

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS IN BUSINESS

LECTURE TEN

GROUP: A group is a two or more individual who interact regularly with each other to accomplish a common purpose or goal.

The study of group behavior is essential for an organization to achieve its goals. Individual and group behavior vary from each other. In 1920, Elton Mayo and his associates conducted the Hawthorne experiments and came to know that the group behavior has great impact on productivity. The importance of group behavior has been realized from time to time.

Human behavior consists of individuals, who move in groups. The knowledge of group behavior as well as individual behavior is necessary for a manager. He must understand group psychology and should also understand individual behavior in the context of group behavior. The group in which he moves influences individual work, job satisfaction and effective performance.

DEFINITION: "A collection of two or more interacting individuals with a stable pattern of relationships between them, who share common goals and who perceive themselves as being a group".

According to Marvin Shaw, "a group comprises, of two or more persons who interact with one another in such a manner that each person influences and is influenced by each other person'.

Need for a Group

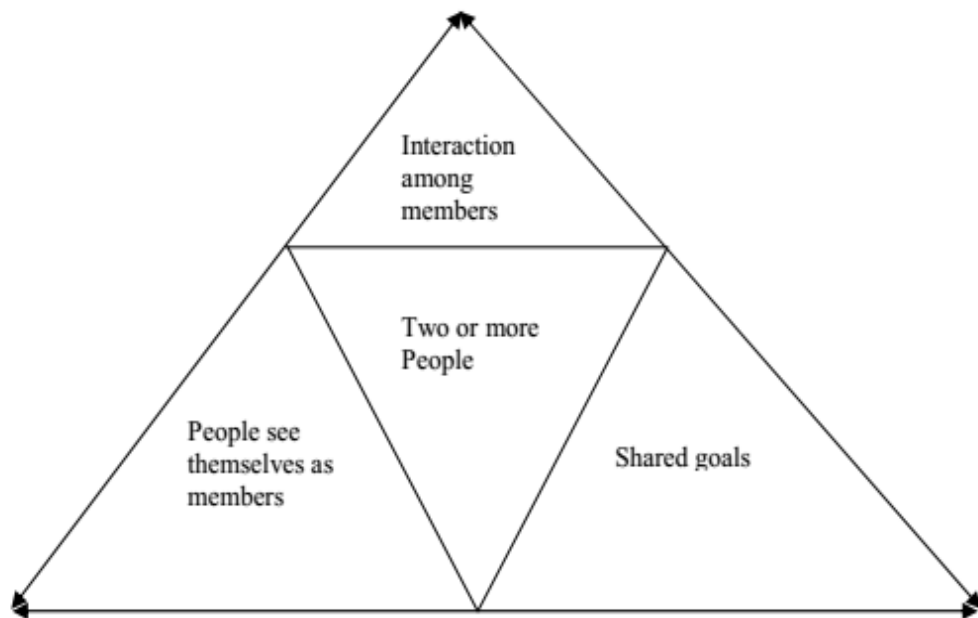
The reasons for the need, of groups are as follows:

- Management of modern organizations make mutual efforts to introduce industrial democracy at workplace. They use project teams and work committees where workers get due recognition. They willingly participate in decision-making.
- The tasks in modern industries are becoming more complex, tedious and of repetitive nature. Work committees, work groups and teams are formed to monitor the work. They also make the environment at workplace more lively.
- Groups help in making participative management more effective.
- Groups of all kinds and types help by cooperating in all the matters related to production and human relations to work effectively in the organization.

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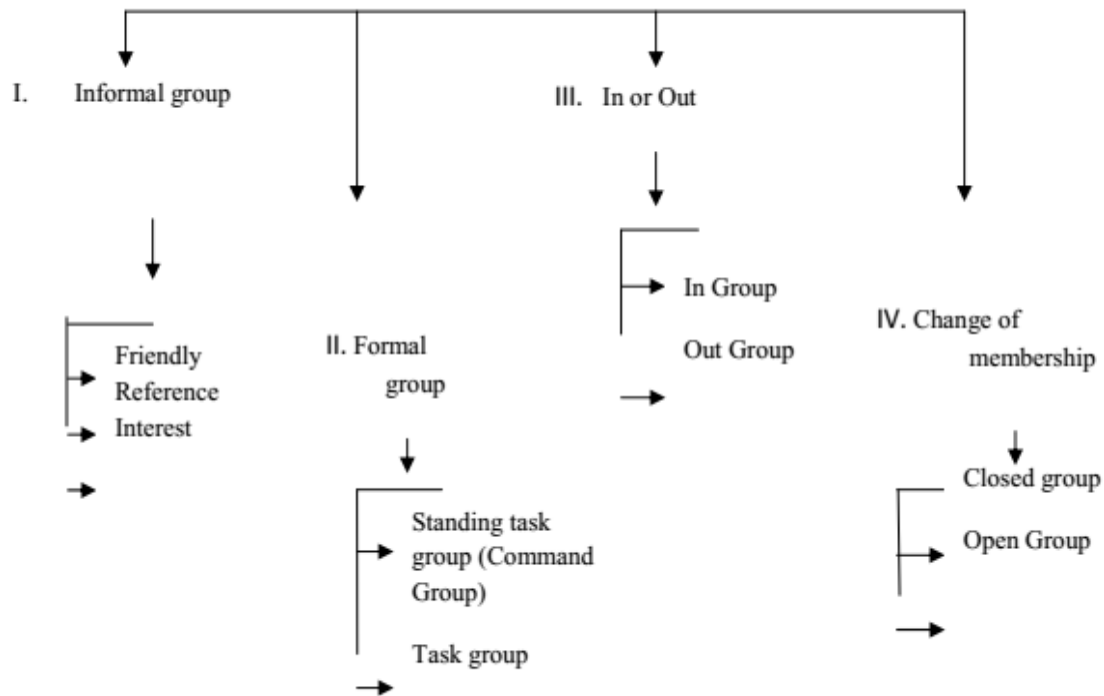
- An individual cannot perform each and every task. Group efforts are required for its completion. For example, building a ship, making of a movie, construction of a fly-over, etc. All these require coordinated and unified efforts of many individuals, working in a group.
- A group can judge in a better way as compared to an individual.
- While accomplishing tasks, all members of a group together use their creative and innovative ideas than a single individual.
- In a group, individuals communicate with each other, discuss their work performances and take suggestions from each other to make it better.
- Group efforts affect an individual, his attitude and behavior.
- Group has the ability to satisfy the needs of its members.

GROUP CHARACTERISTICS



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TYPES OF GROUPS



I. INFORMAL GROUP(CLIQUE):-

- Neither formally structured, nor organizationally determined.
- It forms naturally in the work environment due to social contact.
- Members roles are loosely defined based on members expectation and the needs of a group at any particular moment.

1. FRIENDSHIP GROUPS:-

Develops based on common characteristics, enlightened managers maintain good relations with friendship groups because these groups have tremendous influence on their members that managers would prefer to have directed towards organizational goals.

2. INTEREST GROUPS:-

This kind of groups is made of individuals who affiliate to achieve an objective of mutual interest.

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3. REFERENCE GROUPS:-

Is any group with which an individual identifies for the purpose of forming opinions or making decisions? These groups provide value for individuals on which decisions and norms are formed.

II. FORMAL GROUP:-

- It is the one that is deliberately created to perform a specific task.
- A number of people assigned to a specific job task form a formal group.
- A distinctive feature of formal groups is that a hierarchy of authority exists, with specified members rules and regulations.

1. A **STANDING TASK GROUP** as known as command group is permanently specified in the organizational structure and consists of a supervisor who exercises formal authority over subordinates.
2. A **GROUP TASK** is a temporary formal group to solve specific problems. The employees belong to different departments and they stay along till the task is completed.

III. IN GROUP AND OUT GROUP:-

The group to which one belong are called in group and the group to which one do not belong are called out group.

IV. CHANGE OF MEMBERSHIP:-

a. OPEN AND CLOSED GROUP:-

In open groups, the members keep changing new members join and existing ones leave the group.

A closed group maintains a relatively stable membership, with few additions and losses in member's overtime.

WHY DO PEOPLE JOIN GROUPS?

1. **SEFETY AND SECURITY NEEDS:-**Groups provide protection to their members from outside pressures. Eg. Workers join trade unions to feel safe and secure.
2. **RELATEDNESS OR BELONGINGNESS:-**Needs people being social beings, belonging to or relating to groups satisfies a number of their social needs.
3. **ESTEEM NEEDS:-**When one is member of a group and does some good piece of work, gets a praise from others. This in term brings a sense of recognition to the group members and also a sense of fulfillment.

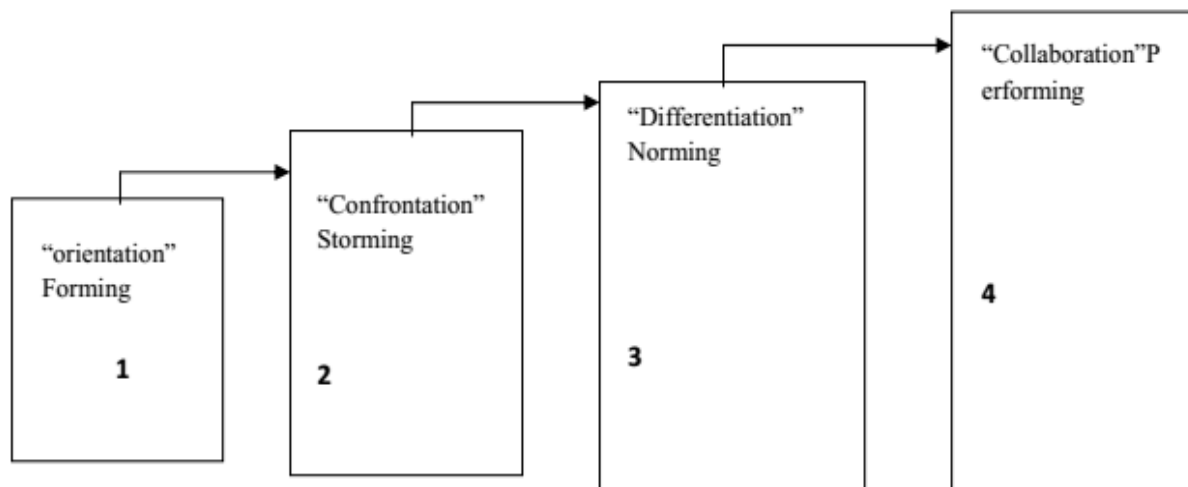
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4. **POWER:-**One of the appealing aspects of group is that they represent power and also offer power to their members.
5. **IDENTITY:-**As a member of group, an individual gets identity.

STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT:

- 1) **FORMING STAGE:-**In this all most every group is in orientation stage. This stage is marked by a great deal of caution, confusion, courtesy and uncertainty about the purpose, structure and leadership of the group.
This stage is complete when members of the group have began to think of themselves as part of a group.
- 2) **STORMING STAGE:-**This stage is characterized by conflict, confrontation concern and criticism. Struggle for individual power and influence are common.
- 3) **PERFORMING STAGE:-**This is the highest level of group maturity. This stage is marked by teamwork, role clarity, and task accomplishment. Conflict is identified and resolved.
- 4) **NORMING STAGE:-**This is the stage in which close relationship among the members develops. The group now assumes certain identity.
- 5) **ADJOURNING STAGE:-**Groups are adjourned for two reasons. First the group has completed its task. Second the members decide to disband and close the group with sensitive feelings.

STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT



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❖ GROUP BEHAVIOUR:-

- Group behavior means behavior of the group members.
- Each member of the group affects the behavior of the other members and in turn is also affected by them. While studying group behavior the factors that should be understood are group norms, group cohesion, group role, group conflict and group decision making.

⇒ GROUP NORMS:- (Standard of Behavior)

- ♣ Group norms is a rule that tells the individual how to behave in a particular group.
- ♣ Group norms identify the standard against which the behavior of group members will be evaluated and help the group members know what they should or should not do.

There are pivotal and relevant group norms.

- ✓ Pivotal norms are conformed by every members of the group.
- ✓ Relevant norms are desirable to be conformed by the members.

CHARACTERISTICS OF GROUP NORMS:-

- ❖ Group norms help in identifying the unique characteristics of a group.
- ❖ Norms serve as the basis for behavior of group members.
- ❖ They predict and control the behavior of members in groups.
- ❖ Norms are applied to all members of the group though not uniformly.

⇒ GROUP COHENSION:-

Means the degree to which the group members are attracted to each other and remain within the group. It develops out of the activities, interactions and sentiments of the members cohesiveness binds all the group members to work as one man to attain the set goals.

⇒ FACTORS INFLUENCING GROUP COHENSION:-

- ❖ Inducing agreement on group goals.
- ❖ Increasing members homogeneity.
- ❖ Increasing interactions among group members.
- ❖ Down-sizing of the group.
- ❖ Encouraging competition with other rival groups.
- ❖ Allocating rewards to the group not to members.
- ❖ Keeping the members isolated from other groups.

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COMMUNICATION

Communication means common derived from the Latin word Communize. It is a process of sharing facts, ideas and opinions in common. The information sent is called message, the person who sends the information is called sender or communicator, the person who receives the information is called receiver or communicatee. The act of conveying message is called transmission.

NATURE OF COMMUNICATION:

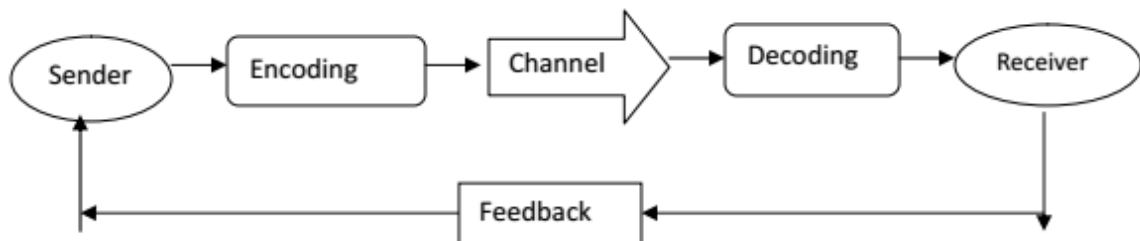
1. Two way process
2. knowledge of language
3. the message should have substance
4. Communication may be made in gestures too
5. communication is a continuous process
6. communication may be formal or informal

Objectives of Communication

- To give and receive information
- To provide advices and opinions
- To provide counseling
- To issue orders and instructions
- To impart education and training
- To receive suggestions
- To persuade people
- To improve morale
- To motivate people

The Communication Process

Communication is the process of passing information from one person to another.



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Source or Sender

The communication cycle begins when one person called the sender wants to transmit a fact, idea, opinion or other information to someone else. A manager, for instance, might call the research department to send the latest information on a particular market.

Encoding

The second step is to encode the message into a form appropriate to the situation. The encoding might take the form of words, facial expressions, gestures, physical actions and symbols such as numbers, pictures, graphs etc. Indeed, most communication involves a combination of these. The encoding process is influenced by the content of the message, the familiarity of the sender and receiver and other situational factors.

Channel

After the message has been encoded, it is transmitted through the appropriate channel or medium. Common channels or media in organizations include face-to-face communication using the media of sound waves, light, letters and reports.

Decoding

The person to whom the message is sent, called the receiver interprets the meaning of the message through the process of decoding. This process may be simple and automatic, but it can also be quite complex. Even when you are just reading a letter, you may need to use all your knowledge of the language, your experience with the letter-writer and so on. If the intended message and the received message differ a great deal, there is a communication gap and misunderstanding is likely to follow.

Receiver

The receiver can be an individual, a group, or an individual acting on behalf of a group. The sender has generally little control over how the receiver will deal with the message. The receiver may ignore it, decide not to try to decode, understand it or respond immediately. The communication cycle continues when the receiver responds by the same steps back to the original sender, which is called the feedback.

Types of Communication :

1. Formal Communication : This type of communication follows the hierarchy ,(Scalar chain). It is always authentic and in a written form such as policy manuals, orders, circulars and notices. Any information that officially reaches an employee is called formal communication.

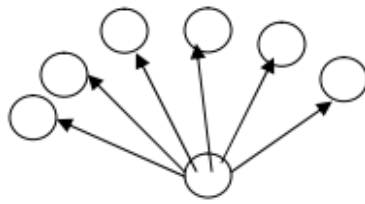
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2. Informal Communication : This type of communication is the result of casual talk or personal contact between two or more persons. Informal communication is also called as “**Grapevine**”.

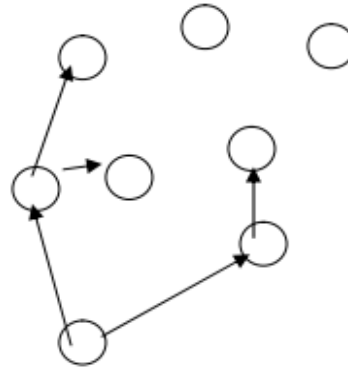
Types of Grape Vine:



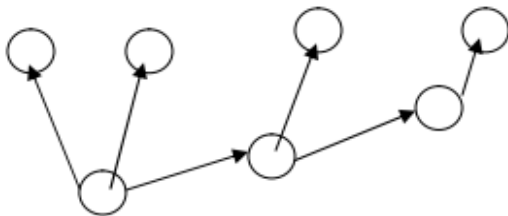
Single Stand



Gossip



Probability



Cluster type

3. Oral Communication : Verbal transmission of information is called oral communication.

4. Written Communication : this type of communication is in a written form.

5. Gesture Communication : gestures are actions , such as nodding head, shaking hands, rolling of eyes etc

6. Downward Communication : from the top authority to the lower level such as orders, messages, circulars etc

7. Up Ward Communication : From the lower level management to the top level management such as feedback and reports .

8. Sideward communication : persons with same designation .

BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

The communication must be interpreted and understood in the same manner as it was-meant to be sent by the sender, otherwise it will not achieve the desired result and a communication

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breakdown will occur. There are certain external roadblocks to effective communication. In addition, there are personal factors, which affect communication.

Some of the organizational barriers and some of the interpersonal barriers to effective communication are discussed below:

Noise Barriers

Noise is any external factor, which interferes with the effectiveness of communication. The term is derived from noise or static effects in telephone conversation or radio wave transmission. It may cause interference in the process of communication by distraction or by blocking a part of the message or by diluting the strength of the communication. Some of the sources contributing towards noise factor are:

Poor Timing

A message sent on poor timing acts as a barrier. For instance, a last minute communication with a deadline may put too much pressure on the receiver and may result in resentment. A message must be sent at an appropriate time to avoid these problems. Hence the manager must know when to communicate.

Inappropriate Channel

Poor choice of channel of communication can also be contributory to the misunderstanding of the message. The manager must decide whether the communication would be most effective if it is in writing or by a telephone call or a face-to-face conversation or a combination of these modes.

Improper or Inadequate Information

Information must be meaningful to the employee and should be precise or to the point. Too little or too much information endangers effective communication. Ambiguity in use of words will lead to different interpretations.

Physical Distractions

Any physical distractions such as telephone interruptions or walk-in visitors can interfere with the effective face-to-face communication process.

Organizational Structure

Communication may be blocked, chaotic or distorted if the channels are not clear or if there are bottlenecks. Hence the organization structure should be such that the chain of command and channels of communication are clearly established and the responsibility and authority are clearly assigned and are traceable.

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Information Overhead

Overload occurs when individuals receive more information than they are capable of processing. The result could be confusion or some important information may be laid aside for the purpose of convenience.

Network Breakdown

Network breakdown may be intentional or due to information overload and time pressures under which a communication has to be acted upon. Some factors contributing to such disruptions are:

- The managers may withhold important negative information.
- The secretary may forget to forward a memo.
- There may be professional jealousy resulting in closed channels.

Interpersonal Barriers

There are many interpersonal barriers that disrupt the effectiveness of the communication process and generally involve such characteristics that either the sender or the receiver can cause communication problems. Some of these are:

Filtering

Filtering refers to intentionally withholding or deliberate manipulation of information by the sender, either because the sender believes that the receiver does not need all the information or that the receiver is better off not knowing all aspects of a given situation. It could also be that the receiver is simply told what he wants to hear.

Semantic Barriers

These barriers occur due to differences in individual interpretations of words and symbols. The words and paragraphs must be interpreted with the same meaning as was intended. The choice of a wrong word or a comma at a wrong place in a sentence can sometimes alter the meaning of the intended message. For example, a nightclub advertisement sign, "clean and decent dancing every night except Sunday", could lead to two interpretations. First, that there is no dancing on Sundays and second, that there is dancing on Sundays, but it not clean and decent.

Perception

Perception relates to the process through which we receive and interpret information from our environment and create a meaningful word out of it. Different people may perceive the same situation differently. Hearing what we want to hear and ignoring information that conflicts with what we know can totally distort the intent or the content of the message. Some of the perceptual

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situations that may distort a manager's assessment of people resulting in reduced effectiveness of the communication are:

- A manager may perceive people to belong to one category or another as stereotypes, rather than unique and distinct individuals. For example, he may perceive women to be less efficient managers.
- A manager may make total assessment of a person based on a single trait. A pleasant smile may make a positive first impression.
- A manager may assume that his subordinate's perception about things and situations are similar to his own.

This perception limits the manager's ability to effectively respond to and deal with individual differences and differing views of work situations.

Cultural Barriers

The cultural differences can adversely affect the communication effectiveness, specially for multi-national companies and enterprises.

Sender Credibility

When the sender of the communication has high credibility in the eyes of the receiver, the message is taken much more seriously and accepted at face value. If the receiver has confidence, trust and respect for the sender, then the decoding and the interpretation of the message will lead to a meaning of the sender. Conversely, if the sender is not trusted, then the receiver will scrutinize the message heavily and deliberately look for hidden meanings or tricks and may end up distorting the entire message. Similarly, if the source is believed to be an expert in a particular field then the listener may pay close attention to the message, and believe it specially if the message is related to the field of expertise.

Emotions

The interpretation of a communication also depends upon the state of the receiver at the time when message is received. The same message received when the receiver is angry, frustrated or depressed may be interpreted differently than when he is happy. Extreme emotions are most likely to hinder effective communication because rational judgments are replaced by emotional judgments.

Multi-meaning Words

Many words in English language have different meanings when used in different situations. Accordingly, a manager must not assume that a particular word means the same thing to all

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people who use it. Hence, the managers must make sure that they use the word in the same manner as the receiver is expected to understand it, otherwise it will create a barrier to proper understanding of the message.

Feedback Barriers

The final source of communication barrier is the feedback or lack of it. Feedback is the only way to ascertain as to how the message was interpreted.

Overcoming Communication Barriers

It is very important for the management to recognize and overcome barriers to effective communication for operational optimization and this would involve diagnosing and analyzing situations, designing proper messages, selecting appropriate channels for communicating these messages, assisting receivers of messages in correct decoding and interpretation and providing an efficient and effective feedback system. Some of the steps that can be taken in this respect are as follows:

- 1 **Feedback:** Feedback helps to reduce misunderstandings. The information is transferred more accurately when the receiver is given the opportunity to ask for clarifications and answer to any questions about the message. Two-way communication, even though more time-consuming, avoids distrust and leads to trust and openness, which helps in building a healthy relationship contributing to communication effectiveness.
- 2 **Improve Listening Skills:** Good listening habits lead to better understanding and good relationships with each other. Some guidelines for effective listening are:
 - Listening requires full attention to the speaker. Do not let your mind wander or be preoccupied with something else, otherwise you will not be able to grasp the meaning of the message in its entirety.
 - The language used tone of the voice and emotions should receive proper attention. Listen for feelings in (he message content and respond positively to these feelings.
 - Ask questions to clarify any points that you do not understand clearly and reflect back to the speaker, your understanding of what has been said.
 - Make sure that there are no outside interruptions and interference during the course of conversation.

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- Do not prejudice or value the importance of the message due to your previous dealings and experiences with the sender or your perceptions about him, positive or negative.
 - Do not jump to conclusions before the message is over and is clearly understood.
 - Summarize and restate the message after it is over to make sure about the content and the intent of the message.
- 3 **Develop Writing Skills:** Clearly written messages can help avoid semantic and perception barriers. A well-written communication eliminates the possibility of misunderstanding and misinterpretation. When writing message it is necessary to be precise thus making the meaning as clear as possible so that it accomplishes the desired purpose. Some helpful hints in written communication are suggested by Robert Degise as follows:
- **Keep words simple:** This will reduce your thoughts to essentials and the message will be easier to understand for the receiver. The message will be lost if the words are complex and do not lend to a clear single meaning.
 - **Do not be bogged down by rules of composition:** While the rules of grammar and composition must be respected, they should not take priority over the ultimate purpose of the communication.
 - **Write concisely:** Use as few words as possible. Do not be brief at the cost of completeness, but express your thoughts, opinions and ideas in the fewest number of words possible.
 - **Be specific:** Vagueness destroys accuracy, which leads to misunderstanding of the meaning or intent of the message. Accordingly, be specific and to the point.
- 4 **Avoid Credibility Gaps:** Communication is a continuing process and the goal of the communication is complete understanding of the message as well as the creation of trust among all members of the organization. Accordingly, the management must be sincere and should earn the trust of the subordinates. Management should not only be sensitive to the needs and feelings of workers but also its promises should be supported by actions. According to the studies conducted by J. Luft, openness and an atmosphere of trust builds healthy relationship and closes credibility gaps, thus contributing to communication effectiveness.

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GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

These guidelines are designed to help management improve their skills in communicating so as not only avoid any barriers to effective communication, but also to strengthen the basis for optimum results which depend upon the clear understanding of the desired communication.

The Ideas and Messages should be Clear, Brief and Precise

The ideas to be communicated must be well planned and clearly identified. This will eliminate ambiguity so that the message will not be subject to more than one interpretation. The message must be clear, precise and to the point and free from distortions and noise. It should also be brief so that only necessary and sufficient meanings are provided.

Sense of Timing

The message should not only be timely so that the decisions and actions can be taken in time and when necessary, but also the timing of the message and the environmental setting in which the message is delivered and received is equally important.

Integrity

The communication must pass through the proper channels to reach the intended receiver. The communication flow and its spread must avoid bypassing levels or people. When these concerned levels are omitted or bypassed, it creates bickering, distrust, confusion and conflict. Accordingly, the established channels must be used as required.

Consult with others who are involved in Planning the Communication

If people have participated in the planning process, they would be highly motivated to give active support to such communication. The people who are concerned must know exactly what they need and when they need the communication.

Consider the Receiver's Interest

Take the receiver's interests into account, and then the receiver will be more responsive to the communication. The management must clarify any part of the communication that may be necessary and must encourage comments, questions, and feedback. The management must always be helpful in carrying out the intended message of the communication.

Mode of Delivery

While delivering the communication, avoid negative statements like, "I am not sure it will work", but be confident and definitive. The success of the communication also depends upon the tone of the voice if the communication is verbal, expressions and emotions exhibited,

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attentiveness to the receiver and so on. The written communication should be polite and unambiguous.

Use proper Follow-up

All communications need a follow-up to ensure that these were properly understood and carried out. The response and feedback to the communication should determine whether the action to the communication has been prompt, appropriate and accurate.

Communication should be Comprehensive

Communication should be complete so as not only to meet the present demands. It should also be based on future needs of the organization as well as individuals.

Recently, the nature of managerial and organizational communication has changed dramatically, mainly because of break through of the electronic technology and advent of computers. Now cellular phones, E-Mail and Internet have made the communication quick and convenient. It is now even possible for managers from different cities to meet by teleconferencing method without leaving their offices. At the same time, psychologists are beginning to discover some problems associated with these new advances in communication.