

Communication



What exactly is communication?

- We humans communicate all the time, there isn't a day in our lives when we don't, if only with ourselves.
- The word communication comes from the Latin *communicare* , which means "to do together".
- We also use the word communication when it comes to movement, for example in traffic contexts.
 - In this context (this course) we mean instead the movement of information or messages, with the intention of doing something together.
- Communicate is a verb, meaning something that you do.
- So something that you can get better at, through training.
- By increasing our awareness of how we ourselves and others communicate, we can get better at it.

Reasons for communication?

There are more human drives to communication than transferring information

Within academia, it is common to divide the field of communication into three main areas:

- **Intellectual** - *convey and receive information*
- **emotional/psychological** - *give vent to feelings, express our identity, needs and personality*
- **social** - *maintaining relationships, feeling seen and appreciated, influencing, getting close, etc*

It is clear that different people place different importance on the aspects.

- Based on situation
- Based on personal preference

Normal people apply all three areas daily.

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Discussion two and two:

Do you have your own preference regarding the three areas? Generally or in different situations.

Can you think of examples where people in the same situation have different focuses between the areas?

Different ways to communicate

There are many ways to communicate, but so far we humans are limited by our senses: primarily hearing and sight (but also the others).

Closest to hand is **verbal communication**, i.e. that we talk to each other.

The nature of verbal communication differs between different cultures, contexts, men and women, highly educated and poorly educated, socio-economic affiliation, young and old, etc.

Verbal communication is among the first things we learn in life, along with body language. Later in life we develop **visual communication**: we learn to interpret symbols, then letters, words and sentences. For visual communication there are several different *media* we use such as notes, books, newspapers, signs, telephones, computers, etc, etc

It is interesting to think about the fact that today we are exposed to between 3000-20000 'advertising messages' every day. (according to a study from 2013) The vast majority via visual communication. This can be related to the fact that the average person thinks 50,000 thoughts in a day.

Discussion

What kind of communication is there that does not happen through hearing or sight?

Can we make active use of such communication? how?

Grebner's model of communication

In order to better speak about communication, we can use a model. Grebner's model from the 1950s has two dimensions, one *perceptive* and one *communicative*.

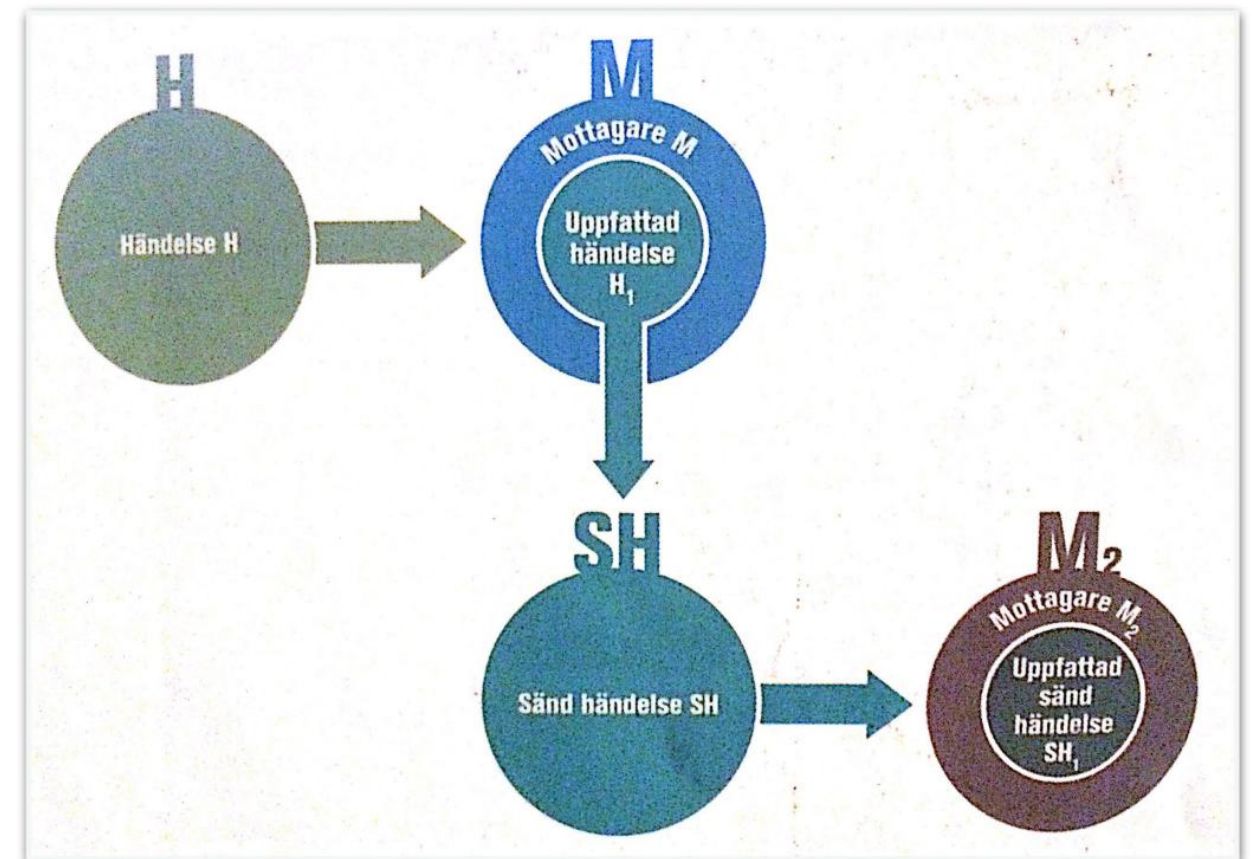
In the first step, Grebner imagines an event (H) which in turn is perceived by a receiver (M).

The event can be a message or information that is sent out.

At the receiver, a certain filtering of the event now takes place, as a result of attention, sight, hearing, situation, interpretation, etc. so that a Perceived event (H₁) is stored at the receiver M.

The next step in the model goes into the communicative dimension, when the event must now be communicated further (or forward-back to the original sender in two-way communication). Now the perceived event (H₁) is converted into a signal (SH) which is transmitted in some way, through speech, text, gesture, etc.

The next step is again in the perceptive dimension when the signal (SH) reaches a new receiver (M₂) who now receives his version of the event.



The model highlights how complex the communication of even a relatively simple message can be. A lot happens along the way...

Noise in communication

Grebner's model shows how many steps, interpretations, transformations take place in our communication. In addition, it is constantly exposed to noise of various kinds. This noise constitutes communication interference and we shall consider some such:

- *Language barrier*
- *Double message*
- *Ambiguity*
- *Wrapped messages*
- *Mind reading*
- *Self-affirmation*
- *Defense mechanisms*
- *Halo effect and other misconceptions*

Noise in communication (1)

Grebner's model shows how many steps, interpretations, transformations take place in our communication. In addition, it is constantly exposed to noise of various kinds. This noise constitutes communication interference and we shall consider some such:

Language barriers - In translations or when communicating with a language other than the mother tongue of one or more of those involved, there is a high risk of disruptions as a result of linguistic misunderstandings. It can be pure misunderstanding, a word you don't know, or a different perception of the degree of a word's meaning, eg the English "hell" is not as rough as the Swedish "helvete". There may also be language barriers between different socio-economic groups or geographical divisions (dialects, slang, etc.).

Double message - When we say one thing and body language, tone of voice or action suggest something else. "This was delicious," someone says, leaving a lot on the plate.

Unclearness - Disturbances occur when the livestock is sent unclearly, ex) "I'll be home later" or "it's very much needed".

Wrapped messages - When we don't say what we mean straight out, but try to hide it, for various reasons. "I need time to myself" instead of "I don't want to see you anymore"

Noise in communication (2)

Grebner's model shows how many steps, interpretations, transformations take place in our communication.

In addition, it is constantly exposed to noise of various kinds. This noise constitutes communication interference and we shall consider some such:

Mind reading - both sender and receiver behave as if they could read the other's mind, especially if they know each other well. This can lead to the sender sending incomplete messages (and expecting the other to understand) or the receiver to stop really listening, because it thinks it knows what the other is going to say. This not only disrupts communication, but also often gives rise to misunderstandings and conflicts.

Assertiveness - Some are so eager to share their own message that they don't listen to the other. Raising your voice, interrupting or 'turning your ears off' disrupts communication.

Defense Mechanisms - Defense mechanisms can disrupt communication or lead to dishonesty. (Weaknesses in the ego can manifest themselves, among other things, in excuses or denial.)

Halo effect and other attribution errors - The halo effect occurs when a person has several good (or bad) characteristics and others thereby attribute to them more of the same kind. This usually disrupts communication as the interpretation, the filtering, becomes incorrect regardless of how the message is sent out.

Noise in communication (3)

- *Language barriers*
- *Double message*
- *Ambiguity*
- *Wrapped messages*
- *Mind reading*
- *Self-affirmation*
- *Defense mechanisms*
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Discussion (two and two)

Try to find real examples of communication disorders you have had, preferably in a work or study environment.

Can you identify what kind of disturbance it was?

Discuss how you could reduce the risk/occurrence of such disturbances

Business communication

Communication at work is partly different than in everyday life or private life. (However, the boundary can be very fine and constantly moved).

Business communication takes place between customers, suppliers, authorities and others in the outside world.

Business communication also includes internal communication at the workplace, such as staff meetings and information to employees.

Business communication differs from private communication in several ways;

- Business communication always has a purpose - ex) compared to private which can be of a purely social nature
 - It may apply to something concrete that we want to sell, buy or inform about.
 - It may be wanting to establish a contact or maintain a relationship.
- As a rule, communication is important, which must then take place in a correct and professional manner.

Adjust the language according to the recipient

There are several reasons why we express ourselves correctly in business communication.

When you talk to people outside the workplace in your work, you always represent your organization. In that situation, you express yourself as a representative, not as a private person.

Partly it is about being polite and pleasant, but it is also important that the person we are communicating with understands what is involved and perceives the message in the right way.

Three special modes:

- You often have a friendly tone towards colleagues when you work together, but in meetings you usually take care of the language and do not joke as much or at all. It is distinctive that you show respect for each other.
- In Sweden, we often have an equal relationship with our managers. But a boss is always superior and you should keep that in mind when you talk to your boss. Most people benefit from carefully thinking through what they want to say, especially if you make a complaint, for example. (The knowledge of this in turn affects everyone's expectations of what the conversational style is like)
- When talking to customers, it is important to listen to the recipient. If the customer has an easy-going way of expressing themselves, you can be happy to be like that yourself, but without exaggeration. If the customer is more serious and serious in their way of communication, you should respect that by speaking and acting correctly.

By and large, it can feel like common sense, indicating an evolved sense of our communication patterns. Despite this, there are many who do not follow these patterns, with unnecessary conflicts and problems as a result...

Factors that affect how communication turns out

Who we communicate with affects how we do it. Different factors on the part of the recipient affect the way you express yourself. It could be:

- age
- gender
- language
- profession
- education
- position
- knowledge of the subject
- previous experience
- personality

All these factors, and more, can affect how communication turns out. The more you know about the person you are communicating with, the more you can adapt your way of expressing yourself, so that the message gets across and the interference is reduced.

It's not that easy. But being responsive and listening in facilitates and makes communication better.

Factors in yourself...

As if it were not enough that the recipient of your communication influences how the communication becomes, or should be, you yourself also influence to a great extent.

Your past experiences, values and attitudes will add to and influence your way of communicating.

How you feel and feel at the moment also matters when you communicate.

In addition, your driving forces, goals and ambitions with the communication or the context.

Just as it pays to listen to the receiver, it can also be helpful to become better at listening to yourself. There is a risk that you will act unprofessionally or behave prejudiced if you do not have good self-awareness, and downright be overwhelmed by your own reaction to someone or something.

If you meet a (for you) new person and somehow notice that you react negatively to them, think about what could be the reason.

Part of developing and using a professional communication style is mastering your inner self and not letting prejudices and other emotions get the better of you. Through increased self-awareness and training, one can go a long way in a relatively short time in this regard.

Oral or written business communication?

Part of finding your style in business communication is learning to choose between oral and written communication.

It depends on the situation and what the message is, but also how the relationship and practice are.

What are the advantages/disadvantages of:

Oral communication

Written communication

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What are the advantages/disadvantages of:

Oral communication

- the receiver can ask questions
- the sender can check (with questions)
- real time

- high risk of interference (noise, misinterpretations, the listener does not catch up, loses the thread)
- Difficult to control (the transmitter can lose control)
- can become stressful

Written communication

- plenty of time to formulate carefully
- the recipient can read several times
- the recipient 'chooses' the time
- the message remains unadulterated over time

- slow, the recipient cannot ask questions in the meantime.
- risk of misinterpretations that are not corrected

Business communication channels

Today, we have more channels available for business communication than ever before, thanks in large part to the internet and social media. Some examples;

- oral, direct contact (eg meeting with customer/supplier)
- oral, telephone / video
- email
- facebook
- LinkedIn
- twitter / X
- instagram
- website - live chat
- newspapers (paper or online)
- letter
- SMS
- tv - video - youtube - etc

Business communication channels

Today, we have more channels available for business communication than ever before, thanks in large part to the internet and social media. Some examples;

- oral, direct contact (eg meeting with customer/supplier), oral, telephone / video, e-mail, facebook, linkedin, twitter, instagram, website - live chat, newspapers (paper or online), letters, sms, tv - video - youtube - etc

As different media, or channels, for communication have emerged, more specialist roles have appeared to manage the selection of, design of information and messages, strategy, etc. In the everyday professional role, however, many still have a choice between;

Meet - call - message - email

By analyzing both the person to communicate with, what to communicate and the relationship you have, the choice becomes easier. The own intention with the communication also plays a role, as well as the recipient's expected reaction and needs.

Yet we do things differently. Some prefer to call a customer if something has gone wrong, while others are more comfortable with a detailed and explanatory e-mail. Some people think that a text message is adequate for a shorter, professional communication that others can only think of as e-mail or phone calls.

Becoming good at business communication is a lot about being responsive and thinking through your own intentions.