Communication and Presentation Skills

BS (CS)/IT-II&III

**Note:**

1. **It is intimated that following lectures will not repeated and would be part of mid-term & final-term exam as well.**
2. **The attendance of the students will be marked on receipt of assignment on due date.**
3. **Marks of the assignment may be deducted on emailing irrelevant material to respective teacher(s).**
4. **Email IDs of concerned teachers are mentioned in the Header of each page (on the top of each page).**
5. **In case of any query, contact you teacher through email.**
6. **The mode of communication would be English only.**

**Topic of the Week: Communication Process & Communication Channel**

**Objectives of Lecture 5 & 6**

The learning objectives of these lectures are:

1. To discuss the communication process.
2. To create awareness among the students regarding communication channels.
3. To learn importance of feedback in the process of communication.

**(Week 3) Lecture 5**

**Process of Communication:**

Communication process is a sequence of activities where message sent is understood by the receiver in its intended meaning. For example, execution of a purchase order or conversation through telephone shall be complete if the desired result is achieved, that is, supplier sends the desired goods and receiver of phone call acts as desired by the maker of the call.

Communication is a process that connects the sender with the receiver of the message. A process is “a systematic series of actions, operations or series of changes directed to some end.” However, in real life situations, communication process is more complex than it sounds. It consists of a series of elements which results in sharing of meaning by sender and receiver.

These elements are discussed below:

**1. Sender:**

Sender is the person who initiates, generates and sends the message. He represents the source of message. The communication process begins when the sender develops an idea or message he wants to transmit. He must arrange the ideas in a manner that can be understood by the receiver. A lecturer delivering a lecture in the classroom is the sender of the message or a manager addressing his team in a meeting is sender of the message.

**2. Message:**

Message is the idea or information that the sender wants to convey. He may convey it verbally (by writing or speaking) or non-verbally (through gestures or body language). Whatever the form, the message should be clearly formed so that desired objective is accomplished.

**3. Encoding:**

Once the sender is clear of what message to transmit, he decides the code through which the message shall be transmitted. The message is abstract and intangible and, therefore, has to be converted into some form (words, gestures, pictures etc.) to make it meaningful. Encoding means converting the message into symbols.

Encoding gives meaning to the message or converts ideas into codes which can be understood by the receiver. Encoding means translating the message into words (written or spoken), symbols or gestures. It may be a combination of the three. The code should be appropriate to the situation, that is, interpreted by the receiver in the manner intended.

**4. Transmission:**

Transmission involves selecting the medium or channel of communication. Once decided that the message has to be sent in writing, the sender may select the electronic channel and the medium of e-mail or fax. Short messages can be transmitted through telephone but lengthy messages can be sent through letters or circulars.

Choice of channel depends upon the message to be conveyed, personal biases of the sender and nature of information. Short messages are generally sent through telephone. Where drawings, charts and illustrations form part of the message, it should be sent in writing. Personal biases include sender’s preference for a particular channel.

Some senders prefer to communicate in writing, howsoever short the message may be and, therefore, prefer the written channel of transmission. Nature of information refers to immediacy and confidentiality of information. Confidential information where immediate feedback is required is generally transmitted orally.

**5. Receiver:**

Receiver is the person or a group of persons to whom the message is conveyed. In case of telephonic conversation, the sender can send message to one receiver but in case of group discussions, seminars and conferences, receivers can be more than one. The message must be designed, encoded and transmitted in a manner that receiver can understand it easily. Use of technical words, jargons and complicated symbols should be avoided. Depending on the channel selected, receiver may be a listener, viewer or a reader.

**6. Decoding:**

Decoding means giving meaningful interpretation to the message. On receiving the message, the receiver translates the symbols into meaningful information to the best of his ability. Communication is effective if receiver understands the message in the same way as intended by the sender. The receiver must, therefore, be familiar with the codes and symbols used by the sender.

**7. Noise:**

It represents the disturbing factor in the process of communication. It interferes with effective communication and reduces clarity of the message. The message may be interpreted differently than intended by the sender. Conversing near a machine making sounds, disturbance in telephone line, physical ailment or mental distress of sender or receiver, psychological barriers (degree of trust, fear, perception etc.) are the common forms of noise that obstruct the quality of message transmitted from sender to the receiver.

**8. Feedback:**

Feedback is receiver’s response to sender’s message. The receiver communicates his reaction to the sender through words, symbols or gestures. It is the reversal of communication process where receiver becomes the sender and sender becomes the receiver. Unless the receiver responds to the message, communication process is incomplete.

Feedback helps the sender to transform his message, if needed. It also allows the receiver to clear doubts on the message, ask questions to build his confidence and enables the sender to know efficiency of the message. Feedback makes the communication process complete.

In face-to-face communication, the sender can immediately receive the feedback but in written communication, it takes time for sender to receive feedback on the message. A written notice sent by manager to the employees to work seven days a week instead of six can be implemented when everybody has read and signed the notice. Subordinates will give feedback on the notice and recommend changes, if required. Managers can implement the notice only if it is accepted by the subordinates, unless it is an order.

Feedback increases efficiency and applicability of communication.

Feedback plays important role in two-way communication. In one-way communication, sender communicates with the receiver without getting any feedback but in two-way communication, receiver provides feedback to the sender. Though one-way communication takes less time and is more orderly (it avoids noise and chaos), feedback in two-way communication makes it more accurate and precise.

**Feedback offers the following benefits:**

1. It allows senders to improve communication with the receiver.

2. It allows receiver to clarify doubts on the message and, therefore, perform better.

3. Allowing receivers to ask questions builds confidence and they are more confident of their performance.

4. It enables the sender to know efficiency of his message; whether or not the receiver has understood the message in its right meaning. Feedback makes the communication process complete.

5. In response to receiver’s understanding and suggestions on the message, sender can adjust the subsequent messages.

However, two-way communication should be used constructively. If sender and receiver hold conflicting opinions and none is ready to agree to the other’s viewpoint, the message cannot be acted upon. Blaming each other with defensive reasoning and not acting in support of the message can reduce efficiency of the message. Two-way communication cannot be avoided and, therefore, both the parties should hold aside their egos and arrive at consensus in case there are conflicting opinions about the message.

**The communication process can be represented as follows:**

Channels of Communication:

Communication channel is the path through which information flows from sender to receiver.

Two main communication channels are:

**I. Formal communication channel and**

**II. Informal communication channel.**

**I. Formal Communication Channel:**

It is the official channel of communication controlled by managers in their official capacity. Official information and decisions follow this channel of communication. This channel is officially recognised by the organisation structure, follows the formal chain of command for passing information, suggestions, orders etc. and defines authority-responsibility relationships amongst members of the organisation.

It is a deliberately created path of communication. Information flows vertically, horizontally and diagonally along this path of communication ‘through proper channel’, that is, through various levels in the organisational hierarchy.

Vertical communication represents flow of information from one level to the other in the organisational hierarchy. It can be downward and upward. In downward vertical communication, information flows from top to middle-level managers, lower-level managers, supervisors and workers.

The information is related to goals, policies, directions, instructions etc. In upward vertical communication, information flows from lower-levels to higher levels. It relates to reports about subordinates’ work, achievements and progress, work-related problems, suggestions to improve the style of working etc.

Horizontal communication flows amongst people at the same level. It does not follow the official chain of command. When manager of marketing department discusses issues related to production and sale of goods, with the manager of production department, it is said to be horizontal communication. Diagonal communication is similar to horizontal communication that takes place amongst people of different departments at different levels rather than the same level.

**Merits of formal communication:**

Formal communication channel has the following merits:

**1. Authentic information:**

It is an officially recognized path of communication and, therefore, whatever information flows in whatever direction (vertical, horizontal or lateral), it is presumed to be authentic.

**2. Large geographical area:**

Large organisations have branches spread over wide geographical areas. Formal communication channels spread information over wide geographical areas.

**3. Justify organisational hierarchy:**

Who is to receive information from whom, where, when and to what extent is clearly specified in the formal channels.

**4. Coordination:**

Formal channels coordinate the work of other functional areas and facilitate smooth functioning of the organisation.

**5. Control:**

It helps in receiving right information at the right time and facilitates control of organisational activities.

**6. Filtering of information:**

Only important information which top managers must know flows to them. They do not have to, therefore, scan every information, relevant and irrelevant. This saves time which can be spent on strategic issues.

**Limitations of formal communication:**

Formal communication channel suffers from the following limitations:

**1. Information distortion:**

When information passes through a number of levels, some of the information is lost in transit and gets filled by some unintended information. There may be, thus, information distortion. In some cases, information up to eighty per cent gets lost on the way.

**2. Time-consuming:**

As information passes through a number of levels, it is a time-consuming channel of communication.

**3. Expensive:**

It is an expensive channel of communication as it requires lot of paper and administrative work.

**4. Lack of personal touch:**

People at the top and bottom communicate with each other through formal channels only. They do not get to talk to each other personally. Lack of personal touch restricts free flow of information in the organisation. Formal communication channel cannot be avoided. Efforts should be made to reduce its limitations and make it an effective channel of communication.

**II. Informal Communication Channel:**

It is an unofficial channel of communication that arises out of socio-psychological needs of people to interact with each other. It is an important and spontaneous outgrowth of formal channels of communication. It emphasises more on the person than position. It arises when people of common nationality, caste or religion interact with each other or when they share a car pool or meet each other regularly in canteens, libraries, bus stands etc.

**Links for Videos:**

[**https://youtu.be/iYabVHkF9Hk**](https://youtu.be/iYabVHkF9Hk)

[**https://youtu.be/89BsTswJDkI**](https://youtu.be/89BsTswJDkI)

[**https://youtu.be/rWVfKGqL5z8**](https://youtu.be/rWVfKGqL5z8)

[**https://youtu.be/s-8NGC1-GQw**](https://youtu.be/s-8NGC1-GQw)

[**https://youtu.be/3JCQbp41z9g**](https://youtu.be/3JCQbp41z9g)