LESSON 4

THE PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION &
 MISCOMMUNICATION

Outline:

Components of Communication Sender / Encoder

Message

Medium/Channel

o Oral Communication

o Written Communication Receiver / Decoder

Feedback

Communication is a process of sending and receiving verbal and non-verbal messages. Communication is considered effective when it achieves the desired reaction or response from the receiver. Communication is a two way process of exchanging ideas or information. The process of communication has six components: sender/encoder, message, medium, receiver/decoder, and feedbacks.

Context

Every message, whether oral or written, begins with context. Context is a broad field that
includes country, culture, organization, and external and internal stimuli. Internal stimuli have
effect on how you translate ideas into a message. Your attitudes, opinions, emotions, past
experiences, likes and dislikes, education, job status and confidence in your communication
skills, all influence the way you communicate your ideas, especially important is your ability
to analyze your receiver’s culture, viewpoint ,needs ,skills, status, metal ability, experience
and expectation. You must consider all these aspects of context in order to communicate a
message effectively.

Sender / Encoder

While sending a message, you are the “encoder”, the writer or speaker, depending on whether your message is written or oral, you choose symbols — words, graphic, pictures — that express your message so that the receiver(s) will understand and react as you desire. You decide which symbols best convey your message and which message channel will be the most effective among the oral and written media (letter, memo, telephone, etc.)

Message

The message is the main idea that you wish to communicate; it is of both verbal (written or
spoken) symbols and non-verbal (unspoken) symbols. First decide exactly what your message
is. Also consider the receiver of your message. You must also consider your context and your
receiver’s as well. How will your receiver interpret your message and how it may affect your
relationship?

Medium/Channel

It means the way to be used to send your message. You can choose electronic mail, the
printed word or sound etc. The choice of medium is affected by the relationship between the
sender and the receiver. The urgency of a message can also be a factor in whether to use the
written or spoken medium. You may also consider factors such as importance, number of
receivers, costs and amount of information; you must also consider which medium is

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preferred in the receiver’s culture. Based on research, the following are some of the characteristics found in oral and written communication.

Oral Communication

• The oral communication brings back immediate feedback

• It has a conversational nature with shorter words and sentences

• It stresses on interpersonal relations

• This medium needs less technical details

• Its sentence structures are simple

Written Communication

• This medium is more formal with focus on contents

• It can convey any amount of technical information

• It is best for permanent record

• This medium uses longer words and longer sentences.

• It brings delayed feedback.

The internal communication consists of sending messages inside your organization while external communication consists of sending messages outside your organization.

For internal communication, written media may be:

• Memos, reports, bulletins, job descriptions,

• Posters, notes, employee manuals,

• Electronic bulletin boards, even internal faxes

Oral communication may take the form of

• Staff meeting reports, face to face discussions,

• Presentations, audio tapes, telephone chats,

• Tele-conferences, or videotapes

External written communication media may be:

• Letters, reports, telegrams, cablegrams,

• Mailgrams, faxes, telexes, postcards, contracts,

• Ads, brochures, catalogs, news releases etc. Orally it may be

• face to face discussions, telephone,

• Presentations in solo or panel situations

Receiver / Decoder

The receiver/decoder of your message is your reader or listener. He may be influenced by the
context and by the external and internal stimuli. The receiver like sender receives messages
through the eyes and ears but is also influenced by non-verbal factors such as physical
environment, physical appearance, body movements, voice quality, touch, taste, and smell.

All factors of a message are filtered through the receiver’s view and experience in the work. Therefore, miscommunication can occur when personal biases and individual values cause the receiver to misinterpret the sender’s internal message.

Feedback

Feedback can either be oral or written; it can also be an action, such as receiving the mail or an item you ordered. Sometimes, silence is used as feedback, though it is not very useful. Senders need feedback in order to determine the success or failure of the communication.

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