

❖ Introduction: -

- Communication is as old as human civilization. The common need for protection led to group life. As group life developed, forms of communication also developed. Communication was in the forms of codes, indications, signals, and expressions.
- Gradually with the increase in population, division of labor, exchange economy, etc., necessitated the development of language. In the present-day world, communication is a vital need of every step in any industrial or commercial activity.
- The term communication has been derived from the Latin word, 'communicare', which means "to share." Communication means, to tell, show, spread information, and inform. The term communication is used to signify the process of transferring ideas or receiving them by any means such as word of mouth, telephone, telegram, letter, message, etc. Thus, communication stands for sharing of information, imparting or conveying ideas and knowledge.

❖ Meaning

The term communication refers to the sharing of ideas in common. In other words, it is the transmission and interaction of facts, ideas, opinions, feelings, or attitudes. Communication is the essence of management. The basic function of management (planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling) cannot be performed well without effective communication.

In short, Communication is the process of passing ideas, views, facts, information, and understanding from one person to another. This process is necessary for making the subordinates understand what the management expects from them.

Communication cannot take place without two parties – the receiver and the sender. The information which is sent by the sender must be understandable to the receiver.

❖ Definition:

Following are some of the important definitions of communication:

- Communication may be defined as "the transfer of information and understanding from one person to another."
- According to Koontz and O'Donnel, Communication may be understood "as the exchange of information at least between two persons to create an understanding in the mind of the other, whether or not it gives rise to conflict."
- Newman and Summer- "Communication is an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions or emotions by two or more persons."
- 'Communication is the sum of all things a person does when he wants to create an understanding in the mind of another. – Louis A. Allen
- 'It is the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another. It is essentially a bridge of meaning between people. By using this bridge of meaning, a person can safely cross the river of misunderstanding that separates all the people'. – Keith Davis

Objectives / Functions of Business Communication

(i) To exchange information: The main objective of business communication is to exchange information with the internal and external parties. Internal communication occurs within the organization through orders, instructions, suggestions, opinions, etc. Externally, an organization communicates with investors, customers, suppliers, competitors, government agencies, etc.

(ii) To develop a plan: Plan is the blueprint of future courses of action. The plan must be formulated for attaining organizational goals. In order to develop a plan, management requires information. In this regard, the objective of communication is to supply the required information so the concerned managers.

(iii) To implement a plan: Once a plan is prepared, it is to be implemented. Implementation of a plan requires timely communication with the concerned parties. Thus, communication aims at transmitting a plan throughout the organization for its successful implementation.

(iv) To facilitate policy formulation: Policies are the guidelines for performing organizational activities. Policies are also termed as standing decisions to recurring problems. Every organization needs to develop a set of policies to guide its operations. Preparing policies also require information from various sources. Therefore, the objective of communication is to collect necessary information for policy formulation.

(v) To achieve an organizational goal: Collective efforts of both managers and workers are essential for achieving organizational goals. Communication coordinates and synchronizes the efforts of employees at various levels to achieve the stated goals of an organization.

(vi) To organize resources: Various kinds of resources are available in the organization such as human resources, material resources, financial resources and so on. Organizing these resources in an effective and efficient way is a key challenge to the managers. Communication is the vehicle to overcome this challenge.

(vii) To coordinate: Information is a basic management function. It involves linking the various functional departments of large organizations. Without proper and timely coordination, the achievement of organizational goals is impossible. Therefore, the objective of communication is to coordinate the functions of various departments for the easy attainment of organizational goals.

(viii) To direct the subordinates: The job of a manager is to get the things done by others. In order to get the things done, management needs to lead, direct, and control the employees. The performance of these managerial functions depends on effective communication with subordinates.

(ix) To motivate employees: A pre-requisite of employees' motivation is the satisfaction of their financial and non-financial needs. Financial needs are fulfilled through monetary returns. However, in order to satisfy non-financial needs, management must communicate with employees on a regular basis both formally and informally.

(x) To create consciousness: Employees of an organization must be conscious regarding their duties and responsibilities. Communication supplies necessary information and makes them conscious about their duties and responsibilities.

(xi) To increase efficiency: In order to increase employee efficiency, they should be provided with the necessary information and guidelines. Communication supplies such information and guidelines for them.

(xii) To bring dynamism: Organizations should be dynamic to cope with the internal and external changes. Bringing dynamism requires finding new and better ways of doing things. For this purpose, communication helps to seek new ideas and suggestions from the internal and external parties.

The Importance of Business Communication

Communication is a very important aspect of our daily lives. Without it, there would be no civilized society. This activity is unavoidable because every human being has to live in a community with others and interact with them. Everything we know about the world and the people closest to us has been learned through communication, without which we would be completely lost and in the dark.

Business communication is the bridge that connects people, organizations and countries, and people. At every level, from job seekers to politicians, effective business communication can make a huge difference in our professional lives and in achieving our goals, and business communication can also be incredibly useful in your daily personal life, more than you might think.

Efficient external and internal business communication in an organization is one of the most important factors for smooth operations. Every business activity involves more than half a dozen people, namely the employees, the management, customer service, and stakeholders involved. The entire process is like a chain in which each member is assigned its own set of tasks. It must function properly so that no one is inconvenienced and the smooth flow of work is not disrupted, especially because of poor communication.

1. Effective Corporate Communication Improves Our Business Relations.

In today's fast-paced world, business communication is more important than ever. Companies need to communicate effectively with their employees, customers, and partners to stay ahead of the competition. When we communicate in the business world, we need to be able to adapt to get things done because humans are always the final decision-makers. In business, relationships are everything.

2. Excellent for Leadership and Professional Development

It's obvious that a problem in any area of the business can have a negative impact on the entire company. When a company is faced with problems and can not solve them properly, they need good internal written and verbal communication with each other so they can find a solution as quickly as possible and avoid damaging their business reputation.

If leaders do not have proper communication with each other, it can lead to conflicts among themselves that can have a negative impact its employee engagement, productivity, and consequently on the business organization.

When it comes to a company's customer service, we often feel that employee morale leaves something to be desired because they tend to communicate poorly, and that's usually because their managers use poor communication themselves.

An effective business communication strategy is very important for employee engagement. Good internal communication means each employee feels valued and understands the company's vision and mission because their leader is an effective communicator. When communication is good at the business administration level, then half the work is already done.

3. Important for Team Building

Creating an environment where employees feel comfortable expressing their ideas and opinions is essential to effective communication in the workplace. When there is trust between people, they tend to express their opinions freely and openly without fear of being ridiculed or humiliated by their colleagues. They are more willing to share their thoughts if they know that what they say will not be taken personally or used against them later.

When people work well together, they become more productive and develop a good rapport with each other. Good workplace communication helps build trust between employees, which is essential to creating a positive work environment.

4. Strengthens the Power of Persuasion

Strong communication skills in the business help you present your ideas and proposals convincingly when you want to convince others of your point of view.

Persuasion is important when asking for a raise or promotion, when talking to senior executives who might offer you new assignments or other opportunities within the company, or when trying to convince a customer to buy a product or service.

5. Prevents Misunderstandings and Conflicts.

We can not always control our environment, but we can control how we respond to it. When misunderstandings and conflicts arise, some effective communication skills can be best practices in a business organization.

For example, you learn how to:

Treat Everyone With Respect

You may not agree with everyone you meet, but you need to give them the benefit of the doubt and assume they are good people who have something meaningful to say. It's important to learn that different people approach problems in different ways – directly or indirectly, cooperatively or competitively – and you'll do best if you understand and respect your counterpart's communication style.

Listen First, Then Speak

In most situations, listening is more important than talking, because you can not solve a problem if you do not understand it. When you learn what others are saying, you can identify their needs, determine your response, and build consensus among all parties.

Ask the Right Questions at the Right Time

Too many leaders rely on one-way conversations that put all the power in their hands. Effective communication requires many questions – open-ended questions about others' thoughts and feelings, closed-ended questions about facts and details, reflective questions to help others clarify their thoughts, and even rhetorical questions to encourage deeper thinking and stimulate participation from everyone at the table.

6. Learn About Different Types of Communication Styles and Tools

In corporate communication, there is formal or informal communication, verbal and oral communication, visual communication, and a wide variety of communication styles that you would never hear of unless you take a corporate communication training course, e.g. have you heard of downward communication, upward communication, grapevine communication, organizational communication? You will be amazed at how much you can learn with just one communication style!

Communication tools are also an important part of learning. Nowadays, one can use various tools for written communication and verbal communication.

One can talk face to face with an employee or customer, by phone, webcam, email, letter writing, social media, and many others.

Corporate communication training in business communication skills is essential for the communication strategy of a business organization.

Whether a large or small business, an intelligent organization understands that poor communication and lack of mutual understanding between employees is not good for the organization. Therefore, offering professional development training in written and oral communication for leaders and employees to gain proper communication skills can have a positive impact on employee morale, industrial relation, and customer satisfaction.

7. Improves Organizational Skills

Incorporate communication, organization is the key to success. It means paying attention to details, being well prepared, and using your time wisely. Business should be conducted in a timely manner, whether in oral or written communication. It means paying attention to details, being well prepared, managing your time wisely, and always planning ahead. By using technology to prepare and organize meetings, you are constantly learning how to be organized and conduct business communication at the same time.

8. Good Business Communication Is Good for Business Networking

Good business communication is essential to your networking efforts. If you have not yet developed your professional communication skills, here are some tips and techniques to help you get started:

Be Prepared

Before you set out on a networking adventure, know what you want to say to people. Prepare a few questions to ask everyone to get the conversation started. Also, make sure you have a good business card with you so everyone you meet can remember who you are and how to contact you later.

Make Contacts

The goal of networking is to make contacts with people you can work with in the future and build relationships based on common interests or experiences. When building these relationships, make sure that they are mutual and that both parties get something out of it. Then, when one of your contacts introduces another to one of your contacts, everyone involved will benefit, and your reputation as a networker who is good to work with will be solidified.

9. Increases Productivity

An effective communicator in business is a good listener. If you really listen during a meeting, you can increase your productivity at work.

By listening to others during a meeting instead of thinking about what you are going to say next, you can stay on top of the conversation and make sure everyone is on the same page – an important aspect of being productive at work. Plus, by listening in sessions, you are using two hemispheres of your brain at the same time, which can improve your thought processes when problem-solving at work. This can lead to better knowledge retention and even innovation.

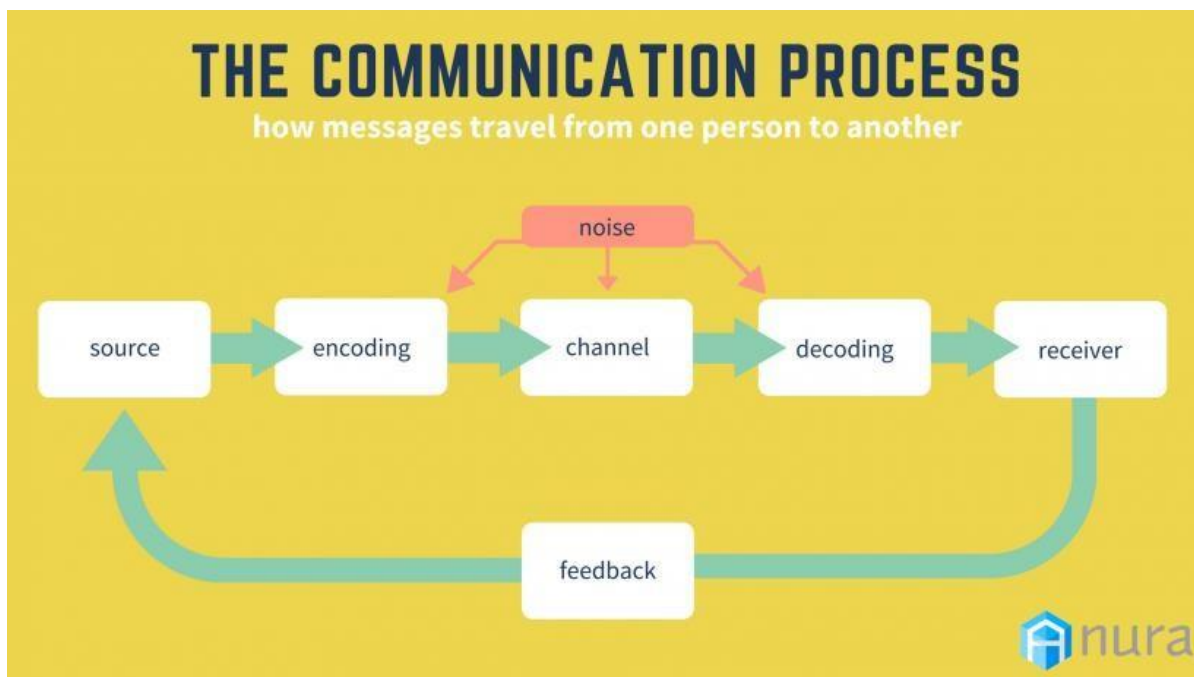
10. Public Relations Starts With Basic Corporate Communications

Proper communication is an essential part of doing business, whether it's with customers, employees, suppliers, or outside agencies. It's important to remember that effective external business communication

skills are also important when working with the media. Most companies make the mistake of thinking that mass communication and social media go hand in hand, but they are two completely different things.

□ Elements of Communication Process:

The communication is a dynamic process that begins with the conceptualizing of ideas by the sender who then transmits the message through a channel to the receiver, who in turn gives the feedback in the form of some message or signal within the given time frame. Thus, there are Seven major elements of communication process:



The communication process has the following components:

1. **Sender or communicator** – Sender is an employee with ideas, intentions, information, and a purpose for communicating. He is the source or initiator of the communication. He has something with a meaning to communicate. Communication begins when a sender identifies the need to send a message based on certain reasons.
2. **Message** – The sender encodes meaning into a message that can be transmitted. The message represents the meaning, the source is trying to convey.
3. **Encoding** – The function of encoding is to provide a form in which ideas and purpose can be expressed as a message. The result of the encoding process is the message. Encoding involves translating the sender's intent or ideas into a systematic set of symbols or gestures.
4. **Channel or medium** – A medium serves as the **means of communication** whereas a channel refers to the **means of transmission** of a message between the sender and the receiver. A medium, which is an **abstraction**, can be oral, written, or non-verbal. Channel, on the other hand, is **concrete** and could be a letter, a report, a book, a memorandum, fax, an email, the television, the telephone, etc.
A sender conveys his/her message to the receiver by some medium (oral, written, or non-verbal) **over** some channel (electronic means or printed Media).
5. **Receiver** – The receiver is the individual whose senses perceive the sender's message. There

may be one or many receivers. If the message does not reach the receiver, communication is not completed.

6. **Decoding** – Decoding is the process by which the receiver interprets the message and translates it into meaningful information. Decoding is a two-step process – (a) the receiver must first perceive the message, and (b) the receiver must then interpret it. The decoding process is very much affected by some factors such as the receiver's need, status, experience, situational factors, etc.

7. **Communication noise** – In communication, noise can be thought of as those factors that disturb or distort the intended message. Noise may occur in each of the elements of communication. "Noise" hinders communication.

It includes the following factors:

(a) Factors that hinder the development of clear thought.

(b) Faulty encoding due to ambiguous symbols.

(c) Defects in the channel.

(d) Inattentive reception.

(e) Faulty decoding due to prejudices, wrong understanding, personal outlook, the wrong meaning of words and symbols.

Noise can result in miscommunication. Hence the important point is to realize all these possibilities of noise and to minimize them.

8. **Feedback** – A feedback provides a link or channel for the communicator to know the receiver's response and to determine whether the message has been received and has produced the intended change.

Feedback may come in many ways. In face-to-face communication, feedback comes through the facial expressions of the receiver. Some indirect means of feedback are such factors as declines in productivity, poor quality of production, lack of coordination, absenteeism, etc. Feedback may cause the sender to modify his future communication.

□ **BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION:**



The barrier of communication is such a part that you have to keep in mind during every communication. Even after taking care of every other detail during the conversation, some misunderstandings remain during communication. Therefore, we must keep in mind some communication barriers to eliminate misunderstandings.

Barriers during communication can be of many types such as linguistic barriers, physical barriers, Personal barriers, Gender barriers, Emotional barriers, Language Barriers, Status Barriers, Cultural Barriers, Organizational Barriers, Semantic Barriers, and Inattention Barriers and many more barriers.

1. **Physical Barriers:** It is also caused by barrier distance. Suppose that the person sending the message is far away from the recipient. And communication is happening between the two. The barrier arises due to him not being heard clearly because of far distance.
2. **Personal Barriers:** The personal factors of both sender and receiver may exert influence on effective communication. These factors include life experiences, emotions, attitudes, behavior that hinders the ability of a person to communicate.
3. **Gender barriers:** Gender barrier is also a type of barrier, such as male and female in an organization, people of both genders work. Societal stereotypes, assumed gender roles, and interpersonal differences can contribute to a communication gap between the gender and there is a rift between people due to gender. **For Example:** Women are focused on relationships and men are focused on tasks.
4. **Emotional Barriers:** The emotional barrier changes according to our mood. Emotional barriers are due to mental limitations created by one's own self. Emotional Barriers are the mental walls that keep you from openly communicating your thoughts and feeling to others.
5. **Language Barriers:** Language barriers are the most common communication barriers which cause misunderstandings and misinterpretations between people. Not using the words that other person understands makes the communication ineffective and prevents message from being conveyed.
6. **Status Barriers:** People often have difficulty navigating status differences when trying to inform or persuade others. To many, social status is an indicator of credibility and legitimacy, and this affects how seriously others take what one communicates. Status differences can create a bias against those with the perceived lower status.
7. **Cultural Barriers:** Past experiences, perception, and cultural background greatly affect the way people talk and behave. Culture plays an important role in shaping the style of communication. The culture in which individuals are socialized influences the way they communicate, and the way individuals communicate can change the culture.
8. **Organizational Barriers:** Inside the organization, there are many things inside which a communication barrier is created. Just like the policy of the organization, about the rule and regulation of the organization, about the status, the facility, there are many other things which cause a lot of barriers.
9. **Semantic Barriers:** Semantic barriers to communication are the symbolic obstacles that distort the sent message in some other way than intended, making the message difficult to understand. The meaning of words, signs and symbols might be different from one person to another and the same word might have hundreds of meanings.
10. **Inattention barriers:** Sometime the persons do not pay adequate attention to the message. They do not listen, the spoken words attentively. The communication has no impact on those who are unwilling to listen. Inattention arises due to lack of interest, over stimulation and time pressure.

□ OVERCOME BARRIERS OF COMMUNICATION

- **Eliminating differences in perception:** Seek clarity: if we are unclear about expectations, assumptions, preferences or beliefs of another person in an interaction, confusion may arise. The key to overcoming **perceptual barriers** is asking questions to gain a sense of clarity and ensure that you and the other person are on the same page.
- **Use of Simple Language:** Use of simple and clear words should be emphasized. Use of ambiguous words and jargons should be avoided.
- **Reduction and elimination of noise levels:** Noise is the main communication barrier which must be overcome on priority basis. It is essential to identify the source of noise and then eliminate that source.
- **Active Listening:** Listen attentively and carefully. There is a difference between “listening” and “hearing”. Active listening means hearing with proper understanding of the message that is heard. By asking questions the speaker can ensure whether his/her message is understood or not by the receiver in the same terms as intended by the speaker.
- **Emotional State:** During communication one should make effective use of body language. He/she should not show their emotions while communicating as the receiver might misinterpret the message being delivered. For example, if the conveyer of the message is in a bad mood then the receiver might think that the information being delivered is not good.
- **Simple Organizational Structure:** The organizational structure should not be complex. The number of hierarchical levels should be optimum. There should be an ideal span of control within the organization. Simpler the organizational structure, more effective will be the communication.
- **Avoid Information Overload:** The managers should know how to prioritize their work. They should not overload themselves with the work. They should spend quality time with their subordinates and should listen to their problems and feedbacks actively.
- **Give Constructive Feedback:** Avoid giving negative feedback. The contents of the feedback might be negative, but it should be delivered constructively. Constructive feedback will lead to effective communication between the superior and subordinate.
- **Proper Media Selection:** The managers should properly select the medium of communication. Simple messages should be conveyed orally, like: face to face interaction or meetings. Use of written means of communication should be encouraged for delivering complex messages. For significant messages reminders can be given by using written means of communication such as : Memos, Notices etc.
- **Flexibility in meeting the targets:** For effective communication in an organization the managers should ensure that the individuals are meeting their targets timely without skipping the formal channels of communication. There should not be much pressure on employees to meet their targets.

❖ ESSENTIALS FOR GOOD COMMUNICATION:

Effective communication is a part and parcel of any successful organization. A communication should be free from barriers so as to be effective. Communication is a two way process where the message sent by the sender should be interpreted in the same terms by the recipient. The characteristics of effective communication are as follows:

1. **Clarity of Purpose:** The message to be delivered must be clear in the mind of sender. The person to whom it is targeted and the aim of the message should be clear in the mind of the sender.
2. **Completeness:** The message delivered should not be incomplete. It should be supported by facts and observations. It should be well planned and organized. No assumptions should be made by the receiver.
3. **Conciseness:** The message should be concise. It should not include any unnecessary details. It should be short and complete.
4. **Feedback:** Whether the message sent by the sender is understood in same terms by the

receiver or not can be judged by the feedback received. The feedback should be timely and in person. It should be specific rather than general.

5. **Empathy:** Empathy with the listeners is essential for effective verbal communication. The speaker should step into the shoes of the listener and be sensitive to their needs and emotions. This way he can understand things from their perspective and make communication more effective.
6. **Modify the message according to the audience:** The information requirement by different people in the organization differs according to their needs. What is relevant to the middle level management might not be relevant to the top level of management. Use of jargons should be minimized because it might lead to misunderstanding and misinterpretations. The message should be modified according to the needs and requirements of the targeted audience.
7. **Multiple Channels of communication:** For effective communication multiple channels should be used as it increases the chances of clarity of message. The message is reinforced by using different channels and there are less chances of deformation of message.
8. **Make effective use of Grapevine (informal channel of communication):** The employees and managers should not always discourage grapevine. They should make effective use of grapevine. The managers can use grapevine to deliver formal messages and for identification of issues which are significant for the employees. The managers can get to know the problems faced by the employees and can work upon it.

***** Notes taken from Open Sources on Internet

