

COMMUNICATION

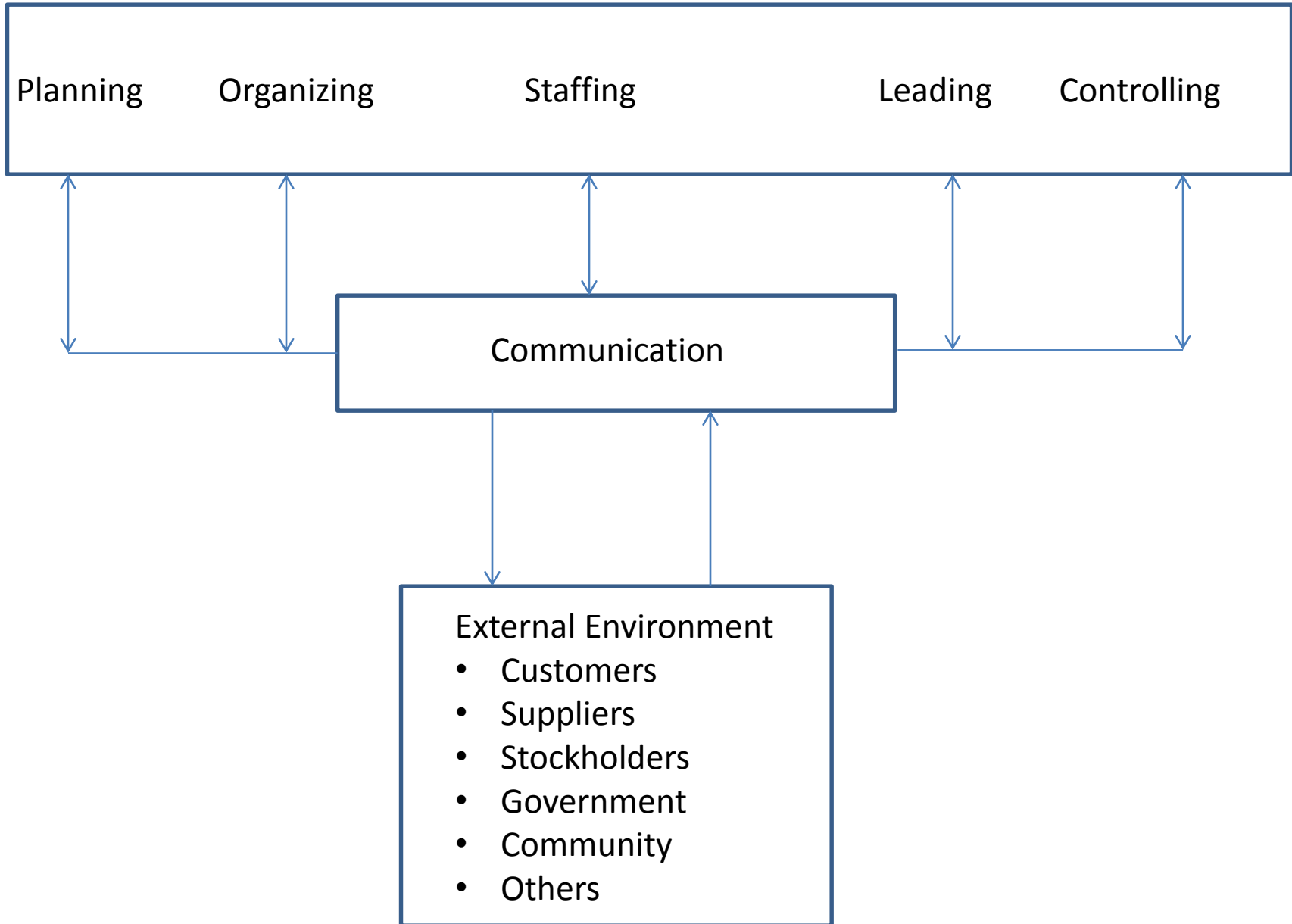
Communication is viewed as the means by which people are linked together in an organization to achieve common goals.

Group activities in the organizations are impossible without proper communication because coordination and change can not be effected.

Communication is essential for the internal functioning of the organization, because it integrates the managerial functions of planning, organizing, staffing, leading and controlling.

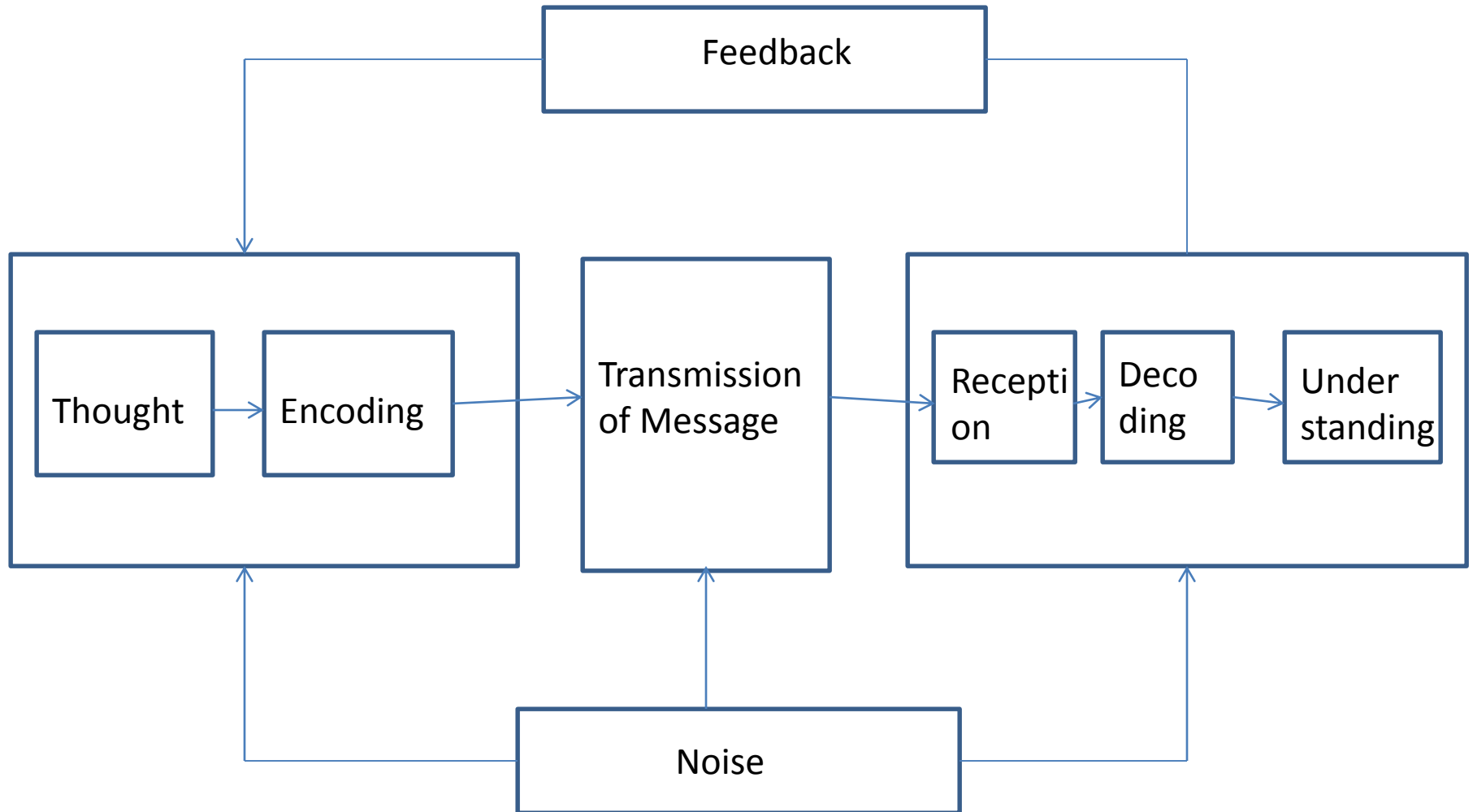
Communication also relates an enterprise to its external environment. It is through communication that managers become aware of the needs of the customers, the availability of suppliers, the claims of stockholders, the regulations of the government and concerns of the community.

Internal Environment



Purpose and Functions of Communication

The Communication Process:



- The communication process involves the sender, the transmission of message through a selected channel, and the receiver.
- Communication begins with the sender, who has a thought or an idea which is then encoded in a way that can be understood by both the sender and the receiver.
- The information is transmitted over a channel that links the sender with the receiver. The message may be oral, or written and it may be transmitted through a memorandum, a computer, the telephone, a telegram or television.

Types of communication

Formal vs. informal communication

- Formal communication is an officially created procedure for the flow of communication between the various positions in the organizational set-up.
- Informal communication is one that is outside the formed, recognized communication system, such as conversations and among workers and the grapevine.

Downward communication flows from people at higher levels to those at lower levels in the organizational hierarchy.

- This kind of communication exists especially in organizations with an authoritarian atmosphere.
- The kinds of media used downward oral communication include instructions, speeches, meetings, telephone, loudspeakers etc.

- Written downward communication includes letters, memoranda, pamphlets, policy statements, procedures etc.
- Downward flow of communication through the different levels of the organization is time consuming.
- Information is often lost/distorted as it comes down the chain of command.

Upward communication travels from subordinates to superiors and continues up the organizational hierarchy.

- Unfortunately this flow is often hindered by managers in the communication chain who filter the messages and do not transmit all the information, especially the unfavorable news to their bosses.

- Upper management needs to know specifically about production performance, marketing information, financial data, what lower level employees are thinking etc.
- Upward communication is primarily non-directive, and is usually found in participative/demographic organizational environments.
- Effective upward communication requires an environment in which subordinates feel free to communicate.

Crosswise communication includes horizontal flow of information, among people in the same or similar organizational levels.

- **Diagonal flow** among people at different levels who have no direct reporting relationships.
- This kind of information flow is used to speed up the process of communication, to improve understanding and to coordinate efforts for achievement of organizational objectives.
- **Written communication** has the advantage of providing records, references and legal defense.
- The message can be carefully planned, prepared and then directed to a large audience through mass mailing.

- It can promote uniformity in policy, and procedure.
- The disadvantages are that written messages may create mountains of paper, may be poorly expressed by ineffective writers, and may not provide immediate feedback.

Oral communication can occur in a face to face meeting of 2 people or in a manager's presentation to a large audience, which can be formal or informal, or it can be planned or accidental.

- Advantages being it makes possible speedy interchange with immediate feedback.

- People can ask questions and clarify points.

Non-verbal communication – what a person says can be reinforced (or contradicted) by non verbal communication, such as facial expressions, and body gestures.

- Non verbal communication is expected to support the verbal, but it does not always do so.

Barriers in effective communication:

- Lack of planning
- Un-clarified assumptions
- Semantic distortion – can be deliberate or accidental. “We sell for less” is deliberate (less than what?).
- Poorly expressed messages.

- Loss by transmission
- Poor retention
- Poor listening and before hand evaluation
- Distrust, threat and fear
- Insufficient period for adjustment to change
- Information overload
- Other communication barriers
 - Selective perception

- Attitude influence
- Differences in status and power
- Large number of levels in the organizations

Towards effective communication:

Following are the guidelines for effective communication/improving communication:

- Senders of messages must clarify in their minds what they want to communicate.
- Encoding and decoding be done with symbols that are familiar to the sender and receiver of the message.

- Planning for communication should not be done in vacuum.
- It is very important to consider the needs of the receivers of the information.
- In communication tone of the voice, the choice of language, and the congruency between what is said and how it is said influence the reactions of the receiver of the message.
- Communication is complete only when the message is understood by the receiver of the information.
- The function of communication is more than transmitting information. It also deals with emotions that are important in interpersonal relationships between the superiors & subordinates.

- Effective communication is the responsibility of both the sender and the receiver of the information.
- Listening is the key to understanding. Listening is a skill that can be developed by following the guidelines listed below:
 - Stop talking
 - Put the talker at ease
 - Show the talker that you want to listen
 - Remove distraction
 - Emphasize with the talker
 - Be patient

- Hold your temper
- Go easy with arguments
- Ask questions
- Stop talking

Following are the guidelines to improve written communication:

- Use simple words and phrases
- Use short and familiar words
- Use personal pronouns (Such as I, You etc) whenever applicable.
- Give illustrations and examples.

- Use short sentences and paragraphs
- Use active verbs (Such as the manager plans)
- Avoid unnecessary words and sentences.