

Communication channels refer to the way this information flows within the organization and with other organizations.

- ⦿ Horizontal
- ⦿ Vertical
 - Upward
 - Downward
- ⦿ Crosswise
- ⦿ Spiral

Communication may flow horizontally, i.e., among people of the same rank in an organization. This is for better coordination among various departments and for effective decision-making purposes. In order to achieve the production target for a particular month, the discussion held between the production manager and the supply manager will certainly be a perfect instance of *horizontal communication*.

However, when the production manager imparts certain instructions to the workers and supervisors for the same purpose, it will be *downward communication*. Here, the information moves from the higher authority to its subordinates. And in the same context, if the supervisor reports to the production manager regarding the present state of production, it will be a case of *upward communication*.

If the management circulates the copy of new bonus and incentive scheme among all the employees, it will be called *spiral communication* in the organization. Sometimes however, communication flows between persons who belong to different levels of hierarchy and who have no direct reporting relationships. This is used generally to quicken the information flow, improve understanding and coordinate efforts for the achievement of organizational objectives. Such a movement of an information flow is termed as *diagonal communication*.

In organizations, informal communication also permeates the personal and professional lives of the employees. This informal flow of communication is called *grapevine*. For instance, rumors about the company's expansion, salary hike, promotion of an employee, relationship between two colleagues etc. It flows in all directions. Grapevine may create both negative and positive impact on the environment within an organization.