

Meaning of Communication:

Communication can broadly be defined as exchange of ideas, messages and information between two or more persons, through a medium, in a manner that the sender and the receiver understand the message in the common sense, that is, they develop common understanding of the message.

The word communication is derived from the Latin word ‘communicare’, which means to share, impart, participate, exchange, transmit or to make common. It emphasises on sharing common information, ideas and messages. It is not merely issuing orders and instructions.

“Communication is the transfer of information from a sender to a receiver, with the information being understood by the receiver”. — Koontz and Weihrich

“Communication is the art of developing and attaining understanding between people. It is the process of exchanging information and feelings between two or more people and it is essential to effective management.” — Terry and Franklin

“Communication is the sum of all 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.” — Allen Louis

“Communication is the process by which people attempt to share meaning via the transmission of symbolic messages.” — Stoner and Wankel

Nature of Communication:

Communication has the following features:

1. Two-way process:

Communication is a two-way process of understanding between two or more persons – sender and receiver. A person cannot communicate with himself.

2. Continuous process:

Exchange of ideas and opinion amongst people is an ongoing process in business and non-business organisations. Continuous interaction promotes understanding and exchange of information relevant for decision-making.

3. Dynamic process:

Communication between sender and receiver takes different forms and medium depending upon their moods and behaviour. It is, thus, a dynamic process that keeps changing in different situations.

4. Pervasive:

Communication is a pervasive activity. It takes place at all levels (top, middle, low) in all functional areas (production, finance, personnel, sales) of a business organisation.

5. Two people:

A minimum of two persons — sender and receiver — must be present for communication to take place. It may be between superiors, subordinates and peer group, intra or inter se.

6. Exchange:

Communication involves exchange of ideas and opinions. People interact and develop understanding for each other.

7. Means of unifying organisational activities:

Though words are active carriers of information, gestures can sometimes be more powerful than words. Facial expressions, sounds, signs and symbols are the non-verbal forms of communication.

Communication unifies internal organisational environment with its external environment. It also integrates the human and physical resources and converts them into organisational output.

8. Verbal and non-verbal:

9. Mutual understanding:

Communication is effective when sender and receiver develop mutual understanding of the subject. Messages conveyed should be understood by the receiver in the desired sense.

10. Goal-oriented:

Communication is goal-oriented. Unless the receiver and sender know the purpose they intend to achieve through communication, it has little practical utility.

11. Foundation of management:

Though communication is a directing function, it is important for other managerial functions also. Designing plans and organisation structures, motivating people to accomplish goals and controlling organisational activities; all require communication amongst managers at various levels.

14. Inter-disciplinary:

Communication is the art of how communicators use knowledge of different fields of study like anthropology, psychology and sociology. Making best use of these disciplines makes communication effective. It is, thus, an inter-disciplinary area of management.

Role of Communication:

Right from the time a child is born, communication plays an important role in his life. Speaking, listening and writing are the common forms of communication. A large part of our time is devoted to communication as we share our thoughts and feelings with individuals and groups of people. Communication helps to develop an organised society with defined roles for each individual.

It is important that communication should be effective. Effective communication is transfer of information along with transfer of understanding. It means transfer of messages, ideas and information in a manner that the sender and receiver understand the subject in the same sense.

Importance of Communication:

The desire to socialize and get formed into organised groups necessitates the need for communication. In the fast changing world, managers communicate changes in technology, structure or people to the subordinates. If the communication system is well organised, it becomes easier for subordinates to understand and act upon the message. Communication plays important role in the lives of individuals and organisations.

The following points highlight the importance of communication:

1. Basis for planning:

Planning is the basic function of management. If plans are well designed and communicated for their implementation, it leads to organisational success. Planning requires extensive environmental scanning and information about internal and external organisation elements. An effective system of communication helps in obtaining this information. Implementing the plans requires communicating them to everybody in the organisation. Communication is, thus, the basis of planning.

2. Motivation to work:

Employees are motivated to work if their needs are satisfied. Communication helps managers know needs of their employees so that they can adopt suitable motivators and inspire them to develop positive attitude towards the work environment.

3. Job satisfaction:

Exchange of information develops trust, confidence and faith amongst managers and subordinates. They understand their job positions better and, thus, perform better. People are committed to organisational objectives which promotes job satisfaction,

4. Commitment to organisational objectives:

Managers who follow an effective system of communication understand employees' needs, adopt suitable motivators to satisfy

them, appraise their performance and provide them regular feedback. The employees also work with commitment towards organisational objectives.

5. Coordination:

Communication coordinates organisational resources (human and non-human), individual goals with organisational goals and internal environment with external environment. Coordination is the key to organisational success and communication is an active contributor to coordination.

6. Adaptability to external environment:

In order to survive in the changing, dynamic environment, managers continuously interact with external parties like government, suppliers, customers, etc. This requires effective communication system in the organisation.

7. Internal functioning of an enterprise:

Managers interact with parties internal to business enterprises. They constantly obtain and provide information to them. More effective the communication system, more accurate will be the information.

8. Healthy industrial relations:

Satisfied workers contribute to healthy organisations.

Communication brings managers and trade unions closer, develops mutual understanding and promotes industrial peace and harmony. This increases industrial production.

9. Helps in performing managerial roles:

According to Henry Mintzberg, managers perform three major roles – interpersonal, informational and decisional. Communication helps managers in performing these roles effectively. In interpersonal roles, managers interact with superiors, peers and subordinates; in informational roles they receive and give information to people inside and outside the organization and in decisional roles, they take important decisions and communicate them to organisational members for their effective implementation.

10. Facilitates leadership:

Effective leaders interact with followers, guide and inspire them to perform the individual and organisational goals. Effective communication process facilitates leaders to carry out the leadership functions.

11. Facilitates control:

Planning is effective if accompanied by an effective control system. Control is possible when managers assess subordinates'

performance, correct and prevent deviations and provide them regular feedback of performance. Control function largely depends upon communication system of the organisation. How effectively managers control organisational activities depends upon how effective is the communication system.

12. Training and development:

Imparting training and development facilities to employees depends upon how well their superiors communicate with them. Trainers with good communication skills are better than those who have poor communication skills.

13. Substance to organisational existence:

Obtaining information to make plans, making members aware of authority-responsibility structure, position in the organisational hierarchy, coordinating their activities is the essence of organisational survival and growth. This is possible through effective communication.

Process of Communication:

Communication process is a sequence of activities where message sent is understood by the receiver in its intended meaning. For example, execution of a purchase order or conversation through telephone shall be complete if the desired result is achieved, that is,

supplier sends the desired goods and receiver of phone call acts as desired by the maker of the call.

Communication is a process that connects the sender with the receiver of the message. A process is “a systematic series of actions, operations or series of changes directed to some end.” However, in real life situations, communication process is more complex than it sounds. It consists of a series of elements which results in sharing of meaning by sender and receiver.

These elements are discussed below:

1. Sender:

Sender is the person who initiates, generates and sends the message. He represents the source of message. The communication process begins when the sender develops an idea or message he wants to transmit. He must arrange the ideas in a manner that can be understood by the receiver. A lecturer delivering a lecture in the classroom is the sender of the message or a manager addressing his team in a meeting is sender of the message.

2. Message:

Message is the idea or information that the sender wants to convey. He may convey it verbally (by writing or speaking) or non-verbally (through gestures or body language). Whatever the form, the

message should be clearly formed so that desired objective is accomplished.

3. Encoding:

Once the sender is clear of what message to transmit, he decides the code through which the message shall be transmitted. The message is abstract and intangible and, therefore, has to be converted into some form (words, gestures, pictures etc.) to make it meaningful. Encoding means converting the message into symbols.

Encoding gives meaning to the message or converts ideas into codes which can be understood by the receiver. Encoding means translating the message into words (written or spoken), symbols or gestures. It may be a combination of the three. The code should be appropriate to the situation, that is, interpreted by the receiver in the manner intended.

4. Transmission:

Transmission involves selecting the medium or channel of communication. Once decided that the message has to be sent in writing, the sender may select the electronic channel and the medium of e-mail or fax. Short messages can be transmitted through telephone but lengthy messages can be sent through letters or circulars.

Choice of channel depends upon the message to be conveyed, personal biases of the sender and nature of information. Short messages are generally sent through telephone. Where drawings, charts and illustrations form part of the message, it should be sent in writing. Personal biases include sender's preference for a particular channel.

Some senders prefer to communicate in writing, howsoever short the message may be and, therefore, prefer the written channel of transmission. Nature of information refers to immediacy and confidentiality of information. Confidential information where immediate feedback is required is generally transmitted orally.

5. Receiver:

Receiver is the person or a group of persons to whom the message is conveyed. In case of telephonic conversation, the sender can send message to one receiver but in case of group discussions, seminars and conferences, receivers can be more than one. The message must be designed, encoded and transmitted in a manner that receiver can understand it easily. Use of technical words, jargons and complicated symbols should be avoided. Depending on the channel selected, receiver may be a listener, viewer or a reader.

6. Decoding:

Decoding means giving meaningful interpretation to the message. On receiving the message, the receiver translates the symbols into meaningful information to the best of his ability. Communication is effective if receiver understands the message in the same way as intended by the sender. The receiver must, therefore, be familiar with the codes and symbols used by the sender.

7. Noise:

It represents the disturbing factor in the process of communication. It interferes with effective communication and reduces clarity of the message. The message may be interpreted differently than intended by the sender. Conversing near a machine making sounds, disturbance in telephone line, physical ailment or mental distress of sender or receiver, psychological barriers (degree of trust, fear, perception etc.) are the common forms of noise that obstruct the quality of message transmitted from sender to the receiver.

8. Feedback:

Feedback is receiver's response to sender's message. The receiver communicates his reaction to the sender through words, symbols or gestures. It is the reversal of communication process where receiver becomes the sender and sender becomes the receiver. Unless the receiver responds to the message, communication process is incomplete.

Feedback helps the sender to transform his message, if needed. It also allows the receiver to clear doubts on the message, ask questions to build his confidence and enables the sender to know efficiency of the message. Feedback makes the communication process complete.

In face-to-face communication, the sender can immediately receive the feedback but in written communication, it takes time for sender to receive feedback on the message. A written notice sent by manager to the employees to work seven days a week instead of six can be implemented when everybody has read and signed the notice. Subordinates will give feedback on the notice and recommend changes, if required. Managers can implement the notice only if it is accepted by the subordinates, unless it is an order.

Feedback increases efficiency and applicability of communication.

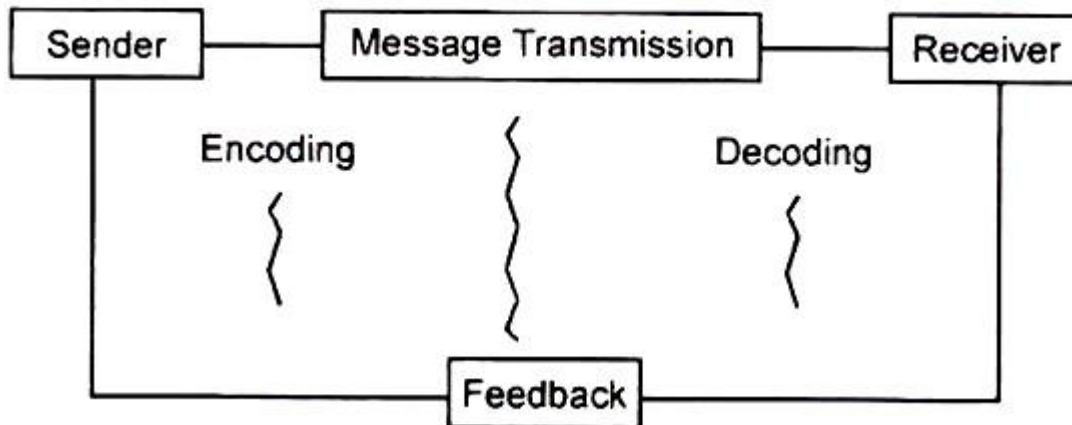
Feedback plays important role in two-way communication. In one-way communication, sender communicates with the receiver without getting any feedback but in two-way communication, receiver provides feedback to the sender. Though one-way communication takes less time and is more orderly (it avoids noise and chaos), feedback in two-way communication makes it more accurate and precise.

Feedback offers the following benefits:

1. It allows senders to improve communication with the receiver.
2. It allows receiver to clarify doubts on the message and, therefore, perform better.
3. Allowing receivers to ask questions builds confidence and they are more confident of their performance.
4. It enables the sender to know efficiency of his message; whether or not the receiver has understood the message in its right meaning. Feedback makes the communication process complete.
5. In response to receiver's understanding and suggestions on the message, sender can adjust the subsequent messages.

However, two-way communication should be used constructively. If sender and receiver hold conflicting opinions and none is ready to agree to the other's viewpoint, the message cannot be acted upon. Blaming each other with defensive reasoning and not acting in support of the message can reduce efficiency of the message. Two-way communication cannot be avoided and, therefore, both the parties should hold aside their egos and arrive at consensus in case there are conflicting opinions about the message.

The communication process can be represented as follows:



Channels of Communication:

Communication channel is the path through which information flows from sender to receiver.

Two main communication channels are:

- I. Formal communication channel and
- II. Informal communication channel.

I. Formal Communication Channel:

It is the official channel of communication controlled by managers in their official capacity. Official information and decisions follow this channel of communication. This channel is officially recognised by the organisation structure, follows the formal chain of command for passing information, suggestions, orders etc. and defines

authority-responsibility relationships amongst members of the organisation.

It is a deliberately created path of communication. Information flows vertically, horizontally and diagonally along this path of communication 'through proper channel', that is, through various levels in the organisational hierarchy.

Vertical communication represents flow of information from one level to the other in the organisational hierarchy. It can be downward and upward. In downward vertical communication, information flows from top to middle-level managers, lower-level managers, supervisors and workers.

The information is related to goals, policies, directions, instructions etc. In upward vertical communication, information flows from lower-levels to higher levels. It relates to reports about subordinates' work, achievements and progress, work-related problems, suggestions to improve the style of working etc.

Horizontal communication flows amongst people at the same level. It does not follow the official chain of command. When manager of marketing department discusses issues related to production and sale of goods, with the manager of production department, it is said to be horizontal communication. Diagonal communication is similar to horizontal communication that takes place amongst

people of different departments at different levels rather than the same level.

Merits of formal communication:

Formal communication channel has the following merits:

1. Authentic information:

It is an officially recognised path of communication and, therefore, whatever information flows in whatever direction (vertical, horizontal or lateral), it is presumed to be authentic.

2. Large geographical area:

Large organisations have branches spread over wide geographical areas. Formal communication channels spread information over wide geographical areas.

3. Justify organisational hierarchy:

Who is to receive information from whom, where, when and to what extent is clearly specified in the formal channels.

4. Coordination:

Formal channels coordinate the work of other functional areas and facilitate smooth functioning of the organisation.

5. Control:

It helps in receiving right information at the right time and facilitates control of organisational activities.

6. Filtering of information:

Only important information which top managers must know flows to them. They do not have to, therefore, scan every information, relevant and irrelevant. This saves time which can be spent on strategic issues.

Limitations of formal communication:

Formal communication channel suffers from the following limitations:

1. Information distortion:

When information passes through a number of levels, some of the information is lost in transit and gets filled by some unintended information. There may be, thus, information distortion. In some cases, information up to eighty per cent gets lost on the way.

2. Time-consuming:

As information passes through a number of levels, it is a time-consuming channel of communication.

3. Expensive:

It is an expensive channel of communication as it requires lot of paper and administrative work.

4. Lack of personal touch:

People at the top and bottom communicate with each other through formal channels only. They do not get to talk to each other personally. Lack of personal touch restricts free flow of information in the organisation. Formal communication channel cannot be avoided. Efforts should be made to reduce its limitations and make it an effective channel of communication.

II. Informal Communication Channel:

It is an unofficial channel of communication that arises out of socio-psychological needs of people to interact with each other. It is an important and spontaneous outgrowth of formal channels of communication. It emphasises more on the person than position. It arises when people of common nationality, caste or religion interact with each other or when they share a car pool or meet each other regularly in canteens, libraries, bus stands etc.

Grapevine communication:

It is an informal communication network where information flows freely throughout the organisation. Grapevine is the most common

form of informal communication. It connects people in the organisation and transmits information in every direction: vertical, horizontal and diagonal.

It cuts across formal positions and facilitates social, personal and psychological interaction amongst people. Though it travels faster than formal communication channel, it also carries gossips and rumours with it. Grapevine communication normally occurs when some change is introduced in organisational policies (change in office, automation etc.) and people are located close to each other (as individuals or groups) in order to discuss matters.

Features of grapevine communication:

Grapevine communication has the following features:

1. It connects almost everybody in the organisation.
2. It flows in every direction – vertical, horizontal and diagonal.
3. It does not follow the official chain of command.
4. It is a fast channel of communication.
5. It generally occurs at the work site, though it may occur outside the organisation also.

6. It arises out of social and personal interaction amongst people in the organisation.

7. It is based on people than task.

8. It generally occurs orally.

9. It occurs in various forms known as communication chains.

Patterns of grapevine communication—grapevine communication chains:

Grapevine communication chain represents the pattern in which information flows in different directions.

Kieth Davis identifies four types of communication chains:

1. Single-strand chain:

In this chain, information passes from one person to the other in a sequential order. A tells something to B who tells it to C, C to D and so on till the information finally reaches the person concerned, say, J.

It appears like this:

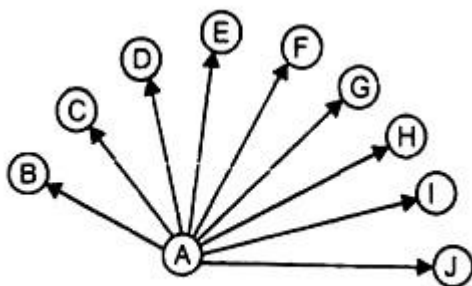


(One person passes information to another)

2. Gossip chain:

In this chain, one person passes information to everyone else in the organisation. He is not selective about passing the information. This information may not be related to work but is of interest to all.

It appears like this:



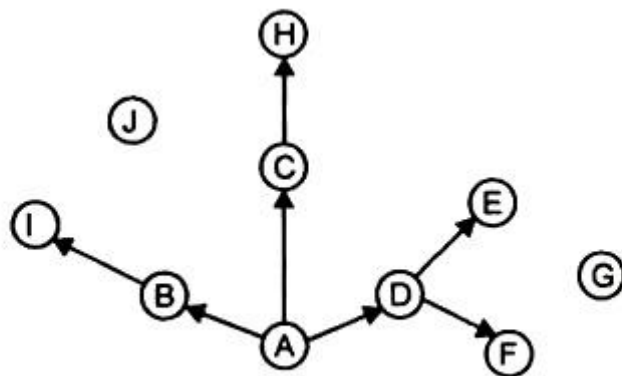
(One person [A] spreads information to the rest)

3. Probability chain:

In this chain, information is passed randomly by one person to others. These persons further pass information in the same random

fashion. This information is not significant but is somewhat interesting.

It appears like this:



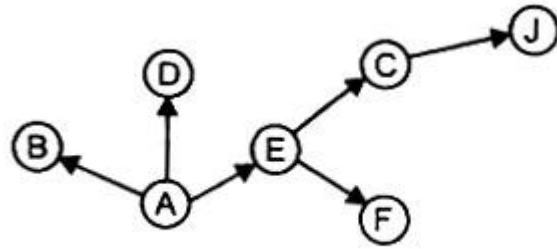
(Each person randomly passes information to the rest)

4. Cluster chain:

In this chain, one person passes information to a selected few confidentially, that is, communication is done with people whom the sender trusts. Some of them keep the information to themselves and others pass it to other selected few whom they trust.

Information of interest is transmitted further and rest is retained by members. It is the most common pattern of grapevine or informal communication.

It appears like this:



(Some people transmit information to selected individuals)

Merits of grapevine communication:

Informal or grapevine communication channel has the following merits:

1. Speed:

Communication through this channel spreads fast as it does not follow a definite path. The moment someone comes to know of information that is 'confidential' or otherwise, it spreads like wild fire throughout the organisation. It is "just between you and me" is the basis of spreading information through grapevine.

2. Supports formal communication channel:

This channel is an important supplement to formal channel of communication. Whatever cannot be communicated through formal channel, because of time or official constraints, can be successfully transmitted through informal channels.

3. Nature of information:

Information about corporate history, moral values and traditions can be better transmitted through informal channels than formal channels.

4. Feedback:

Managers can obtain feedback from subordinates regarding the policies, directions, instructions, decisions etc. through grapevine. Feedback through informal channel is faster than the formal channel.

5. Human relations:

Since informal channels cut across official positions and hierarchical relationships, they promote healthy relations amongst people in the organisation.

6. Socio-psychological needs:

This channel satisfies social and psychological needs of people to interact with each other and share their joys and sorrows. It creates a sense of belongingness in the group and strengthens their group identity.

Limitations of grapevine communication:

Informal communication channel suffers from the following limitations:

1. Information distortion:

Since information is not based on facts, it may be misleading and distorted.

2. Lack of authenticity:

Informal communication is not authentic. Different people may-interpret the same information in different ways.

3. Fixing responsibility:

Origin of information cannot be known in this channel. It is, therefore, difficult to hold responsibility for spreading false information.

4. Incomplete information:

Information filtration and distortion are the common features of informal communication. What is said by first sender is not what is received by the last receiver. There is, thus, incomplete transmission of information.

5. Lack of evidence:

It spreads by word of mouth. It is not supported by written facts. This makes it often incredible or non-dependable. Though informal channel has limitations, managers cannot eliminate it. It is an inevitable channel of communication.

Managers should make proper use of this channel to attain the formal goals. They can make use of this channel to receive feedback about organisational plans and policies and avoid spreading gossips and rumours in the organisation.

How to make effective use of grapevine communication:

Since grapevine or informal communication channel cannot be eliminated, managers should use it effectively to attain the formal organisational goals.

The following steps can help managers in this regard:

1. Managers should personally inform employees about organisational goals, plans, policies, etc. besides communicating them through the formal channel. This will avoid spreading rumours and gossips. While communicating with subordinates, managers should maintain closeness with them.
2. Enhance group discussions and activities so that people openly discuss their formal and informal problems.

3. Managers should fix some time, in a week or month, to personally meet the employees and discuss various formal and informal problems with them.
4. Managers should win the confidence of group leaders so that group goals are not contrary to individual goals.
5. As much as possible, decision-making should be participative in nature.
6. Managers should keep asking the employees about organisational plans and policies. Regular feedback can improve the organisation's state of affairs.
7. Managers should be good listeners. If they want to be listened to, they should also listen to others.

Distinction between Formal and Informal Communication Channels:

The following table highlights the points of difference between formal and informal communication channels:

Formal communication channel	Informal communication channel
1. It follows the official chain of command or organisational hierarchy.	1. It cuts across the formal chain of command and does not follow organisational hierarchy.
2. It is based on formal relationships amongst people.	2. It is based on informal relationships.
3. It is task-oriented.	3. It is people-oriented.
4. It is related to position of a person in the organisation.	4. It is related to person rather than position.
5. It flows in vertical, horizontal and diagonal directions.	5. It flows in every possible direction.
6. It is deliberately created.	6. It arises spontaneously along with the formal channel.
7. It is a slow means of communication.	7. It is a fast means of communication.
8. The information is authentic and accurate.	8. Information distortions are likely to take place.
9. It aims at organisational goals.	9. It aims at personal goals.
10. It is an impersonal form of communication.	10. It is a personal form of communication.
11. It is rigid.	11. It is flexible.
12. It can be oral and written.	12. It can also be oral and written.

Importance of Communication

1. The Basis of Co-ordination

The manager explains to the employees the organizational goals, modes of their achievement and also the [interpersonal relationships](#) amongst them. This provides coordination between various employees and also departments. Thus, communications act as a basis for coordination in the [organization](#).

2. Fluent Working

A manager coordinates the human and physical elements of an organization to run it smoothly and efficiently. This [coordination](#) is not possible without proper communication.

3. The Basis of Decision Making

Proper communication provides information to the manager that is useful for [decision making](#). No decisions could be taken in the absence of information. Thus, communication is the basis for taking the right decisions.

Learn more about [Barriers of Communication here in detail](#).

4. Increases Managerial Efficiency

The manager conveys the targets and issues instructions and allocates jobs to the [subordinates](#). All of these aspects involve communication. Thus, communication is essential for the quick and effective performance of the managers and the entire organization.

5. Increases Cooperation and Organizational Peace

The two-way communication process promotes co-operation and mutual understanding amongst the workers and also between them

and the **management**. This leads to less friction and thus leads to industrial peace in the factory and efficient operations.

6. Boosts Morale of the Employees

Good communication helps the workers to adjust to the physical and social aspect of work. It also improves good human relations in the industry. An efficient system of communication enables the management to motivate, influence and satisfy the subordinates which in turn boosts their morale and keeps them motivated.

Types of Communication

1. Formal Communication

Formal communications are the one which flows through the official channels designed in the organizational chart. It may take place between a superior and a subordinate, a subordinate and a superior or among the same cadre employees or managers. These communications can be oral or in writing and are generally recorded and filed in the office.

Formal communication may be further classified as Vertical communication and Horizontal communication.

Vertical Communication

Vertical Communications as the name suggests flows vertically upwards or downwards through formal channels. Upward communication refers to the flow of communication from a subordinate to a superior whereas downward communication flows from a superior to a subordinate.

Application for grant of leave, submission of a progress report, request for loans etc. are some of the examples of upward communication. Sending notice to employees to attend a meeting, delegating work to the subordinates, informing them about the company policies, etc. are some examples of downward communication.

Horizontal Communication

Horizontal or lateral communication takes place between one division and another. For example, a production manager may contact the finance manager to discuss the delivery of raw material or its purchase.

Types of communication networks in formal communication:

- **Single chain:** In this type of network communications flows from every superior to his subordinate through a single chain.

- Wheel: In this network, all subordinates under one superior communicate through him only. They are not allowed to talk among themselves.
- Circular: In this type of network, the communication moves in a circle. Each person is able to communicate with his adjoining two persons only.
- Free flow: In this network, each person can communicate with any other person freely. There is no restriction.
- Inverted V: In this type of network, a subordinate is allowed to communicate with his immediate superior as well as his superior's superior also. However, in the latter case, only ordained communication takes place.

2. Informal Communication

Any communication that takes place without following the formal channels of communication is said to be **informal** communication. The Informal communication is often referred to as the 'grapevine' as it spreads throughout the organization and in all directions without any regard to the levels of authority.

The informal communication spreads rapidly, often gets distorted and it is very difficult to detect the source of such communication. It also leads to rumors which are not true. People's behavior is often

affected by the rumors and informal discussions which sometimes may hamper the work environment.

However, sometimes these channels may be helpful as they carry information rapidly and, therefore, may be useful to the manager at times. Informal channels are also used by the managers to transmit information in order to know the reactions of his/her subordinates.

Learn more about [7 C's of Communication here in detail](#).

Types of Grapevine network:

- Single strand: In this network, each person communicates with the other in a sequence.
- Gossip network: In this type of network, each person communicates with all other persons on a non-selective basis.
- Probability network: In this network, the individual communicates randomly with other individuals.
- Cluster Network: In this network, the individual communicates with only those people whom he trusts. Out of these four types of networks, the Cluster network is the most popular in organizations.

Barriers to Communication

The **communication barriers** may prevent communication or carry incorrect meaning due to which misunderstandings may be created. Therefore, it is essential for a manager to identify such barriers and take appropriate measures to overcome them. The barriers to communication in organizations can be broadly grouped as follows:

1. Semantic Barriers

These are concerned with the problems and obstructions in the process of encoding and decoding of a message into words or impressions. Normally, such barriers result due to use of wrong words, faulty translations, different interpretations, etc.

For example, a manager has to communicate with workers who have no knowledge of the English language and on the other side, he is not well conversant with the Hindi language. Here, language is a barrier to communication as the manager may not be able to communicate properly with the workers.

2. Psychological Barriers

Emotional or psychological factors also act as barriers to communication. The state of mind of both sender and receiver of communication reflects in effective communication. A worried

person cannot communicate properly and an angry recipient cannot understand the message properly.

Thus, at the time of communication, both the sender and the receiver need to be psychologically sound. Also, they should trust each other. If they do not believe each other, they cannot understand each other's message in its original sense.

3. Organizational Barriers

The factors related to organizational structure, rules and regulations authority relationships, etc. may sometimes act as barriers to effective communication. In an organization with a highly centralized pattern, people may not be encouraged to have free communication. Also, rigid rules and regulations and cumbersome procedures may also become a hurdle to communication.

4. Personal Barriers

The personal factors of both sender and receiver may act as a barrier to [effective communication](#). If a superior thinks that a particular communication may adversely affect his authority, he may suppress such communication.

Also, if the superiors do not have confidence in the competency of their subordinates, they may not ask for their advice. The

subordinates may not be willing to offer useful suggestions in the absence of any reward or appreciation for a good suggestion.

Solved Question for You

Q: List the measures to improve communication effectiveness?

Answer: Measures to improve communication effectiveness are as follows

1. Communication of Clarification of the idea.
2. Communication should be according to the needs of the receiver.
3. Consulting others before communication.
4. Awareness about the language, tone and body postures and gestures.
5. Convey information useful to the receiver.
6. Ensure proper feedback.
7. Follow up communications.
8. Be a good listener.

Principles of Effective Communication:

An effective communication system is based on the following principles:

(1) Principle of Clarity in Ideas:

First of all it should be clear in the mind of the sender as to what he wants to say. According to Terry the principle of effective communication is 'first to fully inform oneself.' The clearer the thought the more effective is the communication.

(2) Principle of Appropriate Language:

According to this principle, the communication should always be in a simple language. Ideas should be clear and be devoid of any doubt. Technical words and words having various meanings should be used to the minimum.

(3) Principle of Attention:

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The purpose of communication is that the receiver of information should clearly understand its meaning. It means merely transferring information is not communication and it is important that the receiver should understand it. This is possible only when the receiver takes interest in the message and listens to it attentively.

(4) Principle of Consistency:

According to this principle, communication system should maintain consistency in the objectives of the enterprise, its procedures and

processes. It means communication should be in accordance with the policies laid down for it.

(5) Principle of Adequacy:

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The information sent to the receiver should be sufficient and complete in every respect. Information more than the need or less than the need is harmful. In the context of business incomplete information is dangerous. The sufficiency of information depends on the ability of the receiver. If the receiver happens to be capable more information can be given with the help of a few words. On the contrary, in case of a less capable receiver more details are needed.

(6) Principle of Proper Time:

The messages should reach the receiver whenever they are needed. Late messages are meaningless and the utility of communication is ended. Hence, the message should be sent before the actual need keeping in mind the time required for communication.

(7) Principle of Informality:

ADVERTISEMENTS:

Formal communication has a prominent place among the channels of communication but informal communication is not less important. There are some problems which cannot be solved with

formal communication but informal communication does succeed in solving them. Therefore, informal communication should also be given recognition in the organisation.

(8) Principle of Feedback:

It is essential for the sender of the message that he should know about the success of the message. It means that he should see whether the receiver has understood the message or not. Feedback is easily obtained in a face to face communication with the help of the facial reactions of the receiver. In the written communication the sender can get the feedback by using appropriate means.

(9) Principle of Integration:

Communication should be able to introduce all the employees in the enterprise with its objectives so that all the employees move unitedly towards the goal.

(10) Principle of Consultation:

The suggestions of all the persons concerned should be invited while making plans for communication. The obvious benefit of such a move will be that all those who are invited while making plans for communication and taken into confidence will contribute to the success of the communication system. Planning for communication aims at determining as to when, how and through what medium

communication is to be done among people working at different levels.

(11) Principle of Flexibility:

Communication system should be able to absorb the changes in the organisation. A communication system that cannot absorb changes according to the need becomes meaningless.

(12) Principle of Economy:

Communication system should not be unnecessarily costly. As far as possible unnecessary messages should be reduced to the minimum to make communication economical. No single employee should be burdened with the work of communication.

(13) Principle of Proper Medium:

In order to make communication effective it is necessary not only to have clarity of ideas, consistency and completeness but also to make a proper choice of medium. For example- the managers should make use of oral communication for individual communication and written communication for policy matters.

Effective communication means communication free from barriers. Though ideal communication free from all barriers is seldom

achieved, communicators should acquire communication skills and enhance effectiveness of their communication.

The following factors increase effectiveness of the communication process:

1. Formal Communication Channel:

Official information should flow through formal channels of communication. It avoids spreading of rumours and relieves top managers from scanning every information. Workers will contact their supervisors rather than functional managers.

2. Authority Structure:

Well defined authority structure results in effective communication. Clear authority-responsibility structures facilitate answering questions like who will communicate with whom, who has authority over whom and increase the effectiveness of communication.

3. Clarity:

Effective communication should be as clear as possible.

Communication does not take place on its own. It is made to happen. Careful planning about what, when, where, why and how to communicate makes communication effective.

Rather than saying, “dispatch this mail as early as possible”, it will be better if the manager says, “dispatch this mail latest by tomorrow evening”; because the word ‘early’ can have different meaning for the manager and the clerk.

4. Completeness of Information:

Complete information makes communication effective. Incomplete messages create gaps that may be filled by people according to their individual perceptions. A manager says to his workers, “We want to increase production to meet the increasing demand. So please cooperate with us and work overtime.”

The message is incomplete unless it specifies how much increase in production is desired, how many hours of overtime have to be put in and for what time period. Information is complete when it answers five W’s— what, when, why, where and who. Completeness of information increases the effectiveness of communication.

5. Information Ownership:

People specialized in their work like tax, accounts, sales, finance etc. are the best persons to be contacted rather than immediate superiors. These experts possess the power of information and can make people perform activities related to their areas more effectively than others.

6. Conciseness:

Though all details should be included in the message, the sender should be as brief as possible. Readers and listeners prefer reading and listening to short notices rather than lengthy details. Long messages become boring and may lose attention of the receiver. Simple, short and crisp sentences should be used to make the message effective.

Language should be as simple as possible. Use of technical words and tough vocabulary should be avoided.

7. Develop Listening Habits (Consideration):

Some people are good speakers but bad listeners. Research has shown that most of the managers are not good listeners. If managers want their subordinates to listen to them, they should develop their listening skills also. They should be considerate towards needs, sentiments and emotions of the receiver. They should seek not only to be understood but also to understand.

8. Correctness:

The messages should be correct, authentic and accurate. Incorrect transmission will lead to incorrect action. While corresponding with outsiders, incorrect message can affect company's goodwill and public relations.

9. Courtesy:

Politeness and courtesy are important contributors to effective communication. Thanking the other person for a favour, acknowledging his action or response, apologizing for a mistake, avoiding negative expressions (the product failed because of you, your behaviour is bad etc.) and using empathy are some of the ways which can make communication courteous and effective.

10. Focus on Needs:

What the sender wants to convey must also be what the receiver wants to receive. Sender should analyze the needs of information at the receiving end before conveying the message. If a seminar is organized for the students and speakers of esteem from various fields are invited who deliver lectures beyond the understanding of students, the lectures will be of no value to them and will go unheard. Communication should, therefore, satisfy the needs of the receivers.

11. Informal Communication System:

Informal communication system should supplement the formal communication system. Informal communication system speeds up the transmission of formal messages.

12. Feedback:

The speaker should not just speak and get away from the communication site. He should wait for a response to know whether the receiver has understood what he has said. Feedback is an important element to effective communication.

13. Consistency:

Consistency should be maintained in sending messages. The sender should not change his words and actions too often.

14. Authenticity:

Before transmitting any information, sender should ensure that the information is correct and fair. Wrong information will result in wrong decisions.

15. Self-Control:

A person's state of mind or mood should not overpower his communication with others. The gestures of the sender should correspond with the message he sends. Manager should not communicate sad news (say, retrenchment of an employee) in a happy mood and vice versa. Communicators should maintain complete control over their actions, behaviour and gestures and not distort the message.

Clarity, completeness, consideration, correctness, courtesy and consistency are also called C's of effective communication.

The American Management Association has laid ten principles of effective communication. These are the 'Ten commandments of good communication'.

These are as follows:

1. Examine the true purpose of each communication.
2. Seek to clarify your ideas before communicating.
3. Consider the total physical and human setting whenever you communicate.
4. Consult with others, wherever appropriate, in planning communications.
5. Be mindful, when you communicate, of the overtones as well as the basic content of your message.
6. Take the opportunity, when it arises, to convey something of help or value to the receiver.
7. Follow up your communication.
8. Communicate for tomorrow as well as today.

9. Be sure your actions support your communication.

10. Seek not only to be understood but to understand-be a good listener.