

Communication Skills Notes

Unit 1

1. Define Communication.

Communication is a process in which information is exchanged between and among individuals using common symbols, signs and behavior.

According to Robert Anderson, "Communication is interchange of thoughts, opinions, or information, by speech, writing or signs

According to Allen Louis, "Communication is the sum of all the things one person does when he wants to create understanding in the mind of another, it involves a systematic and continuous process of, telling, listening, and understanding.

Koontz and O'Donnell as, "The transfer of information from one person to another, irrespective of whether or not it elicits confidence"

2. State the different objectives of business communication

Broadly speaking, in business we communicate

1. To Inform :

To provide information for use in decision making, but not initiating any course of action.

Information consists of facts & figures and data which can be arranged in different patterns as required for different purpose.

Information can be oral or in written form. E.g. Information is given orally in a meeting, at airports, at railway stations by public address systems.

Companies give employees information about the company's goals, plans, progress, working conditions, training, promotional opportunities, benefits, work related information, etc. in the form of circulars, notices, rules, procedure manuals, work instructions, bulletins, pamphlets, periodicals, e-portals and other such medium

Company's also give public information about their progress, products and policies through mass media like newspapers and television.

2. To persuade :

Persuasion means to reinforce or change the audience's belief about something and possibly act on that belief. Making efforts to influence the attitude and behavior of others.

It is achieved by skillful appeal to emotions. The style and tone of persuasive communication is different from the style and tone of informative communication.

Mostly all communication in business is a deliberate and intentional act of persuasion.

We use persuasion to motivate employees, to sell products to consumers, to collect dues from customers, etc.

There are three factors of persuasion

1. **Source Credibility:** The personal character, reputation and expertise of the persuader must be respected and accepted by others. People believe what is said or written by a respected and reputable person and organization
2. **Emotional Appeal:** The social and ego needs of a person are emotional needs. If the persuader offers satisfaction of these emotional needs, people respond favorably.
3. **Logic:** The communication made by the persuader must be logical and reasonable. People must be shown how they will benefit by accepting the proposed ideas, views or actions.

3. To Build Relationship:

The way people communicate to customers, to employees, to supplier, to stakeholders and to the regulatory authorities will decide on the kind of relationship they will build for the company.

To create goodwill with the audience.

Good relationship can be built by giving proper advice & suggestions.

It can also be done by helping out in solving a specific problem.

Regular lateral communication is necessary for preventing and resolving conflicts between departments and individuals and to have a good and harmonious relationship.

Prompt actions on customers' needs and complaints through discussion and follow-ups will create long-lasting and loyal customers and will build a good image of the company.

4. State the different types of communications :

1. Verbal Communication:

Verbal communication consists of arranging words in a meaningful pattern and **includes speaking, writing, listening and reading.**

Verbal means use of words and language, both, written and oral.

The human languages can be described as a system of symbols and rules of grammar by the parameters of which the symbols are manipulated.

The effectiveness of verbal communication depends on a person's skill in the use of the language. A rich vocabulary, command of a variety of sentence structures, clarity in thinking and focus on audience are necessary for effective verbal communication.

2. Nonverbal Communication:

This category of communication includes communicating through sending and receiving wordless messages, which are conveyed through facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, posture or body language.

In fact, verbal communication may also contain non-verbal elements referred to as paralanguage that comprise of voice quality, intonation, stress, emotion and style of speaking.

Similarly, non-verbal elements play a key role in written texts as well in the form of handwriting style and the spatial arrangement of words.

According to research, 55 percent of communication is determined by the body language, 38 percent by the tone of the voice and 7 percent by the content or the words used in the communication process.

3. Visual Communication:

This method of conveyance of ideas and information is primarily associated with two dimensional images that include signs, typography, drawing, graphic design, illustration, color and electronic resources.

This form of communication with visual effect emphasizes on the concept that a visual message with text has a greater power to inform, educate or persuade a person.

The most common ways to present information visually are video and television. Here, the focus is on the presentation of text, pictures, diagrams and photographs integrated on a computer display. This category of communication is widely used now a days.

5. Which are the different types of communication

Types of Business Communication

There are two types of business communication in an organization:

1. Internal Communication

2. External Communication

1. Internal Communication

Communication within an organization is called "Internal Communication".

It includes all communication within an organization. It may be informal or a formal function or department providing communication in various forms to employees.

Effective internal communication is a vital mean of addressing organizational concerns. Good communication may help to increase job satisfaction, safety, productivity, and profits and decrease grievances and turnover.

Under Internal Business Communication types there come;

a) Upward Communication

b) Downward Communication

c) Horizontal/Lateral communication

a) Upward Communication

Upward communication is the flow of information from subordinates to superiors, or from employees to management. Without upward communication, management works in a vacuum, not knowing if messages have been received properly, or if other problems exist in the organization.

By definition, communication is a two-way affair. Yet for effective two-way organizational communication to occur, it must begin from the bottom.

Upward Communication is a mean for staff to:

- O Exchange information
- O Offer ideas
- O Express enthusiasm
- O Achieve job satisfaction
- O Provide feedback

b) Downward Communication

Information flowing from the top of the organizational management hierarchy and telling people in the organization what is important (mission) and what is valued (policies).

Downward communication generally provides enabling information – which allows a subordinate to do something.

e.g.: Instructions on how to do a task.

Downward communication comes after upward communications have been successfully established. This type of communication is needed in an organization to:

- O Transmit vital information
- O Give instructions
- O Encourage 2-way discussion
- O Announce decisions
- O Seek cooperation
- O Provide motivation
- O Boost morale
- O Increase efficiency
- O Obtain feedback

Both Downward & Upward Communications are collectively called "Vertical Communication"

c) Horizontal/Lateral communication

Horizontal communication normally involves coordinating information, and allows people with the same or similar rank in an organization to cooperate or collaborate. Communication among employees at the same level is crucial for the accomplishment of work. Horizontal Communication is essential for:

- O Solving problems

- O Accomplishing tasks
- O Improving teamwork
- O Building goodwill
- O Boosting efficiency

1. External Communication

Communication with people outside the company is called "external communication". Supervisors communicate with sources outside the organization, such as vendors and customers.

It leads to better;

- O Sales volume
- O Public credibility
- O Operational efficiency
- O Company profits

It should improve

- O Overall performance
- O Public goodwill
- O Corporate image

Ultimately, it helps to achieve

- O Organizational goals
- O Customer satisfaction

6. Write a note of Grape vine communication

Grapevine communication.

Grapevine is informal channel of communication.

It doesn't follow any set lines or definite rules.

It spreads like the grapevine, in any direction anywhere, and spreads fast.

It spreads by way of gossip and rumors.

Primarily grapevine is a channel of horizontal communication but it can flow even vertically and diagonally.

Specialists in this field have identified four types of grapevine chains.

- (1) Single Strand Chain: It flows like a chain, i.e., 'A' tells something to 'B' who tells it to 'C' and so on.
- (2) Gossip Chain: One person tells everybody else. This chain passes a message regarding a 'not-on-job' nature.

- (3) Probability Chain: here information may move from anybody to anybody. This chain is found when the information is somewhat interesting but not really significant.
- (4) Cluster Chain: This moves through selected groups. 'A' tells something to a few selected individuals and then some of these individuals inform a few other selected individuals. Cluster chain is the dominant grapevine pattern in an organization. Most informal communication flows through this chain.

Importance of Grapevine
It gives emotional relief.

It transmits information very speedily. The managers or top bosses of an organization get feedback regarding their policies, decisions, memos etc. the feedback reaches them much faster through the informal channel than through the formal channel. The grapevine functions as a supplementary or parallel channel of communication.

Whatever is deemed to be unsuitable for the formal channels can be successfully transmitted through the grapevine.

Demerits

The information spread through grapevine is less credible than the one given by the formal channel.

It doesn't always carry the complete information.

It often misinforms as its origin lies in the rumor mill.

It may spread any kind of stories about responsible people and thus may spoil the image of the organization.

Effective use of Grapevine

The manager should organize fruitful group activities so as to enhance the self-worth of the employees and update their knowledge. The manager should keep an eye on rumor-mongers. He should tactfully identify the leaders and win their confidence. As far as possible, the employees, through their leaders, should be made partners in the decision making process. A tactful manager will keep the employees well informed so that they may not spread rumors. The manager should try to get feedback on his style of functioning and work for continuous improvement. A manager must be a good empathic listener. This way the employees or the leaders will feel free to talk to him rather than indulge in rumor mongering.

7. Explain the role and characteristics of Non verbal communication

Non verbal communication is composed of the messages sent without or in addition to the words. These messages have a stronger impact on the receivers.

Non verbal symbols – body language, appearance, touch, space, time, voice – exists in written and oral communication and in the environment.

Receivers interpret non verbal symbols by using their senses: sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell. If you hear a person say, "Great" and see the person smile while looking at a letter, you will conclude that the letter contains good news.

Non verbal symbols may reinforce, contradict, or substitute for verbal symbols. They may also regulate the verbal part of a message.

Reinforcing a verbal message :

Pointing to a door as you state, "The office is the second door on the left" reinforces the verbal message.

Pounding on the table while making a statement also reinforces a verbal message.

Contradicting a verbal message :

Sometimes verbal and non verbal symbols do not agree. You may say, "That's fine," but if your voice is strained and sad and you look away from the receiver, the receiver understands that the situation is NOT fine.

Substituting for a verbal message :

Non verbal symbols sometimes act as a substitute for verbal message. Gritting your teeth or throwing your hands in the air indicates frustration.

Clenching your fists indicates anger. Tapping your feet or pencil indicates impatience. Nodding and smiling indicates agreement.

Regulating a Verbal Message :

Non verbal symbols may be used to regulate or control oral communication between the sender and receiver. These regulators may signal when you want to speak, when you want others to continue speaking, or when you want to withdraw from a conversation.

Nodding in agreement encourages other person to continue. However checking your watch or closing your book or bag means you want to have an end to the conversation.

Nonverbal messages primarily communicate emotions, attitudes

- Non-verbal communication is however ineffective to communicate concepts and ideas

Nonverbal cues are generally seen as more reliable

- nonverbal communication is considered to be more reliable because it is difficult to fake emotions.

Nonverbal cues are culture bound

Gestures and body language varies from one culture to another. There is also no universally correct meaning for nonverbal expressions

8. Explain Non Verbal symbols in written messages

The appearance and correctness of a written document send critical non verbal message and deserves careful attention.

Letterhead sheets, plain sheets and envelopes should be made of quality bond paper should be of the same color.

The design of the letterhead and company logo should convey a professional image.

Drawings, pictures, charts and graphs should be appropriate to the content. The print should be crisp and easy to read.

Documents should not have errors and should be in appropriate format. Check capitalization, grammar and spelling carefully. Make sure that all the facts, such as dates and amounts are correct.

Error free documents sends a positive message that the sender is reliable and considers quality important.

9. List the Non verbal symbols in spoken messages

Several non verbal symbols have an impact on spoken messages.

Body Language includes facial expressions and gestures.

People can reveal their feelings through various facial expressions. A frown indicates negative feeling; a smile indicates, happy feelings. Nervous smile communicates weakness or insecurity.

Eyes also reveal feeling such as excitement, boredom, and concentration. Eyebrow also sends various messages. Raised eyebrow may mean nervousness, surprise or questioning.

Direct eye contact conveys interest, friendship or confidence. A lack of eye contact may mean disinterest or boredom.

A gesture is the use of your arms and hands to express an idea or feeling. Crossed arms may indicate concentration or withdrawal. Trembling or fidgeting hands indicates nervousness.

Leaning towards a person who is speaking conveys open attitude. Nodding confirms listening and sometimes agreement. However folding your arms and shaking your head from side to side indicates a closed attitude or disagreement.

No matter what words you may use, your eyes and your face reveals what your true feeling are.

Touching :

A Handshake is the most acceptable form of touching for both men and women in business environment. It is a gesture used to greet someone and to close a discussion.

A person who gives a firm handshake and makes a eye contact projects a cordial, confident image. However, a weak soft handshake suggests listlessness and mental dullness. A cold, wet handshake may indicate nervousness and possibly a feeling of inferiority,

Other forms of touching such as, hugging or backslapping are generally not accepted in business. A person in higher rank, may put his hand on a subordinate's shoulder as a sign of encouragement or support. A coworker could do the same thing with another coworker. A coworker should not put his hand on the shoulder of his superior.

Everyone should avoid touching that could be interpreted as sexual harassment.

Personal Space :

One aspect of personal space is the physical distance between individuals. In general people stand relatively closer to people they like and leave more space between themselves and people they fear or dislike.

When unable to arrange space comfortably, such as in a crowded elevator or train, people adjust themselves by using other non verbal symbols such as avoiding eye contact. They may stare at the passing floor numbers or just keep silent. People stop talking and avoid eye contact because their own space zone is violated.

The social zone is common for most business meetings or social gathering.

Communication between a speaker and the audience is within the public zone.

When a coworker stands too close or too far from you, he or she probably thinks your relationship is on a different level than you do.

Consistently standing too close to a coworker could be interpreted as sexual harassment.

In an office setting, the size, the location (corner office, distance from the top manager's office and so forth), and use of space may be a sign of person's status. Generally, the more spacious a person's office is, the higher the person's status is.

Time :

The use of time is another aspect of non verbal communication. Suppose a person asks you to do a task as soon as possible. If you complete the task right away, you send a positive message to the other person. Ignoring an urgent request gives a negative message.

In business promptness is considered important. Being on-time for a meeting shows respect for others.

Paralanguage:

It's not what you say but how you say it that counts.

Paralanguage includes pitch of the voice, rate of speech, volume, inflection, rhythm and pronunciation.

It also includes laughing, crying, sighing, grunting, yawning, and coughing. Even silence, pauses, and hesitations are part of paralanguage.

10. Identify non verbal symbols that affects a person's image

Non verbal symbols establish a person's image.

Important aspects of your image are based on level of confidence, friendliness, enthusiasm, sincerity, appearance, eye contact, and posture.

Level of confidence:

Self confidence means belief in yourself and your abilities.

Others use your self confidence level as a basis to determine your competence and abilities.

Too much self confidence:

Being too much self confident can hinder your communications and hurt your image. Others may see you as arrogant, inflexible, or a "know it all". They may have serious questions about your ability to work with others and complete tasks. They may wonder whether you have a personality that allows you to learn and grow.

Too Little self confidence:

If people think you do not believe in yourself, they will question why they should believe in you. Being too nervous in normal situation shows low confidence. This nervousness is reflected by a quivering voice, shaking hands, perspiration, or the inability to think and respond properly.

Negative thinking and unrealistic expectations are two causes of a lack of confidence. People need to feel positive about them. No matter who you are, you can make a contribution. Identify your strengths and build upon on it. Identify your weakness and try to improve on them.

Friendliness:

Friendliness is defined as being supportive, helpful, or kind. When you are cordial, pleasant, or kind to others, they are more likely to respond to you in a positive way. This positive response makes communication easier.

To be perceived friendly often means that you must focus on the needs of others rather than the needs of your own.

Enthusiasm:

Enthusiasm is an aspect of image that can set you apart from others. Enthusiasm means showing excitement or a lively interest. When you enthusiastically present your ideas, receivers will sense your enthusiasm and feel positive about those ideas and you.

Smiles, raised eyebrows, and eyes that are wide open and sparkle are non verbal symbols that show enthusiasm.

Sincerity:

Sincerity means being open and genuine or earnest. Being seen as sincere helps you to build a positive image. Open, honest communication sends a non verbal message that you are sincere. If your actions and words contrast with one another, you will be considered as insincere. If they match you will be considered credible and sincere.

Appearance:

Your appearance is critical to your image. It helps to create a first impression. Proper diet, rest, and exercise can help to maintain a healthy body and present a confident image.

Being clean and neatly dressed and wearing clothing and accessories that are tasteful generally creates a favorable impression. Your clothing should be appropriate for your work and for your organization.

Being poorly groomed or dressed in a way that is not appropriate can create a negative image.

Eye Contact:

Eye contact can send a message of confidence, interest, sincerity, interest or honesty. It can also send a message of lack of confidence, boredom, fear, insincerity or dishonesty.

In one to one situation, effective eye contact builds interpersonal trust and confidence in each other. In small group situation, look each person in the eye, keeping the eye contact long enough so that the person thinks that you are talking to him or her personally.

In large group situation, make sure that you look at all individuals in all parts of the room. This action makes members of the group feel that they are being included and not ignored.

Posture:

Posture is the way you stand or sit. It conveys your confidence level or your interest in a situation or topic. Poor posture may be a sign of timidity, laziness, or lack of interest. To project a positive image, sit and stand naturally but straight and tall. Sitting or standing erect and leaning in can signal that you are interested in the topic being discussed.

11. Write a note on components of non verbal communication

Nonverbal signals or cues can be studied under three main areas:

Paralanguage: Paralanguage is the study of how we say, what we say

Kinesics : It is the study of body language and facial expressions.

Proxemics: It is the study of how people's usage of the physical space around them reveals the kind of relationship they are willing to share with others.

12. Write a note on Paralanguage

Paralanguage

Two similar verbal messages can communicate totally different messages, depending on the tone that is used to deliver the message. The tone of voice, its loudness or softness, rate of speech and the point of emphasis are important factors in communication.

Example: When you wish to ask your friend as to why he hasn't mailed you for very long, you may do so in two ways:

- Why haven't you mailed? I am missing your mails.
- Why the hell haven't you mailed??? Are you so busy?

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Components of Paralanguage

Paralanguage has the following components:

Voice Qualities: Voice quality depends on a number of factors such as volume, rate of speech, pitch, rhythm, pronunciation and enunciation.

Volume: When a person speaks loudly, his intention may be to attract others' attention or even to make a point. It is needless to say that most often, speaking in a loud volume only annoys the listeners. Soft spoken people, on the other hand, may communicate an impression of being weak or indecisive. Hence, it is always important that an appropriate level of volume be used, depending upon the situation.

Example: While speaking to your boss or to elders at home you may speak softly. But if you are to speak at a public meeting during students' union elections, then you may have to speak loudly to ensure that your message reaches the audience.

Rate of speech: On an average a person speaks 150 words per minute. When a person speaks faster or slower than this rate, such speech can communicate negative signals.

Example: When a person speaks too fast he/she is considered to be nervous. When the speech

is too slow, it may convey that the speaker is unsure of what he/she is saying.

Voice pitch: Voice pitch is considered to reflect the emotional state of the person. High pitch is associated with excitement or nervousness while a low pitch indicates the person's control over the situation.

Rhythm: It indicates the regular or irregular pattern of the voice.

Pronunciation and enunciation: The manner in which words are pronounced communicates a lot about the person delivering the message. Despite having a good vocabulary, poor pronunciation undermines the image of the speaker. 'Enunciation' is more about articulation of words. People with poor enunciation slur while pronouncing words, the endings of words are left out, or they lack clarity in speech.

Voice Qualifiers: Voice qualifiers are temporary variations in the volume, pitch or rate of speech of a person. If a person adopts a volume that is unlike the one that is generally used, it is very easy to identify that something is not right.

Example: Your friend who is usually bubbly and enthusiastic over the phone, talks to you in a low voice. It is then obvious that something is wrong.

Vocal Characteristics: Certain audible sounds are produced when people communicate. These may be in the form of sighs, clearing of the throat, growling and so on. These sounds are known as vocal characteristics and convey a subtle message about the person.

Vocal Segregates: These are meaningless sounds used while speaking which only form awkward components of speech and serve no useful purpose in communication.

Example: Very often we come across people using sounds like hmmm, errrrrrrrrr etc. while speaking.

11. Write a note on Kinesics

Kinesics

It involves the study of body postures, gestures and facial expressions.

Posture : The posture of a person is the manner in which he sits or stands. The body posture adopted by a person may communicate confidence, anxiety, fear, and a host of other emotions.

Example: A teacher who wants to assert his authority while reprimanding a student may do so by leaning forward and peering down at him. This posture communicates superiority.

Gestures: Gestures mainly comprise of **emblems, adaptors, regulators and illustrators**. Emblems are gestures that are easily understood by most people. However, some gestures may be culture specific. Adaptors are learned behavior patterns which are most often imbibed during one's childhood. Regulators are gestures that control the flow of communication. Illustrators are gestures that support what is being said verbally.

Example:

Gestures: The gestures used by classical dancers convey a specific meaning.

Adaptors: The way we use a spoon while eating, the manner in which we clean hands before and after eating and so on.

Regulators: The audience cheers the artists and encouraging them to perform better.

Illustrators: Asking someone to be seated accompanied with a wave of the hand.

Facial expression: They have plenty to convey to the audience.

For instance, By maintaining eye contact with the listener, the person speaking conveys honesty on his part.

12. Write a note on Proxemics

Proxemics

The invisible boundary that is created by individuals around themselves is known as personal feature space. A closer observation of the physical space between two individuals can reveal the relationship between them. As far as organizations are concerned, control of space communicates one's personal powers over others, within the organization.

There are four categories or zones into which personal feature space can be divided:

Intimate distance zone: The zone enclosed within a radius of 18 inches around a person is known as intimate distance zone and is reserved for friends and close relations.

Personal distance zone: Extends from 1½ to 4 feet and is reserved for friends and family.

Social distance zone: Extends from 4 to 12 feet distance around a person. Business transactions usually take place at this distance.

Public distance zone: Extends from 12 to 25 feet. This is the farthest distance within which effective communication can occur on a face-to-face basis.

13. Explain the process of communication:

It consists of the following elements:

Sender:

The 'sender' initiates the process of communication by sending a message. The sender is sometimes also known as 'encoder.'

Encoding:

Encoding is the process wherein the sender selects and organizes the message using appropriate words and nonverbal signals (gestures, tone of voice, etc.) Encoding is done keeping in mind the composition of the audience.

Message:

Message comprises the information that is being transmitted. The composition of the audience determines the style, language, length and tone of the message.

Communication channel/medium:

The channels used for communication may be verbal or non-verbal channels.

- Oral - spoken
- Via electronic means - e-mail, fax or through the Web for example
- Telephone
- Paper based - letter, memo, scribbled note, poster etc.

- Image/visual
- Sound
- Silent communication - smell, touch, body language, colour, how letters or numbers are presented.

The choice of the channel and the medium depends on the message, location of the audience, the speed at which the message is required to be transmitted and the formality of the situation.

Receiver:

The person who receives and interprets the message is known as the receiver.

Decoding:

Decoding is the process in which the receiver interprets the message transmitted by the sender. If the message is decoded correctly, it means that the receiver in the manner in which the sender intended it to be conveyed has interpreted the message.

Feedback:

It is the receiver's response to the message. This is the final stage in the communication process and may be verbal or nonverbal in nature. The response in verbal feedback may be intended to obtain further information or to provide closure to the communication process. Nonverbal feedback may be in the form of gestures (nodding one's head) and facial expressions.

Example: A message is sent by the 'Company Secretary' (sender) to General Managers saying that 'There will be an annual general meeting on 25th March 2003 and all GMs are requested to send all relevant documents at the earliest' (encoding) . This message is sent via 'the intranet' (channel of communication) to 'the GMs' (receivers). 'They read the mail and understood it' (decoding). 'They then send back a message saying that all relevant reports will be sent to him in a

14. What are the barriers to communication ?

The various types of communication barriers are grouped into four categories:

- Problems caused by the sender
- Problems in message transmission
- Problems in reception
- Problems in receiver comprehension and perception

1. Problems caused by the sender

Inadequate amount of information – If the sender of the message is himself not adequately equipped with the requisite information, he will be unable to communicate the information effectively.

Excessive knowledge about the subject – If the sender has excessive knowledge about the subject, he may decide to explain the message too much in detail and make it highly complex and confusing.

Indecision regarding selection of information – The sender may sometimes be unable to decide what information to include and what information to exclude from the message. This

inability of the sender to decide on the selection of information may hamper communication.

Order of presentation – Quite often, people are unable to decide on the order in which to present their ideas. The inability to decide on the order of presentation hinders effective communication.

Lack of familiarity with the audience – While communicating, the sender of the message should have some knowledge about his audience. This will allow him to structure his message appropriately so as to suit the needs of his audience. If the audience has no knowledge about the topic being communicated, the sender should provide some background information about the topic to enable them to understand the message. On the other hand, if the audience is knowledgeable and learned, the sender need not give any background information and can directly begin with information on the topic.

Lack of experience in speaking or writing – If the sender is not learned enough or is not properly trained on how to communicate, there is a scope for wrong choice of words, grammatical errors, and improper punctuation in his communication.

2. Problems in Message transmission

Number of transmission links – The process of communication consists of the message passing from one person to another till it reaches the final destination. The more the number of people involved in the communication process, the greater the chances of distortion of communication.

Transmission of unclear or conflicting messages – Sometimes, messages may consist of two or more parts which may not convey the same information. In such a case, the receiver is faced with a dilemma as to which part of the message to accept.

3. Problems in Reception

Problems in reception often give rise to communication problems. The factors that interfere with the exchange of messages are termed as "noise". Noise may be of several types. Physical noise refers to the external sounds that distract communicators. Physiological noise are the physiological factors that impede reception of the message. This may include hearing disorders, illnesses, disability, etc. Psychological noise refers to the forces within the receiver that interfere with his or her understanding. These include preoccupation, fear, hostility, egotism, etc.

4. Problems in Receiver comprehension and Perception

Many times, the receivers have difficulty in comprehending the message they have received. One of the reasons for this happening is the inability of the receiver to understand some of the words that are being used in the message. The use of technical terms in the message makes it difficult for people from non technical background to understand the message. Another reason for failure of the receiver comprehending the message is the involvement of personal interests. Many times, receivers comprehend what was not intended in the message and fail to comprehend the actual meaning. This is especially true when the message affects the personal interests of the receiver.

Communication Skills

Content

- Definition of Communication
- Forms of communication
- Objectives of Communication
- Characteristics of Communication
- Communications Roadblocks
- Role of Verbal & non verbal symbols
- Barriers in Communication

Communication : Definition

- Communication is a process in which information is exchanged between and among individuals using common symbols, signs and behavior.



- To express oneself in such a way that one is readily and clearly understood
- Communication is Shared Feeling / Shared understanding



Importance of Communication in management

Communication has four main goals

1. To Inform : To provide information for use in decision making, but not initiating any course of action



Importance of Communication in management

2. To request : To ask for a specific action to be taken by the receiver



Importance of Communication in management

3. To persuade : To reinforce or change the audience's belief about something and possibly act on that belief



Importance of Communication in management

4. To Build Relationship : To create goodwill with the audience



Forms of Communication

- One way communication
 - Memo, fax, e-mail, voice mail, letter
- Two way
 - Phone call, in-person
- Collaborative or lateral
 - Team meetings, consulting, consensus, decision making, group problem solving

Forms of communications

- Formal & Informal communication
 - Formal includes
 - Conservative language (grammar)
 - No contradiction
 - Restrained style

- Downward Communication
 - Instructions,
 - Orders,
 - Education & Training,
 - On the job training,
 - Motivation,
 - Counseling,
 - Advice,
 - Warning,
 - Appreciation

- Upward Communication
 - Request
 - Application
 - Appeal
 - Demand
 - Representation
 - Complaints
 - Suggestions
- Non Verbal & Verbal

Forms of communications

- **Non-verbal Communication:** It includes cues, gestures, vocal qualities, spatial relationships etc.
- It is less structured than verbal communication and often unintentional and spontaneous.
- Non-verbal communication is more reliable form of communication and reflects the true feelings of the individual.
- It is more effective than verbal communication alone.

- Non verbal cues such as body language, facial expressions and vocal characteristics

Happy

Hopeful



Directing / Instructing



Love



Anger



SAD



Playful



Naughty / Adamant



Persuading / reassurance



Attentive



Disagreement



Building Relationship



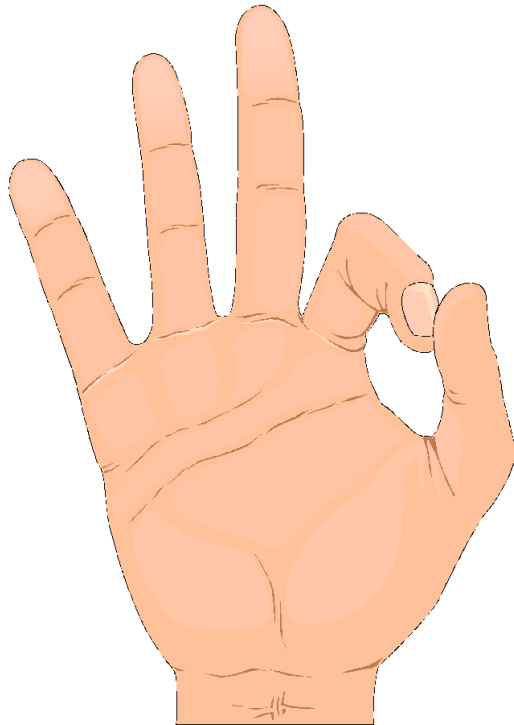
Showing respect



Explaining



Approval



Defeat



Characteristics of nonverbal communication

- **Nonverbal messages primarily communicate emotions, attitudes**
 - Non-verbal communication is however ineffective to communicate concepts and ideas
 - E.g. It is not possible to effectively convey the message that there will be a budget session on Tuesday by using nonverbal communication. However, the response to the announcement of budget session can be nonverbally expressed by displaying disinterest, anxiousness and so on.

- **Nonverbal cues substitute for, contradict, emphasize or regulate verbal messages:**
 - our body language contradicts what we say. Our body language reveals our actual responses, even though we may try to conceal expressing our true feelings.

- **Nonverbal cues are often ambiguous:**
 - It is very difficult to understand nonverbal cues. They may convey a totally different meaning from what was originally intended to be conveyed. Sometimes they may also mean nothing to the person receiving the message.

- **Nonverbal cues are continuous:**
 - Unlike verbal communication, nonverbal cues cannot be controlled and are continuously given out.

- **Nonverbal cues are generally seen as more reliable**
 - nonverbal communication is considered to be more reliable because it is difficult to fake emotions.

- **Nonverbal cues are culture bound**
 - Gestures and body language varies from one culture to another. There is also no universally correct meaning for nonverbal expressions.

Components of nonverbal communication

- **Paralanguage:** Paralanguage is the study of how we say, what we say
- **Kinesics :** It is the study of body language and facial expressions.
- **Proxemics:** It is the study of how people's usage of the physical space around them reveals the kind of relationship they are willing to share with others.

Paralanguage

- Two similar verbal messages can communicate totally different messages, depending on the tone that is used to deliver the message
- The tone of voice, its loudness or softness, rate of speech and the point of emphasis are important factors in communication.
 - Why haven't you mailed? I am missing your mails.
 - Why the hell haven't you mailed??? Are you so busy?

Components of paralanguage

- **Voice Qualities**
 - *Volume*
 - *Rate of speech*
 - *Voice pitch*
 - *Rhythm*
 - *Pronunciation and enunciation*

Components of paralanguage

- **Voice Qualifiers**

- Voice qualifiers are temporary variations in the volume, pitch or rate of speech of a person
- Your friend who is usually bubbly and enthusiastic over the phone, talks to you in a low voice. It is then obvious that something is wrong.

Components of paralanguage

- **Vocal Characteristics**

- Certain audible sounds are produced when people communicate
- These may be in the form of sighs, clearing of the throat, growling and so on

Components of paralanguage

- **Vocal Segregates**

- These are meaningless sounds used while speaking which only form awkward components of speech and serve no useful purpose in communication.
- Very often we come across people using sounds like hmmm, errrrrrrrrr etc. while speaking

Components of paralanguage

- Silence
 - Short silence or pause are very effective in giving emphasis to words
 - To express feelings
 - unable to speak as full of emotions
 - Express sympathy
 - Express anger or displeasure
 - In negotiation, silence and non response is a useful strategy. It could make the other person speak more

Kinesics

- It involves the study of body postures, gestures and facial expressions
- **Posture**
 - The posture of a person is the manner in which he sits or stands
 - The body posture adopted by a person may communicate confidence, anxiety, fear, and a host of other emotions

- **Gestures**

- Gestures mainly comprise of *emblems, adaptors, regulators and illustrators*

- ***Emblems :***

- Emblems are gestures that are easily understood by most people

- gestures used by classical dancers convey a specific meaning



- ***Adaptors:***

- The way we use a spoon while eating, the manner in which we clean hands before and after eating and so on.

- ***Regulators:***

- The audience cheers the artists and encouraging them to perform better.

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- ***Illustrators***

- Asking someone to be seated accompanied with a wave of the hand



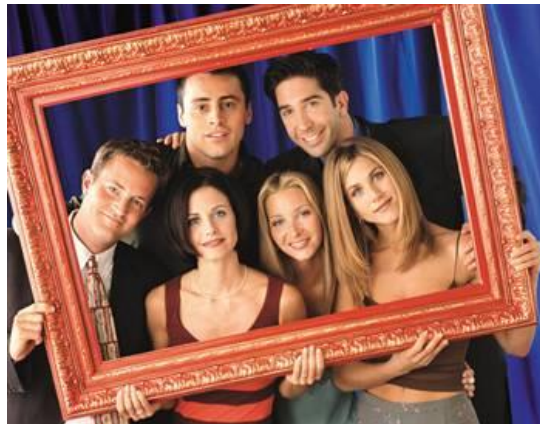
- **Facial expression**

- They have plenty to convey to the audience
- By maintaining eye contact with the listener, the person speaking conveys honesty on his part.

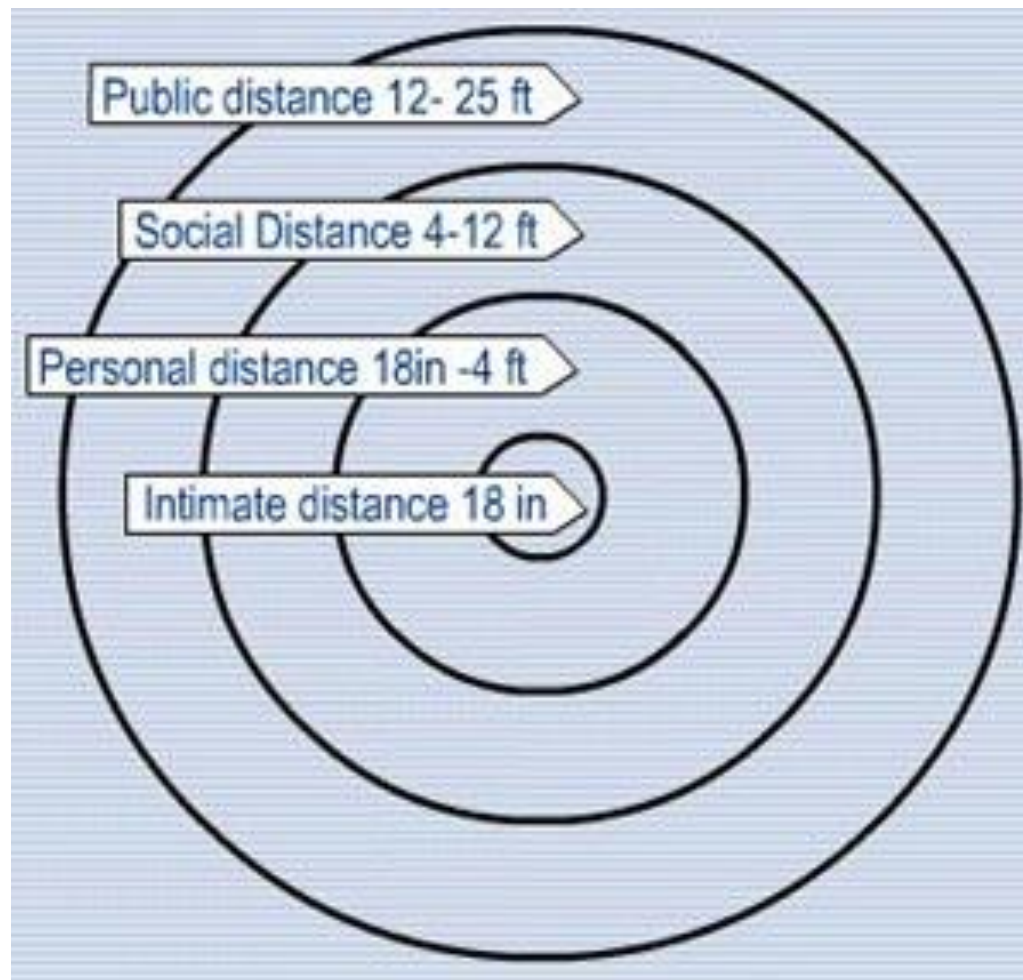


Proxemics

- **Proxemics**
 - The invisible boundary that is created by individuals around themselves is known as personal feature space
 - **Intimate distance zone** The zone enclosed within a radius of 18 inches around a person



- **Personal distance zone** Extends from 1½ to 4 feet and is reserved for friends and family
- **Social distance zone** Extends from 4 to 12 feet distance around a person. Business transactions usually take place at this distance.
- **Public distance zone** Extends from 12 to 25 feet. This is the farthest distance within which effective communication can occur on a face-to-face basis.



Other forms of nonverbal communication

- **Use of time:** The manner in which a person utilizes his time conveys information about the kind of person he is. Also, the amount of time that a person allocates to a certain task indicates the relative importance he gives to the task.

- **Mode of dress** The first impression about a person is created by his/her mode of dressing. Not surprisingly, in organizations, sometimes even promotions depend on this factor.

Verbal Communication

- **Verbal Communication:** Verbal communication consists of arranging words in a meaningful pattern and includes speaking, writing, listening and reading.
- Writing memos and letters

Process of Communication

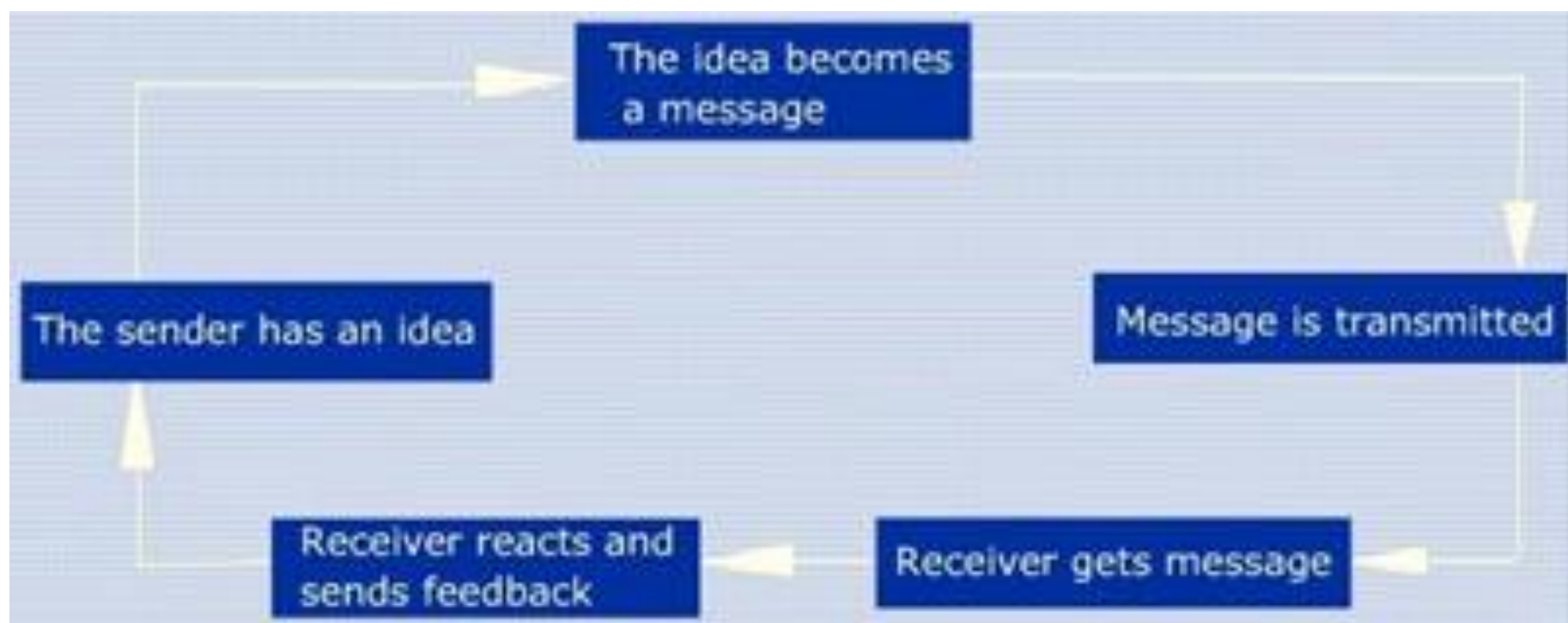
- It consists of the following elements:
- **Sender:** The 'sender' initiates the process of communication by sending a message. The sender is sometimes also known as 'encoder.'
- **Encoding:** Encoding is the process wherein the sender selects and organizes the message using appropriate words and nonverbal signals (gestures, tone of voice, etc.) Encoding is done keeping in mind the composition of the audience.

- **Message:** Message comprises the information that is being transmitted. The composition of the audience determines the style, language, length and tone of the message.
- **Communication channel/medium:** The channels used for communication may be verbal or non-verbal channels. The various media used for communication may be telephone, fax, computer, memos, letters, etc. The choice of the channel and the medium depends on the message, location of the audience, the speed at which the message is required to be transmitted and the formality of the situation.

- **Receiver:** The person who receives and interprets the message is known as the receiver.
- **Decoding:** Decoding is the process in which the receiver interprets the message transmitted by the sender. If the message is decoded correctly, it means that the receiver in the manner in which the sender intended it to be conveyed has interpreted the message.

- **Feedback:** It is the receiver's response to the message. This is the final stage in the communication process and may be verbal or nonverbal in nature. The response in verbal feedback may be intended to obtain further information or to provide closure to the communication process. Nonverbal feedback may be in the form of gestures (nodding one's head) and facial expressions.

- **Example:** A message is sent by the 'Company Secretary' (sender) to General Managers saying that 'There will be an annual general meeting on 25th March 2003 and all GMs are requested to send all relevant documents at the earliest' (encoding) . This message is sent via 'the intranet' (channel of communication) to 'the GMs' (receivers). 'They read the mail and understood it' (decoding). 'They then send back a message saying that all relevant reports will be sent to him in a day's time' (feedback).



Continuum of Media richness





How the customer explained it



How the Project Leader understood it



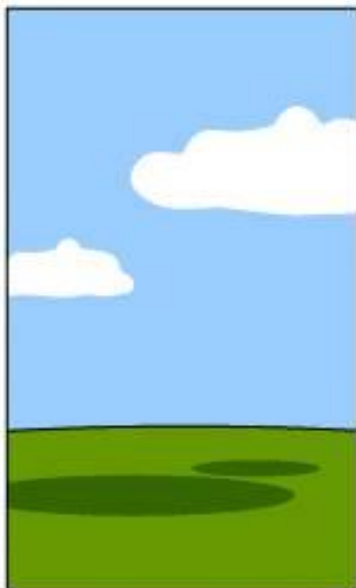
How the Analyst designed it



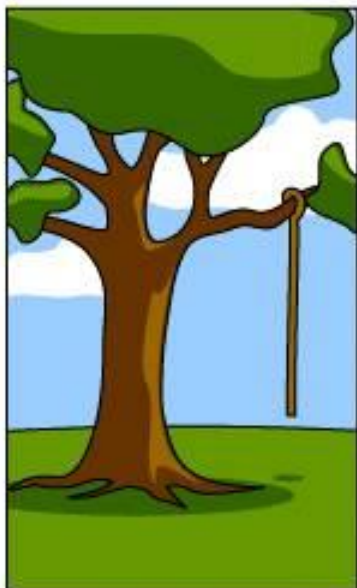
How the Programmer wrote it



How the Business Consultant described it



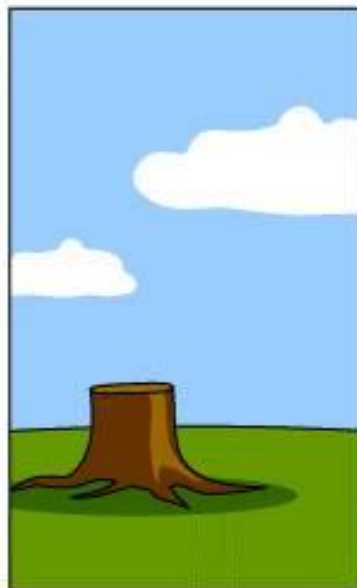
How the project was documented



What operations installed



How the customer was billed



How it was supported



What the customer really needed

Barriers to communication

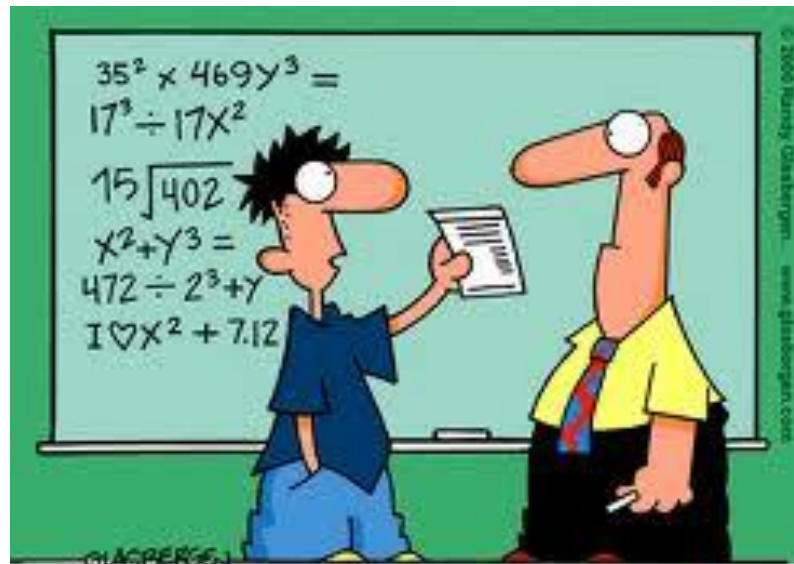
- Problems caused by the sender
- Problems in message transmission
- Problems in reception
- Problems in receiver comprehension and perception

Barriers caused by the sender

- ***Inadequate amount of information*** –
 - If the sender of the message is himself not adequately equipped with the requisite information, he will be unable to communicate the information effectively.
 - Lack of preparation



- ***Excessive knowledge about the subject*** – If the sender has excessive knowledge about the subject, he may decide to explain the message too much in detail and make it highly complex and confusing.



"I HAD MY DOCTOR DO A D.N.A. BLOOD ANALYSIS.
AS I SUSPECTED, I'M MISSING THE MATH GENE."

- ***Indecision regarding selection of information***
 - The sender may sometimes be unable to decide what information to include and what information to exclude from the message. This inability of the sender to decide on the selection of information may hamper communication.
 - Lack of structure

- ***Order of presentation*** – Quite often, people are unable to decide on the order in which to present their ideas. The inability to decide on the order of presentation hinders effective communication.

- **Reputation and authority**

- The reputation or seniority of the sender may be such
 - That the message content is accepted without demur
 - Even though it is improperly understood
- Or the message implies "No questions, please!"
- Or the message structure is so compelling
 - That it is followed without question

- ***Lack of familiarity with the audience*** – While communicating, the sender of the message should have some knowledge about his audience. This will allow him to structure his message appropriately so as to suit the needs of his audience. If the audience has no knowledge about the topic being communicated, the sender should provide some background information about the topic to enable them to understand the message. On the other hand, if the audience is knowledgeable and learned, the sender need not give any background information and can directly begin with information on the topic.

- ***Lack of experience in speaking or writing*** (Lack of Language Skills)
 - If the sender is not learned enough or is not properly trained on how to communicate, there is a scope for wrong choice of words, grammatical errors, and improper punctuation in his communication.
- **Language**
 - Not everyone on the project may be fluent in the prevailing language
 - Technical language may differ from discipline to discipline
 - The project may, or may not have its own glossary of terms
 - Use of jargon should be avoided

Problems in Message transmission

- ***Number of transmission links*** – The process of communication consists of the message passing from one person to another till it reaches the final destination. The more the number of people involved in the communication process, the greater the chances of distortion of communication.

- ***Transmission of unclear or conflicting messages*** – Sometimes, messages may consist of two or more parts which may not convey the same information. In such a case, the receiver is faced with a dilemma as to which part of the message to accept.



Receiver oriented barriers

- Mental turbulence
 - The receiver is disturbed and not in a proper frame of mind to receive the message
 - It can be a result of a situation, an interaction that has taken place or emotions or feelings at the time of message reception

Receiver oriented barriers

- Ineffective Grasp of message
 - Receiver not very comfortable with the subject or lacks complete knowledge of the subject
- Distractions & Preoccupations
- Lack of Interest
- Misunderstandings
- Biased listening
- Lack of provision of correct feedback

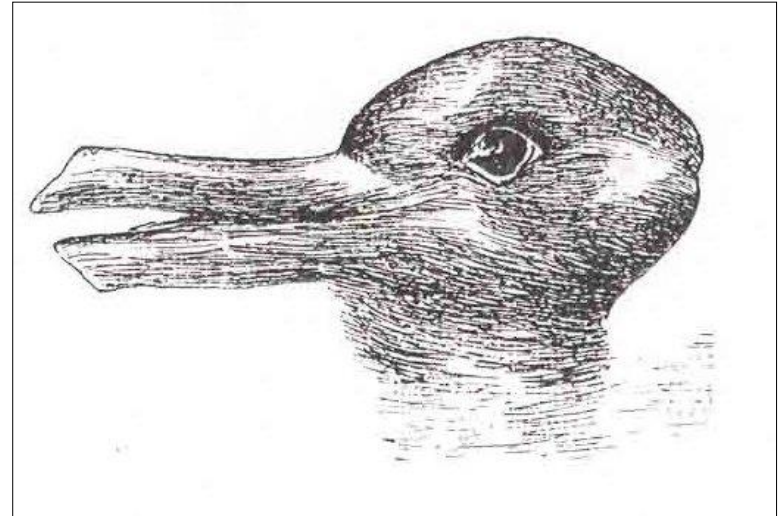
Receiver oriented barriers

- Problems in reception often give rise to communication problems. The factors that interfere with the exchange of messages are termed as "noise". Noise may be of several types. Physical noise refers to the external sounds that distract communicators. Physiological noise are the physiological factors that impede reception of the message. This may include hearing disorders, illnesses, disability, etc. Psychological noise refers to the forces within the receiver that interfere with his or her understanding. These include preoccupation, fear, hostility, egotism, etc.

Problems in Receiver comprehension and Perception

- Many times, the receivers have difficulty in comprehending the message they have received. One of the reasons for this happening is the inability of the receiver to understand some of the words that are being used in the message. The use of technical terms in the message makes it difficult for people from non technical background to understand the message. Another reason for failure of the receiver comprehending the message is the involvement of personal interests. Many times, receivers comprehend what was not intended in the message and fail to comprehend the actual meaning. This is especially true when the message affects the personal interests of the receiver.

What's your perception?



Nonverbal Communication Barriers

- ***Nonverbal Communication Barriers***
- 1. Flashing or rolling eyes
- 2. Quick or slow movements
- 3. Arms crossed, legs crossed
- 4. Gestures made with exasperation
- 5. Slouching, hunching over
- 6. Poor personal care
- 7. Doodling
- 8. Staring at people or avoiding eye contact

Physical Barriers

- Noise & physical distractions (cell phones in a meeting)
- Time and distance
- Information Overload



Semantic & Language Barriers

- Different meanings of words or symbols
 - Mouse
 - Red & Blue Carpet
- Technical Terms and jargons
- New words and language

Socio-Psychological Barriers

- Problems in understanding, interpretation and response
 - Noticing is at physical level
 - Understanding is at intellectual level
 - Acceptance is at emotional level
- Socio- psychological barriers operate at emotional level

- Self centered attitude
- Group identification
- Self image
- Selective perception
- Defensiveness
- Filtering
- Status Block
- Resistance to change
- Closed mind
- Poor communication skill
- Poor state of health

Overcoming Communication Barriers:

- Control the length of the sentence
- Think clearly
- Prefer simple words
- Consider the audience
- Use familiar word
- Active listening
- Constructive feedback
- Use of communication channels
- Proxemics & space design
- Technology utilization
- Valuing culture & diversity
 - Be self-aware
 - What you want, see, feel and do
 - Listen actively
 - And avoid turn-offs
 - Make information readily available
 - Avoid unnecessary secrecy
 - Establish a regular "two-way" information flow
 - Provide training
 - In speaking, listening and writing skills
 - Provide feedback