Communication Processes

Unit: Soft Skills

Problem Area: Communication

Lesson: Communication Processes

Student Learning Objectives.

Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

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

Resources.

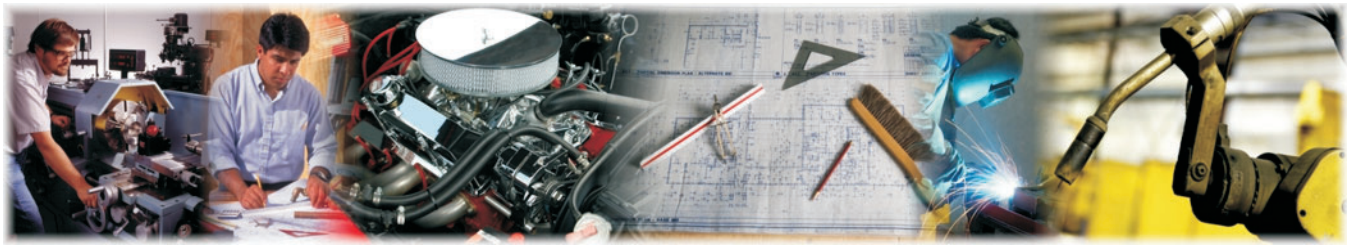
The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

"Communication," *Wikipedia*. Accessed Jan. 22, 2010. <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Communication&oldid=309879674>.

"Communication Process," *Community Partnerships for Adult Learning*. Accessed Jan. 21, 2009. <http://www.c-pal.net/course/module3/pdf/Week1_Lesson7.pdf>.

Foulger, Davis. "Models of the Communication Process," *Evolutionary Media*. Accessed Jan. 21, 2010. <http://davis.foulger.info/research/unifiedModelOfCommunication.htm>.

Lizotte, Valerie. "Elements of the Communication Process," *Suite101.com*. Accessed Jan. 21, 2010. <http://soft-skills-development.suite101.com/article.cfm/communication_model>.



Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities

- ✓ Overhead or PowerPoint projector
- ✓ Visual(s) from accompanying master(s)
- ✓ Copies of sample test, lab sheet(s), and/or other items designed for duplication
- ✓ Materials listed on duplicated items
- ✓ Computers with printers and Internet access
- ✓ Classroom resource and reference materials

Key Terms.

The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

- channel
- communication
- decode
- encoding
- feedback
- message
- receiver
- sender
- transmit

Interest Approach.

Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Teachers often develop approaches for their unique class and student situations. A possible approach is included here.

Tell students to pretend you are a warehouse supervisor. Select one student to pretend to be a forklift operator. If students do not know what a warehouse or a forklift is, take time to explain. Use VM–A to illustrate a typical manufacturing warehouse setting.

Use, or pretend to use, a pair of walkie-talkies to have a conversation with a student. Send the student into another room or hallway to have the conversation. Ask the student questions about the forklift, and give the student some simple instructions to repeat back to you.

During the conversation, ask students to think about what is necessary for the conversation to take place. After finishing the conversation, tell students to think about and analyze what they observed. Assign LS–A to have students sketch the entire communication process they observed. It is not important that students get everything "correct." Students should think about what they have seen and then make a sketch to show that process using arrows and labels to identify what their drawing represents. See the LS–A Teacher Information Sheet for a sample communication process drawing.

CONTENT SUMMARY AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1: Use relevant terms to describe the communication process.

Anticipated Problem: What is communication and how can it be described?

I. Communication and messages

A. ***Communication*** is the process of transporting a message from a sender to a receiver. In day-to-day life, communication happens almost constantly. For instance, when reading this page or listening to someone, communication occurs. Other examples of communication are:

1. A telephone conversation
2. A text message
3. Music

B. A ***message*** is a thought, feeling, or idea that is communicated. Messages provide the content and purpose for communication and allow for shared meaning between the sender and receiver. Messages are sent in a number of ways, including but not limited to a verbal message.

1. A customer feeling very happy with a purchase (facial expressions, laughing, etc.)
2. A technician learning important information about how to fix a car (written notes, Web site resource, etc.)

C. The sender and receiver in communication are the people or technology at either end of the communication process.

1. The ***sender*** is the originator of the message. This person or group of people creates the message to be transported to the receiver.
2. The ***receiver*** is the person or group to whom the message is transmitted. For example, in a warehouse, a forklift operator may need to tell his or her supervisor his or her fear that there is something wrong with the steering on the forklift. The sender of this message is the driver, and the receiver is the supervisor.

D. Messages are often just thoughts, feelings, or ideas. They may not be something tangible. Messages must be changed before they can be sent. ***Encoding*** is the process of changing a message into a form that can be transmitted. How a message is encoded depends on how it needs to be transmitted. Encoding can be very simple or very complex.

1. A simple example of encoding is a warehouse supervisor writing words down on a piece of paper. The idea was encoded into letters and words that may be written on paper.

2. A more complicated example of encoding is a forklift operator using a bar code scanner to read (encode) the UPC symbol printed on a shipping box.

Teaching Strategy: *Distribute copies of VM–B and VM–C. Give students time to create a diagram and to define terms. Then display the Teacher Information Sheet for VM–B and VM–C so the students can check their comprehension. Clarify any areas of confusion.*

Objective 2: Transmit messages and provide feedback.

Anticipated problem: How are messages transmitted? How is feedback provided?

II. Transmitting messages and providing feedback

A. Once the message has been encoded, it is ready to transmit. To ***transmit*** a message is to transport the message from the sender to the receiver. Transmitting a message can happen in very different ways and involves some sort of channel.

1. A forklift operator may use a walkie-talkie to send a message using radio waves, or he or she may look at the light coming from a computer screen to read the orders for that day.
2. The method or medium used to transmit the message is a ***channel***. A channel is like a pipeline through which the message is transmitted.
   a. Radio waves are an example of a channel for communication.
   b. Light, sound, and electricity are channels. Because channels are used to transport messages, energy is an important component of a communication channel.

B. Once the message has been transmitted to the receiver, it needs to be decoded. To ***decode*** a message is to change a message into a form that can be understood by the receiver.

1. A receiver cannot understand a message until it is decoded. For example, a warehouse supervisor must use a walkie-talkie to decode a message sent using radio waves. Otherwise, the message would never be heard or understood.
2. Usually decoding is the opposite of encoding.

C. Since messages involve thoughts, feelings, and ideas, they cause the receiver to have more thoughts, feelings, and ideas. 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 another message. For instance, if a warehouse supervisor receives the message that there is something wrong with a forklift and he or she is worried for the safety of the forklift operator, the supervisor will send feedback to the driver and tell him or her to bring in the forklift for repairs.

Teaching Strategy: *Display VM–E. Have the students work individually, and then display the Teacher Information Sheet for VM–E.*

Assign LS–B and LS–C. Have students research communication models via the Internet and then create a sketch of a real world manufacturing communication process. Display VM–D and explain that this model is the one you have chosen for them to follow. Allow time for a class discussion of the various sketches to take place. Discuss the various components of the model and why the components appear differently in various models. Ensure students understand that while there are many different accepted communication models, all models share common components and characteristics.

- **Review/Summary.** Use the student learning objectives to summarize the lesson. Have students explain the content associated with each objective. Student responses can be used in determining which objectives need to be reviewed or taught from a different angle.

- **Application.** Use the included visual master(s) and lab sheet(s) to apply the information presented in the lesson.

- **Evaluation.** Evaluation should focus on student achievement of the objectives for the lesson. Various techniques can be used, such as student performance on the application activities. A sample written test is provided.

- **Answers to Sample Test:**

Part One: Matching

1. h
2. g
3. a
4. e
5. b
6. c
7. i
8. f
9. d

Part Two: Multiple Choice

1. d
2. c
3. b
4. c
5. d

6. c
7. a
8. d
9. a
10. c

Part Three: Short Answer

1. Drawings will vary, but students should create a sketch of the communication process diagram that shows all the components listed in VM–D. Each process should be labeled correctly. Near or next to the process components, students should sketch in the CAD operator and the boss, using stick figures or similar simple drawings. Additional sketches of technology should be added to show the encoding, transmission, decoding, feedback, etc. Other components that would be included are the Internet, the boss, communication wires, etc. See VM–E for a similar solution.
2. Drawings will vary, but students should create a sketch of the communication process diagram that shows all the components listed in VM–D. Each process should be labeled correctly. Near or next to the process components, students should sketch in the safety inspector and safety engineers, using stick figures or similar simple drawings. Additional sketches of technology should be added to show the encoding, transmission, decoding, feedback, communication devices, etc.

Sample Test

Name _____

Communication Processes

Part One: Matching

Instructions: **Match the term with the correct definition.**

a. channel
b. communication
c. decode
d. encoding
e. feedback
f. message
g. receiver
h. sender
i. transmit

_____1. The originator of the message

_____2. The person or group to whom the message is transmitted

_____3. The method or medium used to transmit the message

_____4. A message sent back from the receiver to the sender in response to another message

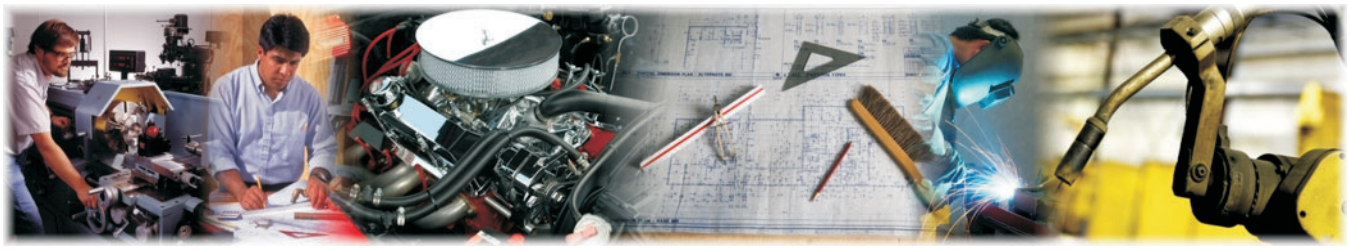
_____5. The process of transporting a message from a sender to a receiver

_____6. To change a message into a form that can be understood by the receiver

_____7. The process of transporting a message from a sender to a receiver

_____8. A thought, feeling, or idea that is communicated

_____9. To change a message into a form that can be transmitted



Part Two: Multiple Choice

Instructions: **Write the letter of the correct answer.**

_____1. A message is a(n) _____ that is communicated.

a. thought
b. feeling
c. idea
d. All of the above

_____2. The method or medium used to transmit the message is the _____.

a. encode system
b. decode system
c channel
d. message

_____3. The person who is the originator of the message is the _____.

a. receiver
b. sender
c. channel
d. message

_____4. To communicate is the _____ of transporting a message from the sender to receiver.

a. encoding
b. decoding
c. process
d. transmission

_____5. The receiver is the person to whom the _____ is transmitted.

a. channel
b. transmission
c. decoded information
d. message

_____6. The thought that a forklift may be broken and need repair is an example of a(n) _____.

a. channel
b. feedback
c. message
d. decoded system

_____7. A walkie-talkie can be used to _____ a message so it can be transmitted.

a. encode
b. transmit
c. communicate
d. receive

_____8. For two people to communicate via walkie-talkies, both must be set to the same _____.

a. picture
b. television
c. message
d. channel

_____9. To move an email message from your computer to another computer, it must be _____ from one place to another.

a. transmitted
b. channeled
c. messaged
d. decoded

____10. When the receiver of a message sends back a message to the sender in response to the original message, it is called _____.

a. encoding
b. decoding
c. feedback
d. transmitting

Part Three: Short Answer

Instructions: **Answer the following.**

1. Sketch a communication process diagram below that models a CAD operator who emails a computer file to his boss. The CAD operator is working in Chicago, Illinois, and his boss works in the Los Angeles, California office. Label all of the important components of the diagram, including all of the important terms you learned in this lesson. Sketch and label the people and technology involved in the communication (e.g., the CAD operator and computers). Use arrows to represent the flow of the message from one place to another.

2. Sketch a communication process diagram that models an automobile safety inspector who is doing a quality control inspection on the brakes of a brand new Ford Mustang. The inspector has a handheld computer that uses radio signals to send information to a main computer in the factory where other safety engineers are able to look at the data with computers. Label all of the important components of the diagram, including all of the important terms you learned in this lesson. Sketch and label the people and technology involved (e.g., the safety inspector and computers). Use arrows to represent the flow of the message from one place to another.

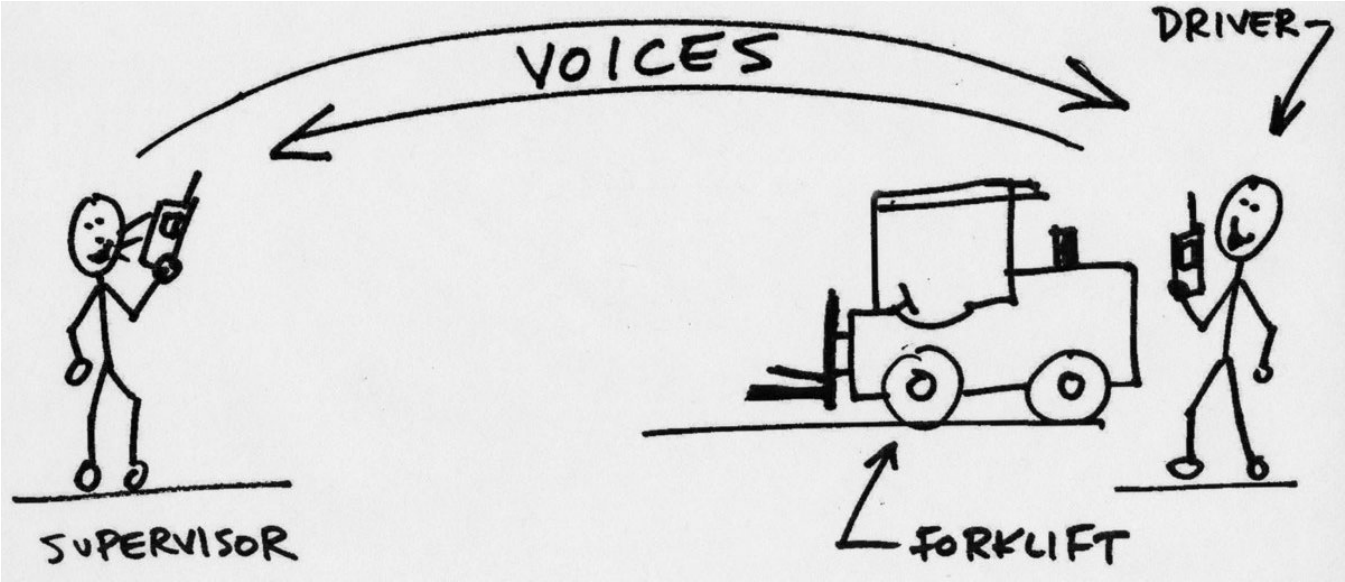
TYPICAL MANUFACTURING WAREHOUSE TEAM WITH FORKLIFT TRUCK

VM–B

COMMUNICATION PROCESS BRAINSTORMING

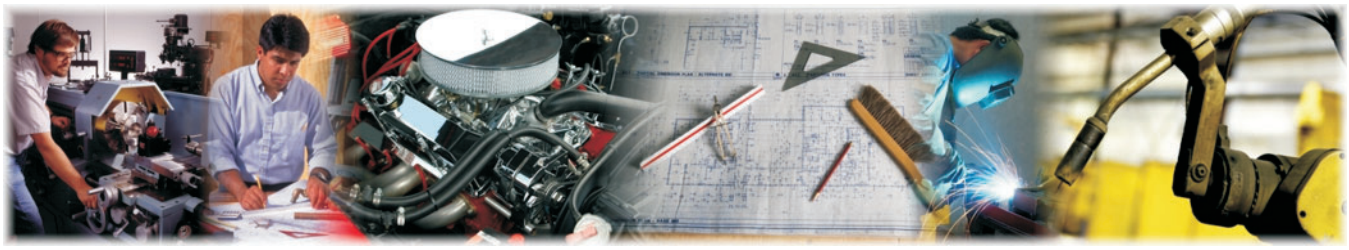
In the space below, make a simple diagram of the communication process. Use arrows and labels to name the components of your sketch.

COMMUNICATION PROCESS BRAINSTORMING



COMMUNICATION PROCESS TERMS TO KNOW

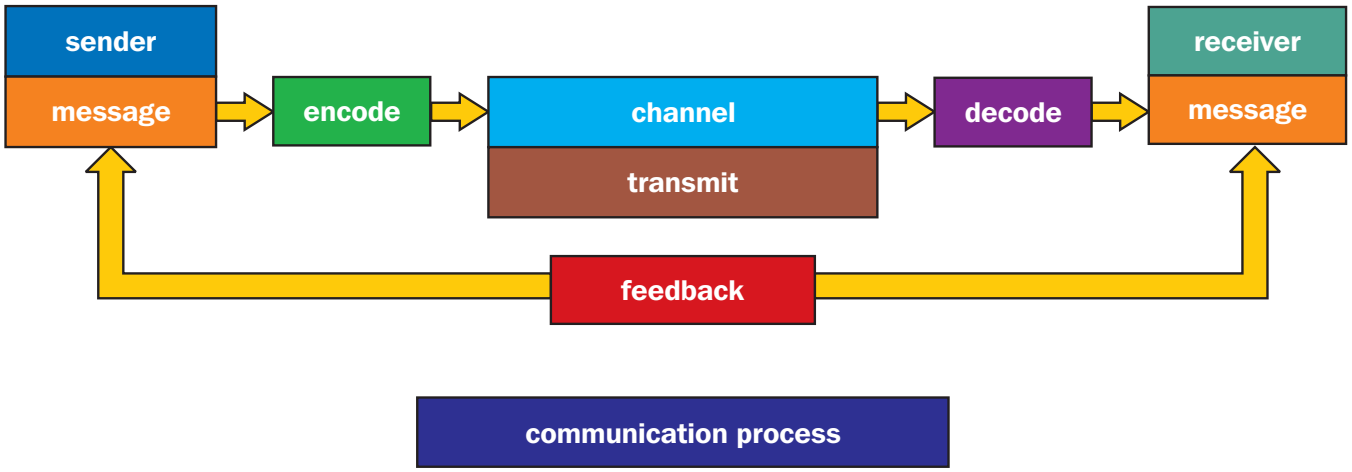
- channel
- communication
- decode
- encode
- feedback
- message
- receiver
- sender
- transmit



COMMUNICATION PROCESS TERMS TO KNOW

- channel—the method or medium used to transmit the message
- communication—the process of transporting a message from a sender to a receiver
- decode—the process of changing a message into a form that can be understood by the receiver
- encode—the process of changing a message into a form that can be transmitted
- feedback—a message sent from the receiver back to the sender in response to another message
- message—a thought, feeling, or idea that is communicated
- receiver—the person who accepts the message
- sender—the person who is the originator of the message
- transmit—to transport, or move, the message from the sender to the receiver

COMMUNICATION PROCESS DIAGRAM

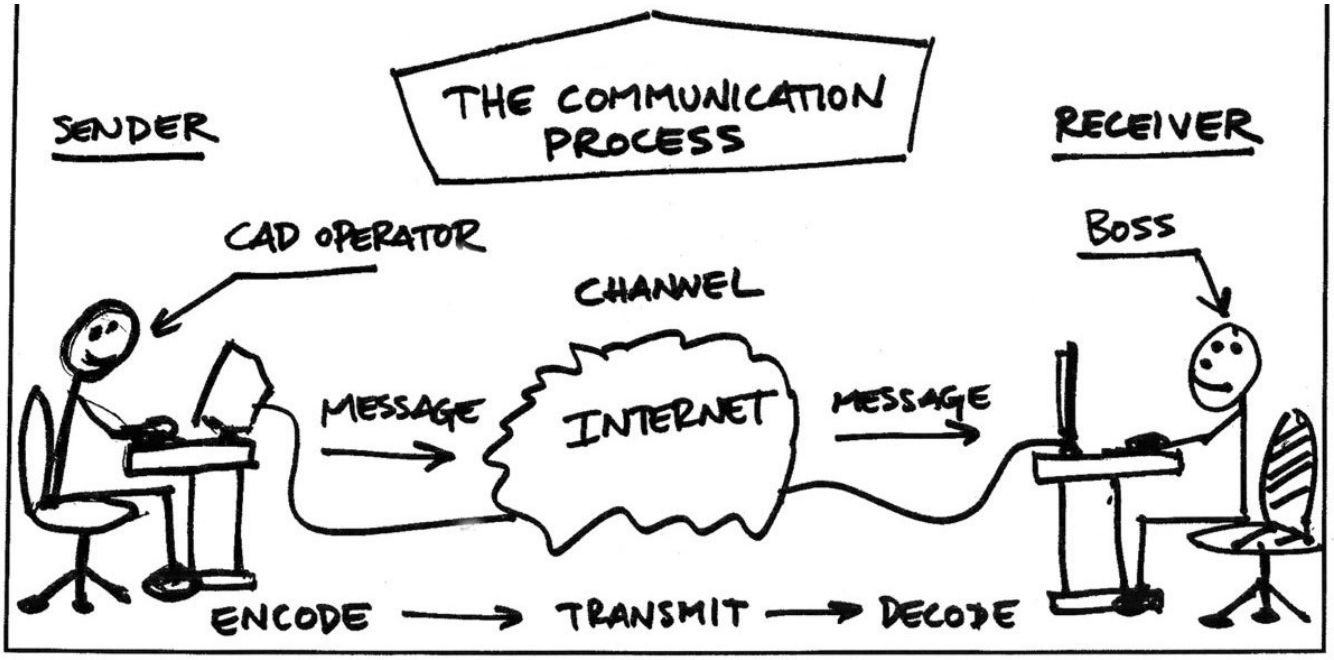


VM–E

COMMUNICATION PROCESS REAL WORLD DIAGRAM

1. Choose a communication process related to the manufacturing industry.
2. In the space below, make a communication process diagram to represent what you have chosen.
3. Use arrows and labels to name each component.

COMMUNICATION PROCESS REAL WORLD DIAGRAM



LS–A

Name _____

Communication Process Brainstorming

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to introduce the topic of communication processes.

Objectives

1. Observe a typical manufacturing communication process.
2. Sketch and label a communication process.

Materials

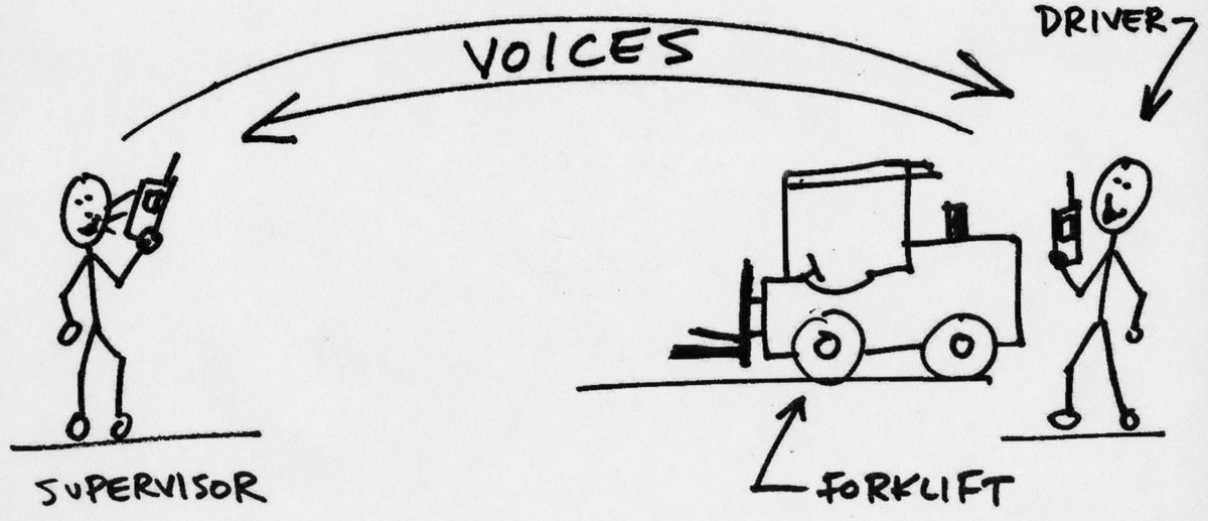
- lab sheet
- writing utensil

Procedure

1. Watch and listen to a typical communication process conducted in a manufacturing setting between a warehouse supervisor and a forklift operator who are using walkie-talkies to communicate about a broken forklift. (Your teacher will role play this scenario with a student.) Pay close attention to the details of the communication demonstration.
2. Sketch a simple diagram of the communication process and the conversation you heard. Use arrows and labels to name the components of your sketch.
3. Think about how your sketch will answer the following questions:
   a. Who is the sender and who is the receiver of the message?
   b. What is the message?
   c. How is the message encoded?
   d. How is the message transmitted?
   e. What channel is used?
   f. How is the message decoded?
4. Share your sketch with a partner. Discuss any differences and any similarities between the two sketches.
5. Discuss and compare answers to Question 3.
6. Make any changes to your diagram as a result of the class discussion. Turn in your sketch to your instructor.

Communication Process Brainstorming

1. A sample drawing is shown below.



2. As students analyze the communication process, it will help to have walkie-talkies in the classroom so they can understand the relationship between the components of the diagram and the model they are analyzing. The goal here is for them to be able to break down the communication process into its smaller components while they make a sketched model. To promote discussion of the communication model, use questioning and the provided answers shown below.

3. Sample responses to Procedure 3 questions:

   a. Depending on who begins the conversation, the sender could be the warehouse supervisor or forklift operator. Since the forklift is broken and may need repair the forklift operator is most likely the person who starts the message.
   b. The message is that the forklift is broken and needs repair.
   c. The message is encoded via the walkie-talkie. Sound energy from the voice of the forklift operator and warehouse supervisor are converted into radio waves.
   d. The message is transmitted through the air via radio energy waves.
   e. Walkie-talkies may use many different channels, or frequencies. Typically a walkie-talkie has channel numbers, like 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. In order to communicate, the two walkie-talkies must use the same channel.
   f. The message is decoded via the walkie-talkie. It converts the radio waves into sound energy that the receiver can hear.

LS–B

Name _____

Communication Process Terms to Know

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to create your own hand-written record of key communication terms.

Objectives

1. Use relevant terms used to describe the communication process.
2. Identify the basic processes involved in communication.

Materials

- lab sheet
- writing utensil

Procedure

1. As the teacher describes various "Communication Terms to Know," participate in the discussion of each term.
2. Record your own definition for each term using the format shown below.
   - channel
   - communication
   - decode
   - encode
   - feedback
   - message
   - receiver
   - sender
   - transmit

Communication Process Terms to Know

- channel—the method or medium used to transmit the message
- communication—the process of transporting a message from a sender to a receiver
- decode—the process of changing a message into a form that can be understood by the receiver
- encode—the process of changing a message into a form that can be transmitted
- feedback—a message sent from the receiver back to the sender in response to another message
- message—a thought, feeling, or idea that is communicated
- receiver—the person who accepts the message
- sender—the person who is the originator of the message
- transmit—to transport, or move, the message from the sender to the receiver

Name _____

Communication Processes: A Manufacturing Diagram

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to apply what you have learned about communication processes to a real life manufacturing situation.

Objectives

1. Use standard terms to describe the communication process.
2. Identify the basic processes involved in communication.
3. Analyze communication technology processes used in manufacturing.

Materials

- lab sheet
- writing utensil

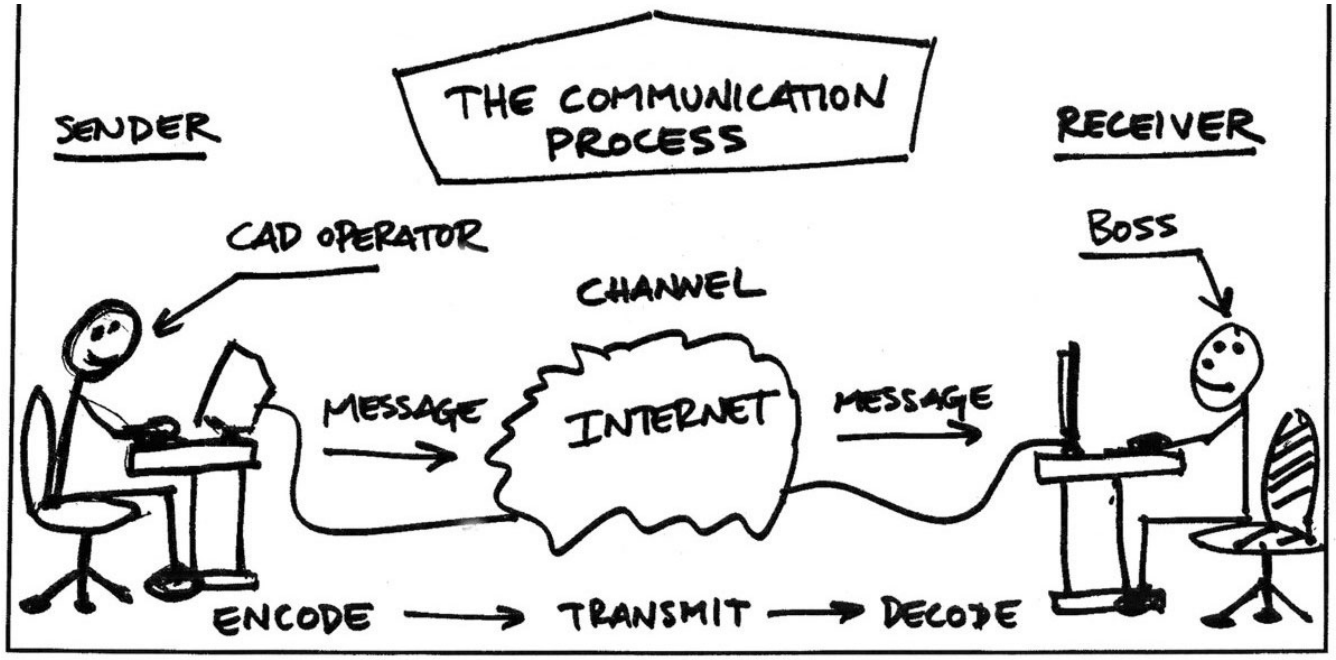
Procedure

1. Research various communication processes by conducting an image search for the keyword phrase, “communication process.”
2. Review several different diagrams of the communication process and identify the common components used in different diagrams. List the common components in the space provided.

3. Select a communication process related to manufacturing industry.
4. In the space below, sketch a communication process diagram to represent what you have chosen.
5. Use arrows and labels to name each component.
6. Discussing what you have discovered with other students in the class or in your group.
7. Turn your communication diagram sketch in to your instructor.

Communication Processes: A Manufacturing Diagram

1. You may direct students to begin their Internet search using the web sites listed in the Resources section of this lesson plan.
2. A sample communication process for the manufacturing industry is shown below.



3. Have students practice creating communication process diagrams for more communication processes that take place in the manufacturing industry. For example, sketch a diagram that represents a CAD operator using email to communicate with a parts supplier.