

2. What is Communication?



All communication is composed of three parts that make a whole: sharing, understanding, and meaning.

Sharing means doing something together with one or more person(s). In communication, sharing occurs when you convey thoughts, feelings, ideas, or insights to others. You also share with yourself (a process called intrapersonal communication) when you bring ideas to consciousness, ponder

how you feel about something, figure out the solution to a problem, or have a classic “Aha!” moment when something becomes clear.

The second key word is **understanding**. “To understand is to perceive, to interpret, and to relate our perception and interpretation to what we already know.” (McLean, 2003) Understanding the words and the concepts or objects they refer to is an important part of the communication process.

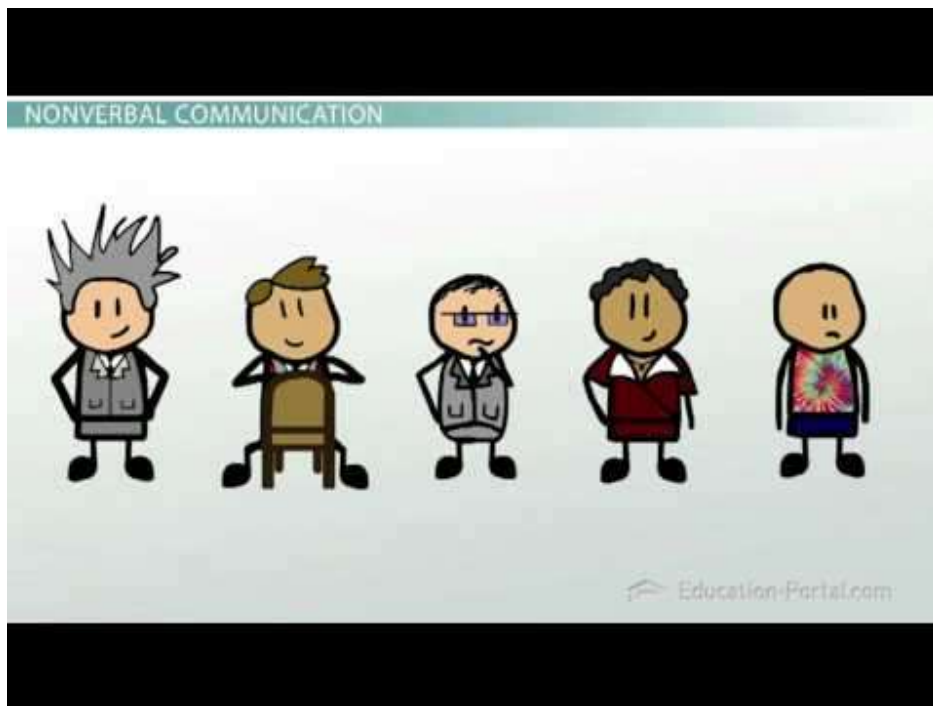
Finally, **meaning** is what you share through communication. For example, by looking at the context of a word, and by asking questions, you can discover the shared meaning of the word and better understand the message.

Watch the following 8 minute video reviewing *Types of Communication*

Example:

A nurse is explaining to a patient how high blood pressure affects the body. The nurse says, “It’s when water flows through a hose — if the pressure is too high, the hose can get damaged.”

The patient immediately understands because they relate this new medical information to their knowledge of how a garden hose works. By connecting the new concept (blood pressure) to a familiar one (water pressure in a hose), the patient can perceive, interpret, and make sense of the explanation.



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- Interpersonal communication is any message exchanged between two or more people.
- Written communication is any message using the written word.
- Verbal, or oral, communication is any message conveyed through speech.
- Nonverbal communication is any message inferred through observation of another person.

Intrapersonal

Example:

A student is preparing for a big exam and thinks to herself:

"I'm really nervous about this test... but I studied all week, and I know the material. I just need to stay calm and focus."

Interpersonal

Example:

Two coworkers discuss how to complete a project:

Alex: "I think we should divide the tasks—I'll handle the research, and you can focus on the presentation."

Jamie: "That sounds good. Let's set a meeting on Friday to review our progress."

3. Communications Process: Encoding and Decoding

In basic terms, humans communicate through a process of **encoding** and **decoding**. The encoder is the person who develops and sends the message. As represented in Figure 1.1 below, the encoder must determine how the message will be received by the audience, and make adjustments so the message is received the way they want it to be received.

Encoding is the process of turning thoughts into communication. The encoder uses a 'medium' to send the message – a phone call, email, text message, face-to-face meeting, or other communication tool. The level of conscious thought that goes into encoding messages may vary. The encoder should also take into account any 'noise' that might interfere with their message, such as other messages, distractions, or influences.

The audience then 'decodes', or interprets, the message for themselves. **Decoding** is the process of turning communication into thoughts. For example, you may realize you're hungry and encode the following message to send to your roommate: "I'm hungry. Do you want to get pizza tonight?" As your roommate receives the message, they decode your communication and turn it back into thoughts to make meaning.

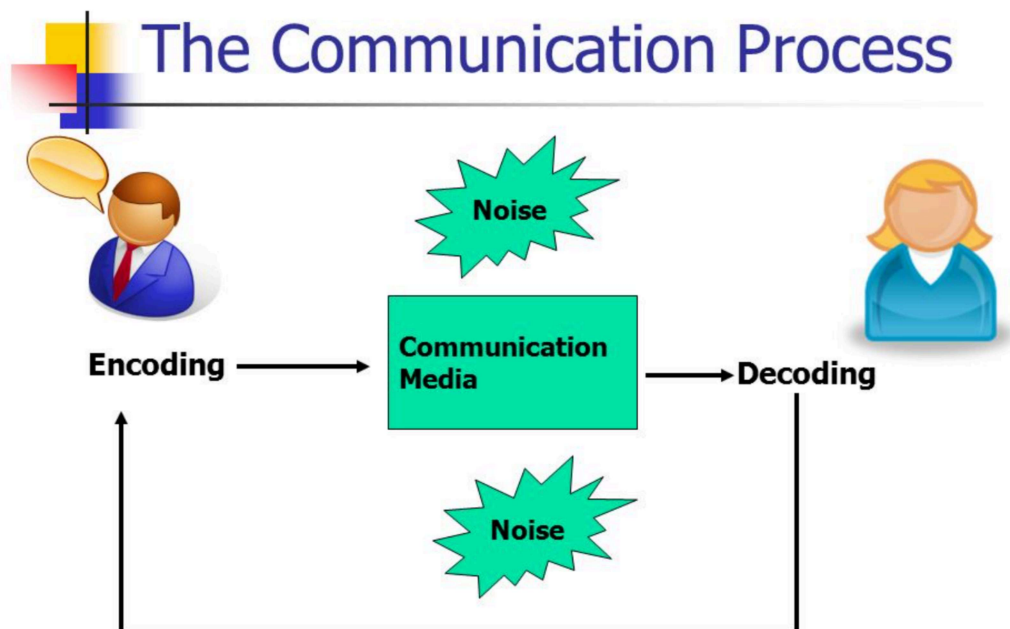


Figure 1.1. The communication process. Encoding, media, and decoding (Hawkins, 2016).

Of course, you don't just communicate verbally—you have various options, or channels, for communication. Encoded messages are sent through a channel, or a sensory route, on which a message travels to the receiver for decoding. While communication can be sent and received using any sensory route (sight, smell, touch, taste, or sound), most communication occurs through visual (sight) and/or auditory (sound) channels. If your roommate has headphones on and is engrossed in a video game, you may need to get their attention by waving your hands before you can ask them about dinner.

The **transmission model** of communication describes communication as a linear, one-way process in which a sender intentionally transmits a message to a receiver (Ellis & McClintock, 1990). This model focuses on the sender and message within a communication encounter. Although the receiver is included in the model, this role is viewed as more of a target or end point rather than part of an ongoing process. You are left to presume that the receiver either successfully receives and understands the message or does not. Think of how a radio message is sent from a person in the radio studio to you listening in your car. The sender is the radio announcer who encodes a verbal message that is transmitted by a radio tower through electromagnetic waves (the channel) and eventually reaches your (the receiver's) ears via an antenna and speakers in order to be decoded. The radio announcer doesn't really know if you receive their message or not, but if the equipment is working and the channel is free of static, then there is a good chance that the message was successfully received.

The **interaction model** of communication describes communication as a process in which participants alternate positions as sender and receiver and generate meaning by sending messages and receiving feedback within physical and psychological contexts (Schramm, 1997). Rather than illustrating communication as a linear, one-way process, the interaction model incorporates feedback, which makes communication a more interactive, two-way process. Feedback includes messages sent in response to other messages. For example, your instructor may respond to a point you raise during class discussion or you may point to the sofa when your roommate asks you where the remote control is. The inclusion of a feedback loop also leads to a more complex understanding of the roles of participants in a communication encounter. Rather than having one sender, one message, and one receiver, this model has two sender-receivers who exchange messages. Each participant alternates roles as sender and receiver in order to keep a communication encounter going. Although this seems like a perceptible and deliberate process, you alternate between the roles of sender and receiver very quickly and often without conscious thought.

The **transaction model** of communication describes communication as a process in which communicators generate social realities within social, relational, and cultural contexts. In this model, you don't just communicate to exchange messages; you communicate to create relationships, form intercultural alliances, shape your self-concepts, and engage with others in dialogue to create communities. In short, you don't communicate about your realities; communication helps to construct your realities (and the realities of others).

The roles of sender and receiver in the transaction model of communication differ significantly from the other models. Instead of labeling participants as senders and receivers, **the people in a communication encounter are referred to as communicators**. Unlike the interaction model, which suggests that participants alternate positions as sender and receiver, **the transaction model suggests that you are simultaneously a sender and a receiver**. For example, when meeting a new friend, you send verbal messages about your interests and background, your companion reacts nonverbally. **You don't wait until you are done sending your verbal message** to start receiving and decoding the nonverbal messages of your new friend. Instead, you are simultaneously sending your verbal message and receiving your friend's nonverbal messages. This is an important addition to the model because it allows you to understand how you are able to adapt your communication—for example, adapting a verbal message—in the middle of sending it based on the communication you are simultaneously receiving from your communication partner.

Example Of encoding and decoding :

A manager wants to motivate her team after a tough week. She decides to send an email that says:

“Team, I really appreciate your hard work this week. Let’s keep pushing — we’re almost at our goal!”

Encoding:

The manager encodes her thoughts (gratitude and encouragement) into words in the email. She chooses positive language (“appreciate,” “keep pushing”) to make sure her message motivates rather than criticizes. She also considers the medium (email) and timing (end of the week) to ensure it’s well-received.

Decoding:

When the team members read the email, they decode it based on their own experiences and perceptions.

Some may feel encouraged and motivated — understanding the message as appreciation.

Others might read it differently, perhaps thinking the manager wants them to work even harder because the goal hasn’t been met.

Why I need to learn these models?????

Transmission model — best explains mass communication (e.g., TV news, radio, announcements).

Interaction model — fits classroom discussions, interviews, or Q&A, where feedback happens in turns.

Transaction model — describes everyday conversations and relationships, where meaning is co-created continuously.

4. Eight Essential Components of Communication

The communication process can be broken down into a series of eight essential components, each of which serves an integral function in the overall process:

1. Source

2. Message

3. Channel

4. Receiver

5. Feedback

6. Environment

7. Context

8. Interference

Before you speak, think clearly about what you want to say and how your listener might understand it.

You, the source, are responsible for shaping your message so that your receiver can get it easily

Good communicators always think about both what they're saying and who they're saying it to.

Source

The source imagines, creates, and sends the message. The source encodes the message by choosing just the right order or the best words to convey the intended meaning, and presents or sends the information to the audience (receiver). By watching for the audience's reaction, the source perceives how well they received the message and responds with clarification or supporting information.

Message

Use the right channel for your message. Sometimes that means talking face-to-face, sometimes writing a message, or even sending a video.

"The message is the stimulus or meaning produced by the source for the receiver or audience" (McLean, 2005). The message brings together words to convey meaning, but is also about how it's conveyed – through nonverbal cues, organization, grammar, style, and other elements.

Channel

"The channel is the way in which a message or messages travel between source and receiver." (McLean, 2005). Spoken channels include face-to-face conversations, speeches, phone conversations and voicemail messages, radio, public address systems, and Skype. Written channels include letters, memorandums, purchase orders, invoices, newspaper and magazine articles, blogs, email, text messages, tweets, and so forth.

Receiver

"The receiver receives the message from the source, analyzing and interpreting the message in ways both intended and unintended by the source" (McLean, 2005).

Feedback

Always pay attention to feedback, how people react to what you say.

Their faces, questions, or silence all tell you something.

When you respond to the source, intentionally or unintentionally, you are giving feedback. Feedback is composed of messages the receiver sends back to the source. Verbal or nonverbal, all these feedback signals allow the source to see how well, how accurately (or how poorly and inaccurately) the message was received (Leavitt & Mueller, 1951).

Environment

“The environment is the atmosphere, physical and psychological, where you send and receive messages” (McLean, 2005). Surroundings, people, animals, technology, can all influence your communication.

How easy to get distracted, You need to stay focused - train yourself

Context

“The context of the communication interaction involves the setting, scene, and expectations of the individuals involved” (McLean, 2005). A professional communication context may involve business suits (environmental cues) that directly or indirectly influence expectations of language and behaviour among the participants.

Interference

Interference, also called noise, can come from any source. “Interference is anything that blocks or changes the source’s intended meaning of the message” (McLean, 2005). This can be external or internal/psychological. Noise interferes with normal encoding and decoding of the message carried by the channel between source and receiver.

Watch out for interference — anything (noise, distractions, confusion) that stops your message from being clear

5. Why Is It Important To Communicate Well?

It is important to you as a receiver and sender



People share a fundamental drive to communicate. You share meaning in what you say and how you say it, both in oral and written forms. Your communication skills help you to understand others—not just their words, but also their tone of voice, and their nonverbal gestures. The format of their written documents provides you with clues about who they are and what their values and priorities may be. Active listening and reading are also part of being a successful communicator.

Skilled communicators interpret and express these subtleties to achieve clarity and mutual understanding.



Tone of voice (e.g., friendly vs. sarcastic)

Facial expressions and gestures

Word choice and phrasing (formal vs. informal)

Timing and pauses

Cultural or contextual signals

One says, Good Job, but his facial reaction shows the opposite. Even though the word is the same, but these subtleties

Nonverbal cues like posture, eye contact, or even silence

Photo by [Myung-Won Seo](#) on [Unsplash](#)

When you were an infant, you learned to talk over a period of many months. You need to begin the process of improving your speaking and writing with the frame of mind that it will require effort, persistence, and self-correction, just as it did when you were acquiring basic communication skills.

Your speaking and writing are reflections of your thoughts, experience, and education. Part of that combination is your level of experience listening to other speakers, reading documents and styles of writing, and studying formats similar to what you aim to produce.

→ Yourself reflection is one of the most important one as well

As you study professional business communication, you may receive suggestions for improvement and clarification from speakers and writers more experienced than yourself. Your success in communicating is a skill that applies to every field of work, and it makes a difference in your relationships with others.

You want to be prepared to communicate well when given the opportunity. Each time you do a good job, your success will bring more success.

An individual with excellent communication skills is an asset to every organization. No matter what

career you plan to pursue, learning to express yourself professionally in your communications will help you get there.

6. Communication in Context

To begin this section, watch the following 18 minute TED Talk from Sam Sommers, *The Hidden Power of Context*



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<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/commbusprofcdn/?p=67>

Situation

Context is made up of the parts of communication that influence the meaning of a message. Context has an influence on the communication process. Contexts can overlap, creating an even more dynamic process. You have been communicating in many contexts across your lifetime, and you'll be able to apply what you've learned from experiences in multiple contexts to business communication.

Intrapersonal Communication

Intrapersonal communication involves one person; it is often called "self-talk" (Wood, 1997). Donna Vocate's (1994) book on this topic explains how, as you use language to reflect on your own experiences, you talk yourself through situations. Your intrapersonal communication can be positive or negative, and directly influences how you perceive and react to situations and communication with

"We should be direct in meetings."

In an American business culture, this might mean being honest and efficient.

In a Japanese or Filipino culture, it could sound rude or confrontational.

ex:

others. For example, before a big presentation, you may give yourself a pep talk to calm feelings of anxiety and give yourself a boost of confidence.

What you perceive in communication with others is also influenced by your culture, native language, and your world view. As the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas said, "Every process of reaching understanding takes place against the background of a culturally ingrained pre-understanding" (Habermas, 1984).

But it is not always right

Interpersonal Communication

The second major context within the field of communication is interpersonal communication which normally involves two people, and can range from intimate and very personal to formal and impersonal. A conversation over coffee with a colleague about a project you're working on would be a form of interpersonal communication.

ex:

Group Communication

"Group communication is a dynamic process where a small number of people engage in a conversation" (McLean, 2005). Group communication is generally defined as involving three to eight people. The larger the group, the more likely it is to break down into smaller groups.

When engaging with groups, you can observe factors like age, education, sex, and location to learn more about general preferences as well as dislikes. You may find several groups within the larger audience, such as specific areas of education, and use this knowledge to increase your effectiveness as a business communicator.

You have flexibility to tailor your message to suit the audience

Public Communication

In public communication, one person speaks to a group of people; the same is true of public written communication, where one person writes a message to be read by a small or large group. The speaker or writer may ask questions, and engage the audience in a discussion (in writing, examples are an email discussion or a point-counter-point series of letters to the editor), but the dynamics of the conversation are distinct from group communication, where different rules apply.

The message or the way cannot be changed

Mass Communication

Through mass communication, you send a message to as many people as possible. Mass communication involves sending a single message to a group. It allows you to communicate your message to a large number of people. Something to consider, however, is that you may be limited in your ability to tailor your message to specific audiences, groups, or individuals when using mass communication. As a business communicator, you can use multimedia as a visual aid or reference common programs, films, or other images that your audience finds familiar yet engaging. By choosing messages or references that many audience members will recognize or can identify with, you can develop common ground and increase the appeal of your message.

7. Your Responsibilities as a Communicator

Four Tips for Communication

Whenever you speak or write in a business environment, you have certain responsibilities to your audience, your employer, and your profession. Your audience comes to you with an inherent set of expectations that is your responsibility to fulfill. The specific expectations may change given the context or environment, but two central ideas will remain: be prepared, and be ethical.

Preparation

Being prepared means that you have selected a topic appropriate to your audience, gathered enough information to cover the topic well, put your information into a logical sequence, and considered how best to present it.

Organization

Being organized involves the steps or points that lead your communication to a conclusion. Once you've invested time in researching your topic, you will want to narrow your focus to a few key points and consider how you'll present them. You also need to consider how to link your main points together for your audience so they can follow your message from point to point.

Each topic is huge; I need what matters to deliver my message

Clarity

You need to have a clear idea in your mind of what you want to say before you can say it clearly to someone else. It involves considering your audience, as you will want to choose words and phrases they understand and avoid jargon or slang that may be unfamiliar to them. Clarity also involves presentation and appropriate use of technology.

Business and then suddenly talk about students. You need to link them

Looking at the presentation or read, or freeze)

This is part of the importance of proper encoding and having a clear message

Punctuality

Concise means to be brief and to the point. In most business communications you are expected to 'get down to business' right away. Being prepared includes being able to state your points clearly and support them with trustworthy evidence in a relatively straightforward, linear way.

Be concise in your choice of words, organization, and even visual aids. Being concise also involves being sensitive to time constraints. Be prepared to be punctual and adhere to deadlines or time limits.

Lengthy speeches are boring, synthesis and punctuality are the key

Some cultures also have a less strict interpretation of time schedules and punctuality. While it is important to recognize that different cultures have different expectations, the general rule holds true that good business communication does not waste words or time.

Ethics in Communication



equality

Communicating ethically involves being egalitarian, respectful, and trustworthy—overall, practising the “golden rule” of treating your audience the way you would want to be treated.

Communication can move communities, influence cultures, and change history. It can motivate people to take stand, consider an argument, or purchase a product. The degree to which you consider both the common good and fundamental principles you hold to be true when crafting your message directly relates to how your message will affect others.

The Ethical Communicator Is Egalitarian Address only those who he/she likes / same age/ gender/ nationality/ education

The word “egalitarian” comes from the root “equal.” To be egalitarian is to believe in basic equality: that all people should share equally in the benefits and burdens of a society. It means that everyone is entitled to the same respect, expectations, access to information, and rewards of participation in a group.

⇒ To communicate in an egalitarian manner, speak and write in a way that is comprehensible and relevant to all your listeners or readers, not just those who are ‘like you’ in terms of age, gender, race or ethnicity, or other characteristics. In business, an effective communicator seeks to unify the audience by using ideas and language that are appropriate for all the message’s readers or listeners.

The Ethical Communicator Is Respectful Losing temper and not being able to control emotions

People are influenced by emotions as well as logic. The ethical communicator will be passionate and enthusiastic without being disrespectful. Losing one’s temper and being abusive are generally

regarded as showing a lack of professionalism (and could even involve legal consequences for you or your employer). When you disagree strongly with a coworker, feel deeply annoyed with a difficult customer, or find serious fault with a competitor's product, it is important to express such sentiments respectfully.

The Ethical Communicator Is Trustworthy

Being biased or manipulate the data for your interest

Trust is a key component in communication, and this is especially true in business. Your goal as a communicator is to build a healthy relationship with your audience, and to do that you must show them how they can trust you and why the information you are about to share with them is believable.

Your audience will expect that what you say is the truth as you understand it. This means that you have not intentionally omitted, deleted, or taken information out of context simply to prove your points. They will listen to what you say and how you say it, but also to what you don't say or do. Being worthy of trust is something you earn with an audience. Many wise people have observed that trust is hard to build but easy to lose.

The "Golden Rule"

When in doubt, remember the "golden rule," which is to treat others the way you would like to be treated. In all its many forms, the golden rule incorporates human kindness, cooperation, and reciprocity across cultures, languages, backgrounds, and interests. Regardless of where you travel, with whom you communicate or what your audience is like, remember how you would feel if you were on the receiving end of your communication and act accordingly.

Place yourself in the receiving end