

Communication



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and characteristics of
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Communication: Meaning

The word 'communication' is derived from the Latin word 'communicare' and communis' which means 'to share'. The dictionary meaning of communication is to exchange information and feelings through words, expressions and writing. It means sharing of ideas and flowing of messages. Even, someone's gestures visible to eyes or sounds audible in ears can be called communication.

The communication process takes place when a sender sends message through a medium (such as sound, gesture, oral tone, speaking, writing, etc.) and the receiver responds to it by sending appropriate feedback.

Communication is the most integral part of human nature. Human beings need to communicate to deal with various situations of daily lives. They do so, by verbal communication such as speaking, writing and non-verbal communication such as facial expressions, body language, tone, etc. So, communication is a social process and comprises of countless ways in which persons keep in touch with each other. Communication is a two-way process and works well with feedback, this helps to confirm that the intended message has been successful.

❖ Definition of Communication –

Experts	Definition
Allen Louis	"Communication is the sum of all things, one person does when he wants to create understanding in the minds of another. It involves a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening and understanding."
Koontz and O'Donell	Communication has been defined "As the transfer of information from one person to another whether or not it elicits confidence."
George Terry	"Communication is an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions or emotions by two or more persons."


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Peter Little	"Communication is the process by which information is transmitted between individuals and/or organization so that an understanding response results".
W.H. New man and C.F. summer Jr.	"Communication is an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions or emotions by two or more persons".
Keith Davis	"Communication is the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another."
Carl Howland	"Communication is the process by which an individual transmits stimuli(উদ্দীপনা) to modify the behaviour of the other individuals."
Millet	"The underlying(অন্তর্নিহিত) aim of communication is the meeting of minds on common issue."
Oxford Dictionary	"Communication is transferring or conveying of meaning."
Berlo	"Communication as S-R Model or Sender-Receiver Model, where sender stands for stimulus and receiver stands for response. This was later extended to S-M-C-R Model that stands for Sender-Message-Channel-Receiver. It is the basic communication process. Thus, the above definitions make it clear that "the essence of communication is understanding information not transmitting information."
Little	'Human communication is the process by which information is passed between people by means of previously agreed symbols, in order to produce a desired response.'

□ **Process of Communication** – Communication is effective when a concise and clear message is delivered well, received successfully and understand fully. The process of communication has the following distinct components(স্বতন্ত্র উপাদান):

Communication begins with an impulse - উদ্দ্বুদ্ধ করা (or motivation) to pass on a message made up of bits of information. In the process of encoding, units of information are selected and organized for transmission. Input is the sum of experiences that build up in the human brain or computer.


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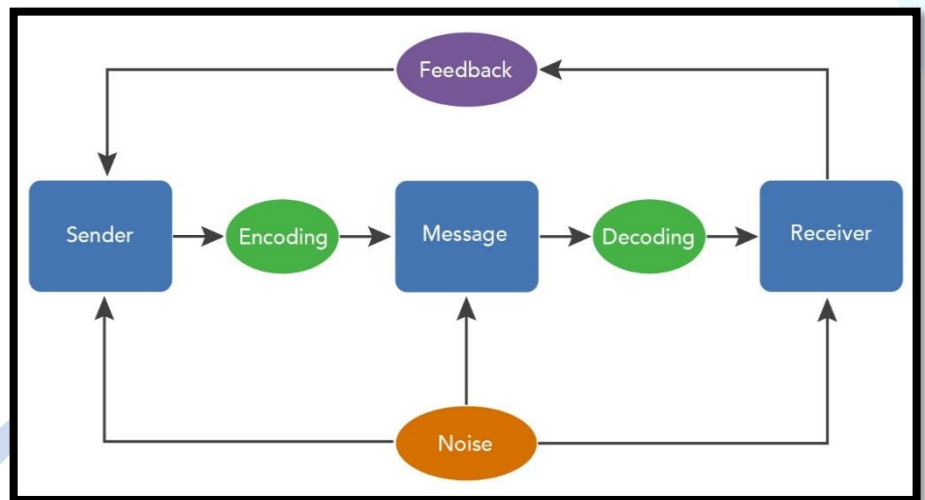
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The output is the encoded message transmitted by the information source (an individual person or group of people). The interpretation (ব্যাখ্যা) of the message is referred to as decoding.

Feedback is the response or message that the recipient (decoder) returns to the sender (encoder)

- ✓ The sender has an idea
- ✓ Sender encodes the idea
- ✓ The sender transmits the message through a medium
- ✓ The receiver gets the message
- ✓ The receiver decodes the message
- ✓ Receiver sends feedback



Elements of Communication

1. The Sender: The communication process begins with the sender, who is also called the communicator or source. The sender has some kind of information - a command, request, question, or idea- that he or she wants to present to others.

For that message to be received, the sender must first encode the message in a form that can be understood, such as by the use of a common language and then transmit it.

2. The Receiver: The person to whom a message is directed is called the receiver or the interpreter. To comprehend the information from the sender, the receiver must first be able to receive the sender's information and then decode or interpret it.

3. The Message: The message or content is the information that the sender wants to relay to the receiver. Additional sub-text can be conveyed through body language and tone of voice. Put all three elements together - sender, receiver, and message and you have the communication process at its most basic.



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4. The Medium: It is also called the channel; the medium is the means by which a message is transmitted. Text messages, for example, are transmitted through the medium of cell phones.

5. Feedback: The communication process reaches its final point when the message has been successfully transmitted, received and understood. The receiver, in turn, responds to the sender, indicating comprehension. Feedback may be direct, such as a written or verbal response, or it may take the form of an act or deed in response (indirect)

6. Noise: This can be any sort of interference that affects the message being sent, received or understood. It can be as literal as static over a phone line or radio.

7. Barriers: Barriers to the communication process can occur in the form of physical, psychological, mechanical and linguistics.

(a) Physical Barriers: The 'physical barriers' to the communication process includes environmental stress (A high temperature and humidity can contribute to distortions in the sending and receiving of messages), ignorance of the medium (The use of a medium with which the communicators are not familiar would turn the medium itself into a barrier), etc.

(b) Psychological Barriers: Each of us certain frame of reference' through which we look out at the world, at people, and events and situations. No two individuals possess exactly similar frames of reference, even if they are identical twins. So, this is another form of barrier in the communication process.

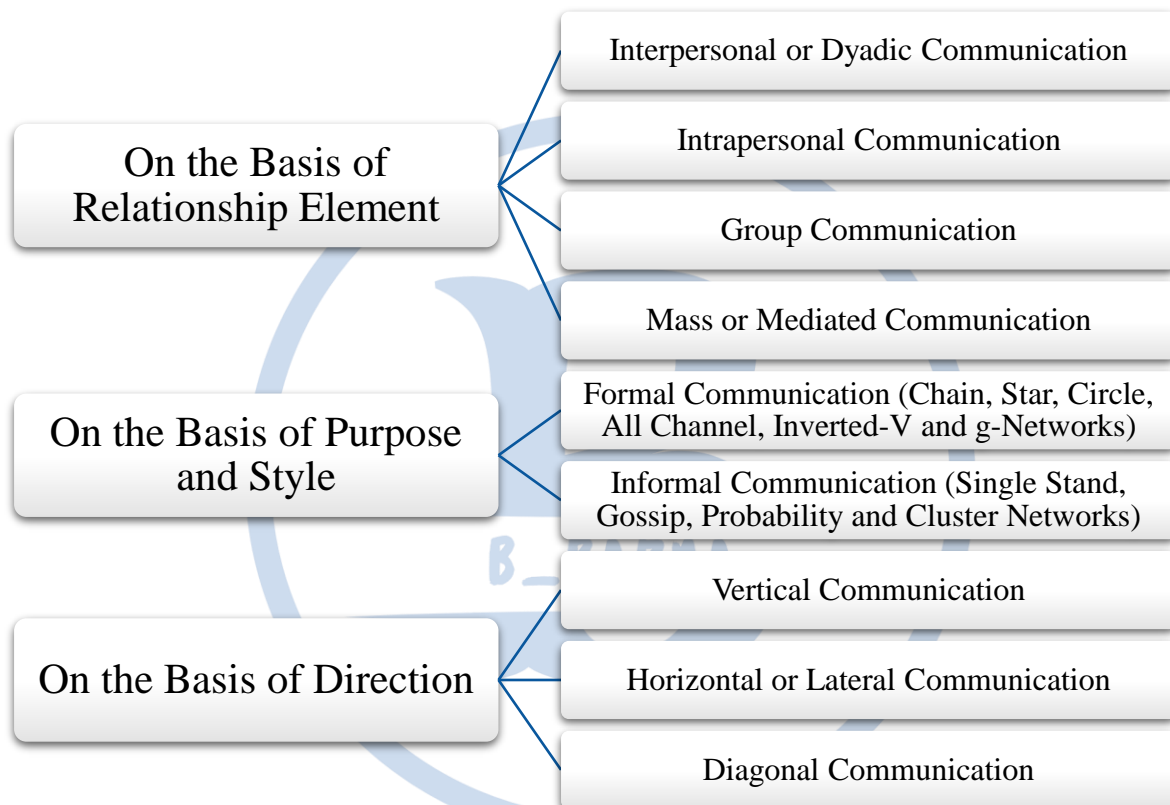
(c) Mechanical Barriers: Mechanical barriers are those raised by the channels employed for interpersonal, group or mass communication. This type of barrier includes any disturbance, which interferes with the fidelity of the physical transmission of the message.

(d) Linguistics and Cultural Barriers: Language is the expression of the thoughts and experiences of people in terms of their cultural environment. When the same language is made use of in a different culture, it takes an another colour, another meaning.

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Types of Communication

Communication involves a sender and a receiver of message to perform a function. The message is shared between two persons, where, either one reacts to the message or one does not react. It can be said that communication is social and cultural togetherness. Therefore, types of communication are divided on the basis of following aspects –



❖ On the Basis of Relationship Element-

☐ Interpersonal or Dyadic Communication

➔ It is the process by which people exchange information, feelings and meaning.

➔ It is universal form of face-to-face routine communication between two people, both the sending and receiving of messages.

➔ It is not just about what is actually said but how it is said.

➔ It is an ideal and effective communication, as one can get an immediate feedback. In this communication ethics are important.

➔ It may be formal or informal and can take place anywhere by means of words, sounds, facial expressions, gestures(অঙ্গভঙ্গি) and postures(ভঙ্গিমা).



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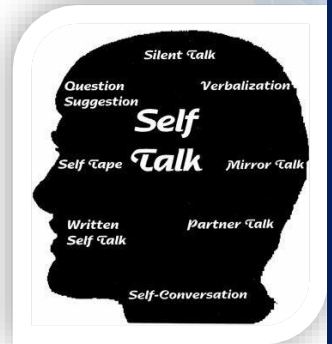
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- This type of communication depend on the mutual relationship between two partners in their status, communication, role and skills.

❑ Intrapersonal Communication

- It takes place within the individual.
- It is meant to reflect oneself to clarify something.
- It is self-orientation to know what is true or false, good or bad, etc.
- It might be descriptive or prescriptive(নির্দেশক).
- It is a learned idea of an individual.
- It is generally consistent with values, so that it is often emotional.



❑ Group Communication

- A group is a number of people with a common goal that interact with one another to attain the goal that recognize one another's existence, and see themselves as part of the group.
- An individual may belong to more than one group simultaneously(একসাথে).
- Since the large majority of us do not live alone, we consequently live-in groups - all kinds of groups.



- Groups may be of two types, 1. Primary Groups 2. Secondary Groups - namely primary and secondary.

- According to C. H. Cooley, primary groups are composed of individuals with intimate, personal relations and who interact face to face, figuratively and not literally. It is the degree of intimacy or social distance rather than physical distance that determines the primary group. The family is considered a primary group. The other examples of primary group are play groups, kinship groups, labour groups, clan, etc.

- Secondary groups are those in which individuals have formal, impersonal and status relations. All other groups which are not primary are considered secondary.

❑ Mass or Mediated Communication

- Communication with mass audience is called as mass communication.
- It is used as synonyms for convenience.
- The channel through which communication takes place is called as mass media. Any mechanical device that multiplies


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messages and takes it to a large number of people simultaneously is called mass communication.

- It is a special kind of communication in which the nature of the audience are considered.
- Its feedback is different from that of interpersonal communication.
- Radio, TV, newspapers, films, magazine, etc. are the examples of mass communication.

❖ On the Basis of Purpose and Style -

☐ Formal or official Communication

A formal communication is deliberately established by upper level of management for day-to-day transmission of official information.

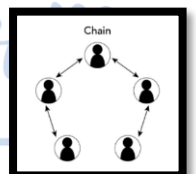
- It takes place in governmental departments, firms, NGOs, and other organisations for transmitting orders, instructions, plans, policies, etc.
- Flow of information takes place through some predefined channels.
- It is more reliable.
- As it has to flow through particular channel, so its pace is slow and there are delays.
- It is usually in the written form.
- It is time-consuming.
- It is affected due to systematic flow of information.
- Secrecy can be maintained in such communication.
- There can be distortions during the flow of information.
- It is usually horizontal or verbal or occasionally diagonal.



❖ There are six types of formal communication. -

1. Chain Networks -

In this communication, the information and message flow only up or down in hierarchical chain of command.



2. Star Networks

Under this communication, the information and message flow among the group members through a leader. In other words, the group members do not communicate with each other directly but rely on the leader.



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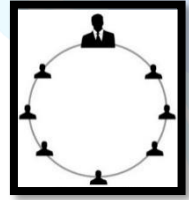
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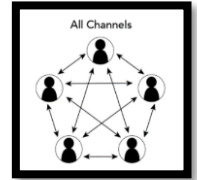
3. Circle Networks

In this communication, the group members interact with the adjoining member only.



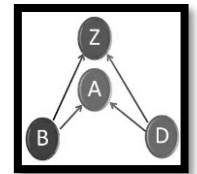
4. All Channel Networks

Under this communication, all members of a group actively communicate with each other freely. It is most decentralised type of formal communication.



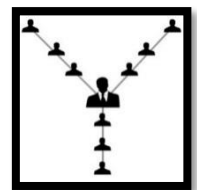
5. Inverted-V Networks

Under this communication, a subordinate communicates with his immediate superior as well as second superior.



6. γ-Networks

Under this communication, two subordinates through the hierarchical chain, communicate with the superior. In turn, the superior communicates with two superiors who are senior to him.



❖ Informal Communication

Informal communication is an unofficial channel and is result of the operations of social forces at the work place. It mainly addresses the social needs of the employees. It is also own as the grapevine and supplements formal communication.

- It takes place in interactions between friends, family members, etc.
- There is no requirement for flow of information through any particular channel.
- It is relatively less reliable.
- It is relatively faster.
- It is usually verbal or gestural.
- It saves time.
- It is efficient as it is faster.
- Secrecy is difficult to be maintained here.
- It can also lead to spread of rumours, as the source of origination of message is difficult to trace.
- It can be in any direction.

Keith Davis has investigated the phenomena of grapevine. There are four types of grapevine networks.


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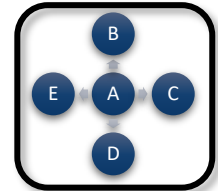
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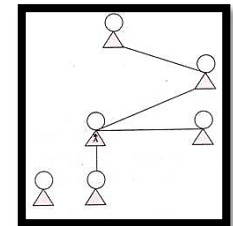
1. **Single Strand Network** - Under this communication, the information passes from one to one, that is one member communicates to another member who in turn communicates to another member and so on.



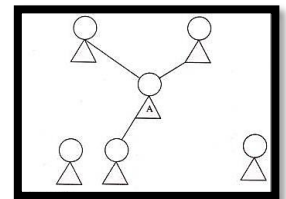
2. **Gossip Network** - Under this communication, the member communicates non-selectively, i.e. a member having information passes it on to everyone he meets.



3. **Probability Network** - Under this communication, information passes according to the law of probability, i.e. one member communicates randomly with others who in turn communicate to some others.



4. **Cluster Network** - Under this communication, the information passes selectively, i.e. one member communicates with only those members whom he trusts. In turn, they pass it on to some other selected members. It is most popular type of grapevine communication and widely prevalent in organisation.

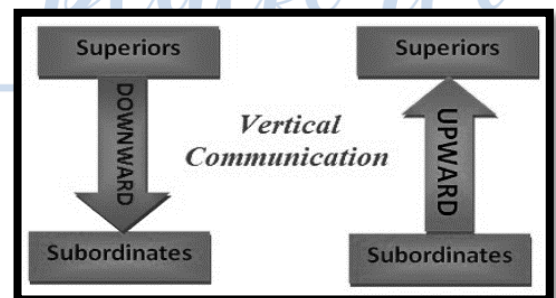


❖ On the Basis of Direction

Communication flows through the networks in an organisation which may be of three types i.e. horizontal, vertical and diagonal.

☐ Vertical Communication

This is basically a formal communication, where communication is most dominated. This follows the hierarchical chain of command. The vertical direction of communication can be upward (bottom up) and downward (top down).



☐ Horizontal or Lateral communication



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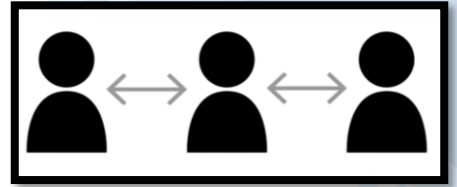
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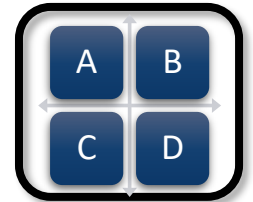
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It is the communication where people can communicate their colleagues and peers at same level in hierarchical chain of command. It is necessary for smooth coordination. It may be combined of both formal and informal. It is beneficial when organisations are very large. This leads to a successful interactive interpersonal communication.

❑ Diagonal Communication

It is free flow of communication hence no barrier of hierarchy. It encourages the bonding between superior and subordinate as well as among the colleagues.



Characteristics of Communication

- ❑ **Two Way Process** - Communication can take place only when there are at least two persons. One person has to convey some message and another has to receive it. For example, in classroom the teacher conveys information to a group of students.
- ❑ **Exchange of Ideas** - Communication cannot be thought in the absence of exchange of ideas. In order to complete the process of communication, there must be an exchange of ideas, orders, feelings, etc. among two or more than two persons.
- ❑ **Knowledge of Language** - To make the communication successful, the receiver should first of all understand the sender's message. For this, the sender must speak in a language that is known to the receiver. For example, if the receiver cannot understand English and the sender conveys his ideas in English then the communication will be a failure.
- ❑ **Continuous Process** - Communication is an endless process, we cannot freeze it at any moment. So, it is a dynamic process of action. It also interacts towards a desired goal. For example, manager or any officer continuously assigns work to his subordinates. At the same time, he also tries to know the progress of the work as well as gives directions to achieve the desired goal.
- ❑ **Use of Words as well as Symbols** - Communication need not necessarily be made orally or in writing. Certain gestures or symbols or actions may also convey one's willingness or understanding of a given problem. For example, nodding of heads, rolling of eyes, ringing of bell for closing a school or college, etc.
- ❑ **Communication is all-Pervasive** - Communication is present everywhere and found in all levels of management. For example, the top management conveys information to the middle of management and vice-versa. Similarly, the middle management conveys information to the supervisory staff and vice-versa. Thus, there is flow of communication in all the directions in a workplace.


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- ❑ **Mutual Understanding** - It means that the receiver should receive the information in the same spirit with which it is being given. In the process of communication, it is more important to understand the information rather than carry it out.
- ❑ **Formal or Informal** - Communication may be formal or informal. Formal communication follows official channel or hierarchy whereas informal communication does not follow the official channel or hierarchy. It allows any individual to convey information to anybody.
- ❑ **Direct and Indirect** - It is not necessary in communication that the receiver and sender should communicate face-to-face with each other. Communication can be both direct and indirect. Direct communication means face-to-face conversation while indirect communication is through other means.
- ❑ **The Message must have Substance** - The message has a particular kind of matter. It means the message must have something really worthy for the receiver. For example, if certain botanical names are explained to a commerce student, he may not show any interest in the subject.

❑ Objectives of Communication

1. **Convey Information:** The main objective of communication is to convey information to the receiver. The information that is conveyed can be related to news, policies, procedures, decisions, etc.
2. **Give Command:** Communication is used to give commands to the receiver. The receiver of the command can be a junior, student or a member of the family.
3. **Make Decisions:** Communication helps in making decisions. The relationship of communication and decision making is inseparable since decisioning must rely on information.
4. **Motivation:** Communication is used for motivating people. Motivation is necessary to bring out the best in people and communication plays a big role in it.
5. **Coordination:** Coordination is a basic management function. It involves linking the various functional departments of an organization without proper and timely coordination, achievement of organizational goals is not possible.

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Therefore, the objective of communication is to coordinate the functions of various departments for the attainment of organizational goals.

❑ Importance of Communication

The importance of communication has been divided into four parts. These are as under:

1. In Personal Terms

It provides subject-matter for knowledge.

It provides the way to achieve success.

It determines the personality of a person.

It helps in making a person social.

2. In Social Terms

It helps in bringing change in the society.

It makes the people in a society literate and employed.

It helps in dealing with contingencies.

3. In Psychological Terms

It provides a good environment for an individual to develop.

It increases the morale of a group.

It inspires people in an organization to work effectively.

It gives encouragement for establishing coordination.

4. In Physical Terms

It provides a platform for people to communicate with each other.

It provides tools for business control.

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