

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

UNIT I

Introduction

The word “**Communication**” is derived from the Latin word “**communico**” which means “**To share**” . It is the act of sharing or imparting a share of anything. In its vital sense, it means a sharing of ideas and feelings in a mood of mutual understanding. It is a two-way process in which a speaker must have a listener to share the experience.

Communication is the tool with which we exercise influence on others, bring about changes in the attitudes and views of our associates, motivate them and establish and maintain relations with them. Without communication there would not be any interaction between persons. Hence, there cannot be a Government or society without communication.

The ability of communication depends upon the advancement of the society he lives. Among human beings, the more civilized and advance groups have higher communication ability than the less advanced groups. It is found that about 75% of the effective hours of a man is being spent on communication.

Meaning

Communication is the act of influencing and inducing others to interpret an idea in the manner intended by the speaker or writer. Communication is an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions or emotions by two or more persons. It is the process by which information is transmitted between individuals and/or organisations so that an understanding response results. We shall now see some of the important definitions given by eminent authorities on the subject.

Definition

“Communication is a exchange of facts, ideas, opinions or emotions by two or more persons”. - **W.H.Newman** and **C.F.Summer Jr**

According to **Fred G.Meyer**, “Communication is the intercourse by words, letters or messages, intercourse of thoughts or opinions. It is the act of making one’s ideas and opinions known to others.

IMPORTANT OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN BUSINESS

Communication is life blood of business. No business can devolved in the absence of are effective internal and external communication. Beside of Commucation skill of the employees are given high weight age at the time of there appointment as per as promotion.

1. **Internal Communication:** the following important reasons are:-

- **Business has grown in size:** large business houses have a number of branches within the country and even abroad. Some of the multinational corporations are no smaller than huge empires. The central organisation of a large business house is its nerve centre. The central organization maintains a thorough and up-to-date knowledge of the various activities at the branch offices, this calls for an effective and efficient network of communication.
- **Business activity has become extremely complex:** Every business has numbers of departments to run them efficiently there should be an effective communication network. This is done to have the good co-ordination.
- **Effective communication promotes a spirit of understanding and cooperation:** If there is effective communication between management and employees, it develops, mutual trust and confidence both management and the employees are interdependent, therefore this mutual understanding is benefit for the both

2. External Communication:

External communication includes communication with the government agencies and departments on the one hand and distributors, retailers individual customers and general public on the other.

- **Government agencies department :** business organizations are required to deal with licensing authorities, foreign trade offices, customs authorities, banks and financial institutions, income tax and sales-tax officers, post offices, transporters, etc.
 - **Distributors, retailers, individual customers:** every business wants to expand by the way of distributors or retailers or agencies. Marketing research has revealed that the organizations that can communicate better can also sell better. Sales are promoted through persuasion and persuasion is another aspect of communication.
3. **Communication skill a job requirement:** Some areas like personnel, public relations, marketing, sales, labour relations call for exceptional communication skills. Editors, writers, teachers, advocates, researchers also need a highly developed ability to communicate.

OBJECTIVES OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is a process through which different persons are connected to each other in such a manner to achieve a common objective. Without communication, group activity

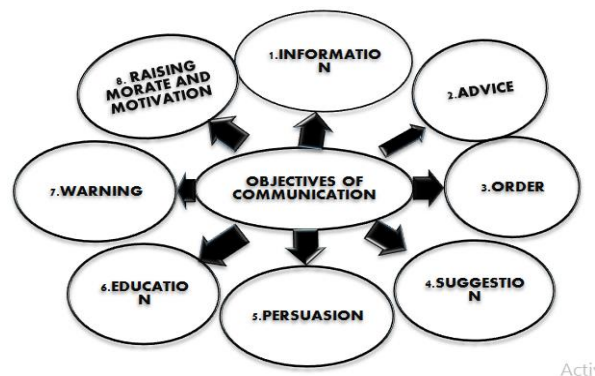
is impossible. It helps the members to co-ordinate with each other, exchange their ideas and thereby to make progress. Effective communication is needed at all stages in order to ensure this welfare.

At the **Planning stage**, information is needed on the various aspects of the enterprise, the feasibility of the project being undertaken finances involved, man-power required, marketing conditions, publicity campaigns, etc.

At the **Execution stage**, orders are issued to the employees to start work, the workers associated with the project are constantly motivated and kept involved, a sense of discipline is cultivated among them and their morale is kept high.

At the **Assessment stage**, the manager is again required to communicate with various sources, both internal and external, to assess the success of the project and modifications in the future plans. Communication can be used for any or more of the following objectives:

The objectives of communication may be represented diagrammatically as shown below:



i. Information:

One of the important objectives of communication is passing or receiving information about a particular fact or circumstance. It can be done either through spoken or written language or by using any other system of signs.

1. **External information:** information on the following aspects is very vital for the existence and welfare of any organization:

1. Information about its products
2. Information about the availability of credit
3. Information about the availability of raw materials
4. Information about the government rules and regulations

5. Information about the advertising media
6. Information about the latest developments in the fields of science and technology
2. **Internal information:** information should be freely given to the employees on the following points:
 1. Information on job assignments and procedures governing them
 2. Information on status and decision-making powers
 3. General information on the policies and activities of the organization

Source of Information that are required for the organisation are normally obtained from the sources like old files, personal observation, Radio, TV, Cinema, Newspapers, Periodicals, Pamphlets, Government publications, Chambers of Commerce, meetings, seminars and conferences, personal interviews with people, questionnaire and trade fairs and exhibitions.

2.Advice:

Advice is also a kind of information. It means opinion given as to the action to be taken. Advice is normally given to a person either to influence his opinion or his behaviour. It may prove helpful, but it may also lead to disaster. So to make advice effective, while offering advice, the adviser should keep the following points in mind:

1. Advice should be related to a specific piece of work.
2. It should meet the needs of the recipient.
3. It should not make the recipient to feel inferior.
4. The adviser should make the recipient to feel that he is being advised for his own betterment.

3.Order:

Order is an authoritative communication. Orders are absolutely necessary for any organisation irrespective of its nature and size. It is a directive to somebody, normally a subordinate, to do something, to alter the course of something he has already done, or not to do something. An order to be effective-

1. Should be clear and complete,
2. Should be given in a friendly manner,
3. Its execution should be possible.

Types of order:

Keeping different aspects of orders in mind, we can classify orders in various ways:

- Written and oral orders
- General and specific orders
- Procedural and operational orders
- Mandatory and discretionary orders

4.Suggestion:

The term suggestion means proposing something for acceptance or rejection. Communication is used to convey suggestion or ideas. This is being constantly done in all human groups. Someone or the other is making suggestions and other react to them. This happens in any social group like a family, office, factory, State, Nation etc. Effective communication promotes the acceptance and trial of good suggestions. Subordinates normally give suggestions. This is because, they are the one's who are actually involved in the work and have a better understanding of the shortcomings and can make useful suggestions for improvements. That is why, in big concerns suggestions are collected at regular intervals by means of a suggestion box. Such suggestions are known as upward communication.

5. Persuasion:

Including, compelling or promoting a person to act mostly in a positive way is known as persuasion. Persuasion is an important objective of communication. Management try to persuade their workers to put in their best effort; sellers persuade their customers to buy etc. It takes place through some kind of communication. Persuasion is more easily done by a person who-enjoys respect and confidence of those whom he wishes to persuade. However, if persuasion is to be effective, they must not be conscious of being persuaded.**[buyer should impressing for customer to buy the goods]**

6. Education:

Education involves imparting instruction, character building, enriching mental faculties, giving training to human beings etc. It aims at widening the knowledge and improving skills. It is carried on at various levels of management namely, top level, employees' level and at the level of outside public. Employees are trained essentially by communication. All education takes place by means of communication. It is carried on at three level.

- At the **management level**: their education can take place through books, lectures, seminars, case studies etc., success of the knowledge in company junior manager will be improve to get higher positions.
- At the **level of the employees**: communication to other employee for office or factory.
- At the **level of the outside public**: when marketing times new products will be introduced that time various brands will comparative price, concession and discounts if any. This known will be provided using medias.

7. Warning:

Warning is a forceful means of communication. It may be given orally or in writing. Very often, we come across notices like "No smoking", "Beware of dogs", "Danger" etc. These

are some warnings or cautions. In offices and factories, higher officials give warnings to their subordinates, by issue of memos.

8.Motivation:

Inspiring the interest in their job in the minds of the employees is known as motivation. If the people are adequately motivated, they will have high morale and this will be low if the level of motivation is low. Low morale is the basic cause for indiscipline. Motivation determines the behaviour of a person to a greater extent. In motivation, employees are motivated in such a manner to work willingly and eagerly. A motivated worker does not need much supervision.

9.Counseling:

Counseling is done by a man of greater skill or knowledge on some specific subject and he offers his counsel without any personal interest. Companies, which are interested in their employees' welfare, have centres to counsel their employees. It is very much similar to giving advice. However, there are some differences between the two also. They are-

- i) Counseling is objective and impersonal, whereas advice is personal touch.
- ii) Counsel is almost professional, whereas advice is not so, and
- iii). Counsel is eagerly sought, whereas advice is very often unwelcome.

10.Morale Boosting:

Morale is the term usually applied to armed forces during war time and to sports and athletic teams. It refers to team spirit and co-operation of people for a common purpose. Its importance has been realised by the management only recently. The management feels that if the morale is high, production would be higher and on the other hand if it were low, the production would also be low. It is already stated that motivation and morale are interconnected and dependant on each other. If the workers are highly motivated, morale is also said to be high. On the other hand, if the degree of motivation is low, the morale is also said to be low.

11.Appreciation:

Praising of initiative, good effort and work by employees is known as appreciation. It is very useful for creating a good attitude. It may be conveyed orally or in writing. If given publicity, it will have better effect.

MEDIA OF COMMUNICATION

On the basis of media used, communication can be classified into five namely

- 1.Oral communication
- 2.Written Communication

3. visual Communication
4. Audio-Visual Communication
5. Computer-based communication

1. Oral Communication

Oral communication refers to face-to-face communication. It offers interchange of ideas at the personnel level. There can be questions and answers. The sender and receiver of the message are in direct contact. If the listener does not understand the message, he can ask for a clarification or raise questions and get the answers. If matters are to be conveyed within an organisation, oral communication is considered as the best as well as the cheapest method of communication. Especially, it is of vital importance in handling difficult or complicated situations.

Merits of Oral Communication: *Merits of oral communication are as follows:*

1. It is economical when compared to written communication.
2. It is more flexible and can be effectively combined with gesture and other expressions.
3. It is more effective on account of direct contact between the communicator and communicatee.
4. It leads to better understanding because response to the message can be obtained on the spot, and doubts, clarifications etc. can also be removed quickly.
5. It is faster and saves time.

Demerits of Oral Communication

Oral communication has certain demerits. They are:

1. It is not suitable in cases where the message is long and complicated, when the audience is large and when there is no need for interaction.
2. It does not provide any record for future reference.
3. It is time consuming and costly.
4. It cannot be used as a communication media where people are scattered over a wide area.
5. It can be irritating and wasteful when the persons involved are poor in talking skills.

2. Written Communication

Written communication, on the other hand, is very wide in its scope and covers entire paper work relating to all kinds of transactions, agreements, proposals etc.,. In fact, the main work of any office is written communication. Written communication though has a place inside the organisation, it is of paramount importance in conveying messages to the external world. Though modern devices such as telephone etc. have lessened the dependence on writing, it still serves as the main channel for all the business transactions. This is because, a written communication can carry assurance of transactions, confirm the dealing and form a reliable record for future reference. Besides, it is the cheapest method of contacting the external world. Hence, it saves money as well as time. Moreover, people place more reliance in pen than in the tongue.

Merits of Written Communication:

There are certain obvious advantages in written communication.

1. Letters or written communications can be kept as a legal record.
2. They can be retained for purpose of future reference.
3. They are formulated more carefully than oral communication.
4. They can save money and time.
5. The written communication is used for all practical purposes in every organisation.

Limitations of Written Communication:

A written communication though has many points to its credit, is not an unmixed blessing. It too has certain definite limitations. It is not suitable under all circumstances. The following are the situations in which a written communication is unsuitable.

- **Complicated Matters:** Complicated or difficult matters cannot be handled through written communication.
- **Confidential Matters :** Confidential matters cannot be reduced to writing
- **Instructions and Clarifications:** Instructions to a subordinate can be best given orally than in writing. If the subordinate seeks any clarification, he can get it at once.
- **Assessing the Reaction:** The reaction of the receiver can be best assessed only in a face to face communication.
- **Expressing the Feelings:** When two persons are talking, many matters can be said expressly. But many matters are left unsaid or said by implication i.e. understood. This is impossible through a written communication.

4. Visual communication:

Communication through such visuals is very effective because it is sure and instantaneous. No words are uttered, no signs made, and yet the message gets across.

But visual communication alone is not enough. It can be used to transmit very elementary and simple ideas, orders, warnings. It can be effectively used only in combination with other media.(eg.) printed pictures, posters, slides, film strips ect.,

5. Audio- visual communication

Audio-visual communication uses the methods that are seen and heard. It makes use of short films, slides, video tapes, telecasts etc. Examples are small advertisement films, or documentary films related to social issues etc. Screened just before the main picture.

Audio-visual communication combines both sight and sound to attract the attention of the communicate. If it is of only visual communication, people may just casually look at it and forget afterwards. But if audio is also combined with visual aids, the message conveyed will

be retained much longer than through other media. It is most suitable for mass publicity, mass propaganda and mass education.

6. Computer-Based communication:

Computer technology has dramatically changed the landscape of business communication today. It is fast annihilating the barriers of time and space and the concept of our world turning into a small global village now appears to be distinct and near possibility.

The fax, voice mail, E-mail, cellular phones, telephone answering machines, video conferencing etc., are some of the computer-based media of communication.

Advantage of computer technology:

- The quickest communication
- Space no longer a barrier to communication
- Video conferencing can replace personal meetings
- Permanent record of valuable and bulky data.
- World-wide web as a publishing platform.

Limitations of computer technology:

- Uncertain legal validity
- Fear of undesirable leakage
- The virus malady

CHANNELS OR TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

Types of communication can be discussed under the following two broad heads.

1. On the basis of organizational structure:

1. Formal or Official Communication, and
2. Informal Communication.

FORMAL COMMUNICATION

1. Organisational Structure

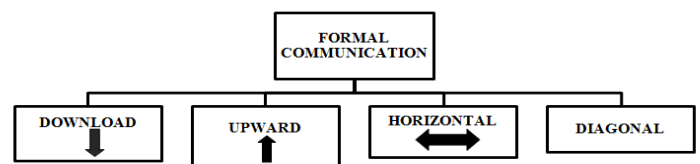
On the basis of organisational structure, communication can be further classified into two namely,

1. Formal Communication, and
2. Informal Communication

We shall now describe them briefly.

1. Formal Communication:

Formal communication takes place via formal channels of the organizational structure established by the management. These channels are deliberately created for regulating the



communication flow and to link various parts of the organization. They are helpful for performing functions like planning, decision-making, co-ordination and control. In a formal communication system, matters with regard to who should communicate, what, when and how to be communicated and to whom to be communicated are all clearly defined. The formal organization chart describes the formal lines of authority, power, responsibility and accountability of organizational members. All these relationships involve communication. Formal communications are in writing. There are three forms of formal communication namely

1. Downward,
2. Upward, and
3. Horizontal.

1. Downward Communication:

Communication is said to be downward when it moves from the top to the bottom. Downward channels are used for passing on managerial decisions, plans, policies and programmes to subordinates down the line for their understanding and implementation. Downward communications are used by the superiors to convey their orders, instructions and directions to their subordinates. In the words of D.Katz and R.L.Kahn, the purpose of downward communication are to-

1. Give job instructions.
2. Create an understanding of the work and its relations with other tasks.
3. Inform about procedures.
4. Inform subordinates about their performance.
5. Indoctrinate the workers to organizational goals.

However, downward communication suffers from certain drawbacks. They are..

1. It develops an authoritative atmosphere that might be detrimental to morale.
2. As information passes through the various levels of hierarchy, it might be distorted, misinterpreted etc.,

Effective downward communication are..

- Managers should be adequately informed,
- Managers should be clear about how much to communicate,
- Some authority should be delegated to lower levels to shorten the line of communication,
- Information should be passed to the correct person.

2. Upward Communication:

Communication is said to be upward when it flows from the subordinates to the top management. Upward communication is used by subordinates for transmitting information, ideas, views and requests to their superiors on matters relating to their jobs, responsibilities etc.,. Upward communications are also used to convey views, suggestions, grievances and problems of subordinates to their superiors. It enables the subordinates to

communicate to the superiors the progress of the work and response to the work assigned to them. Upward communication may be oral or written. It also enables the management to know the extent to which the subordinates understand the policies and programmes of the organization.

Importance of upward communication:

- **Providing feedback:** Upward communication provides the management with necessary feedback. The management is able to ascertain whether the directives issued to the lower staff have been properly understood and followed. It also gets valuable information on what the employees think of the organization and its policies.
- **Reporting job progress:** corrective measures are possible if there is timely knowledge of chances of delay.
- **Seeking superiors' intervention for problem-solving.**
- **Providing the superiors with useful suggestions,**
- **Making the introduction of new schemes easier,**

Methods of upward communication are:

- The employees just walk in to the manager's room and talk to him.(open-door policy)
- Complaints and suggestions boxes,
- They meet their superiors at informal social gathering and freely interact with them about their personal problems.
- They write letters to their superiors and prepare reports for them.
- The superiors meet the employees at counseling sessions and listen to them.

Limitations of upward communication:

- **Awe of authority:** employees are usually reluctant to initiate upward communication. Managers might keep their doors open but the employees, in awe of authority, are unable to overcome their inhibitions and express themselves freely.
- Fear of adverse reaction.
- Distortion and filtering.
- Information overload.

Essentials of Effective upward communication are:

- To get close to the subordinate staff.

- Distortion by ‘editing’ can be avoided if the lines of communication are kept as short as possible.

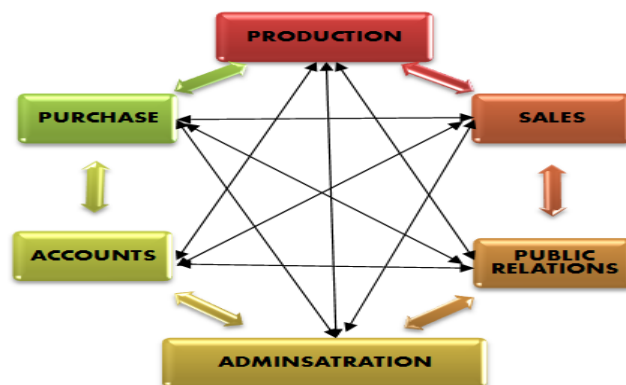
3. Horizontal Communication:

Communication is horizontal when it flows between individuals at the same operational level i.e., between two departmental heads. The purpose of the horizontal communication is to enable managers and others of the same rank to interact on important matters, to exchange information and co-ordinate their activities without referring all matters to the top level management.

Importance of horizontal communication: the important for promoting understanding and coordination among various people or departments. It also helps in decision making, problem solving and resolving conflicts. The main importance for (a) Job coordination, (b) Decision making, (c) Problem solving, (d) Resolving conflicts, and (e) Sharing of ideas and information.

Limitations of horizontal communication are.

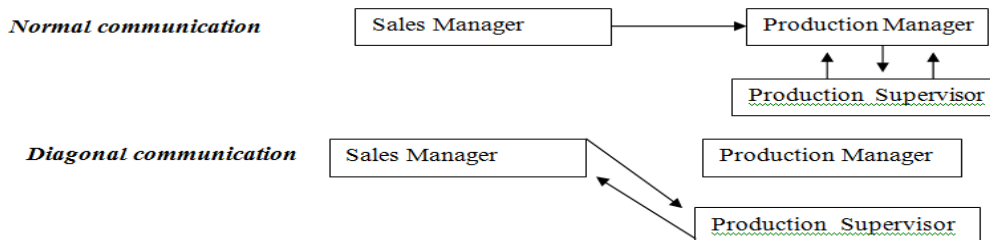
- Lack of authoritativeness:
- Interpersonal rivalries, and
- Interdepartmental rivalries.



(Horizontal flow of communication)

3. DIAGONAL COMMUNICATION

Diagonal communication between two individuals at different levels in different departments. If the sales manager directly talks to the production supervisor, it would be a case of diagonal communication.



Diagonal communication has the following advantages:

- Total elimination of delay.
- Instantaneous feedback and clarification,

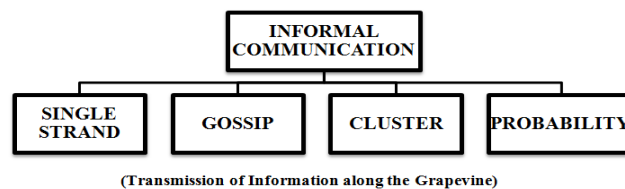
- Decreased incidence of distortion or dilution,
- Better coordination, and
- Fast problem solving.

Disadvantages:

- Normal channels are disrupted,
- By passed superiors may feel incensed and may refuse to cooperate.
- Too frequent a use of this channel may cause chaos and anarchy in the organization.

ii. Informal Communication

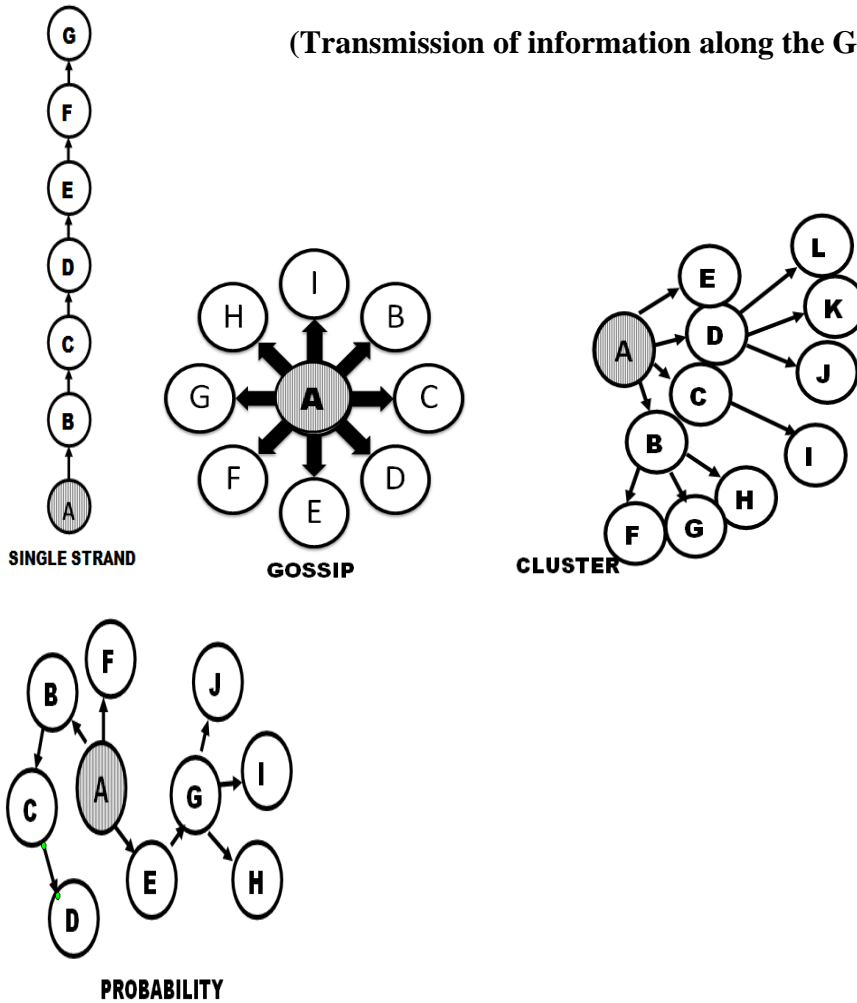
So far before discussing the formal channels of communication, which follow certain definite, predetermined directions. A part from the, there operates in ever organization an informal channel of communication called the grapevine. It follows no set lines, nor any definite rules, but spreads, like the grapevine, in any direction, anywhere, and spreads fast.



Professor Keith Davis, done some research on the nature of the grapevine or the informal channel of channel of communication classifies it into four basic types: *single strand, Gossip, Probability, Cluster.*

Single strand chain involves the passing of information through a long line of persons to the ultimate recipient. **A** tells **B**, who tells **C**, who tells **D**, and so on, till the information has reached most of the persons concerned. In the *Gossip chain*, **A** actively seeks and tells every one. This chain is just like the wheel where **A** is at the centre and the information passes along the spokes of the wheel to others stationed on the rim. The *Probability chain* is a random process in which **A** transmits the information to others in accordance with the laws of probability and then theses others tell still others in a similar manner. This chain may also be called *random*. In the *Cluster chain*, **A** tells selected persons who may in turn relay the information to other selected individuals. Most of the informal communication follows this chain.

(Transmission of information along the Grapevine)

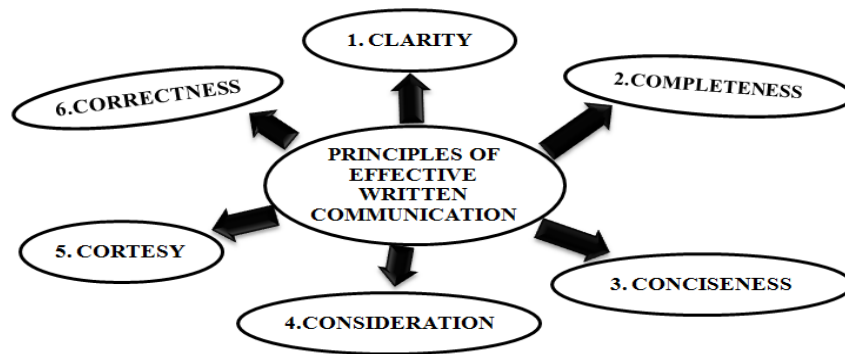


Importance of the Grapevine-(a) Emotional relief,(b) Raise the morale of the workers, (c) supplement to other channels,(d) A fast channel, (e)Provides feedback.

Demerits: (a) Distortion of information, (b) may transmit incomplete information, (c) travels with destructive swiftness.

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION

In order to make a letter and others forms of communication effective. We should follow scientific principles. It principles discussed are of fundamental important and relevant to all media. But they are most important to written communication. The principles of effective written communication can be diagrammatically represented as shown below:



1. CLERITY

a. **Clarity of thought** :The communication cycle begins with the generation of a idea. In the mind of the transmitted a great deal of clarity if need at this stage. The communicated must be clear about 3 points.

- What is objective of communication.
- What is to be communicated.
- Which medium will proof to be a must effective.

Clarity is presented in this areas.

b. **Clarity of Expression**: the clarity can be expressed by using simple words, using single words for long phrase. The following points about the choice of words deserve attention:

- i. **Use simple words**: Remember that simple and short words are more effective than pompous and heavy words. It is better to use “tell” or “inform” for “acquaint”.

Pompous (Avoid them)	Simple (Use them)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate • Visualize • Utilize • Compensate • Terminate • facilitate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show • see • use • pay • end • help

- ii. use single words for long phrases: a single word is often more effective than long, pompous-looking phrases.

Long Phrases (Avoid them)	Single words (use them)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at all times • at a later date • at the present time • subsequent to • prior to/previous to • for the purpose of • despite the fact that • to the fullest possible extent • in the event that 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • always • later • now • after • before • for • although • fully • if

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • until such time as • will you be kind enough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • until/when • please
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- c. **Use Verbs for nouns:** using verbs in place of nouns often brings about simplicity and clarity:

Using nouns(difficult)	Using verbs(simple)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Come to a conclusion • Make a decision • Submit a proposal • Take into consideration • Make the announcement • Pursuant to our agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclude • Decide • Propose • Consider • Announce • As we agreed

- d. **Avoid Double Entry:** we often use phrases with two words conveying the same idea. Such phrases can be easily simplified.

Double entry	Simple
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actual fact • Mental state of mind • 11am. In the morning • Previous experience • End result • Revert back • Absolutely complete • Viable alternative • Period of one week • Costs an amount of • During the year 2016 • My personal opinion • Seldom ever 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact • Mental state/state of mind • 11 am. • Experience • Result • Revert • Complete • Alternative • Oneweek • Costs • During 2016 • My opinion • seldom

- e. **Use Concrete Expressions:** it create visual images that are easy to register. So instead of vague, generalized statements, give definite facts.

Vague and general	Concrete and effective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goods are soon being dispatched. • This piece of jewellery is inexpensive. • You can own this refrigerator by paying Rs.1500 cash down and easy instalments later. • Your savings earn a high rate of interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goods will be dispatched on 2nd july. • These beautiful earrings cost only Rs.950. • You can own this refrigerator by paying Rs. 1500 cash sown and fifteen monthly installments of Rs.800 each. • Your savings earn 10% interest compounded half-yearly.

Void words like: high, low, big, small, many, a few, soon, easy, large, short quick, slow, several, frequent, most least.

- f. Avoid Ambiguity:
g. Use Short Sentences:
h. **COMPLETENESS:**A completeness should be considered in the two areas.

- a. While answering a letter make sure that you have answered all the question.
- b. Checking for “five W’ question [who, where, what, when and why]

Completeness here we mean the simplest answers. It shows that the meaning is completed. So that a reader and listener can be able to grasp the meaning at full stretch.

i. CONSCISENESS : Brevity in expression effectively wins the attention of the reader. However, brevity should not be effected at the cost of appropriateness, clarity correctness, completeness or courtesy in fact, there is no hard and fast rule for the length of a letter. A letter should be as long or as short as is necessary to tell the story effectively. A two-page letter may seem short, while a ten-line letter may seem all too long. The following four simple rules will help you to achieve conciseness in your messages:

- **Include only relevant facts.** Make sure your message does not get encumbered by unnecessary details.
- **Avoid repetition.** The readers would naturally expect that you are saying something additional. But when they discover that you are repeating something, they feel cheated.
- **Avoid trite and wordy expression.**

Write not this	But this
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In considerable number of cases • In close proximity to • Enclosed herewith please find • Pursuant to your enquiry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often • Nearby • Enclosed is • As you requested

- **Organize your message well** – use simple and short words as well as sentences. Ensure that your messages is coherent.

j. CONSIDERATION: In our letters we must show consideration for the reader. This can be done in the following ways:

- **Adopt the you-attitude.** to make our letter more effective, we must avoid **I** and **We** and have as many **You** as possible.

We-attitude	You - attitude
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was happy to hear that my letter of January 5 provided you sufficient information--- • I want to express my sincere thanks for the good words--- • We have four different savings schemes in which our customers can invest their savings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank you for your assurance that you had sufficient information--- • Thank you for your kind words--- • You have a choice of four savings schemes in which you can invest your savings.

- **Avoid gender bias.** the business world is no longer dominated by men, it is extremely important to avoid gender bias. Using **he** when a message is going to a lady will certainly cause offence.
- **Emphasis positive, pleasant facts.** Examples of words that generate negative impulses and positive, pleasing words to replace them:

Negative	Positive

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint department • Down payment • Cheap • bossed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • customer service department • initial investment • economical • supervised
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• **Impart integrity to your message.** (write only what you sincerely feel to be correct.)

k. **COURTESY:** in business we must create friendliness with all those we write to. Friendliness is inseparable from courtesy. And courtesy demands a considerate and friendly behavior towards others. The following principles help to promote courtesy:

- Answer the letters promptly,
- Omit irritating expressions
- Apologise sincerely for an omission/ thank generously for a favour.
- Thank profusely for any favours.

l. **CORRECTNESS:** it implies (1) giving correct facts, (2) at an appropriate time, (3) in a suitable style.

MODERN COMMUNICATION METHODS:

BUSINESS LETTER:

The business letter to maintain contact with the external world including other business men including customers and government department. Letter writing may be less important for a small business establishment. But it is indispensable.

NEED OF A BUSINESS LETTER: Every business, whether big or small, has to maintain contacts with its suppliers, customers, prospects, government departments and the like. In his regular work, a businessman has to exchange information of varied types with different parties.

In the case of a very small business, letter-writing may be less important, but is not unimportant. As and when the business expands, its activities increase, as also the number of its suppliers and prospects. It is difficult to maintain personal contact with all these persons and institutions, particularly if the geographical distance between the firm and these outsiders widens. The best method for all these persons/institutions to contact each other is correspondence-the written communication.

FUNCTION OF A BUSINESS LETTER: there are four main reasons for writing business letters;

- i. To provide a convenient and inexpensive means of communication without personal contact;
- ii. To seek or give information,
- iii. To furnish evidence of transactions entered into, and
- iv. To provide a record for future reference.

There is also an important incidental purpose-that of building goodwill by creating in the mind of the reader an impression of the writer's organization as one that is efficient, reliable and anxious to be of service.

1. **RECORD AND REPERENCE:** with a view to maintaining record of communication with the outside world, the communication must be in writing. Written communication can be passed on to the concerned persons or departments as it is. Written letters enjoy a distinct advantage over other means of communication: they can be preserved for future reference.
2. **MAKING A LASTING IMPRESSION:** Oral communication, whether in person or over the phone, is rarely remembered in full because its impact is felt mainly during the time it is being heard. However, a letter makes a lasting impression on the reader's mind because it stays with him, goes with him and does its work effectively every time it is read.
3. **WIDENING THE APPROACH.** Frequently, a businessman finds it difficult to send his representatives to all the place of his business connections. It is the letter the reaches any palace at whatever distance. It its effect, a business letter helps widen the area of operation.

Executive, professionals, politicians, etc. are difficult to be approached in person. But a letter can find easy access to one and all . a letter knows what is the right times to reach different persons.

4. **AN AUTHORITATIVE PROOF:** a commitment in writing binds the parties concerned to the text of writing. A letter, signed by a responsible person, is an authoritative proof of what is said in it. It can even be treated as a valid document that can be produced as evidence in a court of law in case of dispute.
5. **BUILDING GOOD WILL:** an important purpose of a business letter is to sell the good reputation and friendliness of a company. It aims at building goodwill in customer-company relationship, holding present customers and capturing new ones, reviving inactive accounts and inviting customers to buy more and varied products.

KINDS OF BUSINESS LETTERS

In every business concern, Letters have to be drafted and sent to the customers on various occasions. Therefore, business letters depending on the occasion in which they are sent can be classified as under;

A.1.Letters of inquiry seeking information about the required grades and replies.

2.Offers and acceptance.

3.Orders and their execution

4. Credit and status enquiry
5. Claims and adjustments.
6. Collection letters.
- B. 7. Circular letters.
8. Sales letters.
- C. 9. Banking correspondence
10. Insurance correspondence
11. Export and import correspondence
12. Agency correspondence
- D. 13. Application letters,
14. Interview letter, references, testimonials, letters of appointment, confirmation, promotion, retrenchment, resignation.
- E. 15. Transport correspondence
16. Secretarial correspondence
17. Correspondence with the State and Central Government
18. Public relations letters.

Business letters can also be classified as official letters, demi-official(D.O) letter, internal letters or memos, form letters, etc.,

- Official letters are written to government or semi-government bodies.
- Demi-official or D.O letters are official in purpose but are addressed to a person by name. D.o. Letters may be written if
- Internal letters or memos are used both in government offices and business housed for internal communication.
- Form letters are used for correspondence of recurring or routine nature. they are in case of acknowledgment, reminders, interviews, notices, appointments, etc., they have a standard form with some blanks left in them. Letters are sent to the addressees with relevant details filled in.

Sometimes these form letters carry a number or paragraphs one or more of which can be ticked (). these paragraphs are known as form paragraphs and are usually printed on post cards. ✓

ESSENTIALS OF EFFECTIVE BUSINESS LETTER

All type of business letter must conform to certain well recognised principles and should possess certain essential qualities. Business letters devoid of universally accepted requisites will prove ineffective.

The essential of a business letter can be analysed under the following heads.

(i) The structure of a business letter.

The structure of a business letter refers to the proper arrangement of the various parts or the different elements of a business letter. To give the letter the right look and to ensure clarity and convenience, the letter should consist of the following components.

1.The Heading.

2.The Date.

3.The Inside Address.

4.The Salutation.

5.The Body of the letter.

6.The complimentary Close.

7.The Signature.

8. Reference initials

9. Enclosures

Each of these part has a definite place and position in all business letters.

1.The Heading

Almost all business firms use printed letterheads for their correspondence. Generally, the name and the address are printed on the top of the letterhead but it frequently gives other particulars such as the description of business, the telephone number, the telegraphic address, the telex number, Fax number, E-mail address etc. The letterhead of the large concern may give the addresses of its branches and that of a branch may give the address of its head office. To give a balanced appearance to the letter, nearly one fifth of the total space should normally be used for the heading .

BALAJI PUBLICATIONS,
17, Aminjikarai, R.S.N
Telephone :28 64 89 36
E-mail: balaji2015@gmail.com

2.The date

This gives the date of the month and the year. It appears on the right hand side of the letterhead about five spaces below the heading. Some letterheads contain a printed line indicating where the date should be typed. In England, the usual method of indicating the date is to state it in original numbers such as IstMarch 2000. In U.S.A., it is usual to state the numbers of month before the date in cardinal numbers e.g. March 1, 2000. Some people omit the comma after the date and the full stop after the year, but it is generally considered correct to use them.

The practice of writing the date as 1-3-2008 or 1/3/2008 should be avoided because it would give rise to errors, particularly in foreign correspondence. For example, in U.S.A. 1/3/2008 would be January 3rd, 2008 while in England and in other Commonwealth Countries it would mean as 1st March 2008.

3.The Inside Address

This gives the name and full address of the person, firm or company to whom the letter is written. It is one of the essential ingredients of the physical make up of the business letter. It is generally typed two lines below the date line and above the salutation on the left-hand margin of the letterhead.

Importance of Inside Address

The typing of inside address is highly useful in many ways. They are:

- 1.This will provide the despatch clerk all the particulars that are necessary for writing the address on the envelope.
- 2.If window type envelopes are used, the inside address is a must.
- 3.Since it is also imprinted on the office copy of the letter, it will be easy to identify the number and the nature of the letters sent out to specified parties.

4.The Salutation

The salutation is the similar to greeting like '*good morning*', '*good day*', '*good afternoon*' etc. used by us in social life. It is written about three spaces below the inside address.

The form of salutation depends on the personal relation between the writer and the address as well as upon the letter's rank or position.

The following are the usual forms used in business letters.

Sir, Dear Sir, Dear Sirs, Gentlemen, Dear Mr. Raveen, Madam, Mesdames etc.

5.The Body of The Letter

This is the most important part of the letter. The ultimate object of a business letter is to convey a message. The body of the letter contains the principal message to be conveyed to the other party. Hence the other parts, though necessary, are only subordinates to the body of the letter. It is no exaggeration to say that the whole of this book deals with the writing of the body of different types of letters. Therefore, the writer should take utmost care to set out the matter clearly. The matter should be properly arranged and presented in a logical manner.

In this connection, Mr.**L.Gartside** suggests the following points which the reader should always bear in his mind.

- 1.Write simply, clearly, politely, grammatically and to the point.

2. Paragraph correctly confining each paragraph to one topic.
3. Avoid stereo typed phrases and commercials.

6. The Complementary Close or Subscription

The complementary close is merely a courteous leave taking. In other words, it is merely a polite way of ending a letter. It is like the salutation, conventional in form and meaning. A letter without a close or an appropriate close is vulgar and ineffective.

The complementary close is written three spaces below the last line of the body of the letter and just above the signature.

7. The signature

The signature follows immediately after the complementary close. It is usually written in black ink. Facsimiles can be used only in case of circular letters.

Since the letter binds the signatory, the signature has assumed great importance. A person may sign in different letters in different capacities. Therefore, the signatory should clearly indicate the capacity in which he signs. For instance, if the person signs in his individual capacity, his signature does not bind the firm.

If he signs as a representative of the firm, he is not personally liable. Therefore, care should be taken while signing the letter.

8. The Reference Initials

These initials are helpful in fixing the responsibility for typing and dictating the letter. The initials are put in any one of the following ways:

- JSK NNB
- JSK:NNB
- JSK/NNB
- JSK-nnb

9. Enclosures

Sometimes a letter carries along with it some other papers, such as price list, catalogue, prospectus, order invoice, railway or lorry receipt, bill, cash memo, or cheque, draft, etc. in such cases a mention should be made of these enclosures in the letter after the signature, and at the left-side margin, as below:

Encls:Four, Or

Encls: (1) -----

(2) -----

- **copy distribution:** sometimes copies of a letter have to be sent to some people other than the addressee also. In such cases, the names of these persons should be typed just below the reference initials or the enclosure notation, if any in the following manner:

CC: Mr. Jayanathan

Copies to Mr. Prasant Bannerjee and Miss Angela Paul

THE LAY-OUT AND DESIGN OF A BUSINESS LETTER

The overall arrangement and appearance of the different parts of a letter is called its layout. It refers to the arrangement of the various parts of a finished letter and to the neatness and spacing of the written matter.

With the advent of computers in almost all offices, the computer itself does the job of a suitable format and alignment proportionate to the matter therein were the conventional lay-out refers to-

(i) Arrangement of a letter proper on paper.

The arrangement of the typed area on the sheet of paper should look good. As a rule, the body of the letter is expected to start two spaces below the salutation and end two spaces above complimentary close. The body should be aligned on the right hand side with the first line of the inside address of the person to whom the letter is written.

(ii) Margins.

The right hand and left hand margins should be of nearly equal width, even though the former may be a little wider than the latter. The margin should not be less than an inch wide, in any case. However, an inch and a half is generally preferred. The margins on the sides should be about 2/3rd as wide as those at the top and the bottom in order to see that the letter looks well spaced.

(iii) Spacing.

It is better to use single spacing between the lines, with double spacing between the paragraphs. However, if the letter is short, double-spacing may be used throughout, with the first line of each paragraph indented to indicate the necessary divisions.

(iv) Forms of Indentions.

We come across four ways in which letters are typed and indented. (a) Block or straight edged form; (b) Indented orstepped-inform; (c) Semi-blocked or combination form; (d) Hanging indention form. Of these the first three are more popular than the last.

(a) Block or Straight-Edged Form

It is the most popular form used at present. Indention is avoided. The introductory address, salutation and body paragraphs are aligned right from between the paragraphs which are indented.

This is the most symmetric form. It saves time for the typist as there is no need to shift the carriage of the typewriter too often.

(b)Semi-Block or Combination Form

This form of lay-out is combination of the Block and Indented forms. The heading and the inside address are in Block form while the initial line of each paragraph of the text is indented five to ten spaces. This enables to identify clearly the separated paragraphs of the letter.

Both these forms are usually accompanied by open punctuation, *i.e.*, no terminal marks punctuate the lines of the heading and those of the inside address.

(c) Indented or Stepped-in Form

Here the lines of the inside address and the opening line of each paragraph begin a few spaces away from the margin. The lines of the inside address are indented five spaces to the right of the first letter of the preceding line above. Close punctuation is adopted in this form. There is a mark of punctuation for each line of the inside address. The full-stops are marked at the end of the last line of the letter-head and the inside address. The intervening lines of both are followed by commas.

(d) Hanging Indention Form

In this form the inside address and the salutation are typed in Block Form. The first-line of each paragraph in the body of the letter commences right at the left-hand margin but the subsequent lines are indented five or more spaces. Single spacing is used between the lines with double spacing between the paragraphs. This form is not much used. However, it is favoured in sales letters to draw the attention of the customers. It is suitable for letters of a very informal character that can stand novelty.

Planning the Letter:

BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

Communications fail due to various reasons. Sometimes, subordinates may not be receptive. Sometimes, the superiors lack in their expression. Besides, some other barriers may also come into operation. The various barriers to communication can be discussed as below.

1. Perception:

An individual's view of reality is known as perception. Two individuals do not see things exactly alike. People differ greatly in the way they perceive things and events. Even a single individual has different perceptual styles depending on time and circumstances.

Hodgetts say that, "the sender's meaning and the receiver's interaction are not always identical, but it is not necessary that they be so". This is the basic barrier to communication.

2. Semantic or Language Barriers:

Language serves as the basis for the communication. It is the medium through which views are conveyed. Sender should select the words and construct the sentences carefully. Words that are used to convey messages have several meanings. The sender selects the words as per his own frame of reference and which he thinks will convey the meaning he proposes to communicate. On the other hand, the receiver reads or listens to the message and interprets it within his own frame of reference. As people vary in their experience, knowledge of the language etc., there is a possibility of semantic distortions. Thus, semantic difficulties come in the way of clear understanding.

3.Perfunctory Attention:

If receiver pays very little attention to the message, communication in the sense of transfer of information and understanding will fail. When the employee is pre-occupied with a number of problems, sender faces such problem. In this case, employee should be made to keep away his problems and listen to the message. If this is not done, he cannot proceed the communication further.

4.Status:

One of the basic barriers to communication arises due to status relationship that exists in every organisation. The superior subordinate relationships in the organisational structure inhibit free movement of information and understanding, exchange of ideas, views etc.. Generally those who receive communication judge the sender and naturally sender's status has its own weight. For e.g., any communication received from the management is viewed as troublesome by trade unions; any message from workers will be discounted by management etc.

5.Resistance to Change:

Generally, people resist changes. Resistance to changes will be strong when the proposed change is great. Managers should take all possible steps to overcome such resistance to change. One method of overcoming resistance is explaining the subordinates as to how they will be benefited by such changes.

6.Organisational Structure:

Effective communication depends greatly sound organisational structure. If the organisational policies, rules and procedures are not clear, smooth flow of communication cannot be ensured. If the organisational structure has several layers of management, it may result in delay and distortion in communication. Lack of facilities that ensures effective communication is another barrier that comes in the way of clear understanding.

7.Premature Evaluation:

Premature evaluation refers to a tendency of forming a judgement before listening to the message fully. Premature evaluation misrepresents the message. Thus, it acts as a barrier to effective communication.

8.Emotional Attitude:

Emotional attitude of the parties involved in the exchange of information is another barrier to effective communication. When an individual is emotional, he may not be able to know the frame of mind of other person.

9.Failure to communicate:

Failure to communicate is a pervasive barrier to communication. The communicator may be lazy or it may be assumed that everything is known to all. Sometimes, failure to communicate may also arise from an intention to embarrass the receiver or from complexes like superiority, inferiority or due to status difference, Communication also has no impact on those who are not willing to listen / read the message.

10.Other Barriers:

Other barriers include faulty translation, badly expressed messages, loss by transmission, lack of attention, unclarified assumption, inadequate adjustment period and communication distrust.

