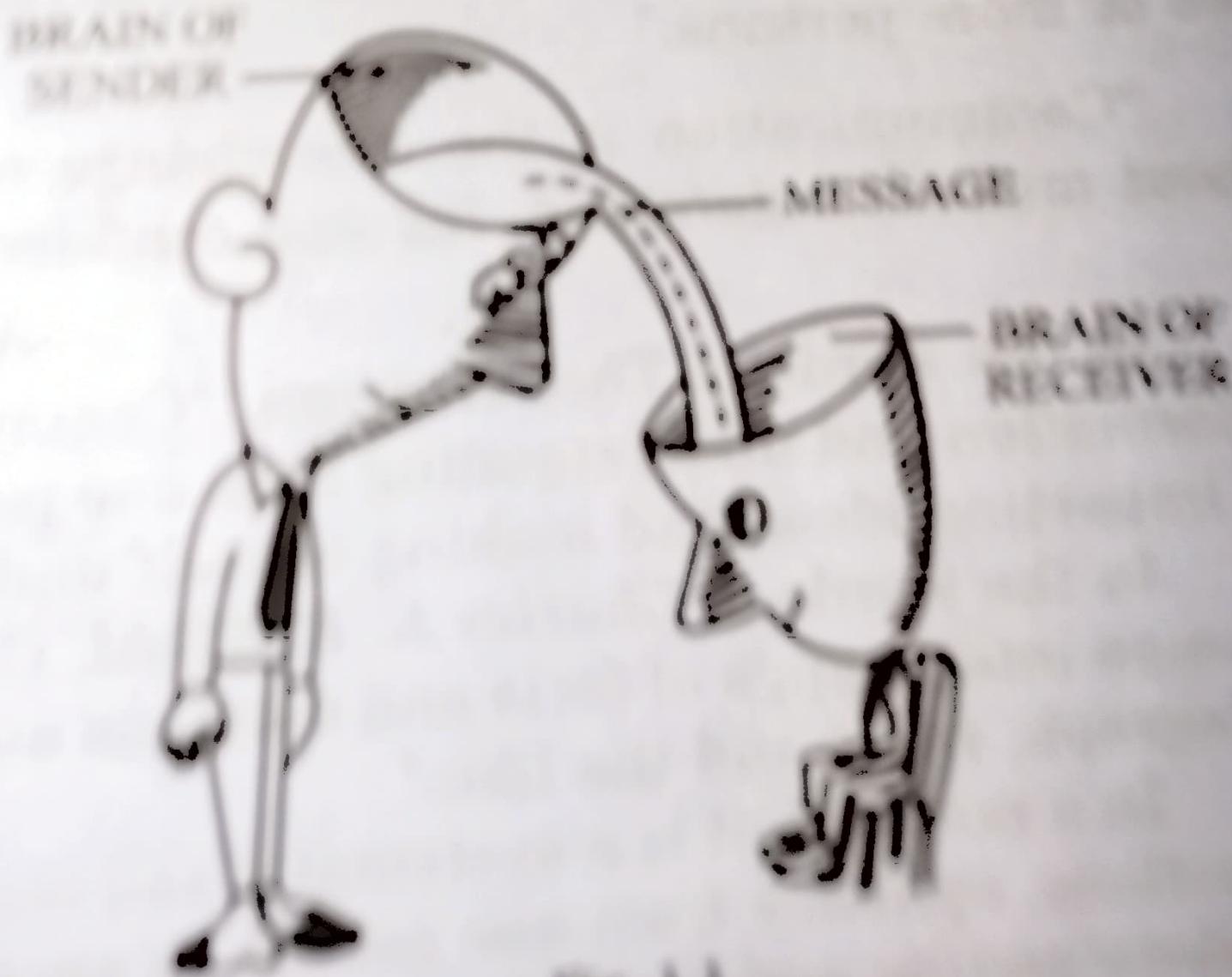


INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES AND PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

an himself. Without communication we can't



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INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS COMMUNICATION MEANING, NATURE, OBJECTIVES AND PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

Communication is as old as man himself. Without communication we can't live and work together in an organised way. It enables us to understand others and make ourselves understand. Communication is the process by which we exchange meanings, facts, ideas, opinions or emotions with other people. The word communication has been derived from a Latin word 'Communis' which means 'commonness' or to share or to participate. At every moment of time we share our views, ideas, opinions with others in the form of speeches or in writing or like other means by exchange of common set of symbols.

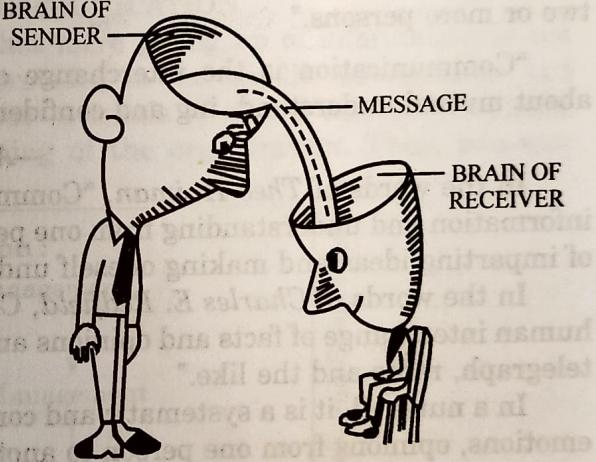


Fig. 1.1

Meaning : Man is a communicating animal; he alone has a power to express the words.

The presence of minimum of two minds is essential for communication.

In fact, communication means to convey a message by one person to another so that another person may understand, follow and implement the message. If one person is unable to follow the message of another, it can't be called communication.

For instance, if Mr. X delivers a lecture in Hindi to a gathering of Englishmen or Americans (to whom Hindi language is Greek and Latin), it will fall flat on them and there is no communication in it. "Basically, communication is a two-way process and the two terminals should be concerned with mutual understanding if communication is to be purposefully effective."

It is important to note that communication does not mean merely written or oral messages. It includes everything that may be used to convey meaning from one to another person. For example, movement of lips or the wink of an eye or wave of hands may convey more meanings than even spoken or written words.

It is rightly said that communication is like a tennis ball between two players. Sometime the ball is with one player and sometimes it is with other player and the quality of that tennis game depends upon the quality of both the players. Likewise if in effective communication one person is weak other start losing interest in the communication and ultimately other party also becomes weak. It has been said, "The communication is like a bridge through which river of understanding is crossed." It is communication, which can bring understanding and even create misunderstanding.

"Communication is the sum total of all the things that a person does when he wants to create an understanding in the mind of the another. It involves a systematic and continues process of telling, listening and understand."

—Louis A. Allen

"Communication in its simplest form in conveying of information from one person to another."

—Cyril L. Hudson

"The act of making one's ideas and opinions known to others."

—Fred. G. Meyer

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

—Newman and Summer

"Communication is the interchange of thought or information to bring about mutual understanding and confidence of good human relations."

—American Society of Training Directors

In the words of *Theo Haiman*, "Communication is the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another..... It is the process of imparting ideas and making oneself understood by others."

In the words of *Charles E. Redfield*, Communication is "the broad field of human interchange of facts and opinions and not the technologies of telephone, telegraph, radio and the like."

In a nutshell, it is a systematic and continuous process of conveying ideas, emotions, opinions from one person to another in order to bring about mutual understanding and confidence of good human relations.

SCOPE OF COMMUNICATION

1. Communication is a Social Necessity

Since man is a social animal, he must communicate with the people around him. He has the urge to share his thoughts and feelings with others. Moreover, he has to understand the thoughts and feelings of others. Hence, communication is a social necessity.

2. Communication in Early Life

It starts indeed at the very start of human life. As soon as a child is born, it starts communicating with the other. The child specialist knows the meaning of different cries, discovers the little patient's ailment and gives treatment. This is all communication. As the child grows up, it comes into contact with his relatives, neighbours, friends, teachers and learns to communicate with them.

3. Communication in Professional Life

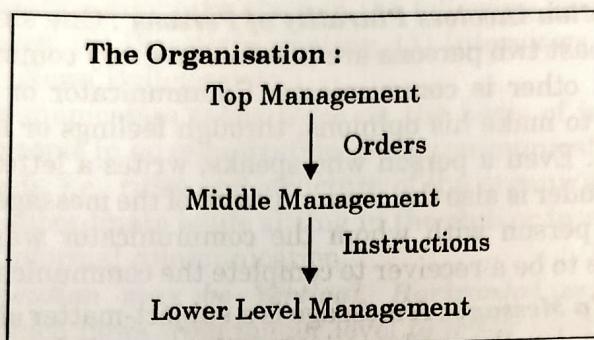
The art of communication becomes all the more important when one enters the professional life. For example, A lawyer or a doctor has to communicate with his clients, his patients. His ability to communicate well makes him successful in his professional life.

4. Communication in Progressive Society

In the present age of globalization where trade, business, commerce have transcended national and international boundaries, communication has become all the more important. In our modern day society, there are MNC's with sprawling spaces, having branches in different parts of the country.

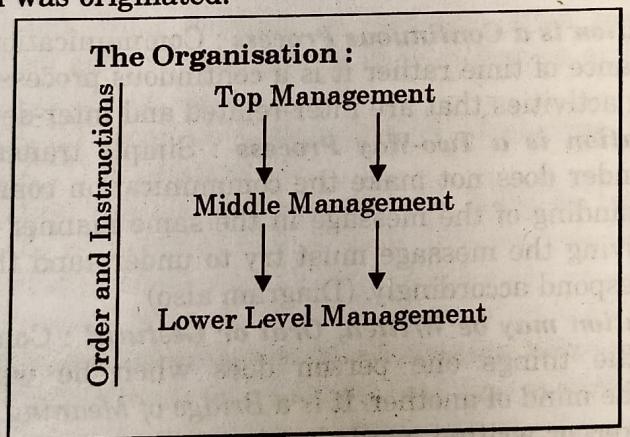
ONE-WAY COMMUNICATION v/s TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION

In the early stages of Industrial Revolution, 'communication' was limited to the giving of orders or 'instructions'. This was one-way communication.



ONE-WAY COMMUNICATION

But, later it was experienced that mere giving up of information is not sufficient, opportunities should be provided to the middle management and lower level employees to question the rationale of issued instructions, offer suggestions for the smooth functioning of the organization. Thus, two-way communication was originated.



TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION

Thus, two-way communication meant giving and receiving of information by both Management and workers, passing orders and instructions downward from the top management—through their intermediate management to the workers and funneling reports and ideas upward from lower level to higher levels.

FUNCTIONS OF COMMUNICATION

Lee Thayer, a prominent management thinker in his book 'Communication and Communication System' has divided the functions of communication into following four categories :

1. *The information function* : It serves to provide knowledge to the individuals who need guidance in their actions. It also fulfils the workers' desires for awareness of things that affect them.

2. *The command and instructive function* : This function makes the employee aware of his obligations to the formal organisation and provides him with additional guidance on how to perform his duties adequately.

3. The influence and persuasive function : This function motivates, directs and guides the employees to act and influence the behaviour and attitudes of the people through arguments and persuasion.

4. The integrative function : Communication, if properly handled, integrates the activities and efforts of the workers. As a result, they move in a single desired direction and the whole organisation becomes a well-knit system.

CHARACTERISTICS/NATURE/FEATURES OF COMMUNICATION

1. Communication involves Plurality of Persons : One single person can't communicate. At least two persons are involved in every communication one is communicator and other is communicate. Communicator or the sender is a person who wants to make his opinions, through feelings or ideas common or shares with others. Even a person who speaks, writes a letter or issues some instructions, the sender is also the communicator of the message. Communicator or receiver is the person with whom the communicator wants to share his message. There has to be a receiver to complete the communication process.

2. Existence of a Message : A message is a subject-matter of communication. The message may be the orders, instructions or information about the managerial plans, policies, programmes sent by the superior to subordinate (downward communication). A message can also be from subordinate to superior in the forms of reports, suggestions, complaints, problems. Just as an artist uses a brush and paint to depict a beautiful sunset or landscape, so too, do communicators use messages to represent their perceptions, thoughts and feelings.

3. Communication is a Continuous Process : Communication is not an art or event at an instance of time rather it is a continuous process incorporating various events and activities that are inter-related and inter-dependent.

4. Communication is a Two-Way Process : Simple transmission of the message by the sender does not make the communication complete rather it also needs understanding of the message in the same manner of receiver. So receiver after receiving the message must try to understand the idea behind the message and respond accordingly. (Diagram also)

5. Communication may be Written, Oral or Gestural : Communication is the sum of all the things one person does when he wants to create understanding in the mind of another. It is a *Bridge of Meaning*. It is generally understood as spoken or written words but in reality it is more than that. It includes everything that may be used to convey meanings from one person to another.

Written Communication : It implies transmission of message in black and white. It includes those decisions policy statements, rules, procedures, orders, instructions, agreements etc. which are expressed on paper.

Oral Communication : It implies conveying of message through spoken words. It is face to face communication and includes communication through telephone and public speech etc.

Gestural Communication : It implies expressions through body parts. It includes facial expressions, movement of lips, nodding of head, movement of hands. It is used as a supplementary method of communication. For example, while delivering his speech a person by thumping the desk/table can communicate to audience that this part of his speech is more important.

6. Primary purpose is to Motivate a Response : The primary purpose of the communication is to influence human behaviour. Communication can motivate employees by clarifying to them what is to be done, how well they are doing and what can be done to improve their performance if it below standard.

7. Communication may be Formal or Informal : Formal communication is that which flows through well established levels or hierarchical positions of the organization. For example, when a chief executive issues decisions and instructions to the subordinates or when subordinate reports to the superior. Formal communication may take place in the following forms :

- (1) Conferences, (2) Director's meeting, (3) Interviews, (4) Departmental staff meeting, (5) News Bulletins etc.

Informal communication takes place on the basis of informal and social relations among people in an organization. Such communication does not follow the formal channels, i.e., rules and structure of the organization. For example, if a superior and subordinate while sitting in the club or in cafeteria share any information it is informal communication.

8. Communication may be Vertical, Horizontal or Diagonal : The communication which flows from higher level to lower level position is known as downward communication. The message transmitted from superior to subordinate or from manager to assistant manager is downward communication. They are in the form of :

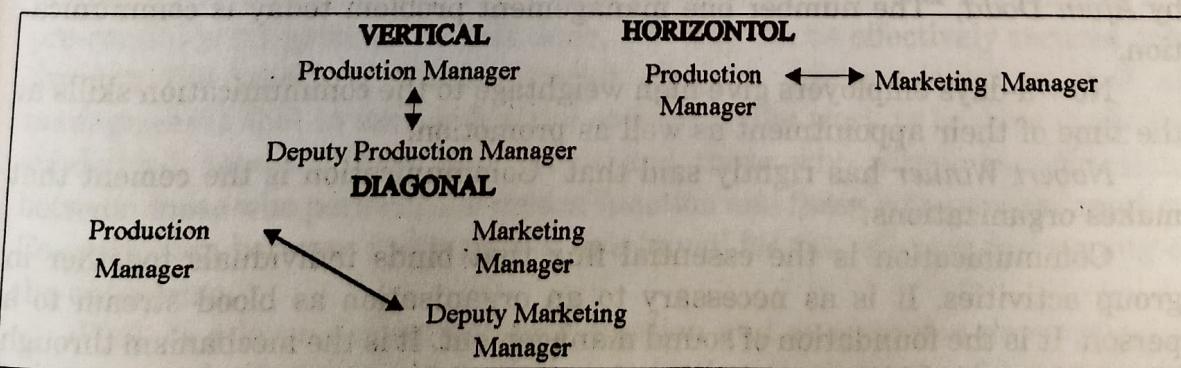
- (1) Circulars, (2) Letters, (3) Memos, (4) Annual reports, (5) Group meetings, (6) Loudspeakers announcements.

Upward communication is from subordinates to superior as that from worker to foreman, from foreman to manager, from manager to general manager and from general manager to chief executive or board of directors. They may be the following form :

- (1) Opinions, (2) Ideas, (3) Complaints, (4) Grapevine, (5) Union publications, (6) Appeals, (7) Grievances etc.

Communication that takes place directly between two persons having equal ranks in the managerial hierarchy or between two subordinates under same manager is called *Horizontal Communication* or *Lateral Communication*.

Diagonal Communication is like downward or upward communication, so we can say that it implies exchange of information between persons who are at position at different levels of hierarchy and also at different departments. This type of communication increases organizational efficiency by speeding up information and cutting across departmental barriers.



9. Communication is Unavoidable : Communication is always existing and unavoidable phenomenon. Not to talk of facial expressions, positive gestures and other behavioural ways, even silence also conveys a lot about person's attitude.

10. **Communication is a Universal Process** : It is a universal phenomenon. All the living beings whether it is humans, animals, insects, birds or beats communicate through their own symbols and signs.

11. **Communication is a Social Process** : As it enables everyone in the society to satisfy his basic needs and desires through exchange of written, spoken or non-verbal message. It is through communication that two or more persons interact and influence each other and consequently bridge the gap in their understanding.

ELEMENTS OF COMMUNICATION

The basic elements of communication are :

1. **Communicator**. The sender, speaker, writer or issuer who intends to conveys or transmits the message.

2. **Communicatee**. The receiver, listener, reader for whom the communication or information is meant.

3. **Message**. It is the content or subject matter of communication. It may be an idea, opinion, information, order, suggestion or complaint etc.

4. **Media or channel**. It refers to the method through which the message is passed on from the sender to the receiver. It serves as a link between the communicator and communicatee.

5. **Response**. The effect or reply or reaction of the message made by the communicatee. Purpose of every communication is to motivate a positive response. It is possible only when the message is meaningful and the receiver thoroughly understands it.

OBJECTIVES OF COMMUNICATION

Or

IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION TO MANAGERS

Communication is the vehicle through which basic management functions are carried out. The success of an enterprise depends upon the effectiveness of the communication. It is said to be the nervous system of an organization. Managers cannot plan, organise, direct and control without communication. It is no exaggeration to say that communication is the means by which organizational activity is unified, behaviour is modified, change is effected and goals are achieved. A manager typically spends 3/4th of his working day on communication and his success depends largely on communication skills. The importance of communication in the field of management has been highlighted by Alvin Dodd, "The number one management problem today is communication."

Now-a-days employers give high weightage to the communication skills at the time of their appointment as well as promotion.

Robert Winner has rightly said that "Communication is the cement that makes organizations."

Communication is the essential flux that binds individuals together in group activities. It is as necessary to an organisation as blood stream to a person. It is the foundation of sound management. It is the mechanism through which human relations are developed.

In the words of Peter F. Drucker, "The manager has a specific tool : information. He does not handle people; he motivates, guides, organises people to do their own work. His tool, his only tool—to do all this is the spoken or written word or the language of numbers." Thus it is obvious that communica-

tion is the life blood and foundation stone of the successful working of an organisation.

The necessity for effective communication in management has been widely recognised in recent years. The major responsibilities of an organiser in an industry lie in the establishment and effective utilisation of a communication system. The importance of communication in management can be judged from the following points :

1. ***Smooth and unrestricted running of the enterprise*** : The smooth and unrestricted running of an enterprise depends in *toto* on an effective system of communication.

In every organisation, big or small, may it be in the public or private sector, 'communication' plays a major role.

For instance, if you happen to enter in a bank or an insurance company, you will find all the clerks and the peons busy with the disposal of some sort of 'communication'. In industrial or manufacturing concerns instructions and information is being passed on continuously from one end to the other, from a superior to his subordinate, from a Labour Officer to the workers, from the Managing Director to his executives and so on.

2. ***Quick decision making*** : Communication helps the administration in arriving at vital decisions.

In decision making process :

- (i) Management identify various alternatives to solve any problem.
- (ii) Management evaluate the alternatives.
- (iii) Management select the best alternative and obtain feedback during and after its implementation.

In fact, the qualities of managerial decisions depends on the information or data and facts gathered through communication.

Moreover, the decision and plans of the management need to be communicated to the subordinates.

It would be of no avail unless the top management can effectively communicate either the policy or the decision to those who can translate it into action.

In short, effective communication is the *sine qua non* for the quick and systematic implementation of the management decisions.

3. ***Proper planning and coordination*** : Communication also helps a lot in planning and co-ordination. The widest possible participation in planning is a pre-condition for getting the task done, and this can be effectively secured only through the media of communication. It is a common experience of all managements that in each industrial enterprise the work to be done is always subdivided between those who direct and those who accept the directions between those who perform one type of function and those who perform another. Co-ordination between these groups is a 'must' for the efficient functioning of the enterprise.

Well, to a large degree this co-ordination and co-operation depends upon adequate and effective system of communication at all levels of management and in all areas of organisation.

4. ***Maximum productivity with the minimum of cost*** : Greater, better and cheaper production is the aim of all prudent managements. Gone are the days of small-scale production manufacturing we confined to the four walls of a

house under the supervision of a family boss ('Karta' of family), who could easily instruct any member-worker of his family for any task. But in this age of mass-scale production, our industrial unit has no longer remained a close-knit family unit as it used to be; with the result that direct, intimate and face-to-face contact between the employees is almost non-existent. Whatever may be the form of organisation—Departmental, Line and Staff or Functional—today the information passes through a variety of filters and there is always a chance for its misinterpretation.

According to W. H. Whyte, "The great economy of communication is the illusion of it."

Effective system of communication can play a vital role in avoiding this illusion. Further, Maximisation of production is to be secured with the minimum of friction and utmost good faith on the part of the workers.

5. Democratic management : Communication in industry is a phase both of organisation and moral building. Under an effective system of communication it is quite convenient for the employees to express their grievances if any, bring all their problems to the notice of the management and get proper adjustment. Such an amicable atmosphere can tone down many a temper and cause many a tension. If the grievances are not nipped in the bud, they may take a serious turn and there remain chances of strikes or lockouts leading to industrial unrest. Most of the conflicts in business are not basic but are caused by misunderstood motives and ignorance of the facts. Proper communications between the interested parties reduce the point of friction and minimise those that inevitably arise.

6. Promotion of co-operation and industrial peace : Economical production which is of excellent quality is the aim of every management. It can be possible only when there is industrial harmony between management and workers. The two-way communication promotes co-operation and mutual understanding between both the parties. The efficient and downward communication helps the management to tell the subordinates what management actually expects from them. The upward communication helps the workers in putting their grievances, suggestions and reactions before management which ultimately helps in achieving the desired goals.

7. Improve public relations : A sound communication system, ensuring free flow of information between the organisation and various components of the society like customers, suppliers, bankers, government agencies and public at large, helps in building a good image in the minds of the public. Public looks upon the organisation as an open unit which strives for maintaining good relations with the extra organisational agencies. Public generally has faith in only those organisations which are open and responsive to the needs of the community.

8. Helps in providing job satisfaction : An employee obtains satisfaction from his job only when he is able to perform his job in a desired manner. For proper performance of the job, it is necessary that an employee is fully aware of his duties, responsibilities authorities and the role or importance of the job in the pursuit for organisational goals. All this awareness can be generated only through sound communication system.

9. Helps in selection of best employees : Communication plays a very important role in the selection of employees of the organisation. Scientific selection procedure, which can eliminate the inefficient and unqualified persons has to be laid down to avoid misfits in the organisation. Communication system helps the personnel manager in obtaining the detailed informations about the mental ability, character, physical health, attitude and behaviour of the persons. These informations can be gathered by the conduct of tests, interviews and checking the references given by the candidate. Conducting of tests, interviews etc. is possible only through communication.

10. Basis of control : The system of maintaining control over the activities of the organisation consists of :

- Firstly*, laying certain objectives or targets,
- Secondly*, measuring actual performance,
- Thirdly*, comparing actual performance with the targets, and
- Fourthly*, taking corrective action in case of deviations.

All these things are possible if there exists an effective communication in the organisation. For knowing the targets, watching the performance and transmission of directions there is the need of communication.

11. Help in motivation and leadership : Management can motivate and lead employees through communication only. The employees have to be told what they have to do and how they have to do. If the employees are not aware of the expectations of the management, how and for what goal will they strive for? It is through communication that a formal leader, that is the manager, guides and supervises his employees.

12. For running internal administration : There is a great need of maintaining effective communication within the organisation as well. The management has to issue day-to-day instructions to subordinates and employees as to what work is to be done by them and how it is to be done. In upward communication, subordinates communicate their problems, complaints, progress reports to their superiors.

13. Liaison with outside world : For running the business, managers need knowledge about external world. They have to know about market trends, competitors, technological developments, government policies, business cycles, conditions of war and peace and what not. Communication provides this information to the managers on the basis of which they take decisions about product line and evolve marketing strategies.

14. Public image : Existence of good communication system in the organisation helps in projection of a good image of the organisation in the eyes of the people dealing with it. Good communication is another name for good public relations. If an outsider writes a letter to the organisation and promptly receives a correct and complete answer, naturally he will think high of the organisation. Effective and prompt communication helps in projecting organisation's plans and policies to outsiders and getting their reactions to them.

COMMUNICATION : AN ART OR A SCIENCE

The controversy with regard to the nature of Communication as to whether it is an art or a science has created a great deal of confusion. The classification of exact nature of Communication as science or an art, or both, is necessary to specify the process of learning of Communication as the learning process in a science differs from that of an art.

I. Communication as an Art

An art is the application of knowledge in skilful and creative way to accomplish the set objectives. The following are the essential features of an art:

1. Personal Skill
2. Practical Knowledge
3. Result-oriented Approach
4. Regular Practice
5. Creativity.

Let us apply these features of art to Communication to determine if it qualifies as an art or not.

1. Personal Skill : Communication can be called an art as one has to use one's personal skill and knowledge in solving many complicated problems to achieve enterprise objectives. Like most arts, Communication is personal in nature in the sense that every manager/person has his own method of communicating. That is why, there arises a difference in the performance of different persons at the same level in spite of the fact that they possess equal technical qualifications.

2. Practical Knowledge : Communication does not merely mean the knowledge of principles of communication, but it includes the application of this knowledge which makes it effective. A person cannot be called a good communicator even if he has learnt the principles of communication unless he can apply these principles practically while communicating with others.

3. Result-oriented Approach : Communication is concerned with accomplishment of objective and hence has result-oriented approach. Communication is to ensure that whatever message the sender wants to convey is received by the receiver in the same sense as the sender intends and sender receives the feedback from the receiver.

4. Regular Practice : Like an art, a communicator tries to achieve higher objectives to reach the state of absolute perfection. This efficiency and effectiveness can be attained through regular practice. One cannot be a good communicator unless he regularly practises the art of communication.

5. Creativity : Communication is a creative art which is concerned with getting desired results by getting feedback from others to achieve the organisational objectives.

Hence, we can say that Communication is an art.

II. Communication as a Science

A science is a systematised body of knowledge acquired by mankind through observation and experimentation which is capable of verification. The basic difference between art and science is that art implies knowing how to apply whereas science is concerned with knowing why to apply. The following are the essential features of a science :

1. Systematised body of Knowledge
2. Continued Observation
3. Universal Application
4. Cause and Effect Relationship
5. Validity and Predictability.

Let us apply these features of science to Communication to determine if it qualifies as a science.

1. Systematised body of Knowledge : Communication can be called a science as it is a body of useful and universally applicable principles which can guide the managers to create an understanding among different minds/people with

widespread use of advanced information technology. It is growing as a systematic body of knowledge with its own theories, principles and concepts.

2. **Continued Observation** : The knowledge of Communication has been acquired through continuous efforts of many theorists. The knowledge so acquired has been systematically composed over a period of time.

3. **Universality in Application** : The principles of Communication, like science, represent basic truths and can be applied in all situations at all times, i.e., they are universally applicable.

4. **Cause and Effect Relationship** : The principles of communication, like science, establish cause and effect relationship. For example, incomplete messages can lead to misunderstanding or miscommunication, and misunderstanding can result from incomplete message.

5. **Validity and Predictability** : The principles of Communication put to several tests and, like science, have been found to be valid. These principles help us to predict the results, though not accurately.

Hence, we can say that Communication is a science.

Conclusion : The above discussion shows that Communication is an art because it involves personal skill in handling a particular situation and is result-oriented and needs regular practice.

Communication can be called a science as well because it provides a body of universally applicable principles which create an understanding in the minds of the people with the use of advanced information technology. It is developing as a systematic body of knowledge but has not developed as an exact science. Unlike Mathematics, results of Communication cannot be predicted accurately.

QUALITIES OF GOOD COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

An office manager should be conversant not only with the various methods and devices of communication but also with different factors which have to be considered before adopting a particular system of communication in the office.

No hard and fast rules can be laid down as to the qualities of a good communication system. A method may be suitable for a particular type of message but may not be for another type. What particular system of communication should be used will depend on the needs of the organisation and the type of message. A communication system may be very quick and excellent but the cost may be prohibitive, so cost factor cannot be ignored. Anyhow an ideal system of communication should have the following qualities :

1. **Speed** : The Communication system should be capable of carrying message speedily.

2. **Accuracy** : Communication system should be capable of conveying the messages accurately. Figures are likely to be misheard over telephone.

3. **Secrecy** : If desired, the message should not leak out. Certain modes of communication like television or public address system cannot keep the message secret.

4. **Record** : In certain matters authentic record of the communication has to be kept which may be needed as legal evidence in case of dispute later. An ideal system should be capable of keeping record of the communication. There can be no record of verbal communication.

5. **Cost** : The system should not be costly to install or operate. Anyhow, cost is measured in terms of benefits derived from the system. The conveyor belt

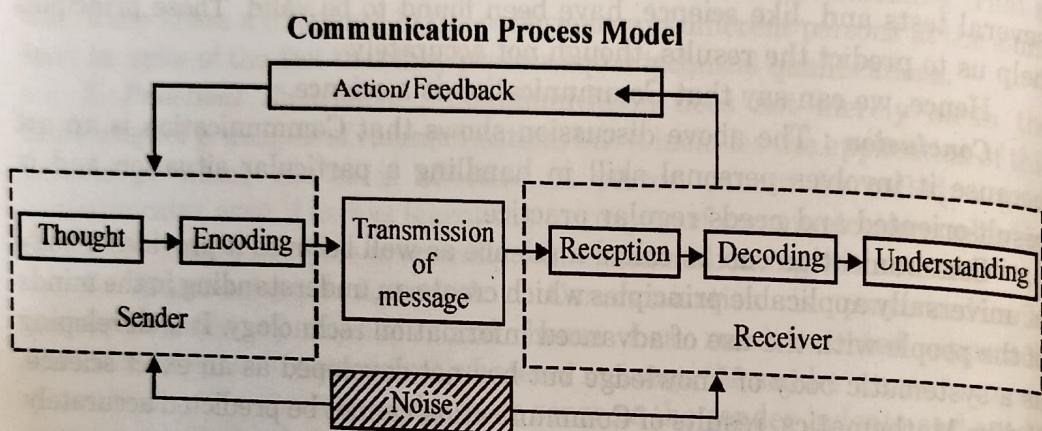
system is quite costly to install but is essential where the number of letters or documents to be carried is large.

6. **Convenience** : The system of communication should be convenient to use. If a system cannot be easily used it will lose its utility.

7. **Suitability** : Suitability of communication system will depend on the nature, size and dispersal of the organisation. In the case of a small office even the method of face-to-face talk will be sufficient but internal telephone system is a must if different departments or sections of an organisation are located on different floors of a multistoreyed building.

8. **Impression** : The mode of communication should not be clumsy, it must leave good impression on others. Spreading tubes, for example, throw a very bad impression.

PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION



The communication is the process by which two or more people exchange information and share meaning. By analyzing the communication process, one discovers that it is a chain made of identifiable links. "Link in this process includes : Sender message, encoding, decoding, receiver and feedback. Like any other chain, the communication chain is only as strong as its weakest link."

1. **Sender** : The process of communication involves two parties i.e., the sender and the receiver. Sender may be individual or group of individuals or any organisation, who desires to share information for a predetermined purpose or for an expected action or response. The process starts at the moment when an idea or feeling or information strikes the mind of the sender. The sender being the promoter of the process is required to have clear vision of his expectations of the communication process and the receiver.

2. **Encoding** : Encoding means to transform the idea into words, symbols, pictures, diagrams, gestures, i.e., it is a method to provide a concrete shape to the message. The purpose of encoding is to translate internal thought patterns into a language or code that the intending receiver of the message will probably understand. Encoding, requires common media which both the sender and the receiver can understand. Because there is a need for the receiver to interpret the information in a sense which the sender transmits. Thus, the language, symbols, gestures or expressions used in communication are to be common and mutually understandable. For example in Japan 'T' is shown with a finger on the nose but in India same gesture implies it is wrong or do not do it.

In the same way to say 'no' an American nods the head horizontally and to say 'yes' vertically. An Indian with slight difference nods the head horizontally for both 'yes' and 'no' which confuses an American receiver. Thus, it is necessary to use common media.

3. Message/Information : The message is the physical form of the thought which can be experienced and understood by one or more senses of the receiver. Communication process facilitates transmission of information or message in the form of words, symbols or any such media, which carries the information to the receiver. In fact, message is an idea, feeling opinion or any expression generated in the mind of the sender which he desires to convey to the receiver with a predetermined purpose.

Messages are not the meanings but indicative of meanings. Meaning lies in the receiver's mind not in the message. In fact, message is the actual content of the information that enters into the channel.

4. Channel/Media : It is a vehicle in the transmission of a message. In this stage the message is actually sent and the information is transferred. The technological revolution has brought about a wide range of telecommunication methods. Sender must consider all aspects : speed, cost, quick receipt, printer record, confidentiality etc., for making an intelligent decision before sending his message.

Time and money can be wasted if the wrong medium is chosen. Selection of suitable channel is essential for effective communication. It assures immediate feedback from the receiver. It also helps to reduce noise during communication process. So, it is necessary to select a channel, which is familiar, convenient and suitable for both the parties.

5. Receiver : The person or group, who perceives the message and attaches some meaning to the message is the receiver. If there is no receiver, there is no communication. The situation is not much improved if the message reaches receiver but the receiver does not understand it.

6. Decoding : Decoding is translation of information received, into an understandable message to interpret it. Even the most expertly fashioned message will not accomplish its purpose unless it is understood. After physically receiving the message, the receiver must comprehend it. If the message has been properly encoded, decoding will take place rather routinely. But perfect encoding is nearly impossible to achieve in our world of many languages and cultures. The receiver's willingness to receive the message is a principal prerequisite for successful decoding.

When decoding is done according to expectation of the sender, the communication could be deemed as effective. The chances of effective decoding are greatly enhanced as the receiver knows the language and vocabulary used in the message. The more the sender's message commensurate with the receivers understanding, the more effective the communication will be.

7. Action/Feedback : Feedback is the response to the message received by the receiver of the information, which sends back to the sender of the information. Feedback is the reversed of the communication process. This is the stage where major and serious distortions take place in a message and such distortions are due to receiver's perception, value system, attitude, past experience etc. Normally the message interpreted by the receiver is different from what the sender had intended to. Therefore, feedback is necessary to

ensure whether the receiver has understood the message as desired by the sender or not and if not, the message is modified or certain additions are made in the message by the sender in order to make communication effective.

8. **Noise** : Noise is not an integral part of the chain like communication process, but it may influence the process at any or all points. Noise is any interference with the normal flow of understanding from one person to another. Noise may be with the receiver or channel or the message or sometimes the external environment. Psychological noise consists of forces within the sender or receiver that interfere with understanding i.e., egotism, hostility, prejudices, etc.

Noise reduces the effectiveness of communication. Therefore, it is necessary to take preventive steps to reduce the level and intensity of noise to make communication effective.

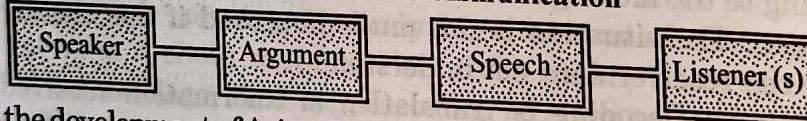
COMMUNICATION MODELS AND THEORIES

Over the course of time the question of what the essential features of communication have been discussed from many different angles. It appears to have always been a common view that communication somehow involves transferring thoughts from one mind to another. There are many communication process models and theories to understand the process involved in it as developed by different people. It is very difficult to consider all communication models.

1. Aristotle's Communication Model

Aristotle took the initiative of developing a communication model. Aristotle's model of communication is known as the elementary model of the communication process. His model is simple and easy. According to Aristotle in a communication event, there are three main contents. They are the speaker, the argument, the speech and the listener.

Aristotelian view of Communication



After the development of Aristotle model of communication, many more complex and dynamics models of communication have been developed.

2. Lesikar and Petlit's Communication Model

In the model given by Raymond V. Lesikar and John D. Petlit, stress was laid on the communication environment as well as the communication process. According to Lesikar and Petlit for receiving the communication process, the communication environment is taken as the base.

Study of the communication process logically is proceeded by an analysis of the environment in which the communication occurs. The following points should be kept in mind when we study the communication environment in context of the communication process :

1. Communication occurs in a sensory environment the real world with all the signs the senses can detect.

2. The real world means all that exists, no that which exists in the mind.

3. Signs are parts of the real world that can act as stimuli. They produce responses in us.

4. Sensory receptors, which are the body organs, detect signs. These sensory receptors continually select signs in our sensory environments. They time in one sign and ignore other signs. Thus, occurs selective perception.

5. During the perception process, the signs reach the nervous system, meanings are attached to them. This process of perceiving reality is different from individual to individual depending upon his knowledge, emotions, experience and degree of mental alertness.

The Communication Processes¹

With the communication environment as a base, we shall review the communication process. The communication process can be explained with the help of following diagram :

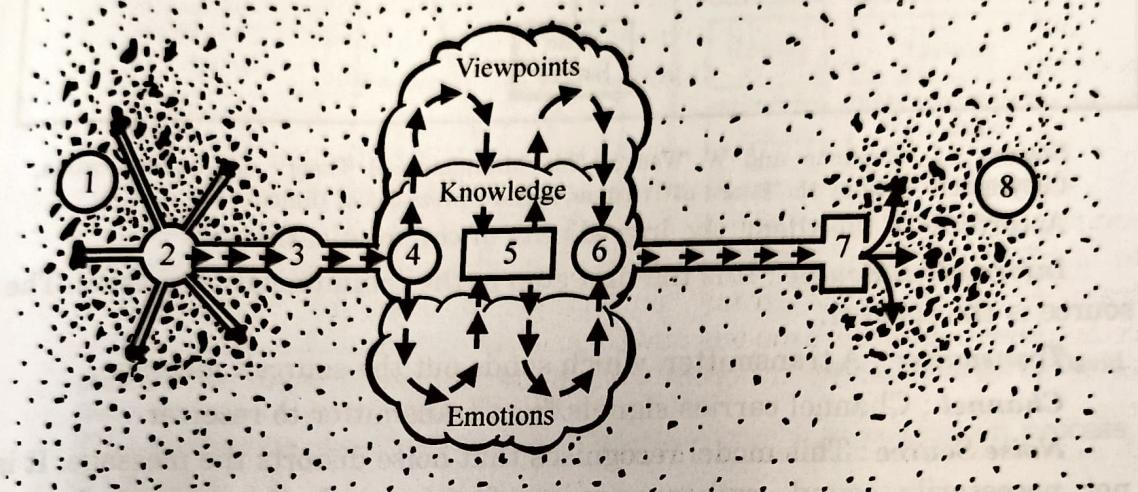


Fig. 1.2

Explanation of the Diagram

1. This area represents our communication environmental. It is all the signs that exist in the real world surrounding us.
2. Our sensory receptors pick up some (but far from all) of the signs and symbols.
3. Those signs that are picked up go through our nervous systems and into our mental filters.
4. Our mental filters give the signs meaning. The meanings received add to the filters content.
5. Sometimes the meanings we form trigger communication responses.
6. We form these responses through our mental filters.
7. We send our responses as word symbols (Speaking, Writing) and non-verbal symbols (gestures, facial expressions etc.).
8. These symbols become part of others communication environments. Here, they may be picked up by others, sensory receptors and another cycle begins.

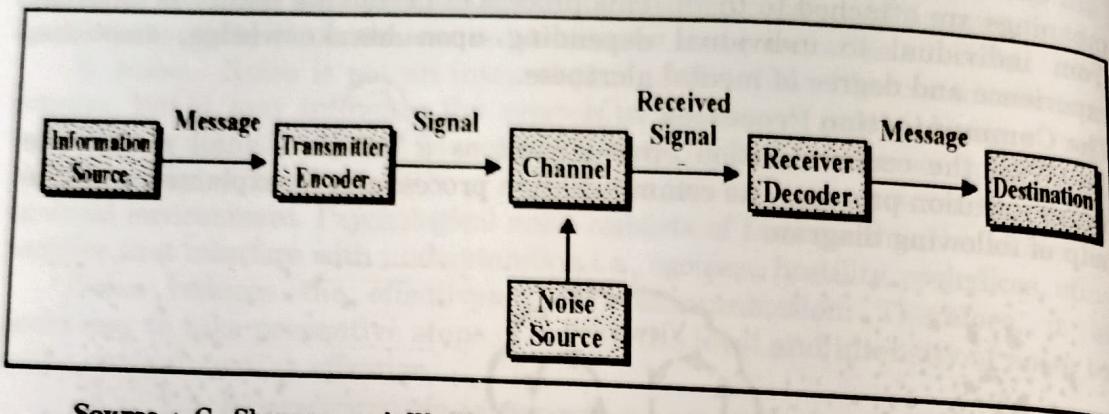
This communication process model given by Lesikar and Petlit emphasises on "What did the sender mean when he or she used those symbols" rather than on "What do those symbols mean in my mind?" If all of us understand and practiced this fundamental truth, we could eliminate a majority of the misunderstandings regarding communication.

3. Shannon and Weaver's Communication Model

The Shannon-Weaver (1949) model is consistent with Aristotle's proposition.

¹ Business Communication by Lesikar & Petlit, page 20, 2001 Edition (Indian Reprint).

Shannon And Weaver's Communication Model



Source : C. Shannon and W. Weaver The Mathematical Theory of Communication, Copyright © 1949 by the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois.

According to them, the ingredients of communication are :

Information Source : It is the first step in the communication process. The source is the speaker.

Transmitter : A transmitter, which sends out the source's message.

Channel : Channel carries signals from transmitter to receiver.

Noise Source : This model recognises that noise distorts the message. It is not necessarily sound, rather any interference with the normal flow of understanding from one person to another. In fact, the problem is that the message can get distorted by noise sources or interference. In the mechanistic version of the telephone this might be interference on the telephone line, thus making the communication difficult and unclear. In the case of a manager speaking to an employee, it could be more subtle. The noise source which distorts the message could be personal. For example, the employee may dislike the manager, or be unhappy with the situation in which he or she works, or have a headache or personal problems at home.

Receiver : Receiver catches the message for destination. Message is decoded by the receiver, either by hearing or reading the message.

Message : It is the information passing between the sender and the receiver.

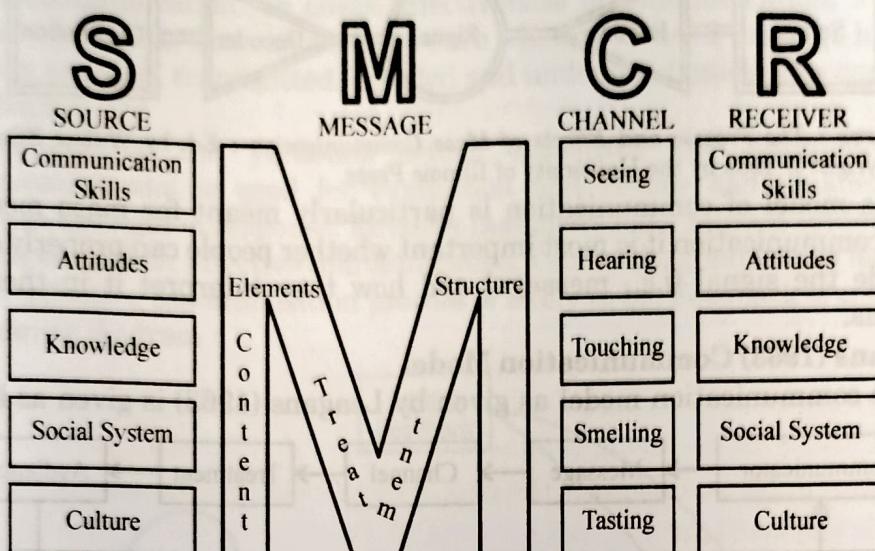
Destination : Destination is the audience.

One criticism of the Shannon and Weaver model is that communication is seen as only a one-way process. Observers in the field of human behaviour have stated that this is not so, even in communication between the most seemingly compliant employee and manager. The employee may communicate dissatisfaction through body language or through another source, such as his or her work group. Later communication model builders therefore, added the element of 'feedback' to the communication model (Schramm, 1954; DeFleur, 1966).

4. Berlo's Communication Model

According to Berlo (1960) the ingredients of communication are :

Berlo's SMCR Model of Communication



Source : The Process of Communication : An Introduction to Theory and Practice by David Berlo. Copyright © 1960 by Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

This model has considered the four ingredients of communication process :

- (1) Source,
- (2) Message,
- (3) Channel,
- (4) Receiver.

(1) **Source** : According to Berlo, all human communication has some source, some persons or group of persons with a purpose. In order to analyse and determine the effectiveness of the source we should try to analyse the following about him (the source) :

- (a) His Communication Skills
- (b) His Attitude
- (c) His Knowledge
- (d) His Social System
- (e) His Culture.

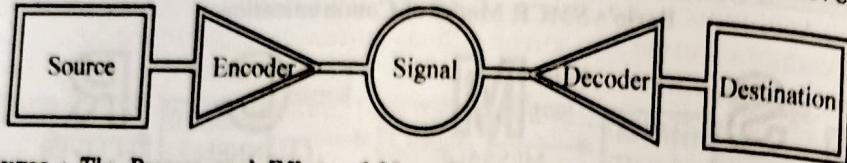
(2) **Message** : The purpose of the source has to be expressed in the form of the message. In fact, the communication encoder is responsible for taking the ideas of the source and putting them in a code, expressing the source's purpose in the form of a message. In a nutshell, what is communicated is the message.

(3) **Channel** : The medium through which a communication message travels is known as channel. In fact, a channel is a medium, a carrier of message. It may be one of the natural senses i.e., seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting.

(4) **Receiver** : For communication to occur there must be somebody at the other end, who can be called the communication receiver, the target of communication. In other words, the person who perceives the message and attaches some meaning to the message is the receiver. If there is no receiver, there is no communication.

5. Schramm's Communication Model

According to Schramm (1961), the communication process involves :

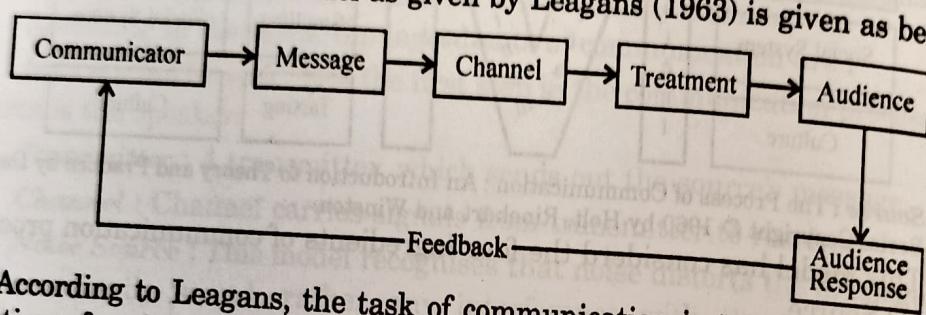


Source : *The Process and Effects of Mass Communication* : Ed. by Wilbur Schramm.
Copyright © 1965 by the University of Illinois Press.

This model of communication is particularly meant for mass media. In human communication it is most important whether people can properly encode or decode the signal (i.e., message) and how they interpret it in their own situations.

6. Leagans (1963) Communication Model

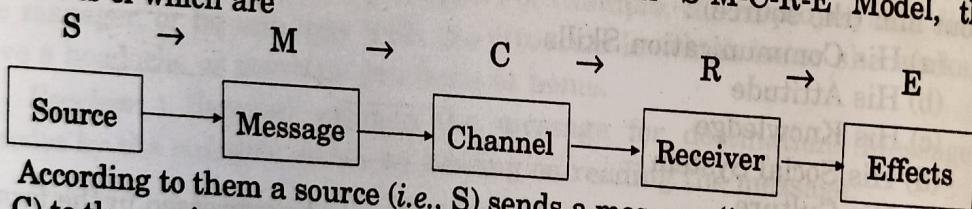
The communication model as given by Leagans (1963) is given as below :



According to Leagans, the task of communication is to provide powerful incentives for change and thorough understanding of the six elements of communication i.e., a skilful communicator serving useful message through proper channel, effectively treated, to an appropriate audience that gives its response via feedback.

7. Rogers and Shoemaker's (1971) Communication Model

Roger & Shoemaker (1971) has given their S-M-C-R-E Model, the ingredients of which are



According to them a source (i.e., S) sends a message (i.e., M) via channels (i.e., C) to the receiver (i.e., R); which causes some effects thereby changing the existing behaviour pattern of the receiver.

8. Westley and Maclean Concept

Westley and Maclean extended the feedback theory. They said that the receiver could give his feedback not only to the sender, but also to the others. In other words, he could convey his response to the communicator's message, even to a third party.

9. Interpersonal Relationship Concept

Subsequent thinkers believed that the focus of the communication was inter-personal relationship. Some of these thinkers are Newcomb, Jacobson etc.

IMPORTANCE OF FEEDBACK IN COMMUNICATION

Sending back the knowledge about the message to the communicator is known as feedback.

After receiving the message, the receiver will take necessary action and send feedback information to the communicator. On the other hand, communicator must know how well the message has been received by the

receiver, understood, interpreted and acted upon. Feedback helps to determine this process. Feedback is one of the important elements of the communication process. A communication process without a provision for feedback is not an effective communication. To check effectiveness of communication, a person must have feedback. One can never be sure whether or not a message has been effectively encoded, transmitted, decoded and understood unless it is confirmed by feedback.

Feedback is the yardstick which measures the effectiveness of communication and is used for evaluation and review and to amend the message in the light of response. Efficient managers have reliable feedback and they succeed in their effective communication. Generally, greatest the feedback, the more effective communication process is likely to be. Feedback is clear from the following diagram :

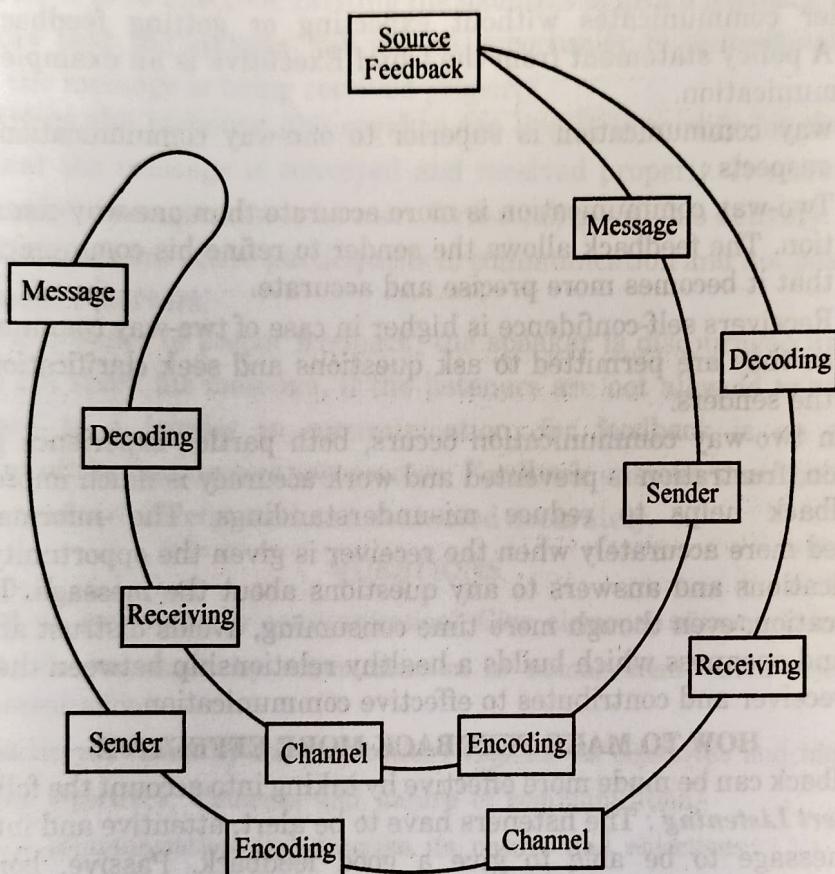


Fig. 1.3

Feedback varies from one situation to another. In face-to-face communication there is immediate and continuous feedback; the facial expression of the listener can tell the speaker, whether the message is understood. For instance, when the supervisor observes a frown on the face of a late-comer employee, who has been reprimanded for coming late, the feedback shows that the worker has not liked the reprimand. The speaker can modify the message according to the needs and understanding of the listener, and also make it more acceptable. In a nut shell, the audience can control the speaker through feedback on the spot.

In written communication, feedback is slow. The writer cannot see the facial expression of the receiver. There is no chance for immediate clarification or modification or even for finding out if the message has been understood. Feedback may also be collected through grapevine.

In case, feedback is negative, the speaker can go in for self improvement through self-introspection and he can go in for major changes in delivery and manner of speeches.

In a nutshell, feedback is an error correcting machine and therefore a good speaker is always attentive to the feedback and always on toes to modify the message in the light of reaction of the respective audience. So feedback is not an error finding or fault finding exercise. Instead it is aimed at continuous improvement of the speaker as well as of the listener.

IMPORTANCE OF FEEDBACK IN COMMUNICATION

Two-way communication takes place when the receiver provides feedback to the sender. For instance giving an instruction to a subordinate and receiving its acceptance is an example of two-way communication. On the other hand, in one-way communication feedback is totally absent. Here the sender communicates without expecting or getting feedback from receiver. A policy statement from the Chief Executive is an example of one-way communication.

Two-way communication is superior to one-way communication in the following respects :

- (a) Two-way communication is more accurate than one-way communication. The feedback allows the sender to refine his communication so that it becomes more precise and accurate.
- (b) Receivers self-confidence is higher in case of two-way communication as they are permitted to ask questions and seek clarifications from the senders.

When two-way communication occurs, both parties experience greatest satisfaction, frustration is prevented and work accuracy is much improved.

Feedback helps to reduce misunderstandings. The information is transferred more accurately when the receiver is given the opportunity to ask for clarifications and answers to any questions about the message. Two-way communication, even though more time consuming, avoids distrust and leads to trust and openness which builds a healthy relationship between the sender and the receiver and contributes to effective communication.

HOW TO MAKE FEEDBACK MORE EFFECTIVE

Feedback can be made more effective by taking into account the followings:

1. Alert Listening : The listeners have to be alert, attentive and interested in the message to be able to give a good feedback. Passive, bored and disinterested listeners can never give a good feedback. An alert listener would be interested in getting more information and clarity of the message.

2. Speaker must Understand his Responsibilities : The speaker must be a willing partner in communication. A speaker who is not responsible will not be willing to invite feedback. His superior and intimidating attitude might discourage feedback. The speaker must be interested in feedback and must understand that only feedback can help him to communicate properly.

3. Proper Note Taking : The listeners should take notes properly during the lecture to ensure that important information is not forgotten. It also helps the speaker to get an overall picture. It also makes the listeners aware if any detail is omitted by the speaker.

4. Preparation before Discussion : Preparing before the topic is discussed and a little bit of reading and research will ensure better feedback. Hence more awareness helps the listener to give an appropriate response.

5. Positive Mental Attitude of the Listener and Speaker : Mental attitude of the listener and speaker goes a long way in ensuring an effective feedback. An open, unprejudiced, unbiased attitude is essential. If the listener and speaker both have a positive approach, it ensures an effective feedback.

6. Concentration and Focussed Approach : Concentration and focussed approach will help a listener to give a better response. It also helps the speaker to judge whether his message is being properly interpreted by the audience. A blank look in the eyes of the listeners is the first sign to look out for. This is possible only if the speaker is attentive while giving his lecture.

7. If Response is Prompt : It is the duty of the listener to give a prompt feedback for it to be effective. Inviting the listeners to give a feedback promptly will ensure that the speaker will get an opportunity to immediately assess whether the message is being received properly.

Based on the response, the speaker can decide to modify his delivery to ensure that the message is conveyed and received properly. It reassures the speaker and encourages him to be more forthcoming with his delivery. It shows that the listeners are active participants in communication and not passive and disinterested observers.

In the absence of proper feedback, the speaker is discouraged and might decide to cut short his message. If the listeners are not allowed to respond it might lead to a barrier in communication, for feedback is an essential component of the communication process. Feedback ensures that the message has been received, interpreted and evaluated accurately.

QUESTIONS

1. What do you mean by communication? Give elements of communication.
2. What do you mean by communication in management? Give objectives of communication.
3. What do you mean by communication? Explain its objectives and importance.
4. Define objectives, elements and nature of communication.
5. Define communication and describe its nature and objectives.
6. What is communication? Discuss its importance in business organisation.
7. "Communication is as essential for a business concern as blood and breathing are for life." Do you agree? Explain.
8. "Communication is the sum of all things one person does when he intends to create understanding in the mind of another. It is a bridge of meaning. It involves a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening and understanding." Discuss.
9. What is Business Communication? Explain the communication process.
10. What do you mean by feedback? Give its characteristics. Give importance of feedback in communication.
11. Communication is the key of successful manager.
12. Briefly explain the various theories of Communication.
13. What is business communication and also discuss factors responsible for the growing importance of business communication in modern time.

- 14.** Write short answers :
- Essential features of business communication.
 - Nature of communication.
 - Reasons of growing importance of Communication.
- 15.** Write short notes :
- Communication is two-way process.
 - Explain any two objectives of communication.
 - Receiver and decoder are one and the same thing.
- 16.** Write a short note on the following Communication Theories or Models :
- Shannon and Weaver's Model
 - Berlo's-SMCR Communication Model
 - Shramm's Communication Model
 - Leagan's Communication Model
 - Roger and Shoemaker's Communication Model
- 17.** What is meant by feedback ? What can be done to improve feedback ?
- 18.** "Feedback is an important factor of the Communication process" Explain.