



**Mc  
Graw  
Hill**

Because learning changes everything.®

# Chapter Eight:

---

## Communicating in Teams and Organizations

# Learning Objectives

1. Explain why communication is important in organizations and discuss four influences on effective communication encoding and decoding.
2. Compare and contrast the advantages and disadvantages of digital written communication channels, other verbal communication channels, and nonverbal communication.
3. Discuss the relevance of synchronicity, social presence, social acceptance, and media richness when choosing the preferred communication channel.
4. Discuss various barriers (noise) to effective communication, including cross-cultural and gender-based differences in communication.
5. Explain how to get your message across more effectively and summarize the elements of active listening.
6. Describe effective communication strategies in organizational hierarchies and review the role and relevance of the organizational grapevine.

# Communication: Definition and Importance



Definition: Process by which information is transmitted and understood between two or more people.

Importance:

- Coordinating work activities.
- Better decision making.
- Learning
- Changing others' behavior.
- Employee well-being.

# Communication Process Model

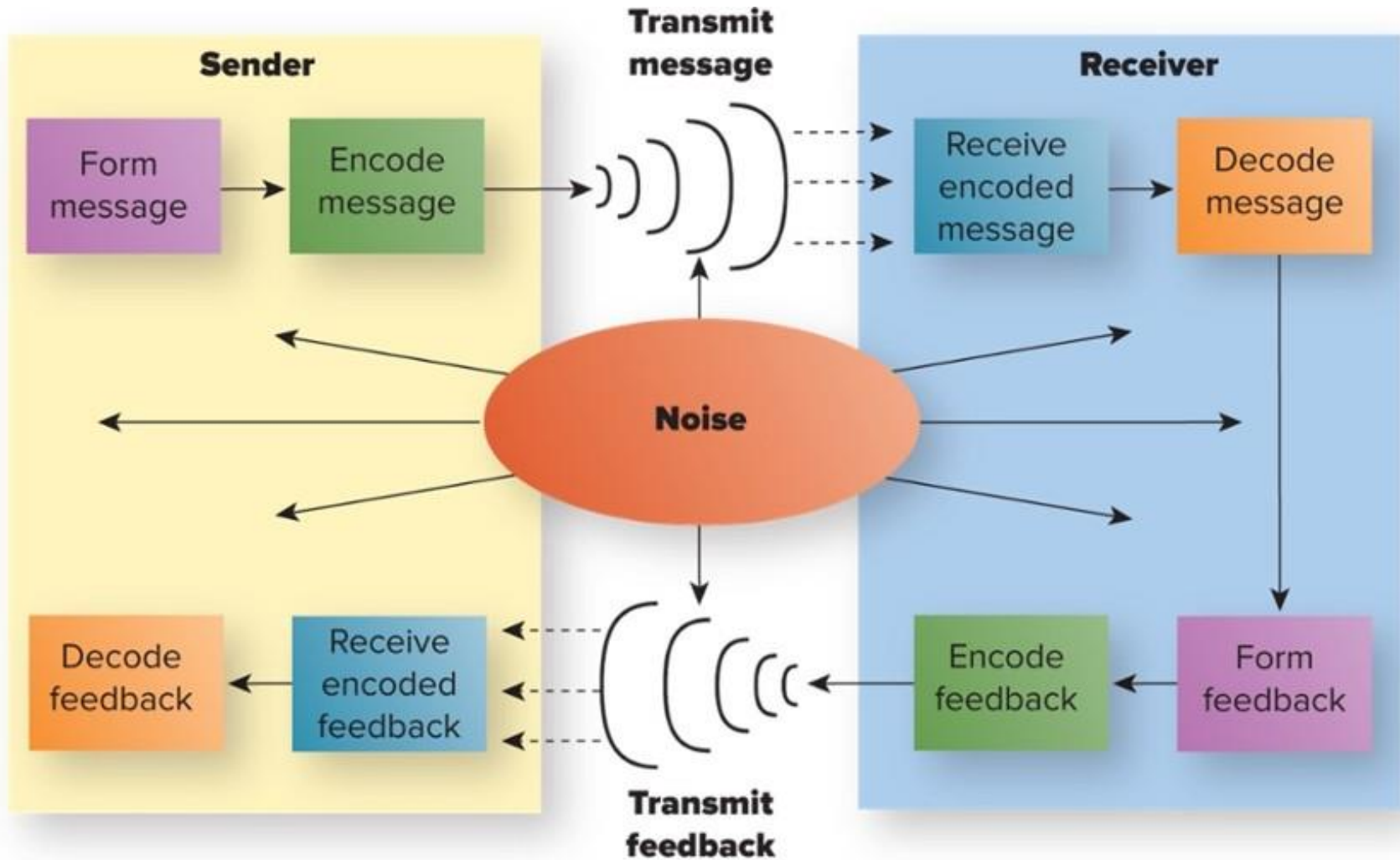


Exhibit 8.1 The Communication Process Model

[Access text alternatives for slide image.](#)

# Improving Communication Coding and Decoding



1. Sender and receiver have similar codebooks.
2. Sender has experience encoding the message.
3. Sender and receiver are motivated and able to use the selected channel.
4. Sender and receiver have shared mental models of communication context.

# Digital Written Communication

Digital written communication is rapidly evolving:

- Changing generational preferences.
- Emerging workplace communication platforms.

Email is most frequently used, but is declining quickly.

Fastest growing channels are text messaging/chat.

Gen Z employees use email less than text/chat at work.

# Benefits of Digital Written Communication

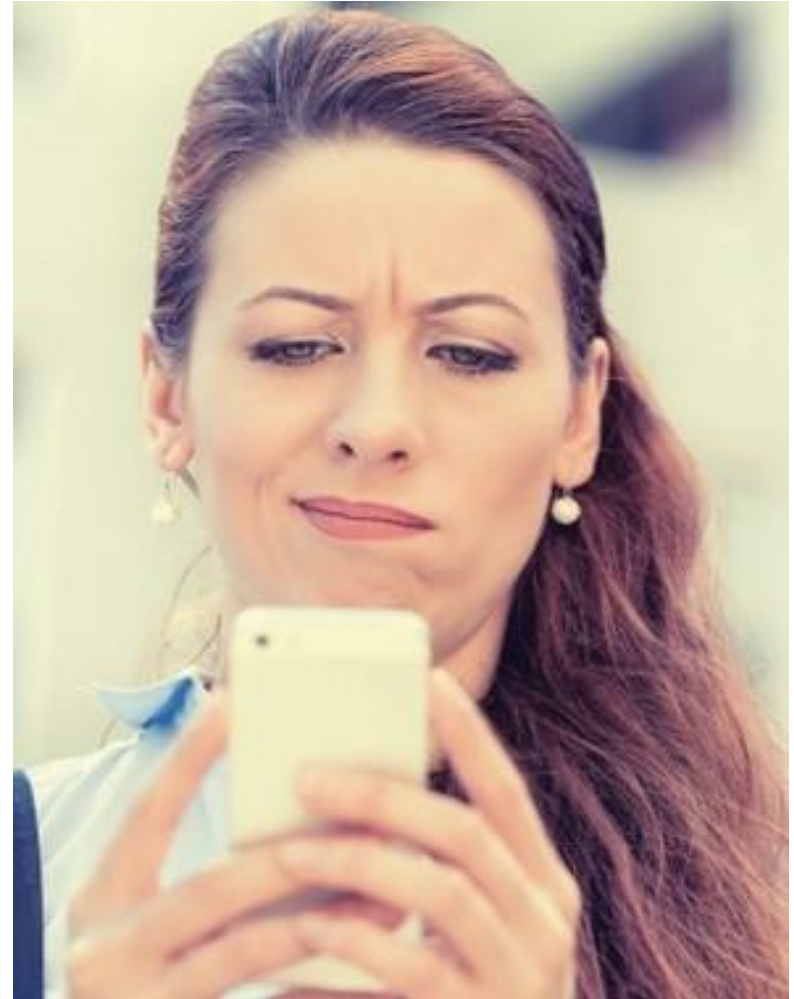
Preferred channels for sending well-defined information for decision making and for coordinating work.

- Can be written, edited, and transmitted quickly.
- Can be sent to many people simultaneously.
- Some channels have search engines.
- Increases upward communication.
- May reduce status differences, but still exists.
- May reduce stereotyping and prejudice, but may also increase reliance on stereotypes.



# Problems with Digital Written Communication

- Faulty communication of emotions.
- Less politeness and respectfulness (flaming).
- Inefficient for ambiguous, complex, novel situations.
- Contributes to information overload.





# Workplace Communication Through Social Media

Digital communication channels that enable people to collaborate in the creation and exchange of user-generated content.

Channels are “social.”

- Enable reciprocally interactive content.
- Users provide feedback, links, edits (“user-generated”).

Various social media serve diverse functions.

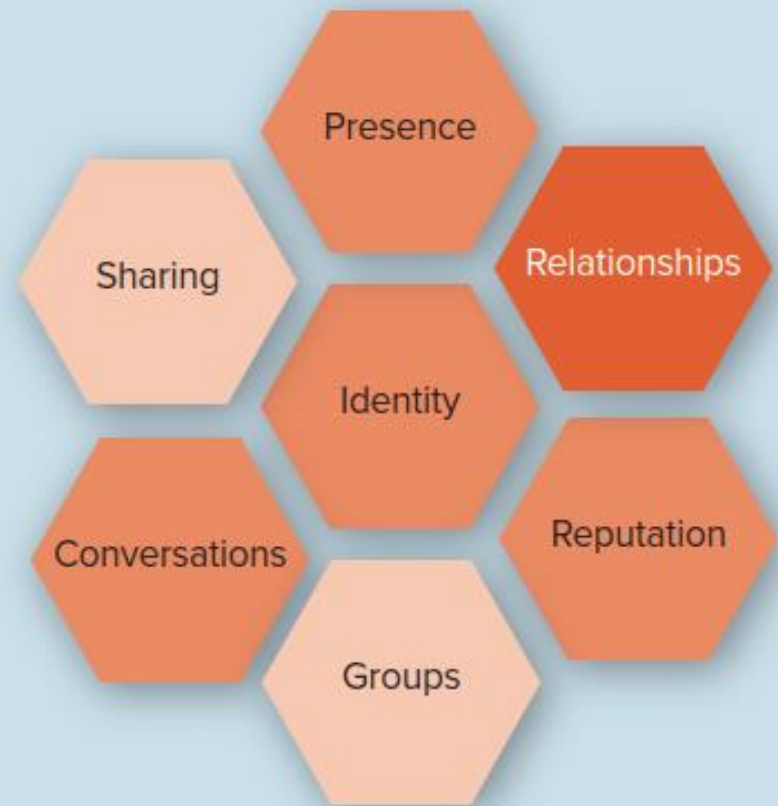
- Identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation/status.

# Workplace Communication Through Social Media

**Exhibit 8.2** Functions of Communicating through Social Media



**Wikis**



**Facebook**

# Nonverbal Communication

Includes actions, facial gestures, physical distance, and silence.

Differs from verbal communication by being:

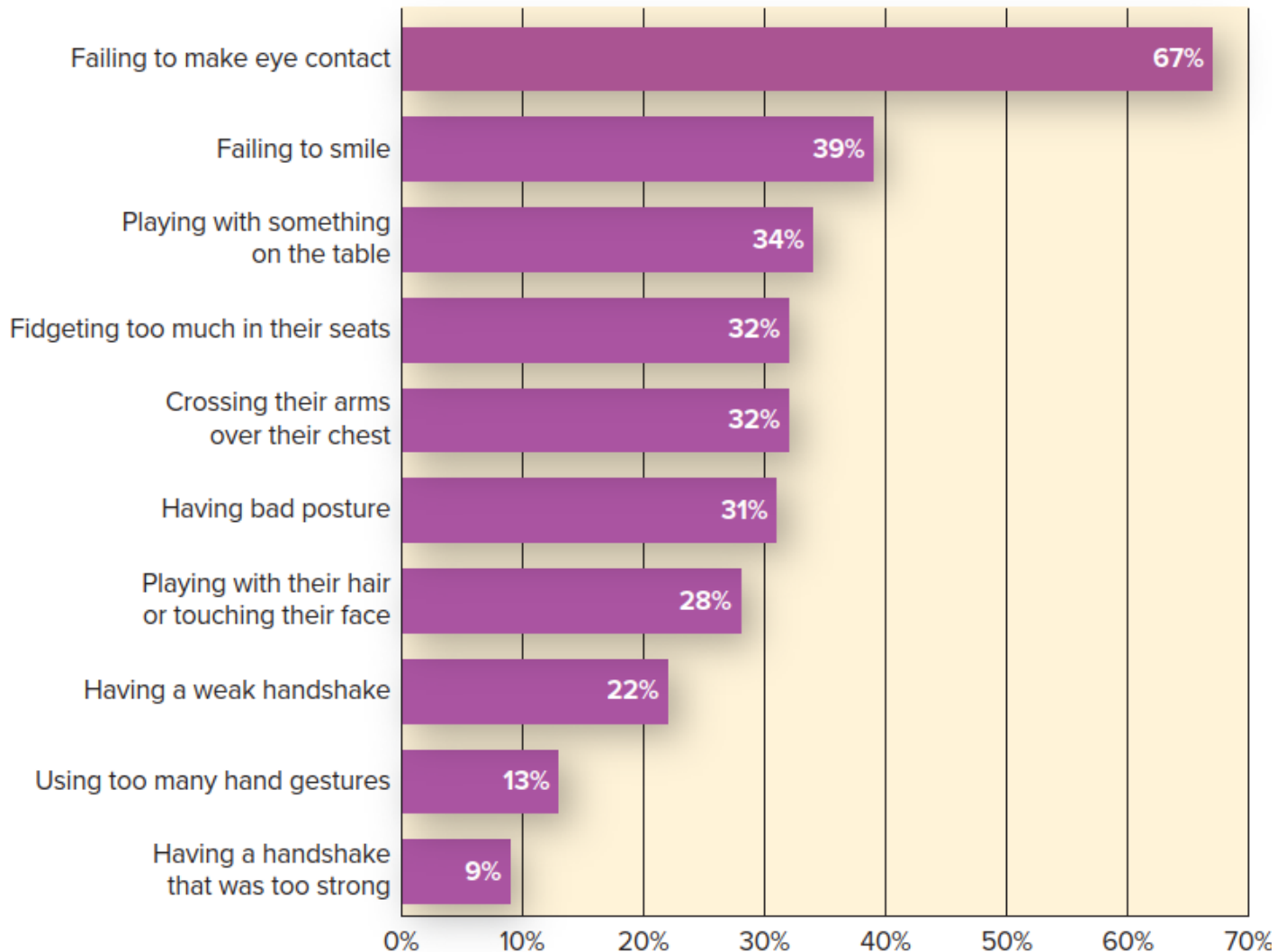
- Less rule bound.
- Mostly automatic and nonconscious.

**The most important thing in communication  
is hearing what isn't said.<sup>32</sup>**

—Peter Drucker, scholar, consultant, and “father” of management theory

# Nonverbal Communication

## Top 10 Body Language Mistakes in Job Interviews<sup>30</sup>



Percentage of 2,605 U.S. human resource and hiring managers surveyed who identified each of these behaviors as the biggest body language mistakes made by job candidates during hiring interviews.

# Emotional Contagion

Nonconscious process of sharing another person's emotions by mimicking that person's facial expressions and other nonverbal behavior.

Serves three purposes:

1. Provides continuous feedback to speaker.
2. Improves empathy.
3. Fulfills drive to bond.

# Choosing Channels: Synchronicity

Extent that the channel requires/allows sender and receiver to communicate at the same time (synchronous) or at different times (asynchronous).

Depends on:

- Time urgency (immediacy).
- Complexity of the topic.
- Cost of synchronous communication.
- Whether receiver should have time to reflect.



# Choosing Channels: Social Presence

Extent that the channel creates psychological closeness to others, awareness of their humanness, and appreciation of the interpersonal relationship.

Higher social presence with:

- Synchronous communication.
- Casual/personal message content.

Higher social presence increases:

- Empathy.
- Influence.





# Choosing Channels: Social Acceptance

Extent that others support use of that communication channel for that purpose.

Depends on:

- Firm/team norms for using the channel.
- Individual preferences for using the channel.
- Symbolic meaning of the channel.



# Choosing Channels: Media Richness

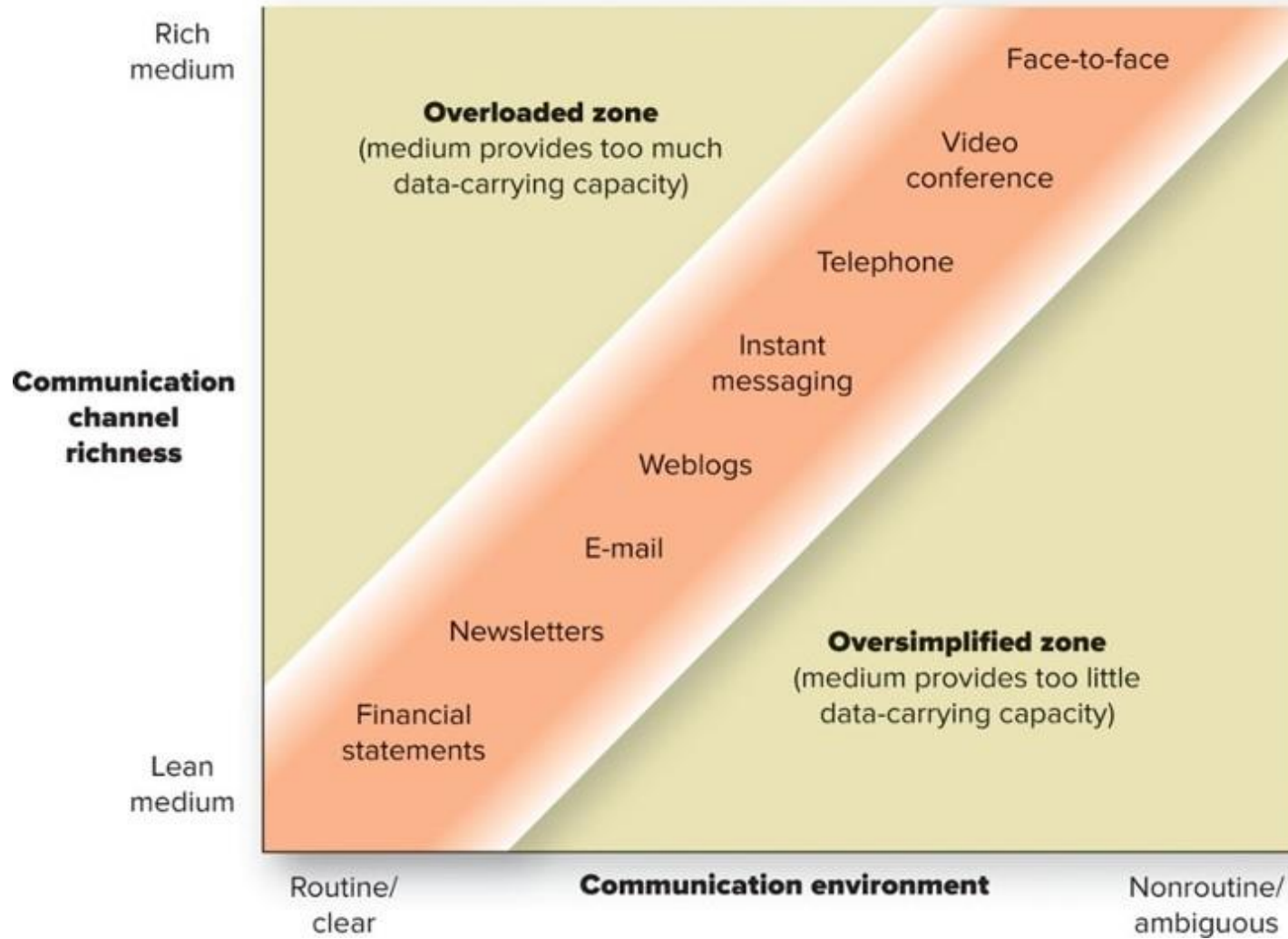
The channel's data-carrying capacity – the volume and variety of information that can be transmitted during a specific time.

High richness when channel:

- Conveys multiple cues.
- Allows timely feedback.
- Allows customized message.
- Permits complex symbols.



# Media Richness Hierarchy



Sources: Based on R.H. Lengel and R.L. Daft, "The Selection of Communication Media as an Executive Skill," *Academy of Management Executive* 2, no. 3 (August 1988): 226; R.L. Daft and R.H. Lengel, "Information Richness: A New Approach to Managerial Behavior and Organization Design," *Research in Organizational Behavior* 6 (1984): 199.

**Exhibit 8.5 Media Richness Hierarchy.**

[Access text alternatives for slide image.](#)

# Exceptions to Media Richness

Media richness theory doesn't apply as well to digital channels because:

1. Able to multi-communicate through lean channels.
2. More varied proficiency levels.
3. Lean channels have less social distraction than do media rich channels.

# Communication Channels and Persuasion

Use of facts, logical arguments, emotional appeals to change another person's beliefs/attitudes, usually to change behavior.

Spoken communication is more persuasive because:

- Accompanied by nonverbal communication.
- Has high quality immediate feedback.
- Has high social presence.

Written communication may be more persuasive when technical detail is required.

# Communication Barriers

- Imperfect perceptual process.
- Language problems.
- Jargon.
- Filtering.
- Information overload.

The greatest barrier to communication is the illusion that it has been achieved.<sup>55</sup>

—Joseph W. Coffman, president of Tecnifax Corporation, inventor, communication expert

# Information Overload

Job's information load exceeds person's information processing capacity.

- Result: Information gets overlooked or misinterpreted.

Two sets of solutions:

- Increase information processing capacity.
- Reduce information load.



# Cross-Cultural Communication

1. Language problems.
2. Voice intonation differences.
3. Different meaning of silence and conversational overlaps.
4. Nonverbal differences.

# Gender Communication Differences

## Men

- Engage in report talk.
- Give advice/requests directly.
- Dominant/power conversation style.
- Apologize less often.
- Less sensitive to nonverbal cues.

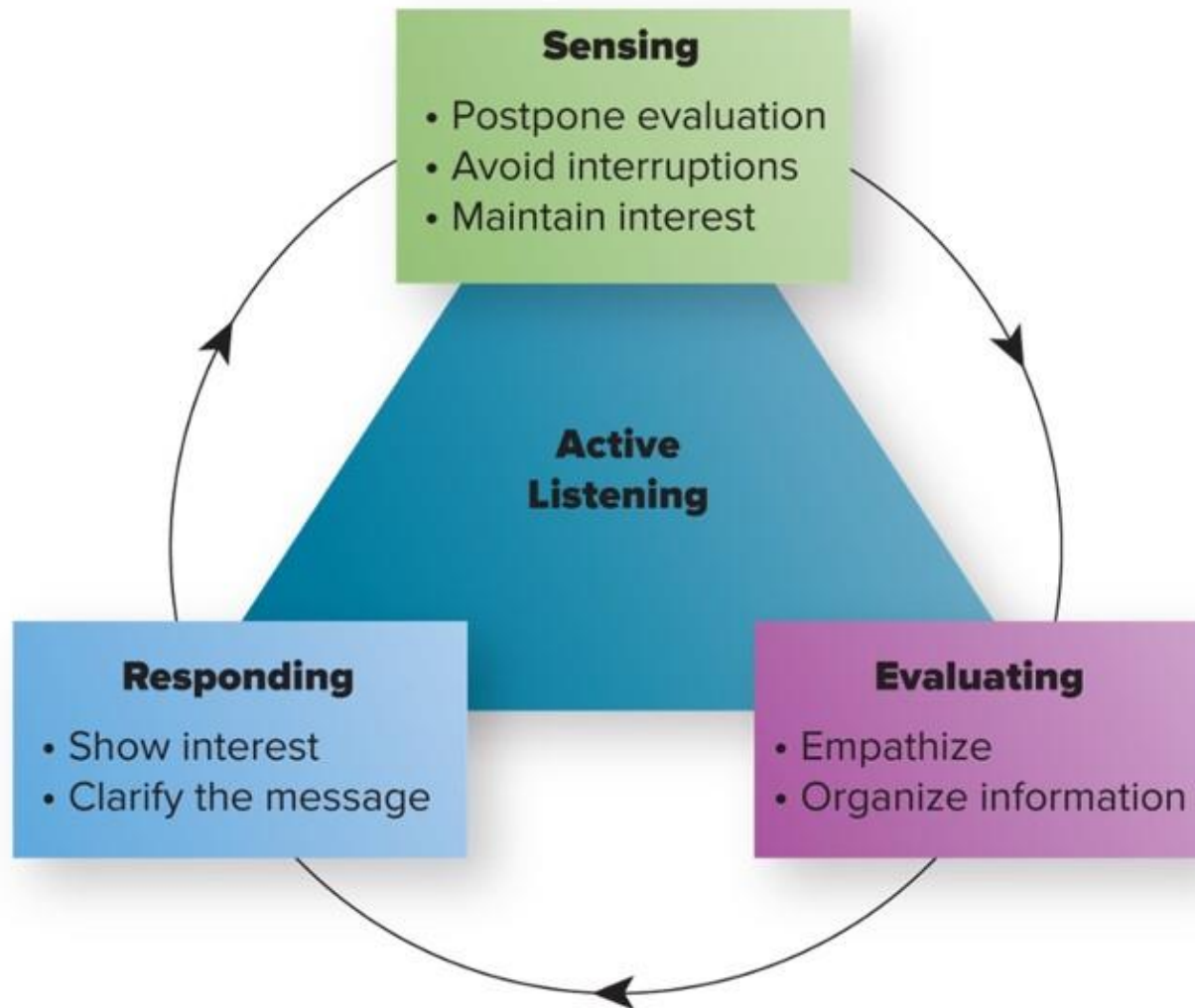
## Women

- Engage in rapport talk.
- Give advice/requests indirectly.
- Deferential conversation style.
- Apologize more often.
- More sensitive to nonverbal cues.

# Getting Your Message Across

- Empathize.
- Repeat the message.
- Use timing effectively.
- Be descriptive.

# Active Listening Process and Strategies



**Exhibit 8.7** Active Listening Processes and Strategies

[Access text alternatives for slide image.](#)

# Communication in Hierarchies

## Workspace design:

- Communal areas.
- Open-space offices.
- Team spaces.

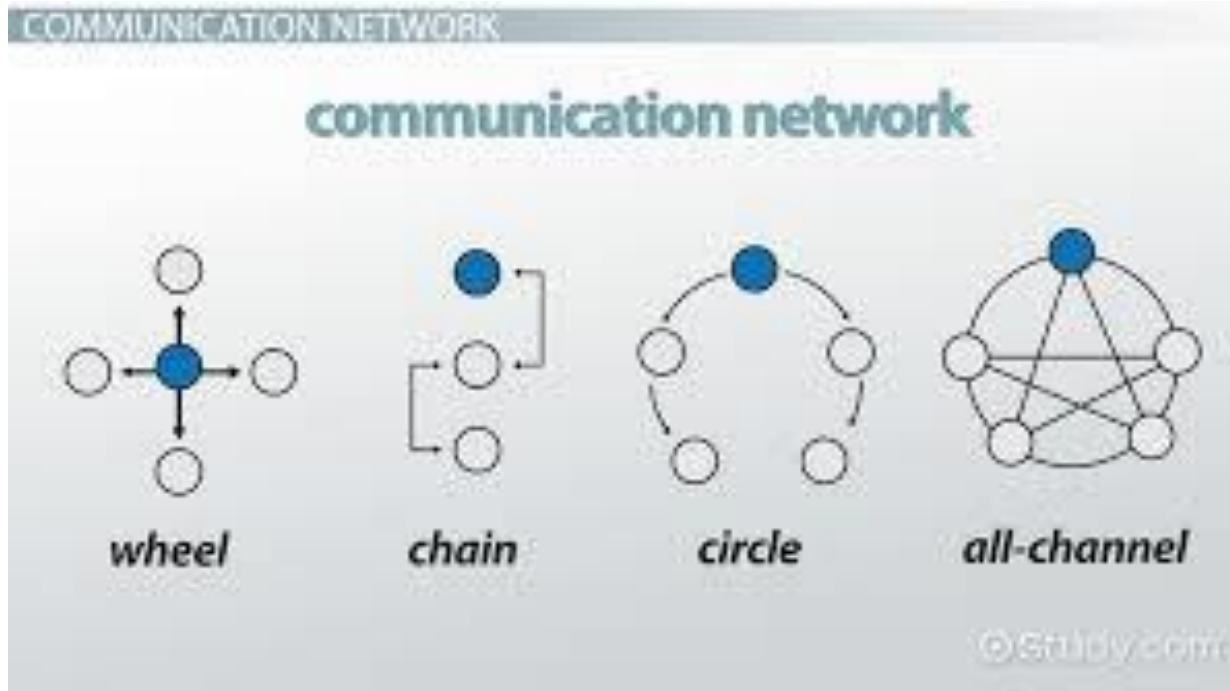
## Digital communication:

- Real-time news from employees on enterprise platforms are replacing company news.

## Direct communication with management:

- Town hall meetings.
- Roundtable forums.
- Management by walking around.

# Communication in Hierarchies



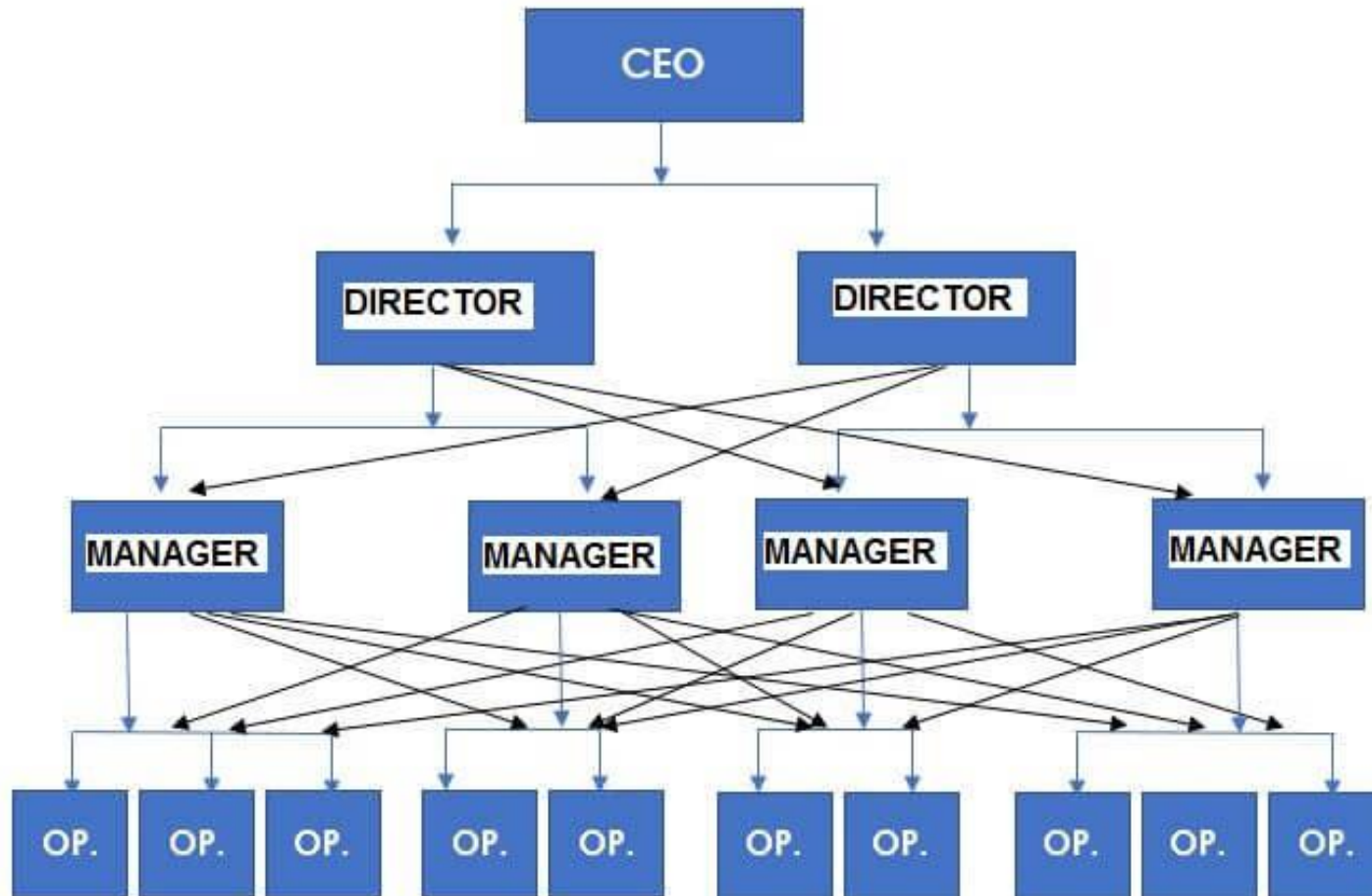
<https://study.com/academy/lesson/types-of-communication-formal-informal-grapevine-verbal-non-verbal.html>

# Communicating in Hierarchies



Directives

■ Information





# Organizational Grapevine

Unstructured/informal network founded on social relationships, not organizational charts or job descriptions.

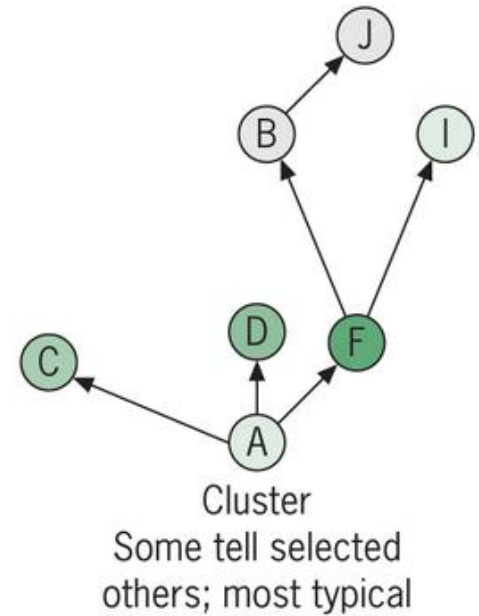
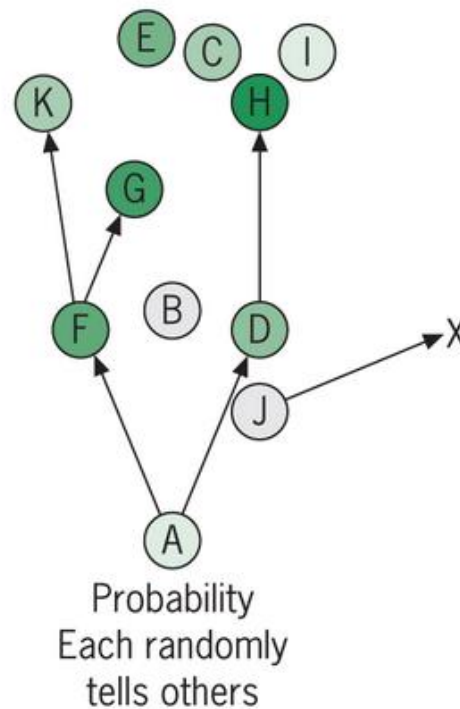
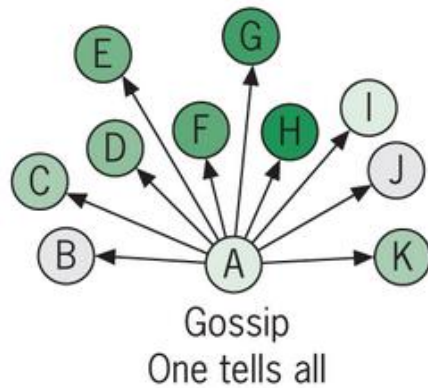
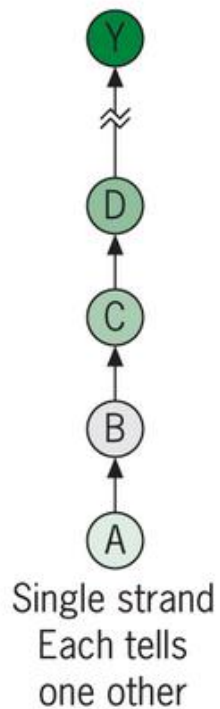
Grapevine dynamics have changed due to the social media and other digital trends.

Grapevine benefits:

- Fills in missing information.
- Strengthens corporate culture.
- Relieves anxiety.
- Associated with drive to bond.

Grapevine limitations:

- Distorted/exaggerated information.
- Employees dissatisfied when company slower than the grapevine.





Because learning changes everything.®

[www.mheducation.com](http://www.mheducation.com)