



LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION STRATEGY IN IMPROVING EMPLOYEE WORK DISCIPLINE AT THE SOLO-MOLO SUB- DISTRICT OFFICE

STRATEGI KOMUNIKASI PIMPINAN DALAM MENINGKATKAN DISIPLIN KERJA PEGAWAI DI KANTOR CAMAT SOMOLO-MOLO

Medarman Jaya Lawolo^{1*}, Odaligoziduhu Halawa², Tiarni Duha³, Fatoslosa Hulu⁴

^{1*} Universitas Nias, Email: medarmanjaya@gmail.com

² Universitas Nias, Email: oda15halawa@gmail.com

³ Universitas Nias, Email: tiarniduha7@gmail.com

⁴ Universitas Nias, Email: fatosshulu@gmail.com

*email koresponden: medarmanjaya@gmail.com

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62567/micjo.v3i4.3322>

Abstract

This study aims to understand the communication used by the leader, describe employee work discipline, and analyse the leadership communication strategy used to improve work discipline at the Somolo-Molo District Office. A descriptive qualitative case-study design was employed. Seven informants were selected purposively: one key informant (the District Head), two main informants (the District Secretary and the Head of General Affairs Subdivision), and four supporting informants (employees/staff). Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation and analysed through data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing, and verification. The findings show that leadership communication is open and two-way and combines meetings, assemblies, direct communication, letters/dispositions, digital media, and informal communication. Work discipline is categorised as fairly good but not yet fully consistent. In measurable qualitative terms, all seven informants described attendance as generally maintained, while all seven also identified occasional lateness and the need for stronger consistency; effective use of working hours, leave/out-of-office reporting, and completion of some tasks still require reminders. Leadership communication is implemented through informative, persuasive, educational, repetitive, role-modelling, personal coaching, supervision, gradual reprimand, proportionate firmness, evaluation, and positive reinforcement approaches. Identified improvements include better punctuality, more orderly absence reporting, more effective use of working hours, and faster task completion. Sustainable discipline requires consistent rule enforcement, routine briefings, documented follow-up, multichannel communication, and exemplary conduct across all levels of leadership.

Keywords : Communication Strategy, Leadership, Work Discipline, District-Office Employees, Organizational Communication



Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami komunikasi yang digunakan oleh pimpinan, menggambarkan kondisi disiplin kerja pegawai, serta menganalisis strategi komunikasi pimpinan dalam meningkatkan disiplin kerja pegawai di Kantor Camat Somolo-Molo. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan desain studi kasus. Informan dipilih secara purposif sebanyak tujuh orang, terdiri atas satu informan kunci (Camat), dua informan utama (Sekretaris Camat dan Kasubbag Umum), serta empat informan pendukung (pegawai/staf). Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis melalui reduksi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan kesimpulan dan verifikasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa komunikasi pimpinan bersifat terbuka dan dua arah serta memadukan rapat, apel, komunikasi langsung, surat/disposisi, media digital, dan komunikasi informal. Kondisi disiplin kerja dikategorikan cukup baik tetapi belum konsisten. Secara terukur dalam kerangka kualitatif, tujuh dari tujuh informan menilai kehadiran pegawai pada umumnya terjaga, namun tujuh dari tujuh informan juga mengidentifikasi keterlambatan sesekali dan perlunya penguatan konsistensi; pemanfaatan jam kerja, pelaporan izin/keluar kantor, serta penyelesaian beberapa tugas masih memerlukan pengingat. Strategi komunikasi pimpinan dilakukan melalui pendekatan informatif, persuasif, edukatif, pengulangan pesan, keteladanan, pembinaan personal, pengawasan, teguran bertahap, ketegasan proporsional, evaluasi, dan penguatan positif. Perubahan yang teridentifikasi meliputi ketepatan hadir yang lebih baik, pelaporan izin yang lebih tertib, penggunaan jam kerja yang lebih terarah, dan penyelesaian tugas yang lebih cepat. Keberlanjutan disiplin memerlukan konsistensi aturan, briefing rutin, dokumentasi tindak lanjut, komunikasi multialasan, dan keteladanan pada seluruh jenjang pimpinan.

Kata Kunci : Strategi Komunikasi, Pimpinan, Disiplin Kerja, Pegawai Kecamatan, Komunikasi Organisasi.

1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is a crucial element in any organization because it serves as a means of conveying information, policies, and direction to all members of the organization. Effective communication can create a shared perception, enabling optimal organizational goals to be achieved. According to Suwardi Lubis (2024), a communication strategy is a combination of communication elements, including the communicator, message, media, recipient, and effect, systematically designed to achieve communication goals. In government organizations, leaders play a crucial role in establishing effective communication with employees. The communication strategy implemented by leaders aims not only to convey information but also to build motivation, increase understanding, and influence employee behavior to work in accordance with organizational goals.

Leadership communication strategies are one factor that can improve employee work discipline. Through clear, open, and continuous communication, leaders can provide direction, guidance, supervision, and motivation to employees, fostering their commitment to complying with organizational regulations. Therefore, good communication from leaders will foster disciplined behavior in the workplace. In addition to communication, leadership role models are also crucial in fostering employee work discipline. Leaders who provide positive examples through their attitudes, responsibilities, and adherence to regulations will more easily earn the trust and compliance of their subordinates. According to Sutrisno (2022), work discipline is influenced by several factors, including leadership role models, goals and abilities, rewards, fairness, supervision, assertiveness, sanctions, and human relations. Therefore, a communication strategy coupled with leadership role models will be more effective in improving employee work discipline.



Based on initial observations at the Somolo-molo Sub-district Office, several issues related to employee work discipline were identified, such as late arrival to work, suboptimal performance of duties in accordance with responsibilities, and employees who continue to fail to comply with work hours. This situation indicates that efforts to improve work discipline still need to be enhanced. Therefore, leadership communication strategies are a crucial approach to improving employee discipline. Communication strategies encompass message planning, media selection, and effective delivery methods to ensure employee acceptance and implementation. (Ruliana, 2018) states that effective organizational communication can create shared perceptions and increase employee commitment to the organization.

With the right communication strategy, leaders can influence employee attitudes and behavior, leading to greater work discipline. Several previous studies have shown that communication strategies play a crucial role in improving employee work behavior. However, most research focuses on the influence of communication on employee performance or leadership in general, while research specifically examining leadership communication strategies in improving employee work discipline in sub-district government agencies is relatively limited. This situation indicates a research gap, necessitating a more in-depth study of leadership communication strategies in improving employee work discipline at the Somolo-molo Sub-district Office.

This study aims to analyze leadership communication strategies in improving employee work discipline at the Somolo-molo Sub-district Office. This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of management science, particularly in the areas of organizational communication and leadership. Furthermore, this research is also expected to provide practical benefits for government agencies in improving employee work discipline through the implementation of effective and sustainable leadership communication strategies.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The type of research used in this study is qualitative with a descriptive approach (Nabila Puteri, 2023). This study uses a qualitative research type with a descriptive approach to describe the phenomenon in depth which provides a detailed and systematic picture of the leadership communication strategy in improving employee work discipline within the Somolo-Molo sub-district office. This approach was chosen because it is appropriate to explore in depth the meaning and experiences of the participants concerned. A case study was used because the researcher wanted to understand the phenomenon contextually and comprehensively in one specific unit of analysis, namely the Somolo-Molo sub-district office. With a case study, the researcher can capture the complexity of the leadership communication strategy, starting from message planning, media selection, communication style, to obstacles faced in a real context. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with the sub-district head, sub-district head, and employees, and supported by participatory observation and documentation. The data obtained are descriptive in nature in the form of words, actions, and documents that describe daily communication practices. Data analysis was carried out inductively using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which consists of three activity flows: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification.

This research was conducted at the Somolo-Molo Sub-district Office, located in Somolo-Molo District, Nias Regency, North Sumatra Province. The research was conducted in stages until August 2026. The initial phase included literature review, initial observations, and permit processing. Primary data collection through interviews was conducted on July 20, 22, and 27, 2026. Subsequently, data analysis, verification, and the preparation of a research report were conducted. The subjects in this study included the leadership (sub-district head) and employees at the Somolo-Molo Sub-district Office. The leadership was chosen because of their crucial role in managing, directing, and controlling the organization, including implementing communication strategies to improve employee discipline. Employees were also selected as subjects because they are the ones who directly receive and experience the implementation of communication strategies by leadership in the workplace.



The research object in this study focuses on the communication strategies implemented by leadership in an effort to improve employee discipline at the Somolo-Molo Sub-district Office. These communication strategies encompass various forms of communication used by leaders, both verbal and nonverbal, formal and informal, and encompass how information, instructions, and motivation are conveyed to employees. The research also encompasses various efforts by leaders to foster employee discipline through persuasive communication, setting a good example, and consistently applying rules and sanctions.

Data Collection Techniques

The data collection techniques used by the researcher were:

1. Interviews

Interviews are a data collection technique conducted through a question-and-answer process between the researcher and informants to obtain more in-depth information related to the research problem. In this study, interviews were conducted with the sub-district head as the primary informant, employees as supporting informants, and other relevant parties as additional informants. Prior to conducting the interviews, the researcher first requested research permission from the sub-district head's office.

The researcher also developed an interview guide containing questions related to:

- a. Communication strategies implemented by leaders to improve employee work discipline.
- b. Forms of communication used (verbal, non-verbal, formal, and informal).
- c. Leadership efforts to foster and improve employee work discipline.
- d. Supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of communication strategies.
- e. Determining the interview schedule with the sub-district head and employees.
- f. Conducting in-depth, direct interviews.
- g. Recording and transcribing interview results for analysis.

Through interviews, researchers can understand more deeply the experiences, perceptions, and views of informants regarding leadership communication strategies in improving employee work discipline (Hansen, 2020).

2. Observation

Observation is a data collection technique conducted by directly observing activities occurring in the field. Through observation, researchers can obtain a concrete picture of the behavior of leaders and employees in the work environment.

The observation implementation plan used by the researchers is as follows:

- a. Compiling an observation sheet based on indicators of communication strategies and employee work discipline (punctuality, compliance with regulations, and work responsibility).
- b. Conducting observations at the Somolo-Molo Sub-district Office during work activities.
- c. Observing leadership behavior in providing direction, motivation, and supervision to employees.
- d. Observing interactions between leaders and employees during work activities.
- e. Observing employee disciplinary behavior in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.
- f. Systematically recording observation results in field notes.
- g. Conducting repeated observations to obtain consistent data.

Thus, observations are conducted to directly determine how leadership communication strategies are implemented and their impact on employee work discipline (Moleong, 2021).

3. Documentation

Documentation is a data collection technique that involves collecting various documents related to the research. This technique is used to supplement data from interviews and observations.

The steps taken by the researcher were:

1. Collecting official documents from the Sub-district Office, such as:
 - a. Sub-district Office Profile
 - b. Organizational structure
 - c. Employee regulations or rules of conduct



- d. Work programs and policies related to employee discipline
2. Taking photographs of employee work activities (with office permission).
3. Collecting archives or notes related to leadership communication strategies and employee discipline.
4. Organizing documents systematically for analysis.

Documentation helps researchers describe the actual conditions occurring in the work environment related to leadership communication strategies in improving employee discipline. All data obtained is then systematically compiled and analyzed (Arikunto, 2020).

Data Analysis Techniques

Data collected through interviews, observations, and documents were analyzed using an interactive model (Miles & Huberman, 1994), which includes three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions and verification. The researcher reread all interview transcripts and field notes and identified themes relevant to the study's focus: leadership communication strategies and employee work discipline. The data reliability testing technique used by the researcher was triangulation, which is used to verify the reliability of the data obtained from multiple sources using various methods (Moleong, 2021).

a. Data Reduction

Data reduction is the process of selecting, simplifying, and focusing on data obtained from the field. At this stage, according to Miles et al. (2018), the researcher selected data relevant to the research focus, namely leadership communication strategies in improving employee work discipline.

The reduced data was then presented in the form of a theme matrix and quotations, before being interpreted to answer the research questions. Data reduction emphasizes focusing the data collected by the researcher. This process continues from the initial formulation of the research question until the data is collected.

b. Data Presentation

After data reduction, the next step in qualitative descriptive research is data presentation, which can be done in the form of brief descriptions, charts, and relationships between categories. According to Sari et al. (2023), the purpose of displaying data is to facilitate understanding of what is happening and to plan further work based on that understanding (Wiwin Yulian et al., 2018).

Data presentation is the stage of compiling the reduced data into a more systematic form, making it easier for researchers to understand and interpret the data obtained. In this study, the data is presented in the form of a narrative description that clearly illustrates the leadership communication strategy in improving employee work discipline.

c. Conclusion Drawing and Verification

Conclusion drawing is the final stage in data analysis, which is carried out by interpreting the collected data to answer the research problem formulation related to leadership communication strategies in improving employee work discipline. At this stage, researchers examine the meaning of the analyzed data and then relate it to theory and previous research findings (Elviana, 2021).

Next, the conclusions drawn are re-examined through a verification process by comparing various data sources, such as observations, interviews, and documentation. This process is repeated throughout the research to ensure that the conclusions drawn truly reflect the actual conditions in the field.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research results are compiled based on field interview data collected from seven informants. The analysis follows the flow of data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification. Overview of Field Interview Results

1. Key Informant (IK) Views - Somolo-Molo Sub-district Head

The key informant explained that the communication pattern implemented is essentially open and two-way. For important official matters, communication is conducted through meetings, roll calls,



and direct briefings. Meanwhile, rapid coordination needs are facilitated by telephone and digital messaging groups. The choice of media is based on the nature of the information: policies that need to be documented are conveyed directly formal, while daily coordination can be done through digital media or direct communication. *"My communication style is essentially open and two-way. For important official matters, I convey directions through meetings, roll calls, or direct briefings to avoid misunderstandings."* (IK, interview, July 20, 2026).

In developing messages, key informants considered the type of work, person in charge, employee conditions, deadlines, and expected outcomes. When messages related to discipline, leaders not only conveyed obligations but also explained the rationale and purpose of the rules. In terms of discipline, the sub-district head assessed employee performance as generally quite good. Most employees fulfilled attendance and responsibilities, but there were still incidents of lateness, suboptimal use of work time, and certain tasks that required monitoring to ensure timely completion. The form of guidance was carried out in stages: general reminders, private conversations, explanations of the impact of behavior, and if repeated violations could be followed up with more stringent reprimands in accordance with regulations.

2. Views of Key Informant 1 (IU1) - Sub-district Secretary

The Sub-district Secretary assessed that leadership directives were generally conveyed through meetings, roll calls, direct communication with structural officials, and digital messaging groups. The language used was relatively easy to understand and task-oriented. However, when activities were busy or agendas changed quickly, additional confirmation was sometimes necessary to avoid misunderstandings. In terms of discipline, the Sub-district Secretary observed that attendance was quite good, but consistency in punctuality and utilization of working hours still required attention.

"Messages regarding discipline were generally quite clear, especially regarding attendance, working hours, service, and responsibility for completing tasks." (IU1, interview, July 20, 2026).

IU1 observed positive changes following reminders and personal coaching, such as employees attending more regularly and being more prompt in providing information if they were late or unable to attend.3. Pandangan Informan Utama 2 (IU2) – Kepala Sb Bagian Umum, Keuangan dan Kepegawaian

The Head of the General Affairs Sub-Division emphasized the administration and dissemination of information. According to IU2, the Sub-District Head is quite active in conveying directions and involving the Sub-District Secretary and relevant officials before information is passed on to staff. Direct communication, digital messaging, and dispositions are the most frequently used methods. Meetings are used when issues involve multiple departments or require mutual agreement.

IU2 assessed that messages regarding discipline are relatively consistent, particularly regarding clock-in hours, permits, service responsibilities, and work completion. However, informants identified a need for improvement in the documentation of follow-up coaching so that behavioral changes can be monitored more systematically. In terms of discipline, IU2 described attendance as generally quite good, and tardiness was not a problem for all employees. Compliance with regulations is also quite good, but reminders still need to be made about working hours and the habit of reporting when leaving the office.

3. Views of Supporting Informant 1 (IP1) – Head of the Governance Section

Stated that directions are generally received through roll calls, meetings, direct supervisors, and communication groups. The informant found it easier to understand direct directions because they could immediately ask questions. Digital groups were considered helpful in terms of speed, but messages that were too brief sometimes required confirmation, especially when it came to schedule changes and task allocations.

IP1 observed that coaching was conducted in a manner that relatively maintained employee dignity. General reminders were delivered at roll calls or meetings, while issues concerning individuals were discussed privately. The informant also considered the leadership's exemplary behavior to have



a positive impact, but continued supervision was necessary due to the varying levels of awareness among employees.

4. Views of Supporting Informant 2 (IP2) – Head of the Village Community Empowerment Section

IP2 assessed that the leadership's communication channels were quite clear, with a combination of group messages and direct directions. According to the informant, both media should be used together because written messages can be interpreted differently without explanation. Opportunities for questions were adequate, although in larger forums some employees were still reluctant to speak up. Sectional discussions were considered more comfortable for obtaining more open input.

IP2 emphasized the importance of consistent implementation of rules for all employees. He believes that employees are more receptive to rules when messages are clearly communicated, they are treated equally, and coaching is delivered individually when individuals are involved. Appreciation and positive feedback are also considered necessary to ensure that disciplinary communication is not simply synonymous with reprimands.

5. Views of Supporting Informant 3 (IP3) – Information Technology and Systems Governance

IP3 described leadership communication as a combination of meetings, direct reports, and group messaging. Directions were considered helpful when accompanied by clear deadlines. Challenges arose primarily when information changed rapidly or important messages were missed amidst the multitude of digital messages. The informant also emphasized that employees needed to be more courageous in communicating concerns politely so that leaders were aware of the true situation. IP3 observed that after reminders about using work hours and reporting, employees returned to their desks more quickly and were more disciplined in providing information when they needed to leave the office. This finding suggests that repeated coaching can establish order, but a culture of discipline needs to be maintained when leaders are performing tasks outside the office.

6. Views of Supporting Informant 4 (IP4) – Office Administrator

IP4 assessed that leadership directives were fairly regular and generally received through superiors, direct briefings, and communication groups. The speed of information was considered an advantage of digital media, but the sheer volume of messages required employees to differentiate between general information and instructions requiring immediate follow-up. Therefore, direct directives were still considered most effective for messages requiring high clarity. IP4 assessed that supervision, role models, and clear deadlines influenced employee accountability. He also emphasized that a culture of discipline needed to be supported by all structural officials to avoid relying solely on the presence of the sub-district head. Suggestions included regular briefings, two-way communication, polite reprimands, consistent supervision, and increased appreciation for disciplined behavior.

7. Coding, Categorization, and Theme Formation

Coding was conducted to maintain a clear relationship between informant statements and the research theme. The first stage was data condensation, which involved selecting sections of responses related to leadership communication styles, disciplinary conditions, coaching strategies, behavioral changes, obstacles, and suggestions for improvement. The second stage was assigning initial codes that represented the main meaning of each statement. The third stage was grouping the codes into categories, and the fourth stage was the formation of themes that directly addressed the research objectives.

Table 1. Summary of Coding and Theme Formation

Theme	Dominant Code	Meaning of Findings
Communication	Meetings, roll calls, briefings, dispositions, digital groups, two-way, feedback	Communication is multimodal, adaptive, and combines both direct and digital communication.



Discipline	Attendance, tardiness, working hours, permission, responsibility, deadline	Discipline is quite good, but not yet evenly distributed and still needs to be strengthened in consistency.
Coaching	Informative, persuasive, educational, repetition, personal reprimand, exemplary, supervision	Coaching works through explaining rules, building awareness, leading by example, and follow-up.
Change	More punctual, faster reporting, more orderly use of working hours, faster tasks	There are behavioral improvements, but the effects are not the same for every employee.

Leadership Communication Used at the Somolo-Molo Sub-district Office

The first theme relates to the communication used by leaders to coordinate, convey policies, and develop staff. The data shows that no single channel is used for all situations. Leaders combine formal communication, face-to-face communication, digital media, and informal communication. This pattern allows messages to be tailored to the level of urgency, documentation needs, number of recipients, and sensitivity of the issue.

Table 2. Forms of Leadership Communication and Their Functions

Form	Channel	Function/Power	Limitations
Formal kolektif	Rapat dan apel	Menyamakan pemahaman, memberi arahan umum, dan memungkinkan penjelasan langsung	Tidak semua pegawai aktif memberi umpan balik di forum besar
Collective formal	Letters and dispositions	Ensure clarity of administration and documentation of instructions	Less flexible for very fast coordination
Direct/interpersonal	Face to face briefings and private talks	Facilitates clarification, individual coaching, and maintains sensitivity to issues	Requires time and the presence of related parties
Digital	Message and phone groups	Quick for daily agenda changes and coordination	Messages may be read late or interpreted differently
Informal	Short discussion in the workspace	Flexible for operational and work relationship issues	Official decisions still require documentation

Source: Processed by researchers, 2026.

Overall, leadership communication can be categorized as open, flexible, and relatively two-way. However, its effectiveness is strongest when important messages are conveyed through more than one channel, accompanied by opportunities for clarification, and consistently relayed by structural officials. This finding addresses the first research question regarding communication used by leaders at the Somolo-Molo Sub-district Office.



Employee Discipline at the Somolo-Molo Sub-district Office

The second theme describes the state of employee discipline based on the experiences of seven informants. All informants tended to assess that discipline was in a fairly good condition, but not yet fully prevalent. This assessment does not imply the absence of problems, but rather indicates that office activities continue and the majority of employees fulfill their obligations, while certain behaviors still need to be strengthened.

Table 3. Summary of Employee Work Discipline Conditions

Aspect	Key Findings	Needs to be Fixed	Source
Presence	In general it is quite good and the service is still running	Reporting of leave/absence still needs to be orderly	IK, IU1, IU2, IP1-IP4
Punctuality	There are still occasional delays; there is improvement after reminders	Consistency of clock-in hours and time management	IK, IU1, IU2, IP1-IP4
Working hours/rules of conduct	Generally complied with	Utilization of working hours and habits of reporting when leaving the office	IU1, IU2, IP1-IP4
Responsibility	Quite good, especially on service and time-bound tasks.	Priorities, inter-departmental coordination, and progress reporting	IK, IU1, IU2, IP1-IP4
Consistency	Discipline is improving but not evenly distributed	Building disciplined habits without always waiting for supervision	All informants

Source: Processed by researchers, 2026.

Thus, employee work discipline can be interpreted as quite good, but still requires strengthening in terms of punctuality, utilization of working hours, reporting permits, initiative in reporting progress, and behavioral consistency. This finding answers the second research question and provides a basis for discussing the communication strategies used to maintain and improve discipline.

Leadership Communication Strategies in Improving Work Discipline

The third theme shows that leadership communication strategies are not simply about conveying rules, but rather a series of communication actions that include explanation, awareness-raising, repetition, setting examples, supervision, gradual reprimands, evaluation, and reward planning. These strategies are situational: a persuasive approach is more often used for minor issues, while assertiveness is used when violations are repeated.

Table 4. Leadership Communication Strategies in Discipline Development

Strategy	Form of Implementation	Impact	Repair
Info	Explains rules, working hours, tasks, deadlines, and reasons for policies.	Employees know their obligations and work flow	Standardization of critical messages and documentation
Persuasion	Linking discipline with service, responsibility, and office image	Reprimands are easier to accept	Adapted to employee character
Education	Explains errors, impacts, and how to fix them	Employees are given the opportunity to improve themselves	Follow-up and assistance



Repeat	Reminder on roll call/meeting and reconfirmation	Reporting habits and punctuality improved	Scheduled reminders
Firm	Personal warning and follow-up if repeated	Rules have certainty without embarrassing employees.	Consistency of treatment and recording
Example	Leaders are present on time, active and responsible	The message of discipline is more credible	Continued by all structural officials
Bait	Room for questions, clarification and communication through superiors	Problems are identified more quickly	Mengurangi rasa sungkan di forum besar
Appreciation	Praise and recognition for orderly work	Encourages motivation and a sense of appreciation	Needs to be more routine and measurable

Source: Processed by researchers, 2026.

Factors Supporting and Inhibiting the Effectiveness of Communication Strategies

The effectiveness of communication strategies is influenced by both supporting and inhibiting factors. Supporting factors include open leadership, the use of multiple communication channels, the role of the Sub-district Secretary and Sub-division Head as liaisons, role models, supervision, and the willingness of most employees to receive coaching. These factors allow messages to be repeated, clarified, and followed up at different levels.

Meanwhile, recurring barriers in informants' responses included differences in personality, reluctance to raise issues, late reads of digital messages, sudden changes in activities, busy leaders or structural officials, and differences in understanding of brief instructions.

Table 5. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of Communication Strategy

Factor	Evidence from Interviews	Implications
Supporters: openness and feedback	Employees can ask questions through meetings, direct superiors, or personal communication.	Helps clarify and reduce misinterpretation
Supporters: multi-channel communication	Meetings, roll calls, dispositions, digital groups, telephone and direct communication are used as needed.	Messages can be tailored to urgency and formality.
Supporters: the role of structural officials	The Sub-district Secretary and Sub-district Head continued and explained the directions.	Strengthen message consistency and coordination
Supporters: exemplary leadership	The leadership strives to be punctual and responsible	Increase the credibility of the discipline message
Inhibitors: feelings of embarrassment and differences in character	Some employees are more comfortable raising issues in person.	Need interpersonal approach and small forum
Barriers: limitations of digital media	Messages are sometimes read late or interpreted differently	Important information requires direct confirmation
Obstacles: sudden agendas and busyness	Information is sometimes conveyed in a short time	Requires repeated delivery and accountability of information



Barriers: coaching documentation	IU2 proposed more systematic follow-up recording.	Evaluation of changes needs to be based on consistent records.
----------------------------------	---	--

Source: Processed by researchers, 2026.

Discipline Changes Following Direction and Coaching

The behavioral changes reported by informants were gradual, not uniform and immediate. The sub-district head observed an increase in punctuality and responsiveness to directions among several employees. IU1 reported that an employee who was previously frequently late became more consistent in attendance after reminders and personal coaching. IU2 highlighted an increased habit of notifying employees when needed and faster completion of work when deadlines were emphasized.

Table 6. Identified Changes in Disciplinary Behavior

Change	Before/Problem	After Coaching	Corroborating Informants
Punctuality of attendance	There are still delays for some employees	Some employees have become more regularly present	IK, IU1, IP1, IP2, IP3, IP4
Reporting permits/obstacles	Information is not always provided from the start	Employees are quicker to inform you if they are late/absent.	IU1, IU2, IP1, IP2, IP3, IP4
Utilization of working hours	At certain times the working atmosphere is more relaxed	Employees return to work more quickly after reminders	IP1, IP3
Task completion	Some tasks require reminders.	Work is faster when deadlines and progress are defined.	IU2, IP1, IP2, IP4
Procedural compliance	Still need to be reminded about permits and reporting	Awareness of reporting and requesting permission increases	IU2, IP2, IP3, IP4

Source: Processed by researchers, 2026.

The first research objective was to gain an understanding of the communication used by leaders at the Somolo-Molo Sub-district Office. The results showed that leadership communication was combinatorial, combining formal, direct, digital, and informal communication. This pattern demonstrates that leaders do not rigidly use one medium, but adapt the form of communication to the message's objectives and the work situation. This finding aligns with Cangara's concept used in the proposal, which states that communication strategy is a combination of communication planning and communication management to achieve specific goals. The findings also support Cangara's (2013) idea, which in the proposal divided leadership communication strategy into message planning, communication media, communication patterns, and evaluation.

These four elements emerged in the field. Message planning was carried out by adjusting the content of directives; media were selected based on formality and urgency; communication patterns were top-down while providing feedback; and evaluation was conducted through monitoring implementation and behavioral changes. This demonstrates a strong alignment between theoretical concepts and leadership practices at the research site. The results of this study are similar to those of Tamri (2021), who found that communication Dialogic and two-way communication improves employee understanding and discipline. These similarities are evident in the availability of a space for



questions, personal communication, and feedback through direct superiors. This research also aligns with Suppah (2025), who emphasized the importance of clear and consistent communication within the sub-district office environment. However, this study provides a more detailed explanation that formal openness is not always accompanied by psychological openness. Some employees still feel reluctant to raise issues in larger forums and prefer personal communication or with their direct superiors.

Regarding punctuality, field findings reinforce the initial proposal's phenomenon regarding tardiness. However, the research findings provide a more proportional nuance: tardiness does not occur among all employees and is not described as a serious violation that occurs daily. Several factors such as distance, transportation, weather, family matters, and time management are cited as contributing factors. This interpretation is important so that the research does not simplify all tardiness as a lack of discipline. Leaders also admitted to examining the causes before determining guidance. Regarding adherence to working hours, the research results indicate that working time is not always optimally utilized when the workload decreases. This finding relates to the discipline indicators in the proposal, which emphasize adherence to working hours and effective time use. This means that discipline is not only measured by the presence of employees in the office, but also by the use of time for work, administration, coordination and service.

The research findings are similar to Suppah (2025), who showed that clear and consistent communication helps improve coordination and discipline in sub-district organizations. The findings also overlap with Herawati (2024), who identified communication and discipline as elements related to performance. Thus, the second research objective was met: employee discipline at the Somolo-Molo Sub-district Office was generally quite good, with the majority of employees demonstrating attendance, compliance, and responsibility. However, there was still variation in punctuality, utilization of work hours, reporting of permits, initiative, and consistency in task completion. Therefore, improving discipline needs to be directed at habituation and awareness, not just temporary control.

The communication techniques found in the field align with those proposed by Abidin (2015), namely informative, persuasive, educational, redundancy or repetition, and coercive or assertive techniques. However, their application was not uniform. Information was used to explain rules; persuasion to build awareness; education to guide improvement; repetition to maintain attention; and assertiveness was used after initial approaches failed to produce change. This pattern indicates the use of tiered strategies according to the level of the problem. The findings on role models reinforce the theory of discipline factors used in the proposal. Azijah and Hasibuan place leadership role models as a crucial element because leadership behavior serves as a reference for subordinates. Interviews with IU1, IU2, and IP1-IP4 revealed a consistent pattern: when the sub-district head arrives on time, actively participates in activities, and demonstrates responsibility, employees feel more motivated to be prepared and find it more difficult to ignore disciplinary directives. This means that nonverbal communication through behavioral examples enhances the credibility of verbal communication.

Another important finding is the need to balance correction with appreciation. Key informants and several employees suggested that disciplinary behavior should also be reinforced through simple praise or rewards. Managerially, this strategy can prevent disciplinary communication from being only associated with mistakes and reprimands. Appreciation sends the message that the organization not only pays attention to violations, but also recognizes consistency and responsibility. Thus, the third research objective was answered, namely that leadership communication strategies contribute positively to improving work discipline through clarity of information, two-way communication, persuasion, education, repetition, example, personal development, supervision, proportional assertiveness, and evaluation. This contribution can be seen in improvements in timeliness, reporting permits, use of working hours, and completion of tasks. However, its sustainability is highly dependent on consistency of implementation, documentation of follow-up, and the ability to change discipline from compliance due to supervision to awareness of work.



DICUSSION

The first research objective was to gain an understanding of the communication used by leaders at the Somolo-Molo Sub-district Office. The results showed that leadership communication was combinatorial, combining formal, direct, digital, and informal communication. This pattern demonstrates that leaders do not rigidly use one medium, but adapt the communication method to the message's objectives and the work situation. This finding aligns with Cangara's concept, used in the proposal, that communication strategy is a combination of communication planning and communication management to achieve specific goals. The findings also support Cangara's (2013) idea, which in the proposal divided leadership communication strategy into message planning, communication media, communication patterns, and evaluation.

These four elements emerged in the field. Message planning was carried out by adjusting the content of directives; media were selected based on formality and urgency; communication patterns were top-down while providing feedback; and evaluation was conducted through monitoring implementation and behavioral changes. This demonstrates a strong alignment between theoretical concepts and leadership practices at the research site. The results of this study are similar to those of Tamri (2021), who found that dialogic and two-way communication improved employee understanding and discipline. These similarities are evident in the availability of question-and-answer opportunities, personal communication, and feedback through direct superiors. This research aligns with Suppah (2025), who emphasized the importance of clear and consistent communication within the sub-district office. However, this study provides a more detailed explanation that formal openness is not always accompanied by psychological openness. Some employees still feel reluctant to raise issues in a larger forum and prefer personal communication or with their direct superiors.

Regarding punctuality, field findings reinforce the initial proposal's phenomenon of tardiness. However, the research findings provide a more proportional nuance: tardiness does not occur across all employees and is not described as a serious violation that occurs daily. Several factors such as distance, transportation, weather, family matters, and time management are cited as contributing factors. This interpretation is important so that the research does not simplify all tardiness as a lack of discipline. Leaders also admitted to examining the causes before determining guidance. Regarding compliance with working hours, the research findings indicate that working time is not always optimally utilized when the workload decreases. This finding relates to the discipline indicators in the proposal, which emphasize compliance with working hours and effective time use. This means that discipline is not only measured by employee attendance at the office, but also by the use of time for work, administration, coordination, and service.

The research findings are similar to Suppah (2025), who showed that clear and consistent communication helps improve coordination and discipline in sub-district organizations. The findings also overlap with Herawati (2024), who positions communication and discipline as elements related to performance. Thus, the second research objective was met: employee work discipline at the Somolo-Molo Sub-district Office was generally quite good, with the majority of employees demonstrating attendance, compliance, and responsibility. However, there were still variations in punctuality, utilization of work hours, permit reporting, initiative, and consistency in task completion. Therefore, improving discipline needs to be directed at habituation and awareness, not just temporary control.

The communication techniques found in the field align with those of Abidin (2015) in the proposal: informative, persuasive, educational, redundant or repetitive, and coercive or assertive techniques. However, these techniques are not applied uniformly. Information is used to explain rules; persuasion to build awareness; education to guide improvement; repetition to maintain attention; and assertiveness is used after the initial approach fails to produce change. This pattern suggests the use of tiered strategies according to the level of the problem. The findings on role models reinforce the theory of discipline factors used in the proposal. Azijah and Hasibuan emphasize leadership role models as a crucial element because leadership behavior serves as a reference for subordinates.



Interviews with IU1, IU2, and IP1-IP4 revealed a consistent pattern: when the sub-district head arrives on time, actively participates in activities, and demonstrates responsibility, employees feel more motivated to be prepared and find it more difficult to ignore disciplinary directives. This means that nonverbal communication through behavioral examples enhances the credibility of verbal communication.

Another important finding is the need to balance correction with appreciation. Key informants and several employees suggested that disciplinary behavior should also be reinforced through simple praise or rewards. Managerially, this strategy can prevent disciplinary communication from being associated solely with errors and reprimands. Appreciation conveys the message that the organization not only pays attention to violations but also recognizes consistency and responsibility. Thus, the third research objective is answered: leadership communication strategies contribute positively to improving work discipline through clarity of information, two-way communication, persuasion, education, repetition, role modeling, personal coaching, supervision, proportional assertiveness, and evaluation. This contribution is evident in improvements in timeliness, permit reporting, use of work hours, and task completion. However, its sustainability depends heavily on consistent implementation, follow-up documentation, and the ability to shift discipline from compliance due to supervision to work awareness.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research and discussion, conclusions are drawn up directly in accordance with the three focuses of discussion in Chapter IV, namely the leadership communication used, employee work discipline conditions, and leadership communication strategies in improving employee work discipline at the Somolo-Molo Subdistrict Office, as follows:

1. Leadership communication used at the Somolo-Molo Subdistrict Office is open and two-way and combines formal, direct, digital and informal channels. Meetings and calls are used for common understanding and general direction; letters and dispositions are used for official messages that require documentation; face-to-face communication and personal conversations are used for clarification and coaching; while messaging and telephone groups are used for quick coordination. This pattern is considered effective when important messages are conveyed through more than one channel, opportunities for clarification are provided, and directions are consistently forwarded by structural officials. Obstacles that still arise are feelings of hesitation on the part of some employees, delays in reading digital messages, and the need to confirm short or sudden information.
2. Employee discipline at the Somolo-Molo Sub-district Office is categorized as quite good, but not yet consistent across all indicators. Measurability in this qualitative study is demonstrated by the convergence of sources: seven of seven informants stated that employee attendance was generally maintained and services continued, but seven of seven also mentioned occasional delays and the need for increased consistency. Regarding working hours and regulations, compliance was generally good, but time utilization and reporting of leave/office leave still need improvement. Regarding responsibilities, work was generally completed, but some tasks still required reminders, prioritization, or coordination to ensure timely completion. Therefore, the primary issue is not gross indiscipline among all employees, but rather consistency in punctuality, use of working hours, reporting, and task completion. This measure is based on triangulation of seven informants and observations, not official absence percentages because monthly/annual summaries were not available in the research files.
3. The leadership communication strategy to improve employee work discipline is carried out through informative, persuasive, educational communication, message repetition, role modelling, personal coaching, supervision, gradual reprimands, proportional assertiveness, evaluation, and positive reinforcement. This strategy is related to the changes identified in Chapter IV, namely some employees become more regular in their attendance, employees are quicker to provide information



when late or absent, reporting when leaving the office becomes more orderly, the use of work hours is more focused after reminders, and task completion is faster when deadlines and progress are emphasized. Changes are not the same for every employee and can be weakened if supervision is reduced. Therefore, the effectiveness of the strategy needs to be maintained through regular briefings, multi-channel communication, follow-up documentation, scheduled evaluations, consistent application of rules, and role models from all structural officials.

5. REFERENCES

- Abidin, Y. Z. (2015). *Manajemen komunikasi: Filosofi, konsep, dan aplikasi*. Pustaka Setia.
- Arikunto, S. (2020). *Prosedur penelitian: Suatu pendekatan praktik*. Rineka Cipta.
- Cangara, H. (2013). *Perencanaan dan strategi komunikasi*. PT RajaGrafindo Persada.
- Hansen, S. (2020). Investigasi teknik wawancara dalam penelitian kualitatif manajemen konstruksi. *Jurnal Teknik Sipil*, 27(3), 283–294. <https://doi.org/10.5614/jts.2020.27.3.10>
- Herawati, N. (2024). Strategi peningkatan kepemimpinan dan kinerja pegawai melalui komunikasi dan disiplin kerja. *Jurnal Kelola*, 11(2), 145–156.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2018). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*. SAGE Publications.
- Suppah, F. Z. (2025). Komunikasi pimpinan dalam meningkatkan efektivitas kinerja di kantor camat. *NUSANTARA: Jurnal Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial*, 12(1), 45–56.
- Sutrisno, E. (2022). *Manajemen sumber daya manusia*. Kencana.
- Tamri. (2021). Strategi komunikasi pimpinan dalam meningkatkan kinerja pegawai. *Jurnal Perspektif Pendidikan*, 15(2), 89–98.