BGEC 103 : BUSINESS COMMUNICATION WEEK ONE FOUNDATIONS OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION OUTLINE   
Definition of communication   
The concepts of business communication   
The business communication process and its elements Functions of communication

INTRODUCTION   
Introduction   
This lecture on the foundations of communication seeks to enhance the student’s communication skills and provide the tools needed to speak successfully in today’s corporate environment.

Objective   
This seeks to help the student understand the basic concepts of business communication.

INTRODUCTION II   
Learning outcomes   
At the end of this lecture, the student should be able to: Explain the concept of communication.

Analyze and elucidate the various definitions of business communication.

Discuss the business communication process and the various elements of the communication process.

Interpret the functions of communication.

MEANING OF COMMUNICATION

The Latin root of "communication," communicare, means to share or make common, emphasizing the goal of establishing common   
understanding with others.

Communication is the everyday process of sharing information, ideas, or feelings, involving both clear expression and ensuring mutual understanding.

Communication is essential in all human interactions, playing a vital role in both personal and professional relationships.

Effective communication is crucial in business, as it influences all areas of a company and helps managers and leaders achieve common objectives.

DEFINITION OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION I

General Definition

Communication has been described as the “glue‟ that holds the entire organization together as one entity. Business communication refers to the exchange of information, ideas and messages within or outside an organization to achieve business objectives.

Examples

1. An email form Human resource department announcing a policy change.

2. A press release announcing a new product launch. 3. A team meeting to discuss a project.

DEFINITION OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION I   
Organizational Definition   
Business communication is the backbone of an organization, enabling internal and external stakeholders to share ideas, resolve conflicts, and build professional relationships.

Examples:   
1. A press release announcing a new product launch.

2. A team meeting discussing progress on a project.

3. A performance review session between a manager and an employee.

DEFINITION OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION II   
Functional Definition   
Business communication is the process of sharing information between individuals or groups in a business environment to promote understanding, collaboration, and decision-making.

Examples:   
A performance review session between a manager and an employee. A business proposal sent to a potential supplier.

A conference call with stakeholders to discuss quarterly results.

DEFINITION OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION II   
Process-Oriented Definition   
It is a systematic process of transmitting messages through various channels, such as verbal, written, or digital mediums, to ensure effective interaction among stakeholders in a business.

A company-wide announcement via Slack or Microsoft Teams.

A memo informing employees of a change in working hours. A webinar hosted for industry professionals.

DEFINITION OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION III   
Objective-Based Definition   
Business communication involves the structured conveyance of information aimed at facilitating organizational goals, such as improving productivity, enhancing customer satisfaction, and fostering teamwork.

Examples   
A sales pitch delivered to a prospective client.

An annual report shared with shareholders.

A social media campaign to promote a product.

DEFINITION OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION III   
Academic Definition   
According to Little(1977), "Business communication is the flow of information, perception, and understanding among persons involved in the business process.

Examples   
A contract agreement between two companies.

A customer service representative responding to a client’s query via email.

A keynote speech by the CEO at a company event.

THE CONCEPT OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION 1   
The concept of business communication has evolved alongside the development of trade, commerce, and technology throughout history. Its origins can be traced back to ancient civilizations, where trade necessitated the exchange of information and ideas.

Ancient Trade and Communication (circa 3000 BCE – 500 BCE): Early forms of business communication emerged in ancient   
Mesopotamia, Egypt, and China, where merchants used clay tablets, papyrus, and other mediums to record transactions and contracts.

The development of writing systems, such as cuneiform and

hieroglyphics, facilitated record-keeping and correspondence.

Medieval Period (5th – 15th century):   
During the Middle Ages, trade expanded through routes like the Silk Road, necessitating communication between diverse cultures.

Letters and messengers were commonly used for business transactions, agreements, and negotiations.

THE CONCEPT OF BUSINESSS COMMUNICATION II

Industrial Revolution (18th–19th centuries):   
The Industrial Revolution marked a significant shift in business communication, with the advent of mass production and global markets.

Innovations like the printing press enabled widespread dissemination of business information through newspapers, pamphlets, and catalogs.

Telecommunication Era (19th – early 20th century):   
The 19th and early 20th centuries introduced telegraphs, telephones, and radio, revolutionizing the speed and reach of business communication.

These technologies allowed businesses to connect with remote locations and respond quickly to market demands.

Digital Revolution (late 20th century – present):   
The late 20th century witnessed the rise of computers, the internet, and mobile technology, transforming business communication into

a real-time, global phenomenon.

Email, video conferencing, and social media have become integral tools for modern business communication.

SITUATIONS IN WHICH COMMUNICATION EXISTS I

Interpersonal communication

This is the process of message transaction between people who work toward creating and sustaining shared meaning.

A marketing team leader meets with a graphic designer to discuss the visual elements of an upcoming campaign, where they engage in a back-and-forth conversation to clarify the design brief, provide feedback, and align on the project's creative direction.

This illustrates interpersonal communication as a collaborative dialogue aimed at achieving a shared understanding of a business objective.

Small group communication

Communication between and among members of a team who meet for a common purpose.

A company's executive board conducts a quarterly strategy session, where the CEO, CFO, and department heads engage in a facilitated discussion to review financial performance, identify areas for improvement, and set key priorities for the next quarter.

This illustrates small group communication as a strategic planning process among senior leaders to drive business growth.

SITUATIONS IN WHICH COMMUNICATION EXISTS II

Mass communication

Mass communication involves transmitting messages to a large audience through mediated channels like TV, radio, the Internet, or newspapers. It converges with interpersonal communication when interactions, such as interviews or web chats, occur via these media.

Example: When the CEO uses a mediated channel (live webcast) to address a large audience while also enabling direct interaction through Q&A sessions on social media and online chat.

This demonstrates mass communication as a large-scale, mediated event to reach a broad audience and share business information.

Public communication

Public communication involves a speaker addressing a large audience in person, often to inform, persuade, or entertain.

Example: A company's founder delivers a keynote speech at an industry conference to share insights and promote the brand, demonstrating public communication through a live, in-person presentation.

This illustrates public communication as a live, in-person presentation to engage and influence a large audience, while representing the company's values and expertise.

SITUATIONS IN WHICH COMMUNICATION EXISTS III

Organizational communication

This is the communication with and among large, extended groups. Organizational communication may involve other communication types, such as interpersonal communication.

Example: A university's administration launches a campus-wide

initiative to promote sustainability and reduce waste, using a variety of channels to communicate with students, faculty, and staff, including email campaigns, social media, posters, and a dedicated website, as well as hosting events and workshops to engage the university community and encourage participation. This illustrates organizational communication as a multi-channel, university-wide effort to share information and promote a shared goal among a diverse group of stakeholders, including students, faculty, and staff.

THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS   
The communication process starts when one party decides to send a message to another. It is a road map for achieving effective   
communication.

The sharing of a common meaning between the sender and the receiver occurs during the communication process.

We can improve our communication when we understand the various components of the communication process and how they contribute to the success of any form of communication.

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS I   
ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS II   
The communication process consists of several components that allow a message to be transmitted. Here are the various   
components:   
SENDER   
Sender/Source/Encoder: The communication process begins with the sender, who initiates communication.

Idea Formation: The sender has an idea to communicate.

Message Encoding: The sender converts the idea into words or gestures to convey meaning.

Effective Encoding: Skilled communicators use familiar, concrete words to ensure clarity.

Example: A lecturer delivering a lecture is the source of communication.

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS III   
SENDER   
Case Study:   
A university's admissions team communicates the institution's benefits to prospective students.

The team encodes the message using clear, familiar terms like "state-of-the-art facilities" and "career opportunities."   
The message is delivered through brochures, social media, and the website.

Effective encoding ensures the message is received clearly and encourages student applications.

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS IV   
MESSAGE   
An active process of transforming the idea/concept into a message is the second phase of the process of communication.

The source may wish to share an idea, concept, emotion, or information with an individual or a group. The message can be either verbal or nonverbal.

The message refers to the signs and codes that are exchanged

during the communication process.

The code is the symbols that carry the message.

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS V

MESSAGE

There are three basic communication codes:

Language (verbal code): Spoken or written words used to communicate thoughts and emotions.

Paralanguage (vocal code): Th e vocal elements that go along with spoken language, include tone of voice, pitch, rate, volume, and emphasis. (Although paralanguage is often listed as a subcategory of nonverbal communication, it is separated here to emphasize the importance of each.)

Nonverbal cues (visual code): All intentional and unintentional means other than writing or speaking by which a person sends a message, including facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, appearance and posture.

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS VI

MESSAGE

Case study

A university’s president wants to communicate a message of welcome and support to new students during the orientation ceremony. The president transforms the idea into a message by choosing words, tone, and nonverbal cues that convey enthusiasm and warmth.

In this example:

The message is the president's speech, which includes:

Verbal code: The spoken words, such as “Welcome to our university community!” and “We are excited to have you here!”

Paralanguage: The tone of voice, pitch, rate, volume, and emphasis used to convey enthusiasm and warmth.

Nonverbal cues: The president’s facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, and posture, which all convey a sense of friendliness and approachability.

The president uses a combination of these codes to convey a message that is both informative and supportive, setting a positive tone for the students' university experience.

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS VII

CHANNEL/MEDIUM

Once the idea/concept is given a shape in the mind, the immediate task would be to transmit the message.

The medium through which the message is transmitted is the channel.

To transmit your message to your receiver, you select a   
communication channel (verbal or nonverbal, spoken or written)

Messages may be sent by computer, telephone, letter, or   
memorandum. They may also be sent by means of a report,   
announcement, picture, spoken word, fax, meetings, billboards, TV ads, and e-mail, to name just a few.

Because both verbal and nonverbal messages are carried, senders must choose channels carefully.

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS VIII

CHANNEL/MEDIUM

The channel and medium you choose depend on your message, the location of your audience, your need for speed, and the formality of the situation .

Channel Selection /Choosing the appropriate medium for a given message can thus be affected by many factors including:   
The importance/complexity of the message   
The needs and abilities of the receiver   
Channel Selection /Choosing the appropriate medium for a given message can thus be affected by many factors including:   
The necessity of a permanent record   
The cost of the channel   
The formality or informality desired   
The urgency of a message.

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS IX   
CHANNEL/MEDIUM   
Case study   
A university’s admissions team wants to notify applicants of their acceptance to the university. The team chooses a communication channel that is formal, yet timely and efficient, considering the importance and excitement of the message.

In this example:   
The channel/medium chosen is a personalized email with a formal letter attached, which is sent to each accepted applicant.

The team considers the following factors when selecting the channel:

Importance/complexity of the message: The message is important and requires a formal tone, which is achieved through a written letter.

Needs and abilities of the receiver: The applicants are likely to be tech-savvy and have access to email, making it a suitable channel.

Necessity of a permanent record: The email and attached letter provide a permanent record of the acceptance notification.

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS X

CHANNEL/MEDIUM

Cost of the channel: Email is a cost-effective channel compared to printing and mailing physical letters.

Formality or informality desired: The formal tone of the letter and email is suitable for the occasion.

Urgency of the message: Email allows for timely notification, ensuring that applicants receive the news promptly.

By choosing the right channel/medium, the university's admissions team effectively communicates the acceptance message to   
applicants, creating a positive and memorable experience.

RECEIVER/DECODER

When a message is transmitted, communication has not taken place until it gets to another person or a group of persons.

The receiver’s role includes (a) listening or reading carefully, (b) making notes, when necessary, (c) providing appropriate feedback to the sender, and (d) asking questions to clarify the message.

The receiver is the listener, reader, or observer in the communication process.

For communication to occur, your receiver must first get the

message. If you send a letter, your receiver has to read it before he can understand it.

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS XI   
RECEIVER/DECODER   
If you are delivering a speech, your audience has to be able to listen to you and pay attention.

Your receiver must cooperate by decoding your message, absorbing, and understanding it.

Decoding is the process the receiver goes through in trying to interpret the exact meaning of a message.

Successful communication takes place only when a receiver understands the meaning intended by the sender.

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS XII   
ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS XIII   
RECEIVER/DECODER   
Case Study   
A university’s student affairs department sends an email to all students about a new scholarship opportunity. The email includes details about the eligibility criteria, application process, and deadline. In this example:   
The receiver/decoder is the student who receives the email.

The student's role as a receiver includes:   
Listening or reading carefully: The student reads the email carefully to understand the details of the scholarship opportunity.

Making notes when necessary: The student might make a note of the deadline and the required documents to apply for the   
scholarship.

Providing appropriate feedback to the sender: If the student has questions or needs clarification, they might reply to the email or contact the student affairs department.

Asking questions to clarify the message: The student might ask questions about the application process or eligibility criteria to ensure they understand the message correctly.

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS XIV

RECEIVER/DECODER

The student decodes the message by interpreting the meaning of the email, including:

Understanding the eligibility criteria and application process

Recognizing the importance of the deadline

Identifying the required documents and information needed to apply

If the student successfully decodes the message and understands the intended meaning, they will be able to apply for the scholarship opportunity, and effective communication will have taken place.

FEEDBACK

The verbal and nonverbal responses of the receiver create feedback, a vital part of the entire communication process. Feedback helps the sender know that the message has been received and understood.

Feedback refers to the receiver’s response to the message. This is the final link in the chain of communication.

Feedback may be direct and immediate or indirect and delayed; it may be verbal or nonverbal.

Without feedback, the sender cannot confirm that the receiver has interpreted the message correctly.

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS XV   
FEEDBACK   
Case Study   
The university sends an email to all students explaining the new policy and providing instructions on how to register for courses. The email includes a link to an online forum where students can ask questions and provide feedback.

Student Feedback : One student, Sarah, posts a question on the online forum asking for clarification on the registration deadline.

Another student, Alex, emails the university's administration suggesting that the registration process be simplified.

University Response : The university responds to Sarah's question on the online forum, clarifying the registration deadline. The   
university also takes Alex's suggestion into consideration and revises the registration process to make it more user-friendly.

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS XVI   
ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS XVII   
FEEDBACK   
The importance of feedback in the communication process includes: Feedback ensures that messages are accurately interpreted.

It enables the sender, and the receiver reach a common understanding.

Without feedback, all we can do is assume that the messages have been received correctly.

Feedback enables you to evaluate the effectiveness of your message.

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS XXVII FEEDBACK

A student, Emily, responds to the email with a question about the application deadline. The student affairs department responds with a clear answer, confirming the deadline and providing additional information. Through this feedback, the student affairs department can:   
Ensure that the message has been accurately interpreted.

Reach a common understanding with Emily and other students.

Evaluate the effectiveness of their email and make necessary adjustments.

Provide better support to students and improve their chances of securing the scholarship.

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS XVIII   
CONTEXT   
Context is a crucial element of the communication process as it provides the framework within which communication occurs.

It shapes how messages are interpreted and affects the meaning derived from the exchange.

There are different types of context:   
Physical context: The setting or environment where communication takes place, such as a quiet room or a crowded street, which can influence how a message is received.

Cultural context: The shared beliefs, values, and norms of the participants involved in the communication. This influences how messages are framed and understood across different cultures.

ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS XIX CONTEXT

Social context: The relationship between the communicators, including their roles, statuses, and social dynamics, which guide how formal or informal communication is.

Historical context: The background or prior experiences of the communicators, which can influence how a message is interpreted based on past interactions.

Psychological context: The mental and emotional states of the communicators, including mood, biases, and assumptions, which can affect how the message is conveyed and received.

FUNCTIONS OF COMMUNICATION II

To share or exchange information

We use communication to convey a wide range of information. For example, academic institutions inform students when schools will reopen, where and how to register, and who to contact if they encounter a problem. Example: A Human Resources representative sends an email to all employees stating, “Please note that the company's holiday party will take place on December 18th at 3 PM in the conference room, and RSVPs should be sent to me by   
December 10th.”

Developing Relationships

Establishing, acknowledging, and maintaining relationships with others are essential communication functions. Strong relationships can lead to increased collaboration, improved communication, and enhanced customer satisfaction. In business, relationships can be categorized into internal and external relationships’

FUNCTIONS OF COMMUNICATION III

Developing Relationships

Example: A sales representative regularly checks in with clients to understand their needs and preferences, establishing trust and

demonstrating genuine interest. This helps build a rapport with the client, ultimately strengthening their relationship and increasing the chances of successful sales.

SUMMARY

The following sub-topics have been covered: 1. The concept of communication   
2. Definitions of communication   
3. The communication process   
4. Functions of communication   
FORUM DISCUSSION

Explain how noise/barriers to effective communication can be solved in the communication process

• NB: Each class should form 10 groups.

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SITUATIONS IN WHICH COMMUNICATION EXISTS III

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