

COMPONENT OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is a process of transmitting and receiving verbal and nonverbal messages. Communication is considered effective when it achieves the desired reaction or response from the receiver. In other words, communication is a two-way process of exchanging ideas or information. But this is not an easy process. Sometimes, it becomes complicated and results in miscommunication.

Communication includes six components: Context, sender, encoder, message, medium, receiver-decoder and feedback.

1. CONTEXT

Every message begins with context. Context is the situation, setting or circumstances within which communication takes place. Context plays a very important role in how a message is encoded and decoded. It is a broad field that includes country, culture, organization, and external and internal stimuli. Every country, every culture, and every company or organization has its own conventions for processing and communicating information, and it communicates information according to these conventions.

2. ENCODER OR SENDER

The person who sends a message is called 'encoder'. He may be a writer or a speaker depending on whether his message is written or oral. He tries to choose symbols—usually words—which express his message correctly so that the receiver may understand it and react with the response the sender desires. It is the duty of the sender to encode his message properly, correctly, clearly and completely to achieve the desired response. He has to decide which words and expressions will communicate his message in the best way.

3. MESSAGE

The message is the core idea which the sender wants to communicate. It consists of both verbal (written or spoken symbols) and nonverbal (unspoken symbols). No message can achieve its purpose unless it has unity of thought, consistency in expression and emphasis on the main point. The message should be very clear so that the receiver may understand it completely. To achieve clarity, the sender must be clear about the contents of his message. He should

avoid vague words or ideas which may lead to misunderstanding. He should plan his message carefully so that irrelevant details may not creep into it.

4. MEDIUM

A medium or channel is the means or technique used to convey a message. It may be a conversation, letter, telephone call, radio or television program. The choice of message channel depends on all the contextual factors discussed above and the nature of the message itself. The choice of medium is also influenced by the relationship between the sender and the receiver, the urgency of the message and the receiver's culture. The written channel is often preferred when the message is long, technical, or formal in nature, and when the message must be documented. The oral channel is effective when the message is urgent or personal, or when immediate feedback is important.

5. DECODER OR RECEIVER

The receiver of the message is the reader or listener also known as the decoder. When a message is received, the receiver assigns certain meanings to it. This is called 'decoding'. The factors that affect the decoding of a message are knowledge, experience and attitude. Different people have different attitudes, abilities, experiences and opinions. The message is decoded by the receiver within the range of his knowledge. Similarly, the receiver's attitude or feeling will affect him to understand the message. Therefore, it is very important that the sender, while encoding his message, should consider all these factors to minimize the possibility of its being misunderstood.

6. FEEDBACK

Feedback is an essential part of successful communication. It is the receiver's response to the sender's message. It indicates understanding or misunderstanding of the message. It also stimulates further communication and discussion. Both sender and receiver need feedback. Senders need feedback to determine the success or failure of communication. Receivers need feedback to understand how their behavior affects others. Feedback can be oral or written. It can also be an action, such as receiving in the mail an item the encoder ordered. Sometimes silence is used as feedback, though it is almost ineffective. The ability to provide appropriate feedback can assist the development of effective relationship and the productivity of business.

