

## Unit 4

### Communication

#### Introduction

Communications is fundamental to the existence and survival of humans as well as to an organization. It is a process of creating and sharing ideas, information, views, facts, feelings, etc. among the people to reach a common understanding. Communication is the key to the Directing function of management. A manager may be highly qualified and skilled but if he does not possess good communication skills, all his ability becomes irrelevant. A manager must communicate his directions effectively to the subordinates to get the work done from them properly.

#### Meaning and Definition

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

(Louis A Allen) Communication can be defined as the process through which two or more persons come to exchange ideas and understanding among themselves.

#### ➤ Importance of communication

1. Communication **promotes motivation** by informing and clarifying the employees about the task to be done, the manner they are performing the task, and how to improve their performance if it is not up to the mark.
2. Communication is a **source of information** to the organizational members for decision-making process as it helps identifying and assessing alternative course of actions.
3. Communication also plays a crucial role in **altering individual's attitudes**, i.e., a well informed individual will have better attitude than a less-informed individual. Organizational magazines, journals, meetings and various other forms of oral and written communication help in moulding employee's attitudes.
4. Communication also **helps in socializing**. In today's life the only presence of another individual fosters communication. It is also said that one cannot survive without communication.
5. As discussed earlier, communication also assists in **controlling process**. It helps controlling organizational member's behaviour in various ways. There are various levels of hierarchy and certain principles and guidelines that employees must follow in an organization. They must comply with organizational policies, perform their job role efficiently and communicate any work problem and grievance to their superiors. Thus, communication helps in controlling function of management.

An effective and efficient communication system requires managerial proficiency in delivering and receiving messages. A manager must discover various barriers to communication, analyze the reasons for their occurrence and take preventive steps to avoid those barriers. Thus, the primary responsibility of a manager is to develop and maintain an effective communication system in the organization.

### ➤ Factors influencing communication

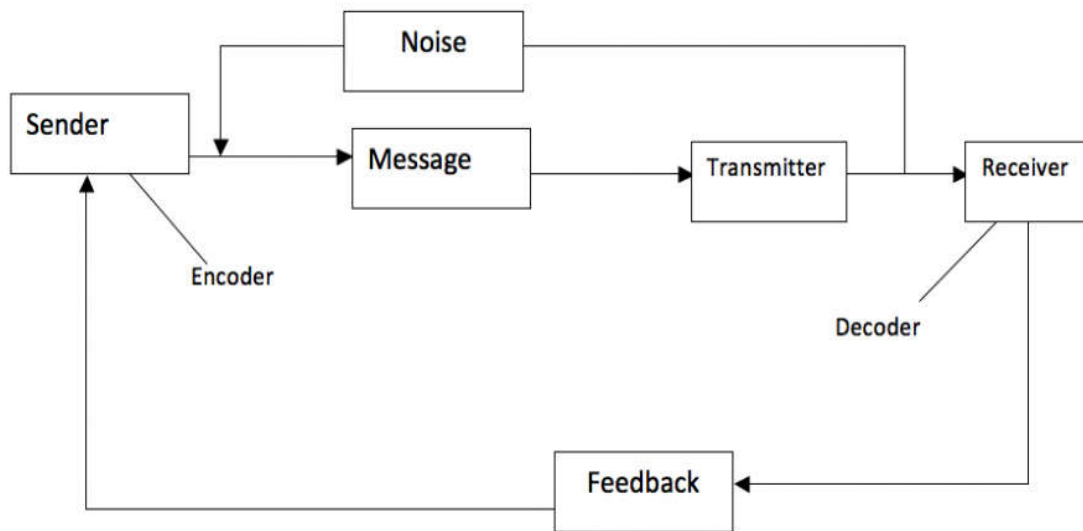
Raymond (1977:336) has described four factors that influence the effectiveness of organizational communication, these are such as;

- 1. Formal channel of communication:** Is a means of communication that is endorsed and probably controlled by managers. Example includes newsletters, regular memos reports and staff meeting. Formal channel of communication influence communication effectiveness in tow ways, ever widening distance as organization develop and grow and second, the formal channels of communication is a mechanism that can affect the free flow of information between organizational levels. But then, effect communication is usually for more difficult to achieve in a large retail organization or industry with widely dispersed branches than in departmental store and it can still inhibit the free flow of information between organizational levels, example are as the manager avoids being bogged down by irrelevant information the higher level manager may in his process miss important information.
- 2. The organization authority structure:** The organization of authority structure had a similar influence on communication effectiveness, status and power differences in the organizations help determine who will communicate effectively and accuracy of the communication will also be affected by authority differences. For example, conversation between a company president CEO and a chemical worker may well be characterized by somewhat strained politeness and formally.
- 3. Job specialization:** Usually facilities communications with differentiated group members of the same work group are likely to share the same jargon time horizons goals tasks and personal styles. Communication between highly differentiated groups however is likely to be inhibited.

### ➤ Communication process

The communication process can be described a model with several components. These components include a sender or information source who wishes to create a desired meaning in the mind of another the receiver. The meaning is encoded into a message or set symbols and it is sent along a channel to the receiver, who decodes the message and attaches meaning to it. The receiver spends to the sender or source with feedback reply there can be noise in all part of the system.

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The communication process.

1. **Sender:** A sender will be a person with information needs or desires and a purpose for communication then to one or more other people. The sender in any organization can be the director, manager, subordinates, department / branch or the organization itself. The manager in organization communicates with other managers / subordinates, client / customers and others who are both within and outside the organization.
2. **Messages:** The encoded sent by the sender to the receiver; Stones 91983). The messages is the physical form into which the sender encodes the information, the message may be in any form that can be experienced and understood by one or more of the senses of the receiver.
3. **Noise:** Stones (1983), said that noise is any factor that disturbs, confuses, or otherwise interferes with communication. Noise may be internal (as when a receiver is not paying attention) or external (as when message is distorted by the sounds in the environment) noise can occur at any stage of the communication process especially troublesome during encoding or decoding stage.
4. **Channel:** A formal medium of communication between a sender and the recover Onwuchekwa (1995), the channel is the mode or means of transmission e.g on paper, telephone etc the situation of the receiver influences the choice of channel.
5. **Receiver:** The receiver is the person whose senses perceive the sender's messages. If the message does not reach the receiver, communication has not taken place.  
Wallace and Szillagyi (1982:231) said just as the sender flitters the intended messages when he or she manipulates symbols, the receiver filters when he or she interprets (or decodes) the symbols that had been manipulated. To Koontz and Wellrich (1988:464) accurate communication can occur only when both the sender and the receiver attach the sense or at least similar meanings to the symbols that compose the message. Therefore communication is not complete unless it is understood in the mind of both sender and other receiver.

6. **Feedback:** This is the reaction of the receiver on a sender message. Feedback passes back to the sender through the communication process. It helps to determine how effective a communication process is. Bason (1980:305) submitted that communication involves a process in which one or more person transmits messages to one or more person efforts to interpret this message often return information to the sender.

#### ➤ **Elements of communication process**

Communication process as such must be considered a continuous and dynamic inter-action, both affecting and being affected by many variables.

##### **(1) Sender:**

The person who intends to convey the message with the intention of passing information and ideas to others is known as sender or communicator.

##### **(2) Ideas:**

This is the subject matter of the communication. This may be an opinion, attitude, feelings, views, orders, or suggestions.

##### **(3) Encoding:**

Since the subject matter of communication is theoretical and intangible, its further passing requires use of certain symbols such as words, actions or pictures etc. Conversion of subject matter into these symbols is the process of encoding.

##### **(4) Communication Channel:**

The person who is interested in communicating has to choose the channel for sending the required information, ideas etc. This information is transmitted to the receiver through certain channels which may be either formal or informal.

##### **(5) Receiver:**

Receiver is the person who receives the message or for whom the message is meant for. It is the receiver who tries to understand the message in the best possible manner in achieving the desired objectives.

##### **(6) Decoding:**

The person who receives the message or symbol from the communicator tries to convert the same in such a way so that he may extract its meaning to his complete understanding.

##### **(7) Feedback:**

Feedback is the process of ensuring that the receiver has received the message and understood in the same sense as sender meant it.

#### ➤ **Principles of communication**

There are formal and informal relationship that has been established within the framework of the organizing function provide a means of disseminating such information to organizational members for communication to be effective, certain principles need to be systematically followed as these;

1. **Principle of efficiency of communication:** communication is necessary for planning, organizing, directing and controlling all the organizations operational activities as a result, communication should be as effect as possible.
2. **Principles of integrity in communication:** The purpose of communication is to provide a time and accurate understanding of messages in order to coordinate effectively the firm's activities, the greater the integrity and consistency of written, oral and nonverbal

messages as well the moral behavior of the sender, the greater the acceptance of the message by the receiver.

3. **Principle of clarity in communication:** This is the responsibility of the sender to express messages in an understandable manner. The sender should know that modern business does not require verbosity in communication in consideration of the composition of the workforce, and as such be clear precise and concise when sending message as attention is paid especially to the receiver. If this principle as adhered to, it would in the small measure help to overcome barriers to effective communication such as badly expressed messages and fault translation.
4. **Principle of effect listening:** In this aspect, communication cannot take place unless the message received and understand.
5. **Principles of information communication:** The formal communication channels may be slow as a result, the most effective communication may be specially the transmission concept of encodes (sending) and decode (receiving) in terms of both their functional roles and contribution the advancement of a given level of performance are the distribution characteristics of information theory by taking advantage of the statistical nature and to use electrical signals to transmit messages over a given channel with a minimum error. Cybernetics is used in a very broad sense to incorporated the general science of control over complex systems information and communication.

### ➤ 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.

##### a. 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.

##### b. 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.

### 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.

### Merits and Demerits of communication

#### ➤ Merits of communication

1. Successful completion of works
2. Cost minimization
3. Help to plan
4. Share ideas, suggestions and complaints
5. Democratic management
6. Implement decisions in time

#### ➤ Demerits of communication

1. Poor planning
2. Poorly worded messages
3. Semantic problems
4. Status differences between sender and receiver

5. Disadvantages of Communication
6. Perceptual differences between sender receivers
7. Environmental factors
8. Unqualified assumptions
9. Loss by transmission and poor retention

#### ➤ **Barriers of communication**

Barriers to effect communication are factors that impede, distort or cause a breakdown in the exchange of idea and feelings. Many of these man made barriers can be identified with the organization. Some of the more common barriers include:

- i. Language use of words with different meaning use of Jargon by the sender.
- ii. Use of skill in listening
- iii. Use of influence or authority to stop feedback
- iv. Negative feelings, prejudices and other barriers resulting from divergence between senders and listeners' interests like status and position.
- v. Filtering that is faulty transmission of messages along the line, addition and subtraction form original message to suit one's convenient.
- vi. Stereo typing: This refers as when an individual has perceived idea about other people and refused to discriminate between individual behavior and his relationship with other people, he tends to be stereotyping.  
Onwuchekwe (1996) refers to this as a halo effect. Megginson, Mosley and Pacton (1992:405) stereotyping is the perception tendency to structure and the world into a predicted patter.

#### ➤ **Effective communication**

Effective communication is a process of exchanging ideas, thoughts, knowledge and information such that the purpose or intention is fulfilled in the best possible manner. In simple words, it is nothing but the presentation of views by the sender in a way best understood by the receiver.

#### **Characteristics of effective communication**

- **Clear Message:** The message which the sender wants to convey must be simple, easy to understand and systematically framed to retain its meaningfulness.
- **Correct Message:** The information communicated must not be vague or false in any sense; it must be free from errors and grammatical mistakes.
- **Complete Message:** Communication is the base for decision making. If the information is incomplete, it may lead to wrong decisions.
- **Precise Message:** The message sent must be short and concise to facilitate straightforward interpretation and take the desired steps.
- **Reliability:** The sender must be sure from his end that whatever he is conveying is right by his knowledge. Even the receiver must have trust on the sender and can rely on the message sent.
- **Consideration of the Recipient:** The medium of communication and other physical settings must be planned, keeping in mind the attitude, language, knowledge, education level and position of the receiver.
- **Sender's Courtesy:** The message so drafted must reflect the sender's courtesy, humbleness and respect towards the receiver.

### ➤ **Effective communication skills**

- **Observance:** A person must possess sharp observing skills to gain more and more knowledge and information.
- **Clarity and Brevity:** The message must be drafted in simple words, and it should be clear and precise to create the desired impact over the receiver.
- **Listening and Understanding:** The most crucial skill in a person is he must be a good, alert and patient listener. He must be able to understand and interpret the message well.
- **Emotional Intelligence:** A person must be emotionally aware and the ability to influence others from within.
- **Self-Efficacy:** Also, he/she must have faith in himself and his capabilities to achieve the objectives of communication.
- **Self-Confidence:** Being one of the essential communication skills, confidence enhances the worthiness of the message being delivered.
- **Respectfulness:** Delivering a message with courtesy and respecting the values, beliefs, opinions and ideas of the receiver is the essence of effective communication.
- **Non-Verbal Communication:** To connect with the receiver in a better way, the sender must involve the non-verbal means communication too. These include gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, postures, etc.
- **Selection of the Right Medium:** Choice of the correct medium for communication is also a skill. It is necessary to select an appropriate medium according to the situation, priority of the message, the receiver's point of view, etc.
- **Providing Feedback:** Effective communication is always a two-way process. A person must take as well as give feedback to bring forward the other person's perspective too.