

COMMUNICATION

**FEAFFA-EARA TRAINING
MODULE FOR C&F CERTIFICATE**

Objectives

At the end of the course you will be able to:

- Identify the purpose of communication in organisations
- Define barriers of communication
- Distinguish between good and poor communication

Definition of communication

- Communication is the transfer of messages from one person or group of people to another or group of people in a way that is understandable to both parties
- Communication is giving out messages from one person or group of people and the understanding of those messages by another or others. It is a process of interaction, an interpersonal process of sending and receiving of symbols with messages attached to them

Definition of communication

- Communication is the exchange and flow of information and ideas from one person to another. It involves sender transmitting an idea to a receiver
- Communication is therefore:
 - A process of interaction in which we relate to others
 - A process of passing information which calls for feedback

Communication defined

Communication:

- Is not a one-sided process
- In an organisation it is vertical and horizontal
- Vertical for informing, instructing and training
- Horizontal for cooperation and coordination between people

Uses of communication

- Task communication: Involves passing of factual information which employees need in order to do their jobs.
- Regulation: to ensure that employees' behavior is consistent and congruent to the organisation goals (to communicate the role of clearing agents and the importer of goods)

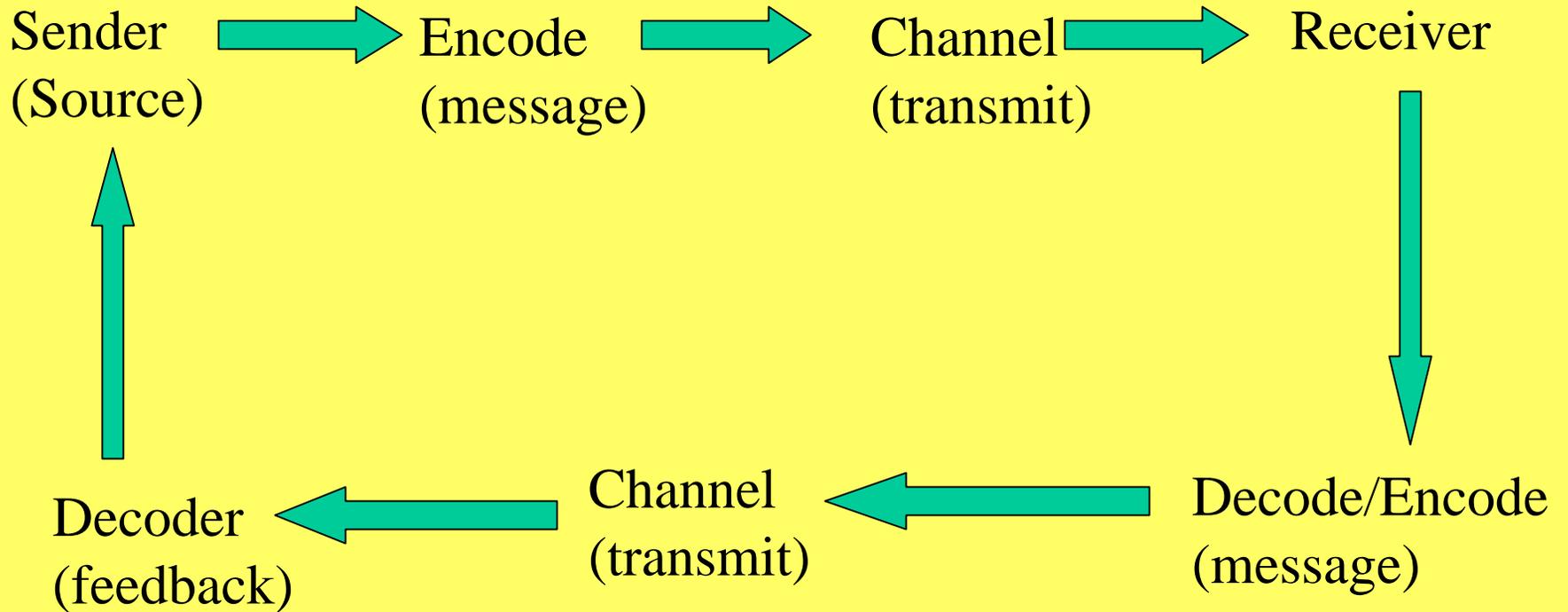
Uses of communication

- Innovation: The organisation may seek to change the way things are done, but this is only possible through communicating with employees
- Integration: To encourage employees to identify with the organisation and raise morale
- Educational: Information that helps employees develop

Uses of communication

- Motivational: persuasive communication to achieve desired purposes of an organisation
- Helps people interact
- Passing on information, ideas, attitudes, abilities, value and behaviors
- For obtaining feedback

Communication model



Methods of communication

- Written: Includes e-mails, letters, reports
- Oral: Verbal
- Non-verbal:
 - Visual
 - Tactile
 - Vocal
 - Use of time
 - Space

No-verbal communication- Visual

- Often called body language
- Includes facial expressions, eye movement, posture and gestures
- Posture can indicate self-confidence, aggression, fear, guilt or anxiety
- Many gestures are culture bound and can be easily misinterpreted

Non-verbal communication - tactile

- Involves the use of touch to impart meaning
- May include a handshake, a pat on the back, an arm around the shoulder, a kiss, a hug, etc

Non-verbal communication

– use of time

- Use of time can communicate how we view our own status and power in relation to others
- When you delay people in a meeting, you are communicating disinterest
- An immediate response after a question has been posed indicates eagerness, enthusiasm

Non-verbal communication – physical space

- Do not stand too close to a person. you are invading his/her "space"
- People seek to extend their territory to attain power and intimacy
- We mark our territory with walls, our desks, papers, coat hanger, etc

Non-verbal communication – physical space

'Ultimate zone' is one's perfect physical space (territory). It varies with cultures.

- The personal zone: 2-4 feet, reserved for family and friends
- The social zone: 4-12 feet, where most business transactions take place
- The public zone: over 12 feet, is used for lectures

Non-verbal behaviors of communication

1. Eye contact:
 - helps to regulate the flow of conversation
 - Conveys interest, concern, warmth and credibility
2. Facial expression:
 - Smiling transmits happiness, friendliness and warmth
 - Smiling is contagious. People react favourably

Non-verbal behaviors of communication

3. Gestures:
 - lack of gestures while speaking may be perceived as boring or stiff
 - Lively speaking style captivates listeners attention
4. Posture and body orientation:
 - The way you talk and walk communicates numerous messages: standing erect and leaning forward says that you are approachable, receptive and friendly

Forms of communication

1. Vertical:

- Communication that moves up and down the chain of command
- Takes 2 forms:

Downward:

- mainly to advice, inform, instruct or evaluate subordinates.
- Information is usually filtered, modified or altered at different levels by managers as it goes down

Forms of communication

Upward:

- mainly to supply information to management.
- Includes progress reports, suggestions, explanations, requests for aid, decisions and consultations.
- Is likely to be filtered, condensed and altered by management as it goes up to protect upper level management from non-essential data origination at lower levels

Forms of communication

2. Horizontal communication (lateral)
 - Takes place between departments
 - A direct channel for coordination and problem solving
 - Mainly occurs outside the chain of command, but with knowledge and encouragement of superiors

Effective communication

Occurs only if receiver understands the exact information or idea that the sender intended to transmit

Barriers to effective communication

- Language
- Misreading of body language
- Noisy transmission (unreliable messages, inconsistency)
- Receiver distortion: selective hearing, ignoring non-verbal cues
- Power struggles between sender and receiver
- Managers hesitation to be candid
- Assumptions
- Interpersonal relations
- Cultural differences

Strategies to effective communication

- Focus on a personal agenda: When you spend listening time formulating the next response, you are not fully attentive to hear the speaker
- Hearing emotional noise: we react emotionally to certain words, concepts and ideas. Make an effort to control your emotional reactions so that you can listen properly

Strategies to effective communication

- Criticizing the speaker: do not be distracted by critical evaluations of the speaker. Focus on the message, rather than the messenger
- Experiencing information overload: too much stimulation or information can make it difficult to listen with full attention

Strategies to effective communication

- Experiencing external noise: turn down audible noise as it is distracting when listening
- Experiencing physical difficulty: feeling physical unwell or experiencing pain can make it difficult to listen effectively

Strategies to effective listening

- Stop: Focus on the other person, their thoughts and feelings. Give full attention to the speaker
- Look: pay attention to non-verbal messages
- Listen: for the essence of the speaker's thoughts
- Be empathetic
- Ask questions: clarify, demonstrate interest

Strategies for improved perception

- Avoid stereotyping and generalizing
- Don't make assumptions
- Distorted focus: do not focus on negative aspects of a conversation
- Assuming similar interpretations: do not assume that everyone shares the same priorities as yours
- Analyse your own perceptions: are they biased?

Strategies for improved perception

- Observe carefully and attentively: look for detail but keep the bigger picture in mind
- Focus on what you know: describe your own feelings rather than evaluating others
- Focus on the issue, not the person
- Empathise rather than remain detached

Strategies for improved perception

- Be flexible towards others: allow for other points of view. Diversity brings creativity
- Present yourself as an equal rather than a superior
- Use confirming responses: respond to others in ways that acknowledge their experiences

Effective telephone communication

When you speak over the phone, your client cannot see you. Use your voice to communicate effectively. Your voice is your biggest asset. Words are the tools of a speaker's trade. Use words which:

- Form pictures in the mind of the listener
- Are jargon free
- Are positive and helpful

Effective telephone communication

- Are friendly, courteous and professional
- Your voice should be cheerful, ready to help and audible

Preparing for telephone calls

For receiving calls, we all need the following:

1. Good knowledge of our organisation, its products, services and our colleagues
2. An up-to-date internal telephone directory
3. A pad and pen fixed near the phone

Controlling calls

- Answer promptly: not more than three or four rings
- Give a greeting: introduce yourself by name and indicate the office
- Transfer of calls: inform the caller you are transferring them and give the caller the name and number of the person to whom you are transferring him/her to

Difficult calls

Approach difficult calls professionally:

- Crossed lines: 'I think we have a crossed line....'
- Being cut off: it is generally accepted that the person who initiated the call will redial when cut off. If it is an important client, it is better to call back immediately

Difficult calls

- Wrong numbers
- Difficult callers. When a client calls to complain:
 - Accept responsibility for whatever is being complained about
 - Apologise
 - Avoid taking insults personally
 - Ask questions to clarify
 - Offer alternatives
 - Use the callers name

Summary note:Telephone do's

- Have a pen and pad at hand
- Use friendly tone and voice
- Speak into the mouthpiece
- Sound interested and caring
- Repeat messages
- Listen and check understanding
- Let the other person speak

Summary note:Telephone do's

- Identify yourself to callers
- Get their name and number immediately
- Transfer after you have informed the caller
- Be cheerful and helpful

Summary note: telephone don'ts

- Speak too softly or too quickly
- Shout or whisper
- Keep the caller hanging on
- Eat, drink or smoke while talking
- Do anything else at the same time
- Forget that they are the source of income

Questions

1. What is communication
2. Give an illustration of a conflicting assumption
3. Explain the importance of non-verbal communication in interpersonal communication