

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

BCA SEMESTER: I

UNIT I: MEANS OF COMMUNICATION:

1.0 Meaning and Definition of Communication:

Meaning:

Communication: is the process by which we exchange meanings, ideas, opinions or emotions with other people.

The word *communication has been derived from a Latin word “Communis”* which means commonness or to share.

- The presence of mind is very essential for communication.

For instance if Mr. X delivers a lecture in Hindi to a group of Americans who do not understand Hindi, it will not be called Communication as the Americans cannot understand and implement the message.

- Communication can be in various forms:
 - Verbal.
 - Written.
 - Non-Verbal.
 - Signals.
 - Gestures & Postures.

Definitions:

- “Communication in its simplest form in conveying of information from one person to another.” *Cyril L. Hudson*
- “The act of making one’s ideas and opinions known to others.” *Fred. G. Meyer*
- “Communication is the interchange of thought or Information to bring about mutual understanding and Confidence of good human relations.” *American Society of Training Directors.*

1.1 Phases of Industrial Communication:

There are three phases of IC:

- Inter-scalar communication:** the communication takes place between different levels of personnel, workers or scalars. For example: communication initiated from a clerk (lower level) sending a request regarding salary to the Manager (higher level).
- Intra-scalar communication:** the communication takes place between workers or personnel of the same level in an organization/company or organization.
- Extra-organization/scale communication:** in and out of the company.

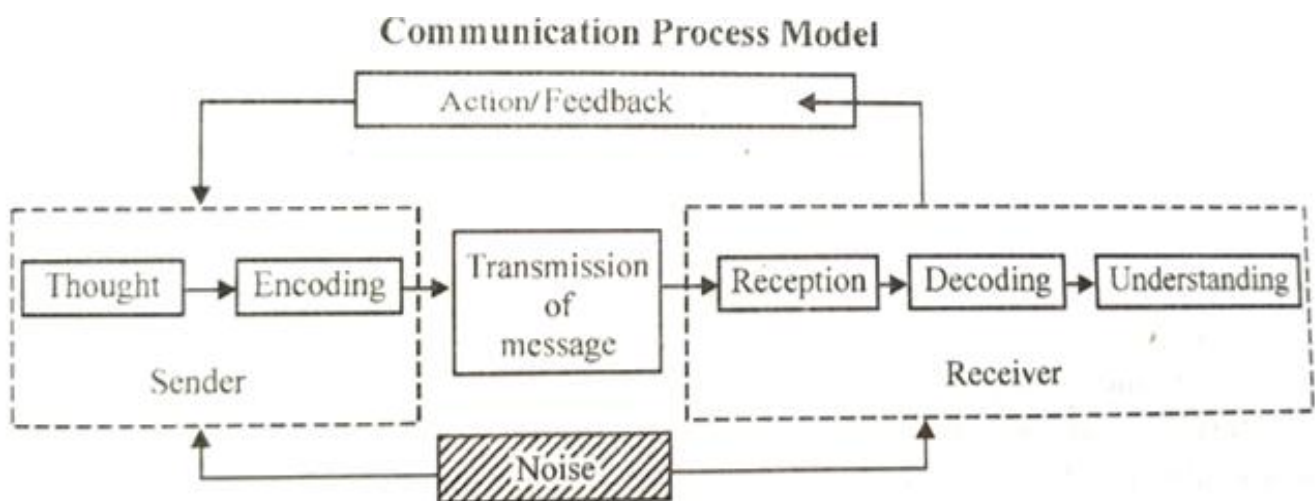
1.2 Process of Communication:

Sender, encoding, message, channel/media, decoding, receiver, action, noise.

1. **Sender:** the process of communication involves two parties {Sender & Receiver}. The sender can be an individual, a group or an organization who shares information for a purpose.
2. **Encoding:** Transform the ideas into words, symbols, pictures, diagrams, gestures. The purpose to encode is to transform the internal thought patterns into a language or code that the receiver will probably understand.

For example: An American nods his head horizontally for “no” and vertically for “yes” but an Indian with slight difference nods the head horizontally for both “yes” and “no”.

3. **Message/ Information:** This is the physical form of the thought which can be experienced and understood by one or more senses of the receiver.
 - A message is an idea, opinion, feeling or expression generated in the mind of the sender.
4. **Channel/Media:** it works as a vehicle in transmission of information via telecommunication methods.
 - The sender must consider all aspects: speed, cost, quick receipt, printer record and confidentiality.
5. **Receiver:** The person who perceives the message and attaches some meaning to it is the receiver.
 - There is no communication if there is no receiver.
 - There is no communication if the message is not understood by the receiver.
6. **Decoding:** This is the translation of the information received into an understandable message to interpret it.
7. **Action/Feedback:** The response to the message received by the receiver.
8. **Noise:** This is the interference with the normal flow of the understanding process.



Communication can be as:

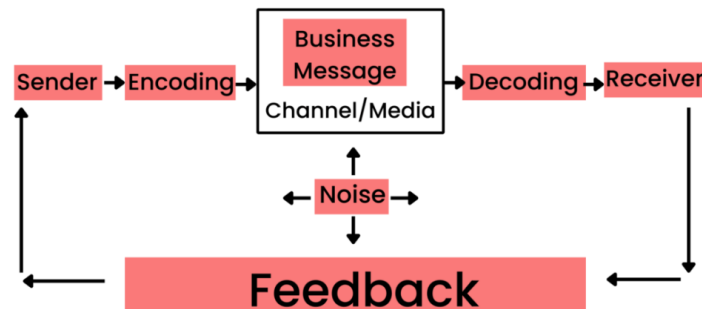
1. One way communication.

One-way Communication Model

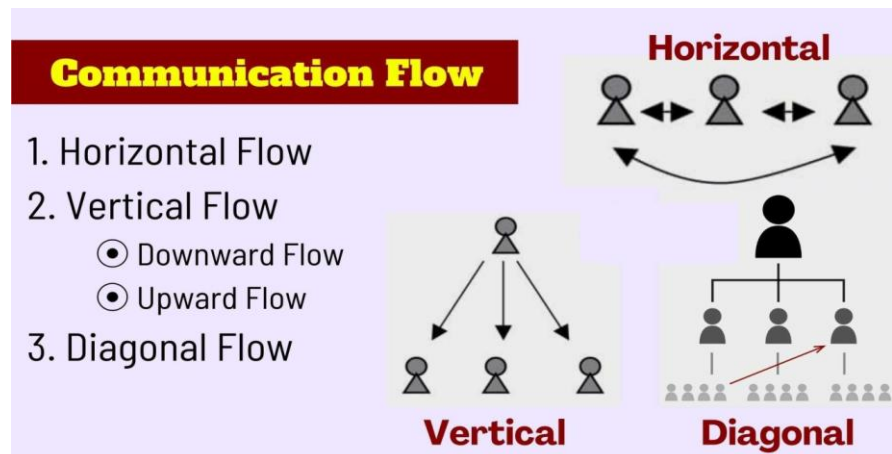


2. Two way communication.

Two-way Communication Model in Business



3. Vertical.
 - a. Upward flow
 - b. Downward flow
4. Horizontal.
5. Diagonal.



Qualities of Good Communication:

- Speed
- Accuracy
- Secrecy
- Record
- Suitability
- Impression
- Convenience

1.3 Functions of Communication

“Lee Thayer”, a prominent management thinker; in his book titled: “Communication & Communication System” has divided the functions into four categories namely:

1. **The information function:** provides knowledge and information to people that require guidance in their actions.
2. **The command and instructive function:** Makes us aware of our obligations and responsibilities and to perform these duties adequately.
3. **The Influence and persuasive function:** this function motivates, directs and guides us to act and influence the behaviour of people through arguments and persuasion.
4. **The integrative function:** this integrates the activities and efforts of all individuals in a system; as a result a proper and well understood communication takes place.

1.4 Objectives & Importance of Communication:

1. **Smooth and unrestricted ideas exchange:** for a task to be completed smoothly in a company or organization, peons and clerks take and deliver messages from higher level authorities to lower levels or from an employee to another. This helps in easy exchange of ideas and information within an organization.
2. **Quick decision making:** communication helps the administration in arriving at vital decisions;
In decision making;
 - Management;
 - identifies various alternatives to solve any problem;
 - evaluate the alternatives;
 - Select the best alternative and obtain feedback during and after its implementation.
3. **Maximum productivity with the minimum cost:** Greater, better and cheaper production is the aim of all managements. In the olden days, company worked as a close knit family but as the size of the companies are now larger, tasks and information passes through a variety of filters and there is always a chance for its misinterpretation.
4. **Proper planning and co-ordination:** Communication helps in proper planning and coordination. Work is divided by those who direct a task and those who accept the directions; it is a must for the workers to coordinate in order to present the final result. Communication should be amongst all management levels and workers.
5. **Promotion of co-operation:** It is again one of the most crucial objectives of communication when it comes to the effective and efficient management of an organization.
With the right use of communication strategies, managers can link different functional departments of an organization in a result-driven manner. It also plays a significant role in accomplishing organisational goals in a well-coordinated manner.
6. **Improve Public Relations:** Refers to the practice of enhancing an organization’s reputation in the eyes of public, stakeholders, employees, investors and all others associated with it.
 - Communication plays an essential role in effective public relations.

- Two way communication between both the parties is essential and information must flow in its desired form between the organization and public.
- The receiver must understand what the sender intends to communicate for an effective public relation.
- The receivers (public, target audience, stakeholders, employees, investors) must clearly understand the sender's message. (Organization in this case).

7. Democratic management: Communication is also essential for democratic management. It helps to achieve workers participation in management by involving workers in the process of decision-making. In the absence of an efficient system of communication, there cannot be any delegation and decentralization of authority.

8. Helps in motivation and leadership: Either you are running a business, or channelizing any social or educational endeavours, you must motivate your audiences in the right manner, so they can stay motivated in accomplishing the goals.

When communication is done with the right inclusion of emotional intelligence, it empowers the audiences to opt for a higher level of performance in a dedicated and enthusiastic manner.

Businesses can use different means such as workshops, lectures, meet-ups, talks, films, etc. for motivating people.

9. Public Image: An important part of Strategic Communication is managing the public image of a business. The public image is the way the public sees and perceives a business. It can be positive or negative and is influenced by many factors including what the business does, how it communicates, and what others say about it.

10. Helps in providing job satisfaction: The aspect of job satisfaction is developed through the medium of communication, which results in the form of achieving high productivity by employees in an organization.

It is through communication that an individual can express his skills, role, and efficiency. In the absence of effective communication employees' level of job-satisfaction will decline and will affect their productivity adversely.

1.5 Communication Barriers

1. Physical Barriers

- Noise: interference that occurs in the process which blocks the receiver from reception of message.
- Improper Time: an order at closing time, a case at duty off etc
- Physical Distance: Staff is located at distant locations it therefore becomes difficult for the sender to check whether the message has been received, understood and properly acted upon.
- Information Overload: too much information sometimes causes problem. Too many mails may result in important mails being left unchecked.

2. Semantic Or Language Barriers

- a. Variety of Meanings: many words and symbols have a variety of meaning therefore both sender and receiver should choose the same meaning in order to have a complete communication.
- b. Cultural Barriers: miscommunication often happens due to differences in environment, language and vocabulary.
- c. Badly Expressed Message: lack of clarity causes lack of communication. Poor sentences structure, wrong usage in context cannot transmit the correct message.

3. Organizational Barriers

- a. Organizational policy: policy has to be supportive for proper and smooth flow of information in the organization.
- b. Organizational rules and regulations: these affect the flow by prescribing the subject matter, the channel and priority of message.
- c. Status differences: if the sender has a higher position or status he might not disclose complete information in the fear of competition or to maintain his importance.
- d. Organizational facilities: if facilities like meetings, complaint box, suggestion box, social gatherings are not provided- it will lead to communication failure.

4. Psychological/Emotional Barriers

- a. Premature Evaluation: some officers make judgement without listening to the whole message- think before speaking and taking an action.
- b. Selective Listening:
- c. Inferring: direct hearing, feeling, tasting, smelling etc; can be verified and constitutes a fact- but when we think beyond a fact it's referred to as inferring. Eg: when we drop a letter in the post box, we assumed it will be picked and carried to the post office to be sent to the address provided on it.
- d. Emotional Attitudes: if a superior is short tempered, his subordinated will fear communication with him, they will avoid him.

5. Personal Barriers

- a. Resistance to Change: it is a common feeling to stick to one's habits and customary patterns. Most people do not want any change with the fear that their authorities and responsibilities might be affected.
- b. Lack of Trust & Confidence: employees should have trust and confidence amongst themselves else their will hardly be a cordial relation.
- c. Inattention: when the receiver is not interested in the message sent such as reports, bulletins, notices, sometimes during oral communication, the listener might be inattentive, physically present but mentally absent.
- d. Lack of ability to communicate: this affects the flow of communication.
- e. Difference in the speed of talking and listening: this is a barrier that shows difference in the speed of talking and listening. Speakers usually have a flow rate of 120-160 words per minute and the listener can process four times faster than that.

1.6 Overcoming Communication Barriers:

- i. Shortening the lines of communication.
- ii. Use of simple and meaningful language.
- iii. Have patience to listen and understand others.
- iv. Utilize feedback.
- v. Develop mutual trust.
- vi. More use of informal and face to face talk.
- vii. Avoid Premature Evaluation.
- viii. Give importance to gestures and postures.
- ix. Co-ordination.
- x. Communicate to express not to impress.

1.7 7C's of Communication

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|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. Clear. | 4. Correct. | 7. Courteous. |
| 2. Concise. | 5. Coherent | |
| 3. Concrete. | 6. Complete. | |

Explanations:

- 1. Clear:** (Clarity) Be clear about the goal of your message and the purpose of the message.
 - Present one idea at a time making it easier for the recipient to understand.
 - Don't leave them guessing what the message is about and having to fill in the gaps themselves.
 - Set a goal or outcome for what you want to communicate and work towards that.
- 2. Concise:** (Conciseness) Keep to the point and keep it short and simple.
 - Don't use unnecessary words (use two words where one will do or 6 sentences when 3 will do).
 - Don't repeat the same point in different ways.
 - This will also make any communication more engaging and easier to understand.
- 3. Concrete:** (Concreteness) Be clear, not fuzzy.
 - Ensure there is enough detail to get the message across but not too much so that the recipient will be lost and that the message is factual.
 - Adding too much 'noise' around your main points can mean these are missed.
 - Make sure your main points and any conclusions are clear to the recipient.
- 4. Correct:** (Correctness) Check the information you are providing is accurate and, in written communication, ensure it is free from grammatical and spelling errors.
 - Check the technical parts of your content are understandable by the person receiving the information.
 - Preparation will help here to make sure you can be sure about what you are communicating or a chance to read what you have written.
- 5. Coherent:** Make sure your message flows well and is laid out logically.
 - The points you make should all be linked to the main topic and should help you to deliver the objective you originally set out to achieve.
 - Make sure the tone of the message is the same throughout.
 - Consider using a structure for your communication to help here.
- 6. Complete:** (Completeness) Ensure the recipient has everything they need to understand your message and take action if needed.
 - If action is needed, ensure your message includes a 'call to action'.
 - Also, ensure that any specific details are clear and included.
 - Don't leave the recipient with lots of questions to ask.
 - Think about how you will check for understanding.
 - For example, you could ask questions to check their understanding.
- 7. Courteous:** (Courtesy) Your message should be polite, friendly, professional, open and honest.
 - Think about your message from the recipient's point of view and you are empathetic towards their needs.
 - This will help you to deliver the message in a way that's easy to understand and buy into.
 - Also, communicating to or writing for the reader can make your communication more engaging.