

## ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS IN MODERN COMMUNICATION

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This article is devoted to the characteristics of communication in the modern world. It shows the penetration of symbols and abbreviations in everyday life.

The purpose of the article is to identify the most popular symbols and abbreviations, most commonly used in communication, to find positive and negative aspects of these phenomena in our communication.

Communication, in general, is the activity of conveying information through the exchange of thoughts, messages or information, as by speech, visuals, signals, writing, or behavior. It is the meaningful exchange of information between two or more people.

Some scientists define communication as any act by which one person gives to or receives from another person information about that person's needs, desires, perceptions, knowledge or affective states. Communication may be intentional or unintentional, may involve conventional or unconventional signals, may take linguistic or non-linguistic forms, and may occur through spoken or other modes.

According to D. Clark, communicating with others involves three primary steps:

- Thought: First, information exists in the mind of the sender. This can be a concept, idea, information or feelings;

- Encoding: Next, a message is sent to a receiver in words or other symbols;
- Decoding: Lastly, the receiver translates the words or symbols into a concept or information that a person can understand.

People communicate with each other in a number of ways that depend upon the message and its context in which it is being sent. The choice of communication channel and the style of communicating also affects communication. So, there are different types of communication, based on communication channels (nonverbal and verbal) or on style and purpose (formal and informal).

Nonverbal communication is the sending or receiving of wordless messages (gestures, body language, posture, tone of voice or facial expressions). On the other hand, verbal communication refers to the form of communication in which message is transmitted verbally; communication is done by word of mouth and a piece of writing. This type of communication is further divided into oral communication (including face-to-face conversations, speech, telephonic conversation, video, radio, television, voice over the Internet) and written communication which involves any type of interaction that makes use of the written word. This type of communication is very common in business situations, so it is important for small business owners and managers to develop effective written communication skills. Examples of written communication avenues typically pursued with clients, vendors, and other members of the business community, meanwhile, include electronic mail, Internet Web sites, letters, proposals, telegrams, faxes, postcards, contracts, advertisements, brochures, and news releases. Moreover, in formal communication certain rules, conventions and principles are followed while communicating messages. But informal communication is done using channels that are in contrast with formal communication channels. It is established for societal affiliations of members in an organization and face-to-face discussions and it usually happens among friends and family.

A great deal of communication through the Internet consists of people typing messages to one another — texting, email, and Twitter, as well as Facebook, Usenet articles, instant messaging, IRC, chat rooms, discussion groups, and so on. In fact, the Internet has always been a source of technology inspired slang. Even back in the early 1980s, Internet users had their own particular argot and abbreviations. By the way, some of these terms eventually find their way into a more enduring part of the culture, where they are used for years by people of all ages.

Abbreviations and symbols are an important source of new words for any language. They spring from the imagination of the people and supply a great number of words that share the characteristics of the language, of which they are part. Many of these words are transitory and disappear within a few years of their creation. Others survive and ultimately become a part of the language. They join the stream of words that arise in response to the need created by the forward march of science and technology.

Certain abbreviations can be used in both formal and informal conversations. Business people have their own symbols and abbreviations widely used in business correspondence (f.e., *B/E* – ‘bill of exchange’, *USD* – ‘United States dollar’, *w/c* – ‘without charge’). There are also a lot of abbreviations which are created by people for communicating in particular groups (f.e., *OMG* – ‘oh my God’, *LOL* – ‘laughing out loud’, *IMHO* – ‘in my honest opinion’). The military establishment, jazz musicians, stock and commodity market traders and employees, doctors, nurses, and teenagers are among the groups that have their own idioms or vocabulary. Sometimes young people need to communicate differently from their parents (f.e., *AITR* – ‘adult in the room’, *P@H* or *PAH* – ‘parents at home’, *PAW* – ‘parents are watching’).

In order to determine the use of abbreviations and symbols in written communication, we conducted the survey among the students of the Polessky State University. It was held with the participation of 50 students of our university and it showed that 82% of our students use abbreviations and symbols while chatting.

So, we should admit that everyone uses some abbreviations and symbols in written communication, however some of them are wholly acceptable, but not at all times or in all situations. Just as some occasions require the use of more formal clothing, many occasions require a more formal style of language. That’s why the use of abbreviations and symbols has its advantages and disadvantages. On one hand, abbreviations help us to save time, create a circle of like-minded persons and make communication easier. ‘Smiles’ and other symbols allow to convey emotions in written communication better. Abbreviations and symbols include existing words or terms to which new or different meanings are ascribed. But on the other hand, this way of simplifying communication makes our speech poorer or more

monotonous and sometimes even incomprehensible. In addition, abbreviations create a barrier to communication for the uninitiated. Moreover, some scientists underline that dependence on abbreviations can lead to fuzzy thinking, because most abbreviations are short and lively, favoring one-syllable words, and it may result in the use of clichés, rather than the use of more precise words.