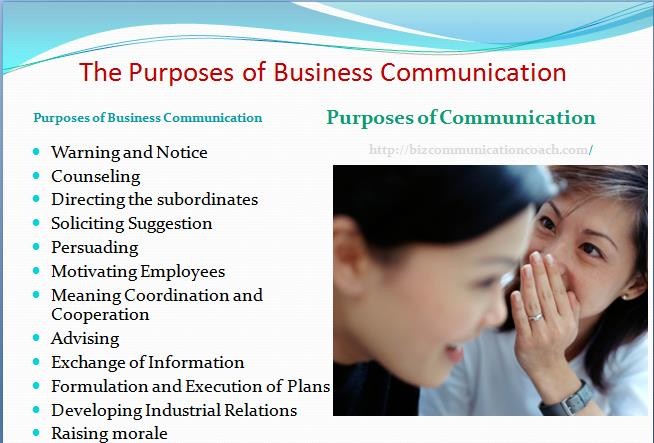
**Course Notes: Communication Meaning**

The word communication is used in common talk, usually, to mean speaking or writing or sending a message to another person. Communication is really much more than that. Communication is a dynamic interactive process that involves effective transmission of ideas, thoughts, information and values through verbal and non-verbal methods and suitable channels. It involves ensuring that your message has reached the target audience, (that is, the persons to whom it is sent) and that the receiver understands and responds as you want them to. It also involves ensuring that you yourself are able to understand, interpret, and respond to messages that you receive. Communication is an important aspect of behaviour; human communication is affected by all factors that influence human behaviour.

The crucial element is **meaning.** Communication has as its central objective the transmission of meaning. The process of communication is successful only when the receiver understands an idea as the sender intended it. Both parties must agree not only on the information transmitted but also on the meaning of that information.

When we talk about some profession it is called a technical or professional communication. Technical communication is about business and industry. It focuses on the information about products and services – how to manufacture them, market them, manage them, deliver them, and use them. The thumb rule of communication is that one should communicate to express, and not to impress, to make understand, and not to confuse. General communication contains basically casual talks but on the other hand technical communication contains formal talks where both the parties aware about the specific topic of conversation. Technical Communication contains technical words and technical message. It is mostly formal so far as organization, presentation, style, medium and language are concerned. It follows a set pattern. It may be in both forms of communication; oral and written. It is always for a specific audience. Thus it is usually scheduled in advance and has pre-arranged participants and pre-set agenda like a meeting, an interview, a conference, a presentation.

In our everyday life, general communication as well as technical communication mostly depends on language, whether it is written or spoken. One may talk about different languages, and different vocabularies but it is almost only the knowledge of language that can decode a technocrat’s ideas. Language in everyday contexts is natural and informal whereas the language of technical communication is or should be characterized by formality, high stylization, accuracy, and precision. Language is the starting and ending point for any communication. It is impossible to dissociate language competency from any communication. So language should be used accurately and in a good style.



**Elements of Communication**

In order to analyze the activity of communication, we must know the elements involved in the process of communication. There are seven elements or factors which make up the process of communication:

1. **Source /Sender**, is the one who initiates the action of communicating

2. **Audience/Receiver** is the person(s) for whom the communication is intended

3. **Goal/Purpose** is the sender's reason for communicating, the desired result of the communication

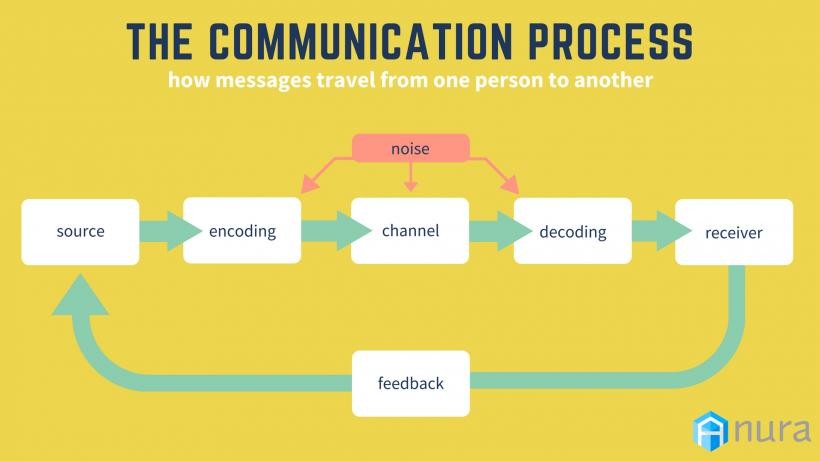
4. **Message/ Content** is the information conveyed

5. **Medium /Channel** is the means or method used for conveying the message

6. **Feedback** is the receiver's response to the communication as observed by the sender

7. **Environment /Context** is the background in which the communication takes place.

**Process of Communication**



Whether it is an informal social situation or a formal academic or professional situation, we need to share information, ideas, and knowledge with others. However, this process of sharing information is a symbolic interchange, which is both dynamic and interactive, and results in an exchange of meaning and understanding. Let us look more closely at the whole process of communication.

1. **Ideation:**

The process of communication begins with ideation, which refers to the formation of the idea or selection of a message to be communicated. The sender initiates the process of communication. The sender has to be clear about the purpose (or goal or objective) of the communication and about the target audience (or receiver) of the communication; that is, the sender decides why and to whom to send a message. Conscious or intended communication has a purpose. We communicate because we want to make someone do something or take some action, or think or feel in a certain way, that is, to influence the person.

1. **Encoding:**

Encoding is the next step in communication. The source has to decide what information to convey and create the message (or content) to be conveyed by using words or other symbols which can be understood by the intended receiver. The process of putting the idea into symbols is called **encoding**; in order to encode, the sender has to select suitable symbols which can represent the idea, and can be understood by the receiver. Also he has to select an appropriate communication form.

1. **Transmission -** **channel** or **medium:**

Transmission refers to the flow of the message over the chosen channel. The sender also chooses a suitable **channel** or **medium** (like mail, e-mail, telephone, face-to-face talk,) by which to send the message. The choice of the medium depends on several factors like urgency of the message, availability and effectiveness of a medium, and the relationship between the two communicants. The medium should be free from all kinds of barriers.

1. **Decoding**

The process of translating or converting the message or symbols into ideas and interpreting the message is called **decoding.** The **receiver** becomes aware that a message has arrived when he perceives it with his senses (he may see, hear, feel, etc). The receiver attends to the message and interprets it.Interpreting is a complex activity; it involves using knowledge of the symbols, drawing upon previous knowledge of the subject matter, ability to understand, attitudes and values, in order to create meaning. Meaning can not be transferred from one person to another, the receiver has to assign meaning to a message in order to understand it.

1. **Feedback or Response:**

Response is the last stage in the communication process. It is the action or reaction of the receiver to the message. Finally, the sender tries to note the effect of the message on the receiver; that is, he checks whether the receiver has got the message, how the receiver has responded to the message and whether he has taken the required action; this information about the receiver's response is called **feedback.**

Sender's functions make up half the process of communication. The functions of the sender are:

1. Being clear about the goal/purpose of the communication

2. Finding out about the understanding and needs of the target audience

3. Encoding the required information and ideas with symbols to create the message to suit the receiver/ audience

4. Selecting the medium to send the message

5. Making efforts to get feedback, that is, finding out the response of the target audience

The receiver also feels a reaction to the message; this reaction may be conscious or unconscious; it may cause some change in the receiver's facial expression. It definitely leads the receiver to think. The receiver may take some action, if required. He may also reply to the message. This response or reply is **feedback.**

Receiver's functions complete one cycle of the process of communication. The functions of the receiver are:

1 Attending to the received message, that is, listening, reading or observing

2 Decoding the received message

3 Interpreting and understanding the meaning of the message

4 Responding to the message

5 Giving feedback to the sender of the message

This is a simplified description of a single cycle in the process of communication. Communication really takes place in several cycles and the two persons take turns and alternately carry out functions of sender and receiver.



This one-way routine is only a part of the communication process. For the communication to be complete, the sender must know whether the receiver has got the message, understood it in the way it was intended, and has received it well. The sender can find out this only on getting a chance to note the reaction and response of the receiver. The response may be in words (spoken or written), signs, or behaviour, both conscious and unconscious. The response or return message is feedback. When the feedback is got by the sender, one cycle of communication is complete. This may be represented roughly by the following diagram.

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**Communication must be** **Demographic (know the need of the reader)**: Technical communication should be demographic. Here the term demographic is selective for the study of the audience/reader concerned. A technical writer/speaker should know well before communicating that his/her reader is familiar or unfamiliar with the subject. The writer has to classify the reader is an expert or layperson. Then, according to the sensibility of the reader, the language should be used. For effective communication, an audience can, be analyzed as follows;

**A = Analyze**​. Who is/are the recipients of your message?

**U = Understand**​. What is their knowledge about your intended message

**D = Demographics​.** What is their age, gender, education level, and position?

**I = Interest**​. What is their level of interest in your message (What’s in it for them?)

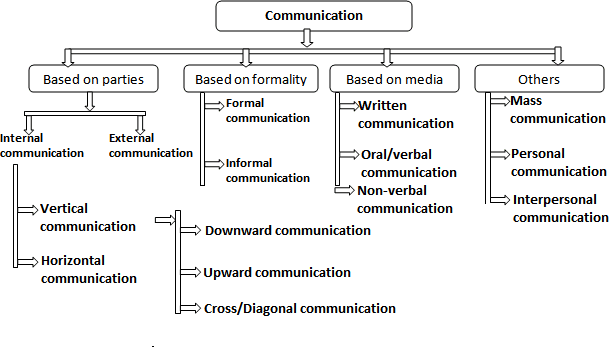
**E = Environment**​. Is there a shared contextual understanding? What is their likely attitude to your message? Have you taken cultural differences into consideration?

**N = Need**​. What information does your audience need?

**C = Customize**​. How do you adjust your message to your audience?

**E = Expectations**​. What are your audience’s expectations?

**Types of Communication**



Communication takes many forms according to the occasion and situation, the relationship between the persons, the medium and the symbols used the style of expression, and other factors.

1. **Based on media:**

**1.1 Verbal Communication and non-Verbal Communication**

Communication through words and language is called verbal communication; communication through other symbols than words and language is called non-verbal communication.

The term 'verbal' is colloquially used to mean oral but in communication studies, 'verbal' means by using words and language. It includes both written and oral. Most of our communication is done by using language; we speak and write whenever we have to convey information and ideas, to discuss, to motivate, to appreciate, or to warn, reprimand, complain, and so on. We may do any of these things orally or in writing.

**Non-Verbal Communication**

Non-verbal methods of communication include all things, other than words and language, that can convey meaning. For example, graphics like pictures, maps, charts, graphs and diagrams in a written document, and body language and voice qualities in speech, are non-verbal communication.

Non-verbal communication can be independent of verbal communication; but verbal communication is always accompanied by non-verbal communication. Non­ verbal methods can be used as a substitute for words like the red colour at traffic lights to mean stop, or nodding the head to mean "yes”

Sometimes, our body language or voice, or untidy typing may convey something opposite of what we want to convey. This discordant or inconsistent relation between verbal and non-verbal communication occurs when the person is not comfortable or is trying to say something different from what he or she really feels. Non-verbal communication is mostly involuntary and unconscious and difficult to control; it may sometimes reveal the truth which the speaker/writer is hiding behind the words. It is said, "non-verbal communication speaks louder than words." Thus, there can be unintended and unconscious non-verbal communication. On the other hand, non­ verbal methods can be consciously created and used with both written and oral communication.

Body Language always conveys meaning. It is:

• **Omnipresent**: it always accompanies spoken communication

• **Emotionally expressive**: it expresses mainly the feelings of the speaker and also of the listener

• **Dominates interaction**: it is more communicative than words

• **Seems trustable**: it is usually felt to be more truthful than spoken words

**Various forms of non-verbal communication:**

**Kinesics:** kinesics refers to communication through the body language of the parties communicating. When a boss gestures a thumbs up it could mean liking the idea or going ahead, pounding the table to express anger or disagreement, staring at the father that you have done something inappropriate, nodding delivers a positive message without words, during an interview shaking legs shows nervousness.

**Paralinguistics:**

A term used variously in the study of human communication to refer to aspects of vocal or bodily expression that convey meaning. Characteristics of the voice, apart from the words spoken, which can communicate something about the speaker’s attitude, are known as paralanguage. It is the study of spoken communication throw changes in the rate of speech, accent, volume, voice modulation, pitch and fluency. It includes the qualities of the voice, the way we use our voice, as well as the sounds we make without uttering words. It is possible to control and use paralanguage effectively by becoming aware of it and paying attention to one's voice and speech.

Voice has characteristics like tone, volume, and pitch. Tone is the quality of the voice. Volume is the loudness or softness, which can be consciously adjusted to the number of persons in the audience and the distance between the speaker and the listeners; speaking too loud shows lack of self-command or abrasive nature. Pitch is the high or low note on the scale; a high-pitched voice is often unpleasant, and suggests immaturity or emotional disturbance; a frightened person speaks in a high-pitched voice. It is better to begin softly, in a low pitch and raise the volume and pitch as required. For example, a simple sentence like ‘come here’ can be said authoritatively or endearingly, depending on the tone of the voice of the sender.

**Haptics (Touch):**

It is a subcategory of Body Language, and the study of touching as such, handshakes, holding hands, back slapping, high fives, brushing up against someone or patting someone all have meaning. Touching is the most developed sense at birth and formulates our initial views of the world. Touching can be used to sooth, for amusement during play, to flirt, to express power and maintain bonds between people, such as with baby and mother.

**Proxemics:** Proxemics refers to the use of physical space to communicate. it is the study of the amount of the space that people feel it necessary to set between themselves. Some people stand very close to another person while talking. Some people may be okay with it, while others may take offence. This aspect of communication is called proxemics.

This aspect of communication goes as far as to study the impact of objects around the room where people are communicating. For example, if during a meeting, a fountain is kept in the room, people may get distracted.

Not only the objects in a room, the room itself can have an impact on a conversation. Imagine an interview taking place in an office cafeteria. How comfortable would the interviewee be? Compare this situation to giving an interview in a closed room only in the presence of the interviewer. Thus, the three main aspects of proxemics that are used for communication are territory, things, and personal zones.

**Chronemics:** Chronemics refers to communication using time as a factor. Let us understand this with the help of an example. A boss who comes to office on time every day, subtly communicates it to his/her employees that they too are expected to be on time every day.

An understanding of non-verbal methods and aspects of communication helps a person to improve oral and written presentation by using the methods and by gaining control over body language.

There are formats and structures for verbal communication in different types of situations. For example, documents used in business have names and formats; letters, reports, memos, minutes have their own formats and layout. For oral communication we have the formats of presentations (or speeches), interviews, meetings of various types, negotiations and so on. The effectiveness of verbal communication depends on a person's skill in the use of language. A rich vocabulary, command of a variety of sentence structures, clarity in thinking, and focus on the audience are necessary for effective verbal communication.

* 1. **Spoken and Written Communication**

Spoken or oral and written communications are both forms of verbal communication. Oral communication is more natural and immediate. It is natural to speak when the other person is present; we speak to communicate in natural and informal situations. We also speak in formal and official situations such as making a presentation or taking an interview when the target audience is present.

Written communication has to be used when the other person is not present and is not available on the telephone. Long and complex messages are best conveyed in writing. A written message can go beyond time limitations since it can be preserved and can wait for the attention of the intended receiver. Written communication is separated from the sender and has no support from the sender's personality and voice. This requires different kinds of skills in both the sender and the receiver. Oral and written communications have different qualities which must be taken into account in choosing which one to use in a particular situation.

We communicate by exchanging symbols to describe our ideas and experience. Language is a common symbol system which we use for sharing our experience with others. Communication through words is called verbal communication; communication through other symbols is called non-verbal communication.

**Attributes of Spoken and Written Communication**

Oral and written communications have different attributes which have to be taken into account in choosing which one to use in a particular situation. Some of the attributes are discussed below.

**Speed**: Written communication is slower in preparation, in conveyance and in reception; it takes more time to draft, type, dispatch, and to receive and read a letter than it takes to speak, hear and understand an oral message.

**Record**: Written communication serves as a record and can be used for future reference. It is a documentary proof, and can be used as legal evidence. Oral communication may be taped for later reference, but the authenticity of the voice can be questioned; moreover, tapes can be edited and the message distorted. Written records and documents are more reliable and acceptable.

**Precision and accuracy**: Written communication is more precise and accurate than oral. Choice of words is possible in written communication because the writer has the time to look for suitable words and phrases, and to revise the draft, if necessary. Accuracy is necessary in written communication because the receiver is not present to ask for clarification. In oral communication, it is not always possible to be so precise in the choice of words. There is also no time to seek and consider words while speaking; however, the receiver can seek clarification on the spot. Besides, oral communication has the support of body language and paralanguage which enrich the meaning of the words.

**Length**: A written message is usually shorter than an oral communication. The situation of oral communication requires some preliminary and closing remarks, while for written messages there are standard formats for opening and closing which can keep the message short.

**Body Language**: Oral communication is supported by the speaker's body language and paralanguage. The speaker can control the style of delivery, giving meaning to words and sentences by voice inflexion and facial expressions and gestures. Written communication is separated from the writer's bodily presence and is more in the control of the reader. The reader can give to the words the sound, inflexion and stress as he chooses; and this may be affected by the reader's mood and state of mind at the time of reading.

**Features of Spoken Language**

**Paralinguistic elements:** A term used variously in the study of human communication to refer to aspects of vocal or bodily expression that convey meaning. Characteristics of the voice, apart from the words spoken, which can communicate something about the speaker’s attitude, are known as paralanguage. It is the study of spoken communication through changes in the rate of speech, accent, volume, voice modulation, pitch and fluency. It includes the qualities of the voice, the way we use our voice, as well as the sounds we make without uttering words. It is possible to control and use paralanguage effectively by becoming aware of it and paying attention to one's voice and speech. The actual phonetic realization of language elements is only one component of face-to-face communication.

**Normal non-fluency or voice dynamics:** Spoken discourse is generally characterized by **normal non-fluency or voice dynamics**. **Normal non-fluency** results from the unprepared nature of speech and refers to phenomena such as hesitation, unintended repetitions (e.g. I I ..), false starts, fillers (e.g. um, er), grammatical blends and unfinished sentences. A blend occurs where a sentence 'swaps horses' ie beginning in one way and ending in another; for example, in “Would you mind telling me what's the time?” the sentence begins as an indirect question, but ends as a direct question. This is slightly different from a 'false start', where a sentence is broken off mid-way as a result of a change of mind; for example, “You really ought - well do it your own way.” These phenomena are edited out in written language, which consequently appears more fluent. We may also note the apparent fluency of fictional speech that appears in literature.

**Monitoring features:** Spoken language is a dialogue, with a physically present addressee so there are **monitoring features** that indicate the speaker’s awareness of the addressee’s presence and reactions.

In a speech situation there is a constant interchange between the participants, each playing the role of speaker in turn. What the speaker says is controlled by the reactions of the listener expressed either by linguistic or by paralinguistic means, either by what the other says, or by the non-linguistic sounds he makes. The reactions of the listener provide feedback to the speaker who modifies what he says. In communication by speech there are always two participants actively involved, each monitoring the other.

**Feedback**: Feedback is the receiver’s reply to the sender either by linguistic or by paralinguistic means. Oral communication allows immediate feedback; the listener's face gives some feedback and the speaker can modify the message on the spot. Clarifications can be sought and given at once. A conversation can be brought to a satisfactory conclusion by continuous exchange of ideas and views. In written communication the feedback is delayed; the reader's facial expressions cannot be seen by the writer; the reader's response is known to the writer only when the reader replies. The reader may give a cautious and guarded reply without letting the other see the really felt reaction.

**Formality**: Spoken language tends to be less formal than written language. When a language is spoken, there are abbreviations and dropping of some sounds, as in *can't, won't, don't, I'll, we'll.* The vocabulary used in written English is also more formal than in spoken English.

1. **Based on formality:**

**Formal or Informal communication**

Formal communication means the exchange of ideas and information which is done under the planned organizational structure. The difference between "formal" and "informal" is not the same as the difference between "grammatical" and "ungrammatical." The difference is in the "register" which includes specific way, use and purpose, tone of voice, vocabulary and syntax. Varieties of language associated with specific uses and communicative purposes are called registers. In writing as well as speaking, we use a variety of registers. We use different registers for writing an assignment, for writing to a friend, for writing to a prospective employer, for conversation with a friend, and for making a presentation. Writing is usually more formal than speaking. The register we use in a given situation is determined by the social code and not the grammatical code. The relationship between writer/speaker and audience is a social relation and we maintain it in the style of writing and speaking.

**The formal** **register** follows certain conventions:

*Conservative language:* In formal style, we are careful about the noun-pronoun agreement as in "Everyone has his or her weakness" but in an informal situation we may say, "Everyone has their weakness."

*No contractions:* In instruction manuals, ''You don't want to offend your reader," sounds more comfortable than the formal ''You do not want to offend your reader." But in formal prose, contractions can give the impression that the writer is being casual.

*Restrained style:* Slang and colloquial terms suggest a casual rather than a serious approach. They are not used in formal communication. Gestures and movements are also restrained in a formal speech.

Formal communication is usually scheduled in advance and has pre-arranged participants and pre-set agenda like a meeting, an interview, a conference, a presentation. The language used is formal.

**2.1 Formal Channels**: Formal communication is the process of exchanging information by following the prescribed or official rules, procedures, systems formalities, chain of command etc. in the organizational structure. Formal channels of communication are closely related with the formal organization structure. In an organisation, formal communication is a means of controlling activities through circulation of authoritative policies and procedures stating what is to be done when, where, how, and by whom. Formal communication moves along the established "channels" of communication within the organisation. It is impersonal (desk to desk), official, and, in most cases, written. Formal meetings are documented by writing summaries and minutes. The purposes of formal communication are to command, to instruct, and to finalise matters through the application of regulations. Formal communication is needed in organisations. Since it is official, it is binding and more likely to be obeyed. It establishes responsibility of the sender and receiver. The formal channels are as follows;

1. **Upward Communication**
2. **Downward Communication**
3. **Horizontal Communication**

**2.2 Informa**l communication is the process of spontaneous exchange of information among various people of different statuses in the organizational structure. Informal communication refers to communication among people through informal contacts. Informal communication is known as Grapevine because it is related to personal rather than positional matters and is free from all formalities planned in an organization. It arises due to informal relations. It is the result of the social interaction of people. It takes place as an account of the natural desire of people to communicate with others. The informal communication system is built around the social relationship of the members of the organization. Informal communication may be unscheduled, with random participants, and no pre-set agenda. It is likely to be interactive and richer than formal communication. The style is informal and may be conversational. Informal communication is personal, unofficial, and mostly oral. It is based on the realisation that personal interaction among employees is healthy for an organisation. The purposes of informal communication are to educate through information sharing, to motivate through personal contacts, and to resolve conflicts through participation and friendship. It maintains enthusiasm, loyalty, and commitment by involving employees in organisational matters. The informal channels are as follows;

1. **Diagonal Communication or Grapevine**

**Difference between the formal and informal channels of communication**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Formal Communication** |  | **Informal Communication** |
| 1. | Formal communication is based on formal organizational relationships. | 1. | Informal communication is not based on formal organizational relationships. It is free from formalities. |
| 2. | Formal communication is mostly in written form. | 2. | Informal communication is normally the exchange of verbal talks. |
| 3. | Chances of distortion of information are very few. | 3. | Chances of distortion of informal are very high. |
| 4. | The subject matter, chain of command and authority etc. are all predetermined. | 4. | In informal communication news passes through different ways, because it depends on nearness of contacts and not on status of persons in the organization. |
| 5. | In case of formal communication, status or position of the person is very important. | 5. | In case of informal communication, status or position of the person has no relevance. |
| 6. | Formal communication takes place while carrying out their duties and responsibilities. | 6. | Where there is informal relationship between sender and receiver the communication happening in between them is called. |
| 7. | The channels of communication are preplanned. | 7. | The channels of communication are not preplanned. |
| 8. | Only prescribed and predetermined informal are exchanged in this communication. | 8. | Informal communication consists of rumours and misconceptions. |
| 9. | Formal communication is rigid as deviations are not allowed. | 9. | Informal communication is flexible. |
| 10. | Organizational hierarchy system is followed i.e. upward to downward. | 10. | Informal communication spreads like wild fire. |
| 11. | Formal communication is slow as it has to follow the path laid down by the management. | 11. | Informal communication is very fast as it is not supported to follow a particular path. |

1. **Based on parties:**
   1. **Internal:** Communication can also be categorised on the basis of location. Any communication done within an organisation or a department or even a team, is internal communication. Internal communication can be both, formal and informal.

**Note:** Following types of communication are discussed under the section “Flows of Communication**.”**

**3.1.a Vertical** **Communication:**

**3.1.a.1 Upward Communication:**

**3.1.a.2 Downward Communication**

**3.1.a.3 Diagonal Communication or Grapevine**

**3.1.b Horizontal Communication**

* 1. **External:** Any communication done with people outside an organization is external communication. External communication is always formal because, in these types of communications, a person deals with external parties that may quote the person later on. On the other hand, internal communication can be both, formal and informal.

1. **Intentional or** **Unintentional Communication**

What we intend to convey is intentional communication. Unintentional communication is what, that we do not intend to convey, but the receiver knows the same through our body language and para language. We do not always convey exactly what we want to; the targeted receiver may receive less or more than what we intended to convey. A casual observer (unintentional receiver) may receive information or ideas which we do not intend for him/her. Our non-verbal behaviour conveys something about us; what we speak or write is accompanied by non-verbal behaviour. At times we don’t want to communicate some facts but the very facts to which we want to hide are communicated by non-verbal methods.

1. **One-way and Two-way**

In one-way communication information is always transferred in only one direction from the source to the target audience. With one-way communication there is no direct interaction between the persons involved. The receiver has no chance to get clarification or to question the information received. One-way communication follows the linear Source-Message-Channel-Receiver (S-M-C-R) model of communication. Since there is no feedback, the source cannot find out whether the receiver has understood the message. Examples of one-way communications systems are radio and television broadcasts, newspapers, advertisements and other mass media. Within an organisation, the notice board and public address system are one-way systems.

Two-way communication is interactive. It involves both persons fully. In a normal two-way conversation, the persons constantly alternate between being source and receiver. The receiver can ask for clarification or challenge the source or add one's own ideas and views to the conversation. At the end of such a conversation, both gain information on the issue talked about as well as about each other.

Communication is much more complex than the simple model of source sending a message over a channel to a receiver. The sender and the receiver both actively play a role. They function within their respective frames of reference, their social situations, and their relationship to one another. What the receiver brings to the communication situation is as important as (perhaps even more important than) what the sender brings. It is a reciprocal process of exchanging signals to inform, instruct, or persuade. Two-way communication requires interpersonal skills. It takes more time than one-way communication, but it is more satisfying and brings about a better understanding and agreement between the parties involved.

1. **Intrapersonal Communication:**

Intrapersonal communication is communication within oneself. Man uses his senses to understand the environment around him and to perceive, to judge and to act accordingly. For example, when it is hot man seek for shade, when it is rainy man seek for cover, when it is cold man seek for fire, etc. All these are a result of communication taking place within the individual. Intrapersonal communication, thus, forms the basis of all other forms of communication. Effective intrapersonal communication is required for effective functioning of an individual in its environment. The information received through senses forms the basis of decision-making in this type of communication system. For example, when we watch TV, our eyes and ears receive information and transmit the same to our brain. If we like what we see or hear, our intrapersonal communication system makes sure that we attend to it. On the other hand, if we don’t like it, our brain sends a message to our muscles that result in a decision to change station. Thus, we can see that in intrapersonal communication, our eyes and ears become the senders, electrochemical impulses become the message, nerve system become the medium and the brain becomes the receiver. Also, the additional impulses transmitted by the brain to the muscles become the feedback which produces the desires result of changing the station.

1. **Interpersonal Communication:**

Interpersonal communication is a face-to-face communication between two persons. It includes most of the informal and formal exchanges that we engage in throughout the day.

1. **Extra Personal:**

Communication between human beings and non-human entities is extra personal. For example, your pet dog comes to you wagging its tail as soon as you return home from work. A parrot responding to your greeting is another example.

1. **Group Communication:**

Group communication occurs essentially between three or more people who see themselves as belonging to, or being identified with, a group. The size of the group decides the level of interaction and intimacy within it. Larger groups provide less time for personal and intimate exchanges. As a matter of fact, communication becomes difficult and more of a monologue with the increase in size of the group.

1. **Public Communication:**

It generally occurs within a formal and structured setting and is different from small group communication in this respect. However, in this type of communication, one person plays the part of the speaker and the rest of the persons serve as listeners or audience. Speaker speaks for the most of the time and the listeners are not generally allowed to contribute through verbal messages except for the question-and-answer session following the speech. However, listeners contribute through nonverbal messages such as applauses, laughter, etc. throughout the speech. Still the balance of message sending is quite uneven with speaker being dominant. Despite the imbalance, public communication is effective because of the simple fact that it occurs face-to-face. Also, we find ourselves participating in it as either speakers or listeners. Public communication always takes place in public places rather than private places. Auditoriums, conference and seminar rooms, classrooms, etc. are a few examples of public places.

1. **Mass Communication:**

It involves transmission of information to a sizable and diversified audience through the use of appropriate media. It is much more complex than any other form of communication. The communicator addresses a large number of people at a time. This makes it difficult for him to address and meet individual needs. An approach that convinces one part of the audience may left another part of the audience completely uncertain. Thus, the communicator must find the correct method and expression to correlate with the largest possible number of people in the audience.

A communicator must know what to deliver and how to deliver so that he can create maximum impact. Message should be well-structured, easy to understand and clear. The message must be presented in such a way that it leaves a long-lasting impression. However, this requires an understanding of audience’s profile. Wright defined audience of mass communication as ‘relatively large, heterogeneous and anonymous to the source. The experience is public and rapid. The source works through a complex organization rather than in isolation and the message may represent the efforts of many different people.’

**Flows of Communication**

Communication is essential for the internal functioning of any organization. The interaction between the different individuals working in a company takes place through different channels. These channels could be both informal and informal. According to the flow of messages towards the hierarchy communication is described as follows;

**Vertical communication:** Vertical communication is the communication where information or messages flows between or among the subordinates and superiors of the organization.

**(A) Downward Communication:** As the main function of downward communication is providing control, it refers to communication from the higher level in the managerial hierarchy to the lower one. A communication from the general manager of a company to the branch managers is an example of downward communication.

**(B) Upward Communication:** As the main purpose of communication is to provide feedback on several areas of organizational functioning, it refers to communication from subordinates to superiors. A business report from the branch manager or a company to the managing director of the company is an example of upward communication.

**Horizontal Communication:** Horizontal communication is communication where information or messages flows between or among the parallel or same level or statuses people of the organizational structure.

The main objectives of horizontal communication are developing teamwork, and promoting group coordination within an organization. It takes place between professional peer groups or people working on the same level of hierarchy. Horizontal communication is less formal and structured than both downward communication and upward communication, and may be carried out through informal discussion, management gossip, telephone calls, teleconferencing, videoconferencing, memos, routine meetings, and so on.

**Diagonal /Grapevine Communication:** Diagonal communication is the produce of modern changes in information technology and management and is the result of the growing realization of fraternity and equality in the corporate channel occurs between people who do not have to follow rigid norms of communication protocol, it flows in all directions. Informal channels transmit official news through unofficial and informal communicative interactions known as the grapevine. Such channels are more active in organisations that are not transparent. As employees want to know what is going on in their organization. As tea time gossip, casual gatherings, lunch time meeting.

**Barriers to communication**

Communication is not always successful several things can prevent the message from reaching the intended recipient or gaining from the desired effect on the recipient. There may be some faults in the communication system which prevents the message from reaching. Some of these defects are in the mechanical devices used for transmitting, that is, the medium. Some are in the symbols we use for communicating, that is, language or other symbols used for encoding. Some are in the nature of the persons who are engaged in communication, that is, the sender and the receiver. In an organisation, these barriers can become quite complicated and can cause information gaps leading to problems in its working.

Barriers can be divided into broad groups: Physical barriers, Semantic and Language barriers, Socio-psychological barriers and organisational barriers. Besides, there are Cross-cultural barriers which distort communication between persons or groups belonging to a different cultural background.

1. **Physical Barriers**

Obstacles that prevent a message from reaching the intended recipient may be outside and beyond the control of the persons concerned. Some can be controlled by the management; some cannot be controlled because they are in the environment.

**Defects in the Medium.**

Defects in the devices used for transmitting messages are external, and usually not within the control of the parties engaged in communication. The telephone, the postal system, the courier service, or electronic media may fail. Messages can get delayed, distorted and even lost while being transmitted.

A partial failure of the mechanical equipment \_ is more harmful than a total failure because a partial failure may carry an incomplete or distorted message. A fax message can be wrongly delivered as a wrong number can get dialled on the telephone. The printout may not be clear at all. It is advisable to call up and check that the fax has been received.

**Noise in the Environment**

Noise is any disturbance which occurs in the transmission process. In face-to face communication which is carried by air vibration, the air may be disturbed by noise such as traffic, factory work, or people talking. In a factory, oral communication is very difficult because of the noise of the machines.

**Information Overload**

When there is too much information, some of it is blocked in transit and may not reach the intended audience. Advertising and sales information is an example of overload; so much communication about products floats through so many media that a good deal of it-does not reach the potential buyer.

1. **Semantic and Language Barriers**

Semantic means pertaining to 'or 'arising from the different meanings of words or other symbols. Language is our most important and powerful tool of communication; and yet it is a tricky tool that needs skill in handling. First of all, many words have **multiple meanings**. The meaning that comes to your mind first depends on your occupation ("charge" may mean an electrical charge to an engineering student, but a fee/rent to a commerce student).

The word ‘current’ has different meanings in different contexts, such as for an electric engineering student, for a commerce student, or for a bank manager.

The word ‘housewife’ has different meanings with different pronunciations.

Housewife /ˈhaʊs.waɪf/ a married woman whose main occupation is caring for her family.

Housewife /ˈhʌz.ɪf/ a small case for needles and other sewing items.

**Emotional and cultural attitudes** towards something can evoke different responses in people. Sentences can convey entirely different meanings depending on how they are spoken due to the **Position of focus** ie **End-focus and contrastive focus.** Consider the sentence, “Idid not tell John you were late.” It means something different with every shift of emphasis/focus from one word to another. In oral communication, the speaker can signify the meaning by emphasising particular words; but in written communication, the reader is in his own control and may read with different emphasis.

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| **Placement of Emphasis** | **Signifying Meaning** |
| **I** did not tell John you were late. | Someone else told John you were late. |
| I **did not** ​tell John you were late. | This did not happen. |
| I did not **tell** John you were late. | I may have implied it. |
| I did not tell **John** ​you were late. | But maybe I told Sharon and José. |
| I did not tell John **you** were late. | I was talking about someone else. |
| I did not tell John you **were** late. | I told him you still are late. |
| I did not tell John you were **​late**. | I told him you were attending another meeting. |

Technical terms can be a barrier to communication. Such terms are limited to the group of persons who work together, or work in the same kind of occupation; they need to use technical terms in their work. Often, these words have other meanings in ordinary language, and are differently understood by people who do not belong to that occupational group. New words are being coined almost everyday; everyone does not understand them and many of them are not in the dictionaries yet. More importantly, semantic barriers arise because words mean different things to different persons.

It is' said, "meaning is in people, not in words." Age, education, cultural background and many other factors influence the meaning we give to words.

1. **Socio-Psychological Barriers**

Any socio-psychological or emotional disturbance can prove to be a barrier to effective communication because it leads to lack of interest and concentration. The emotional disturbance may adversely affect both encoding and decoding. All people are not skilled communicators. Skill in communicating has to be cultivated. Most people have problems which come in the way of good communication. People have personal feelings, desires, fears and hopes, likes and dislikes, attitudes, views and opinions. Some of these are formed by family background and social environment; some are formed by the individual's own intelligence, inherited qualities, education, and personal experiences.

Most of the socio-psychological barriers discussed below operate at the emotional level.

**Self-centred Attitudes:** We tend to see and hear everything in the light of our own interests and needs and desires.

**Group Identification:** Our values and opinions are influenced, by the group to which we belong.

**Self-Image:** We have a certain idea of ourselves; some persons even take care to project an image of themselves

**Selective Perception:** Sometimes, we fail to get the complete message which is sent to us.

**Defensiveness:** If we feel threatened by a message, we become defensive and respond in such ways that reduce understanding.

**Status Block:** A "boss" who is conscious of status finds it difficult to receive any suggestions from subordinates.

**Resistance to Change:** This is a serious psychological barrier. Some people strongly resist new ideas which are against their established opinions or traditions or social customs. They may avoid new ideas because they feel insecure or afraid of changes in methods or situations.

**Closed Mind:** Limited intellectual background, limited reading and narrow interests can cause a person's mind to be narrow.

**Poor Communication Skills:** Lack of skill in writing and in speaking prevents a person from framing the message properly.

**State of Health:** Physical conditions can affect communication efficiency. Pain or fever certainly makes a person disinclined to engage in communication; but even if the general state of health is poor, communicating ability is reduced.

1. **Organisational Barriers**

In an organisation, the information gaps and barriers become more complex. The movement of papers and of information gets held up by the system itself. Editing and filtering may also create barriers. A great deal of loss of information occurs as a message moves from senior management to lower levels. If a message passes down through many levels of authority, there may be much distortion in the message. Loss or distortion of information, as it moves downward, may be caused by misinterpretation, lack of understanding, and neglect of messages by some of the members of the organisation.

Over-dependence on written communication is one of the reasons for communication gaps. Circulars, bulletins, notices and even letters are not always read carefully. Many employees are unable to read and understand long messages.

1. **Inter-Cultural Barriers**

Even in the best of conditions, communication can be difficult. Cross cultural factors naturally increase the possible problems of communication. If for historical or political reasons, the relationships between two countries are not friendly, there can be even greater problems of communication. Culture is a shared set of values and attributes of a group; it is the sum total of the ways of living built up by a group and transmitted from one generation to another. Culture is so much a part of an individual's manner of talking, behaving and thinking, that communication style and competence are influenced by it.

**The Language** of any group directly reflects their culture. You only have to think of some of the sayings or proverbs or idiomatic expressions in an Indian language and in English to see that translation from one to the other is nearly impossible. Such culture-bound word as *Jalebi, Sherwani* certainly can't convey the same notion with other language equivalents. Many words cannot be translated exactly. Even among countries that speak the same language like the British and the Australians, a word may not have the same significance.

**Non-verbal behaviour** is another area of trouble in cross-cultural communication. Body language is a major factor that varies between cultures. Not only are gestures understood differently, but the amount of use of gestures varies. Indians use much more natural gestures than the British; the Japanese have many formal gestures for social interaction but fewer free body movements.

**Paralanguage**

Cross-cultural confusion arises from the way we use our voices. People in many countries are put off by loud Indian voices, and noisy Indian tourists. Some Western cultures speak in such low voices that we can hardly hear them and may wonder if they intend to be secretive. The difference between cultures in the speed of talking makes the faster-talking people consider the slow-talking cultures as slow and lax. Some cultures expect formality and a formal tone at work and are embarrassed or put off by the informal tone of another culture. The amount of silence that is considered as right during a conversation can cause confusion.

**Perception** is influenced by culture. We perceive some things and ignore others; we particularly perceive what is contrary to our own culture and what makes us uncomfortable. What smells "good" or "bad" is perceived differently. Rain means something different for Indians from what it means for the British. Differences in perception of the world can be amazing. Our worldviews and attitudes to life affect our meanings.

1. **Gender barriers**

Gender barrier is also a type of barrier, such as male and female work in an organization. Societal stereotypes assumed gender roles, and interpersonal differences can contribute to a communication gap between the gender and there is a rift between people due to gender.

**Overcoming Barriers**

The constant organisational effort is needed to overcome the barriers which are unconsciously built up by different people in the organisation. Persons in positions of authority, as well as subordinates, can be helped to overcome these barriers by training in effective communication.

The responsibility for overcoming barriers to personal communication and ensuring the success of every communication activity falls upon the senior and the better-trained person. The higher your position, the greater is your need for effective communication. You have to cultivate all the communication skills including getting feedback and non-verbal communication. The external barriers of defective channels and faulty organisational systems are the Management's responsibility within the organisation. The channels must be kept in good working condition; the intercoms, noticeboards, and information meetings must be kept up-to-date.

Semantic and language barriers can be overcome only by being careful with the use of language, by using words which have a clear meaning, by using short and simple sentences, and also by using visual aid whenever possible. Whenever possible, feedback must be got and given to ensure that there is a common understanding of a message.

Personal barriers can be overcome only by making a conscious effort, and by training for better communication. Persons in responsible positions are expected to improve their communication skills and overcome their particular blocks. Many companies organize training sessions for their staff for better communication skills.

Barriers can develop unexpectedly since emotions play a large part in communication. It is not easy to overcome all barriers; everyone has to make efforts to be aware of them and take care to avoid them.

**Basics / Characteristics / Qualities / CS**  **of Professional Communication**

Our everyday life in general communication as well as in technical communication is (almost) entirely dependent on language, both written language and spoken language. One may talk about different languages and different vocabularies but it is almost only the knowledge of language that can decode a technocrat’s ideas. Language in everyday contexts is natural, informal and constantly evolving whereas the language of technical writing is or should be characterized by formality, high stylization, accuracy, and precision. Language is the starting and ending point for any writing. It is impossible to dissociate language competency from any writing. So language should be used accurately and in a good style.

**Style:** a style clad in a good uniform of thoughts must work sooner or later. Style and thought are two cardinal virtues of writing; these are the sinews of fame, as of eternity. A single word can earn or mar a user’s reputation. Words are like gravel for the writing journey that leads to the palace of wisdom. Technical communication art is born of the right choice of words. The ignorance of the choice of words is not innocence but sin that only ruins one’s writing. Jonathan Swift’s definition is succinct: “Proper words in proper places make the true definition of a style.” When proper words prevail ambiguity flees away so a technocrat has to endeavour a lot to achieve immaculateness. A technical writer very nicely must know his art and re-examines it with a true critic’s skill.

Stylistics is not a stylish word, but it is well-connected. The true nature of it is elusive and needs a subtler net to catch the mistakes and ambiguities. Choose a simple word rather than a difficult one, a concrete word in preference to an abstract one, and a familiar word instead of a rare one. Complex, hard-to-understand sentences are rarely good sentences. Good technical writing communicates in simple terms, even though the subject may be complicated. Repeated use of unnecessary, difficult, and abstract words and phrases makes the subject hard to understand.

**Verbosity** should be avoided. It means to say a thing in a complicated way, with lots of words, usually to make it sound more important, this is a poor style. Technical writing should be impersonal and formal at the expense of readability and clarity. The rhythm and smooth flow of language is important in technical writing.

**Descriptive writing**: technical writing should be descriptive. The term descriptive here does not refer to the detail and length of a document, but to cover each aspect of the topic described. Language should be used to create an image in the reader’s mind so that every concept should be clear.

**Demographic writing or knowing the need of a reader:** Technical writing should be demographic. Here the term demographic is selective for the study of the audience/reader concerned. A technical writer should know well before writing that his/her reader is familiar or unfamiliar with the subject. The writer has to classify the reader is an expert or layperson. Then, according to the sensibility of the reader, the language should be used.

Technical writing is a process of giving a voice to one’s thoughts. It is not meant to be showy or entertaining or to show the writer’s knowledge; its intent is to provide clear and concise information to the reader. It should not be written to impress but to make understand and establish strong goodwill. Both the use of language and presentation should be of attracting attention. Also, the presentation should be functional and understandable. There should occur an image from words on the page during every illustration. Clear, concise writing gives the impression of confidence and knowledge, credibility and authority. Followings are the basic characteristics of basics of professional communication.

**Clarity:** it exists in using simple, familiar, concrete, specific words and expression and clear references.

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| Tactless Version | Tactful Version |
| You are advised to send us a few important doubtful points as early as possible. Such as your service charges, methods of payment, concession schemes, and so on. | Please send us details regarding your service charges, methods of payment, concession schemes, and so on. |

**Courtesy:** the technical writing must reflect courtesy and consideration, as the reader is under no obligation to do what the writer write for. Positive and encouraging phrases should be used and irritating phrases and expressions should be avoided.

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| Tactless Version | Tactful Version |
| You must send the refund without delay to at the address below. | Please send the refund to me at the address below. |

**Conciseness:** technical writing should be concise and direct so unnecessary words, wordy expressions; empty words, wordy compounds, repetitions, and redundancies must be avoided. Indirect expressions, rhetoric, and exaggeration should be avoided. Conciseness should not be on the cost of clarity.

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| Tactless Version | Tactful Version |
| I am very happy to inform you that the report on student involvement in academic decision-making that was completed for your research department is being sent to you along with this letter of mine. | Enclosed please find the report on student involvement in academic decision-making, completed for your research department. |

**Correct Tone:** tone in technical writing refers to the manner or mood of expression. It helps establish the relationship that the writer wishes to establish with the reader. The tone should be formal, tactful, personal, and positive. A tactless or negative tone can lead to misunderstanding, resulting in a negative response from the reader.

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| Tactless Version | Tactful Version |
| Your project is so complex and your demand for satisfaction is so ambitious that it cannot be completed in the stated time-span so we need more time to complete the project report. | To complete the project report to the best of your satisfaction, please give us an extension of 3 days. |

**Correct Attitude:** attitude in technical writing refers to the reflection of the opinion of the writer on the reader. To establish goodwill and a long-term relationship with the reader, avoid poor and negative language.

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| Tactless Version | Tactful Version |
| We will not be able to process your order because your business terms are too vague and unacceptable to us. | Please send us your specific and clear business terms so that we can process your order. |

**Correct language:** correct, accurate and simple language should be used in technical writing. The use of careless and incorrect use of language not only leaves a bad impression on the reader about the writer but also it misleads the meaning.

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| Tactless Version | Tactful Version |
| You were sold a watch by me on 10 September 2022. | I sold a watch to you on 10 September 2022. |

**Professional Ethics**

The term ethics is referred to morals, beliefs, integrities and principles. It is the study of moral principles or values that determine whether actions are right or wrong and whether outcomes are good or bad. It is a science that deals with the ideals involved in human conduct. Ethics are the set of rules that describe acceptable conduct within society. Ethics serve as a guide to moral daily living and makes provision of support and assistance in judging whether the behaviour of the individuals is justified or not. In fact, ethics are the rules or standards, governing the conduct of a person or the conduct of the members of a profession. When individuals are communicating with each other within the organizations, they need to take these factors into consideration. The ethical conduct really acts as the backbone of an effective communication strategy and a key virtue of professionalism.

The implementation of ethics in the communication process can be recognized in various following aspects.

**Do’s and don’ts in Professional communication**

**Do’s**

Being a good listener.

Admitting criticism.

Responding to critics honestly and respectfully.

Admitting mistakes.

Using polite language.

Possessing a friendly attitude.

Providing constructive criticism.

Depicting truthfulness and honesty.

Imparting factual information.

Depicting helpfulness and co-operation.

Eliminating fraudulent traits.

Encouraging harmonious behiviour.

Inculcating the traits of thoroughness.

Being resourcefulness and conscientiousness.

Augmenting competencies and abilities.

Communicating accurate information.

Obeying laws and public policies.

Protecting confidential information while acting within the law.

Supporting the ideals of free speech.

Being sensitive to others cultural values and beliefs.

Giving credit to others for their work.

Abstaining from doing harm to others.

Being accountable and transparent.

**Don’t s**

Don’t “Reply All” to an email chain.

Don’t have personal conversations at your desk.

Don’t bring your emotions into the office.

Don’t be afraid to ask questions.

Don’t gossip about fellow co-workers…or your boss.

Don’t use emojis or multiple exclamation points (if any) in official emails.

Don’t talk back to your boss.

Don’t use confidential information for personal benefit.

Don’t represent conflicting or competing interests without full disclosure and the written consent of those involved.

Don’t accept undisclosed gifts or payments for professional services from anyone other than a client or employer.

Don’t exaggerating facts.

Don’t guarantee results that are beyond my power to deliver.

Implementation of these factors would contribute effectively in enriching ethics in organizational communication. Within the organization, the members are in the form of the hierarchy. It is indispensable for all the members to put into operation these traits to achieve organizational goals and maintain work place etiquettes. When the members of the organization put into operation these factors, they are able to establish efficacious terms and relationships with others, enhance the structure of the organization and retain their jobs. Therefore, it can be stated, these are regarded as requisite in enriching the lives of the individuals.