UNIT 7: COMMUNICATION

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7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- learn the meaning of communication and its basic features and principles
- discuss the basic principles of communication
- describe internal communication and external communication
- learn the different communication channels
- outline the barriers to communication

7.2 INTRODUCTION

Communication plays an important role in every person's life, whether it is personal or official. In the previous unit we have discussed about office organization principles, the different types office organization

like line, line and staff and services organization, office charts and manuals. Now, in this unit we are going to discuss the concept of communication and its importance in an organization or office as it contributes heavily to the success or failure of every human task.

Communication is the process of transforming information and facts from one party to the other. In an organization, it is through communication that all the important functions like controlling, information, instructing, directing and monitoring etc. carried out. So, to avoid grievances and misunderstanding at office it is very important that proper and correct communication takes place. Mutual trust and understanding can only be achieved thorough meaningful communication.

The objective of this unit is to create an understanding the meaning and importance of communication, process of communication, internal communication and external communication and at the end of the end you will get some idea on the mail organization of the mailing section.

7.3 MEANING OF COMMUNICATION AND ITS FEATURES

Communication has been defined in numerous ways. The one chosen for the purpose of the present study is: 'communication is a mutual exchange of facts, thoughts and perception, resulting in common understanding of fall parties. According to *L.A.Allen,* "communication is the sum of all the things one person does when he wants to create understanding in the mind of another". Communication is a bridge of meaning between people. The following are some of the definitions of communication given by different scholars:

- Webster dictionary states that communication is a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior.
- Peter Little defines communication as "communication is a process by which information is passed between individuals and /or organization by means of previously agreed symbols.



Encoding: the process through which ideas or concepts are converted into a form of that can be transmitted to others.



Decoding: The process through which information received through communication is converted back into ideas or concepts

The essential features of communication are given below:

1. **Two people:** communication always involves two people-a sender and a receiver. Communication is not a one way street; one person cannot communicate.
2. **Sequential process:** Communication is a process, which involves several steps. First, the sender has an idea or thought to communicate. Second, the idea is translated into recognizable form, called *encoding* information. Third, the encoded massage travel a distance through various communication channels like telephone, mail routes etc. Fourth, once the receiver gets the message; he begins *decoding*. Finally the communication takes place.
3. **Continuous activity:** Everything a manager does involves communicating not something, but everything. A manager must always be in touch with his subordinates, peers and superiors in order to get things done.
4. **Pervasive function:** Communication takes place at all levels in an organization. It is, infact,the artery of an organization through which instructions ,order and decisions of the management flow down to lower level. it also conducts upward the pulse of the workforce –i.e., their ideas ,feelings, suggestions etc.
5. **Transference of meaning and understanding:** communication involves both information and understanding. Effective communication, thus, is the process of sending a massage in such a way that the massage received is as closed in meaning as possible to the massage intended.

7.4 IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is important to all managers, and it is needed by all employees. Communication is important because of the following reasons:

1. **Basis of action:** getting the right information to and from the correct sources is necessary for an organization to function properly. Communication keeps the people working in accordance with desires of the manger.

2. **Facilities planning:** communication helps the planning process in a number of ways:
   i) It helps executive interact and provide vital inputs to plan
   ii) It helps executive to strike rapport with subordinates, seek their opinions and provide realistic information
   iii) It helps executives to communicate what is contained in the plans in a clear way and secure their acceptance.
3. **Helps in decision- making:** communication provides the right type of information to a manager and enables him to consider the pros and cons thoroughly before arriving at a decision.
4. **Means of coordination:** in the absence of communication, members may fail to realize the importance of working unitedly towards a common goal. in the words of *Hicks*, *"when communication stops, organized action comes to an end".*
5. **Improves motivation and morale:** communication improves morale and motivation by keeping people informed .employees cans their grievances, troubles, problems to the management. Managers in turn, can explain the importance of organizational rules, policies and procedures properly.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS



Q1: What is meant by communication?

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Q2: State any four importance of communication.

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7.5 PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION

The process of communication is not only the transfer of message from one person to another, but there are also certain other factors that affect

this simple passing of information from person to person. The basic process of communication involves the following steps:

1. **Sender:** The sender is any one who wishes (i) to convey an idea (ii) to seek information (iii) to express a thought or emotions.
2. **Encoding:** The sender encodes the idea by selecting symbols with which he can compose a massage.
3. **Message:** The massage is what is conveyed by the sender. It is the heart of communication.
4. **Channel:** The massage is sent through a channel, which is communication carrier.
5. **Receiver:** The receiver is the person who is supposed to receive the massage.
6. **Decoding:** it is the process by which the receiver translates the massage into the terms that are meaningful to him.
7. **Feedback:** It is the response by the receiver to the sender's message.
8. **Noise:** It is any type of interference with a message that hampers the sharing of meaning between the sender and the receiver.

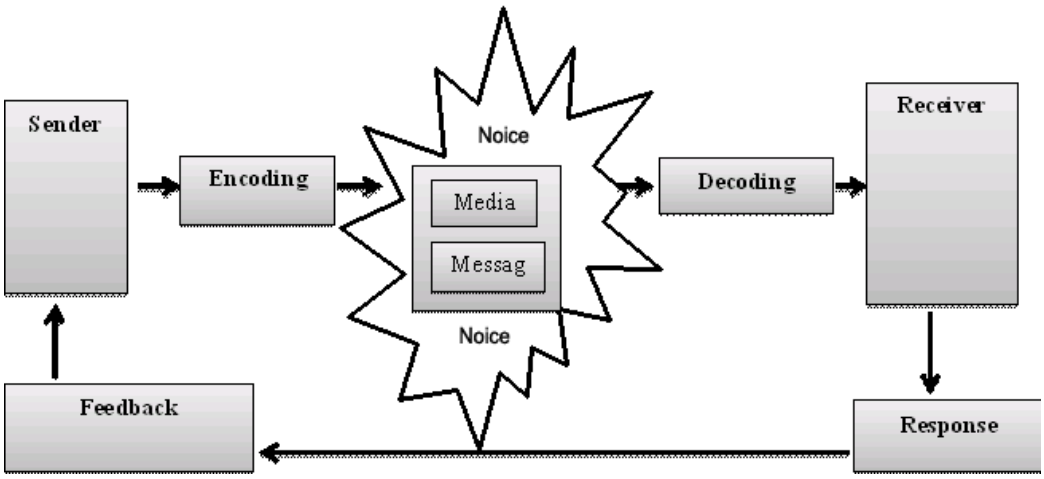


Figure 7.1: Process of Communication

7.6 INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Internal communication denotes a type of communication within the organization. When the inter communication takes place between the

employees of the same department, it is called inter-departmental communication and when it takes place between the employees of different departments of the same organization, it is called intra-departmental communication. The internal communications includes letters, memos, notices, instructions and orders.

The communication between the organization and the outsiders is called external communication. External communication is needed for smooth conduct and the progress of the business.

7.6.1 Internal Communication

Internal communication is also known as inter-communication which a major function of an office is. For a small organization, where there are 10-20 employees there is no problem of internal communication but in a organization where there are large number of employees, the problem of effective communication takes place. In a big organization having a number of departments or sections the internal communication may be:

1. **Inter-departmental:** communication between the employees of the same department.
2. **Intra-department:** communication between different departments of the organization.

   Also communication may be upward or downward. Upward communication is that where the communication flows from subordinate to superior. It includes reports, statistics, opinion suggestions, complaints, etc. submitted by the lower level employees. Downward communication is that where the communication flows from top to bottom i.e from superiors to subordinates. Downward communication include policies, manual, instruction, procedures etc. So, here we can say that internal communications include:

   a. Oral communication
   b. Written Communication
   c. Mechanical Communication

1. **Oral Communication:** It is the ability to talk with others to give and exchange information & ideas, such as: ask questions, give directions, coordinate work tasks, explain & persuade. Oral communication implies communication through mouth. It includes individuals conversing with each other, be it direct conversation or telephonic conversation. Speeches, presentations, discussions are all forms of oral communication. Oral communication is generally recommended when the communication matter is of temporary kind or where a direct interaction is required. Face to face communication (meetings, lectures, conferences, interviews, etc.) is significant so as to build a rapport and trust. The types of **Oral Communication** include:
   a. Face to face communication,
   b. Telephonic Communication,
   c. Public Address System (Speech),
   d. Informal rumor mill (Grape Wine),
   e. Audio & Visual Media(Radio, TV),
   f. Lectures, Conference-Interchange of views, Meetings,
2. **Written communication:** It is an innovative activity of the mind. Effective written communication is essential for preparing worthy promotional materials for business development. Speech came before writing. But writing is more unique and formal than speech. Effective writing involves careful choice of words, their organization in correct order in sentences formation as well as cohesive composition of sentences. Also, writing is more valid and reliable than speech. But while speech is spontaneous, writing causes delay and takes time as feedback is not immediate. The different types of Written communication are:
   a. Orders, Instructions
   b. Letters
   c. Memos
   d. Reports
   e. Policy manuals