

Communicating in Organisational Settings

- The ability to effectively communicate with others is one of the most powerful tools for personal and/or professional success.
- Most people are challenged by the many day-to-day interactions with co-workers, family, and friends.
- Emotion, communication and conflict are present in all human interactions and affect each of us in different ways.
- Everyone manages emotion, communication and conflict from habit – patterns and styles developed early in life and over time.
- 80% of problems in the workplace are communication related.
- One of the quickest ways to alienate yourself from other people is to communicate unsuccessfully.
- Effective communication empowers you to influence others.
- Your capacity to communicate is often seen as an indicator of your ability and intelligence.

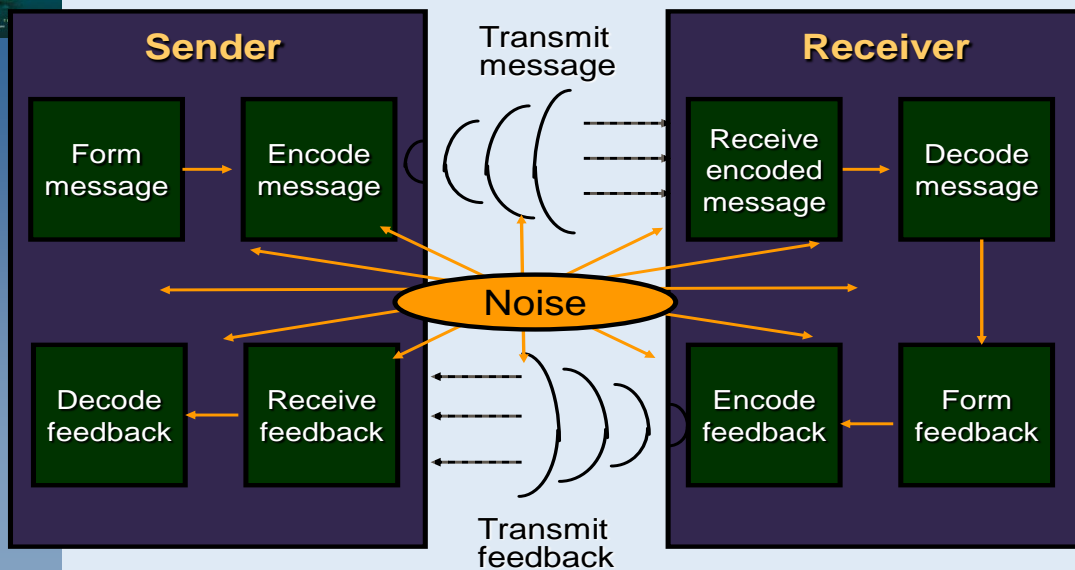
Four functions of communication

- Knowledge management
- Decision making
- Coordinating work activities
- Fulfilling relatedness needs

Communication process model



Communication process model



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Communication barriers

- Perceptions
- Filtering
- Language
- jargon
- ambiguity
- Information overload

Managing information overload

Solution 1: Increase information processing capacity learn to digest information more quickly temporarily work longer hours

Solution 2: Reduce information load

- buffering
- omitting
- summarising

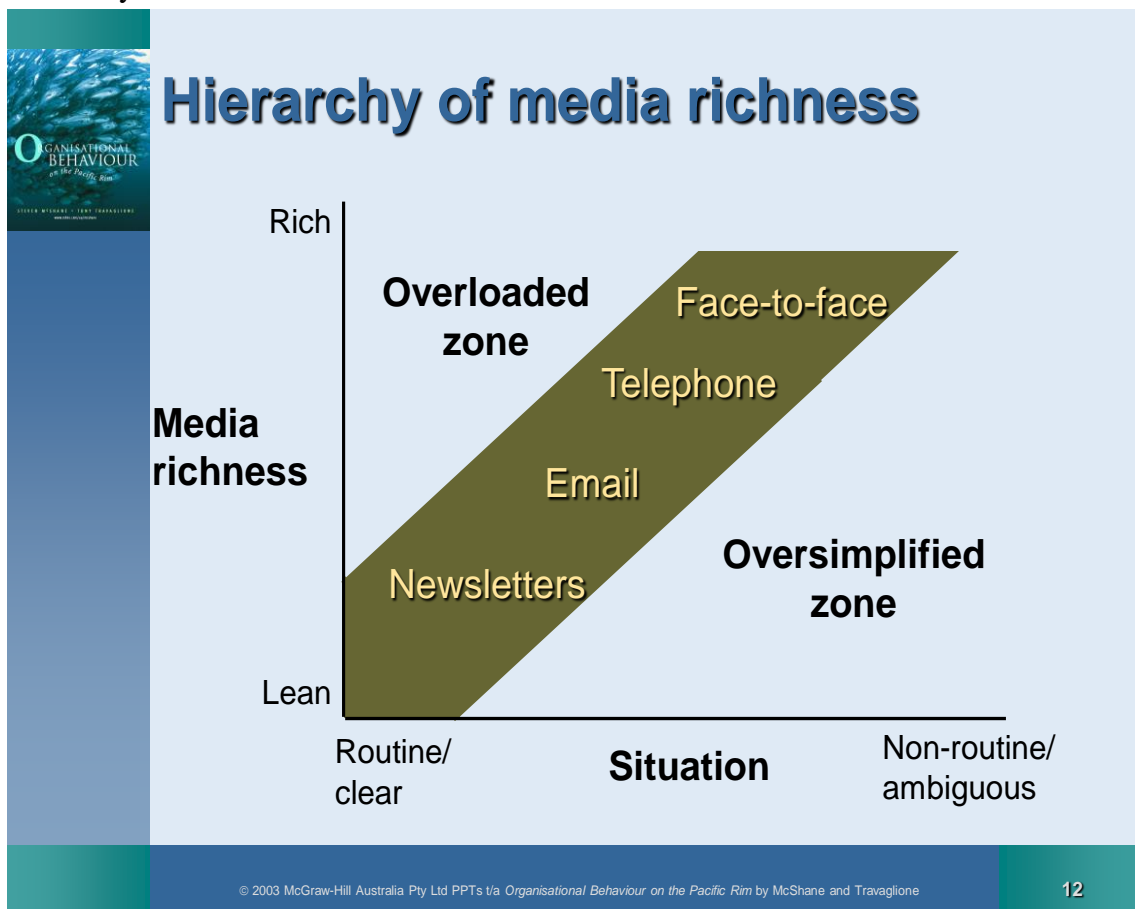
Communicating through email

Advantages of email

- efficient medium
- asynchronous
- random information access
- fewer social status barriers
- Problems with email
- information overload
- interpreting emotions
- flaming
- lacks empathy or social support

Non-verbal communication

- Actions, gestures, facial expressions, etc
- Transmits most info in face-to-face meetings
- Influences meaning of verbal and written symbols
- Less rule bound than verbal communication
- Important part of emotional labour
- Hierarchy of media richness



Management by Walking Around (MBWA) of Pearse Flynn

Pearse Flynn encourages communication by redesigning buildings and asking staff to write their opinions on sticky notes. The former Alcatel executive (now CEO of Damovo) also practises management by wandering around by chatting with employees in offices and pubs.

Communicating in hierarchies

- Newsletters and e-zines
- multi-pronged strategy
- Workspace design
- need to balance need to concentrate with improved informal communication
- Employee surveys
- Management by walking around

Organisational grapevine

Early research findings explained grapevine as: It helps transmit information rapidly in all directions, follows a cluster chain pattern more active in homogeneous groups transmits some degree of truth as well.

Changes due to Internet, email etc becoming main grapevine medium social networks are now global vault.com extends gossip to anyone

Grapevine: benefits and problems

Benefits

- supplements information
- strengthens corporate culture
- relieves anxiety
- signals that problems exist

Problems

- suggests lack of concern for employees
- distortions might escalate anxiety

Cross-cultural communication

Verbal differences

- language
- voice intonation

Non-verbal differences

- interpreting non-verbal meaning
- importance of verbal versus non-verbal
- silence and conversational overlaps

Gender communication differences

Gender communication differences

Men	Women
Report talk	Rapport talk
Give advice quickly and directly	Give advice indirectly and reluctantly
Avoid asking for information	Frequently ask for information
Less sensitive to non-verbal cues	More sensitive to non-verbal cues

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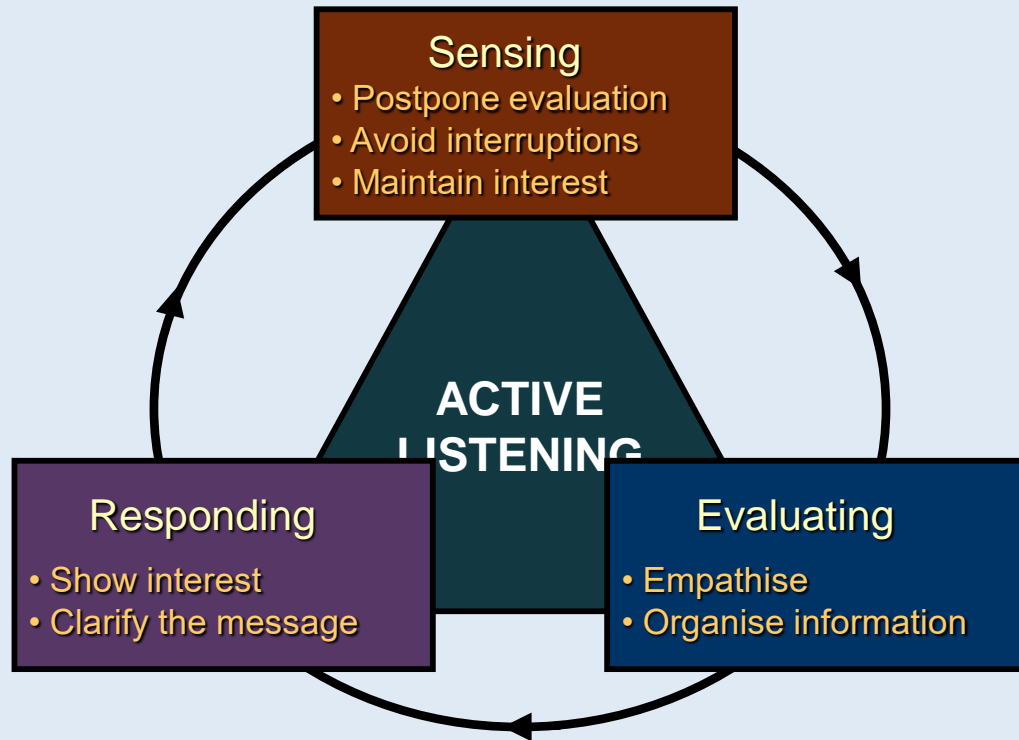
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Getting your message across

- Empathise
- Repeat the message
- Use timing effectively
- Be descriptive

Active listening process

Active listening process



Nine Steps to Effective Listening

1. Face the speaker and maintain eye contact.
2. Be attentive, yet relaxed.
3. Keep an open mind to the speaker's message – try to feel what the speaker is feeling.
4. Listen to the words and try to picture what the speaker is saying.
5. Do not interrupt and do not impose your "solutions."
6. Wait for the speaker to pause to ask clarifying questions - ask questions only to ensure understanding of something that has been said (avoiding questions that disrupt the speaker's train of thought).

7. Give the speaker regular feedback, e.g., summarize, reflect feelings, or simply say "uh huh."
8. Pay attention to nonverbal cues -- to feelings, tone of voice, inflection, facial expressions, gestures, posture.
9. Be aware of potential barriers that impact your ability to listen effectively.

Barriers to Listening

Sometimes people have a barrier that impedes their listening skills. Awareness of a barrier is the first step in being able to overcome it.

Barriers to listening include:

- past experiences that influence our reaction to the speaker or the message
- worry, fear, anger, grief and depression
- individual bias and prejudice
- semantics and language differences
- noise and verbal "clutter"
- preoccupation, boredom and shrinking attention spans

Five Components of Message

Communication should include these five important components:

1. What you are seeing – have seen
2. What you are hearing – have heard
3. What you are feeling – have felt about the issue
4. What you need or want
5. What the positive result will be from receiving/acting on your request

Emotional Obstacles

Emotional obstacles to effective communication include:

1. **Vulnerability** – people may not express their true feelings because they do not want to expose themselves to others

2. **Protecting** – people may not want to express their true thoughts because they don't want to hurt or upset the other person
3. **Expectations** - social, professional, or cultural “rules” may inhibit expression of some feelings
4. **Fear** – people seek approval and acceptance so they are often reluctant to say what they really mean for fear of rejection