

# Enunciating the Importance of Team-building Skills for MBA Learners Using Johari Window

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**Abstract** - Teaching English for learners pursuing a course in MBA does not involve just developing the LSRW skills. As it is a course in ESP, we are more concerned of equipping them with the skills required to face the challenges of their profession. These learners, as the post-graduate students know the importance of developing their employability skills. They are aware of the fact that the employers rely on the professionals for an extra edge of interpersonal skills. The selection process for a job involves a screening test based on Group Discussions. The purpose of conducting the discussions is to test the inter/intrapersonal skills of the candidates which are mainly based on their thinking abilities. The team-building abilities of the learners are also tested as the members of the team discuss the given problem, and they come to a common consensus as a team. The present paper is based on the study conducted with the learners pursuing a course in MBA and aims at elucidating the importance of developing the team-building skills of the learners.

**Key words:** *Consensus, employability skills, interpersonal skills, performing, self-awareness, Team-building.*

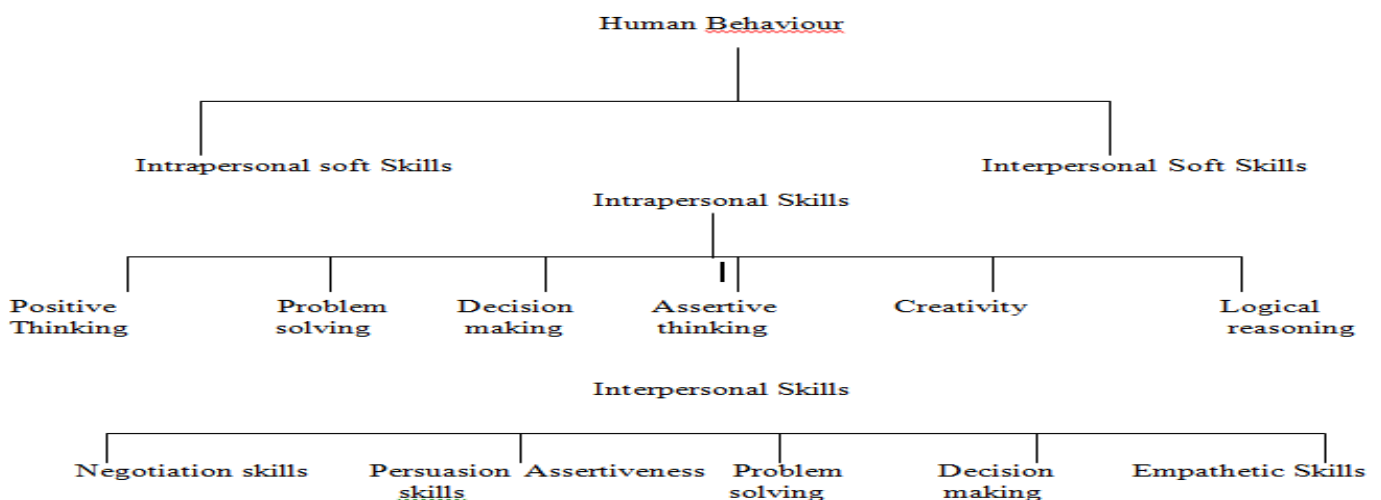
## I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching English to the tertiary level students, especially the post-graduate students, is not just teaching the LSRW skills. There is a shift from a general course to a professional course.

The students, at this level, generally choose a course in which they would be interested.

The students pursuing a course in MBA are at a stage where they can focus on the importance of the (future) profession they would choose.

The students need to think and analyze themselves to be professional. They do understand the importance of effective communication skills but not the importance of interpersonal communication. As a business professional a learner needs to behave and converse in a socially/professionally appropriate way. All the inter/intrapersonal skills mentioned below reflect one's behaviour.



Interpersonal and Intrapersonal communication: It is the communication within the individual (introspection). This is

the way one analyzes one's skills. This is an important aspect which would enable the candidates to draft a functional

resume, perform better in group discussions and in the Human Resource round during interviews.

Interpersonal communication: Communication at this level means sharing of information among people as a group.

Interpersonal skills can be defined as the learned and controlled skills required for the people to communicate, interact and behave in a particular social way in particular situations to obtain or maintain reinforcement from their environment these skills can be developed gradually and can be executed while conversing with others. So, initially, many speaking activities were designed where the learners had ample scope to understand the importance of effective communication skills. This type of communication is characterized by a serial production of messages. Messages are sent from one person to another, and from that person still to another and so on.

Interpersonal communication helps one to maintain and develop relationships, both personal and professional. Interpersonal skills are the ability to relate to others in a socially appropriate, meaningful way. These set of skills that enables one to get along well with others. These skills are also related in working in teams, serving the customers, leading a group, negotiating and also working well with people from culturally diverse backgrounds. These skills include co-operating, sharing, listening, participating and also respecting others.

Interpersonal communication is more about one's behavioral skills. This also includes analyzing oneself (intra-) as and when communicating with others (inter-). For example, if one is thinking about solving a problem, one may analyse it on his/her own way before presenting it in front of the other members.

Inter/intrapersonal skills are related to speaking and listening. The way one behaves while speaking, like using positive gestures, maintaining eye-contact, showing enthusiasm through tone, maintaining the pitch and volume of the tone etc., similarly, while listening one has to maintain eye contact, nod one's head to show agreement, bend a little towards the person and use some words like, "I know/I understand/how true etc. to encourage the speaker.

The different aspects of interpersonal communication, according to Bharathi T. are:

- Working on teams, teaching others, serving customers, leading, negotiating and working with people from culturally diverse backgrounds
- The ability to relate to others in a socially appropriate and a meaningful way.
- Interpersonal skills include skills relating to leadership, co-operation, goal-setting, communication, personal and social responsibility, fair play, achievement, ethical decision making and problem solving.

(Dr. T Bharathi and Dr. M. Hari Prasad. *Personality Development and Communicative English.*)

Certain personal qualities are a prerequisite of effective interpersonal relationships. Warmth, genuineness, empathy and unconditional positive regard are some of these personal qualities.

The learners understand the importance of team work but then the researcher had to explain the concept and importance of interpersonal communication.

The learners were explained the importance of interpersonal communication for effective team building in four phases:

#### Phase 1:

The learners were given an *imaginary crisis* and were asked to give the solution for the problem to make them understand the importance of inter/intrapersonal skills.

**Situation:** You are a civil defence committee appointed by the Prime minister to make decisions on fall out shelter occupancy. War has been declared. It appears that only the occupants of a fall out shelter in central Australia have a good chance for survival. The civil defence director has informed Canberra that at present 10 people are occupying the shelter. The computers have calculated that the shelter can guarantee survival for only 6 people. Your committee is to decide which 6 are to be excluded from the group. 6 may live to rebuild a complete new society.

1. 36-year old female physician
2. Army drill instructor
3. Biological researcher
4. Biochemist
5. Olympic athlete, all sports
6. Film star
7. Third year medical student
8. 30-year old catholic priest
9. 38-year old male carpenter, served 7 years for drug offences. has been out of jail for three months
10. 22-year old army nurse, female.

The learners were divided into groups of 6 each and were asked to give the selection as a team. They were given 20 minutes to complete the list.

The learners unanimously agreed that all the skills are used for team building.

The learners were then explained the importance of participating in group discussions during campus placements as these inter/intrapersonal skills of the candidates are tested during group discussions.

#### Phase 2:

Next, the candidates were explained the importance of *self* during interpersonal communication for developing a professional relationship in order to work on teams.

**Self- awareness and Team-building**

The stages of team-building can be related to the Johari window. During the formation of the team (from forming to performing), each member of the group tries to analyse himself/herself, tries to know his/her own strengths or weaknesses and finally relates himself to the team by expanding the open arena.

They were then explained the model of interpersonal communication- the Johari window which can be related to effective team-building.

A Johari window is a cognitive psychological tool created by Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham in 1955 in the United States, used to help people better understand their interpersonal communication and relationships.

**The Johari Window**

	Known by Oneself	Unknown by Oneself
Known by Others	Johari Window 1 Open Area	Johari Window 2 Blind Area
Unknown by Others	Johari Window 3 Façade /Hidden Area	Johari Window 4 Unknown Area

(SOURCE: <https://www.businessballs.com/self.../johari-window-model-and-free-diagrams-68/>)

**Open:** The skills and qualities that are selected by both the person and his or her peers are placed into the **Open** quadrant. This quadrant represents traits of the person that both they and their peers are aware of.

**Hidden:** The skills and qualities selected only by the individual, but not by any of their peers, are placed into the **Hidden** quadrant, representing information about them their peers are unaware of.

**Blind Spot:** The skills and qualities that are not selected by the individual but only by their peers are placed into the **Blind Spot** quadrant. These represent information that the subject is not aware of, but others are, and they can decide whether and how to inform the individual about these "**blind spots**".

**Unknown:** Adjectives that were not selected by either subjects or their peers remain in the **Unknown** quadrant, representing the participant's behaviors or motives that were not recognized by anyone participating. This may be because they do not apply or because there is collective ignorance of the existence of these traits.

**JohariRegion 1, the Open Area:** The aim in any group should always be to develop the 'open area' for every person,

because when we work in this area with others we are at our most effective and productive, and the group is at its most productive too. This is the area where good communication and cooperation occur, free from distractions, mistrust, confusion, conflict and misunderstanding.

**JohariRegion 2, the Blind Area:** The information is what is **known** about a person by others in the group, but is **unknown** by the person himself/herself. By seeking or soliciting feedback from others, the aim should be to reduce this area and thereby to increase the open area, ie, to increase self-awareness.

**JohariRegion 3, the Hidden Area,** is what is **known** to ourselves but kept hidden from, and therefore **unknown**, to others. This hidden or avoided self represents information, feelings, etc, anything that a person knows about him/self, but which is not revealed or is kept hidden from others. The hidden area could also include sensitivities, fears, hidden agendas, manipulative intentions, secrets - anything that a person knows but does not reveal, for whatever reason. It's natural for very personal and private information and feelings to remain hidden, indeed, certain information, feelings and experiences have no bearing on work, and so can and should remain hidden. However, typically, a lot of hidden information is not very personal, it is work- or performance-related, especially the skills and abilities of a person, it is better positioned in the open area.

**Johari region 4, the Unknown Area,** contains information, feelings, latent abilities, aptitudes, experiences etc, that are **unknown** to the person him/herself and **unknown** to others in the group. These unknown issues take a variety of forms: they can be feelings, behaviours, attitudes, capabilities, aptitudes, which can be quite close to the surface, and which can be positive and useful. It takes considerable amount of time for individuals to get to know each other before forming a relationship.

**Phase 3**

**They were then explained the paradox between interdependence and independence while working as a team to achieve a common goal.** Team members necessarily have differences in terms of knowledge, skills and experience. It is difficult to manage the team task without these differences because different people are adept in different skills. So it is necessary that those differential factors are combined and integrated as one.

A team can function effectively only when the members can depend on one another. Also for group work individual as well as independent judgement is as important as group thinking. Team members have to trust one another.

In simple terms, to make them understand it better the two terms division of labour and unity in diversity were used.



**Phase 4:** During this final phase, the Tuckman's concept of team formation was explained. The researcher has observed that the learners understood it better when explained using the Johari Window.

Psychologist Bruce Tuckman first came up with the memorable phrase "forming, storming, norming, and performing" in his 1965 article, "Developmental Sequence in Small Groups." He used it to describe the path that most teams follow on their way to high performance.

### Forming

In the first stage of team building, the forming of the team takes place. The forming stage of any team is important because the members of the team get to know one another, exchange some personal information, and make new friends. This is also a good opportunity to see how each member of the team works as an individual and how they respond to pressure.

During the initial period of the formation stage, the group members fall into the unknown area of the Johari window as they don't know about each other and also are apprehensive about the work they need to accomplish.

### Storming

Every group will next enter the *storming* stage in which different ideas compete for consideration. The team addresses issues such as what problems they are really supposed to solve, how they will function independently and together and what leadership model they will accept. Team members open up to each other and confront each other's ideas and perspectives.

Here, the team members start analysing themselves, come out of the hidden area or façade, by disclosing their ideas, concepts, skills etc., thereby increasing the open area.

The team members also seek feedback from others during the process of analysing themselves, thus decreasing the blind area and expanding the open area.

### Norming

The team manages to have one goal and come to a mutual plan for the team at this stage. Some may have to give up their own ideas and agree with others to make the team function. In this stage, all team members take the responsibility and have the ambition to work for the success of the team's goals. The danger here is that members may be so focused on preventing conflict that they are reluctant to share controversial ideas.

### Performing

It is possible for some teams to reach the *performing* stage. These high-performing teams can function as a unit as they find ways to get the job done smoothly and effectively without inappropriate conflict or the need for external supervision. By this time, they are motivated and knowledgeable. The team members are now competent,

autonomous and able to handle the decision-making process without supervision.

(SOURCE

:[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuckman%27s\\_stages\\_of\\_group\\_development](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuckman%27s_stages_of_group_development))

The group members fall into the open area during this final stage where they are a perfect team.

By adopting the procedure mentioned above, the researcher could help the learners understand the importance of developing the team-building abilities.

(SOURCE

:[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuckman%27s\\_stages\\_of\\_group\\_development](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuckman%27s_stages_of_group_development))

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