

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION^{1*}

Communication is the art of all social inter course. In order to achieve organisational goal the managers have to frequently communicate their employees the necessary information, decision, ideas, suggestions on so forth. More than three fourth of executive's time is spent in communicating with others. In fact, this reveals the significance of communication in organisations. It is therefore, important to understand the dynamics of communication.

Communication involves imparting the common meaning in another person. According to Allen, "Communication is the sum of all things one person does when he wants to create understanding in the mind of other. It is a bridge of meaning. It involves a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening and understanding". The nature of communication flowing from the above definition may be outlined as follows.

- Communication involves two parties, one who transmits and one who receives the message
- The two respective parties must have the ability to convey and listen to what is communicated.
- Communication includes sending the message and also receiving the response to the message.
- The message may be conveyed verbally, in writing, by means of signs, gestures or symbols.
- Communication is a continuous process and it pervades the entire organisation.

The need for communication is best understood by the fact that an idea, no matter how great, is useless until it is transmitted and understood by others. Some of the functional use of communication are mentioned below:

- Adequate and timely communication help managers discharge their functions of planning, coordinating and control.
- Effective communication ensures willing cooperation from others.
- A good communication system communicating quality information contributes positively to the quality of decisions.
- Effective communication helps morale. It is a powerful instrument to promote a good interpersonal relationship.

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The process of communication includes the following seven components. (Diagram –
at page 36-A.

1. Communicator : the person who has an intended message to communicate. The characteristics of communicator or sender influences the communication process.
2. Encoding : It refers to converting a communication message into symbolic form.
3. Message : The message is the actual physical product from the source of encoding. When we speak, the speech is the message. When we write, the writing is the message. Thus message is what is communicated.
4. Decoding : Translating the sender's message by the receiver is called decoding. It is the sub-process of communication process by which the receiver draws meaning from the symbols encoded by the sender. Receiver's knowledge, attitude and cultural background influence the ability to decode the message.
5. Medium : Medium is a channel through which a communication message travels. Medium is the link that connect the sender and the receiver, Oral communication, body language, visuals, use of telephone, use of notice, circulars, statements, etc. are the various means available as media of communication.
6. Receiver : The person who receives the message is called receiver. Communication to be effective must be receiver oriented.
7. Feedback : The actual response of the receiver to the message communicated to him is known as feedback. Feedback enables the communicator to check whether or not the message sent is properly understood by the receiver. The message can be sent through many channels. These channels are categorised on several basis such as relationship, direction of flow, method used etc.
 - (a) Based on Relationship:
 - (i) Formal channel (established by the Organisation)
 - (ii) Informal channel (Based on Informal or Social relationship).
 - (b) Based on Direction of Flow:
 - (i) Horizontal (communication among the people at same level).
 - (ii) Upward (from lower level employees to higher level employees)
 - (iii) Downward (from higher level to lower level employees)
 - (iv) Diagonal (Between persons at different levels of the hierarchy and also in different departments)

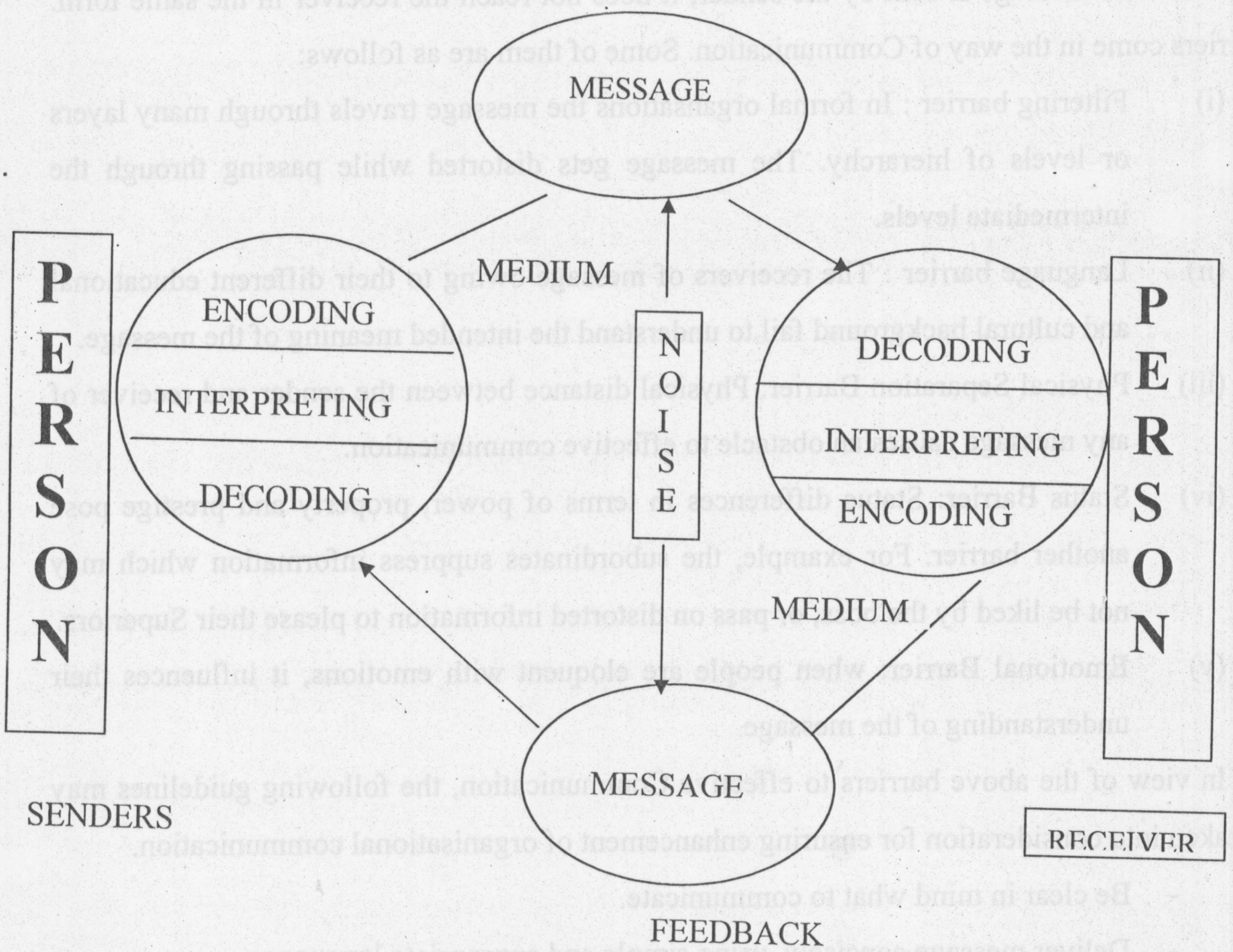


DIAGRAM - 1

(c) Based on Methods

- (i) Verbal communication (oral, face to face talking)
- (ii) Written communication (letter, Circular, order, notice).
- (iii) Gestural Communication (moving hands, postures, eye movement etc.)

When the message is sent by the sender, it does not reach the receiver in the same form.

Barriers come in the way of Communication. Some of them are as follows:

- (i) Filtering barrier : In formal organisations the message travels through many layers or levels of hierarchy. The message gets distorted while passing through the intermediate levels.
- (ii) Language barrier : The receivers of message owing to their different educational and cultural background fail to understand the intended meaning of the message.
- (iii) Physical Separation Barrier: Physical distance between the sender and receiver of any message causes an obstacle to effective communication.
- (iv) Status Barrier: Status differences in terms of power, property and prestige pose another barrier. For example, the subordinates suppress information which may not be liked by the boss; or pass on distorted information to please their Superiors.
- (v) Emotional Barrier: when people are eloquent with emotions, it influences their understanding of the message.

In view of the above barriers to effective Communication, the following guidelines may be taken into consideration for ensuring enhancement of organisational communication.

- Be clear in mind what to communicate.
- Deliver message concisely, using simple and appropriate language.
- Ensure the correct understanding of the message by the receiver by means of feedback mechanism.
- Regulate the flow of communication i.e. prioritisation message.
- Restraint over emotion i.e. involvement in communication with a composed mind.
- Have mutual faith and trust.
- Listen carefully and question effectively wherever there is a need.
- Appropriate body language in Oral communication, i.e. facing the person you are talking to, making eye contact, leaning towards other person, avoiding closed postures, using appropriate facial expression.

- Modulation of voice in oral communication i.e. appropriate volume, tone and speed etc..

Communication, thus means transmission of message or exchange of ideas, facts, opinion or feelings by two or more persons. It is a continuous and pervasive process in every organisation. Organisational success much depends on the communication process. Hence efforts should be made to make organisational communication process effective. The points mentioned above can go a long way to improve the quality of communication. However, it is the individual's skill and ability that matter a lot.
