
UNIT 13 COMMUNICATION

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13.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to :

- explain the meaning of communication
- describe the nature and characteristics of communication
- outline the process of communication
- enumerate and distinguish between different types of channels of communication
- appreciate the importance of **communication** in management
- develop an insight into the **barriers** to effective communication
- state the principles of communication
- suggest how communication can be made effective.

13.1 INTRODUCTION

Communication is as important an aspect of the directing function of management as supervision, motivation and leadership. The success of management depends a great deal on effective communication. Since the purpose of directing is to activate subordinates to work towards the realisation of organisation goals, orders, instructions, plans, policies, rules, procedure and methods of operation must be communicated by managers to their subordinates. Similarly, the problems arising in the work process made at work, actual performance of employees etc. must be known to the superiors for proper guidance to be given to them in the day-to-day activities. In this unit we will discuss the meaning of communication in a business **organisation**, its nature, characteristics and importance. We shall also distinguish between the various channels of communication which may be used in an organisation, **analyse** the barriers to effective communication and discuss how communication can be made effective on the basis of the **principles** of communication.

13.2 WHAT IS MEANT 'BY COMMUNICATION?

Simply stated, communication means **transmission** of messages or exchange of ideas, facts, opinion or feelings by two or more persons. It is the act of making one's **ideas and** opinions known to others. It may also be regarded as the process of meaningfully **transferring information from one person** to another. In an organisational set up, communication is the means by which people are linked together for a common purpose, to establish a common **interest** or mutual understanding. Thus, communication does not simply involve sending of a message by one person. It also involves the receiver listening to it, interpreting it, and responding to it or acting according to it.

13.3 NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is essentially a two-way process. It is not complete unless the receiver of the message has understood the message and his reaction or response is known to the sender of the message. The basic purpose of communication is to create **mutual** understanding and unity of **commonness** of purpose. It may involve exchange of facts by way of information thought, or ideas, opinion or points of view, feelings or emotions. Communication is a continuous process in management. No manager can avoid communicating with his superior and subordinates in the course of his activities. Inadequate or ineffective communication is often responsible for making managerial performance unsatisfactory. Managers at all levels and in all departments must communicate to keep the wheels of operations running smoothly. Thus communication pervades the entire organisation.

The characteristics of communication in a business enterprise may be outlined as follows:

- 1 It is a **cooperative** process involving two parties, one who transmits and one who receives the message.
- 2 The respective **parties** to a **communication** must have the ability to convey and listen to what his counterpart has to communicate.
- 3 Communication includes sending the message as well as receiving the reaction or response to the message and therefore is a two-way traffic.
- 4 The response to a communication is as essential as the initial communication because the response indicates the impact of the communication.
- 5 The message to be communicated may be conveyed verbally, in writing, by means of signs, gestures or symbols. More than one **means** may be adopted to **make** the communication effective.
- 6 The purpose of communication is that of passing information and understanding, to bring about commonness of purpose, interest and efforts.
- 7 Communication is a continuous process for effectiveness and efficiency of on going operations, planning and policy making,
- 8 **Communication** may flow vertically upward or downward between superiors and **subordinates**, horizontally between **persons occupying similar** ranks in different departments, as well as diagonally between persons at different levels in different parts of the **organisation**. Hence, **communication** flows pervade the entire organisation.

13.4 PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION

The **process** of communication **implies** the existence of a sender, a receiver, a message **and** a motivating climate **for it**. The process includes the following steps:

- 1 **Clear perception of the idea or problem** : No message can be **transmitted properly**

unless the idea or problem is formulated with clarity of thought and perception on the **part** of the communicator. It is only on the basis of clear **thinking** that the communicator can decide on the means **to** be adopted to convey the message.

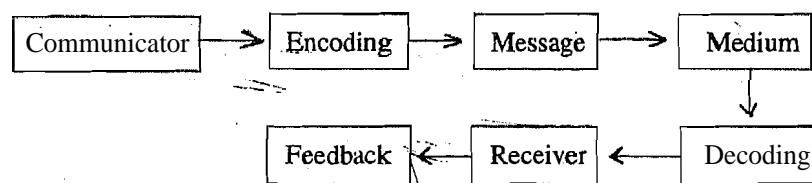
- 2 Participation of others involved : The next step is to secure the **participation** of other persons in the decision to communicate a message. This **may** be helpful in clarifying the ideas through interaction with others, gathering **new** ideas and **suggestions**, and in creating a motivating **climate** for securing positive response to the message.
- 3 Transmission **of** the message : What to communicate, to whom, **when** and how are expected to be decided before actual transmission of the message. Actual transmission involves preparing the matter and the form of communication (known as 'encoding' the message) and selecting the medium or means of communication (oral or written) keeping in view the nature of person or group to be addressed.
- 4 Motivating the receiver of the message : The communicator cannot depend on the message alone to get an appropriate response from the receiver. He must ensure that the receiver of the message is not only able to interpret the message correctly but **is** also prepared to act according to it. Thus, **apart from** the clarity of the message, it must inspire the receiver to do or behave as desired by the sender of the message.
- 5 Evaluation of the effectiveness of communication : After the message has been transmitted **and** accepted by **the** receiver, it remains for the communicator to ascertain and evaluate **the** nature of impact of the communication. This determines whether and to what extent the receiver has positively responded to the message.

Elements in the Communication Process :

The process of **communication** may be better understood if we take into account the basic elements in the **communication** process. The elements are shown in figure 13.1

Figure 13.1

Elements of Communication Process



Let us now discuss them one by one.

- 1 **Communicator** : The communicator plays an important role in the process of communication as the message originates from him. Communicators **may include** managers, subordinates, clients, customers, as well as outside parties.
- 2 **Encoding** : Encoding the matter to be **communicated** is the second element. It refers to preparing the subject of communication (idea, fact, information, etc.) in a suitable language.
- 3 **Message** : The encoded message needs to be transmitted by appropriate means. It may be in verbal or written **form** depending on the purpose in view.
- 4 **Medium** : The medium of communication carries the message from the **communicator** to the receiver. Face-to-face verbal communication, use of telephone, **inter-com** facilities, issue of memorandum, notice, circulars, statements, telegraph, telex, etc. are the various means available as media of communication. Besides, non-verbal media like signals, gestures, etc. may also be used. The choice of medium is an important aspect of **communication**, since proper **medium** also **determines** its effectiveness.
- 5 **Decoding** : Decoding refers to the conversion of the message by the receiver into meaningful **terms** so as to **make** it understandable. This is another important element of communication for the receiver's response depends upon his understanding of the **content** and purpose of the message.

Receiver : The receiver of the message has an equally vital role to play as the communicator. **Indeed**, communication to be effective must be **receiver-oriented**, for it is **the** receiver, his ability to decode the message and understand it, that contribute to a **positive** response from the receiver.

Feedback : The actual response of the receiver to the message communicated to him is **known** as 'feedback'. This is an important element of the communication process for it reduces the possibility of a difference between the intention of the communicator and the **interpretation** of the message by the receiver. Two-way communication requires feedback to the initial message sent and enables the sender to check whether the message received **has** been properly understood by the receiver.

Check Your Progress A

Which of the following statements are True and which are False.

- i) Communication involves something **more than** sending a message,
- ii) **The** basic purpose of **communication** is **to** issue orders and instructions to subordinates.
- iii) Encoding means writing a message in code language.
- iv) **Communication** is always made **either verbally or in writing**.
- v) Two-way communication **ensures feedback** to the initial message sent.
- vi) What **to** communicate must **be** decided first, **and when to communicate** decided later.

Fill in the blanks.

- i) **Communication** is a process in management.
- ii) **The** receiver has to the message to **understand its content** and purpose.
- iii) The response of the party to whom a **message** has been sent is **known as**
- iv) The respective parties to a **communication** must have **the** ability to, **and**, **what** his counterpart **communicates**.
- v) The encoded message **may** be **transmitted** through one or more

13.5 CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

The direction or path through which the flow of communication takes place is **known** as the **channel** of communication. The channels of communication can be divided on the basis of
1) the relationships (2) the direction of the flow and (3) the method used.

13.5.1 Based on Relationships

The direction of the flow is **basically governed** by the relationships between the parties involved. Thus **communication** may be of two broad types: (1) **formal** (2) informal

1 Formal communication : The **formal** channels of communication are based on **organisational relationships** established formally by the management of the organisation. Orders, instructions and information which flow through these channels are official communication. In other words, the formal channels of communication **are** used for the transmission of official messages within or outside the organisation. In every organisation, the lines of **communication** correspond to the chain of command, that is the superior-subordinate relations in the hierarchy. A superior gives orders to the subordinates directly under his authority but cannot do so to anyone who is more than one level below him in the hierarchy. Similarly, a subordinate cannot report on his performance or seek information from anyone except his immediate superior. **He** cannot directly communicate with any one **who** is more than one level higher in the hierarchy. He can do so only through his immediate superior. Formal channels of communications help management in maintaining **order** and add to the seriousness of purpose of the message transmitted. But, formal communication which is intended to flow through more than one level suffers from delay and chances of distortion.

2 Informal communication : Communication which takes place on the basis of informal or social **relations** among people in an **organisation is known** as **informal** communication. Such communication does not generally follow the official, **formal** channels. **This type of communication** occurs due to the natural desire of human beings to communicate with each

other **and** is the result of social interaction among people. It may take place between persons cutting across the organisational positions occupied by them and among people **working** in different work units. The origin and flow of informal communication are difficult to trace. Hence, it is also known as 'grapevine'. The messages which flow through informal channels are of varied nature. It may be purely personal or related with **organisational matters**.

The characteristic feature of informal communication is that it spreads very rapidly among people. But at the same time, it may **consist** of half-truths and **rumours** passing between members of the organisation. No one can be made responsible for it, nor is it **taken** seriously. Moreover, it may lead to leakage of confidential information. Sometimes it causes tension. It is also liable to a great deal of distortion as it passes from one person to another. However, management can take advantage of it by maintaining friendly and cooperative relations with others.

13.5.2 Based on Direction of Flow

Whether the **communication** is formal or informal in nature, channels of communication may be **divided** according to the direction of the flow. These are : (1) vertical (2) horizontal (or lateral) and (3) diagonal communication. Let us examine the implication of these types.

- 1 Vertical Communication : This type refers to communication that takes place between persons occupying superior and subordinates positions in the organisational hierarchy. Orders and instructions issued by managers to **subordinates** and performance reports sent by subordinates to the managers are typical examples of vertical communication. It may be sub-divided into : (a) downward communication and (b) upward communication.
 - a) 'Downward Communication : Communication which flows from higher-level managers to others in lower-level positions is generally known as downward communication. Thus, messages transmitted from the superior to his subordinates, or from a manager to the **assistant** manager are downward communication. It also includes directives and messages which are issued by top management and are transmitted down the hierarchy through intermediate levels of management to employees at the lower levels. Such communications may consist of verbal messages conveying orders, policies, procedures, or written matter conveyed through notices, circulars, memorandas, bulletins, handbooks etc.
 - b) Upward Communication : This type of communication flows from lower level managers and **employees** to those in higher level positions. Information and reports communicated by subordinate workers to the foreman, by the manager to the general manager, or by the chief executive to the Board of Directors, are examples of upward communication. The upward channels of communication not only enable higher level managers to get valuable information but also opinions and suggestions from lower levels at the time of making decisions on plans and policies. The opportunity of upward communication encourages people to transmit their complaints and grievances to superiors, draw the attention of managers to problems and make proposals for improving the **efficiency** of work performance in the organisation. .
- 2 **Horizontal** Communication : **Communication** that takes place directly between two persons having equal ranks in the managerial hierarchy or between two subordinates **under** the same manager is called horizontal communication or lateral **communication**. Thus, horizontal communication consists of interaction between people in the same or different departments. This facilitates coordination of activities which are interdependent. For example, coordination of production and sales activities requires continuous exchange of information between the respective managers of the two departments. The same is true of factory manager and repairs and maintenance manager.
- 3 Diagonal Communication : **This type** of communication implies exchange of information between persons who are in positions at different levels of the hierarchy and also in different departments. This type of **communication** does not take place except under special **circumstances**. For example, the Cost Accountant **placed** in the Accounts Department may want reports from the sales representatives for the purpose of distribution cost analysis. These reports may be sent directly to the Cost Accountant instead of being **sent** to the **sales** manager. **This is** an example. However, formal

communications are normally expected to be routed through the manager who is in charge of the department from which the communication is made.

3.5.3 Based on Method Used

the basis of the methods used for the purpose, communication may be : (i) verbal
 (ii) written (iii) gestural.

Verbal Communication: When the messages are transmitted orally it is called verbal communication. It is more effective method of conveying ideas, feelings, suggestions, information etc. It gives communication a personal touch. It is especially useful when the manager wants to know the reaction of the other person quickly. It is economical both in terms of time and money. There can be nothing better and more economical than passing a verbal order. Verbal communication includes face-to-face contact, interviews, joint consultation. However, verbal communication has its drawbacks. It is not useful when the number of persons to be communicated is more and if the communicator and receiver are at places far away from one another. Moreover, when the subject matter of communication has to be kept as a record, verbal communication will not serve the purpose.

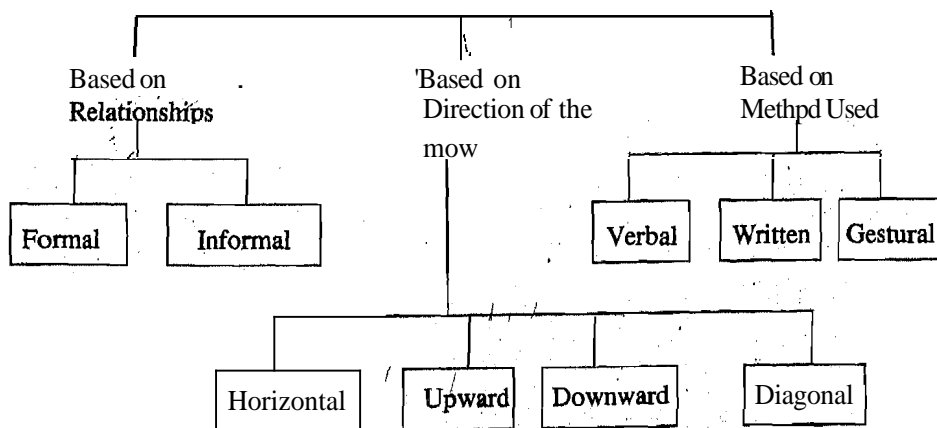
Written Communication: In a formal organisation, written communication is the most important media for conveying ideas, information etc. In every such organisation one comes across a variety of orders, instructions, reports and bulletins, serving as the basis of communication. Written communication is permanent, tangible and verifiable. The record is maintained and both the sender and the receiver have access to the records for further clarification. Written communication is advantageous where the subject matter to be conveyed is lengthy or where it is intended to be conveyed to a large number of persons. One fundamental limitation of written communication is that it is usually time-consuming. Written communications tend to be very formal and lack personal touch. It is difficult to maintain complete secrecy about a written communication. Some day or other it is bound to reach those whom it was intended to be kept as a secret.

Gestural Communication: Communication through gestures is often used as a means to make verbal or written communication more effective. One has only to attend meeting addressed by a trade union leader to see how he uses different gestures by hands, movement of eyes to make his point. If sometimes the superior pats his subordinate on his back, it will be considered as appreciation for his work. This will in turn increases the efficiency of the subordinate.

All types of channels of communication described above have been summarised in Figure 13.2

Figure 13.2

Types of Channels of Communication



13.6 IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

The significance of effective communication in a modern organisation is recognised all over the world. It is of vital importance for efficient and smooth functioning of an enterprise. The importance is evidenced by the fact that every manager on an average spends 80-90 p.c. of his time in the communication process.

Let us analyse the basis of its importance.

- 1 Adequate and timely communication is necessary for the managerial functions of planning, **organising**, directing and controlling to be carried out **successfully**.

It is on the basis of information communicated to them that plans can be developed by top management. On the other hand, plans, policies and procedures must be communicated to operating managers and employees without which implementation of plans can hardly be possible. Similarly to establish organisational relations, people must be informed about their position, tasks, and authority in the **organisation**. The directing function also **requires proper** communication between managers and their subordinates and between **members of** work-groups. Only then it is possible to achieve group goals as well as organisation goals. Again, timely feedback of actual performance against planned targets forms the basis of the control function of management.

- 2 Effective communication contributes a great **deal** to higher efficiency in job performance. It ensures willing cooperation of others due to the close understanding of ideas and instructions established through communication. Indeed a direct relationship exists between the **effectiveness** of communication and efficiency in an organisation.
- 3 The quality of decisions made in an organisation depends largely on the amount and quality of **information** available to the decision maker. However, the quality of information depends on the effectiveness of the communication system. Thus, a good communication system contributes positively to the quality of decisions.
- 4 Communication is the **means** by which delegation and decentralisation of authority is accomplished in an organisation. Operating **managers** must have a clear understanding of their respective limits of authority and accountability and the jobs assigned to them. This is possible only through **the existence** and use of communication channels.
- 5 **Coordination** of interdependent activities requires communication to flow horizontally as well as through all levels of **authority**.
- 6 The effectiveness of communication **also** helps in moulding attitudes and building up employee morale. It plays an **important** role in removing misunderstanding and developing harmonious labour-management relations.

Check Your Progress B

- 1 Fill in the blanks.
 - a) **Formal channels of communication** are based on relationships established by management.
 - b) **Downward communication** flows from managers to others occupying positions.
 - c) and communication is essential for managerial functions to be carried out successfully.
 - d) **Effective communication** leads to in job performance.
 - e) **Horizontal communication** facilitates of interdependent activities.
- 2 Which of the following statements are True and which are False.
 - i) **Diagonal communication** involves exchange of information between people of different ranks and working in different departments.
 - ii) **Upward communication** should be allowed only when there is a crisis or emergency.
 - iii) **Downward communication** takes place only at the lowest level of the hierarchy of management.
 - iv) **The channels of formal communication** correspond to the chain of command in the organisation.
 - v) **No one can be held responsible for informal communication.**

3.7 BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Effective communication implies that the message transmitted by the sender is **understood, accepted** and acted upon by the receiver for the intended purpose. In **actual** practice, one or more factors often stand in the way of effective communication. These are obstacles or **barriers**, which create confusion, misunderstanding and may even lead to breakdown of the **communication** process. The following types of barriers are commonly found to create **problems** in organisations.

Multiplicity of Organisational Layers: The structure of organisation often causes messages to **be** distorted, stopped or absorbed particularly when there are many layers or **levels** in the hierarchy. In upward communication, the message tends to **be** distorted as it passes through intermediate levels. Information may be withheld at **a** particular level or passed on with changes. This is done **if** it is likely to have the effect of carrying **an** unfavourable impression to higher levels about the performance of **the** manager at that level. Downward flow of communication may also be distorted at intermediate levels to suit the convenience or serve the interest of managers concerned. This is known as 'filtering' of the message.

Language Barrier: The language used for communicating a message **may** create problems due to the difficulty of interpreting words or due to lack of clarity of **expression**. People with different educational and cultural background and intellectual ability may find it hard to understand the message due to jargon used by the sender. In such cases, the same word may be **attributed** different meanings by the sender and receiver of the message. This is known as the problem of semantics.

Status Barrier: Status relationships in an organisation may also be a serious obstacle to effective communication. People placed in superior and subordinate positions have difference in status on account of their respective ranks in the hierarchy. It is due to the status difference that subordinates often suppress or withhold information which may not be liked by their superiors, or pass on distorted information to please their superiors. No subordinate **likes** to reveal his mistakes to his superior. Similarly, **the** status consciousness of the superior prevents him from fully communicating information which may adversely reflect on his ability or **judgement**.

Physical Distance as a Barrier: In large organisations, the physical distance between the sender and the receiver of any message may become an obstacle to effective communication. This is because it is difficult to evaluate whether the receiver has understood, accepted and acted on the message sent to him if his workplace is far away from that of the sender.

Emotional and Psychological Barriers: When people have strong **attitudes** and feelings, **they** are emotionally affected by messages received **which** do not conform to their attitudes. Hence, they tend to either **reject** or refuse to accept **such** messages. The sender **may** also distort a message if he feels strongly about it or is under emotional stress at the time. Psychological barriers **often** arise due to lack of mutual trust and confidence. Similarly when subordinates have a favourable image of the superior **they** are psychologically more inclined to accept and respond positively to his messages. It does not happen if they have an unfavourable image. The image is built on the basis of experience and **interaction** between the superior and the subordinate. Any communication which purports to **bring** about a change in the existing state of affairs also creates psychological barriers since people generally do not like a change particularly when its effects are uncertain..

13.8 PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION

There are no fixed principles for the guidance of communication by the managers of an organisation. The guidelines which are useful for **making** communications effective may be regarded as principles of communication. These are listed below:

- 1 The problem or idea to be communicated needs to be **analysed** systematically so as to be clear about it.

- 2 **The purpose** of each communication, that is, what is really to be accomplished through the communication should determine the language, means and media of communication.
- 3 The meaning and intention of communication is conveyed not by words alone. The timing, physical setting, and the organisational climate are important **determinants** of the success of communication.
- 4 Consultation with others may be appropriately made in planning communication so as to gain additional insight and objectivity to the message. .
- 5 The basic content and overtones of the message as well as receptiveness to the viewpoint of the **receiver** have considerable impact on the effectiveness of communication.
- 6 Whenever possible, messages should convey something of value to the receiver in the light of his interest and needs.
- 7 **Communications** have greater chances of **being** effective when followed up by encouraging the receiver to express his reactions, or by review of performance and ensuring a feedback.
- 8 Although communications are primarily necessary to meet immediate situations they must also be consistent with long-term interest and goals.
- 9 The **most** persuasive communication is not what is conveyed through words but the action of the communicator following the communication.
- 10 The sender of a message should not but ensure that the message is **understood** but he must try to understand the reaction and attitude of the receiver by listening to his viewpoint.

13.9 HOW TO MAKE COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVE

The principles or guidelines to making communications effective are of a general nature, operationally speaking, a number of more specific suggestions can be made to ensure the effectiveness of communications.

- 1 **Regulating the flow of communications:** Planning communication should involve determining the priority of messages to be **communicated** so that managers may concentrate on more important messages of high priority. Otherwise, there is a possibility of managers being overloaded **with** the task of communication. Similarly, incoming communication should be **edited** and condensed, if possible, to reduce the chances of overlooking or ignoring important messages received.
- 2 **Feedback:** Along with each communication there is need for feedback, that is, communication of the response or reaction to the initial message. Feedback may include the receiver's acceptance and understanding of the message, his action or **behavioural** response, and the result achieved. Two-way **communication** is thus considered to be more helpful in establishing mutual understanding than one-way communication.
- 3 **Language of the message:** Use of appropriate language is essential for effective **communication**. While preparing the **message**, its sender must keep in view the climate, as well as **the** ability of receiver to interpret the message accurately. **Abstract ideas should** be explained and vague expressions avoided. He must keep in view **the semantic** problem, that is, the **possibility** of particular words having more than one **meaning**. **Experimental** studies have shown that oral communication accompanied by its written version is more effective in bringing about the desired response.
- 4 **Importance of listening carefully:** Listening to verbal messages **carefully** implies an active process. **Half-hearted** attention to the communication is often the cause of **misunderstanding and confusion**. A listener has to be patient, mentally composed, and **avoid distractions while receiving** the message. He should be in a position to concentrate on the message and seek clarification, if necessary. On the **other hand**, the sender of the message must **also** be prepared to listen to what the receiver has to say, and respond to his questions, if any.

Restraint over emotion: Strong feelings and emotional stress on the part of either the sender or receiver of messages are serious handicaps in the communication process. To avoid any negative impact of emotion on the content of the message; the sender may defer the communication for sometime or consult to exercise restraint over his psychological feelings to avoid misinterpreting the message and to be able to respond to it with a composed mind.

Non-verbal signals of compliance: Verbal messages are generally accepted orally by the receiver. But whether action will follow the acceptance of the message is not certain. It is, therefore, suggested that in the case of verbal communication the sender should observe the action of the receiver to ascertain whether the actions are in conformity with the intent and understanding of the message.

Mutual trust and faith: No amount of seriousness of the parties involved can make the process of communication effective unless there is mutual trust and faith between them. The best means of developing these among people in an organisation are honesty of purpose and openness of the managers. However, it takes time to build such a climate. Both managers and subordinates have to cooperate for the purpose so that individuals feel free to make suggestions and correct each other's views without misunderstanding.

Check Your Progress C

- 1 Which of the following statements are True and which are False.
 - a) Communication suffers from semantic barrier when the message is conveyed in vague words.
 - b) As a principle, communication must be consistent with long-term interests and goals while meeting short-term needs.
 - c) Action should be taken on messages on a 'first come first serve' basis.
 - d) A subordinate should not be permitted to ask questions on the communication received from his superior.
 - e) Verbal acceptance of a communication is not enough, it must be acted upon.
- 2 Fill in the blanks.
 - i) Mutual faith and trust can be developed if there is and to the viewpoints of each other.
 - ii) Messages should convey something of value to the receiver in the light of his and
 - iii) Subordinates do not feel free to express their views on policy matters to their superiors due to difference in
 - iv) The most persuasive communication is that which is conveyed through of the communicator following the communication.
 - v) is as important in communication as speaking.

13.10 LET US SUM UP

Communication means transmission of messages or exchange of ideas, facts, opinion or feelings by two or more persons. Communication does not only involve sending a message but also its acceptance by the receiver. It is essentially a two-way process. It is not complete unless the receiver has understood the message and his reaction is known to the sender of the message.

Communication is a cooperative process involving two parties, each having the ability to convey and listen to what his counterpart communicates. The response to a communication is as essential as the initial communication. The message may be communicated verbally, in writing, through gestures, signs or symbols. The purpose of communication is to pass information and understanding to bring about commonness of purpose, interest and efforts. It is a continuous process in management, The process of communication includes the following steps; (1) clear perception of the idea or problem by the sender, (2) participation of others involved, (3) transmission of the message, (4) motivation of the receiver, and (5) evaluation of the effectiveness of communication.

The basic elements of the communication process are:

- (a) The communicator, (b) Encoding, (c) Message, (d) Medium, (e) Decoding, (f) Receiver, and (g) Feedback.

Communication channels may be of two broad types: **Formal** and **Informal**. **Formal** channels of communication are based on **organisational** relationships **formally** established by the management. These are used for the **transmission of official** messages within and **outside the organisation**. Formal communication corresponds to the **chain** of command.

Communication which takes place on **the** basis of informal or social relations among **people in an organisation** is known as **informal communication**. Generally, such **communications** do not follow the formal channels. It is also known as **grapevine**. Channels of communication may be divided into three categories according to the direction of **the flow viz.**, vertical, horizontal or lateral, and diagonal communication.

Communication that takes place between persons occupying superior and subordinate **positions** in the **organisational** hierarchy is known as **vertical communication**. The direction of **flow** of vertical communication may be downward or upward. Downward communication **flows from** higher level managers to others in lower level positions. **Upward communication flows from** subordinates to superiors in the hierarchy of management. Horizontal or **lateral** communication refers to communications that take place **directly** between persons **having equal ranks**, or between subordinates under the same manager. **Diagonal communication implies** exchange of information between persons **who are** placed at **different levels and in different** departments. Adequate and timely **communication is** necessary **for managers to be able to carry out** their functions **successfully**. Effective **communication contributes to** higher efficiency in job performance and ensures willing cooperation of others. **The quality of** decisions made by managers depends largely on the amount and **quality of information** available to them. Further, communication **provides the means by which delegation and decentralisation is accomplished**. ~~Coordination~~ of interdependent activities requires continuous **flow of information** and exchange of views among managers. The effectiveness of **communication** also helps in moulding the attitudes and building up employee morale. Barriers which stand in the way of effective communication are: (1) multiplicity of organisational layers; (2) language and semantic problems; (3) status difference; (4) physical distance; (5) emotional and psychological factors.

The guidelines or principles which may be followed for effective communication include: (1) systematic analysis of the idea or problem; (2) the purpose **determining** language, means and media of communication; (3) the importance of timing, physical setting, and the organisational climate as **determinants** of the success in communication; (4) planning communication in consultation with others; (5) consideration of the impact of the basic content and overtones of the message and receptiveness to the receiver's viewpoints; (6) necessity of conveying something of value to the receiver; (7) need for follow-up by encouraging the receiver to give his reaction, or by review of performance and ensuring feedback; (8) consistency of communication with the **long-term** interest and goals; (9) importance of **action** following the initial communication; (10) understanding the reaction and attitude of the receiver.

To make communication effective, the following factors should be given due attention; (1) regulating the flow of communication; (2) feedback; (3) use of appropriate language; (4) listening carefully; (5) restraint over emotion; (6) looking for non-verbal cues of compliance; and (7) mutual trust and faith.

13.11 KEY WORDS

Communication Barriers: The problems which create confusion, misunderstanding and lead to breakdown of communication process.

Communication Channel: The **direction** or path through which the flow of **communication** takes place.

Decoding: Conversion of a message by the receiver into meaningful term.

Diagonal communication: Exchange of **information** between persons holding different ranks and placed in different **departments**.

Downward Communication: The flow of **communication** is from the higher to the **lower** levels of management.

,coding: Expressing the message to be communicated in a suitable language.

edback: The reaction or response of the receiver to the message.

ormal Communication: It refers to communication among people strictly as per the **annels** laid down in the organisation structure.

rapevine: Channels or flow of informal communication.

orizontal or Lateral Communication: Communication between persons holding similar **anks** in the same or different departments.

ormal Communication: It flows through unofficial channels not specified in the **rganisation** structure.

ransmission: The act of saying, sending or issuing the message.

oward Communication: This type of communication **flows from** lower level positions to **gher** level positions.

ertical Communication: Row of communication between persons having **superior-**
ubordinate relations.

3.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1 (a) Right (b) Wrong, (c) Wrong, (d) Wrong, (e) Right, (f) Wrong.
- 2 (i) Continuous, (ii) decode, (iii) Feedback, (iv) Convey, **listen to**, (v) media
- 1 (a) Organisational, (b) Higher-level, lower-level, (c) Adequate, timely
(d) Efficiency, (e) Coordination
- 2 (i) Right, (ii) **Wrong**, (iii) Wrong, (iv) Right, (v) Right.
- 1 (a) Wrong, (b) Right, (c) Wrong, (d) Wrong, (e) **Right**.
- 2 (i) Honesty of purpose, openness, (ii) Interest, **need**, (iii) Status, (iv) Action,
(v) Listening.

13.13 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

- Define 'Communication'. Why is communication of vital importance to management?
- State and explain the basic elements of the communication process.
- What are the steps involved in the process of communication? Discuss.
- Distinguish **between** formal and **informal** communication. Why is informal communication called 'grapevine'?
- Explain the nature and significance of vertical, horizontal and diagonal communication channels.
- What are the most common **barriers** to effective communication? How can they be overcome?
- Discuss the major principles of communication. How can communication be made effective?
- Write Notes on
 - a) Status barrier to communication.
 - b) Communication channels.
 - c) Emotional and psychological barriers to communication.
 - d) Informal communication.

SOME USEFUL BOOKS

Bhushan, Y.K. 1985. *Fundamentals of Business Organisation and Management*, Sultan Chand & Sons;, New Delhi (Part Four, Chapter 6).

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Koontz, Harold and Cyril O'Donnell, 1987. *Management*, McGraw-Hill Book Company; New Delhi. (Part 4, Chapters 17, 18, 20, Part 5, Chapters 22, 23, 24).

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Singh, B.P. and T.N. Chhabra, 1988. *Business Organisation and Management*, Kitab Mahal; Allahabad (Section Seven, Chapter 33, Section Four Chapters 10 to 13).