**The Impact of Humor in Formal Communication**

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**Introduction**

Humor is defined as 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, even in news channels while disseminating serious information. In a formal communication realm, seriousness and professionalism happens to be the order of the day and an individual who introduces humor may be deemed paradoxical. However, humor can be applied in a prudent manner within a formal communication setting since it has a profound impact to such an atmosphere. It usually helps to transform the communication dynamics while fostering a relatable and more engaging atmosphere for individuals involved (Borum & Green-Barber, 2021). Even though formal communication focuses on serious business, some humor can be infused within its forum of structured information exchange so as to enhance memorability, relieve any growing tension, touch on cultural aspects, and even improve the form of engagement being utilized. In that regard, this paper mainly focuses on the impacts of humor application within a formal communication setting while highlighting some of the aspects it helps to improve within such a setting.

**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 an ability of capturing and sustaining the attention of their respective audience within the 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 the remark or joke creates an immediate better connection between an audience and the communicator. In so doing, such humor builds a rapport between the two parties while establishing a better platform for sharing experiences. Application of humor also helps to paint a grim picture that tells the truth directly in a faster and quicker way.

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 when he decided to make 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 as it 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 while also fostering 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 scenarios is very crucial or the matter being discussed is of grave importance. Failure to apply a sense of humor in such formal communication might render it ineffective in the long run.

In formal communication settings, tension may also hinder the individuals in making critical decisions that are appropriate in helping with growth of a given organization. Skillful deployment of humor usually salvages such a situation in formal communication while easing the tension so as to foster 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 within the discussions while making the right decision as they continue to share meaningful ideas. The managers and employees within a given workplace, such as politicians, teachers, and even students can apply humor in a prudent manner while maintaining an atmosphere that is indeed positive for all (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.

**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. More so, a trigger of laughter during presentations helps to imprint information or content being delivered within the memory of an audience. According to Reece (2014), application of humor within a classroom setting not only creates a good connection between the teacher and the student, but also prevents boredom and a much needed positive attitude for them to grasp content. A humorous sense also builds trusts between the learners and the teacher while strengthening their memory towards content obtained from class.

**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, schools, political arenas or debates, 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 individuals involved. Infusion of humor within forums of formal communication that are also structured works well towards information exchange since it enhances memorability, relieves any growing tension, and even improves the form of engagement being utilized in such a forum. In that regard, this paper has managed to bring out the impacts of humor application within a formal communication setting while highlighting some of the aspects it helps to improve within such a setting.

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