**Lesson-8 Fundamental of Influencing and Communication**

***Influencing***

***Fundamentals of Influencing***

Influencing is the capacity or power of persons or things to be a compelling force to produce effects on the actions, behavior, opinions, etc., of others. It is the process of guiding the activities of organization members in appropriate directions.

Influencing involves focusing on organization members as people and dealing with such issues as morale, arbitration of conflicts, and the development of good working relationships. In fact, the ability to influence others is a primary determinant of how successful a manager will be.

***Influencing People***

Influencing is one of the basic functions within the management process. This function is also commonly referred to as motivating, leading, directing, or actuating. An appropriate direction is any direction that helps the organization move toward goal attainment. The ultimate purpose of influencing is to increase productivity.

***Influencing Subsystem***

Like the planning and organizing functions, the influencing function can be viewed as a subsystem within the overall management. The following figures shows the elements of the influencing subsystem.

1. **Input:** The input of this subsystem is composed of a portion of the total resources of the overall management system. Mainly, people, money, raw materials and machines are the key inputs in this subsystem that help to generate outputs.
2. **Process:** The process of the influencing subsystem involves the performance of six primary management activities such as:

* Leading
* Motivating
* Considering groups
* Communicating
* Encouraging creativity and innovation
* Building corporate culture.

1. **Output:** Managers transform a portion of organizational resources into appropriate organization member behavior mainly by performing these activities. So, the output of influencing subsystem is creating appropriate organization member behavior.

***Concept of Communication***

Communication is the process of transferring information from one person to another having common interest or objectives. It is the exchange of facts, opinions, ideas, suggestion and other information from one person to another. In other words, it is the transfer of meaning and understanding between people through verbal and non-verbal means in order to gain affect behavior and achieve results.

"Communication is "an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions or emotions by two or more persons." - Newman and Summer

" Communication is the transfer of information from a sender to receiver with the information being understood by the receiver." - Knootz and Weihrich

Communication is continuous function till the existence and functioning of the organization. It is the basis of organizational function. Thus, communication is the process of transmitting information from one person to another in a clear and meaningful manner. In business organization it is essential to maintain coordination among the group force and their efforts.

***Nature/ Characteristics of Communication***

The nature and characteristics are as follows:

1. **Two-way process**: Communication can take place only when there are at least two persons. One person has to convey some message and another has to receive it. For example, in a classroom, the teacher conveys information to a group of students.
2. **Knowledge of Language**: For communication to be successful, the receiver should first of all understand the message. For this, the sender must speak in a language that is known to the receiver. For example, if the receiver cannot understand English and the sender the message conveys his ideas in English, the communication will be a failure.
3. **Meeting of Minds Necessary**: The receiver must understand the message in the way the sender wants him to understand. For this consensus is required.
4. **Message**: The sender of message must have somethings really worthwhile for the receiver. For example, if certain botanical names are explained to a student learning commerce, he may not show any interest.
5. **Gestures**: Communication need not necessarily be made orally or in writing. Certain gestures or actions may also convey one's willingness or understanding of a given problem. Nodding of heads, rolling of eyes, movement of lips etc., are some of the gestures normally used to convey certain ideas.
6. **Pervasive**: Communication is found in all levels of management. The top management conveys information to middle level and vice-versa. Similarly, the middle level management conveys information to the supervisory staff and vice- versa. There is a flow of communication in all directions in a workplace.
7. **Continuous Process**: In any workplace, someone will be conveying or receiving some information or the other always. Sharing or exchanging information is an ongoing activity.
8. **Basis of action and co**-**ordination**: Communication is the most important element of action and coordination. The managers provide direction to subordinates through the use of means of communication. It helps to implement plans and policies. Besides, it contributes to maintain coordination among work groups to develop the concept of team spirit.

***Structure of Communication***

**Communicationstructure** is an established network in which the information flows to many directions on the basis of requirement. It is helpful to determine speed, accuracy and smoothness of information flow. It acts as linkage among employees. The structure of communication in organizations are:

1. **Downward Communication**
2. **Upward Communication**
3. **Two – way Communication**
4. **Horizontal Communication**
5. **Diagonal Communication**

**( NOTE: These communications are explained on the topic of TYPES OF FORMAL COMMUNICATION briefly )**

***Process of Communication***

Communication is the process of exchanging information from one person to another. The process of communication begins when one person (sender) wants to transmit a fact, idea, opinion, and other information to someone else (receiver). Generally, the following are the steps essential to fulfill the communication process: sender or source, message, encoding, medium, decoding, receiver, feedback and noise.

**Sender**

**Medium**

**Encoding**

**Message**

Noise

**Feedback**

**Decoding**

**Receiver**

1. **Sender:** The sender is the source of information. He may be the manager, non-manager, departments or organization itself. A manager may communicate to other managers, subordinates, supervisors, clients, and customers and to outsiders. Basically, the sender is the initiator of the process of communication. Therefore, the sender must conceptualize the message before it is encoded.
2. **Message:** It is the subject matter of communication which the sender wants to convey to the receiver. It may consist of facts, opinions, ideas, request, and suggestion etc. of the sender. The sender expresses his views, ideas and facts in terms of messages either in written or verbally to the receiver.
3. **Encoding:** It is the process of giving a form and meaning to the message. It is concerned with systematic presentation of subject matter of communication. When the sender expresses message in terms of words, symbols, gestures, drawing, or other means are forms of encoding. The main purpose of encoding is to translate thoughts and feelings into a code that others are able to understand.
4. **Medium:** It refers to the selection of channel of communication to convey encoded messages to the receiver. It bridges the gap between the sender and the receiver in communicating message of common interest. For instance, an oral communication can be made through telephone, mediator, group discussion etc. whereas written communication can be made through the means of letter, memo, report, newspaper etc.
5. **Receiver:** The receiver is the second person in the communication process. He receives messages, understands the same, and takes necessary steps for response. From the technical point of view, communication becomes complete only when it is received and understood by the receiver. Therefore, an effective message communicated must be receiver-oriented, not sender oriented.
6. **Decoding:** Decoding refers to the process by which receivers translate the message into terms meaningful to them. It is the process of interpreting messages by the receiver. It is essential to get the knowledge or meaning of message as per the intension of the sender. The effectiveness of communication ca be realized only when the receiver is able to decode message in accordance with the sender's intensions.
7. **Feedback:** It is the final stage in the communication process. Feedback determines whether the message is clearly understood and whether required action is taken by the receiver as intended by the sender. When the receiver is able to decode messages received from the sender, he provides the response on time. The feedback to the sender completes the process does not fulfill the objectives of communicating message.
8. **Noise:** Noise is any element or condition that disturbs or interferes in the effectiveness of communication. It disturbs the free flow of information from one person to another. Noise consists of sound of radio, loudspeaker, machines, vehicles etc. It also involves sloppy handwriting, slow voice, soft speech etc.

***Types of Communication***

Communication can be classified into different types on different types on different basis. The following are the basis of classification of communication:

* Formal Communication
* Informal Communication
* Interpersonal Communication
* Non-verbal Communication

***Formal Communication***

It is an authentic and officially written communication with documentary evidence and passing through established channels. The formal communication is controlled and regulated by the organization. It decides which information to share, with whom, and when. Official letters, memos, notices, newsletter, reports, sales-force meetings etc., are the examples of formal communication. Formal communication follows a prescribed path. It can be of following types:

1. **Downward communication:** The flow of information from superior to subordinates in the management hierarchy is known as downward communication. Basically, information of instruction, plans, policies and direction formally flow from the upper level to the lower level. Such information is essential to maintain regular operation of the organization and to meet planned objectives.
2. **Upward Communication:** The flow of information from subordinates to superiors in an organization is known as upward communication. Generally, information of achievement of work done, problems faced in performance, suggestions, grievance etc. are communicated from the lower level to the upper level. Such information enables the management to know what is actually happening in all the departments of the organization. It helps the manager to maintain effective control over organizational performance and which is a must to complete managerial job.
3. **Two-way communication:** It is the communication from both ways between superiors and subordinates. It is used in direct marketing. It can be used for coordination and inter-departmental problem solving.
4. **Horizontal communication:** It is the sideward flow of information among the employees having equal level of authority. In such a communication system, employees of the same level exchange their ideas, views, experience, and knowledge among each other. For instance, exchange of information between a marketing manager and a production manager.
5. **Diagonal communication:** In such a communication system, employees of the different levels exchange their ideas, views, experience, and knowledge among each other. For instance, exchange of information between a marketing manager with a production supervisor and vice-versa.

***Informal Communication***

Informal communication is not planned by the organization , hence no lines of communication exist. This type of communication takes place due to absolute desire of an individual to communicate with others. This type of communication takes place during lunch, or coffee/tea breaks and during social gatherings. This type of communication is also called "grapevine". This major types of grapevine chains can be:

1. **Single Strand:** Person X tells something to person Y, who tells it to person Z, and so on in the line. In this chain, each person tells to the one next to him or her.
2. **Gossip:** One person seeks out and tells everyone the information of an interesting but non-job-related nature. In this chain, one person tells the information to all.
3. **Probability:** Individuals offer information to others indifferently. In this chain, one person randomly tells the information to others.
4. **Cluster:** Person X conveys the information to a few selected others. In this chain, the person tells the information to the selected ones.

***Interpersonal Communication***

Interpersonal communication is the communication between two or more persons. It includes face-to-face, telephone, group meetings, formal presentation, memos, traditional mail, e-mail, fax, hot lines, teleconference, videoconferences, etc. Interpersonal communication can be oral or written. They are as follows:

1. **Oral communication:** It is direct interpersonal contact between communicator and communicate. The communication is expressed by words of mouth. Oral communication is used when both (sender and receiver) are present. It is face to face communication. It is more effective than written communication because the receiver not only hears the contents of the message but also is influenced by the tone, pitch, gestures, speed and even volume of conversation.

It is direct, simple form of communication which is the least expensive and yet the most effective. Feedback is spontaneous and any error in the message is corrected immediately.

1. **Written communication:** It is a system by which the communicator establishes indirect relationship with the communicate through written documents. This is one of the formal communication systems. This includes written words, graphs, diagrams, picture, etc. Written communication is extensively used in organizations. The circular, magazines, notes and manuals are some common force of written communications.

***Non-verbal Communication***

Non-verbal communication is sending and decoding messages with emotional content. The transmission and receipt of messages by some medium other than oral or written is non-verbal communication. It is very useful to express feelings, attitude and emotions. Basically, friendliness, respect, acceptance, rejection, dominance, submissiveness, anger, fear, and humor are conveyed primarily by nonverbal signals. A good and efficient manager should be aware of the importance of non-verbal communication and recognize its potential impact.

Important dimensions of non-verbal communication are follows:

1. **Body postures:** It consists of different postures of the body that convey certain meaning. Gestures can add or detract from the verbal message. hands gestures help emphasizes points, but fidgeting sends the message that the speaker is nervous and lacks confidence. In the United States, holding the thumb and first finger in a circle means OK. In Brazil it is an insult and may provoke a fight.
2. **Facial expression:** Emotions such as happiness, satisfaction, anger, fear, and confusion are signaled by facial expressions. Smiling conveys happiness and warmth. Along with the handshake, a smile a probably one of the most effective ways to establish a positive connection with a new acquaintance.
3. **Verbal intonation:** It refers to the tone in a voice. Emotions such as attentiveness, friendliness, anger, or fear are transmitted by the tone in a voice. Aspects of the tone of voice that communicate different emotional states include pitch, loudness, speed, clarity of speech, and inflection. Therefore, it is a good practice to speak clearly, emphasize key words, and use variable speed and inflection at appropriate times to keep the audience interested.
4. **Eye movement:** Eyes are the most expressive component of facial expressions, a glance, a stare, a smile or some provocative movement of the body conveys a lot. In business communication, it is important for both parties to make some eye contact, but prolonged eye contact may be interpreted as aggressiveness or inappropriate intimacy.
5. **Touch:** Touch signals liking, acceptance, and friendship. Even more than eye contact, touch should be used sparingly in business situations. Unwanted touching in Nepalese workplace is a form of sexual harassment. For example, in France it is common for employees who are good friends to greet each other with a kiss on the cheek.

***Barriers to Effective Communication***

Communication is regarded as providing a basis for the operational life of the organization. However, in practice some barriers emerge in communication, which may create problems in its effectiveness. Effective communication may be interrupted in any organization are as follows:

1. ***Organizational Barriers***

In some case, organizational system and belief itself creates problems for free flow of information. It creates difficulty in transforming information to targeted authority which also creates problem to meet objectives.

1. **Organizational Policy:** Organizational policy regulated by the management regarding communication system provides overall guidelines to the members to use the defined network. The policy may be in written form or it is understood from the behavior of the top management. Therefore, in the absence of supportive policy of the top management, information cannot reach the direction where it is required, so the communication flow will not be smooth and adequate.
2. **One-way Communication System:** In an organization, if the communication system is only one-way-from top level to subordinates there is the possibility of development of grievances among subordinates.
3. **Lack of Confident in Subordinates:** Some conservative managers perceive that their subordinates are not skilled and competent to bear responsibility. Such a belief may distort the free flow of communication in the organization.
4. ***Physical Barriers***

Internal structure of the organization and layout of office machine and equipment also create barriers in the transformation of information. These create difficulty for free, clear and smooth flow of information. Brief explanations of these barriers are as follows:

1. **Physical Distance:** The location of departments and branches in different geographical and regional distances may breakdown communication flow of an organization. It is difficult to communicate the required information to different locations if appropriate communication network is not developed in the organization.
2. **Structure:** Hierarchy structure creates status difference among the members of an organization. Generally, the members at the subordinate level fear and hesitate to communicate message to the upper level. This also breaks down communication flow in an organization.
3. **Noise:** Noise from external environment creates problem in understanding the messages in accordance with the sender's intentions. When the receiver is unable to understand the message he can't provide a response. Therefore, noise also breaks down communication feedback.
4. ***Psychological Barriers***

These barriers are generated due to human perception, lack of skill and negative thinking of top level managers. Such psychological factors create difficulty for productive flow of information and create problems in meeting defined objectives. A brief explanation of these barriers is as follows:

1. **Distrust of Communication:** Many subordinates do not belief on the superior's messages thinking that they might change, cancel, or modify to their own view and ideas. In such superiors is not taken seriously by the subordinates.
2. **Superiority Complex:** Superiority complex of the higher authority also creates barriers in the free flow of information. Such managers feel themselves superior and would not like to talk and communicate with subordinates thinking that it is below their dignity.
3. **Premature Evaluation:** Premature evaluation is concerned with evaluating the subject matter before getting detailed information. Generally, employees at the subordinate level go for premature evaluation of communication.
4. ***Semantic Barriers***

These barriers created due to use of difficult and insensitive language by the sender. Brief explanations of these barriers are as follows:

1. **Harsh Language:** The use of harsh or poor language will emotionally affect the sentiment and ego of the receivers. In such cases, receivers try to resist the senders and may not provide any response. An egoistic receiver may respond in a negative way, which may be the reason of misunderstanding and conflict.
2. **Misleading translation:** Wrong translation of messages received also creates barriers in communication. For instance, middle level managers receive communication from the top level which has to be translated by them in simple language for the use of first line managers. But if they translate the messages in a wrong way it creates confusion to the first line managers.
3. **Technical Language:** Some managers use technical terms in communication. The use of such technical terms creates confusion to the ordinary receivers; therefore, they do not provide any response to the sender.
4. ***Technological Barriers***

These barriers are formed due to defect in technology used and overload in information. Brief explanations of these barriers are as follows:

1. **Mechanical Barriers:** IN some cases, mechanical devices used in the communication process may suffer mechanical defects, for instance technical faults in telephone line, defects in computer software, internet network problems etc. create serious communicating problems.
2. **Loss of transmission:** Generally, a verbal message when it is in course of transmission may lose some of its main contents. In a similar way, due to limited memory power of the receiver, there is also a possibility of loss of content of the message.
3. **Information Overload:** Manager may receive information from various sources. In fact, because of advance in communication technology difficulty may arise not from the absence of information but from excessive information. In such a situation, he cannot absorb adequately all messages directed to him. He may leave a majority of important messages, which in fact means that these messages are not studied in detail.

***Measures overcoming Communication Barriers***

Communication is regarded as a basis for providing the operational life of an organization.it is important for securing smooth functioning of an organization to achieve organizational goals. Many barriers arise in course of communication, however, all attempt must be made by the management to minimize these barriers. The following common measures can be applied to minimize barriers and to enhance effective communication:

1. **Effective Listening:** Effective listening is a must to understand the message. The manager responds to the message only if he is able to listen the message properly and understands its meaning. For this, it is essential to encourage someone to express his true feelings, desires, and emotions. An effective listening helps to understand the messages in a said manner. Clear message also helps the receiver to provide response in a systematic way.
2. **Utilizing feedback:** Feedback is an important element of effective two-way communication. Communication process is incomplete without feedback, as the sender has no way of knowing whether his communication has been successful or not. It is essential both in written, verbal and non- verbal communication. Direct and immediate feedback is possible in face to face communication. An organization must develop a two-way communication system for effective utilization of feedback.
3. **Regulating information flow:** Regulating the flow of communication ensures an optimum flow of information to managers. It reduces communication overload to the managers. Optimum flow of information provides sufficient time for managers to make a detailed study of each and every message. For this, exceptional principal should be taken into every message. For this, exceptional principle should be taken into consideration. This principle states that information which is significant from the policies and procedures of the organization should only be brought to the attention of the manager.
4. **Two-way communication:** Two-way communication is essential in every organization to make communication more effective. Both the sender and receiver should give more attention to fulfill its objectives. In management hierarchy, there must be two-way systems of communications i.e. from top level to subordinates and vice versa. Top managers should get information from subordinates to know the progress of jobs and problems in performance. This is helpful in taking right decisions in proper time.
5. **Simplifying language:** As far as possible the sender should use simple language in communication. The sender should use the word and sentences considering the level of knowledge of the receiver. The use of complex, multi meaning words and proverbs must be avoided because it may create confusion in the minds of the receiver. He may interpret the communication differently and also respond in a different way. Such wrong interpretation and response will not meet the objectives of the sender.
6. **Avoid information overload:** A manager receives many information from various sources. This information is the basis of office operation. However, all these information are not equally important in organizational performance. In fact, because of advances in communication technology, difficulty may not arise from the absence of information but from excessive information. Therefore, important information should be taken into consideration and useless information should be discarded.
7. **Create an Environment of Trust and Confidence:** In communication, there must be an environment of trust and confidence between the sender and the receiver. In an organization, top management must create the environment of trust and confidence. It requires that the management must develop sound policies and put them in writing in front of subordinates. Further, the policies should be administrated judiciously and fairly without fear or favor.
8. **Reduce Psychological Barriers:** Psychological barriers consist of distrust of communicator, superiority complex, individual perception, premature evaluation, no attention etc. subordinates should believe in the superior's messages and implement his instructions and guidance properly. The top level manager should avoid the feeling of superiority complex in communication information with subordinates there must be the same perception between the manager and subordinates regarding organizational performance and goals. The manager and subordinates must avoid both premature evaluation of the message. The receiver must pay proper attention on information to understand it.