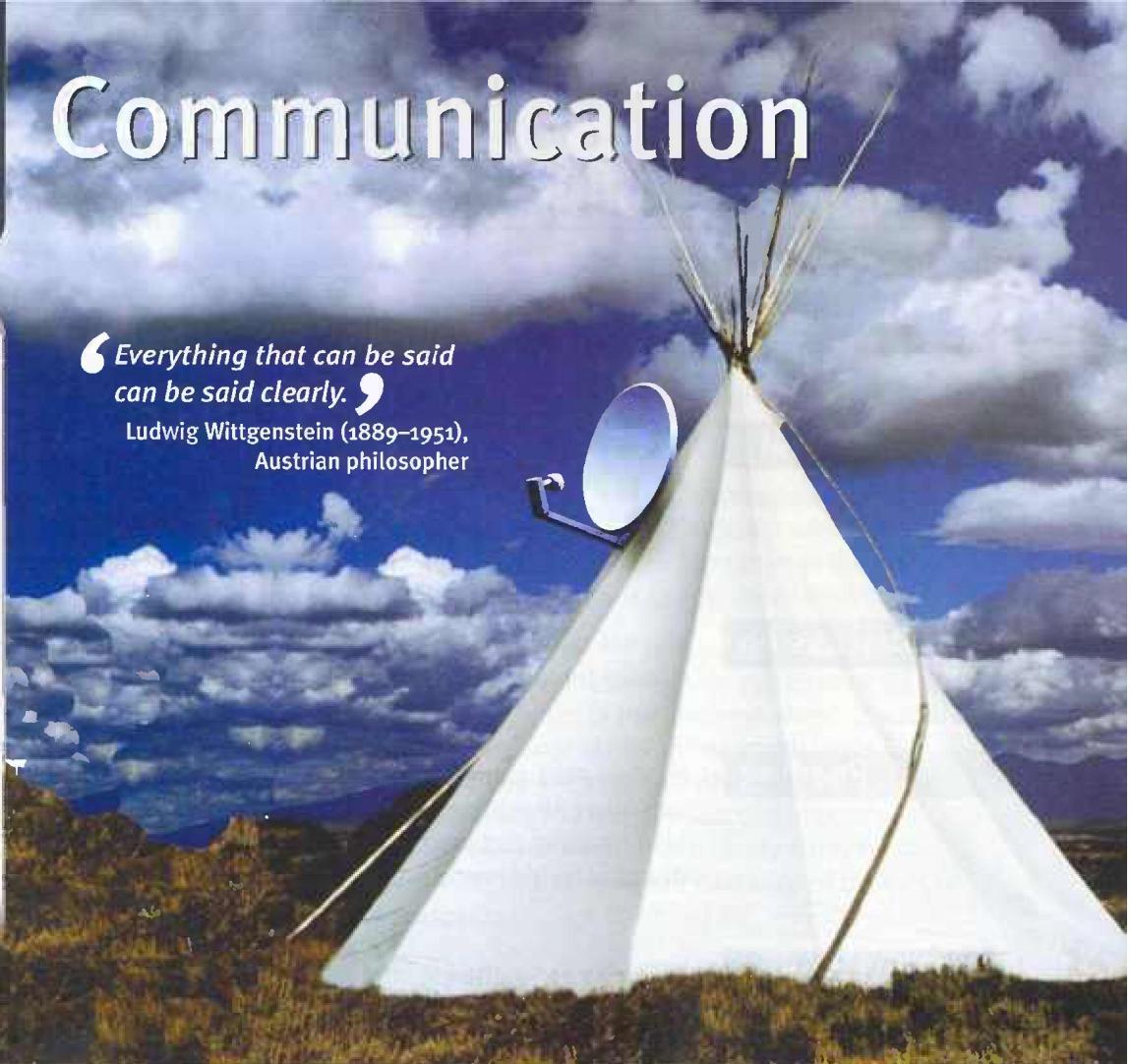


OVERVIEW ▾

- Vocabulary**
Good communicators
- Listening**
Improving communications
- Reading**
Internal communication
- Language review**
Idioms
- Skills**
Dealing with communication breakdown
- Case study**
HCPS

Everything that can be said can be said clearly.

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951),
Austrian philosopher

**Starting up****A What makes a good communicator? Choose the three most important factors.**

- fluency in the language
- an extensive vocabulary
- being a good listener
- physical appearance
- a sense of humour
- grammatical accuracy
- not being afraid of making mistakes
- an awareness of body language

B What other factors are important for communication?**C Discuss these questions.**

- 1 What forms of written and spoken communication can you think of? For example: *e-mails, interviews*
- 2 Which of the above do you like using? Why?
- 3 What problems can people have with them?
- 4 How can these problems be solved?

Vocabulary**Good
communicators****A Which words below apply to good communicators? Which apply to bad communicators?**

articulate coherent eloquent fluent focussed
hesitant inhibited extrovert persuasive rambling
responsive sensitive succinct reserved



Vocabulary file page 171

B Which of the words in Exercise A have the following meanings?

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 concise | 5 clear and easy to understand |
| 2 reluctant to speak | 6 good at influencing people |
| 3 talking in a confused way | 7 outgoing |
| 4 able to express ideas well | 8 reacting in a positive way |

C Complete this talk by a communication expert with the verbs from the box.

listen digress interrupt explain engage clarify confuse ramble

'Good communicators really *listen* to people and take in what is said. They maintain eye contact and have a relaxed body language, but they seldom ¹ and stop people talking. If they don't understand and want to ² something they wait for a suitable opportunity.'

When speaking, effective communicators are good at giving information. They do not ³ their listener. They make their points clearly. They will avoid technical terms, abbreviations or jargon.

If they do need to use unfamiliar terminology they ⁴ by giving an easy to understand example. Furthermore, although they may ⁵ and leave the main point to give additional information and details where appropriate, they will not ⁶ and lose sight of their main message. Really effective communicators who have the ability to ⁷ with colleagues, employees, customers and suppliers are a valuable asset for any business.'

D 1.1 Listen to the talk and check your answers.**E** Think of a good communicator you know. Explain why they are good at communicating.

Vocabulary file page 171

Listening Improving communications



▲ Anuj Khanna

A 1.2 Listen to the first part of an interview with Anuj Khanna, Marketing Manager of Netsize, a marketing agency for mobile media, and answer the questions.

- 1 According to Anuj Khanna:
 - a) why have communications improved in recent years?
 - b) how can they improve in the future?
- 2 What example does he give of banks improving communications with customers?

B 1.3 Listen to the second part of the interview.

- 1 What are the consequences of the following communication breakdowns?
 - a) problems in air traffic control systems
 - b) delays in fixing communication systems
 - c) faults in cash machines
- 2 Which of the following developments in communication does Anuj Khanna expect to see in the future?
 - a) more privacy for customers
 - b) more freedom for companies to communicate with customers
 - c) more control by customers over the messages they receive
 - d) more communication between machines

C How do you think business communication will change in the future?

Reading

Internal communication

- A** What are the advantages and disadvantages for companies of using e-mail?
- B** Select three of the items below which, in your opinion, best contribute to improving communication.

trust	flexi-time
open plan offices	small teams
voice mail	strong corporate identity
e-mail	frequent meetings
mobile phones	staff parties

Communication – it's much easier said than done

By Clare Gascoigne

Trust is key in an open organisation

Getting staff to talk to each other ought to be the least of your problems, but internal communication can be one of the hardest nuts to crack in business.

‘Communication comes up in every department. The repercussions of not communicating are vast,’ says Theo Theobald, co-author of *Shut up and Listen! The Truth About How to Communicate at Work*.

Poor communication can be a purely practical problem.

Gearbulk, a global shipping business with branches around the world, faced language and geographical difficulties, as well as a huge amount of paperwork. With up to 60 documents per cargo, it was a logistical nightmare to track and monitor jobs, while tighter security regulations after 9/11 meant customs documents had to be ready before a ship was allowed to sail.

Installing an automated system means data is now entered only once but can be accessed by anyone in the company, wherever they are.

‘Reporting is faster by a matter of months,’ says Ramon Ferrer, Vice President of Global IT at Gearbulk. ‘An operational team carrying a voyage all the way across the world doesn’t always have to be talking to each other – and we don’t waste time duplicating the same information.’

Given today’s variety of communication tools, it seems strange that we still have a problem communicating. But the



brave new world of high-tech can
45 create barriers – senior managers
hide behind their computers, staff
use voice mail to screen calls, and
employees sitting next to each
other will send e-mails rather than
50 speak.

‘Managers should get up, walk
round the office and talk to people,’
says Matt Rogan, Head of
Marketing at Lane4, a leadership
and communications consultancy.
‘Face-to-face communication can’t
be beaten.’

Theobald recommends checking
e-mail only three times a day,
60 allocating a set period of time to
deal with it. ‘If you leave the sound
on, the temptation is as great as a
ringing phone. People will interrupt
meetings to check their e-mails.’

65 Another problem is simply
hitting the ‘reply all’ button,
bombarding people with
information. ‘We had unstructured
data coming at staff from left,
right and centre, leaving it up to
70 individuals to sort out,’ says
Gearbulk’s Ferrer. ‘Our new system
has reduced e-mails and changed

the way people work. It will remind
75 you about work flow.’

Information overload also means
people stop listening. But there may
be a deeper reason why a message
fails to get through, according to
80 Alex Haslam, Professor of
Psychology at Exeter University.

‘Everyone thinks a failure to
communicate is just an individual’s
error of judgment, but it’s not
85 about the person: it’s about the
group and the group dynamics,’ he
says. ‘Just training people to be
good communicators isn’t the
issue.’

90 The problem is that employees
develop common loyalties that are
far stronger than the need to share
information. This can even extend
to questions of safety.

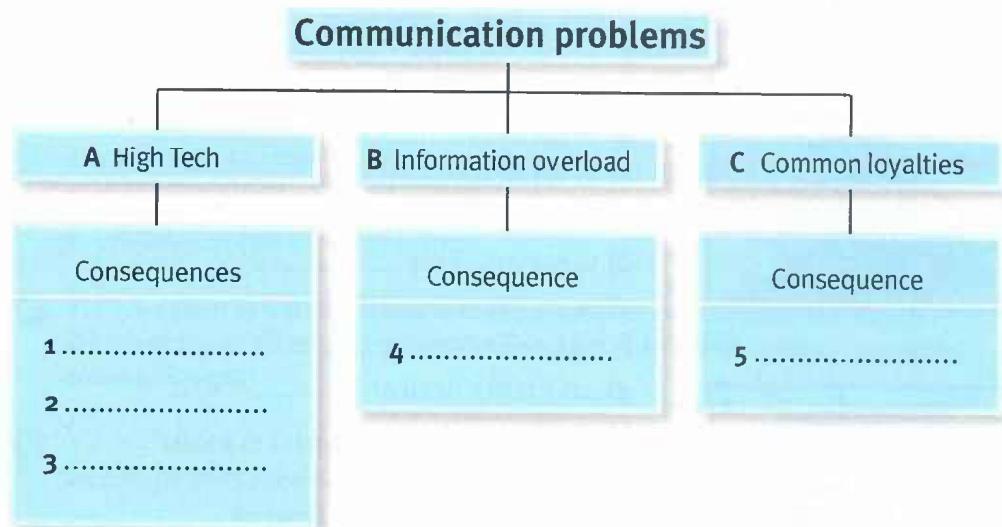
95 In the mid-1990s there were a lot
of light air crashes in Australia
because the two government
departments responsible for air
safety weren’t communicating,’
100 says Haslam. ‘The government was
trying to save money and both
groups felt threatened. The
individuals were highly identified
with their own organisation and
105 unwilling to communicate with the
other department.’

A company is particularly at risk
when cost-cutting is in the air.
Individuals withdraw into
110 departmental loyalties out of fear.
Sending such people on yet another
‘how to communicate’ course will
be pointless. Instead, Haslam
believes that identifying the sub-

115 groups within an organisation and
making sure each group feels
valued and respected can do far
more to encourage the sharing of
information. The key to
120 communication, he says, is trust.

From the *Financial Times*

C Read the article and complete the chart below.



D Read the article again and answer these questions.

- 1 What communication problems did Gearbulk have?
- 2 How did Gearbulk overcome the problems?
- 3 What solutions does Theobald recommend for the above problems?
- 4 According to the author, why do staff often receive too many e-mails?
- 5 Why weren't the two government departments (responsible for air safety) communicating?
- 6 What does the author think about sending people on communication courses?

E Which word in each group does not form a word partnership with the word in bold?

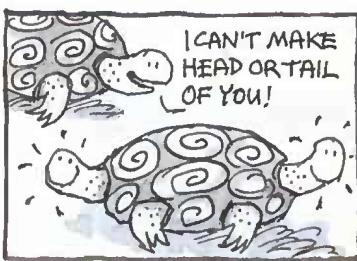
1 waste	time	resources	information
2 face	trouble	problems	difficulties
3 duplicate	information	time	work
4 install	systems	factories	equipment
5 save	money	time	experience
6 develop	truth	loyalty	motivation
7 share	support	information	ideas
8 allocate	time	ideas	resources
9 interrupt	e-mails	conversations	meetings

F Discuss these questions.

- 1 'Face-to-face communication can't be beaten.' Do you agree?
- 2 How could communication be improved in your organisation?
- 3 How will communication change in the office of the future?

Language review

Idioms



page 130

A Complete these idioms with the missing words from the box.

point	bush	grapevine	stick	wavelength	wires
nutshell	picture	tail	purposes		

- to put it in a
- to get straight to the
- to hear it on the
- to put you in the
- to get the wrong end of the
- to be on the same
- can't make head or of it
- to talk at cross
- to beat about the
- to get our crossed

B Which of the idioms in Exercise A mean the following?

- to fail to understand anything
- to share similar opinions and ideas
- to summarise briefly
- to misunderstand
- to delay talking about something
- to give the latest information
- to talk about the most important thing
- to hear about something passed from one person to another

C Complete the sentences with the idioms from Exercise A.

- OK, I'll I'm afraid we're going to have to let you go.
- 'You and your boss seem to agree on most things.' 'Yes, we are'
- Some important decisions were taken at yesterday's meeting. Let me
- I think we are I mean next month, not this month.
- He never gives you a straight answer. He's always
- I that he's been fired. Is it true?
- It's a very complicated system, but to it works exactly like a big kettle.
- If you think our biggest problem is market share then you have
- This report makes no sense at all. I
- Everyone arrived for the meeting at different times. We must have

D Ask your partner the following questions.

- What have you heard on the grapevine recently?
- When was the last time you got the wrong end of the stick?
- When is it necessary to put someone in the picture?
- In what situations is it good to beat about the bush?
- In what situations is it good to get straight to the point?
- Can you give an example of when you were talking at cross purposes?
- Is there anything you can't make head or tail of?

Skills**Dealing with communication breakdown****A** What expressions can you use on the phone in the following situations?

- 1 you don't hear what someone says
- 2 the person speaks too fast or too quietly
- 3 you don't understand a word or expression they use
- 4 you want to check the spelling of something
- 5 you want more information about a subject
- 6 the connection is not good and you can't continue the conversation
- 7 you want to check the key points

B 1.4 Listen to the telephone conversation between Bernard and Koichi. Which of the problems mentioned in Exercise A do the speakers have when communicating?**C** 1.5 Listen to the two speakers in a similar conversation. Explain why the second conversation is better. Give as many reasons as you can.**D** 1.5 Listen to the conversation again and complete these extracts with words or expressions from the conversation.

- 1 That's good. while I get a pen.
- 2 Sorry Bernard, I Could you a little, please? I need to take notes.
- 3 Let me that, 200 posters, pens and pencils and 50 bags. it.
- 4 Seel ... sorry, could you Bernard, I don't think I know the company?
- 5 'They've placed an order for 18 of the new lasers...' 'Sorry, 80 lasers?'
- 6 Sorry, I don't follow you. What 'roll-out' ?
- 7 But I need details about the company. Sorry, it's Could you ? I can't hear you very well.
- 8 Sorry, I still can't hear you. I'll ; maybe the line will be better.

E Now match each extract 1–8 to the points you discussed in Exercise A.**F** Work in pairs. Role play. Marketing Manager: turn to page 151; Overseas agent: turn to page 150. While doing the role play, practise some of the expressions you can use for dealing with breakdowns in communication.**Useful language****Asking for repetition**

Sorry, could you repeat that?
I didn't (quite) catch that.
Could you speak up, please?
Could you say that again, please?

Asking for clarification

Would/Could you spell that, please?
Can I read that back to you?
What do you mean by ...?

What does ... mean?

Sorry, I'm not with you.
Sorry, I don't follow you.
Could you give me some more details, please?
Could you let me have more information?
Could you explain that in more detail?
Could you clarify that?
Could you be more specific, please?

Solving a problem

Sorry, it's a bad line. Can I call you back?

Summarising the call

Let me go over what we've agreed.
Let me just summarise ...