

## Healthcare Communication

Day & Date: Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> May 2016  
Time: 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm  
Venue: Auditorium, Symbiosis International University, Lavale campus, Pune  
Speaker: Dr. Nagesh Rao  
Report prepared by: Ms. Shivika Gupta, Student, MBA - HHM (2015-2017)  
Dr. Harshada Tambe, Student, MBA - HHM (2015-2017)

Dr. Nagesh Rao, President MICA, completed his doctoral work in intercultural communication at the Michigan State University in 1994.

Dr. Rao began the post lunch session with a small fun exercise to rejuvenate the audience. He then began his speech by saying that communication is common sense, we use it every day personally and professionally, but we take it for granted. Communication is not given much importance and is kept at bottom even in MBA colleges, not keeping in mind that recruiters keep communication at top in their preferred list of qualities.

He further explained the impact of communication in healthcare explaining that the top level management speaks different language than doctors, nurses, and other staff and there exist a wide communication gap with the staff of hospital. Agarwal et al 2010 report explained the Economic effect of communication inefficiencies in hospitals:

- Wasted Physician time - \$800 million
- Wasted nurse time - \$4.9 billion
- Wasted time during discharge -\$6.9 billion

*Total annual waste - \$12.6 billion annually*

He then spoke that a mother is the first healthcare provider in everyone's life, mother's care is empathetic, unconditional and costs zero rupees. He told a short incident which happened with his father who was in ICU and had an episode of ICU psychosis, this explained that *hospitals, today are providing medical care and not healthcare*. Healthcare aims to address the comprehensive and

holistic health needs of a patient- physical, psychological, relational, and religious and lifestyle dimensions while medical care just treats the illness.

He later defined communication as a rhythm, which is strategy first and skill later. Dr. Rao pointed out that most of the doctors do not reply to the greetings by the staff they receive while doing rounds, it creates a communication gap between the doctors and other staff. A simple reply to a greeting can make a huge difference and can open communication channels which will help hospitals in delivering better patient care.

Dr. Rao then did another exercise with the audience, where one was a doctor other one was a patient and doctor couldn't ask question from the patient, this showed that normally patient answers only what the doctor asks and most of the time important information is not disclosed. He then told a story about Naserddin Hodja, who used to steal donkeys but the police couldn't catch him although they had seen Hodja with donkeys many times, proving that most of the solution is in front of us but we fail to see it.

He then talked about the 'Positive Deviance Approach' which makes use of '*improv theatres*' to flip the mindset, nurses are asked to play a two minute skit on an incident that happened in last week of work and the other staff is asked to give solutions to the problem enacted. Improv theatres create fun and dialogue and provide simple solutions which make a big difference.

He ended his session with a quote by Patti Digh: 'Shortest distance between any two people is a story'.

Lastly Dr. Rao said, 'Give communication your 100%. Create a story, connect with others and let's together make healthier society.'