

Need for Communication:

Communication is a Latin word which means 'to share'. It is the sharing of information between different individuals. It includes the sharing of ideas, concepts, imaginations, behaviours and written content. 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.

Communication Skills

A deep understanding of the process of communication and communication skills is essential. It is vital to the success of any individual in any business. Here we shall see some of the many types of communication.

Communication styles change from person to person. During the process of communication, a person may invoke several channels or modes or methods to convey a message. But, the process of communication doesn't only depend on the source producing or relaying information.

It also equally depends on the communication method and the manner in which the receiver understands the message.

The Broad Categories of Communication

On the basis of the communication channels, types of communications are:

- Verbal
- Non-Verbal
- Visual
- Formal and Informal

This involves the use of language and words for the purpose of passing on the intended message. In general terms, Verbal Communication means communication in the form of spoken words only. But, in the context of types of communication, verbal communication can be in the spoken or the written form. Thus, the verbal form may be oral or written as discussed below.

Written Communication:

This kind of communication involves any kind of exchange of information in the written form. For example, e-mails, texts, letters, reports, SMS, posts on social media platforms, documents, handbooks, posters, flyers, etc.

Oral Communication: This is the communication which employs the spoken word, either direct or indirect as a communication channel. This verbal communication could be made on a channel that passes information in only one form i.e. sound.

You could converse either face to face, or over the phone, or via voice notes or chat rooms, etc. It all comes under the oral communication. This form of communication is an effective form.

Non-Verbal Communication

In this type of communication, messages are relayed without the transmission of words. The messages here are wordless messages. This form of communication mainly aids verbal communication. It supplements it with gestures, body language, symbols, and expressions.

Through these, one may communicate one's mood, or opinion or even show a reaction to the messages that are relaying. One's non-verbal actions often set the tone for the dialogue. Some of the modes of non-verbal communication are:

Physical Non-verbal Communication

This is the sum total of the physically observable. For instance, hand gestures, body language, facial expressions, the tone of one's voice, posture, stance, touch, gaze, and others. Several researchers have revealed that physical nonverbal communication constitutes about 55% of our daily communications.

Paralanguage

This is the art of reading between the lines. The main kind of such communication is done with the tone of one's voice. This kind of communication amounts to almost 38% of every day. Along with the tone of voice, the style of speaking, voice quality, stress, emotions, or intonation serves the purpose of communication. And, these aspects are not verbal.

Aesthetic Communication

Art is an important means of communication. Through the paintings or other forms of art, an artist can convey the strongest messages. Several times in the history of the world, art has been used as an effective form of nonverbal communication.

Appearance

The first impression sets the tone. People will react to your appearance and this is a fact of life. Like clothes, the color of the fabrics, etc. all determine the reaction of your audience.

Visual Communication

This is communication through visual aids like drawings, placards, presentations, and illustrations, etc. One of the industries which most prominently uses **Visual communication** is the medical industry. New medicines which come into the market have to be shown to doctors and the advantages have to be explained. At such times, the medical representatives carry informative pamphlets which are shown to the doctors and dropped with the doctors.

These informative pamphlets have all the information about the medicine so that doctors can feel confident in suggesting the medicine to their patients. Similarly, many different industries are using visual communication to help interaction with their customers so that they can communicate their ideas better. Explainer videos as a concept is rising and is becoming as one of the best types of communication observed on websites.

There are many elements in visual communication that can be used by marketers or companies.

- Colors (such as brand colors)
- Design (logo and brand design)
- Advertising
- Animations
- Illustrations
- Typography
- Presentations
- Video resume's

In person to person communication too visual communication plays a role. Consider the diagrams made by teachers on blackboards when explaining a concept to a class of students. Or we can also take the example of graphs made in powerpoints by managers when doing a power point presentation to a team of executives or seniors.

Formal & Informal Communication

Formal communication is of following types:

Vertical: The information or data flows up and down the organizational structure.

Horizontal: This is the communication between two similar levels of the organization.

Diagonal: This is the communication across the cross-functional levels of employees from various departments of the organization.

The other form is the informal or casual communication which is the general communication between random people of the organizations.

Definition of Intrapersonal Communication:

The communication with oneself is intrapersonal communication. It involves thinking, analysing, interpreting, assessing, contemplating, feeling, etc. It is to reflect the individual self, with a view to clarifying something.

It is an activity that takes place in our mind; wherein a person is involved in a conversation with himself/herself, commonly known as 'self-talk' or 'inner speech'. The activity can be a monologue or internal dialogue, i.e. when you imagine a conversation, in your mind with the absent other. So, it is quite obvious that the sender and receiver are the same person.

Internal discourse, Solo-vocal communication and Solo written communication are the three levels of intrapersonal communication. The three aspects that govern the intrapersonal communication are:

Self-Concept:

Self-concept ascertains the way an individual takes himself/herself, oriented towards others. The three factors in self-concept are:

Belief

Value

Attitude

Perception: It is what the mind receives and grasp from the outside world.

Expectation: An individual's future-oriented projection that something might happen.

Definition of Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal Communication is the one to one communication between two or more persons, wherein exchange of ideas, information or messages takes place through a channel. It can be a face to face communication between parties, communication over mail, telephone and the like.

In Interpersonal Communication, the way something is said is as important as what is being said. So, here, the tone of voice, body language, gestures, facial expressions, have a great impact on the recipient. The features of interpersonal communication are as under:

Inescapable: Whenever we try not to say anything to anyone at all, it says something about our mood, attitude or nature, i.e. not by words but through the non-verbal signals.

Irreversible or Unrepeatable:

Once something is being said, it cannot be taken back, so neither it is reversible nor repeatable.

Complex:

Due to some variables involved in communication, it is a complex process. The words used in the process of communication may not have the same meaning for both sender and receiver, and this complicates the process.

Contextual: Context plays a significant role in the communication process, as in there is psychological, environmental, situational and relational context.

Interdepartmental communication:

Interdepartmental communication is communication between a business's departments. Departments might need to talk about shared projects, new promotions, changes in goods or services, sales projections, or anything else that might affect multiple departments. Interdepartmental communication can be as simple as a departmental email update or a more complex meeting about a shared project.

Communication between departments is sometimes called cross-departmental communication.

Intra-organizational communication means communication within the organization—for example, between different teams, or between levels in the hierarchy.

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Elements of Communication:

Communications is a continuous process which mainly involves three elements viz. sender, message, and receiver. The elements involved in the communication process are explained below in detail:

1. Sender

The sender or the communicator generates the message and conveys it to the receiver. He is the source and the one who starts the communication

2. Message

It is the idea, information, view, fact, feeling, etc. that is generated by the sender and is then intended to be communicated further.

3. Encoding

The message generated by the sender is encoded symbolically such as in the form of words, pictures, gestures, etc. before it is being conveyed.

4. Media

It is the manner in which the encoded message is transmitted. The message may be transmitted orally or in writing. The medium of communication includes telephone, internet, post, fax, e-mail, etc. The choice of medium is decided by the sender.

5. Decoding

It is the process of converting the symbols encoded by the sender. After decoding the message is received by the receiver.

6. Receiver

He is the person who is last in the chain and for whom the message was sent by the sender. Once the receiver receives the message and understands it in proper perspective and acts according to the message, only then the purpose of communication is successful.

7. Feedback

Once the receiver confirms to the sender that he has received the message and understood it, the process of communication is complete.

Barriers to Effective Communication:

The process of communication has multiple barriers. The intended communicate will often be disturbed and distorted leading to a condition of misunderstanding and failure of communication. The Barriers to effective communication could be of many types like linguistic, psychological, emotional, physical, and cultural etc.

Linguistic Barriers:

The language barrier is one of the main barriers that limit effective communication. Language is the most commonly employed tool of communication. The fact that each major region has its own language is one of the Barriers to effective communication. Sometimes even a thick dialect may render the communication ineffective.

As per some estimates, the dialects of every two regions changes within a few kilometers. Even in the same workplace, different employees will have different linguistic skills. As a result, the communication channels that span across the organization would be affected by this.

Thus keeping this barrier in mind, different considerations have to be made for different employees. Some of them are very proficient in a certain language and others will be ok with these languages.

Psychological Barriers:

There are various mental and psychological issues that may be barriers to effective communication. Some people have stage fear, speech disorders, phobia, depression etc. All of these conditions are very difficult to manage sometimes and will most certainly limit the ease of communication.

Emotional Barriers:

The emotional IQ of a person determines the ease and comfort with which they can communicate. A person who is emotionally mature will be able to communicate effectively. On the other hand, people who let their emotions take over will face certain difficulties.

A perfect mixture of emotions and facts is necessary for effective communication. Emotions like anger, frustration, humour, can blur the decision-making capacities of a person and thus limit the effectiveness of their communication.

Cultural Barriers of Communication:

As the world is getting more and more globalized, any large office may have people from several parts of the world. Different cultures have a different meaning for several basic values of society. Dressing, Religions or lack of them, food, drinks, pets, and the general behaviour will change drastically from one culture to another.

Hence it is a must that we must take these different cultures into account while communication. This is what we call being culturally appropriate. In many multinational companies, special courses are offered at the orientation stages that let people know about other cultures and how to be courteous and tolerant of others.

Organizational Structure Barriers:

As we saw there are many methods of communication at an organizational level. Each of these methods has its own problems and constraints that may become barriers to effective communication. Most of these barriers arise because of misinformation or lack of appropriate transparency available to the employees.

Attitude Barriers:

Certain people like to be left alone. They are the introverts or just people who are not very social. Others like to be social or sometimes extra clingy! Both these cases could become a barrier to communication. Some people have attitude issues, like huge ego and inconsiderate behaviours. These employees can cause severe strains in the communication channels that they are present in. Certain personality traits like shyness, anger, social anxiety may be removable through courses and proper training. However, problems like egocentric behaviour and selfishness may not be correctable.

Perception Barriers:

Different people perceive the same things differently. This is a fact which we must consider during the communication process. Knowledge of the perception levels of the audience is crucial to effective communication. All the messages or communicate must be easy and clear. There shouldn't be any room for a diversified interpretational set.

Physiological Barriers:

Certain disorders or diseases or other limitations could also prevent effective communication between the various channels of an organization. The shrillness of voice, dyslexia, etc are some examples of physiological barriers to effective communication. However, these are not crucial because they can easily be compensated and removed.

Technological Barriers & Socio-religious Barriers:

Other barriers include the technological barriers. The technology is developing fast and as a result, it becomes difficult to keep up with the newest developments. Hence sometimes the technological advance may become a barrier. In addition to this, the cost of technology is sometimes very high.

Most of the organizations will not be able to afford a decent tech for the purpose of communication. Hence, this becomes a very crucial barrier. Other barriers are socio-religious barriers. In a patriarchal society, a woman or a transgender may face many difficulties and barriers while communicating.

The 7 C's of Communication:

Credibility: Communication starts with a climate of belief. This climate is built by performance on the part of the communicator. The performance reflects an earnest desire to serve the receiver. The receiver must have confidence in the sender. He must have a high regard for source's competence on the subject.

Context: The context must confirm, not contradict the message. It must provide for participation and playback.

Content: The content determines the audience. Hence the message must have meaning for the receiver and must be compatible with his value system. It must have relevance for him.

Clarity: The message must put in simple terms. Words must mean the same thing to the receiver as they do to the sender. Complex issues must be converted into theme slogans which have simplicity and clarity. The farther a message have to travel, the simpler a message should be.

Continuity and Consistency: Communication is an unending process. It requires repetition to achieve penetration. The story must be consistent.

Channels: Only the established channels of communication should be used- channels that the receiver uses and respects, creating new one is difficult. Different channels have different effects and serve effectively in different stages of diffusion process.

Capability of audience: Communication must take into account the capability of audience. Communication are most effective when they require the least effort on the part of the recipient. This includes the part of the availability, habit reading ability and receiver's knowledge.

Mass Communication is a medium of dispersing information to a large number of people. The term is not limited to only journalism but spreads its branches to various other media fields including newsgathering and reporting, film direction and production, event management, public relations, advertising, corporate communication, and the list continues.

To understand mass communication one must first be aware of some of the key factors that distinguish it from other forms of communication. First, is the dependence on a media channel to convey a message to a large audience. Second, the audience tends to be distant, diverse, and varies in size depending on the medium and message. Third, mass communication is most often profit driven, and feedback is limited. Fourth, because of the impersonal nature of mass communication, participants are not equally present during the process.

Quite often, mass communication is confused with journalism. People mostly wonder about the difference between mass communication and journalism. In basic terms, journalism is like a subset of mass communication. Both the courses are different from each other in all respects. The term "mass communication" is not limited to journalism but it spreads its branches to various other media fields like news gathering and news reporting, event management, film direction and production, public relations, corporate communication, advertising, etc.

Functions of Mass Communication:

The four functions of mass communications are: surveillance, correlation, cultural transmission and entertainment. In many ways, the four functions of mass communication are still relevant and transferable to contemporary media.

Surveillance of the Environment

Mass communication exists to observe and inform. Mass media keeps citizens informed of news and events. In times of crisis, mass media announcements offer warnings and instructions.

For example, when natural disasters occur, such as hurricanes, blizzards and tsunamis, traditional and social media outlets are the key communication tools to relay information about the path of an impending storm or to inform people about school and business closures, and how to seek

shelters and find evacuation routes. Media is also used as tools of government authorities to protect citizens with important updates.

The Correlation Function

Traditional news outlets once were the only arbiters of what was selected as newsworthy and of how broadcasters and journalists interpreted information. Alternatively, newspapers tapped experts in the field. Although publishers and news stations may have had their biases, most organizations maintained the old, hard-formed principles of journalism.

This function relates to how the media's selection of certain news and its interpretation affects how society understands and responds to it. People's attitudes towards political issues, events, public policy, etc. are influenced to an extent by how the media frames and presents the issue in their discussions and presentations.

Cultural Transmission: This refers to the ability of the media to teach the various norms, rules and values that exist in a society and ensure its transfer from one generation to the next. Television programmes by and large reflect the society in which they are broadcast and promote the understanding of a society's cultural heritage. Children's television programmes are designed to showcase good behaviors and moral standards which children can learn by watching.

Entertainment:

This popular function of the mass media refers to the ability of the media to help relax people and create a means of escape from the stress of everyday life. The entertainment function of mass media has both positive and negative effects. The low quality of content is often criticized but the other benefits like helping people experience new events, stimulating emotions and helping people pass their leisure time show how important this function is.

Purpose of using mass communication is that mass communication is very extensive and serves public messages quickly to a large number of people.

1. Inform People

The most fundamental objective of mass communication is to provide information to mass people.

Information on mass communication may be related to education, weather, sports, products and services, public holidays, festivals, recreation, and entertainment.

2. Build Public Opinion

Another important objective of mass communication is to create public opinion on any national or international issue.

Mass media attempts to create public opinion by providing their audiences with a realistic picture of the world, activities of the leaders, governmental policies, etc. Mass media also tries to build public opinion through special articles, editorials, and commentaries.

3. Persuade

Mass communication aims at persuading people to bring a change in their beliefs, opinions, attitudes, and thinking on several issues like smoking, voting, religious convictions, donation, dowry culture, etc.

Moreover, business enterprises design various advertisements to persuade potential customers.

4. Circulate Government Policies

Another objective of mass communication is to announce and circulate government programs and policies. Mass media can bring such policies to the public notice very quickly.

5. Disseminate Health and Education Programs

The government takes various health and educational programmes like vaccination, sanitation, birth control, open education, mass education, etc.

These health and education programs are disseminated and implemented through mass media like radio, television, films, newspapers, etc.

6. Provide Pleasure and Entertainment

The mass media are wonderful sources of pleasure and amusement. Almost all mass media have an entertainment component. Television and radio arrange various programs for pleasure and amusement of mass people.

Newspapers and magazines publish articles on literary and cultural events, sports, stories, etc. that also provide entertainment to the readers.

7. Establish Social Contact and Linkage

Mass communication also tries to establish and maintain social contact and linkage among various races, tribes, or communities. Mass media create social contact and linkage by giving messages of shared knowledge and experience.

8. Help in Facing Disaster and Calamity

Mass communication also aims at creating public awareness to face natural and man-made disasters like floods, earthquakes, war, riots, etc. with due courage and energy.

Through mass media, necessary instructions, strategies, & programs are circulated so that people can take proactive preparation.

9. Highlight Diplomatic Role

In this uni-global world, every country wants to highlight its diplomatic role in global peacekeeping and development activities. Such a diplomatic role can conveniently be disseminated and highlighted through mass media.

10. Promote Political Ideologies

Political parties rely on mass media to promote their ideologies, plans, programs, and manifestos. With the help of mass media, they try to create public opinion in their favor.