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Communicating in Teams and Organizations

Communicating at Infosys

Infosys has adopted an **"adult–adult"** communication strategy by introducing InfyBubble, an in-house social media platform similar to Facebook.

PAC structure in commnication

**"adult–adult"**

"parent–child"

"child–child"

……

# Communication: Definition and Importance

- Process by which information is transmitted and understood between people
  - Transmitting intended meaning (not just symbols)

- Importance of communication
  - Coordinating work activities
  - Organizational learning
  - Better decision making
  - Changing others' behavior
  - Employee well-being

Communication Process Model
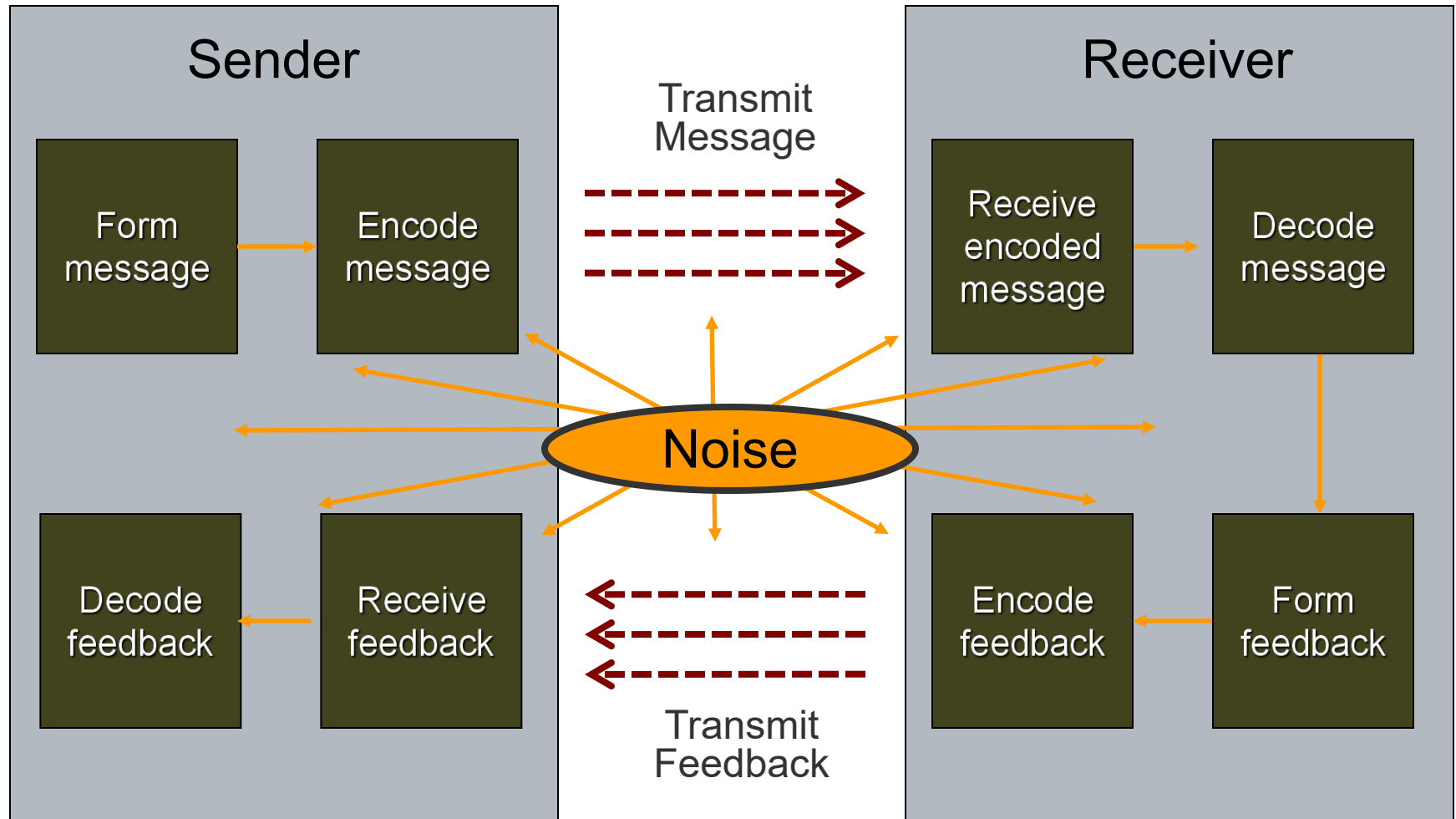
Improving Communication Coding/Decoding
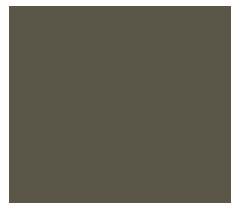
- Sender/receiver have similar codebooks

- Sender is experienced encoding that message

- Sender/receiver are motivated and able to use the selected channel

- Sender/receiver have shared mental models of the communication context

Atos Origin Replaces Email with Social Media Communication

European information technology company Atos Origin is replacing email completely with other Internet-based communication tools within the next couple of years.

How Email has Altered Communication

- Preferred channel for coordinating work

- Tends to increase communication volume

- Significantly alters communication flow

- Somewhat reduces status differences and stereotyping

Problems with Email

- Communicates emotions poorly

- Reduces politeness and respect (flaming)

- Inefficient for ambiguous, complex, novel situations

- Increases information overload

Communicating Through Social Media

Internet/mobile-based channels with user-generated, interactive content

- Blogs, wechat,tiktok, youtube,kwaifu,Bilibili,redbook,tweets, Facebook,etc
- More conversational and interactive
- Most can develop a public identity
- Encourage communities -- links, interactivity, feedback

Serves diverse functions

- Presenting identity, enabling conversations, etc

Nonverbal Communication

- Influences meaning of verbal symbols

- Less rule bound than verbal communication

- Most is automatic and nonconscious
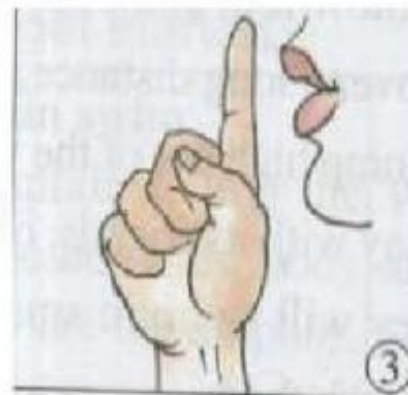

Courtesy of Microsoft.

Well-done

Ok

quiet ③

• I don't know

Emotional Contagion

- The automatic process of sharing another person's emotions by mimicking their facial expressions and other nonverbal behavior

- Serves three purposes:
  1. Provides continuous feedback to speaker
  2. Increases emotional understanding of the other person's experience
  3. Communicates a collective sentiment -- sharing the experience as part of drive to bond

Choosing Channels: Social Acceptance

Do others support use of that communication channel for that purpose?

Depends on:

1. Firm/team norms for using the channel

2. Individual preferences for using the channel

3. Symbolic meaning of the channel

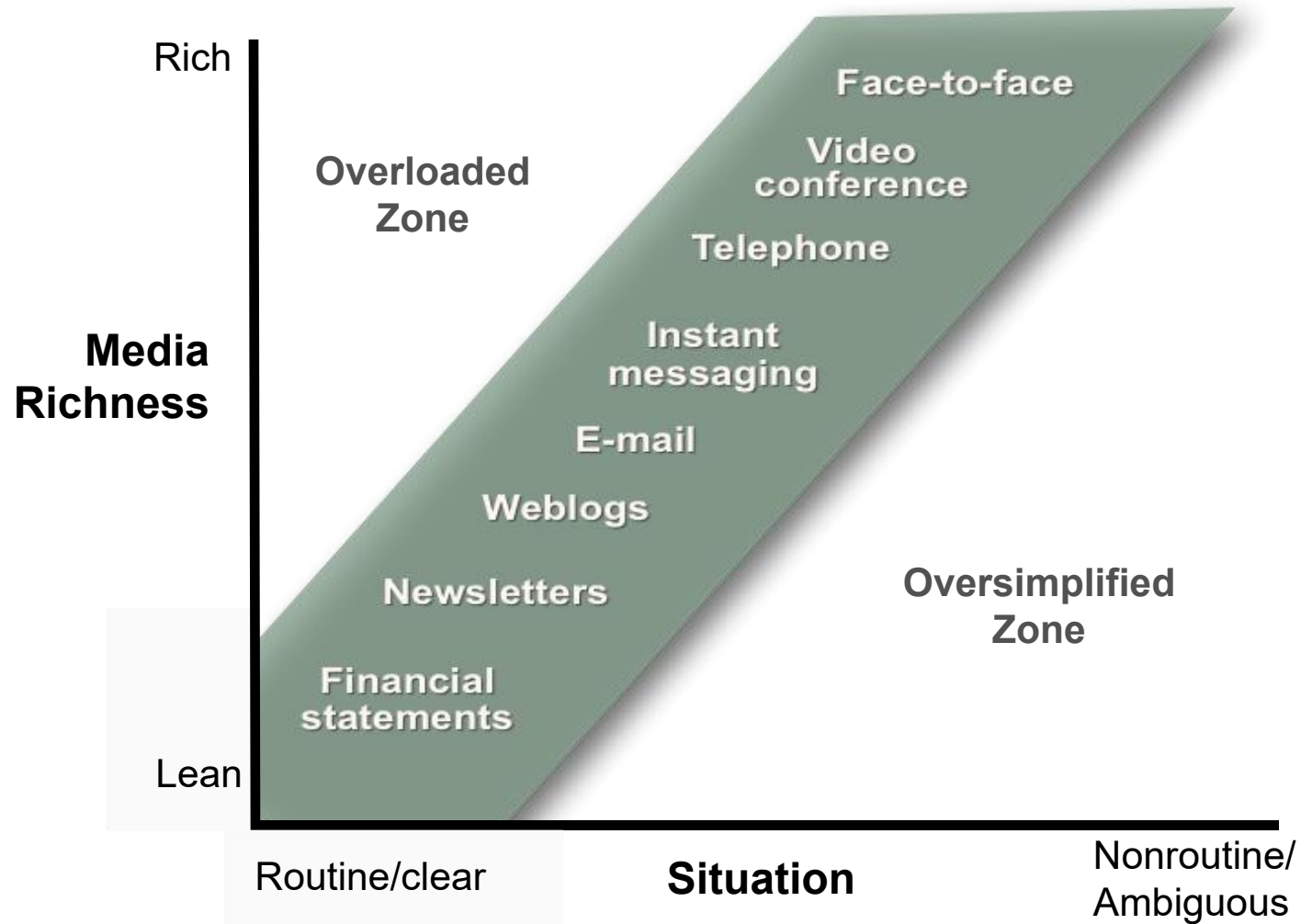# Choosing Channels: Media Richness

The channel's data-carrying capacity needs to be aligned with the communication activity

High richness when channel:
1. conveys multiple cues
2. allows timely feedback
3. allows customized message
4. permits complex symbols

Use rich communication media when the situation is nonroutine and ambiguous

Hierarchy of Media Richness

Rich

Media Richness

Lean

Overloaded Zone

Face-to-face

Video conference

Telephone

Instant messaging

E-mail

Weblogs

Newsletters

Oversimplified Zone

Financial statements

Routine/clear   **Situation**   Nonroutine/ Ambiguous

Exceptions to Media Richness

Media richness theory doesn't apply as well to electronic channels because:

1. Able to multi-communicate through lean channels

2. More varied proficiency levels

3. Lean channels have less social distraction than do media rich channels

Persuasive Communication

- Changing another person's beliefs and attitudes.

- Spoken communication is more persuasive because:
  - accompanied by nonverbal communication
  - has high quality immediate feedback
  - has high social presence

Communication Barriers

- Perceptions

- Filtering

- Language
  - Jargon
  - Ambiguity

- Information Overload

Information Overload

- Job's information load exceeds person's capacity to process it
  - Information gets overlooked or misinterpreted

- Two sets of solutions:
  - Increase information processing capacity
    - Examples: Learn to read faster, remove distractions
  - Reduce information load
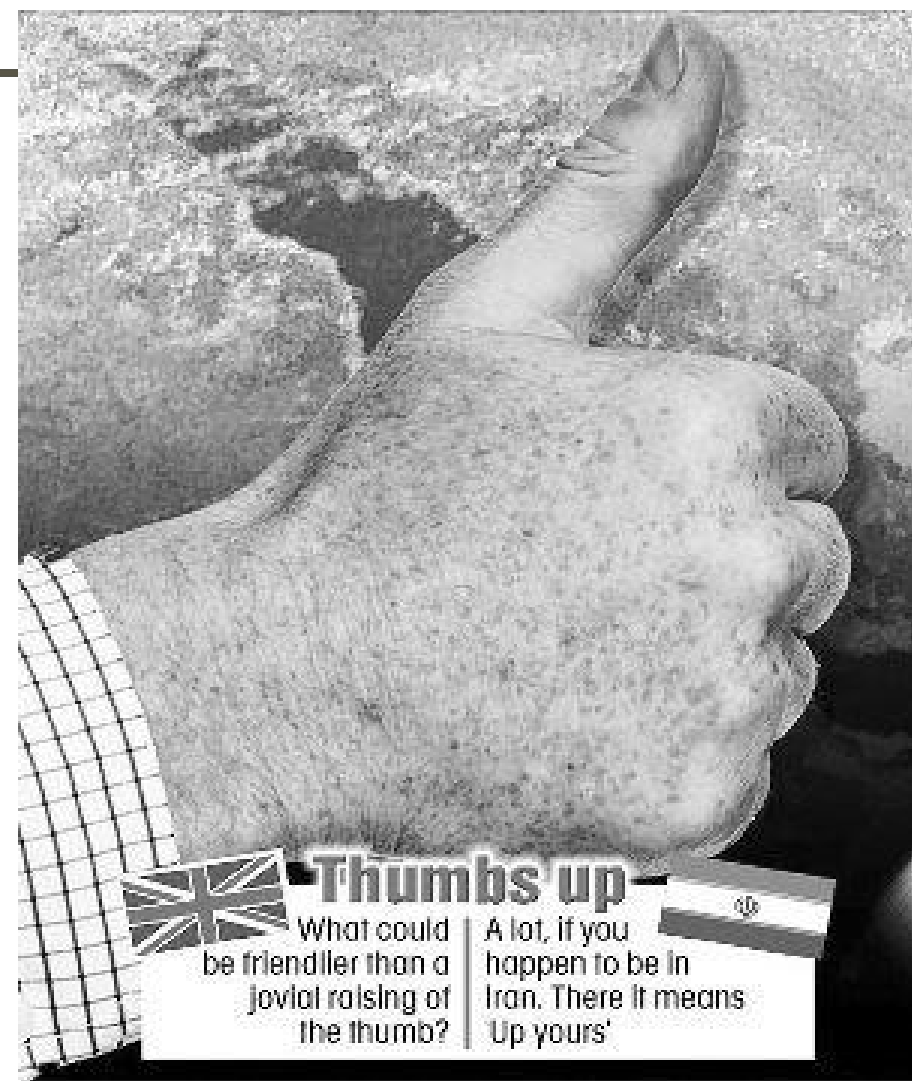   - Examples: Buffering, omitting, summarizing

Cross-Cultural Communication

- Verbal differences
  - Language
  - Voice intonation
  - Silence/conversational overlaps

- Nonverbal differences
  - Some nonverbal gestures are universal, but others vary across cultures

Thumbs up

What could be friendlier than a jovial raising of the thumb?

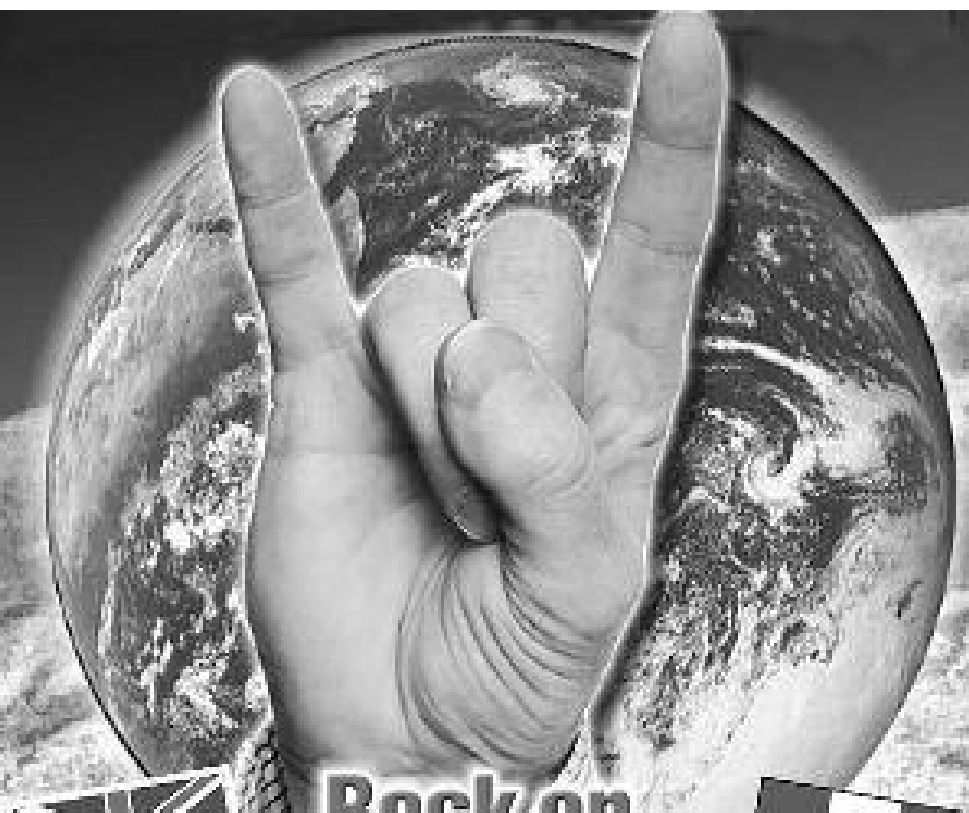A lot, if you happen to be in Iran. There it means 'Up yours'

The circle

This may, to you, symbolise that everying is OK - just perfect

In Turkey or Brazil, it suggests you are an 'a***hole', or that you are gay

Rock on
Heavy metal sign also wards off 'evil eye' in Buddhism or Hinduism

In France & the Med, it means your wife or girl's cheating on you

V for victory
As famously used by Winston Churchill, or by hippies for peace

The Italian gesture, however, actually means 'I don't give a damn'

Four fingers

To us, it means I'd like four of those please... preferably pints

In Japan, it can signify death or has Yakuza mafia connotations

Come here

A gesture you would use to summon someone to come closer

In the Philippines, you would only gesture like this to an animal
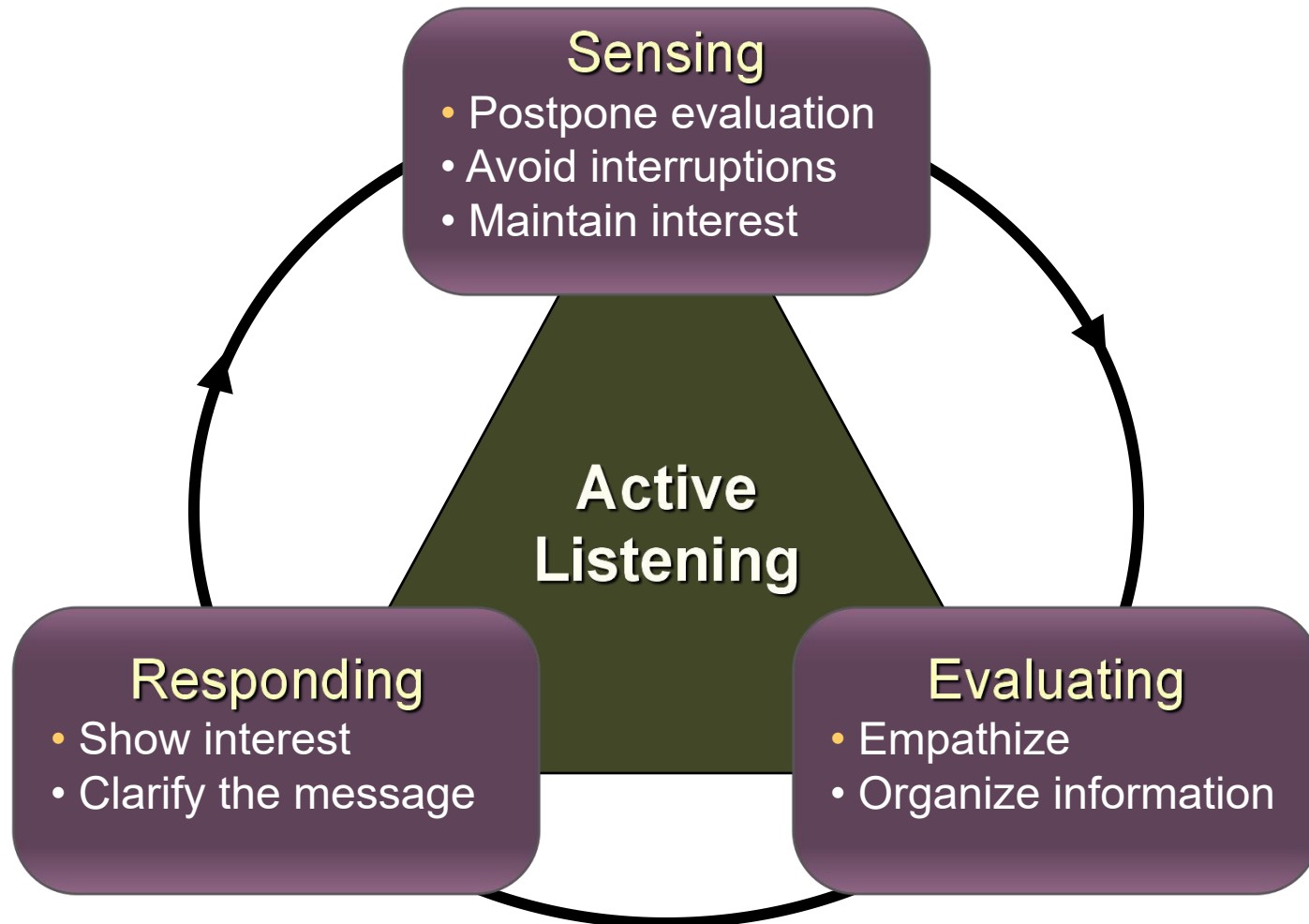
Gender Communication Differences

- Men view conversations more as power, status, functionality
  - Report talk
  - Give advice quickly
  - Dominate conversation

- Women consider more interpersonal relations
  - Rapport talk
  - Indirect advice/requests
  - Sensitive to nonverbal cues

Getting Your Message Across

- Empathize

- Repeat the message

- Use timing effectively

- Focus on the problem, not the person

Active Listening Process & Strategies

Sensing
- Postpone evaluation
- Avoid interruptions
- Maintain interest

Active Listening

Responding
- Show interest
- Clarify the message

Evaluating
- Empathize
- Organize information

Communicating in Hierarchies

- Workspace design
  - Open offices – consider noise, distractions
  - Clustering people in teams

- Internet-based organizational communication
  - Wikis -- collaborative document creation
  - E-zines -- rapid distribution of company news

- Direct communication with management
  - Management by walking around (MBWA)
  - Town hall meetings

Formal network
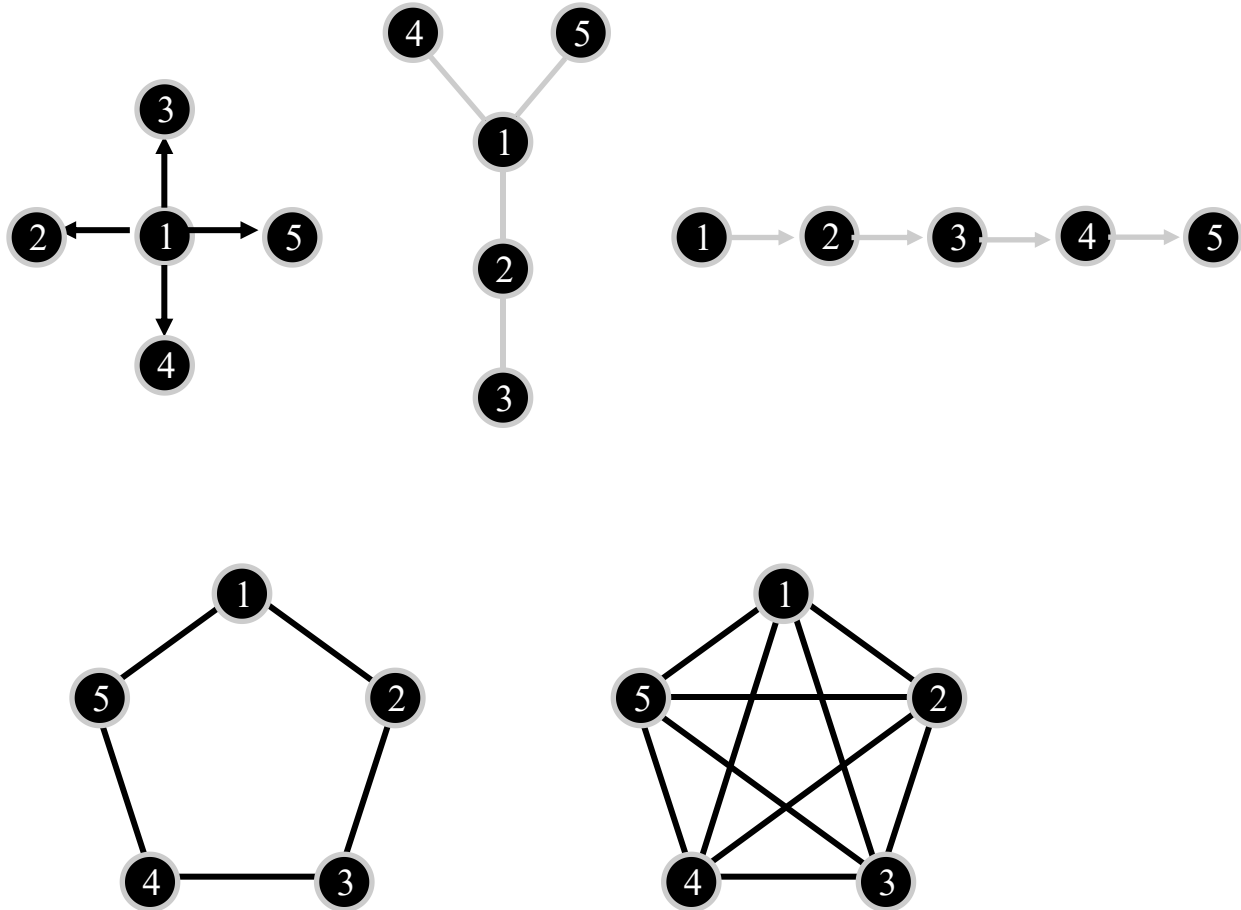
Organizational Grapevine

- Early research findings
  - Transmits information rapidly in all directions
  - Follows a cluster chain pattern
  - More active in homogeneous groups
  - Transmits some degree of truth

- Changes due to internet
  - Emerging grapevines channels: Email, tweets, etc
  - Social networks are now global, extends grapevine

Grapevine Benefits/Limitations

- Benefits
  - Fills in missing information from formal sources
  - Strengthens corporate culture
  - Relieves anxiety
  - Associated with the drive to bond

- Limitations
  - Distortions might escalate anxiety
  - Perceived lack of concern for employees when company info is slower than grapevine