

CHAPTER 12
Communication in organisations



COMMUNICATION IS THE
MANAGER'S JOB

- Communication permeates every function of management
 - Planning
 - Leading
 - Organising
 - Control
- Managers facilitate strategic conversation
 - Dialogue across boundaries and hierarchical levels about the team or organisation's vision, critical strategic themes and the values that help achieve important goals.

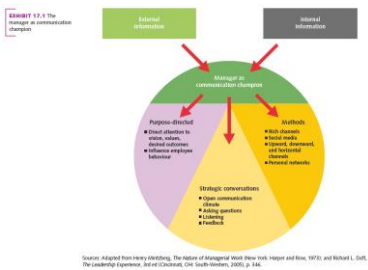


COMMUNICATION

- Is the process by which information is **exchanged** and **understood** by two or more people, usually with the intent to **motivate** or **influence** behaviour
- Managers are communication champions



THE MANAGER AS COMMUNICATION CHAMPION





THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

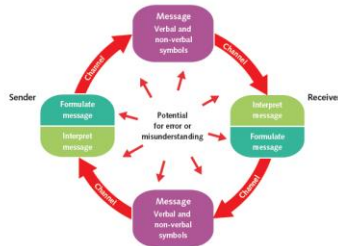
The communication process involves several steps:

- Encode
 - Select symbols with which to compose the message
- Choose a channel
 - The carrier of a communication
- Decode
 - Translate the symbols used for purpose of interpreting its meaning
- Feedback
 - Two-way process



MODEL OF COMMUNICATION

EXHIBIT 17.2 Model of communication



COMMUNICATING AMONG PEOPLE

- Effective communication requires:
- Open communication climate
- Choice of communication channels
- The ability to persuade
- Ability to **listen and ask relevant questions**
- Awareness of gender differences in communication
- Awareness of non-verbal communication

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

- Communication channels differ in their capacity to convey data
- Hierarchy of channel richness is influenced by:
 - 1 Ability to handle multiple cues simultaneously
 - 2 Ability to facilitate rapid, two-way feedback
 - 3 Ability to establish a personal focus

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

- Messages sent through **actions** and **behaviour** rather than words
- Significant information sent through:
 - Facial expression, voice, mannerisms, posture and dress
- Occurs mostly **face-to-face**



ORGANISATIONAL AND WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION

- Concerns organisation as a whole
- Typically flow in three directions:
 - Downward
 - Upward
 - Horizontal
- Managers use **formal** as well as **informal** communication channels



FORMAL COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

- Involves written and verbal ways of exchanging information among people who have recognised status in the organisation
- Primary forms:
 - Downward and upward
 - Traditional, vertically organised companies
- Today's organisations emphasise **horizontal** communication
 - Sharing information across departments and levels



DOWNWARD, UPWARD AND HORIZONTAL COMMUNICATION

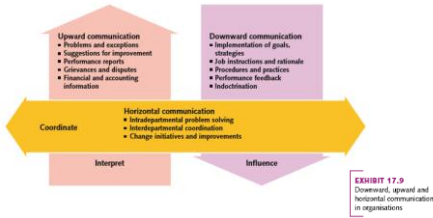


EXHIBIT 17.0
Downward, upward and horizontal communication in organisations



DOWNWARD COMMUNICATION

- Refers to messages and information sent from top management down to employees
- Typically involves:
 - Goals and strategies
 - Job instructions and rationale
 - Procedures and practices
 - Performance feedback
 - Coaching and training



UPWARD COMMUNICATION

- Includes messages that flow from the lower to the higher levels of the organisation's hierarchy
- Five types of information communicated upward:
 - Problems and exceptions
 - Suggestions for improvement
 - Performance reports
 - Grievances and disputes
 - Financial and accounting information



HORIZONTAL COMMUNICATION

- Refers to the **lateral** or **diagonal** exchange of messages among peers or co-workers
- 3 main categories:
 - 1 Intradepartmental problem solving
 - 2 Interdepartmental coordination
 - 3 Change initiatives and improvements



PERSONAL COMMUNICATION

- **Informal** communication **outside** the formally authorised channels
- These channels **co-exist** with formal channels
- Is a **primary** way that information is spread and work gets done
- 3 important types:
 - Personal network
 - The **grapevine**
 - Written communication (contd.)



PERSONAL COMMUNICATION CONTD.

- Developing personal communication networks
 - Acquisition and cultivation of personal relationships that cross departmental, hierarchical and even organisational boundaries.
 - Tips
 - Build it before you need it
 - Never eat lunch alone
 - Make it a win-win
 - Focus on diversity



THE GRAPEVINE

- 90 % of employees engage in gossip
- The grapevine is a valuable tool for managers
 - Provides an efficient channel to communicate information faster than through formal channels
 - Can be a useful, early **warning system**
- In times of crisis, managers need to manage the grapevine effectively



TWO GRAPEVINE CHAINS IN ORGANISATIONS

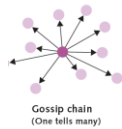
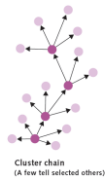


EXHIBIT 17.8 Two grapevine chains in organisations



WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION

- 2 other sources of communication include
- The use of social media
 - Internet-based
 - Allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content
 - External communication
 - Customers
 - Employees



CRISIS COMMUNICATION

- A critical skill
- Strategies for effective crisis communication:
 - Stay calm, listen hard
 - Be visible
 - Get the awful truth out
 - Communicate a vision for the future



COMMUNICATIONS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Two important aspects of communication in sustainability:

- Need to communicate organisation's policies, strategies and activities relating to sustainability
 - Ensure achievements are publicised
- Advance sustainability outcomes in the firm's own communication processes
 - Video conferences, Internet (VOIP), etc. are better than air travel on the environment
 - Also use technology to enable telecommuting

