**COMMUNICATION**

**Communication** - comes from the word ‘communicare’ which means to impart, or to commune literally meaning “giving or sharing information”

We need to share information, ideas, knowledge with others.

“Communication is the process by which information is transmitted between individuals and/or organizations so that an understanding response results.”- Peter Little in his book ‘Communication in Business’

Sender Sent Message Noise Msg Received Receiver

Msg Encoded Msg Decoded

Feedback

Sender –encoder – sender chooses whether the message will be written or oral, which medium.

Message – decide the first point of your message and what other information to include

Medium- which medium to choose printed word, electronic mail or sound.

Receiver- Decoder- the reader or listener decodes and interprets according to his experience, skill attitude.

Feedback- can be oral, written or non-verbal

**Medium can be** - 1. Oral 2. Written

Other media – Visual, Audio-Visual, Computer Based and Non-Verbal Communication.

1. **Oral Communication**- face to face conversations, conversation over telephone, radio broadcasts, interviews, group discussions, meetings, conference and seminar announcements over the public address system, speeches etc.
2. **Written communication**- letters, circulars, memos, telegrams, reports, minutes, forms, questionnaires, manuals
3. **Visual communication**- gestures and facial expressions, tables and charts, graphs, diagrams, posters, slides, film strips etc.
4. **Audio- visual communication-** T.V. cinema, films that combine visual impact with narration
5. **Computer-based communication**- e-mail, voice mail, cell phones, fax etc.
6. **Non- Verbal communication**- Appearance, body language, silence, time and space

**Difference between Oral and written communication**-

**ORAL Comm**. - **WRITTEN Comm.**

1. Immediate feedback - Delayed feedback
2. Short words simple, conversational lang. - longer sentences, formal lang.
3. Focus on prompt action, interpersonal skills - focus on content
4. Less detailed technical information - detailed technical information
5. Cannot be saved for review - possibility of review
6. Cannot be saved as record - useful for permanent record

**Non-verbal communication**- oral communication- 35% verbal meaning and 65% body language

Non- verbal communication includes:-

1. Appearance
2. Body language
3. Silence, Time and Space

**Appearance communicates**-

Written communication- the format, neatness, spelling, grammar and punctuation

Oral communication -1) personal appearance, jewelry, cosmetics, dress, hairstyle, posture. 2) Appearance of surrounding- room size, location, furnishing, decoration, architecture, lighting, view etc. tells about status.

**Body Language (Kinesics) - includes**

Facial expressions and eye contact convey hidden emotions

Gestures and postures convey self-confidence and status, interest

Smell and touch- convey hygiene habits and relationship- friendship, love etc.

Voice and sounds- paralinguistic or paralanguage, (voice, volume, articulation, pitch) conveys confidence, knowledge,

**Silence, Time (Chronemics) and Space (Proxemics)-**

Silence-conveys emotion when read with body language- anger, joy, resentment

Time- punctuality in oral and written communication

Space- 4 different types of space- intimate – 0-18 inches, personal- 18 inches- 4 feet, social- 4- 12 feet, and public- 12 feet – 25 feet

**Conclusion** - Co-relate verbal and non-verbal communication for effective communication. Interpret non-verbal communication in context of inter-cultural communication as

Canadian listeners nod to signal agreement, while Japanese nod to indicate only that they have understood.

British stare at a speaker and blink eyes to indicate understanding, while Americans consider staring as impolite.

**Flow of Communication**

Information flows both formally and informally. Formal communication refers to communication that follows the official hierarchy and is required to do one’s job. It flows through formal channels.

Internal operational and external operational communication is formal.

Information of various kinds flowing through formal channels-such as policy or procedural changes, orders, instructions confidential reports is formal communication.

Formal communication can flow in various directions: vertical, lateral or diagonal.

1. **Vertical communication**-consists of communication up and down the organization’s chain of command .Can be classified as

**a) Downward** – From top to bottom – from a manager down the chain of command .When manager informs, instruct, advise or request their subordinate, communication flows in downward.

Downward communication can take any form – emails, memos, notices, face to face conversation telephone conversation.

**b) Upward communication** – from bottom to top – when reports or findings are sent to superiors. Important for decision making and gathering day to day information. E.g. - Form – reports, analysis statistical.

**2. Horizontal/Lateral communication** – takes place among peer groups or hierarchically equivalent employees at the same level.

Important to facilitate co-ordination, save time, bridge any communication gap. E.g. - sharing of reports for better ideas.

**3. Diagonal communication or cross – wise communication** flows in all directions and across the various functions and levels in an organization.

it is deviation from the normal chain of communication but it expedites action. Eg. Sales manager communicating directly with the vice president (production) of different branch.

**BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION**

We become aware of the need for effective communication only when there is a breakdown in the process.

Problem arises as wrong assumptions are made about the person to whom (assuming the other parties’ level of technical knowledge) the message is being sent and sometimes about the message itself.

If communication fails to evoke the desired response, follow these five steps:

- Identify the problem –e.g. bimonthly report: twice a month; once in 2 months.

- Find the cause

- Work on alternative solutions.

-Opt for the best solution

- Follow up rigorously.

Any interference in the message sent and message received leads to the production of ‘noise’. The term communication barriers, or that which inhibits or distorts the message, is an expansion of the concept of noise. Noise here does not mean cacophony, but a break in the communication process.

**Defn. : -** Noise is defined as any unplanned interferences in the communication environment which causes hindrance in the transmission of the message

Noise distorts interpretation or the decoding of the communication process.

Noise can be classified as:

1. Channel Noise-any interference in the mechanics of the medium used to send a message. Channel noise develops externally

Channel noise e.g.:- distortion due to faulty background, noise in telephone lines, too high volume or pitch of loud speaker.

Written com.-illegible handwriting or short cuts or abbreviations

2. Semantic noise-semantic noise is generated internally resulting from errors in the message itself.

e.g.:- different interpretations of a word, ambiguous sentence structure, faulty grammar, misspellings and incorrect pronunciation.

If we classify these barriers according to the process of message formation and delivery, we get them at three levels:-

1. Intrapersonal

2. Interpersonal

3. Organizational

**Intrapersonal barriers –** (within one self) Causes that lead to these barriers:-

1. Wrong assumption - Bimonthly, sos. Dr -take the medicine only sos
2. Varied perceptions- 7 blind men and the elephants
3. Differing background – Background of knowledge differs – Technical and Arts or Drs.
4. Wrong inferences – To decide this must have happened.
5. Blocked categories – Prejudices-we conform to our personal views, habits and attitudes, we react negatively. E.g.:- people who detest technology
6. Categorical thinking- Over confidence ‘know it all’ are called “Pansophists”. They use all, always, everybody, everything, every time, none, never, nobody and nothing very frequently.

**Interpersonal barriers**-takes place due to the inappropriate transaction of words between two or more people.

2 Broad categories into which this barrier can be classified

1. Inefficiency in communication skills

2. Negative aspect nurturing in the climates

Common reasons for interpersonal barriers are:-

1. Limited vocabulary
2. Incongruity of verbal and non-verbal (words and body lang. should convey same) messages- dress and word.
3. Emotional outbursts -anger, boredom, prejudice,
4. Communication selectivity - receiver pays attention to only a part of comm. that he is interested in
5. Cultural variations – laws, customs and traditions business practices of other countries.
6. Poor listening skills- listening: careful attention, hearing: passive, a good listener important.
7. Noise in the channel -not just cacophony but anything that disturbs communication
8. Hindrance in listening- can be emotional disturbances, indifference, aggressiveness and wandering attention. Visual – gaudy slide or poorly designed room human – late comers, dim typescripts, telephone line disturbances, illegible handwriting

**Organizational barriers:** Each organization, big or small has its own communication techniques.

Irrespective of size, all organizations have communication policies which deserve the protocol to be followed.

It is the structure and complicity of this protocol that usually causes communication barriers

(Upward, Downward, Lateral or Horizontal, Diagonal – Sales Manager to VP. of different divisions, Grapevine)

**Causes which lead to this barrier:**

1. Too many Transfer stations - Rigid hierarchical structure restricts flow of communication as numerous transfer points – distorts , delay or lose the message.
2. Fear of superiors - Can’t tell super boss the ill deeds of boss, or a huge report in order to impress the boss but important points lost.
3. Negative Tendencies - Conflicts of ideas between members of an organization due to negative feelings, some messages are not communicated.
4. Use of inappropriate media – Before selecting the medium keep in mind advantages, disadvantages and potential barriers. (Graphs, charts, telephone, emails, boards, presentations e.g.:- Telephone not appropriate for confidential matter.)
5. Information overload – Availability of huge amount of data which the receiver is unable to handle effectively. Caused due to fatigue, disinterest, and boredom. To overcome this barrier, direct the msg. to concerned person and avoid irrelevant details.

**Tips for effective communication**

\* Create an open communication environment

\* Always keep the receiver in mind

\* avoid having too many transfer stations

\* Do not communicate when you are emotionally disturbed.

\* Be aware of diversity in culture, language etc.

\* Use appropriate non-verbal cues.

\* Select the most suitable medium

\* Analyze the feedback.

**Levels of Communication**

The levels at which human communication takes place are-

1. Extra personal
2. Intrapersonal
3. Interpersonal
4. Organization
5. Mass

**Extra personal Communication –**

It requires perfect co-ordination and understanding between the sender and receiver as one transmits information or responds in sign language only. Between human beings and other living beings. Man and his pet dog.

**Intrapersonal Communication –**

Takes place within an individual mind e.g. – message passed by various parts of our body to the brain.

Even while we are communicating with another party our internal dialogue with ourselves continues. e.g. - Planning, weighing, considering processing information self-motivation, self-determination, takes place at intrapersonal level.

**Interpersonal Communication –**

Communication at this level refers to the sharing of information among people. It involves- a number of considerations how many people are involved, how close they are to one another (relationship and physically), how many sensory channels are used and the feedback provided. Interpersonal communication differs from other forms of communication in that there are few participants involved, they are in close physical proximity to each other, many sensory channels are used, and feedback is immediate.

* In this type of communication roles of sender and receiver keeps alternating
* Direct and immediate feedback is possible
* Can be formal and informal

Interpersonal communication situations depends on a variety of factors-

1. Psychology of the participants
2. Relationship between the sender and receiver
3. Circumstances
4. Surrounding environment
5. Cultural contact

**Organizational Communication –**

In an organizational communication takes place at different hierarchical levels.

Large numbers of employees are involved in several different activities; the need to communicate effectively becomes greater in an organization.

With proper networking system communication is possible even without direct contact between employees.

**Organizational communication can be further divided into following**

1. Internal- Operational - communication that occur in the process of operations within an organization.
2. External- Operational- work related communication that an organization has with people outside the organization.
3. Personal- all communication in an organization other that for business or official purposes.

**Mass Communication –**

1. Meant for large audiences and requires a medium to transmit information.
2. Several types of Mass Media- Journals, books, television and newspapers.
3. Audience or receiver is heterogeneous and anonymous.
4. Thus the approach is impersonal
5. Example- press interviews, advertisement
6. More persuasive in nature than any other form.
7. Oral communication through Mass Media requires microphones, amplifiers.
8. Written form – print or visual media.