

Flows/Dimensions/Channels of Communication



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SEM -1 : AECC -1 Elective English: Communication Skills



Communication in an organization may be either external or internal.

External communication concerns with correspondence with those outside the organization.

Internal Communication is concerned with communication within the organization.

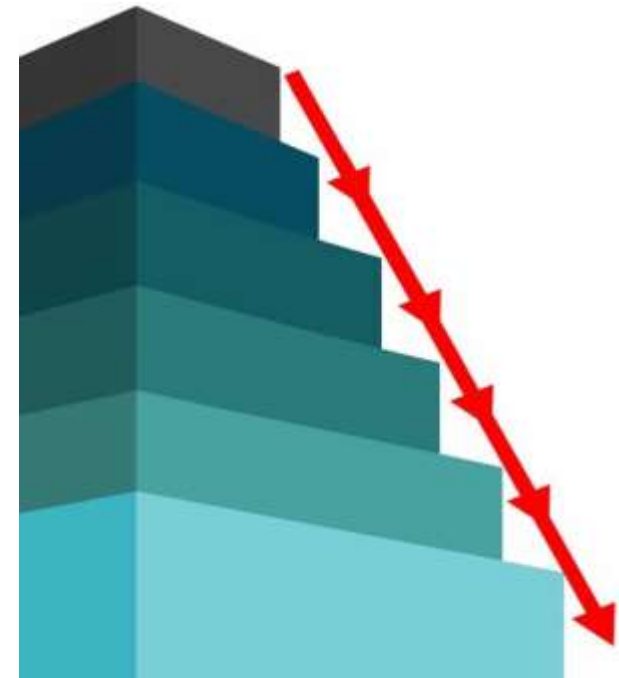
Internal communication can be classified into different communication like Downward, Upward, Horizontal, Grapevine.

Formal Communication

Formal communication is exchanging official information between two or more people within the same organization, by following predefined rules and using official channels of communication.

- Modern day managements, however encourage a lot of open communication with employees so that a free communication climate is generated for exchange of information.
- Formal communication is reflected in the organizational charts that shows the hierarchy of commands.
- The formal network is also labelled as the 'chain-of-command' model.
- All organizational policies and decisions originate with the top hierarchy and they flow down through the managers and supervisors to lower-level level employs.
- Downward, Upward, Horizontal, Diagonal Communication is formal communication.
- In this type of communication, information, circulars and notices are passing through levels in a formal style

Downward Communication starts from higher authority to downward authority, like the board of directors-managers-purchase officer-executive-clerk etc. It is a convenient channel to explain policies and organizational procedures/to appraise the subordinates for their performance. Major decisions are conveyed through this type of communication. It is necessary for the functioning of any organization as it involves the transfer of information, instructions, advices, request, feedback and ideas to subordinate staff. It is useful for appraisal of the subordinates for their performance. Downward Communication is very long and time consuming process. Downward communication is too much authoritarian process.



Upward Communication

Upward Communication starts from bottom level to top level. For example, worker conveys message to production manager, he conveys it to the director of company etc. Upward communication provides necessary feedback. Upward communication is also important for workers' suggestions for the welfare of an organization. Upward communication is difficult as it moves upward against the force of gravity - means workers hesitate to initiate for upward communication. Workers at the lowest level are not efficient communicators so their communication oral or written may not be accurate and may not be welcomed by superiors. It may also include innovative ideas, reactions to a particular policy, rules or a behavior of any person on the job.

Upward Communication



Top Level Management



Middle Level Management

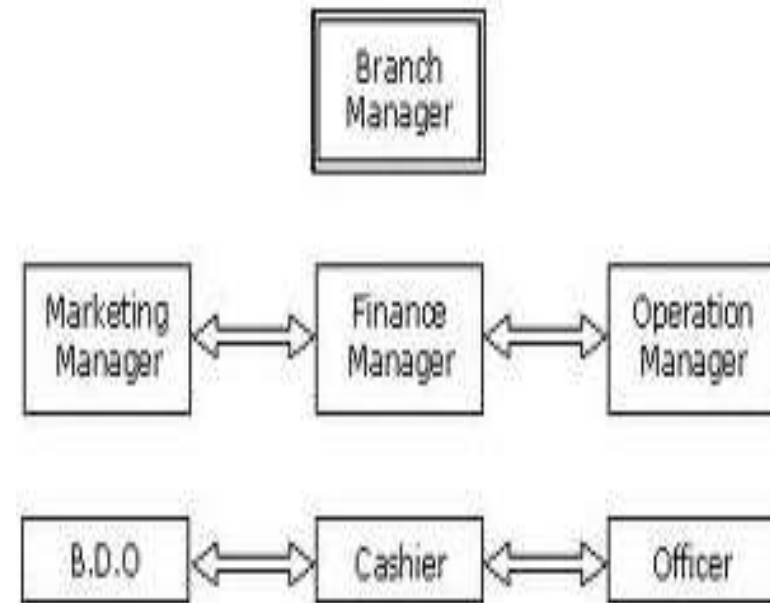


Lower Level Management



Workers/Employees

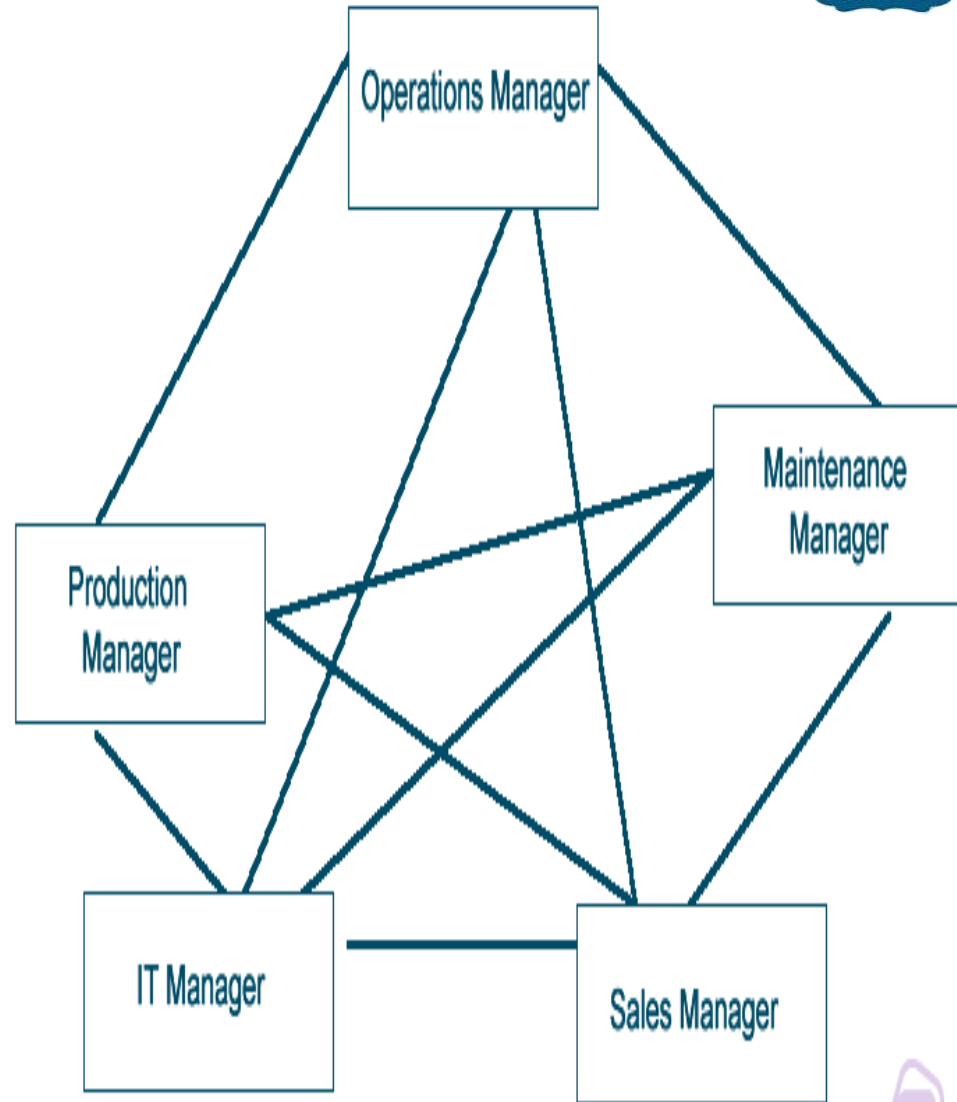
Horizontal Communication: Also known as lateral communication, messages, here, are passed on between employees working at the same organizational levels. For example, communication is transacted between the heads of the institution like Marketing manager, Finance Manager, and Operational Manager. Similarly the workers in the office and the workers on the site are laterally connected. The main objective of horizontal communication are developing team work and promoting group coordination within an organization. Horizontal Communication is less formal. Sometimes it results into "Gossip" about management.



"Horizontal" Communication in a Bank.

Diagonal (or Crosswise) Communication :

Communication between departments or employees in the same organization without any hierarchy is called diagonal communication. It is the most used channel of communication. Workers communicate with other workers, clerks sharing information with one another, managers discuss some organizational problems are all engaged in diagonal communication. Diagonal communication is extremely important for promoting, understanding and co-ordination among various departments.



Diagonal Communication



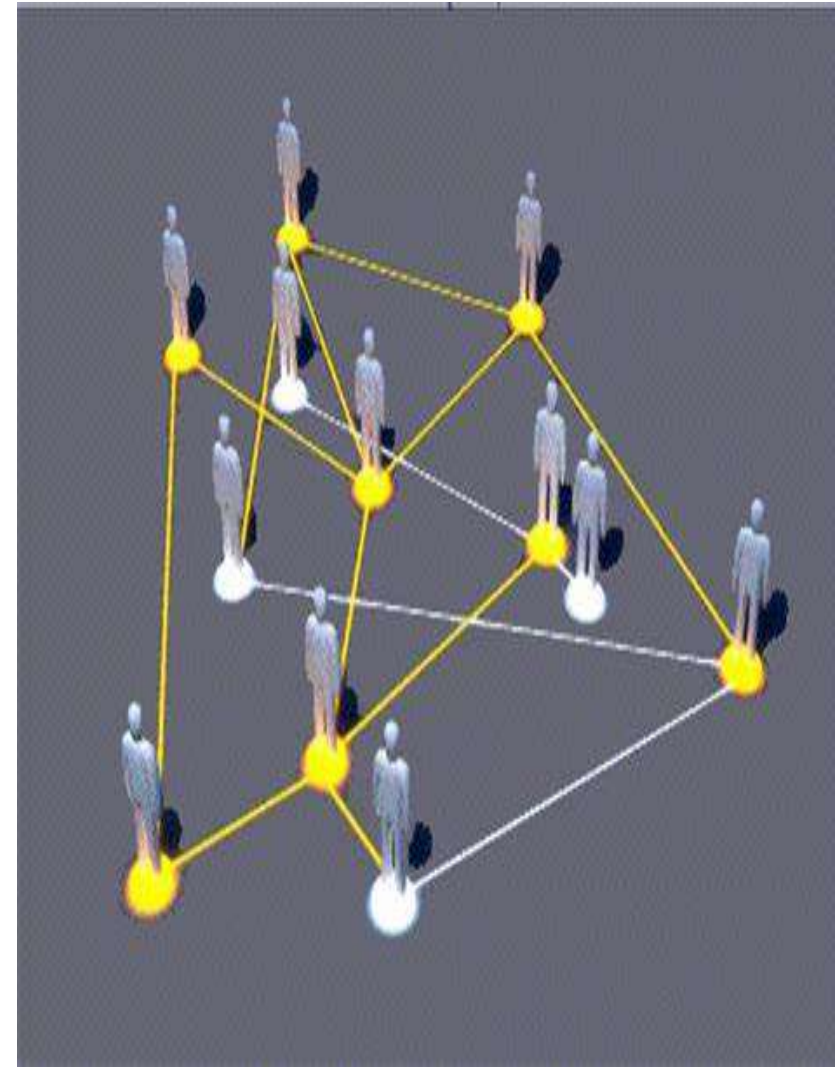
Informal Communication

Informal communication refers to the communication that flows without following the formal defined path. An informal communication system is also known as grapevine. Under informal communication, a piece of information flows in all directions without paying any heed to the level or authority.

- ~~The formal communication network have inherent problems~~ of command and control, the idea of informal communication network emerged with employees playing the lead role.
- Informal channels transmit official news through unofficial and informal communicative interactions known as the 'grapevine.'
- Grapevine is mainly the network of 'who talk to whom' which does not figure on the organizational chart.
- This informal communication network includes teatime gossip, casual gatherings, lunch-time meeting and so on. Grapevine communication is the best example of Informal Communication.

Grapevine Communication

An informal channel of communication in an organization is called Grapevine . For example people working together take interest in one another and talk about appointments, promotions, demotions or even domestic and romantic affairs of another. It follows no set lines or any definite rules but spreads very fast in any direction. Grapevine Communication provides much needed release to emotions. One of the major limitations of the grapevine is that it may spread baseless news which may harm the employees. Grapevine Communication is not always negative for an organization and can be helpful because it helps in positive group building. It may help in building up organizational solidarity and harmony. It provides much needed release to emotions. Any information in the name of 'secret' spreads very fast. It provides feedback for management.





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