

Communication

What is Communication?

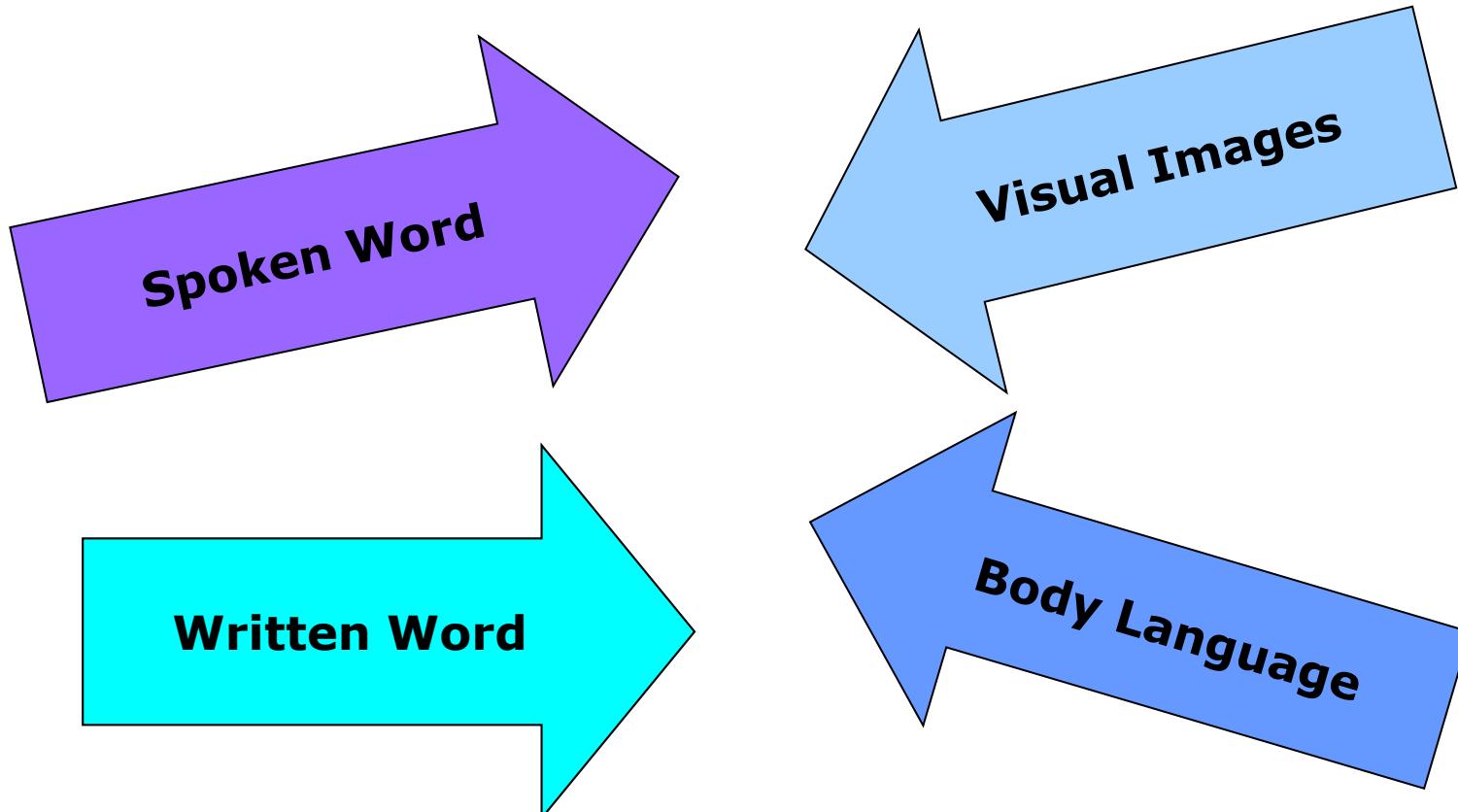
Communication can be defined as the process by which people share **ideas**, **experience**, **knowledge** and feelings through the transmission of **symbolic messages**.



- The means of communication is usually **spoken or written words, pictures or symbols.**
- But we also give information through body language, gestures, and looks, facial expressions can show how we feel and what we think about an issue or another person.

- **Communication is simply the act of transferring information from one place to another.**

What are the most common ways we communicate?



The different categories of communication

- **Spoken or Verbal Communication:** face-to-face, telephone, radio or television and other media.
- **Non-Verbal Communication:** body language, gestures, how we dress or act - even our scent.
- **Written Communication:** letters, e-mails, books, magazines, the Internet or via other media.
- **Visualizations:** graphs and charts, maps, logos and other visualizations can communicate messages.

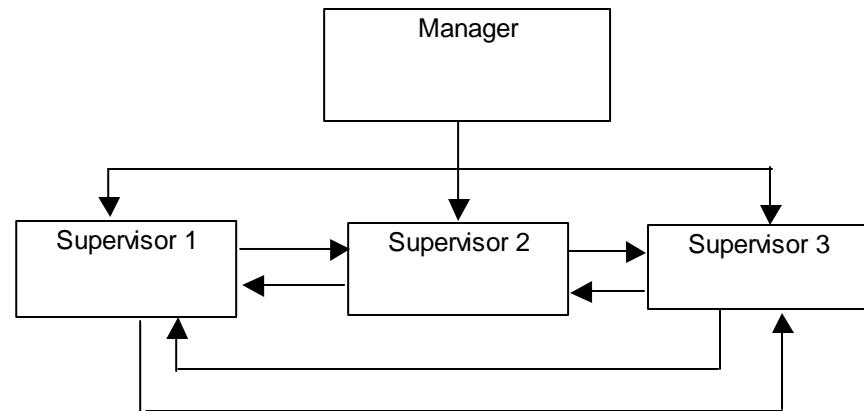
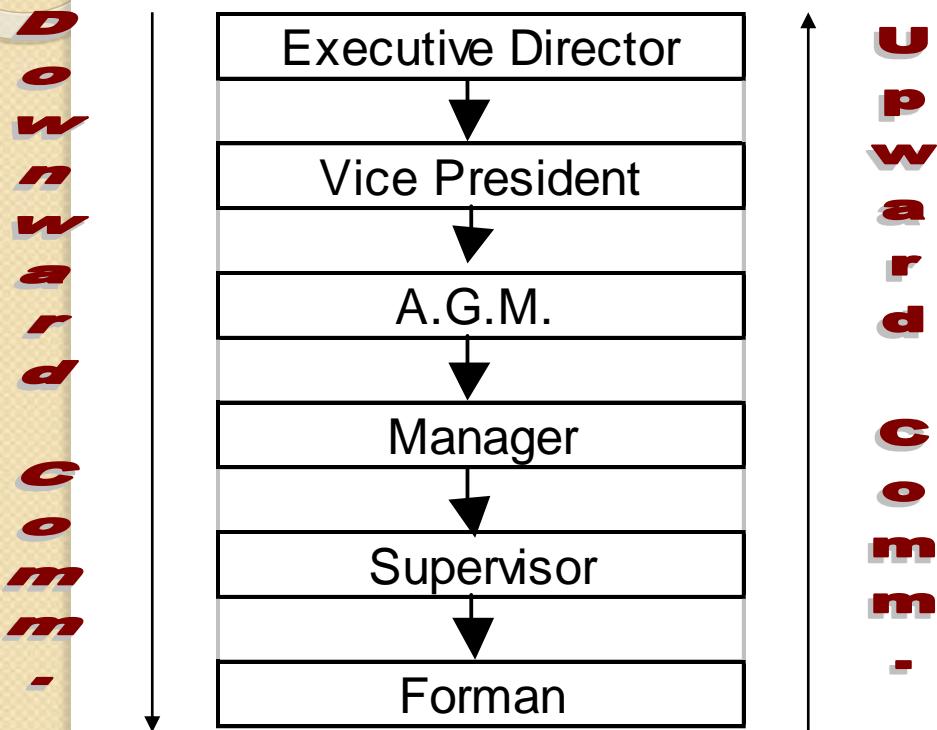
Types of Communication

Downwards Communication : Highly Directive, from Senior to subordinates, to assign duties, give instructions, to inform to offer feed back, approval to highlight problems etc.

Upwards Communications : It is non directive in nature from down below, to give feedback, to inform about progress/problems, seeking approvals.

Lateral or Horizontal Communication: Among colleagues, peers at same level for information sharing for coordination, to save time.

HIERARCHY LEVEL



Horizontal Comm.

Communication Key Elements

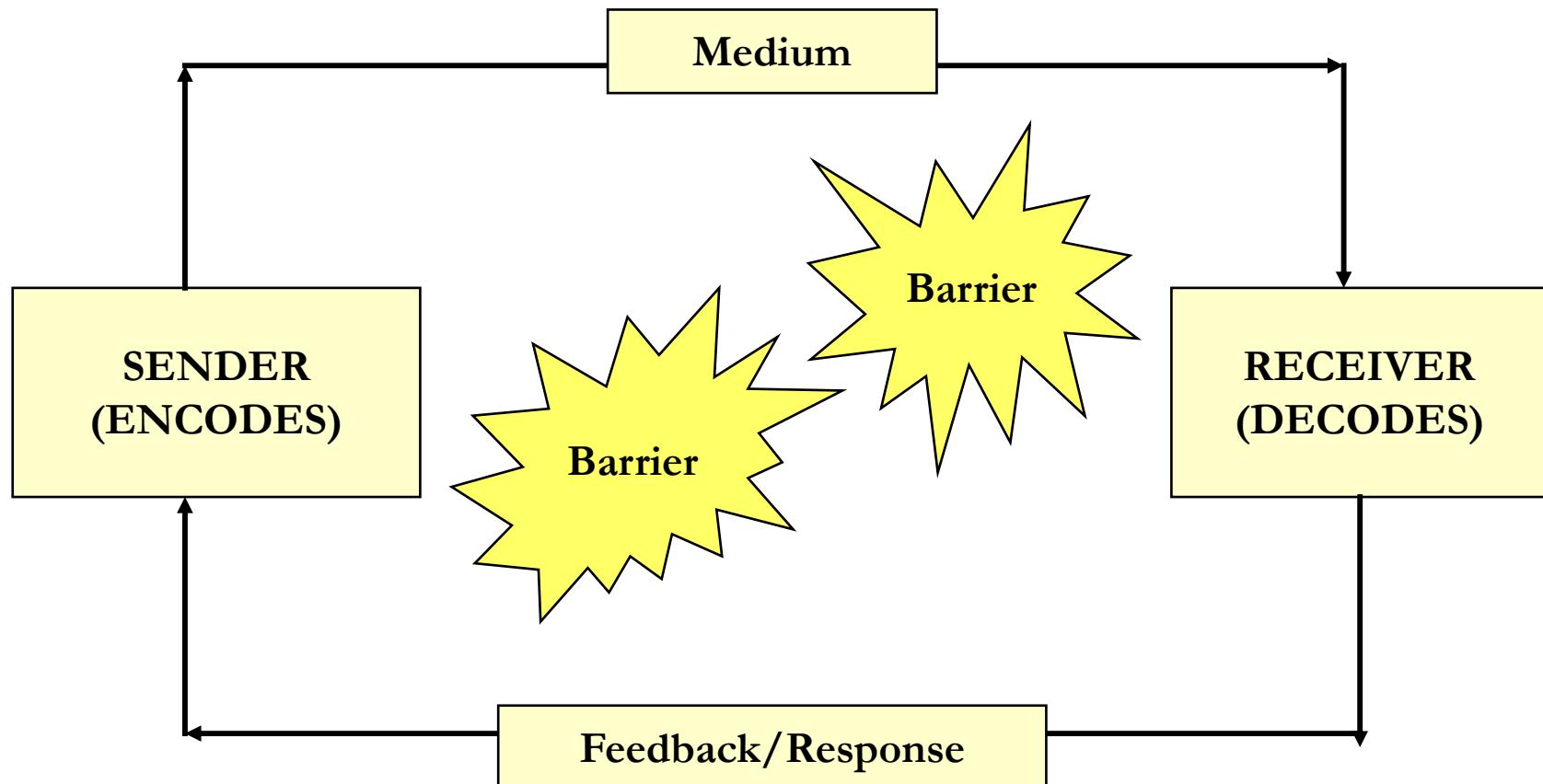
- Message
- Source (sender)
- Channel
- Receiver
- Filter
- Feedback



The Communication Process

- A message or communication is sent by the **sender** through a **communication channel** to a **receiver, or to multiple receivers**. The sender must **encode** the message (the information being conveyed) into a form that is appropriate to the communication channel, and the receiver(s) then **decodes** the message to understand its meaning and significance.

The Communication Process



- We form and interpret the messages we receive.
- We do this based on **canned plans** and **scripts**.
- A canned plan is a “mental library ”of scripts each of us draws from to create messages based on what worked for us or others in the past .(Berger, 1997)
- A script is an actual text of what to say and do in a specific situation.

Barriers to communication

- Language
- Values and beliefs
- Gender and age
- Economic status
- Educational level
- Physical barriers
- Attitude
- Timing
- Understanding of message
- Trust



Decoding Messages

- Once received, the receivers need to decode the message, and successful decoding is also a vital skill.
- Individuals will decode and understand messages in different ways based upon any **Barriers to Communication** which might be present, their experience and understanding of the context of the message, their psychological state, and the time and place of receipt as well as many other potential factors.
- Understanding how the message will be decoded, and anticipating as many of the potential sources of misunderstanding as possible, is the art of a successful communicator.

Feedback

- Receivers of messages are likely to provide feedback on how they have understood the messages through both verbal and non-verbal reactions.
- Pay close attention to this feedback as it the only way to assess whether the message has been understood as intended, and it allows any confusion to be corrected.
- Bear in mind that the extent and form of feedback will vary according to the communication channel used: for example feedback during a face-to-face or telephone conversation will be immediate and direct, whilst feedback to messages conveyed via TV or radio will be indirect and may be delayed, or even conveyed through other media such as the Internet.

Communication Context

- Physical Context
- Social Context
- Historical Context
- Psychological Context
- Cultural Context

physical context.

- The **physical context** reflects the space around something and how that influences how you see it.
- Temperature, lighting , noise level etc.
- Think about how a photograph of a woman's face looks different when it appears framed in an art gallery and when it appears in your friend's photo album.

Social Context

- The nature of relationship that exists between the participants.
- The more you know someone the better you know someone the better relationship you have .

Historical Context

- The history or past conversation with two or more people set the condition of understanding for later communication between them. Which other might not or will not understand.

Psychological Context

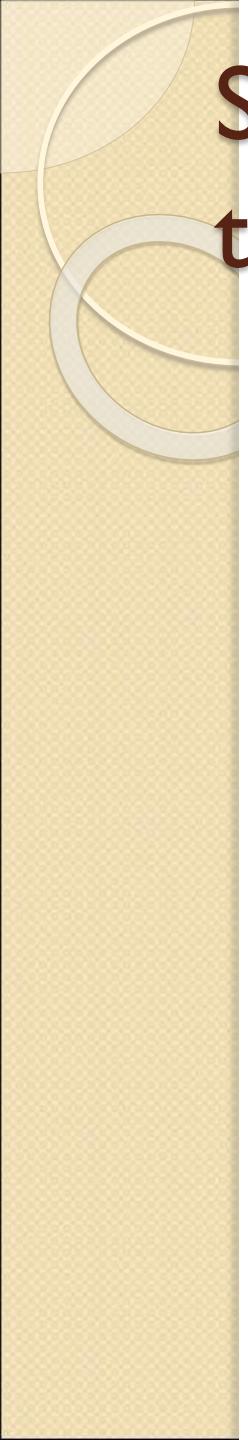
- The mood and feelings each person brings to the communication encounter.
- How do you feel when you get a good or bad grade?

Cultural Context

- Beliefs, values, orientation, rituals that belong to specific cultures.
- Ethnicity, religion, age ,gender, physical ability/disability.

Characteristics of communications

- 1. Develop and maintain our sense of self
- 2. Meet our social needs
- 3. To develop and maintain relationships
- 4. To exchange information
- 5. To influence others



So, communication requires the *message* to be:

- Clear and concise-
- Accurate
- Relevant to the needs of the receiver
- Timely
- Meaningful
- Applicable to the situation

1 COMPLETE

- To be effective, communication should be complete, i.e. it should include all the information the recipient needs to evaluate its content, solve a problem or make a decision.
- Complete communication reduces the need for follow-up questions and answers, and improves the quality of the overall communication process.

Complete (context)

- answer all questions asked
- give something extra, when desirable
- check for the five W's and any other essentials
 - --What Who Why When Where

#2 CONCISE

- Conciseness is not about keeping the message short, but rather about keeping it to a point.
- Conciseness in communication happens when the message does not include any redundant or irrelevant information.
- Concise communication prompts a better understanding of the message, because the recipient can focus on the key points and does not get distracted by a wealth of minor details.

Concise (style)

- shorten or omit wordy expressions
- include only relevant statements
- avoid unnecessary repetition

#3 CONSIDERATE

- When engaging in communication, a sender should always consider and value the recipient's needs, moods and points of view.
- Tailoring the contents and style of your messages based on their target audience strengthens the key points delivered within, as the sender can use argumentations and examples relevant to the recipient's experience, thus catering for a more thorough understanding of the message.

Considerate (context/delivery)

- focus on "you" instead of "I" or "we"
- show reader benefit/interest in the reader
- emphasize the positive, pleasant facts
- apply integrity and ethics

4 CONCRETE

- Effective communication happens when the message is supported by facts and figures.
- Concreteness in communication is also about answering to questions timely and consistently, and developing your argumentations based on real-life examples and situations rather than on general scenarios or theories.
- Concreteness fosters effectiveness in communication, as the recipient gets a more comprehensive overview of the message and its implications.

Concrete (style/sources)

- use specific and accurate words, facts and figures
- put action in your verbs
- choose vivid, image-building words

5 COURTESY

- Courtesy in communication implies being respectful of the recipient's culture, values and beliefs.
- It involves the need to adopt a register your audience can easily relate to and understand.
- Courteous communication has a positive impact on the overall communication, as it prompts a more positive and constructive approach to the conversation.

Courtesy (delivery)

- be sincerely tactful, thoughtful, and appreciative
- omit expressions that irritate, hurt, or belittle
- grant and apologize good-naturedly

6 CLEAR

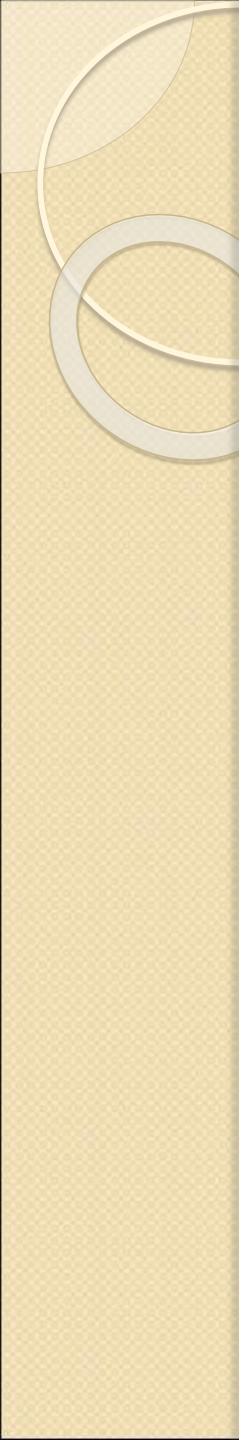
- To be effective, communication has also to be clear and specific. To achieve clearness, the message should focus on a single objective, thus emphasising its importance and catering for a prompt understanding of its contents. Clear communication also requires the adoption of the relevant terminology, thus reducing ambiguities and confusion in the communication process.

Clear /Clarity (organization/ sources)

- choose short, familiar, conversational words
- construct effective sentences and paragraphs
- achieve appropriate readability (through headings and transitions) and listenability
- include examples, illustrations, and other visual aids, when desirable

7 CORRECT

- Using grammar and syntax correctly vouches for increased effectiveness and credibility of the message.
- In fact, grammar and syntax mistakes make it harder for the recipient to decode the message and understand its contents.
- Also, they have a negative impact on the overall communication, as they show that the sender hasn't taken his time to craft his messages more carefully.



Correct (style)

- use the right level of language
- maintain acceptable writing mechanics
- choose nondiscriminatory expressions
- apply all the other pertinent "C" qualities

Characteristics of Effective Communication

Effective communication requires the **sender** to:

- Know the subject well
- Be interested in the subject
- Know the audience members and establish a rapport with them
- Speak at the level of the receiver
- Choose an appropriate communication channel

What is ‘Channel’

- A medium through which a message is transmitted to its intended audience, such as print media or broadcast (electronic) media
- <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/communication-channel.html#ixzz3wQkaz4Ik>

Communication theory states that communication involves a sender and a receiver (or receivers) conveying information through a communication channel.

- Multiple communication channels available
 - face-to-face conversations,
 - telephone calls,
 - text messages,
 - email,
 - the Internet (including social media such as Facebook and Twitter),
 - radio and TV,
 - written letters,
 - brochures and reports to name just a few.

Choosing an appropriate communication

- **This** is vital for effective communication
- Each communication channel has different strengths and weaknesses.
 - broadcasting news of an upcoming event via a written letter might convey the message clearly to one or two individuals but will not be a time or cost effective way to broadcast the message to a large number of people. On the other hand, conveying complex, technical information is better done via a printed document than via a spoken message since the receiver is able to assimilate the information at their own pace and revisit items that they do not fully understand. Written communication is also useful as a way of recording what has been said, for example taking minutes in a meeting.

Characteristics of effective communications

The ***channel*** should be:

- Appropriate
- Affordable
- Appealing

Characteristics of effective communications

The **receiver** should:

- Be aware, interested, and willing to accept the message
- Listen attentively
- Understand the value of the message
- Provide feedback

Characteristics of effective communicator

An effective verbal communicator:

- Clarifies
- Listens
- Encourages empathically
- Acknowledges
- Restates/repeats

An effective nonverbal communicator:

- Relaxes
- Opens up
- Leans toward the other person
- Establishes eye contact
- Shows appropriate facial expressions

Communication settings

- Intrapersonal Communication
- Interpersonal Communication
- Small group communication
- Public communication

Intrapersonal Communication

- **Intrapersonal communication** is a conversation which you have with yourself or which a person has inside with Self.
- Saying affirmations to yourself or talking yourself through your fears are two **examples** of this kind of **communication**.

Interpersonal Communication (IPC)

Interpersonal communication is a person to person, two-way, verbal and non verbal interaction that includes the sharing of information and feelings between individuals or in small groups that establish trusting relationships.

Knowledge and skills needed for effective interpersonal communication

- Adequate knowledge of subject area
- An understanding of one's own values and willingness to withhold judgment about the other people's values.
- Skills in verbal and nonverbal communication.
- Ability to show empathy and encourage others.
- Skills in asking questions and listening.
- Tolerance and patience
- Ability to paraphrase and summarize the concerns of individuals and the community.
- Ability to observe and interpret behavior of other people.
- Ability to use language that other people understand.
- Skills to effectively use support materials.
- Confidence
- Flexibility

Small group communication

- Refers to interactions among three to 20 people who are connected through a common purpose, mutual influence, and a shared identity.
- Family, group of friends, classmates working on a project etc.
- Face to face, electronic technology.

Public communication

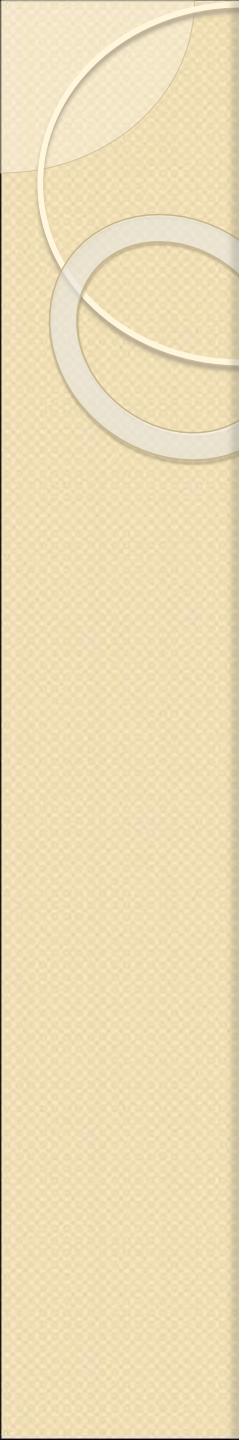
- **Public communication** happens when individuals and groups engage in dialogue in the **public** sphere in order to deliver a message to a specific audience.
- **Audience of more than 20 people**
- **Public** speaking events, newspaper editorials and billboard advertisements are a few forms of **public communication**.
- Internet

Communication is

- Continuous
- Irreversible-you can not take back a message after it is sent nor change how it will be interpreted
- Situated– depends on situation.
- Indexical-measure of emotional temperature –
- Trust -believing that someone wont intentionally do something to hurt you even though they have the power to.
- Learnt.
- Communication messages vary in conscious thought –
Spontaneous and Constructed?

Communication and Ethics

- moral principles that govern a person's or group's behavior
- the branch of knowledge that deals with moral principles.

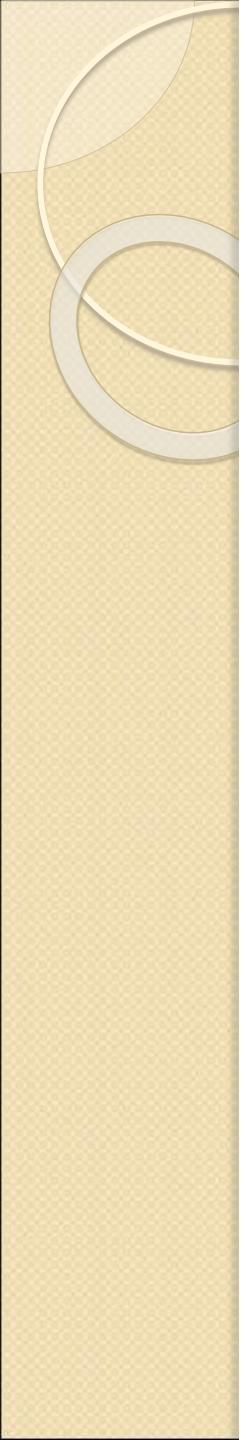


Ethical Principles

- We make choices with ethical implications whenever we communicate.

Ethical communicators must be

- Honest and truthful- do not intentionally betray or mislead others
- Act with integrity – consistency in what we say, believe and do
- Behave fairly--- impartial
- Demonstrate respect- regarding others, their point of view and rights
- Are responsible-- not hurting others by our words



Bright Side and Dark Side Messages

- Bright Side– Ethical and appropriate
- Dark Side- Unethical and inappropriate

- **Hard Dark Side**
 - messages are somewhat ethical and unethical
 - > honest , but damaging
- **Easy Dark Side**
 - somewhat ethical and unethical
 - > dishonest to maintain a good relationship
- **Evil Dark Side-** disrespectful and damaging

Communication apprehension

- **Communication apprehension** is defined as an individual level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated **communication** with another person or persons.
- Trait like- anxious in most speaking situations
- Audience based—a certain person or group
- Situational— short lived— job interview
- Context based – large group

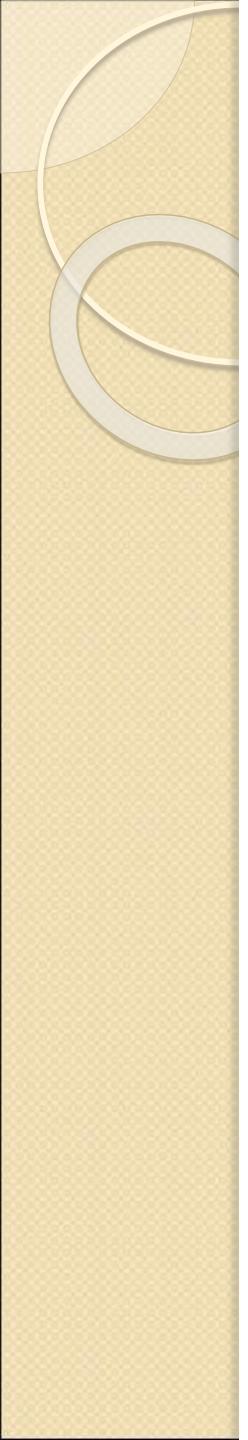
Communication Improvement plans

- Identify problem
- State the specific goal
- Outline a specific procedure to meet the goal
- Devise a method for measuring the process

Success for YOU...

**...in the new global and diverse
workplace requires
excellent communication skills!**





Sources

- <http://www.skillsyouneed.com/general/what-is-communication.html>
- Murphy and Hildebrandt's *Effective Business Communications*, 1991. Modifications/additions by Bob Corey 2005