**The Impact of Humor in Formal Communication**

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**Introduction**

Humor happens to be psychological behavior which brings out smiles or laughter on an individual’s face, or even a group of people within an organization (Michalik & Sznicer, 2017). Notably, its application should be considerate as it may turn out to be harsh making it unacceptable based on people’s perceptions. On the other hand, formal communication can be defined as exchange of information in a controlled and professional manner (Besley et al., 2018). Such a form of communication is applied in workplace settings between managers and employees, schools, political arenas or debates, and even in news channels while disseminating serious information. In a formal communication realm, seriousness and professionalism is the order of the day and an individual who introduces humor may be deemed paradoxical. However, humor can be applied in a prudent manner while bringing out a profound impact to such an atmosphere (Borum & Green-Barber, 2021). It helps to transform the communication dynamics by fostering a relatable and more engaging atmosphere for individuals involved.

**Thesis statement:** This paper focuses on how humor impacts formal communication and conversation while highlighting some of the aspects it helps to improve in a formal setting such as improving connection and engagement, alleviating tension, and even enhancing memorability of participants.

**Improved Connection and Engagement**

The infusion of humor within formal communication brings about a better platform of information exchange, where the individuals involved tend to connect and engage in a better way. Humor grants the speaker the ability of capturing and sustaining the attention of the audience within a formal setting. Any witty remark or even a joke that is well-placed within an ongoing professional meeting such as an academic lecture or a business presentation helps in breaking the monotony. At the same time, Reece (2014) affirms that such a remark or joke creates an immediate better connection between an audience and the communicator. In so doing, a rapport is built between the two parties while establishing a better platform for sharing experiences. Application of humor therefore helps to paint a grim picture that tells the truth directly in a faster and quicker way through the established connection.

Humorous gestures within formal communication also serves as a linkage that creates a better form of engagement between the audience and the communicator. Humor helps to transcend any formal nature within such a transactional exchange while facilitating an exchange that will turn out to be meaningful. A better engagement can be attained in a political arena such as a political debate if the individual being interviewed decides to throw in a sense of humor within an ongoing conversation. For instance, the former USA President Donald Trump always applied humor in political debates by making jokes that were perceived to be funny by the audience and this helped in elevating his confidence and statue to the general public (Anderson & Becker, 2018). The president’s allies and supporters frequented his rallies so as to listen to the jokes as they had become a central part of his speech all over the country while reaffirming his agenda to the American people. Humor application in his rallies changed people’s minds and perceptions towards him as he forged a relatable connection that eventually landed him the presidency. For that matter, humor helps in transforming engagement between various parties while creating a better communication experience that delivers or shares important information.

**Alleviation of Tension**

In many cases, formal communication settings usually come about with a heavy form of tension amongst the individuals involved, irrespective of the situation, whether it is a corporate boardroom meeting or even a high-stakes negotiation forum. Appropriate application of humor in such situations serves as a potent tool that helps to alleviate the growing tension. Insertion of a timely joke in a strategic manner helps to release the building pressure within such a setting as it fosters an atmosphere that grants them relaxation. Eventually, the participants feels free to engage the communicator while approaching the discussion in a sober way and with great ease (Skurka et al., 2019). At the same time, such timely jokes serves a prudent function within the ongoing conversation especially when the arising scenario is very crucial or the matter being discussed is of grave importance. Application of humor in such settings alleviates tension and failure to apply it in such formal communication might render it ineffective in the long run.

In formal communication settings, tension may also hinder appropriate critical decisions being made since the individuals thought process tends to be affected. Skillful deployment of humor usually salvages such a situation as it eases tension and creates an atmosphere that is more collaborative for all participants within the ongoing engagement (Michalik & Sznicer, 2017). A joke that is strategically placed within the formal communication serves as a diplomatic tool which enables the participants to navigate any challenging parts in the discussions and they eventually make appropriate decisions as they continue to share meaningful ideas in a positive atmosphere (Thai et al., 2019). The use of humor in formal communication also helps to create a better context of culture since the individuals involved clearly understand its sensitivity. In the end, humor application aids in tension alleviation that is crucial in the decision making process.

**Enhancing Memorability**

Infusion of humor in formal communication also grants the communicator a unique opportunity and ability to improve the audience’s memorability in connection to the message being communicated. Presentation of information in a context that is humorous helps the message to stick into the recipient’s mind, especially when it is hinged on factual data. Use of humor elicits an emotional response that is better as it also contributes towards effective retention of information. A lasting impact is also created while ensuring that the conveyed information happens in a professional and educational setting so that it is valuable in achievement of the organizational goals (Cacciatore et al., 2020). Notably, the concepts that are presented in tandem with humor tends to be memorable since they trigger responses that are emotional. According to Reece (2014), application of humor within a formal setting not only creates a good connection between the communicator and the audience, but also prevents boredom. For that matter, incorporating humor within formal communication is essential as it helps to builds trust while strengthening the memory of an audience towards the information or content being shared.

**Conclusion**

The application of humor in formal communication is indeed very important, but it has to be considerate so that it is not harsh and unacceptable based on people’s perceptions. Formal communication is very important within workplace settings for managers and employees, or in schools, political arenas or debates, and even in news channels while disseminating serious information. Even though seriousness and professionalism is paramount within formal communication, introduction of humor creates a better atmosphere for those involved to coexist. A delicate balance has to be achieved while cracking humor in formal communication so that it helps to transform the communication dynamics while fostering a relatable and more engaging atmosphere for all. Infusion of humor within formal communication forums also works well towards information exchange. In that regard, this paper has managed to focus on how humor impacts formal communication and conversation while highlighting some of the aspects it helps to improve in a formal setting such as improving connection and engagement, alleviating tension, and even enhancing memorability of participants.

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