

### **WHAT IS COMMUNICATION?**

- a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior.
- an intentional or conscious use of any sign or symbol to transmit a fact, an idea, a feeling, or an emotion from one individual to another.

### **Value of Communication**

- Communication is at the core of our humanness.
  - individual humanity is developed
  - relationship with others is strengthened
- You can grow into greater maturity in your maturity communication with others.
  - you become aware of the needs of others
  - you are able to adjust yourself to different situations
- Great leaders and great corporations understand that the road to success lies in the art of listening, clarifying, and convincing.
  - you have to convince people to follow
  - effective management goes with effective communication
- Effective communication oils the wheels of productive change.
- Good communication promotes mental health.
  - it helps ease daily frustration levels

### **Functions of Communication**

We communicate in order to:

- increase our store of information
  - we attempt to gain information about others so we could interact with them
  - we can better predict what they feel, think, and act if we know them well
- build context understanding
  - the words we say can have varied meanings depending on how and to whom they are said
  - Content Messages – refer to the surface level of meaning; relational messages – refer to how a message is said
  - Good communication helps us understand each other better

### **The Communication Process**

#### **Elements of the Communication Process**

Communicator A

- sender or source of the message
- receiver or interpreter of the message
- also referred to as the encoder

Communicator B

- sender or receiver of the message
- also referred to as the decoder

Encoding

- process of deciding how best to convey the message
- consider these questions: What words should I use? What gestures could best show my message? Should my volume be loud or soft?

Decoding

- process of interpreting the exact meaning of a message
- process of attaching meanings to language symbol
- consider the persons background when giving meaning to messages

Frame of Reference (Background)

- includes educational background, personality, hobbies, sex, age, attitudes, past experiences, etc.
- must be considered during encoding/decoding to avoid communication breakdowns

Message

- idea or feeling

Code

- symbols that carry the message
  - a. Non-verbal – facial expressions, gestures, appearance, and posture
  - b. Language – spoken or written words used to communicate thoughts and feelings
  - c. Paralanguage – refers to tone, pitch, rate, volume, stress

Channel

- medium selected to convey the message
- telephone or mobile phone, radio, television, magazine, newspaper, face-to-face, etc.
- select the medium or channel that would BEST carry your message

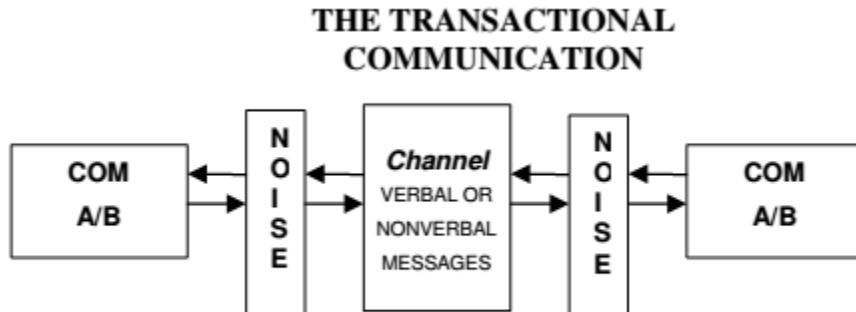
Noise

- interferences with communication
- distorts or blocks messages

Feedback

- a. responses to messages which could either be verbal or visual
- b. way to determine if messages sent are interpreted as planned or intended
- c. strumming fingers, hostile look, spontaneous applause, incessant yawning, etc

**THE TRANSACTIONAL COMMUNICATION**



*Diagram of the Transactional Communication*

Another source of communication breakdown is our failure to observe feedback. Transactions in communication are affected by the feedback we receive. There are several kinds of feedback:

- a. Immediate – receiver answers on the spot
- b. Delayed – there is a time lapse on his reply
- c. Thoughtful – receiver pauses and considers what has been heard or read before replying
- d. Impulsive – hasty assumptions are made about the message

Feedback is more immediate when your audience is with you when you are sending the message. For instance, while delivering your speech, you see incessant yawning, restless movements, and frowning looks on your audience face. As an immediate response, you do a little deviation on what you have planned, change your strategy, or strengthen points which seem to be confusing.

Feedback is a little more delayed for the writer. For instance, you post an article on a school paper and receive the comments the next issue. Distance and time lapse could give your audience the time to digest what has been read; therefore, feedback is more carefully considered. Message could be reviewed and studied before judgments and reactions are made.

The communication process is transactional. Each person is sending and receiving verbal messages as well as non-verbal messages. Both communicators are simultaneously source and receiver. Ideas and feelings once encoded make up the message. A channel is selected on how best to send the message. The process of sending as well as reception of message can be affected and distorted by noise. Therefore, message sent is not always the message received. Once received, communicator A/B decodes the message.

Feedback allows you to see if you are successful in sending your message. Communication breakdown occurs when the sender attempts to encode the message based on his own frame of reference or if the receiver attempts to decode the message received based also on his own frame of reference.

Therefore, the sender should phrase his message in such a way that will be understood by the receiver. But whether feedback is delayed or immediate, still it exists. And feedback allows communicator A or B to be part of the instruction.

### **TYPES OF COMMUNICATION**

1. Intrapersonal Communication is communication within yourself.
  - a. it involves thinking, remembering, feeling – all the things you do internally Example: You are looking at your teacher and think, “I have to go home early, I have plenty of clothes to wash.”
2. Public Communication is communication between you and several other people.
  - Uses mass media such as television, radio, movies, etc
  - presenting a public speech
  - communication is primarily a monologue than a dialogue
3. Interpersonal Communication is communication among a small number of people and includes both dyadic (one-to-one) and small group communication.

Example:

  - a. presenting your report to your classmates
  - b. being a part of a brainstorming session

### **COMMUNICATION: A TRANSACTION**

Communication is a transaction.

In a transaction communication, communicators don't take turns being the sender and the receiver. Instead, each is both source and receiver simultaneously. In other words, they are sending and at the same time receiving messages.

For instance, while your teacher is explaining, you are intently looking. Your teacher is sending the message and at the same time receiving yours—your intent look. And while receiving your teacher's message, you are also sending her yours.

Communication is a process.

Communication is unrepeatable and irreversible. Just like life, it's changing.

Even if we say the same line, the same words, still our communication is different. Everything around us changes every second, every minute, every day.

Messages are in people, not in words.

Messages and not meanings are sent. People put meanings to messages. When someone says “You’re thin”, a message is sent. However, different people could have different meanings. Perhaps, you might feel bad because it may mean you are skinny. Others might feel otherwise because it could mean slim or slender to them. See? One line and yet interpreted differently.

### **CONTENT AND RELATIONAL MESSAGE**

Content message is a linguistic message.

Relational message is non-verbal message that tells ones view of the relationship.

For instance, if you are conversing with your boss (content message), your restlessness, your failure to make eye to eye contact, and excessive sweating communicate that you are not comfortable with the conversation or the relationship (relational message).

### **BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

Effective communicators believe that a perfect communication is beyond reality. Therefore, one has to anticipate communication misunderstandings and must do ways in order to prevent errors from occurring.

There are several habits that create barriers to effective communication. If we aspire to become good communicators, these barriers must be carefully studied in order to be overcome.

#### A. Inadequate Preparation

Nothing could equal a well-planned message. As Heraclitus said, “a man never steps on the same river twice.” What has been said, though could be retracted, could not be completely erased. The effects will still be there.

#### B. Vague Instructions

Unclear instructions are most likely to be understood. Interpretations could become subjective because it will depend on one’s understanding and perception of the instructions. Instructions have to be brief and vivid with the avoidance of jargon or technical terms. The use of simple and specific words will decrease the likelihood of being misunderstood. Repeat instructions or steps if necessary. If they are long and complicated, provide a brief summary. This will clear up confusing points.

#### C. Poor Listening

Poor listening hinders effective communication. If we wanted to become effective communicators, listening is something each of us has to work on. Several bad listening habits result to poor listening.

##### a. Criticizing Speakers

If the listener is uninterested, he justifies his attitude by looking at the speaker’s faults in speaking, his manner of dressing, walking, standing, etc.

##### b. Planning a Rebuttal

Some listeners judge, evaluate, agree or disagree with the speaker long before the entire idea is heard. Instead of listening to the content of the speaker’s message, he preoccupies his mind with the mental argument.

##### c. Writing while Listening

Note taking is important and of help. However, some listeners become too engrossed with their note taking that they do not anymore pay attention to the speaker.

##### d. Different Perceptions

Two people looking at the same thing will unlikely see things similarly. And if they do, they won’t see them exactly the same way.

##### e. Same words, different meanings; different words, same meanings

Bypassing happens when people have different meanings for the same word. It also occurs when people use different words when they exactly mean the same thing.

f. Improve Use of Feedback

Feedback allows us to know if we are successful in sending our message and if it is interpreted as intended. However, our failure to provide or to ask for feedback will lead us to an “assumption” that everything is said and done properly.

### **FEEDBACK**

- responses to messages which could either be verbal or visual
- way to determine if the messages sent are interpreted as planned or intended
- strumming fingers, hostile look, spontaneous applause, incessant yawning, etc.

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### **KINDS OF FEEDBACK:**

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There are several kinds of feedback:

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### **OPTIMAL USE OF FEEDBACK**

In order to reduce communication breakdown, one has to optimize the use of feedback. It is through feedback that we are able to share meanings of words and messages.

Since communication is transactional, both parties have to be aware of each other's reactions. If an audience frowns during your delivery or after making a remark, you need to know what has been said to make him angry. If the listener smiles, it is an indication that everything is going fine.

However, there are messages hidden behind reactions. Some people could actually fake their reactions to avoid the speaker's retaliation or be dubbed as intent listeners. They would just play interested though they are not, or pretend to be irked just to distract a very good speaker. In this case, listener's attitude is the problem.

It is good to ask a friend or an audience on how well you did so you could do better next time. In doing so, errors did on the previous are avoided. Performance is enhanced.

### **SUMMARY**

Communication is a process by which information is exchange. It is through it that we develop relationship with others and adjust ourselves to different situations. We communicate because we need to.

Communication could be intrapersonal and interpersonal. The latter could be: one-to-one, group, public, and mass communication.

Our self-concept or the way we think of ourselves and the way people think of us affect our communication. Emotions are controlled and feelings are covered up.

Communication is a transaction and a process. It is continuous and irreversible. Therefore, extreme care has to be observed so as not to offend others. There are also barriers affecting our communication. If we want to be effective communicators, we have to be aware of those and try eliminating or avoiding them.

One way of reducing communication breakdown is to give a clear indication of how much of a message is actually received. This is called as feedback. Without it, we do not know whether we have to continue or stop.

We could make the "butterflies in our stomach" fly in formation. Self-confidence could be developed by knowing what our fears are, working on it, and by practicing.