

Lecture 9

Managing Communication

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Learning objectives

1. **Define** the nature and function of communication.
2. **Compare** and contrast methods of interpersonal communication.
3. **Identify** barriers to effective interpersonal communication and how to overcome them.
 - **Develop your skill** at listening actively.
 - Know how to identify the differences in how genders communicate.
4. **Explain** how communication can flow most effectively in organizations.
5. **Describe** how technology affects managerial communication and organizations.
6. **Discuss** contemporary issues in communication.

What Is Communication?

- **Communication** – the transfer and understanding of meaning.
 - Transfer means the message was received in a form that can be interpreted by the receiver.
 - Understanding the message is not the same as the receiver agreeing with the message.

What Is Communication? (cont.)

- **Interpersonal Communication** – communication between two or more people.
- **Organizational Communication** – all the patterns, networks, and systems of communications within an organization.

Functions of Communication

- Control
 - Formal and informal communications act to control individuals' behaviors in organizations.
- Motivation
 - Communications clarify for employees what is to be done, how well they have done it, and what can be done to improve performance.

Functions of Communication (cont.)

- Emotional Expression
 - Social interaction in the form of work group communications provides a way for employees to express themselves.
- Information
 - Individuals and work groups need information to make decisions or to do their work.

Methods of Interpersonal Communication

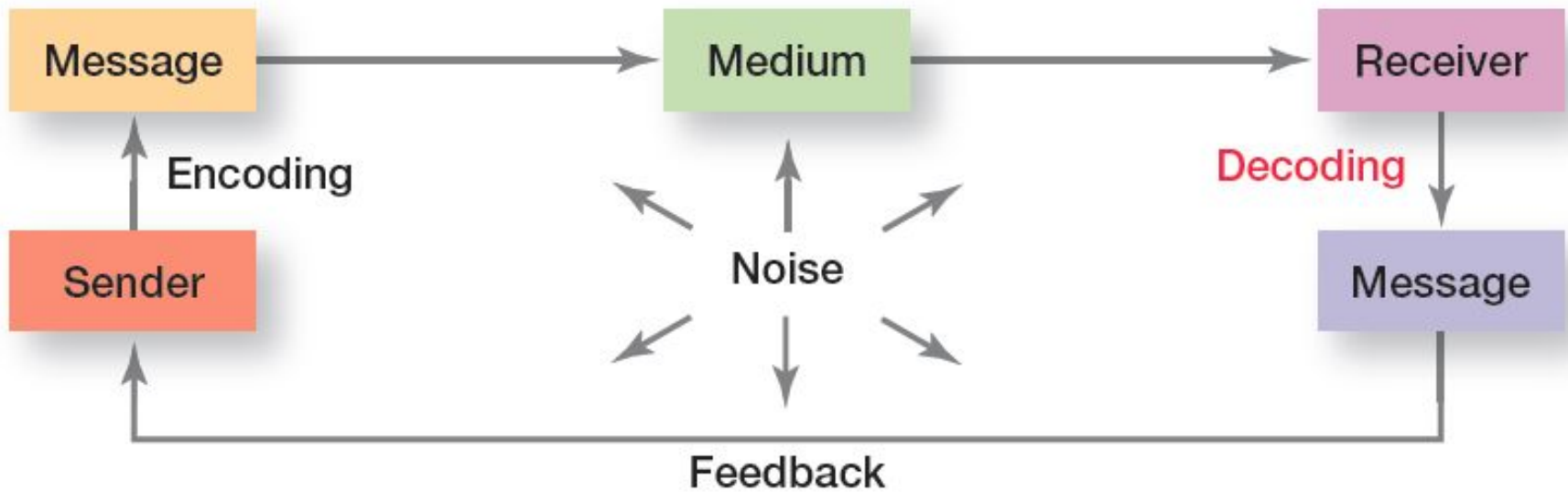
- **Message** – a purpose to be conveyed.
 - **Encoding** – converting a message into symbols.
 - **Channel** – the medium a message travels along.
 - **Decoding** – retranslating a sender's message.

Methods of Interpersonal Communication (cont.)

- **Communication process** – the seven elements involved in transferring meaning from one person to another.
 - **Noise** – any disturbances that interfere with the transmission, receipt, or feedback of a message.

Exhibit 14-1

The Interpersonal Communication Process



Nonverbal Communication

- **Nonverbal communication** – communication transmitted without words.
 - **Body language** – gestures, facial configurations, and other body movements that convey meaning.
 - **Verbal intonation** – an emphasis given to words or phrases that conveys meaning.

Exhibit 14-2

Comparison of Communication Methods

High Feedback Potential

- Face-to-face
- Telephone
- Computer conference

Low Feedback Potential

- Publications

High Complexity Capacity

- Face-to-face

Low Complexity Capacity

- Bulletin boards

High Breadth Potential

- Face-to-face
- Bulletin boards
- E-mail

Low Breadth Potential

- Postal mail
- Audio-videotapes

High Confidentiality

- Face-to-face
- Voice mail

Low Confidentiality

- Publications
- Bulletin boards
- Audio-videotapes
- Teleconference

Exhibit 14-2

Comparison of Communication Methods (cont.)

<i>High Encoding Ease</i>	<i>Low Encoding Ease</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Face-to-face■ Telephone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Publications
<i>High Time-Decoding Ease</i>	<i>Low Time-Decoding Ease</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Face-to-face■ Telephone■ Hotlines■ Voice mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Memos■ Postal mail■ Fax■ Publications
<i>High Space Constraint</i>	<i>Low Space Constraint</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Face-to-face■ Group meetings■ Formal presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Memos■ Postal mail■ Fax■ Publications■ Voice mail
<i>High Cost</i>	<i>Low Cost</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Group meetings■ Formal presentations■ Videoconference	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Bulletin boards

Exhibit 14-2:

Comparison of Communication Methods (cont.)

High Personal Warmth

- Face-to-face

Low Personal Warmth

- Memos
- Bulletin boards

High Formality

- Postal mail
- Publications

Low Formality

- Face-to-face
- Telephone
- Voice mail

High Scanability

- Memos
- Postal mail
- Fax
- Publications
- Bulletin boards

Low Scanability

- Formal presentations
- Face-to-face
- Telephone
- Group meetings
- Audio-videotapes
- Hotlines
- E-mail
- Computer conference
- Voice mail
- Teleconference
- Videoconference

Barriers to Communication

- **Filtering** – the deliberate manipulation of information to make it appear more favorable to the receiver.
- **Information overload** – occurs when information exceeds our processing capacity.
- **Jargon** – specialized terminology or technical language that members of a group use to communicate among themselves.

Overcoming the Barriers

- Use Feedback – ask questions about a message to determine whether it was received and understood as intended.
- Simplify Language – consider the audience to whom the message is directed and tailor the language to them.

Overcoming the Barriers (cont.)

- **Active listening** – listening for full meaning without making premature judgments or interpretations.

Exhibit 14-3

Active Listening Behaviors



Formal Versus Informal Communication

- **Formal communication** – communication that takes place within prescribed organizational work arrangements.
- **Informal communication** – communication that is not defined by the organization's structural hierarchy.

Direction of Communication

- **Town hall meeting** – informal public meetings where information can be relayed, issues can be discussed, or just is a way to bring employees together to celebrate accomplishments.
- **Downward communication** – communication that flows downward from a manager to employees.

Direction of Communication (cont.)

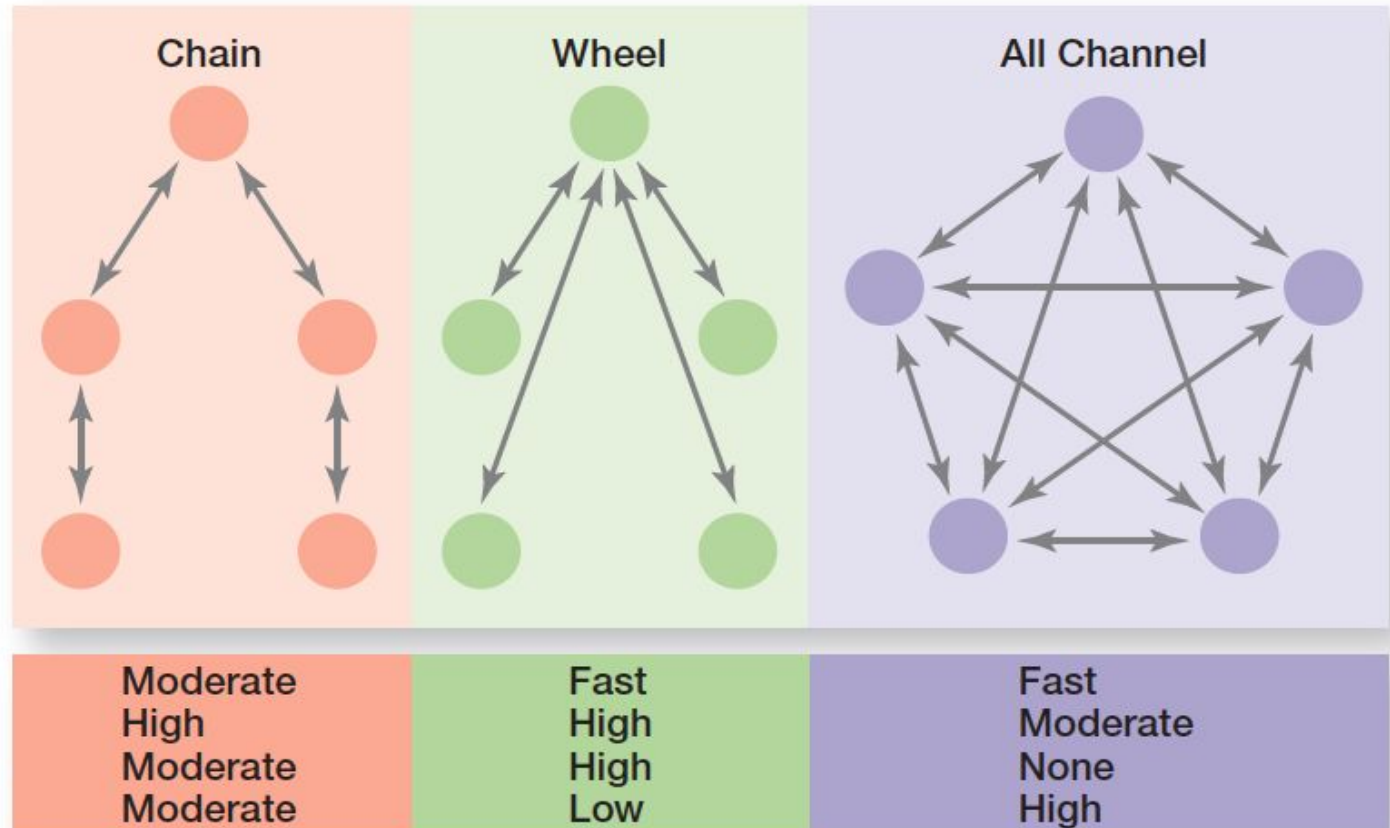
- **Upward communication** – communication that flows upward from employees to managers.
- **Lateral communication** – communication that takes place among any employees on the same organizational level.
- **Diagonal communication** – communication that cuts across work areas and organizational levels.

Organizational Communication Networks

- **Communication Networks** – the variety of patterns of vertical and horizontal flows of organizational communication.
- **Grapevine** – the informal organizational communication network.

Exhibit 14-4

Organizational Communication Networks



Workplace Design and Communication

- **Open workplaces** – workplaces with few physical barriers and enclosures.



How Technology Affects Managerial Communication

- Networked Systems – in a networked system, an organization's computers are linked. Organizational members can communicate with each other and tap into information whether they're down the hall, across town, or halfway across the world.
- Wireless Capabilities – wireless communication technology has the ability to improve work for managers and employees.

Current Communication Issues

- Managing Communication in an Internet World
 - Legal and security issues
 - Inappropriate use of company e-mail and instant messaging.
 - Loss of confidential and proprietary information due to inadvertent or deliberate dissemination or to hackers.
 - Lack of personal interaction
 - Being connected is not the same as face-to-face contact.
 - Difficulties occur in achieving understanding and collaboration in virtual environments.

Communication and Customer Service

- Communicating Effectively with Customers
 - Recognize the three components of the customer service delivery process:
 - The customer
 - The service organization
 - The service provider
 - Develop a strong service culture focused on the personalization of service to each customer.
 - Listen and respond to the customer.
 - Provide access to needed service information.

Getting Employee Input

- In today's challenging environment, companies need to get input from their employees.
 - Suggestion Boxes – managers do business in a world today where you can't afford to ignore such potentially valuable information.

Exhibit 14-5

How to Let Employees Know Their Input Matters

Hold town-hall meetings where information is shared and input solicited.

Provide information about what's going on, good and bad.

Invest in training so that employees see how they impact the customer experience.

Analyze problems together—managers and employees.

Make it easy for employees to give input by setting up different ways for them to do so (online, suggestion box, preprinted cards, and so forth).

Communicating Ethically

- **Ethical communication** – communication that includes all relevant information, is true in every sense, and is not deceptive in any way.