

Communication Processes

IN 1928, English literary critic and author I.A. Richards wrote: “Communication takes place when one mind so acts upon its environment that another mind is influenced, and in that other mind an experience occurs which is like the experience in the first mind, and is caused in part by that experience.” Effective communication establishes a link between communicators through an exchange of thoughts, ideas, emotions, and/or information.



Objectives:



1. Use relevant terms to describe the communication process.
2. Transmit messages, and provide feedback.

Key Terms:



channel	encoding	receiver
communication	feedback	sender
decode	message	transmit

Understanding Communication

Communication comes from the Latin word “communis” (to share). **Communication** is the process of conveying a message from a sender to a receiver. Communication occurs constantly. Communication is an exchange of thoughts, messages or information through speech and vision, signals and writing, and behavior. The receiver of some form of communication does not need to be present at the time the communication is sent. Email, text messages, mail, telephone, radio, television, and music are communication methods that occur between a sender and receiver over distances in time and space. A communication is completed when the receiver understands the information or idea transmitted by the sender.

MESSAGE

A **message** is a thought, feeling, or idea in the mind of the sender that is shared with the receiver. Messages are sent in a number of ways, including verbal messages. When you feel happy, you send messages with your facial expressions, laughter, and tone of voice.

Messages, therefore, contain content and context. Content is the language of the message—spoken, written, or broadcast. Context is nonverbal elements (e.g., tone of voice, expression in the sender’s eyes, hand gestures, body language, and emotions). In person-to-person communication, we tend to trust nonverbal behaviors more than verbal expression. Obviously, much context is lost in written and electronic communications.

Sender

The sender and receiver in communication are the people or technology at either end of the communication process. The **sender** is the originator of the message. A person or a group of people creates a message to be transported to one or several receivers.



BROADENING AWARENESS...

AMAZING ASPECTS: Perception Influences Decoding

A word or a message may convey a different meaning to each person. Perception is how each person interprets the world. The same message may have different meanings for each person. Consider all the meanings of the simple word “dear” to understand how perceptions can vary in decoding a message.

- My dear friend (Beloved or loved one)
- Dear Andrew (Salutation of a letter)
- Dearest possession (Precious in one’s regard)
- Dearest wish (Heartfelt, earnest)
- Too dear to afford (High-priced, expensive)
- Too dear to find (Difficult to get, scarce)
- Oh, dear! (Exclamation of surprise)

At times we are inattentive to what is said. We may not listen, but only hear. A song that is frequently broadcast, we may hear, but we may not truly listen to it. Or someone can be engrossed in concentration and not listen to the message being addressed to him or her. Also, emotions impact our perceptions, effecting if we interpret a message positively or negatively. The messages we transmit need to be as clear as possible to avoid decoding errors.

Receiver

The **receiver** is the person or group to whom the message is transmitted. For example, you may need to tell your mother you will be late for dinner. You are the sender of this message, and your mother is the receiver.

Encoding

Messages are intangible thoughts, feelings, or ideas in the mind of the sender. They must be encoded before they can be sent. **Encoding** is the process of changing a message into words or symbols. Encoding can be simple or complex. Simple examples of encoding are speaking words aloud or writing words on a piece of paper. The idea is encoded into words and letters. A more complicated example of encoding is a bar code scanner that encodes a UPC symbol printed on a product or a shipping box.

Message Transmission and Feedback

Once a message has been encoded, it is ready to transmit. To **transmit** is to transport the message from the sender to the receiver. The method or medium used to transmit the message is a **channel**. A channel is like a pipeline through which the message is sent. Besides person-to-person communication, transmitting a message can happen in several ways.

CHANNELS

Radio waves are an example of a communication channel. When a factory worker uses a walkie-talkie to send a message to a foreman, radio waves are used. Light, sound, and electricity are other channels that transmit communications.

DECODE

Once a message has been transmitted to the receiver, it needs to be decoded. To **decode** is to change words or symbols into a concept or information that can be understood by the receiver. Messages transmit thoughts, feelings, and ideas, so they cause the receiver to share the sender's thoughts, feelings, and ideas. Communication has occurred only when the receiver understands the message. Without decoding, the message will not be heard or understood. Decoding is the opposite of encoding. Methods of decoding can vary. The warehouse supervisor may use a walkie-talkie to decode a message sent via radio waves. Light, sound, and electricity are other channels that can be used for decoding.

FEEDBACK

When the receiver of the message responds to the message, it is called feedback. **Feedback** is a message sent back from the receiver to the sender in response to the sender's message. Feedback tells the sender that the receiver understands the message content, understands its level of importance, and determines what actions should be taken. Senders and receivers must participate to complete the communication exchange. When the parent, who receives your message saying you will be late for dinner, acknowledges your plans, communication and feedback cycles will be completed.

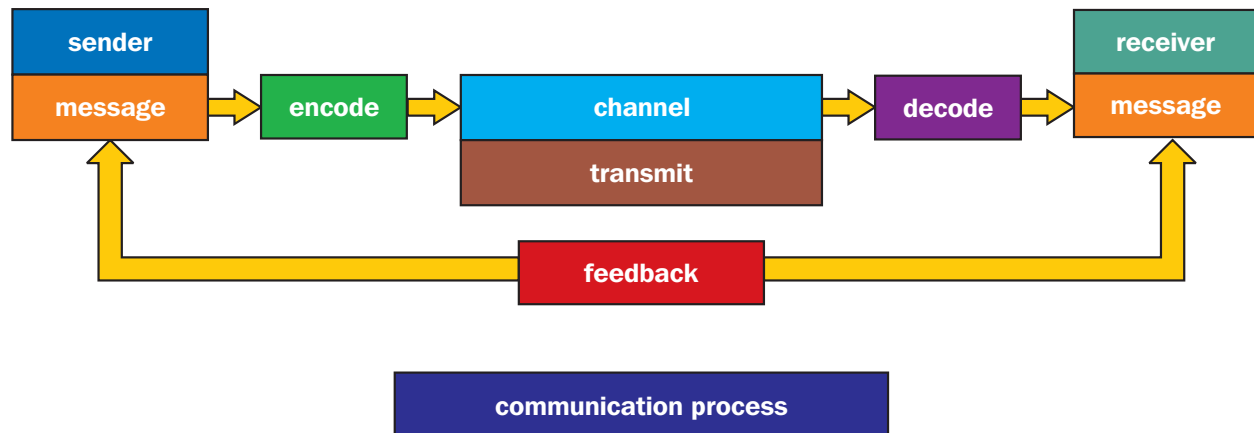


FIGURE 1. Understand the communication process diagram.

Summary:



Effective communications are a foundation between people. Relationships, even careers, can be influenced by your powers of communication. Communication is an exchange between sender and receiver. In addition to speech, other modes of communication that occur between senders and receivers are email, text messages, mail, telephones, radio, television, and music. Intangible thoughts, feelings, or ideas in the mind of the sender are encoded before they are sent. Once a message has been encoded, it is transmitted from the sender to the receiver through a channel.

When a message has been transmitted to the receiver through a channel, it needs to be decoded into words or symbols for the concept or information to be understood by the receiver. The receiver's response to a message is feedback. Feedback tells the sender that the receiver understands the content of the message.

Checking Your Knowledge:



1. Define communication.
2. Why is it necessary for messages to be encoded?

3. What is the “pipeline” through which messages are transmitted?
4. Into what formats are messages decoded?
5. Who transmits feedback?

Expanding Your Knowledge:



Communication is the means of sharing concepts, feelings, and ideas between a sender and a receiver. Are there people you do not see regularly (e.g., grandparents or friends who have moved away) who would appreciate receiving communications from you? Can you transmit your encoded thoughts and information through a channel (e.g., a letter or phone call) for a receiver to decode? In turn, they will likely complete the cycle by transmitting feedback to you.

Web Links:



Communications Progress

<http://www.thereformedbroker.com/2012/09/30/communications/>

Secrets of Success

http://www.dalecarnegieonlinetraining.com/dale_carnegies_secrets_of_success/?keycode=DOT_Communication

Effective Communication Skills

<http://stress.about.com/od/relationships/ht/healthycomm.htm>

Communications Skills

<http://www.directionservice.org/cadre/section4.cfm>

Importance of Communication

<http://www.importanceofcommunication.org/>