

Mass Communication

Communication! - Definition

Communication comes from Latin word 'Communico' which means sharing and not just sending messages. Therefore, Communication is a social process, and countless ways in which human beings keep in touch with one another. The communication may be verbal, non verbal, written audio-visual etc. The act of communication suggests a sender (of message) receiver. The message is what is commuted between the two. The message is shared, reacted, non reacted. When there is active communication, the effort is for interaction, interchange, dialogue and mutual understanding. Communication presupposes a shared symbolic environment, a social relationship among those who participate, leading to social interaction.

There are numerous def of communication, and there is yet no agreement on any single definition. Some of the more functional def of communication are

- "the transfer or conveying of meaning" - Oxford Dictionary
- "transmission of stimuli" - Colin Cherry
- "one mind affecting other" - Claude Shannon
- "one system influence other" - Charles E. Osgood
- "sharing of experiences on the basis of commonness" - Wilbur Schramm

Communication is more than mere transferring or transmission of ideas or thoughts. It is not a static act as some of the more functional earlier definitions suggest but it is a dynamic process of action and interaction towards desired goal, as suggested by later definition.

Communication is therefore is, a process of sharing or exchange of ideas, information, knowledge, attitude or feeling among two or more persons through certain signs and symbols.

→ we live in communication rather than outside of communication and use communication for our own purposes - Pearce (1989)

- Communication is an exchange of ideas, opinions, emotions between two or more person — W.H. Newman or C.F Sommer
- Communication means the process of passing enformer and understanding — Theohaimann
- Communication is the act of making one's ideas and opinions known to others — Fred G Meyer
- Communication is something so simple and difficult that we can never put it in simple words. — T.S Mathews.

Functions of Communication's

" Being at the heart of all social action and interaction, communication functions as a relating tool that creates understanding, facilitates work, and strengthens collective living among people "

Essentially, the primary function of communication is to inform, instruct/educate, entertain and influence/persuade people to make them function smoothly and effectively. Besides, communication has a secondary function to perform as well through debates and discussion, cultural promotion and integration. It fosters consensus, creativity, and understanding among people, groups and societies so that they live in space and harmony. Each of these functions has been discussed

below

(1) **Information**:- Communication provides us enormous information about the environment in which we live. Information such as news of war, danger, crisis, famine etc. is important for that helps us in taking appropriate step to safeguard our interest.

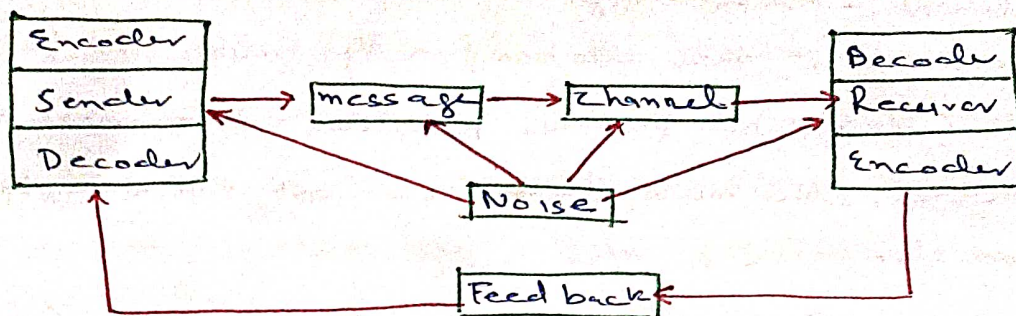
(2) ^{Instruction} One of the major functions of communication is to instruct, educate, and socialize the members of the society. Communication provides a fund of knowledge, expertise, and skills that enable people to operate members of society. It also creates awareness, gives direction and opportunity to people so that they actively participate in public life.

- (3) **Entertainment** :- Human beings must be entertained to break the monopoly of routine and divert their attention from the trouble and tensions of daily life. Communication provides boundless entertainment to people through pictures, films, music, drama, dance, art, literature, comedy, sports, games etc.
- (4) **Persuasion** :- One of the most important functions of communication is to persuade the other party (Aristotle), why is it so? Because persuasion helps in reaching decision or consensus on public policy so that it is possible to control and govern. But it is possible that one may resort to persuasion with a bad motive. The receiver must be careful about the source of such persuasion.
- (5) **Debate & Discussion** :- It is through debate and discussion in media that the public can clarify different viewpoints on issues of public interest and arrive at a general agreement on matters.
- (6) **Cultural promotion** :- Communication provides opportunity for culture to be preserved and promoted. It stimulates individuals to pursue and fulfill their creative urges.
- (7) **Integration** :- Communication is a great integration tool. Through a flow of knowledge or information, individuals, groups or cultures come to know one another, understand and appreciate other's way of life and thereby develop tolerance towards one another. It can also be the greatest disintegrating tool.

Process and Elements of Communication

- Communication is a dynamic process involving a series of action and reactions with a view to achieving a goal
- Communication is a two way process, that is the ability to receive is as important as the ability to send

A complete act of communication is shown in Diagram.



Here the Communicator^{tor} is the encoder, the message is Symbol (Verbal or non Verbal). the channel is one of the transmission medium, the receiver is the decoder, feedback is the response to the message, and noise is any interruption that breaks down the Communication

These, in fact are the essential elements or ingredients or which facilitate the Communication process. Let us examine what role each element plays in the entire Communication process and how all of them are important in making Communication effective.

(I) Communicator (sender or encoder) is the one who initiates the Communication process, he may be editor, a reporter, a film maker, 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 conceptualised first and then encoded. An effective Communication depends on the communication skill, knowledge level, and attitude of the Communicator and how he desire to affect his receiver (David K. Berlo). An ability to think, to organise thoughts quickly and express himself-effectively are some of the attributes of a good Communicator.

Encoding :- is the formulation of messages in the Communicator's mind, that is, the Communicator not only transfer his purpose (ideas, thoughts or info) 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

3. **Message** :- 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 decision can be taken. The success of communication depends on what we say and how we say it. A message can enhance or distort effective communication. ✍

4. **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 T.V, radio, NP, 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.

5. **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~~ and decode the messages ~~in~~ in the manner the communicator wants him to. For effective communication, the receiver is the most important link in the communication process.

6. **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.

7. **Feedback** :- is the response or acknowledgement of receiver to the communicator's message. This exchange is possible only if the receiver responds. Even through fluttering eyelids, raising an eyebrow, making a face, organising a point and asking for explanation, the message is shaped and reshaped by the communicator and the receiver responds naturally, directly and immediately. This provides the

Communicator an opportunity to improve and make his communication effective. Feedback, thus provide 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.

8 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 roadside, constant chattering of individuals outside the communication act, blowing 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.

Kinds of Communication :-

Human beings are engaged in a variety of communication acts. These are (i) Intrapersonal communication (ii) Interpersonal communication (iii) Group communication (iv) Mass communication.

Although each type appears to have distinct feature, they are all much alike in the sense that one enter into a meaningful communication relationship with one or more persons by means of signs and symbols. The following discussion on types of communication will provide us with the understanding of different communication situation in which people interact with each other or disseminate information.

1. **Intrapersonal Communication.**

It refers to communication that transpires inside a person and this happens all the time. It is like talking to oneself, listening to oneself and relating one to oneself. Intrapersonal or auto-communication, therefore, is important in contemplating conceptualizing

and formulating our thoughts or ideas before we actually indulge in ^{oral} overt communication. Just think about your daily activities and involvement with others in the form of dialogue, etc. Every time you do something or speak you rehearse it first within yourself. Isn't it?

2. Interpersonal Communication

This is the universal form of communication that takes place between two individuals. Since it is person-to-person contact, it includes everyday exchanges that may be formal or informal and can take place anywhere by means of words, sounds, facial expression, gesture and postures.

In Interpersonal Communication, there is face-to-face interaction between two persons, that is both are sending and receiving messages. This is an ideal and effective communication situation because you can get immediate feedback. You can clarify and emphasize many points through your expressions, gesture and voice. In Interpersonal Communication, therefore it is possible to influence the other person and persuade him or her to accept your point of view. Since there is proximity between sender and receiver, interpersonal communication has emotional appeal too; it can motivate, encourage, and co-ordinate work more effectively than any other form of communication. Also, in a crisis, through interpersonal channel, flow of information is tremendous e.g. news of violence, famine or disaster.

3. Group Communication :-

Group communication is an extension of interpersonal communication where more than two individuals are involved in exchange of ideas, skill and interests. Groups provide an opportunity for people to come together to discuss and exchange views of common interest. There could be many different groups for as many different reasons. For instance, casually formed groups with friends over a drink, coffee break, games, dances or religious gatherings have a different purpose than that of groups attending a

meetings or seminars to help fight AIDS or interacting with committee members to draft a proposal

Communication in a group, small or big, serves many goals including collective decision making, self-expression, increasing one's effect, elevating one's status, and relaxation

Group Communication is considered effective as it provides an opportunity for direct interaction among the members of the group, it helps in bringing about changes in attitude and beliefs. Group Communication has limitations too, as group interaction is time consuming and often inefficient, especially in an emergency. Besides imbalances in status and goals, may distort the process and the outcome sharply.

4. Mass Communication.

Outside the realm of interpersonal communication exist another form of communication which involves communication with mass audiences and hence the name mass communication takes place are referred to as mass media. Both mass communication and mass media are generally considered synonymous for sake of convenience. Mass communication is unique and different from interpersonal communication as it evident from the following definition. Any mechanical device that multiplies messages and takes it to a large number of people simultaneously is called mass communication. The media through which messages are being transmitted include radio, T.V, newspaper, magazines, films, records, tape records, video cassettes recorder etc, and include large organisations and electronic devices to put across the messages.

Looking at the definition, it is clear that mass communication is a special kind of communication in which the nature of the audience and the feedback is different from that of interpersonal communication. An examination of these components will help in understanding the nature of mass communication itself

Mass Communication: Def

→ Any Mechanical device that multiplies messages and take it to a large number of people simultaneously is called mass communication.

→ Mass Com. is the art of transmitting information ideas and attitudes from one person to another - Edwin Emery

→ Mass Com means dissemination of info, ideas and entertainment by the mass media - D.S Mehta.

Importance

→ It was for the common people

→ Transmit its message with high speed to his audience.

→ Feedback of common mass can be obtained by masscom.

→ Its effects is deep, long life and changeable.

- It required typical organisational structure
- It was targeted to a mass people who are heterogeneous, anonymous
- It is common to all. Its matter contains subjects for all people
Its transmission and organisation is informal
- Through a single source contact made be maintained to a large mass of people
- Mass people are familiar with the organisation of the source hence there is no personal familiarity is there

Conclusion

→ Communication between mass audience which are heterogeneous or anonymous to each other is called as masscom.

→ In terms of Social Scientist this type of social structure of people is to be called as Mass Society or Secondary Society.

→ Mass Com always have relation with only Secondary Society.

→ In a particular Society, every person have some kinds of definite groups. Like as a family member, or his classmate's, or his school.

In this type of groups there is more chance to interact formally and to know each other well hence horizontal or Group Com is better than mass.

Communication Myth

- Communication transmit through a language is a myth.
- we only communicate than we want to communicate.
- words mean to some to both the listener and the speaker/receiver
- meaning lies in minds not in words.

Effective Communication

- ① An effective communication depends on the
 - Communication skill (of sender).
 - Knowledge level (of sender and receiver both)
 - attitude of communicator (of sender and receiver)
 - his desire to effect communication receiver
 - ability to think (sender)
 - to organise thoughts quickly (sender)
 - express himself effectively (sender)
- ② The Success Communication depends on "What to Say and How to Say".
- ③ For efficient communication your attempt should be to minimise time and cost in the total.
- ④ For effective communication receiver is the most imp link in the com. process his nature must be known in advance to as much extent.
- ⑤ feedback must be clear and insubtle because it provides opportunity to improve and make communication effective.
- ⑥ For smooth and effective communication, it is necessary to eliminate or reduce noise as far as possible.
- ⑦ OBJECTIVE must be clear in advance
- ⑧ CLARITY in the message.

Essentials of Good Communication

Wolbert Schramm

- ① It must be so designed and delivered as to gain the attention of the receivers.
- ② It must use signals that are understood in the same way by both source and receiver.
- ③ It must arouse needs in the receiver and suggest some way of satisfying these needs that is appropriate to the receiver's group situation when needed to have the desired response.

Function of Com.

- ① Clarity
- ② Information
- ③ Completeness
- ④ Emphasis on Attention
- ⑤ Consistency
- ⑥ Integration
- ⑦ Use of Informal organization
- ⑧ To know receiver
- ⑨ To use Communicator
- ⑩ Time (at appropriate time)
- ⑪ Simplicity
- ⑫ Use of Media
- ⑬ Feedback

Ten Commandments of Good Com.

- ① Clarify Ideas before Communicating
- ② Examine the true purpose of communication
- ③ Take the entire environment, physical & human into consideration
- ④ when valuable, obtain advice from others in Planning Com.
- ⑤ when possible, convey useful info.
- ⑥ follow up Com.
- ⑦ support word with deed.
- ⑧ be a good listener

The Seven Cs of Com.

- ① credibility
- ② context
- ③ content
- ④ clarity
- ⑤ continuity
- ⑥ Channel
- ⑦ capability

OBJECTIVE of Com

- ① Human Relation
- ② Empathy
- ③ Persuasion
- ④ Dialogue
- ⑤ Informer
- ⑥ Influence
- ⑦ Understanding.