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**INFORMATION**

Information is a concept that refers to data that has been processed, organized, or structured in a meaningful way to convey knowledge, facts, or insights. It is a fundamental concept in various fields, including information theory, computer science, mathematics, and communication.

**Key characteristics of information**

**Meaning**: Information carries meaning or significance. It is not random or chaotic; instead, it has a purpose or conveys some form of understanding.

**Data Representation**: Information can be represented in various forms, such as text, numbers, images, audio, or video. It can be stored and transmitted through various media and technologies.

**Context**: Information often depends on the context in which it is used. The same data can convey different information depending on the circumstances and the receiver's perspective.

**Communication**: Information is often shared or communicated between individuals, systems, or organizations. Effective communication involves the transmission and reception of information.

**Value**: Information is valuable because it helps people make decisions, solve problems, gain knowledge, and perform tasks more efficiently. The value of information can vary depending on its accuracy, relevance, and timeliness.

**Entropy**: In information theory, the concept of entropy is used to measure the amount of uncertainty or surprise in a message. Low-entropy information is highly predictable, while high-entropy information contains more surprises and is less predictable.

Information can take many forms, from simple facts and data to complex knowledge and insights. It is a critical resource in today's information age, where the ability to manage and use information effectively can lead to significant advantages in various aspects of life, including business, science, education, and decision-making.

**TYPES OF INFORMATION**

Information can be categorized into various types based on different criteria and characteristics. Here are some common types of information:

**Primary Information:** Primary information is original data or information collected firsthand through research, observation, surveys, experiments, or direct experience. It is considered the most reliable and credible form of information because it hasn't been altered or interpreted by others.

**Secondary Information:** Secondary information is derived from primary sources or existing data. It includes information obtained from books, articles, reports, databases, and other pre-existing sources. It is valuable for research and analysis but may be subject to interpretation and bias introduced by the secondary source.

**Quantitative Information:** Quantitative information is expressed in numerical terms and can be measured and quantified. Examples include statistics, measurements, numerical data, and quantitative research findings.

**Qualitative Information:** Qualitative information is descriptive and non-numerical in nature. It focuses on qualities, characteristics, and attributes. It is often used in social sciences, humanities, and qualitative research studies.

**Tangible Information:** Tangible information refers to physical or concrete data that can be touched or seen, such as printed documents, physical objects, and tangible records.

**Intangible Information:** Intangible information exists in digital or abstract forms, such as electronic documents, digital media, ideas, concepts, and intellectual property.

**Structured Information:** Structured information is organized and formatted according to a predefined structure or schema. Examples include databases, spreadsheets, and data in standardized formats like XML or JSON.

**Unstructured Information:** Unstructured information lacks a specific organization or format. It is often in the form of text or media that doesn't follow a strict template. Examples include text documents, emails, and multimedia content.

**Public Information:** Public information is accessible to anyone and is not restricted or confidential. It can include publicly available documents, websites, and government records.

**Confidential Information:** Confidential information is sensitive and restricted. It is typically protected by privacy laws or organizational policies to prevent unauthorized access or disclosure. Examples include personal medical records and proprietary business data.

**Static Information:** Static information remains constant and doesn't change over time. It includes historical records, fixed reference materials, and unchanging facts.

**Dynamic Information:** Dynamic information is subject to change or updates. It includes real-time data, news, social media posts, and information that evolves over time.

**Personal Information:** Personal information pertains to individuals and includes details such as names, addresses, contact information, and demographic data.

**Geospatial Information:** Geospatial information is related to geographic locations and includes maps, GPS data, spatial databases, and location-based services.

**Scientific Information:** Scientific information consists of data, research findings, and knowledge generated through scientific research and experimentation.

**IMPORTANCE OF INFORMATION**

The importance of information cannot be overstated in today's interconnected and information-driven world. Information plays a pivotal role in virtually every aspect of human life, society, and business. Here are some key reasons why information is crucial:

**Decision-Making:** Information is essential for decision-making at all levels, from personal choices to business strategies and government policies. Informed decisions are more likely to be effective and efficient, leading to better outcomes.

**Knowledge and Learning:** Information is the foundation of knowledge and learning. It enables individuals to acquire new skills, understand complex concepts, and expand their intellectual horizons.

**Innovation:** Innovation often arises from the availability and exchange of information. New ideas, inventions, and breakthroughs are fueled by access to information and the ability to build upon existing knowledge.

**Problem Solving:** Information provides the raw material for problem-solving. When faced with challenges, individuals and organizations rely on information to analyze problems, identify solutions, and implement effective strategies.

**Communication**: Effective communication depends on the exchange of information. Language, written text, visuals, and other communication tools convey ideas, emotions, and intentions through the transmission of information.

**Economic Growth:** Information is a key driver of economic growth in the digital age. Access to data, market information, and consumer trends empowers businesses to make informed decisions, develop innovative products, and expand their reach.

**Healthcare**: In the healthcare sector, accurate and timely information is critical for patient care, diagnosis, treatment, and medical research. Electronic health records, medical databases, and research findings are all forms of vital healthcare information.

**Education:** Information is the backbone of education. Teachers and students rely on textbooks, research materials, online resources, and educational content to facilitate learning and academic progress.

**Government and Policy:** Governments rely on information for policy formulation, law enforcement, and governance. Census data, economic indicators, and social statistics inform policy decisions and resource allocation.

**Environmental Management:** Environmental monitoring and conservation efforts depend on information about ecosystems, climate change, pollution levels, and wildlife behavior to make informed decisions about protecting the environment.

**Globalization:** Information technology and the internet have facilitated globalization by enabling the rapid exchange of information across borders. This has led to increased cultural exchange, trade, and interconnectedness.

**Personal Empowerment:** Access to information empowers individuals by giving them the knowledge they need to make informed choices about their health, finances, and lifestyles.

**Social Awareness:** Information plays a vital role in raising awareness about social issues, promoting advocacy, and fostering social change. Social movements often use information to mobilize support and drive reform.

**Safety and Security:** In the realm of national security and public safety, information is critical for threat assessment, emergency response, and crime prevention.

**Historical Record:** Information serves as a historical record, preserving the collective memory of societies. Archives, libraries, and historical documents contain valuable information about the past.

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