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Course

Business Communication

Topic

Basic Principles of Communication

Faculty

Dr. Everil Fernandes



Learning Objectives

At the end of this session, you will be able to:

- To Identify the prerequisites to Business Communication
- To choose appropriate communication techniques in responding to all stakeholders of the company in a balanced environment.



WHAT IS COMMUNICATION?

It is the art of imparting or conveying ideas, views or information from the mind of one person to the mind of the other ***to achieve the desired result.***



Communication—our ability to share our ideas and feelings—is the basis of all human contact.

This notion is eloquently stated by Keating: “Communication is powerful: It brings companions to our side or scatters our rivals, reassures or alerts children, and forges consensus or battle lines between us.”



Communication

- Communication is a two-way process of reaching mutual understanding, in which participants not only exchange information, news, ideas and feelings but also create and share meaning.
- Louis A. Allen defines communication as : “Communication is the sum of all the things one person does when he wants to create understanding in the mind of another. It is a bridge of meaning. It involves a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening and understanding.”



Definition

Definitions of Communication by Prominent Scholars:

Hoben

"The verbal interchange of thoughts or ideas"

Newman and Summer

"Communication is an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions or emotions by two or more persons"

When is Communication Successful

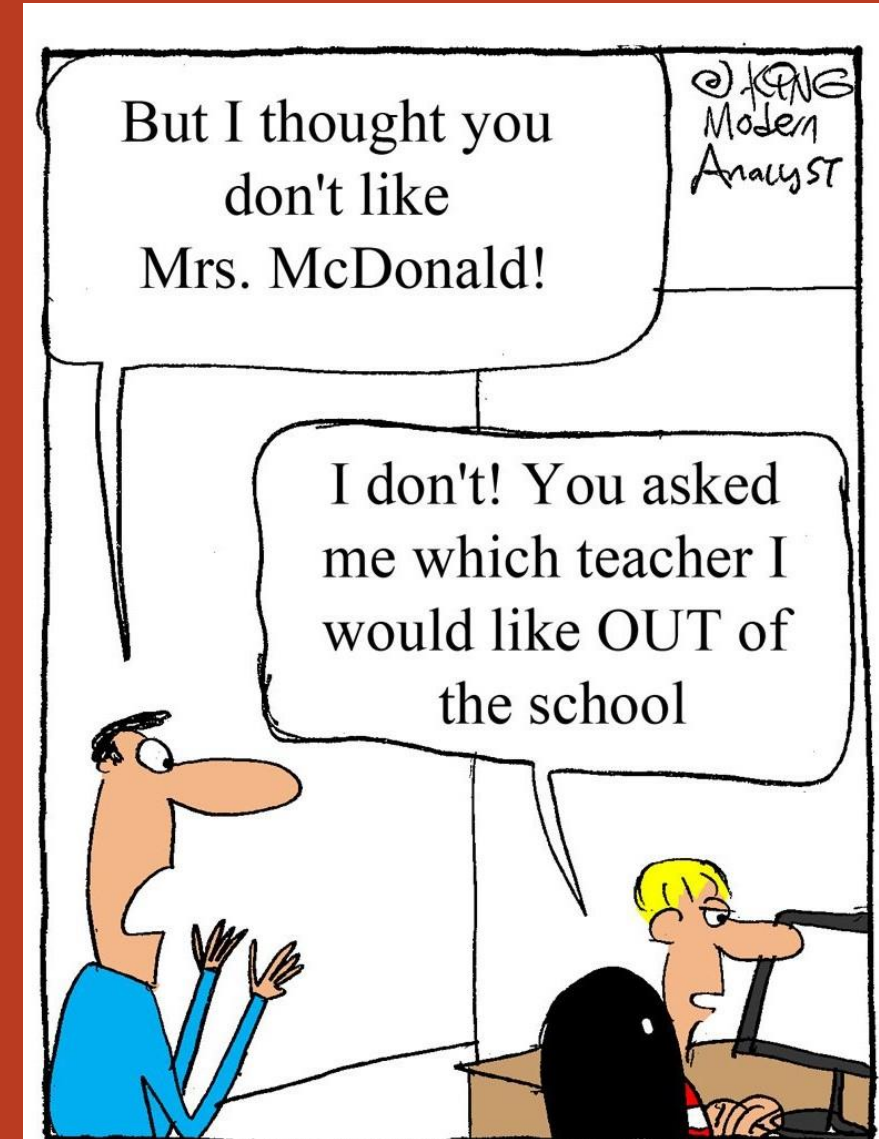
It is successful when message is interpreted as intended.

SENDER

RECEIVER

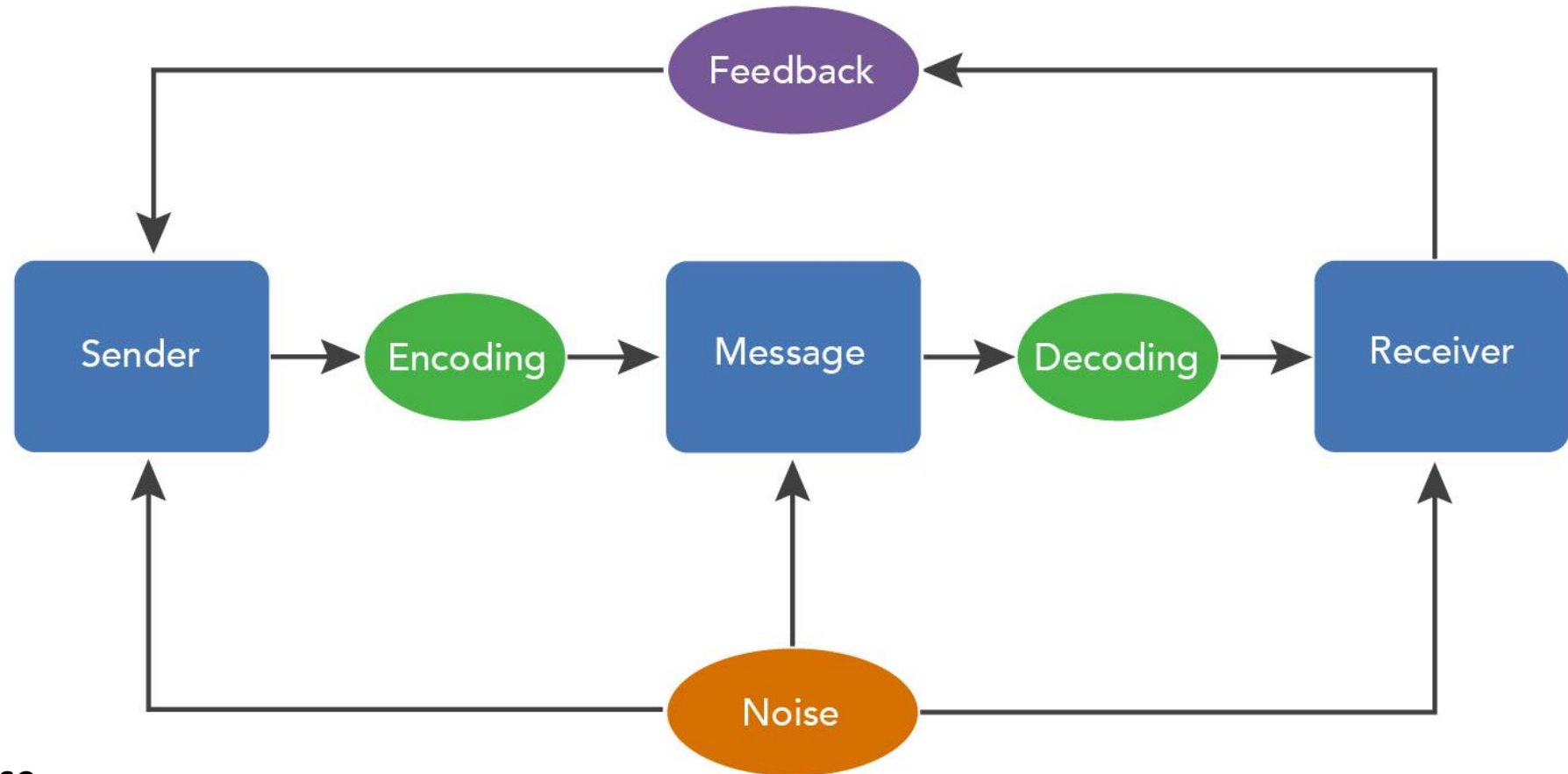
UNDERSTANDING







The Communication Process



Physical noise
Physiological noise
Psychological noise



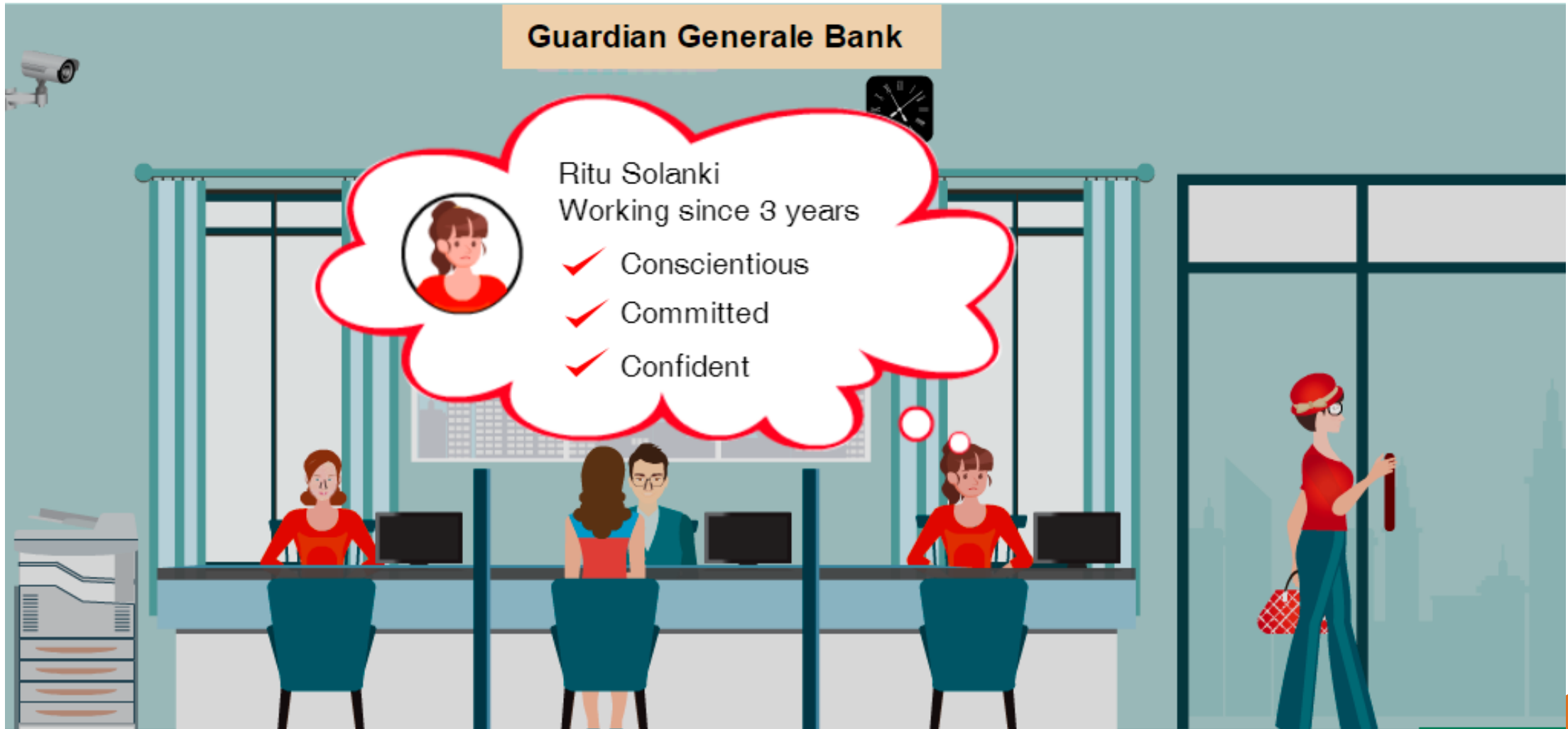
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Importance of Giving and Receiving Feedback





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Importance of Giving and Receiving Feedback



Exceptional clarity in
assignments



Confidence in taking up
independent charge



Calm under pressure



Forthright with her
views and opinions



Deliver end-to-end



Sound judgment on
sensitive issues



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Importance of Giving and Receiving Feedback



She shows tenacity and can persevere in the face of setbacks.

She is bright, energetic and fun loving as a person but she can also withdraw from a social situation if she is not comfortable in the given context.





Importance of Giving and Receiving Feedback



Her resilience could take the form of stubbornness at times, impact her ability to align a team and also give her the label of driving her team too hard.





Importance of Giving and Receiving Feedback





Importance of Giving and Receiving Feedback



This behaviour impacts her ability to build strong relationships within her department and with peers across departments.

She also needs to develop the ability to trust her colleagues and delegate tasks as she is a perfectionist.



Importance of Giving and Receiving Feedback



Question 1

Which one of the following statements would be an appropriate way of giving specific positive feedback?

- ☐ Ritu, I do not know what I would do without you.
- ☐ Ritu, you are an asset to our team.
- ☐ Ritu, you were excellent in the way you managed the client. You were so calm and composed throughout the entire engagement.
- ☐ Ritu, you were very observant.



Correct!

It compliments the individual's specific behaviour.



Question 2

Which one of the following statements would be an example of vague critical feedback?

- ☐ Ritu, you are a bright and energetic person, but some times you come across as arrogant.
- ☐ Ritu, I admire your resilience and passion towards work, however some times you seem very stubborn.
- ☐ Ritu, you are an excellent performer, but you need to focus on managing your team well.
- ☐ Ritu, I appreciate the manner in which you take decisions independently, but you need to learn to trust your team members.



Correct!

It doesn't state specifics about the individual's performance or team management skills.



Question 3

Which of the following would be an appropriate manner for Ritu to seek feedback about her 'Team Management' Skills?

- ☐ Thank you for your feedback Sir. I will definitely look into it, but you see it is very difficult managing a young team.
- ☐ Thank you for your prompt feedback Sir. I will definitely work on it. However, could you guide me on how to manage my team better?
- ☐ Sir, what do you mean by 'manage your team better'?
- ☐ Thank you, Sir. I will be more careful next time.



Correct!

The individual has thanked her boss, acknowledged the feedback and has sought help on how to get better.



Solution



This case brings to focus the importance of feedback. Sometimes while being enthusiastic, focused and result-driven, there may be some areas that an individual needs to improve. Here, despite the fact that Ritu has all the aforementioned traits, there is scope for her to improve, which is possible only through feedback.

The manner, specificity and timeliness, in which feedback is provided, can provide direction and improve performance towards goals. It is imperative to remember that feedback has to be provided in a safe environment without blaming the individual.



Importance of Good Communication Climate

A good communication climate is an integral part of people feeling trusted by the organisation.





Importance of Good Communication Climate



This case study depicts the impact of a negative communication climate on the employees of a particular team.





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Mr. Vikas Nayak
Sales Manager

He is appreciated by his managers
for being highly focused on tasks
that are assigned to him.





On the other hand, direct reports of Vikas feel that he is:

- Always in a hurry to complete their sentences.
- Not really giving them time to share ideas.
- Not really giving the time to respond to his instructions.





Many a time, Vikas also does not check with his direct reports about the status of the tasks assigned to them. He is often too quick to judge based on what he has heard from others. This has made his team members withdrawn and unwilling to share thoughts or ideas, as he does not support them.



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Eventually, HR Manager Ram meets Vikas and informs him of his team's opinion and asks him to mend his ways.





Question 1

After the meeting with the HR, what should be the best course of action that Vikas can take to develop a positive communication climate?

- ☐ He can start by giving people time to respond, listen to ideas being shared, acknowledge the opinions of his team members and engage in participative decision-making.
- ☐ He should neglect the conversation since he is anyway getting appreciation from his managers for getting the job done.
- ☐ He should call the team members and express his displeasure at them having complained to the HR.
- ☐ He should probably let the team know that this is his working style and that they should get used to it if they want to remain here.



Correct!

By doing so, he will understand the feelings of the message, recognise non-verbal cues about the feelings of others and build a supportive environment.



Question 2

From the given scenario, Vikas comes across as someone who needs to work on which of the following?

- ☐ Empathy
- ☐ Numerical Knowledge
- ☐ Time Management Skills
- ☐ Quarterly Goals





Correct!

An empathetic person tends to attend to what is said, recognise non-verbal cues about the feelings of others and retain objectivity.



Question 3

Which of the following ways are important for building an effective communication climate?

- ☐ Interrupting the speaker
- ☐ Paraphrase the ideas of the speaker
- ☐ Disagreeing with them constantly
- ☐ Being aggressive





Correct!

By paraphrasing the ideas of the speaker, you are seeking more information and acknowledging their opinion hence making them feel valued.



Solution



- This case focused on good communication climate and its impact on employees and the organisation. Many a time, it may be convenient to focus on the tasks assigned to you and not pay due attention to the direct reports and other team members.
- This may lead team members to become demotivated and unwilling to share ideas and thoughts, rendering their experience and enthusiasm useless.
- A positive communication climate can be developed by acknowledging people and their ideas, encouraging people to share thoughts and discuss the same thereby building a supportive environment.

BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION



‘Noise’ refers to all these factors that disrupt communication.

Physical noise – Distracting sounds, poor acoustics, or just information overload could interfere with the listening process.

Physical Noise	
Construction activity	Air conditioners
Barking dogs	Airplanes
Loud music	Noisy conflict nearby

Physiological noise – Hearing or other disabilities, fatigue, or physical illness could come in the way of both speaking and listening.

Physiological Noise	
Feeling ill	
Having a headache	
Growling stomach	
Room is too cold or too hot	

Psychological noise – Sometimes emotions within the sender, or receiver such as preoccupations, hostility, fear or lack of interest could interfere with the speaking or listening process.

Psychological Noise	
Worries about money	
Crushing deadlines	
The presence of specific other people in the room	
Tight daily schedule	
Biases related to the speaker or content	

Physical Barriers *(More examples...)*

- Physical barrier is the environmental and natural condition that act as a barrier in communication while sending message from sender to receiver.
- When the sender sends messages, physical barriers like doors, walls, distance, etc. do not let the communication become effective. The barriers are less if the proximity of the sender and the receiver is high, and less technology are required.
- Example: Traffic noise, time zones, physical distance, defects in channel



Psychological Barriers (*More examples...*)



Barriers or problems arising due to the stress or psychological problems are psychological barriers. It is difficult to accept and overcome these barriers.

Example:

If your boss does not trust you, he/she will only send selective information.

You don't talk to your classmate as you feel the person is arrogant.

Habit of dreaming or thinking about something else when some lecture is going on or talk is going on





‘Noise’ refers to all these factors that disrupt communication.

Linguistic and **cultural barriers** :

- When the sender of the message uses a language that the receiver does not understand, the communication will not succeed.
- Either the sender may be using a different or foreign language, or the language used may be too highly technical for the receiver to understand.
- **Cultural differences** refer to differences in values and perceptions, which may affect the interpretation of the message by the receiver.

For example, a joke about women may be taken in the wrong sense if the receiver belongs to a culture in which women are highly respected.

Linguistic barriers may also occur in cross-cultural advertising and distort communication, when translating campaigns or slogans literally from one language to another.

For example, Pepsi’s slogan “Come Alive with Pepsi”, when translated into Chinese, read “Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the grave!”. Many accidents have happened in air because the pilot, who is of foreign origin, has not followed properly the directions given by the Air Traffic Controller who speaks Indianised English.

Cultural Barriers *(More examples...)*



Cultural barriers can interfere with communication in a variety of ways:

- The norms of communication vary between cultures, such as, personal space. It's important to find common ground in these situations.
- People may form assumptions based on stereotypes of the other person's culture (cultural noise).
- Work cultures differ between companies which means you have to adapt to your company's culture to communicate effectively.



‘Noise’ refers to all these factors that disrupt communication.

Semantic barriers – The word ‘semantics’ refers to the meaning of words and how they are used.

- Different words may have different meanings in different cultures. Failure to consider this could lead to serious blunders.

Example – Saying ‘The new product launch went like a bomb’ in British English would mean that the new product launch was a success.

- On the other hand, saying ‘The product launch bombed’ in American English would mean that the new product was a disaster.

Semantic Noise

Special jargon
Unique word usage
Phrases from
foreign languages

Euphemism

Mispronunciation



Semantic barrier

- International business people often say that you can buy in your native language anywhere in the world, but you can sell only in the language of the local community.

Examples:

- In China, Kentucky Fried Chicken's slogan "Finger - lickin' well" was translated "So good you suck you fingers."
- In Thailand, the slogan "Come alive with Pepsi" was translated "Bring your ancestors back from the dead with Pepsi."
- Except-accept, fair-fare, council- counsel, principal-principle





EUPHEMISM

Figure of Speech

“The substitution of an agreeable or inoffensive expression for one that may offend or suggest something unpleasant.”



E =





More examples



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A **EUPHEMISM** is a more polite or gentle way to say something:

He **passed away**.

(Pass away is a euphemism for die.)

I'm **between jobs**.

(Between jobs is a euphemism for unemployed)

Mary is a **senior citizen**.

(Senior citizen is a euphemism for old person.)



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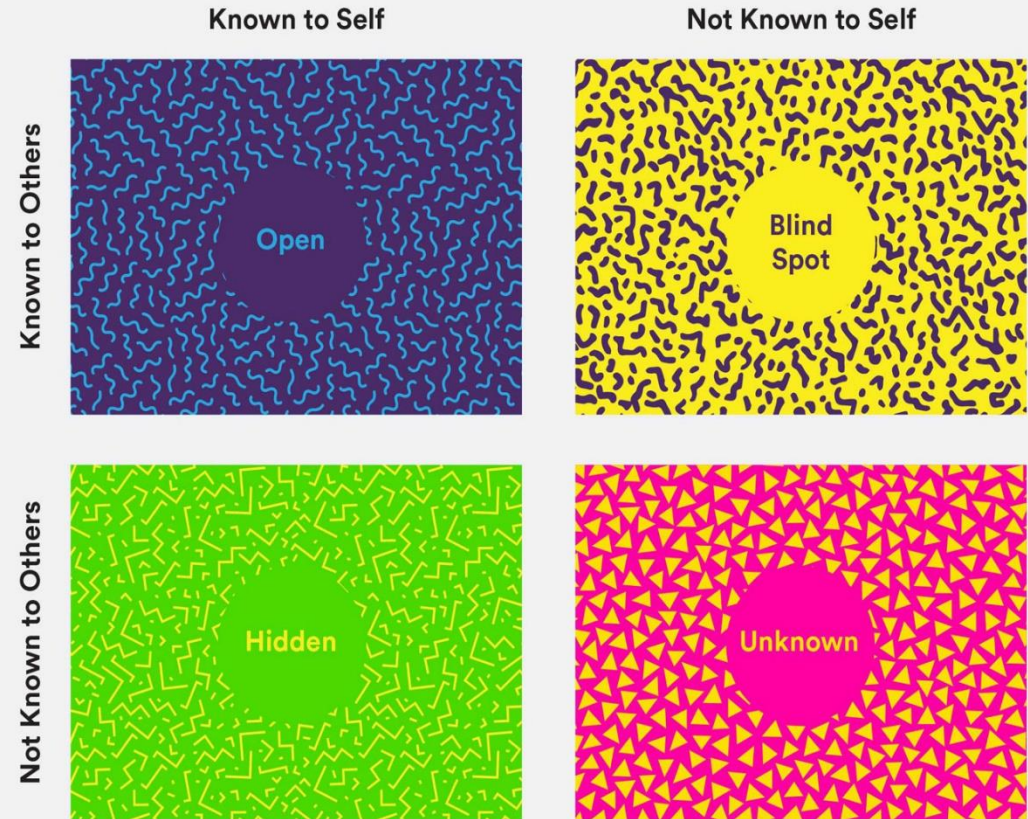


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The 'Johari' window model is a convenient method used to achieve this task of understanding and enhancing communication between the members in a group.

The Johari Window addresses the following questions:

1. What do others know about the individuals?
2. What is unknown to them?
3. What do others not know about the individual that they should know?
4. What do they know about the individual that the individual should know?

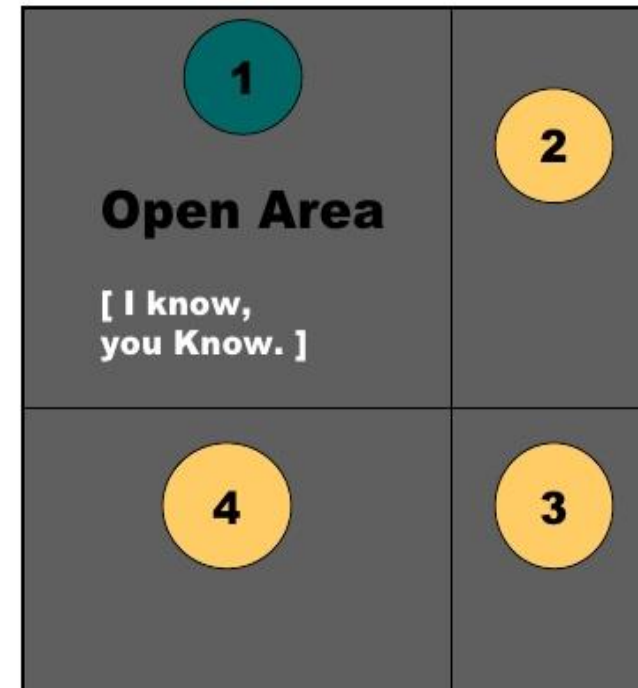




Open Area:

- The first pane, by name Arena, contains information that one knows about one's own self and about which the group knows.
- This is characterized by free and open exchange of information between person's own-self and others.
- The behavior here generally is public and available to everyone.
- The **Arena increases in size as the level of trust increases between individuals or between the individual and their group**, and more information, particularly personally relevant information is shared.

Johari -- Window.



(1) Larger Open Area

- Sensitive to needs of self and also that of others.
- High degree of mutual trust, concern and respect.
- Objective and meaningful relations.
- Open and authentic.



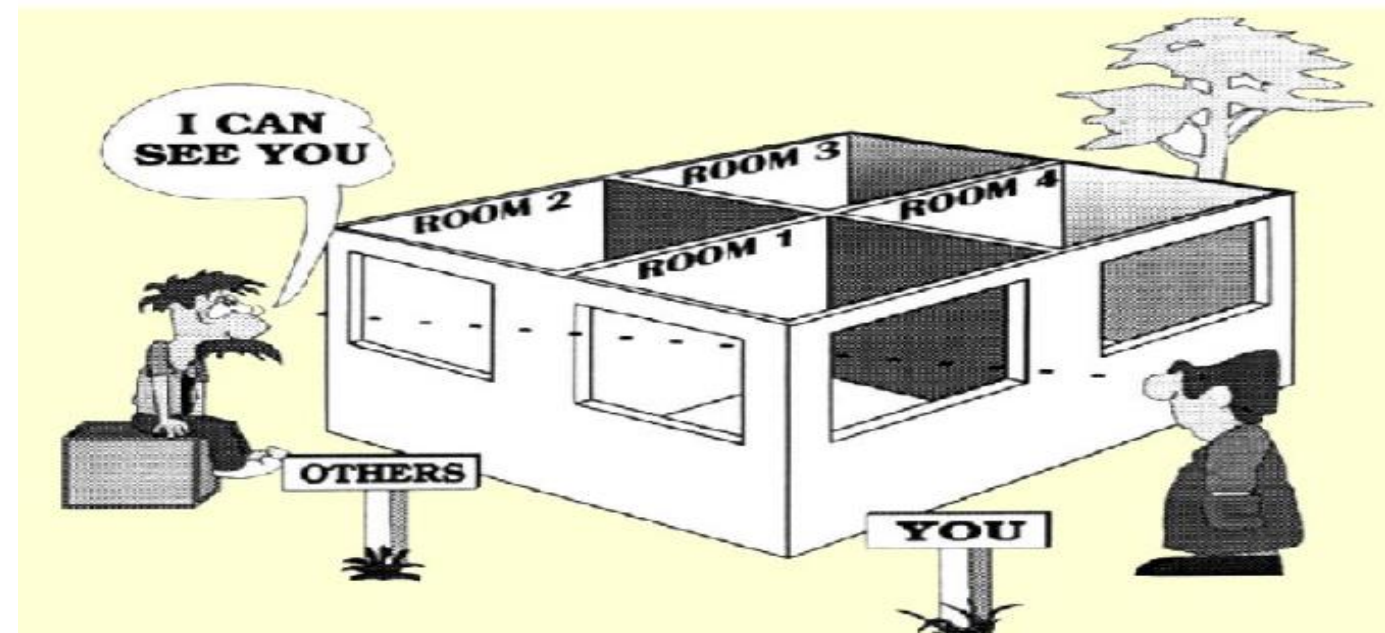
Blind Area:

- This particular phase deals with things about ourselves which we do not know, but that others can notice with profound clarity.
- We assume things to be true of ourselves for various reasons but that others can perceive it in a different way.
- This information may be in the form of mannerism, verbal cues, the way we say things, the style in which we compare ourselves to others.



(2) Larger Blind Area:-

- **Distrust in others' competence.**
- **Rigid opinions.**
- **Fear of failure.**





Blind Area:-Leadership blind spots that present most frequently.

1. Going it alone (being afraid to ask for help)
2. Being insensitive of your behavior on others (being unaware of how you show up)
3. Having an “I know” attitude (valuing being right above everything else)
4. Avoiding difficult conversations (conflict avoidance)
5. Blaming others or circumstances (playing the victim; refusing responsibility)
6. Treating commitments casually (not honoring the other person’s time, energy, resources)
7. Conspiring against others (driven by a personal agenda)
8. Not taking a stand (lack of commitment to a position)
9. Tolerating “good enough” (low standards for performance)



Hidden Area:

- This area is something that is not known to others unless we disclose it.
- This is an inhibition factor or fear factor which stops a person from being open.
- This pane is also called as “Façade” or “Hidden Area.”
- This information can be kept if one does not see the supportive elements in the group.
- It is believed that if one starts revealing thoughts, feelings, and reactions, group members might judge negatively and may react in an inappropriate way.
- At the same time, if the risk of disclosure is not taken, the opportunity to learn could dissipate.



(3) Larger Hidden Area

- **Distrust.**
- **Masking to maintain personal image.**
- **Fear of exposure of own inadequacies.**
- **Indifferent behavior.**



Unknown Area:

- This represents the ignorance of recognition of participant's behaviors or motives by all participants.
- The reason attributed to this may be because of collective ignorance of the existing traits.
- Here our potential is unknown to us and to others.
- This area represents an unknown area that includes early childhood memories, latent potentialities, intrapersonal dynamics, and unrecognized resources.



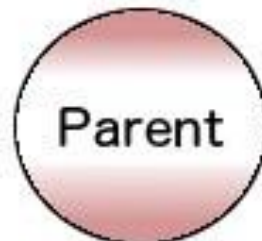
(4) Larger Unknown Area

- Indifferent Behavior.
- Low risk taking.
- Withdrawn.
- Non communicative.
- No importance to interpersonal relations.



Transactional Analysis is a theory developed by Dr. Eric Berne in the 1950s

Our Three Ego States



Parent Ego State :
Behaviours, thoughts and feelings
copied from Parents or parental
figures



Adult Ego State :
Behaviours, thoughts and feelings
which are in direct response to
the here and now



Child Ego State :
Behaviours, thoughts and feelings
replayed from childhood



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In this transaction, all is good:

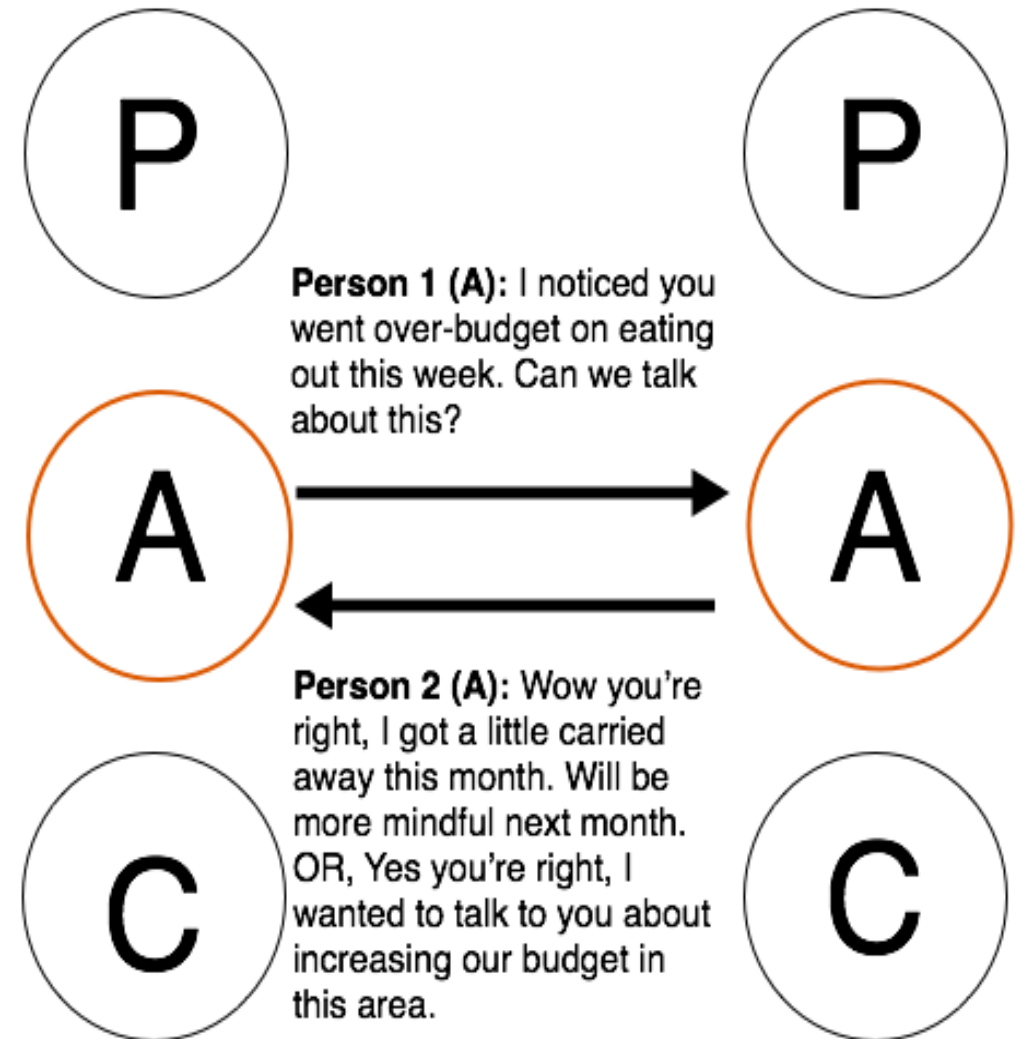
Example 1: Adult — Adult

Money is a trigger topic (at least in my experience) because it's uncomfortable, stressful and emotional to talk about.

A complementary transaction around money would like this:

In this transaction, all is good:

- **Person 1** is curious about something, and asks a question from the Adult ego state, hoping they'll receive an answer from Person 2's Adult ego state.
- **Person 2** responds from his/her Adult ego state.
- **Result:** All good, two Adults are working together to understand a problem, make decisions, etc.





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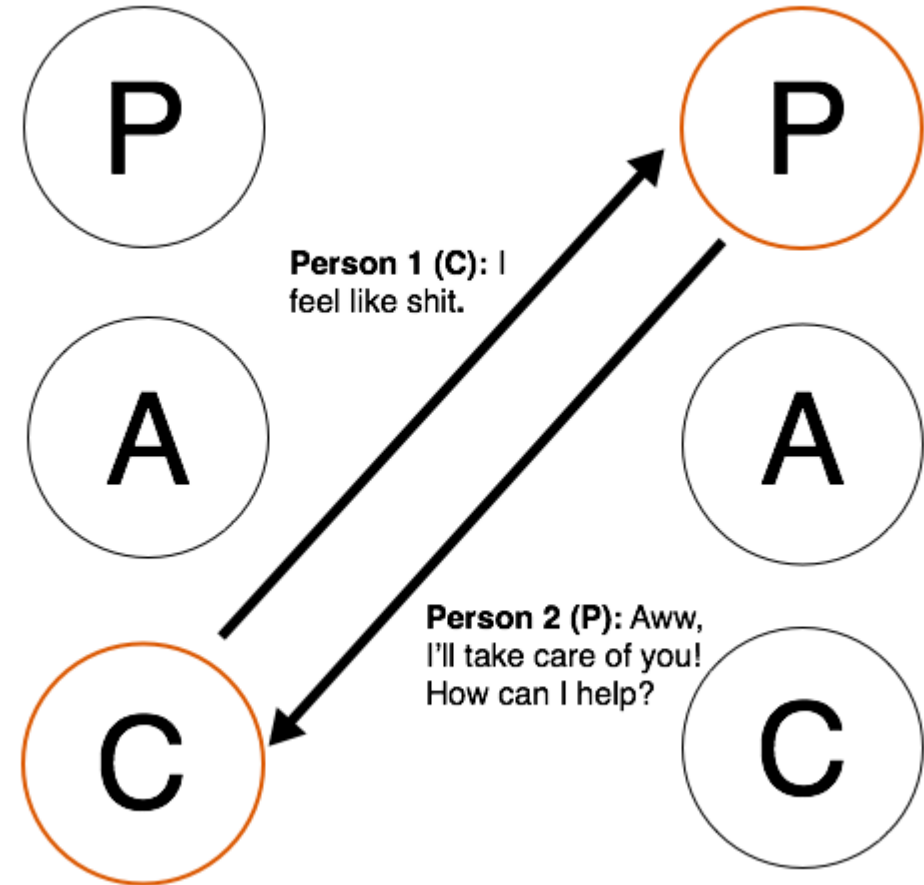
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In this transaction, all is good:

Example 2: Parent - Child

Another complementary transaction is Parent - Child. For example, this can occur when one person is sick and wants to be taken care of by the other person (P).

- **Person 1** feels like shit. Their Child ego state is activated because they want to be taken care of. They expect Person 2 to respond as a Parent.
- **Person 2** understands Person 1's request and is happy to oblige. Person 2's Parent ego state is activated and they happily take care of Person 1.
- **Result:** All is good. There's a balance of 'giving & receiving' and both parties feel loved.





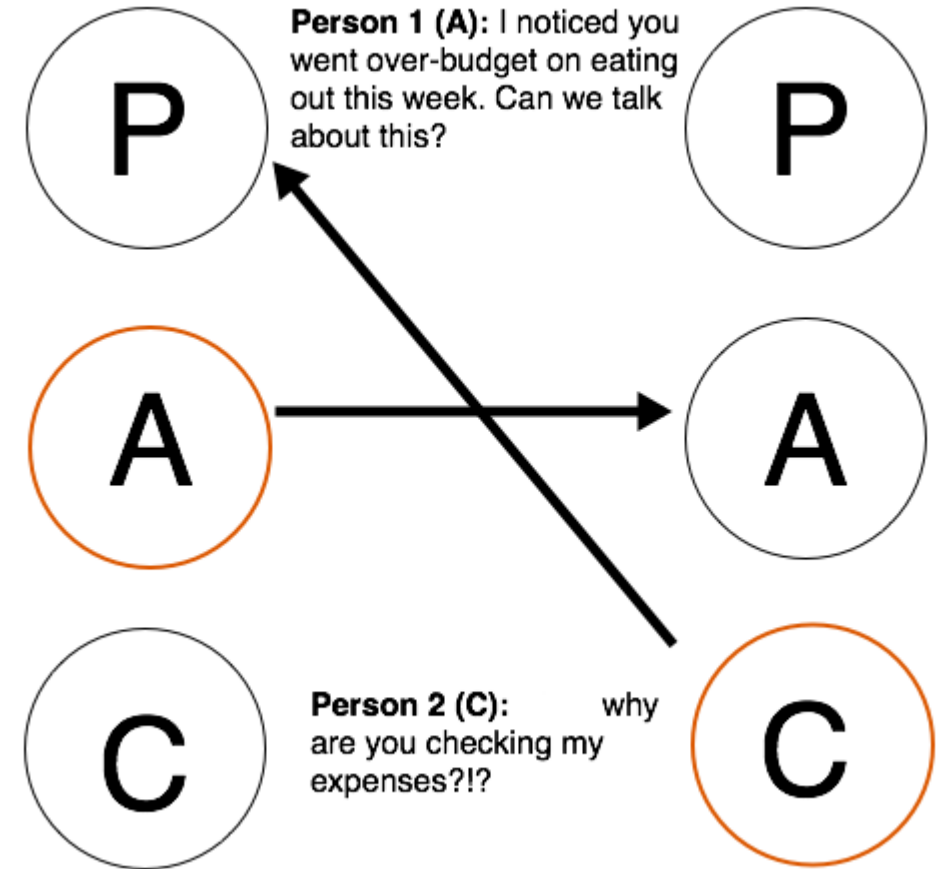
Transactions crossed

Crossed Transactions

Crossed transactions happen when Person 1 says something from one ego state, and receives a different response than he/she is expecting.

In this transaction, all is NOT good:

- **Person 1** is curious about something, and asks a question from the Adult ego state, hoping they'll receive an answer from Person 2's Adult ego state.
- **Person 2** is triggered. Their Child ego state is activated (they feel criticized or patronized) and they're angry.
- **Result:** Probably a fight, or an abrupt end to the conversation. Of course it's ok if this happens once in a while, however habitual communication breakdown is harmful to a relationship.





Summary

Key points discussed in this session:

- Definition of communication and its process
- Importance of Giving and receiving feedback
- Importance of good communication climate
- The 'Johari' window model facilitating the task of understanding and enhancing communication between the members in a group.
- Interpersonal communication model-Transactional analysis being a method of analyzing and understanding interpersonal behavior



Some most Likely Questions from the Module



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- Justify what it means to communicate as a Professional in a business context. Narrate a scenario where you have displayed any such professional skills in your workplace or universities.
- ‘Effective feedback, both positive and negative, is very helpful and feedback is valuable information that will be used to make important decisions.’ In the light of this statement, bring out the importance of giving and receiving feedback’.
- Define communication, and explain the importance of effective business communication.
- “Communication is a two-way street”. In the light of this statement, describe communication as a two way process to exchange information. Graphically present your understanding about the process of communication as described by you.
- Questions pertaining to Johari window/Statergies.



References

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