

Chapter 1 Study Guide

Establishing a Framework for Business Communication

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL FIND:

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1** Define communication and describe the value of communication in business.
- 2** Explain the communication process model and the ultimate objective of the communication process.
- 3** Discuss how information flows in an organization.
- 4** Explain how legal and ethical constraints, diversity challenges, changing technology , and team environment act as contextual forces that influence the process of business communication.

KEY CONCEPTS

Understanding what communication is and how it occurs is central to successful transactions in the workplace. Business communication does not take place in a vacuum but is impacted by various external forces, including legal and ethical constraints, diversity challenges, team environment, and changing technology.

KEY TERMS

TERM	PAGE	TERM	PAGE
Chronemics	14	Internal messages	8
Diversity skills	13	Kinesics	14
Downward communication	6	Organizational communication	4
Ethics	10	Proxemics	14
Ethnocentrism	13	Stakeholders	9
External messages	8	Stereotypes	13
Formal communication network	5	Synergy	16
Horizontal (or lateral) communication	8	Team	16
Informal communication network	5	Telecommuting	15
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CHAPTER OUTLINE

- 1-1 Value of Communication 3**
- 1-2 The Communication Process 3**
- 1-3 Communicating within Organizations 4**
 - 1-3a Communication Flow in Organizations 4
 - 1-3b Levels of Communication 8
- 1-4 Contextual Forces Influencing Business Communication 9**
 - 1-4a Legal and Ethical Constraints
 - 1-4b Diversity Challenges
 - 1-4c Changing Technology
 - 1-4d Team Environment

CHAPTER REVIEW

- 1. What are the three purposes for which people communicate? What percentage of a manager's time is spent communicating? Give examples of the types of communication managers use.**

The three purposes of communication are to inform, to persuade, and to entertain. Managers spend approximately 60 to 80 percent of their time involved in some form of communication, including attending meetings, writing reports, presenting information to groups, explaining and clarifying procedures and work assignments, evaluating and counseling employees, and promoting company products, services, and image. Communication activities in which managers are typically engaged include attending meetings and writing reports related to strategic plans and company policy; presenting information to large and small groups; explaining and clarifying management procedures and work assignments; coordinating the work of various employees, departments, and other work groups; evaluating and counseling employees; and promoting the company's products/services and image.

2. Describe the elements of the Transactional Process Model of Communication, the various parts and how interference or barriers impede communication. .

The Transactional Process Model of Communication includes the following.

- a. The sender who creates or encodes a message.
- b. The message sent to the receiver (includes choices of medium and message channel)
- c. The receiver who receives and decodes the message.
- d. Sometimes both parties attempt to communicate simultaneously, as in face-to-face communication.
- e. T Interferences or barriers may hinder the communication process.

3. How is the formal flow of communication different from the informal flow of communication?

The formal flow follows obvious organizational lines. The informal flow is sometimes referred to as the grapevine because it does not follow predictable lines of flow.

4. What is the difference between intrapersonal and interpersonal communication?

Intrapersonal is the communication that occurs within a person as the person processes information; interpersonal communication occurs between or among people.

5. What are some common causes of unethical behavior in the workplace?

The common causes of unethical behavior in the workplace are (a) excessive emphasis on profits, (b) misplaced corporate loyalty, (c) obsession with personal advancement, (d) expectation of not getting caught, (e) unethical tone set by top management, (f) uncertainty about whether an action is wrong, and (g) unwillingness to take an ethical stand.

6. Describe several intercultural communication barriers and how they might be overcome.

Intercultural barriers include stereotypes, differences in the interpretation of time, differing personal space requirements, body language, translation limitations, and lack of language training. Strategies for overcoming these barriers include learning about the other person's culture, having patience with yourself and the other person, and getting help in the form of resources when needed.

7. What aspect of cultural diversity do you feel will impact you most in your career: international, intercultural, intergenerational, or gender? Explain your answer, including how you plan to deal with the challenge.

Answers will vary, but student responses should focus on one of the three listed here, using concepts from the chapter to defend their answers. For example, if intergenerational issues arise, students could talk with relatives of the same generation as co-workers to obtain suggestions about how to communicate more effectively.

8. Describe several ways that communication technology can assist individuals and organizations.

Communication technology can assist individuals and organizations in collecting and analyzing data, shaping messages to be clearer and more effective, and communicating quickly and efficiently over long distances.

9. What legal and ethical concerns are raised over the use of technology?

Concerns raised over the use of technology include information ownership issues, access to information issues, and threats to privacy.

10. How does communication in work teams differ from that of traditional organizations?

Communication in work teams differs from that in traditional organizations in that communication patterns are different; trust is a primary factor; open meetings are the norm; shared leadership exists; and listening, problem solving, conflict resolution, and negotiation are important factors.

11. Why has communication been identified as perhaps the single most important aspect of team work?

Communication has been identified as perhaps the most important aspect of team work because open lines of communication are essential to increasing interaction between employees and management as well as horizontally among team members, with other teams, and with supervisors.

CONTINUED STUDY

Downward communication flows from supervisor to employee, from policy makers to operating personnel, or from top to bottom on the organization chart. A simple policy statement from the top of the organization may grow into a formal plan for operation at lower levels. Teaching people how to perform their specific tasks is an element of downward communication. Another element is orienting employees to a company's rules, practices, procedures, history, and goals. Employees also learn about the quality of their job performance through downward communication.

Upward communication generally is feedback to downward communication. Accurate upward communication keeps management informed about the feelings of lower-level employees, taps the expertise of employees, helps management identify both difficult and potentially promotable employees, and paves the way for even more effective downward communication.

Horizontal or lateral communication describes interactions between organizational units on the same hierarchical level. Horizontal communication is the primary means of achieving coordination in a functional organizational structure.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Chapter 1—Establishing a Framework for Business Communication

TRUE/FALSE

1. People communicate to satisfy needs in both their work lives and private lives.

ANS: T REFER TO PAGE: 3

2. A major purpose in communication is to help people feel good about themselves and their friends, groups, and organizations.

ANS: T REFER TO PAGE: 3

3. Three basic purpose of communication are to feel, sense, and influence.

ANS: F REFER TO PAGE: 3

4. If the sender uses words the receiver does not understand, the receiver will have difficulty encoding the message.

ANS: F REFER TO PAGE: 4

5. The sender's primary objective is to decode the message so that the message received is as close as possible to the message that is sent.

ANS: F REFER TO PAGE: 4

6. While the sender of a message is responsible for effective encoding and the receiver for effective decoding, both have responsibility for addressing interferences.

ANS: T REFER TO PAGE: 4

7. Barriers, or interferences, to communication can be completely overcome by skilled communicators.

ANS: F REFER TO PAGE: 4

8. The "grapevine" is a part of an organization's formal communication network and should be used effectively.

ANS: F REFER TO PAGE: 5

9. In spite of its poor reputation, the grapevine is in reality no more or less accurate than other channels.

ANS: T REFER TO PAGE: 5

10. Upward communication from lower organizational levels to management involves risk since it is generally feedback to downward communication.

ANS: T REFER TO PAGE: 7

11. Stakeholders are interested people only external to an organization affected by decisions.

ANS: F REFER TO PAGE: 9

12. Stakeholders are those affected by decisions and can include people inside and outside the organization.

ANS: T REFER TO PAGE: 9

13. While all actions that are ethical are legal, some actions that are legal may not be ethical.

ANS: F REFER TO PAGE: 11

14. Employees should set aside their own personal value systems when making ethical decisions for their companies.

ANS: F REFER TO PAGE: 11

15. Though people around the world speak different languages, nonverbal communication, such as gestures and facial expressions, generally has the same meanings to all cultures.

ANS: F REFER TO PAGE: 13

16. An ethnocentrist is a person who refuses to develop sensitivity to other cultures.

ANS: T REFER TO PAGE: 13

17. A limitation of language translation is that some words do not have an equivalent meaning in another language.

ANS: T REFER TO PAGE: 14

18. Synergy occurs when the energy of a group is diverted to nonproductive tasks.

ANS: F REFER TO PAGE: 16

19. In successful teams, leadership is likely to be shared, which requires more direct and effective communication within the organization.

ANS: T REFER TO PAGE: 17

20. Grouping employees into a team structure does not guarantee they will function as a team.

ANS: T REFER TO PAGE: 17

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. Differences in education level, experience, and culture or distractions such as noise, uncomfortable room temperature, and interruptions are examples of
 - a. feedback.
 - b. interference.
 - c. interception.
 - d. decoding.

ANS: B REFER TO PAGE: 4

2. Which of the following is an example of communication that typically comes through an informal communication network?
 - a. organizational charts
 - b. job descriptions
 - c. online chats
 - d. procedure manuals

ANS: C REFER TO PAGE: 5

3. An organizational chart is a graphic representation of ____
 - a. informal communication channels within the organization.
 - b. both informal and formal communication channels within the organization.
 - c. formal communication channels within the organization.
 - d. external communication channels utilized by the organization.

ANS: C REFER TO PAGE: 5

4. The grapevine in an organization
 - a. is typically no more or less accurate than other channels.
 - b. serves no necessary purpose; thus, managers should work to eliminate it.
 - c. passes a message in single file from person to person until it finally reaches the end of the line.
 - d. has a single, consistent source.

ANS: A REFER TO PAGE: 5

5. The ____ communication channel is created by management to control individual and group behavior and to achieve the organization's goals.
 - a. informal
 - b. formal
 - c. email
 - d. oral

ANS: B REFER TO PAGE: 5

6. Intrapersonal communication occurs when
 - a. two people are involved in the process.
 - b. teamwork dynamics contribute to the feedback.
 - c. individuals from two different organizations communicate effectively.
 - d. an individual processes information individually.

ANS: D REFER TO PAGE: 8

7. In downward communication management attempts to ____ activities within an organization while with horizontal communication management hopes to ____ them.
- control; coordinate
 - coordinate; contain
 - coordinate; control
 - conduct; control

ANS: A REFER TO PAGE: 6 and 8

8. Which of the following is **NOT** a contextual force that affects communication?
- team environment
 - diversity challenges
 - changing technology
 - economic downturn

ANS: D REFER TO PAGE: 9

9. Which of the following is **FALSE** concerning stereotyping?
- Stereotyping interferes with the observer being able to understand the other person.
 - Stereotyping is reinforced when the observer sees a behavior that conforms to the stereotype.
 - Stereotyping aids in communication by categorizing cultures into distinct groups that have similarities.
 - Stereotyping can occur concerning any group of people.

ANS: C REFER TO PAGE: 13

10. Which of the following statements about culture is true?
- Culture is inborn from the moment of birth.
 - Components of culture such as value of the individual, value placed on materialism, work ethic, etc. are distinct, unrelated elements.
 - Stereotyping allows one to form accurate mental pictures of the main characteristics of another group.
 - None of the above statements are true.

ANS: D REFER TO PAGE: 13

11. Which of the following are **NOT** barriers to intercultural communication?
- Ethnocentrism, stereotypes, and translation limitations
 - Chronemics, proxemics, and kinesics
 - Synergy, decentralized decision making, and cross functional teams
 - All of the above are barriers

ANS: C REFER TO PAGE: 13 and 14

12. Which of the following is true of personal space requirements?
- The study of space requirements is known as *chronemics*.
 - In the United States culture, very little personal space is expected or required as compared to other cultures of the world.
 - Space operates as a language, just as time does.
 - All of the above statements are true.

ANS: C REFER TO PAGE: 14

13. The single most important aspect of successful teamwork is
- shared leadership.
 - diversity of group members.
 - effective communication.
 - problem solving and consensus.

ANS: C REFER TO PAGE: 16 and 17

14. Which of the following is **FALSE** concerning teams?
- A group must go through a developmental process to begin functioning as a team.
 - Team members need training in problem solving, goal setting, and conflict resolution.
 - The self-directed work team can become the basic organizational building block to help assure success in dynamic global competition.
 - Skills for successful participating in team environments are the same as those for success in traditional organizations.

ANS: D REFER TO PAGE: 16 and 17

15. Which of the following is typically true of work teams?
- Although the concept of work teams has been widely used in the U.S. for some time, it has not gained significant support in other countries.
 - Work teams occasionally experience a drain on their collaborative energy; this drain is referred to as synergy.
 - Employees in a self-directed work team handle a wide array of functions and work with a minimum of direct supervision.
 - Work team members typically set their own goals without management input and plan how to work to achieve those goals.

ANS: C REFER TO PAGE: 16 and 17

16. Communication in successful work teams
- is the same as the process of communication in traditional organizations.
 - is affected primarily by trust building and shared leadership.
 - places reduced emphasis on listening, problem solving, and conflict resolution.
 - replaces vertical information flow with horizontal flow.

ANS: B REFER TO PAGE: 17

17. In a distributed leadership team environment, the role of the leader is **BEST** described as
- the leader remaining in the position until the team is dissolved.
 - any member of the team becoming the leader at various times.
 - a non-existent role.
 - the leader being dictatorial when needed.

ANS: B REFER TO PAGE: 17

SHORT ANSWER

1. Explain the components of the communication process and why challenges can occur.

ANS:

Four components are involved in the process:

1. Sender
2. Message
3. Receiver
4. Feedback

Breakdowns can occur at any stage of the process as limitations of the sender, receiver, or both cause incomplete or faulty communication to occur. Barriers or interferences can also cause breakdowns.

REFER TO PAGE: 3 and 4

2. Explain the challenges involved for both the sender and the receiver in the communication process.

ANS:

People communicate to inform, persuade, or to entertain using a common system of symbols, signs, and behavior. The sender selects and organizes a message in such a way that the message received is as close as possible to the message sent. Knowing the receiver's educational level, culture, and experiences come into play when transmitting a message. The receiver is then involved in listening carefully, without distractions, to interpret the message so that it has meaning to him or her. Both the sender and the receiver have equal responsibility to be effective in encoding and decoding the message. Communication is a complex process with interferences possibly emerging in any portion of the communication encounter.

REFER TO PAGE: 4 and 5

3. Illustrate and explain four ethical dimensions of business behavior; give two examples of behaviors that fit each dimension.

ANS:

Dimension 1 Behavior that is illegal and unethical

Dimension 2 Behavior that is illegal, yet ethical

Dimension 3 Behavior that is legal, yet unethical

Dimension 4 Behavior that is both legal and ethical

Student views as to what is ethical will vary. Examples can include situations similar to the following:

Dimension 1 An employee stealing merchandise from the company he works for.
An employee altering accounting records to hide money stolen from a business.

Dimension 2 A physician accepting a \$100 gift from a pharmaceutical representative.
A manager telling an employee not to buy a new house when the company has not yet made public that a layoff is coming.

Dimension 3 A person in a management position having an affair with a subordinate.
An employer reading personal email generated by an employee.

Dimension 4 An employer firing an employee who is failing to do his/her job.
A manager who gives a pay raise to her most productive workers.

REFER TO PAGE: 11 and 12

4. List six barriers to intercultural communication and provide an example of each barrier.

ANS:

Six barriers to intercultural communication are:

- *Stereotypes*: North Americans are sometimes viewed as overly friendly, blunt, and childlike.
- *Interpretation of time*: Many Latin Americans believe that important things take more time than unimportant things.
- *Personal space requirements*: Arab business people stand very close to each other compared to U.S. business people.
- *Body language*: The symbol for "okay" in the U.S. means "zero" in France and a vulgarity in Brazil.
- *Translation limitations*: The Japanese concept of "indebtedness" has no direct English equivalent.
- *Ethnocentrism*: Many non-Hispanics do not learn to speak even a little Spanish in areas of the U.S. with a high Hispanic population.

REFER TO PAGE: 13 and 14

5. Discuss the major strengths of teams.

ANS:

Teams make workers happier by empowering them to shape their own jobs. Teams increase efficiency by eliminating layers of management, opening lines of communication and increasing interaction between employees and management. Teams enable a company to draw on the skills and imagination of the whole work force. Teams provide a level of expertise that is unavailable on the individual level. Teams help companies deliver higher-quality products or services at faster speeds and lower costs.

REFER TO PAGE: 16 and 17