



ENHANCEMENT OF SOFT SKILLS THROUGH JOHARI WINDOW

K V Rajeshwari

Assistant Professor Mahaveer Institute of Science and Technology,

Bandlaguda, Hyderabad.

Abstract

Johari Window is a communication tool that is used to improve understanding between individuals. It is widely used to instill a sense of confidence to help team members understand the value of self disclosure, to encourage folks to give and accept, in order to yield a constructive feedback. It is an Interpersonal Communications Model specially designed to meet the current trend to nurture the present generation with all its essential ingredients like self awareness, personal development, group development and understanding relationships through behavior, empathy, inter-group development etc. Johari window contains four quadrants or regions, namely open area, open self, free area, free self or the arena: this basically deals with what is known to the individual himself or herself or by others.

Johari Window is based on topics of general interest as well as those pertaining to technology. This offers a mix of individual, pair and group work that promotes activity-based learning in the class room. The activities require students to think for themselves, participate in discussion with their classmates and write down their observations, opinions and conclusions regarding each soft skill. Besides sensitizing students to the importance of soft skills in their academic and professional lives, this tool will help strengthen their spoken and written communication skills, and will encourage creativity and collaborative learning.

This tool is designed with the aim of helping the students acquire the soft skills that are essential for employment. This tool gives a wide exposure on attitude, adaptability, goal setting, motivation, time management, critical thinking and creativity, problem solving, teamwork, leadership and stress management. The goal of this window is for the learner to better understand himself/herself and to know how others see the particular person.

MODEL OF JOHARI WINDOW

It is very unique, simple and useful tool for understanding and training self-awareness, personal development, improving communications, interpersonal relationships, group dynamics, team development and inter-group relationships. The model is developed by American psychologists, Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham in the 1950's, and named it as 'Johari' by combining their first names, viz. Joe and Harry. The model is an amalgamation of many unique qualities with reference to its relevance, emphasis, influence, soft skills, behavior, empathy, cooperation, inter-group development and interpersonal development.

This also serves the purpose of being model for feedback/disclosure and 'information processing tool' that is effective in representing information, like feelings, intentions, empathy, motivation, experience, views, attitudes, skills, etc about a person in relation to their team, from all four angles.

Perspectives of Johari Window

This special tool provides us the opportunity to look into how we view ourselves and how others view us. It acts as a model of opening up the different lines of communication with others. It renders a way to show how we become increasingly more open to others as we get to know them and share information about ourselves.

The four perspectives of this window can be referred as 'regions' or 'areas' or 'quadrants'. Each area contains the information and represents feelings, motivation, etc in terms of whether the information is known or unknown to the person and whether the information is known or unknown to others in the team.

Detailed Information of the Four Quadrants of The Window

The four panes of the window represent the following:

1	Open/free area	Blind area	2
3	Hidden Area	Unknown area	4

Diagrammatic Representation of the Window

Open Area: This phase is basically of our conscious self that include our behaviour, attitudes, motivation, values, and ways of life which we are aware of and which is known to others. The

first pane, by name Arena contains information that one knows about one's own self and about which the group knows. This is characterized by free and open exchange of information between person's own-self and others. The behavior here generally is public and available to everyone. The Arena increases in size as the level of trust increases between individuals or between the individual and his group and more information, particularly personally relevant information is shared.

Hidden Area: This area is something that is not known to others unless we disclose it. This is an inhibition factor or fear factor which stops a person from being open. This pane is also called as "Façade" or "Hidden Area." This information can be kept if one does not see the supportive elements in the group. It is believed that if one starts revealing thoughts, feelings, and reactions, group members might judge negatively and may react in inappropriate way. At the same time, if not taken some risks, there dissipates the opportunity to learn.

Blind Area: This particular phase deals with things about ourselves which we do not know, but that others can notice with profound clarity. We assume things to be true of ourselves for various reasons but that others can perceive it in different way. This information may be in the form of mannerism, verbal cues, the way we say things, the style in which I compare ourselves to others.

Unknown Area: This phase we observe some ignorance of the prevailing traits that cannot selected by neither subjects nor their peers as they remain in the unknown quadrant. This represents the ignorance of recognition of participant's behaviors or motives by anyone participating. The reason attributed to this may be because of collective ignorance of the existence traits. Here our potential is unknown to us and to others. This area represents an unknown area that includes early childhood memories, latent potentialities, intrapersonal dynamics, and unrecognized resources. Since there is a possibility that the internal boundaries can move forward and backward or up and down as a consequence of soliciting or giving feedback, it would be possible to have a window in which there would not be an unknown area.

Johari region I is also known as open area/open self/free area/free self/the arena. This area subjects to what is known to the person about himself/herself and also known by others. This region is also known as the 'area of free activity'. This renders the information about the person's behavior, attitude, feeling, emotion, knowledge, experience skills, views etc which is known by the person and known by the others. The main aim in all groups should always be to develop the open area of every person as it produces effectiveness when we work in this area with others. The arena can be best perceived as the space where good communications and cooperation occur that is free from distractions, distrust, confusion, conflict and misunderstanding. Teachers have huge responsibility to promote a culture and expectation for open, honest, helpful, constructive, affirmative, receptive communications, and the sharing of knowledge throughout their organization. People learn and work with one another overtime that reveals things about themselves directly or indirectly. In order to become a part of the team, there is an utter urgency for us to be open and communicate. We need to be open to know how other people view us. The same thing is applicable even at home with family and friends.

Johari region II is what is known about a person by others in the group, but is unknown by the person himself/herself. The main objective is to reduce this area in order to increase the open area, which paves the way to attain self-awareness for this blind area is considered to an ineffective and unproductive space for individuals or groups. This is an area of ignorance about oneself. Teachers or managers should promote an environment that create a non-judgmental feedback, and group response to individual disclosure, which results in reducing fear and encourages both processes to run smoothly. This is an attempt to make students lose their inhibition. Special attention is essential to avoid emotional upset of the candidates.

Johari region III, also regarded as hidden area/hidden self/avoided area/avoided self or façade. There are some hidden qualities which are known to the self and unknown to others. This particular region is considered as hidden form. This hidden or avoided self represents feelings, information, interests etc. This area particularly revolves around hidden agendas, manipulative intentions, fears, inhibitions, secrets etc. The motive of this is to move the candidate into the open area through the process of 'disclosure' by exposing relevant information and feelings, hence the terminology as 'self-disclosure' and 'exposure process'. By reducing the hidden area we can increase the open area reaps benefits like good cooperation, understanding, trust, reliability, healthy team work, efficacy etc. This acts as a catalyst in reducing the potential for poor behaviors, misunderstanding, confusion, poor communication, ignorance, inefficiency, fear of judgment or susceptibility etc and expands the horizon by enhancing mutual understanding which enables an efficacious individual and group performance.

Johari region IV consist of information, hidden abilities, feelings, aptitudes, experiences and so on that are not known to the person himself/herself and unknown to others in the group as well. These unknown issues include , capabilities, feelings, attitudes, aptitudes, which can be positive and useful, or they can be of profound depth in analyzing the deeper aspects of a person's personality, influencing his/her behavior to various degrees. This area is more prevalent in younger people and people who lack sportive spirit and confidence. The teachers, managers and leaders should help the students by creating an environment that instills a spirit of self discovery to promote the process of constructive observation and feedback among team members. This benefits people to fulfill and achieve desirable results.

As a matter of caution, it is important to mention that suppressed or subconscious feelings rooted in formative events and traumatic past experiences which can stay unknown for a lifetime, under such conditions, the Johari Window should not be used to address issues of a clinical nature. This method is different from the conventional methods which encourages rote learning and memory testing.

Objectives

Cognitive: The learner should have to possess cognitive reasoning to explain how the Johari Window works.

Affective: It responds to the value of better understanding of ourselves and how others view us.

People learn and work with one another overtime that reveals things about themselves directly or indirectly. In order to become a part of the team, there is an utter urgency for us to be open and communicate. We need to be open to know how other people view us. The same thing is applicable even at home with family and friends.

This lesson has connections to the Tennessee KSA – Self-Awareness and the EFF Standard – Take Responsibility for Learning. (Appendix II). The strategy for the Johari Window is to talk to the learners through the various quadrants of the grid. This gives an insight to know how they view themselves and also how they reveal more than what they know about other people. This provides a better appreciation for what other people feel and see. To cite an example, lets us take an organization, class room etc. where people do not open up initially but as time gradually passes, the tend to open up largely as the class or any work environment provides feedback to one another, learners start to know more about themselves through the eyes of the other classmates or colleagues. As time goes on and they develop good and firm bondages in terms of becoming more and more open.

One goal we may set for ourselves in the group setting is to decrease our Blind Spots, i.e., moves the vertical line to the right. How can I reduce my Blind Spot? Since this area contains information that the group members know about me but of which I am unaware, the only way I can increase my awareness of this material is to get feedback from the group. As a consequence, I need to develop a receptive attitude to encourage group members to give me feedback. That is, I need to actively solicit feedback from group members in such a way that they will feel comfortable in giving it to me. The more I do this, the more the vertical line will move to the right.

It is widely recognized that the present-day world requires professional who are not only qualified and competent but who also possess certain personal qualities on which depend how effectively they work in an organization as individuals and in groups. This tool serves the purpose of prompting the students to learn with ease in the classroom to meet the expectations prevalent in the industry.

REFERENCES

Clendenin Dennard. (1999). *NCORE Conference Workshop Memphis Tennessee* Retrieved from <http://www.library.wisc.edu/edvrc/docs/public/pdfs/LIReadings/JohariWindow.pdf> on 05/09/2013

Ingham and Luft's Johari Window concept. (2001-4) Retrieved from <http://postdoc.hms.harvard.edu/slides/AliceSapienzaJohari%20window%20model.pdf?v=%7B0B58B4E7-CB55-4930-9157-D4A588BCBC85%7D> on 05/09/2013

Luft, J.(1970). *Group processes; an introduction to group dynamics (second edition)*. Palo Alto, CA: National Press Books.

Luft J. and Ingham H. (1955). *The Johari Window: a graphic model for interpersonal relations*, University of California Western Training Lab.

Learning Skills. Retrieved from http://www.cls.utk.edu/pdf/1s/Week2_Lesson12.pdf on 05/09/2013 Russell, Jesse. and Cohn, Ronald. (2012). *Johari Window*. Bookvika Publishing.

