised by the fact that the majority of students are women. This is a characteristic that is also reflected at the national level according to data seen in different reports.

Table 3. *Results My Communication System*

Senses	Quantity	Percentage
Visual	19	12
Auditory	34	22
Kinaesthetic/kinaesthetic (touch, taste and smell)	103	66

Source: Form applied to students.

The results show that 66% of the participants are Kinaesthetic and use the three senses of touch, taste and smell to communicate. These results are very similar to those found in recruitment processes in organisations. Historically, in the world of recruiters, it is mentioned that Costa Ricans are characterised by being very tactile in the different ways they act.

The main characteristics of this group of people is that they will generally react through tactile and epidermal sensations, i.e. with skin contact. Their voice is generally deep and their way of speaking is slow, they use metaphors to communicate and they give and receive information through practical experiences, using the body, movements and contact, as mentioned by Marambio, Becerra, Cardemil and Carrasco "they process information more slowly, but much more deeply, making it difficult to forget it, and, being

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in this way, these subjects need more time than others to achieve their learning" (2019, p. 406).

Adding to the above, Mera and Amores (2017) indicate that "Kinesthetic learners process information by associating it with the sensations and movements of their body, doing things, experiments and projects; learning is slower than with the other two systems (visual and auditory) but much deeper and longer lasting" (p.188).

Complementing the data, an important result is that 64% are in the range of assertive communication. This is the result of a control question asked to the students. This denotes that the capacity or ability that people have to transmit their ideas or thoughts is effective, avoiding feelings of guilt or shame and above all taking into account the rights of the other person. That is, they can express their feelings (positive or negative) about a given situation in such a way that the other person does not feel hurt or offended, as stated by Herrera when he indicates that assertiveness "In terms of communication, it refers to a way of honest, clear, direct and respectful communication, with a manifestation that allows us to express what we think without hurting others and allowing us to express our ideas in an open and respectful way" (2020, p.62).

In addition, 77% have a purposeful response to a waiting event. If given an adequate explanation. And 58% value their time. Also, 61% state the importance of respect for their time. This is relevant because in the communication process, attitudes towards communication can be positive, thus improving communication and trust between individuals; however, when it is negative, it tends to hinder the process and generally causes conflicts.

Regarding aspects of direct attention and personal treatment or good manners, 97% of students point out the correct way of requesting a service.

On the other hand, 85% of students indicate that they like to be treated well when they are asked for their opinion on a subject, which is in line with Quiñonez and Moyano:

> From the point of view of interaction and the freedom and security it provides for students, as this paves the way to understand, comprehend, differentiate and relate assertiveness and effectiveness, as well as to recognise each of the factors involved in communication between them (2019, p.70).

5. CONCLUSIONS

Considering the results of the application of the instrument, the participation of women in careers in the social and economic areas, a sector to which the human resources administration and management career belongs, is noticeable. In the jargon of the sector it is indicated that human resources is a career dominated by women. In this case, the comments from the labour market are confirmed.

On the other hand, the results of the communication system indicate that the kinaesthetic senses are the most used for communication and from the point of view of education for learning. That is to say that the results of the participants are related to what is stated in the theory and are manifested through touch, emotions, all this through the previous experiences they have had.

This should be considered because when designing communication strategies, images are not going to be the main focus of attention, nor are speeches or dialogues. In that sense, it is a challenge for the trainer and communicator of the organisation. These strategies should consider each of the communicative forms of the students, with special emphasis on kinaesthetics, considering what Marambio, Becerra, Cardemil and Carrasco mention:

> This model of learning style is based on the fact that all people use different systems unequally and therefore have different development of these sensory pathways, promoting the reception of information delivered in one modality over others. Thus, people accustomed to selecting one type of information will be able to absorb and learn more easily when presented with new knowledge in that preferred modality (2019, p.406).

This means that teamwork and participation are basic tactics for attending to this population. Taking up the methodology indicated by the University, as it is a technical training, the activities and exercises should be pragmatic and take advantage of the skills and competences developed by the participants.

The student population is clear that assertive communication should always have the rules of courtesy, respect and in a simple way.

And with regard to direct attention and good treatment, the importance of empathy in the communication process and communicative ability is denoted, referring to this as the ability of people to identify mentally and affectively with the other. That is, according to the results, these people can read the emotions and thoughts of people in a specific context.

It can be seen that empathy plays a very important role in the communication process as it allows the person to listen carefully to the other person, to handle one's own and other people's emotions without interfering with the transmission of the message and to understand the possibilities and limitations of others. On the other hand, learners can gain some advantages of empathic communication such as:

- Communication flows if you are able to identify each other's emotions, even if they are not expressed openly.
- When there is empathy, people can feel understood, allowing them to strengthen and strengthen their relationships with each other.
- They are able to accept and adapt to each other's expressions of emotions.

With regard to the learning obtained through this research, it is considered that from this experience an important result is that an explanation of the facts is made to understand, this is what the students request, so the strategies are implemented from the career of AGRH. In other words, it is to design a relationship of respect and person to person.

Through the application of this test, it can be seen that training and capacity building in this type of subject has results that allow the design of strategies and actions for improvement based on a collective approach. In this case, it is highlighted that in addition to knowing the communication style, people can use each of them to interact effectively with people and the environment, making the most of their personal characteristics.

The results of the application of the communication system allow the following conclusions to be drawn:

- The communication style of most of the participants in this manuscript is kinaesthetic and/or kinaesthetic. This means that teachers need to use communication strategies that facilitate the process.
- When people identify their communication style they become more sensitive to the process and sometimes ask the professors to facilitate strategies for better understanding. This is also consistent with companies using this type of communication strategy. They use the different media to obtain assertive communication and it strengthens the organisation.
- On the other hand, participants resort to simple methods to develop their other communication systems and it becomes a strength to recognise a physical ability.
- In class events they use all three forms of the communication system to generate empathy with the other learners.
- Students and professors take advantage of packages and apps for the presentation of topics and other classroom exercises.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations arising from the results of this research include the following:

- The generation of educational strategies that allow a greater link to assertive communication in the curricula of the different university careers, in order to encourage the development of communication skills that are essential not only in the workplace, but also in people's daily lives.
- The promotion of assertive communication spaces in the classroom, which are characterised by the implementation of empathy, respect and tolerance.
- The identification of the students' communication style in order to maximise their strengths and reduce their shortcomings in the communication process, and to be able to resort to tools and inputs that improve their communication skills when entering the labour market.

On the other hand, as a recommendation, some lines of research that can be addressed as a complement to this research are set out:

- Repercussions of assertive communication from the telework modality.

- Benefits of technological tools for the improvement of communication of university students entering the labour market.

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