

MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION

MEANING OF COMMUNICATION:

It's nearly impossible to go through a day without the use of communication. Communication is sending and receiving information between two or more people. The person sending the message is referred to as the sender, while the person receiving the information is called the receiver. The information conveyed can include facts, ideas, concepts, opinions, beliefs, attitudes, instructions and even emotions.

Communication is considered to be the most important and most effective ingredient of the management process. Interpersonal communication is fundamental to all managerial activities. All other management functions involve communication in some form of directions and feedback.

Effective management is a function of effective communication. Probably the most frequently cited source of interpersonal conflict is poor communication. Many operations have failed because of inadequate communication, misunderstood messages and unclear instructions. Even in life, in general, communication plays a very important role among friends, within the family and in all social circles, since we spend nearly seventy percent of our waking hours communicating, writing, reading, speaking friendship, divorces and distance between parents and children. Accordingly, communication plays an important role in all walks of human life as well as organizational life.

DEFINITIONS:

Some important definitions of communication are:

1. Communication is the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another. - **Keith Davis**
2. Communication is any means by which thought is transferred from one person to another. - **Chappell and Read**
3. "Communication is an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions or emotions by two or more persons." - **W.H. Newman**
4. "Communication may be broadly defined as the process of meaningful interaction among human beings." - **MC Farland**
5. Effective communication as "Purposive interchange, resulting in workable understanding and agreement between the sender and the receiver of the message".
- **George Vardman**

FEATURES OF COMMUNICATION:

Characteristics of communication are mentioned below:

(1) Two or More Persons:

The first important characteristic of communication is that there must be a minimum number of two persons because no single individual can have an exchange of ideas with himself. A listener is necessary to receive one's ideas. Therefore, there must be at least two persons-the sender of information and the receiver.

(2) Exchange of Ideas:

Communication cannot be thought of 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. 4

(3) Mutual Understanding:

Mutual understanding 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.

(4) Direct and Indirect Communication:

It is not necessary in communication that the receiver and giver of information should be 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.

(5) Continuous Process:

Communication is an endless process, as is the case with business where the manager continuously assigns work to his subordinates, tries to know the progress of the work and gives directions.

(6) Use of Words as well as Symbols:

There can be many means of communication, like the written, the oral and symbolic. The examples of symbolic communication are the ringing of bell for closing a school or a college, saying something by the movement of the neck, showing anger or disapproval through eyes, giving some decision by the raising of a finger in cricket, etc

OBJECTIVES OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is the lifeblood of an organization. It is the vehicle that ensures proper performance of organizational functions and achievement of organizational goals. As a separate field of study, business communication has the following objectives:

1. To exchange information: The main objective of business communication is to exchange information with the internal and external parties. Internal communication occurs within the organization through orders, instructions, suggestions, opinions etc.

2. To develop plans: Plan is the blueprint of future courses of actions. The plan must be formulated for attaining organizational goals. In order to develop a plan, management requires information. In this regard, the objective of communication is to supply required information to the concerned managers.

3. To implement the plan: Once a plan is prepared, it is to be implemented. Implementation of a plan requires timely communication with the concerned parties. Thus, communication aims at transmitting a plan throughout the organization for its successful implementation

4. To facilitate policy formulation: Policies are guidelines for performing organizational activities. Policies are also termed as standing decisions to recurring problems. Every organization needs to develop a set of policies to guide its operation. Preparing policies also require information from various sources. Therefore, the objective of communication is to collect necessary information for policy formulation.

5. To achieve organizational goal: Collective efforts of both managers and workers are essential for achieving organizational goals. Communication coordinates and synchronizes the efforts of employees at various levels to achieve the stated goals of the organization.

6. To organize resources: Various kinds of resources are available in organization such as human resources, material resources, financial resources and so on. In organizing these resources in an effective and efficient way is a key challenge to the managers. Communication is the vehicle to overcome this challenge.

7. To coordinate: Coordination is a basic management function. It involves linking the various functional departments of large organizations. Without proper and timely coordination, achievement of organizational goals is impossible. Therefore, the objective of communication is to coordinate the functions of various departments for the easy attainment of organizational goals.

8. To direct the subordinates: The job of a manager is to get the things done by others. In order to get the things done, management needs to lead, direct and control the employees. The performance of these managerial functions depends on effective communication with subordinates.

9. To motivate employees: A pre-requisite of employee motivation is the satisfaction of their financial and non-financial needs. Financial needs are fulfilled thorough monetary returns. However, in order to satisfy non-financial needs, management must communicate with employees on a regular basis both formally and informally.

10. To create consciousness: Employees of an organization must be conscious regarding their duties and responsibilities. Communication supplies necessary information and makes them conscious about their duties and responsibilities.

11. To increase efficiency: In order to increase employee efficiency, they should be provided with necessary information and guidelines. Communication supplies such information and guidelines for them.

12. To bring dynamism: Organizations should be dynamic to cope with the internal and external changes. Bringing dynamism requires finding new and better ways of doing things. For this purpose, communication helps to seek new ideas and suggestions from the internal and external parties.

13. To improve labor-management is relationships: Harmonious relationship between workers and management is a prerequisite for organizational success. In this regard, the objective of communication is to ensure the free and fair flow of information and to create good understanding between them.

14. To increase Job Satisfaction: Communication enhances job satisfaction level of employees. It creates a friendly environment where employees can express themselves. As a result, they become more satisfied with their job.

15. To convey employee reaction: Communication conveys employees' reactions, opinions, suggestions and complaints to their superiors about the plans, policies, programs and strategies of the company.

16. To orient employee: Communication orients the new employees with the company's policies, rules, regulations, procedures etc

PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION:

Communication is a process of exchanging verbal and non-verbal messages. It is a continuous process. The communication process is dynamic in nature rather than a static phenomenon. Pre-requisite of communication is a message. This message must be conveyed through some medium to the recipient. It is essential that this message

must be understood by the recipient in same terms as intended by the sender. He must respond within a time frame. Thus, communication is a two way process and is incomplete without a feedback from the recipient to the sender on how well the message is understood by him.

There are seven major elements of communication process. They are:

1. Sender
2. Ideas
3. Encoding
4. Communication channel
5. Receiver
6. Decoding
7. Feedback.

(1) Sender: The person who intends to convey the message with the intention of passing information and ideas to others is known as sender or communicator.

(2) Ideas: This is the subject matter of the communication. This may be an opinion, attitude, feelings, views, orders, or suggestions.

(3) Encoding: Since the subject matter of communication is theoretical and intangible, its further passing requires use of certain symbols such as words, actions or pictures etc. Conversion of subject matter into these symbols is the process of encoding.

(4) Communication Channel: The person who is interested in communicating has to choose the channel for sending the required information, ideas etc. This information is transmitted to the receiver through certain channels which may be either formal or informal

(5) Receiver: Receiver is the person who receives the message or for whom the message is meant for. It is the receiver who tries to understand the message in the best possible manner in achieving the desired objectives.

(6) Decoding: The person who receives the message or symbol from the communicator tries to convert the same in such a way so that he may extract its meaning to his complete understanding.

(7) Feedback: Feedback is the process of ensuring that the receiver has received the message and understood in the same sense as sender meant it.

IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION:

Effective communication is vital for efficient management and to improve industrial relations. In modern world the growth of telecommunication, information technology, the growing competition and complexity in production have increased importance of communication in organizations large and small irrespective of their type and kind. A corporate executive must be in a position to communicate effectively with his superiors, colleagues in other departments and subordinates. This will make him perform well and enable him to give his hundred percent to the organization.

1. Managerial efficiency: – Communication helps in smooth operation of management. Managerial task can only be performed when communication system is effective

2. Enhance morale and relations: – Effective communication emphasizes the employee's participation in management. It helps to build the employees morale and cordial industrial relations between management and employees

3. Effective leadership: – effective leadership depends upon effective communication. Two-way communication helps in effective communication. Managerial leader must handle the subordinates. For ordering qualitative leadership is essential. And that can be obtained from proper system of communication.

4. Mutual trust and confidence: – mutual trust and confidence between labor and management is necessary for effective movement of organization. When there is effective communication, it helps to reduce misunderstanding and develop mutual trust.

5. Better decision: – the success of organization can be measured in better decision. When the information, data and other fact are not effectively communicated, it hampers the decision making. So, when the facts are communicates to concerned department, organization and person. It is easy to make decisions promptly.

6. Staffing: – when the information is correctly communicates in time, it helps in the function of selection, placement, socialization, promotion and transfer

7. Better managerial concern: – all managerial functions such as planning, organizing, directing, controlling etc. can't be conducted without communication.

BARRIERS OF COMMUNICATION:

Communication plays a major role in developing a relationship. It can also affect the relationship among family members or management in any institute. More specifically, communication influences the effectiveness of instruction, performance evaluation, and the handling of discipline problems. Communication

should be straightforward. What can make it complex, difficult, and frustrating are the barriers.

Miscommunication can originate at three levels: at the level of the transmitter, of the medium, or of the receiver. In technical parlance, anything that obstructs free flow of communication is called noise. Or we may refer to it simply as a 'Barriers to Communication'. The barriers are physical, sociological and psychological obstacles that interfere with the planning, organization, transmission and understanding of the message. There are a number of such obstacles that can occur in the process of communication. The natural result of such obstacles or interfering factors is the misunderstanding of the message. Some barriers of communication are the following.

I. PHYSICAL BARRIERS

- (a) **Time and Distance:** Time and distance also act as barriers to the smooth flow of communication. The use of telephone along with computer technology has made communication very fast and has, to a large extent, overcome the space barrier. However, sometimes mechanical breakdowns render these facilities ineffective. In such cases, the distance between the transmitter and the receiver becomes a mighty barrier. Some factories run in shifts. There is a kind of communication gap between persons working in different shift
- (b) **Noise:** Unfortunately communication is very affected/distorted by noise that occurs primarily at the transmission level. Literally the word noise means "interference that occurs in a signal and prevents you from hearing sounds properly". It is, therefore, the first major barrier to communication. In a factory, for example, where there are machines and engines making a constant noise, oral communication become difficult. Blaring of

loudspeakers around is bound to interfere with our conversation, whether face-to-face or on telephone.

II. SEMANTIC AND LANGUAGE BARRIERS:

(a) Lack of Common Language: Language uses oral or written arbitrary symbols to transmit meanings from one person to another. Every human language has its own vocal symbol system and its own grammatical structures. If the communicator and the receiver belong to different language groups, their ignorance of each other's language or the lack of a common language will be a barrier to communication between them. It is not possible for them to communicate with each other unless they know some common language which is properly understood by both of them.

(b) Semantic Barriers: Semantic is the study of meaning, signs and symbols used for communication. The word is derived from "sema", a Greek word meaning signs. Semantic barriers to communication are the symbolic obstacles that distort the sent message in some other way than intended, making the message difficult to understand. The meaning of words, signs and symbols might be different from one person to another and the same word might have hundreds of meanings. So, when a message is sent by a sender to a receiver, it might be interpreted wrongly in a communication process causing misunderstandings between them. This can happen due to different situations that form the semantic (of, relating to or arising from the different meanings of words or other symbols) of the sender the receiver, known as the semantic barrier. It also arises due to language, education, culture and place or origin (dialect or accent) or most likely their experiences. It is similar to and related to language barriers in a communication.

III. CULTURAL BARRIERS:

Especially in international environment, cultural differences often cause communication problems. The same category of words, phrases, symbols, actions, colors mean different things to people of different countries/cultural backgrounds. For example, in Western countries black colour is associated with death and mourning while in the Far East white is the colour of mourning. In the United States people love to be called by their first name while in Britain people are more formal and like to be addressed by their little or their last name.

IV. EMOTIONAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS:

The Psychological or Emotional Barriers refers to the psychological state i.e. Opinions, attitudes, status consciousness, emotions, etc. of a person that deeply affects the ability to communicate. The communication largely depends on the mental condition of a person, if the person is not mentally or emotionally sound, then he cannot communicate effectively either as a sender or a receiver.

The major kinds of Psychological Barriers are following:

1. Lack of Attention:

When the person is pre-occupied by some other things and do not listen carefully what the other person is speaking, then arises the psychological barrier in the communication. When the person does not listen to others, then he won't be able to comprehend the message as it was intended and will not be able to give proper feedback.

2. Premature Evaluation: Many people have a tendency to jump to the conclusions directly and form judgments without considering all the aspects of information. This is generally done by the people who are impatient and resort to a selective listening. This

premature evaluation of the information acts as a barrier to the effective communication and lowers the morale of the sender

3. Poor Retention: The retention refers to the capacity of a brain to retain or store things in the memory. The brain does not store all the information came across but in fact, retain only those which deems to be helpful in the future. Therefore, much of the information gets lost during the retention process, and this acts as a barrier to the effective communication.

4. Loss by Transmission: The loss by transmission means, whenever the information exchanges hand its credibility reduces. It is most often observed in the case of an oral communication where people handle information carelessly and transmits the information which has lost some of its truth. Thus, the improper and lack of information being transmitted to others acts as a hindrance in the communication process.

5. Distrust: To have an effective communication, it is must that both the communicators (sender and receiver) trust each other. In case there is a lack of trust between both the parties, then they will tend to derive negative meaning out of the message and often ignore what has been communicated. If the receiver has no trust, then he will not listen to whatever is being said by the sender, and this will result in a meaningless communication.

6. Emotions: The communication is greatly influenced by the emotions of a person. If a person is not in a good temperament, then he would not listen properly to whatever is said and might say things offending the sender. Several other emotions such as anger, nervousness, confusion, restlessness, etc affects the communication process. Thus, every human being has a unique mind which is composed of varied emotions, beliefs, perceptions, opinions, and thoughts that facilitate different forms of communication.

V. Social-Psychological Barriers:

1. Self – centered attitudes
2. Group identification
3. Self image
4. Selective perception

5. Defensiveness
6. Filtering
7. Status block
8. Resistance to change
9. Closed mind
10. Poor communication skills
11. Status of health

VI. Organisational Barriers:

An organisation is a deliberate creation of management for the attainment of certain specific objectives. The day-to-day functioning of the organisation is regulated in such a way as to contribute to the attainment of these objectives in the most effective manner. For this purpose, a variety of official measures are adopted such as designing of the structure, arrangement of activities, formulation of various policies, rules and regulations, and procedures, laying down of norms of behaviour, instituting a reward and punishment system, etc. all these variables markedly affect the organisation's functioning. As such major organisational barriers are:

Hierarchical Barriers: In an organisation, communication transmission must flow through certain formal channels which are established by the organisational hierarchy. The employees are expected to contact the superiors and the subordinates through their immediate superiors or subordinates. This often results in hardships and difficulties in maintaining free flow of communication. Some management disapprove with the barriers of hierarchy and propose that everyone in the organisation should be free enough to communicate directly with anybody else who can help him to solve his problems.

Specialisation of the Workforce: In large-size complex business organisation, increasing specialisation of the workforce is posing a serious barrier to effective internal communication. The tasks are specified and the procedures are structured in such a way that the workforce can hardly come out of their compartments to communicate with the people in other functional groups. They look only at those things that need to be done by a functionalised group. Every one of them is assigned with a special kind of job. This makes it increasingly difficult to see and covers with the people outside one's specialisation. In such organisation, the right hand can never find access to

know what the left hand is doing. So far as possible, the works of each employee is confined to a single function. But this is not always possible.

Wrong Choice of Medium: There are many ways and devices of communication. It may be oral communication through interviews, conversations, speeches, telephone talks, conferences, radio speeches etc. it may be face-to-face communication, written communication or nonverbal communication. All these ways or media of communication are suitable for communicating at different times and for different purposes. Therefore, it is essential to think about their relative merits and limitations, before selecting one of the media for communication. The sales manager must think over it would be better for him to hold a face-to-face talk with the prospective buyer than talking to him on the telephone.

Communication Load: Communication load is one of the major barriers to communication. It refers to the amount and the complexity of messages received by the receiver

Organisational policy: The general organisational policy regarding communication provides overall guidelines in this matter. This policy might be in the form of a written document, or it has to be inferred from organisational practice, particularly at the top level. If the policy creates hindrance in the free flow of communication in different directions, communication would not be smooth and effective.

VII. Physical Barriers:

Noise: It interferes with the transmission of the signals. It also refers to the 'unwanted' Signals of messages which interfere and disturb the reception of the wanted signals. This disturbance is usually in the form of sounds, but it need not be always the sounds. It can be in visual, audio-visual, written, physical or psychological form also. Technical or physical noise refers to loud noise of the machines or blaring noise of the stereo and such other noises which makes it difficult for any listener committee member arrives late at the meeting hall and all the committee members are distracted by his arrival. Time: frequency of communication encounters affects the human

relationships and the intensity of human relations is affected by the amount of time that passes between these encounters. If the employee does not communicate with his superiors for a long time, or if husband and wife stay away from each other for a long time, it may create a communication gap between them which may affect their relationship.

Distance: The distance between the communicator and the receiver can be a strong barrier to communication, if the technical devices of communication such as telephone, telex etc. are not available to link them. Faulty sitting arrangement in the office can create a kind of communication gap which can be eliminated by adjusting the distance.

HOW TO MAKE COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVE:

In order to remove barriers to communication an open door communication policy should be prepared and followed by managers at all levels. The superiors in the organisation must create an atmosphere of confidence and trust in the organisation so that the credibility gap may be narrowed down. Major efforts in this direction are:

(i) Two-way communication:

The organisation's communication policy should provide for a two-way traffic in communication-upwards and downwards. It brings two minds closer and improves understanding between the two parties, the sender and the receiver. A should feedback system should be introduced in the organisation so that distortion in the filtering of damages should be avoided. There should be no communication gap.

(ii) Strengthening Communication Network:

The communication network should be strengthened to make communication effective. For this purpose, the procedure of communication should be simplified, layers in downward communication should be reduced to the minimum possible. Decentralisation and delegation of authority should be encouraged to make information communication more efficient, through frequent meetings, conferences and timely dissemination of information to the subordinates.

(iii) Promoting Participative Approach:

The management should promote the participative approach in management. The subordinates should be invited to participate in the decision-making process. It should seek cooperation from the subordinate and reduce communication barriers.

(iv) Appropriate Language:

In communication certain symbols are used. Such symbols may be in the form of words, pictures and actions. If words are used, the language should be simple and easily comprehensible. The sender must use the language with which the receiver is familiar. The message should be supported by pictures or action, wherever necessary, to emphasise certain points. The sender must also practise in action what he says to others or expects from others.

(v) Credibility in Communication:

One criterion of effective communication is credibility. The subordinates obey the orders of their superior because they have demonstrated through their actions that they are trustworthy. They must practice whatever they say. The superior must also maintain his trustworthiness. If the superior is trusted by the subordinates, communication will be effective.

(vi) Good Listening:

A communication must be a good listener too. A good manager gives his subordinates a chance to speak and express their feelings well before him. The manager also gets some useful information for further communication and can also have a better understanding of the subordinates needs, demands etc.

(vii) Selecting an Effective Communication Channel:

To be effective, the communication should be sent to the receiver through an effective channel. By effective channel we mean that the message reaches its destination in time, to the right person, and without distortion, filtering or omission.

Principles of communication (7 C 's)

There are 7 C's of effective communication which are applicable to both written as well as oral communication. These are as follows:

1. Clear:

The message should be clear and easily understandable to the recipient. The purpose of the communication should be clear to sender then only the receiver will be sure about it. The message should emphasize on a single goal at a time and shall not cover several ideas in a single sentence.

2. Correct:

The message should be correct, i.e. a correct language should be used, and the sender must ensure that there is no grammatical and spelling mistakes. Also, the message should be exact and well-timed. The correct messages have a greater impact on the receiver and at the same time, the morale of the sender increases with the accurate message

3. Complete:

The message should be complete, i.e. it must include all the relevant information as required by the intended audience. The complete information gives answers to all the questions of the receivers and helps in better decision-making by the recipient.

4. Concrete:

The communication should be concrete, which means the message should be clear and particularly such that no room for misinterpretation is left. All the facts and figures should be clearly mentioned in a message so as to substantiate to whatever the sender is saying.

5. Concise:

The message should be precise and to the point. The sender should avoid the lengthy sentences and try to convey the subject matter in the least possible words. The short and brief message is more comprehensive and helps in retaining the receiver's attention.

6. Consideration:

The sender must take into consideration the receiver's opinions, knowledge, mindset, background, etc. in order to have an effective communication. In order to communicate, the sender must relate to the target recipient and be involved.

7. Courteous:

It implies that the sender must take into consideration both the feelings and viewpoints of the receiver such that the message is positive and focused at the 20 audience. The message should not be biased and must include the terms that show respect for the recipient.