ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR ENGINEERS: UNDERSTANDING INDUSTRY’S EXPECTATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Communication skills are often addressed as soft skills which have gained much importance in the engineering industry. Poor communication in the engineering industry had been addressed in many previous studies. The purpose of this paper is to examine the expectations of the industry’s use of oral communication skills in the workplace for engineers. In this study, the engineering segments involved were mechanical and electrical engineering professionals. A deeper understanding of the industry’s expectations of engineering communication is essential for this study. Hence, a qualitative method was used for data collection purposes. Data were collected from four engineering organizations by carrying out structured interviews. There was a total of twenty-eight engineers in management positions who were selected to be involved in the interview from both segments of this research. Data were analyzed using the content analysis approach. Findings show that in the engineering industry there is a high need for the engineers to participate in interacting with co-workers pertaining to work, administrating, attending meetings, presenting to clients, and communicating with individuals with different backgrounds. Conversely, the findings of this study are constant with other literature review findings to show that oral communication skills for the engineering sector are important. These findings will aid as a good platform for further investigation on the relevancy of the use of oral communication in engineering industries.

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