

In the process of communication, at least two persons are required: Sender and Receiver. The process of communication begins when a sender wishes to convey some idea, facts, information or opinion to the receiver. The idea is conceived by the sender and is put in such terms that can be conveyed.

Seven major elements of communication process are: (1) sender (2) ideas (3) encoding (4) communication channel (5) receiver (6) decoding and (7) feedback.

Communication may be defined as a process concerning exchange of facts or ideas between persons holding different positions in an organisation to achieve mutual harmony. The communication process is dynamic in nature rather than a static phenomenon.

Communication process as such must be considered a continuous and dynamic interaction, both affecting and being affected by many variables.

(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:

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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:

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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.

Communicator (sender or encoder) is the one who initiates the communication process. He may be an editor, a reporter, a filmmaker, a teacher, a writer, a speaker, a leader or anybody who takes the initiative to start a dialogue. Before one speaks or writes, the message is conceptualized first and then encoded. An effective communication depends on the communication skill, knowledge level, and attitude of the communicator and how he desires to affect his receiver. An ability to think, to organize thoughts quickly and express himself effectively are some of the attributes of a good communicator. Somebody who uses appropriate words,

sentences, tone, etc. may be called a good communicator. He does not fumble, does not look for words and all that he says is accompanied by appropriate gestures and delivered at an acceptable pace. Another element, which is mentioned here, is knowledge level. We must be able to find out the knowledge level of the persons on a particular topic before we start the dialogue. Also, a person must never look down upon the people with whom he communicates. He must never think that the receivers are inferior to him. The attitudes of a person should be mature and the minimum respect due to the other person must be extended to him.

Encoding is the formulation of messages in the communicator's mind, that is, the communicator not only translates his purpose (ideas, thoughts or information) into a message but also decides on the medium to communicate his planned message. He must choose the media (speaking, writing, signaling or gesturing) that the receiver can comprehend well. For instance, an illiterate receiver will fail to understand a written message, but can understand it well if told orally. A message is what a communicator actually produces for transmission using spoken or written words, photographs, paintings, films, posters, etc. a great deal of skill and effort is required to formulate a message, the meaning of which should be understandable to the receiver. Actually the purpose of communication is to influence the receiver and get favorable responses so that appropriate decisions can be taken. The success of communication, therefore, depends on what we say and how we say it. A message can enhance or distort effective communication. For instance, in an interview your intention is to impress interviewer, but if you give answers whose meaning is not clear, the interviewer may perceive that you are incompetent for the job.

A channel is the vehicle through which a message is carried from the communicator to the receiver. The channels of communication are many-written, spoken, verbal, non-verbal, mass media like TV, radio, newspapers, books, etc. choosing the appropriate channel, one most suitable for the message as well as the receiver, is a complicated task. Success and failure of communication depends on the selection of

the right channel. For example, if you have prepared a campaign on 'National Integration' what media would you choose to reach the intended audience? And even after selecting the media you have to decide if it is feasible cost wise, taking into account the number of people and the kind of people who will be exposed to your message, and certain other factors. Actually your intention or desire would be to reach out to the maximum number of people but for efficient communication your attempt should be to minimize time and cost in the total information exchange effort.

The receiver, at the other end of the communication, is the recipient of the message and must possess the same orientation as the communicator. If the receiver does not have the ability to listen, to read, to think, he will not be able to receive and decode the messages in the manner the communicator want him to. For effective communication, the receiver is the most important link in the communication process.

Decoding is the interpretation of the message by the receiver. Actually, the receiver looks for the meaning in the message, which is common to both the receiver and the communicator.

Feedback is the response or acknowledgement of receiver to the communicator's message. The exchange is possible only if the receiver responds. Even through fluttering eyelids, raising an eyebrow, making a face, organizing a point and asking for explanation, the message is shaped and reshaped by the communicator and the receiver until the meaning becomes clear. In this way both participants in communication interact and constantly exchange roles. In face-to-face communication the receiver responds naturally, directly and immediately. This provides the communicator an opportunity to improve and make his communication effective. Feedback, thus, provides an opportunity to evaluate what is right or wrong about a particular communication. It helps to regulate the conversation among two or more individuals and also stimulates and reinforces an idea that is

desired to be communicated.

Noise is an interruption that can creep in at any point of the communication process and make it ineffective. Environment is one major cause that interferes with message reception: like noises from the roadside, constant chattering of individuals outside the communication act, blaring loudspeaker, faulty transmission, etc. noise can occur in other forms also; poor handwriting, heavy accent or soft speech, communication in a poorly lit room, etc. in fact, these are barriers to effective communication. For smooth and effective communication, it is necessary to eliminate or reduce noise as far as possible.