

Chapter 1

Fundamentals

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Meaning of communication
- 1.3 Definitions of communication
- 1.4 Scope of communication
- 1.5 Features/ nature/characteristics of communication
- 1.6 Purpose/function of communication
- 1.7 Importance of communication

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The field of communication is of vital importance for all human performance and interaction. It has created individuals in groups; by defining common interest and motives. All the cultures and societies are result of communication and interaction. There have been so many efforts, taken place to enhance communication between societies and people. Communication is the locus of forces through which persons create and manage social realities. Social realities include self, community, institutions and cultures. Communication is having magical power to make sit, warring nations on talking table. The significance of communication begins from the time one starts searching for job. A good resume helps in fetching a fine job. Similarly good communication skills help in delivering the work through presentations, reports, research, etc. It also helps in establishing and maintaining good human relations at workplace and to face the various challenges of the businesses.

Communication can be widely categorized in to three major fields: *Business Communication*, *Technical Communication* and *Professional Communication*. All the three are inter-related with one another.

What is Business Communication?

Business communication is nothing but, the communication between the people in the organisation for the purpose of carrying out the business activities. It may be oral, verbal, written etc. A business can flourish when all the targets of the organization are achieved effectively. For efficiency in an organization all the people (within and outside) of the organization must be able to convey their message properly. The exchange of ideas, understanding, within and outside the organization to achieve the business goals is known as business communication.

What is Technical Communication?

People with non managerial background are also required to have the knowledge of communication since ultimately the work done by them needs to be communicated and presented to their seniors in an appropriate manner. Technical Communication is a set of methods that practitioners use to research and document technical processes or products.. The ‘Society for Technical Communication’ defines the field as, any form of communication which focuses on technical or specialized topics, communicates specifically by using technology or provides instructions on how to do something. Whatever the definition of technical communication, the overarching goal of the practice is to create easily accessible information for a specific audience

What is Professional Communication?

It encompasses written, oral, visual and digital communication within a workplace context. This discipline blends together pedagogical principles of rhetoric, technology, and software to improve communication in a variety of settings ranging from technical writing to usability and digital media design. It is a new discipline that focuses on the study of information and the ways it is created, managed, distributed, and consumed. Since communication in modern society is a rapidly changing area, the progress of technologies seems to often outpace the number of available expert practitioners. This creates a demand for skilled communicators which continues to exceed the supply of trained professionals.

Before getting into the insights of Technical Communication, we must first understand the meaning and concepts of communication.

1.2 MEANING OF COMMUNICATION

The word “communication” is derived from the Latin word *communis*, which means common. In its application, it means a common ground of understanding.

It is a process of exchange of facts, ideas, and opinions and as a means that individuals or organizations share meaning and understanding with one another.

Communication is a process involving the sorting and sending of symbols in such a way as to help the listener perceive and recreate in his own mind the meaning contained in the mind of the communicators.

Communication enables us to do important things, to grow, to learn to be aware of ourselves and to adjust to our environment. To communicate with one another is a compulsive urge of human beings. There can be no mutual understanding without communication.

Thus, we can say, communication is a force which binds all the human beings together irrespective of one caste, religion, languages, etc.; and also regulates and shapes all human behavior.

1.3 DEFINITIONS OF COMMUNICATION

1. *“Communication is exchange of facts, ideas, opinions or emotions by two or more persons.”*

W.H Norman and Summer

2. *“Any act by which one person gives to or receives from another person information about that person's needs, desires, perceptions, knowledge, or affective states. Communication may be intentional or unintentional, may involve conventional or unconventional signals, may take linguistic or nonlinguistic forms, and may occur through spoken or other modes.”*

De Valenzuela

3. *“Communication is the sum of all things that one person does when he wants to create understanding in the minds of another. It involves a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening and understanding.”*

Allen

4. *“Communication is the exchange of meaning between individuals through a common system of symbols.”*

I A Richards

5. *“Communication is the sharing of experience on the basis of commonness.”*

Wilbur Schramm

1.4 SCOPE OF COMMUNICATION

The increasing global communication in international business has led to the rise of new business opportunities for business houses aspiring to operate on an international platform. The ability to communicate effectively in modern business environment is the determining factor to the overall success of a professional in the corporate world. It not only determines the efficient functioning, smooth operations, overall success and effectiveness of a business organization, but is also a crucial factor in nurturing the career and ensuring the growth of the professional.

In today's dynamic business scenario, it is highly significant to identify the valuable components forming multidimensional business communication contributing to the overall success and effectiveness of the entrepreneurial journey.

1. The scope of communication is very **wide** and **comprehensive**. It is present at all levels and everywhere in the organization. The media's and tools of communications are extremely wide and dynamic.
2. It is a **two-way process** involving both transmission as well as reception. A successful communication is one which is two way, i.e, after the message is conveyed, feedback is also generated.
3. It is a **continuous process** of exchange of facts, ideas, feelings, attitudes, opinions, figures, and interaction with one another. Communication in an organization continues till the time the organization exists. It only ends when the organizations gets ends.
4. In the process, it uses a set of **symbols**; symbols may be words, action, pictures, figures, etc. Communication is not restricted to mere spoken or written form, use of symbols, photographs; diagrams are equally supportive and effective.

5. In many organizational hierarchy, Communication can be both one-way and two-way:

One way: Downward Movement is a type of one way communication performed by the top management people for sending directions, orders, instructions, etc)

Two way: Once the downward communication takes place, the people at lower level perform their duties and give the feedback of the work performed by them. In Upward Movement communication generally takes place in the form of Suggestions, advices, reports, etc)

6. **Internal Communication:** The communication that takes place within the boundaries of the organization is known as internal communication. It may be *Vertical* (Between superior and subordinate), *Horizontal* (among the peer group) and *Diagonal* (between two divisions or departments).

Formal (work related communication) and *Informal* Communication (social interaction)

External Communication: Communication with the parties outside the organization i.e, governments, customers, dealers, general public, etc.

7. Both **written** and **oral** media can be used to transmit messages.

Written: orders, letters, memos, journals, etc.

Oral: Lectures, conferences, interviews, etc.

1.5 FEATURES/ NATURE/CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMUNICATION

1. **Two-Way Process:** Communication involves at least two parties, a sender and a receiver. It cannot be monologue, it is dialogue.

2. **Information Sharing and understanding:** Communication does not take place simply because information has been transferred or conveyed to the person concerned. What is equally important is that the receiver of communication should understand the information transferred to him as it was intended to be. Thus, understanding is an indispensable part of communication.

3. **Mix of Verbal and Non Verbal:** Communication is not restricted to transfer of information and understanding through words alone. A manager can communicate through symbols, gestures and actions which are non-verbal in nature.

4. **Goal Oriented:** The flow of communication is goal oriented. The end result of communication understands between the sender and the receiver of information.

5. **Circular flow:** The flow of communication is circular, that is, the process of communication starts when the sender transmits a message to the receiver and is completed when the receiver sends the feedback to the sender.
6. **Continuous Process:** Exchanging of ideas and opinions among persons is an ongoing process in business and non-business organizations.
7. **Pervasive activity:** Communication takes place at all levels and in all functional areas of a business enterprise.

1.6 PURPOSE/FUNCTION OF COMMUNICATION

1. **Integration function:** Integrating all the management activities through communication.
2. **Instructive function:** Gives direction and guidance to accomplish the task.
3. **Informing function:** Informing policies, rules, regulations, etc to the employees.
4. **Evaluation function:** Communication is a tool to appraise the individual, his contribution to the organization.
5. **Influencing function:** Motivation and persuasion of employees is possible through communication.
6. **Teaching function:** A complete communication process is required to teach and educate workers about personal safety on the jobs.

7. **Image projecting function:** Through an effective external communication system an enterprise has to inform the society about its goals, activities, social responsibilities etc.

1.7 IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

1. **Co-ordination:** In a large size complex organization, where there are many levels of hierarchy, coordination between groups becomes necessary for efficient functioning of the entire organization.
2. **Smooth Working:** Smooth and uninterrupted working of an enterprise is to a great extent dependent on good communication network. Corrective decision making and efficiency of the organization is based on information supply.
3. **Effective decision making:** Effective communication network provides relevant and vital information for decision making. In the absence of communication it may not be possible even for the top management to make meaningful decision.
4. **Managerial Efficiency:** Managerial function like planning, control, motivation, etc, cannot be discharged without communication. As the management is an art of getting things done through other people, it is communication that educates personnel working in the organization with the desires of the management.
5. **Cooperation:** Cooperation is possible only with the exchange of information between individuals & groups and between manager & employees. the two-way network develops cooperation between people. It also develops mutual understanding, faith, confidence, etc.

6. **Effective Leadership:** It is through the medium of communication that the followers convey their opinions, ideas, feelings, facts etc to their leader. Also communication is the basis for direction, motivation, as well as establishment of effective leadership.
7. **Job satisfaction:** Two-way Communication creates confidence which leads to job satisfaction to employee's openness, frank expression of opinions are necessary in this direction.
8. **Increase Productivity:** It is through communication that the workers can be well informed about the process of production, new methods of production and the activities of the workers in a similar organization. Thus, a good system of communication helps the management to achieve maximum productivity with minimum cost, elimination of waste, reduction of cost, etc.
9. **Morale Building:** Morale and good human relations in the organization are essential to achieve goals of the organization and to promote its goodwill in the public. An effective system of communication builds good morale and improves human relations.
10. **Achieving Managerial Roles:** Henry Mintzberg has described a manager's job by assigning 3 roles:
 - (a) Interpersonal Roles: managers have to interact with subordinates.
 - (b) Informational roles: collect and supply information.
 - (c) Decisional roles: takes decisions by communicating the information.