Organizational Behaviour- II Prof. Sangeeta Sahney Vinod Gupta School of Management Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur

Lecture - 16 Communication

Namaskar. Welcome to Week 4 of our lecture on the Subject, 'Organizational Behaviour II'. I am Professor Sangeeta Sahney. I am a Professor at the Vinod Gupta School of Management at IIT Kharagpur. For the next four weeks, I shall be taking you along this course, and we shall be covering four topics. We will start with communication in Week 4. And then we will be discussing Conflict and Conflict Management in Week 5, Power and Political Behaviour in Week 6, and Decision Making in Week 7.

So, welcome you all. And I will begin my lecture today with the topic, "Communication". We shall be covering this topic, "Communication", in five lectures, all through this week. And I hope you will find the lectures interesting and fruitful. So, to begin with, we start with Communication.



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And in this particular topic, which is Communication, we shall be discussing a couple of things. We will be talking about the concept, the meaning, the definition of communication; the features of communication; the importance of communication; the process of communication; the 7 Cs of communication; we shall also be talking about the process of communication; how do you make communication effective; what is formal communication; what is informal communication; what are formal communication channels and networks; what are informal communication channels and networks. We shall be discussing a lot of, you know, topics pertaining to communication in these five days, across these five lectures. So, to begin with, in today's lecture which is lecture one,

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we will be speaking about the concept of communication; the definition of communication; the features of communication; the importance of communication; the process of communication; and the 7 Cs of communication. So, let us start first with the concept of communication.

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Now, the word 'communication' has actually been derived from a Latin word which is 'communis', which means common. And when we talk about common here, what we mean is, a 'common' meeting ground for understanding. So, the word communication here, derived from the Latin word, 'communis' means common, and it implies a common meeting ground for understanding. Now communication is the sum total of everything.

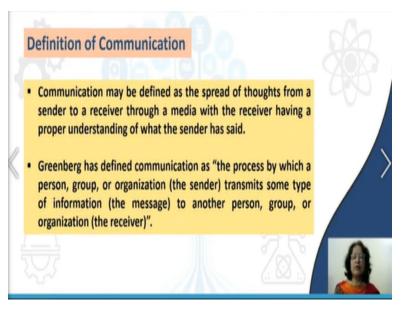
You know, whenever we, as people, as individuals, communicate with another person, we use words; we use symbols; we use sentences; we use body language. And so, when we talk of communication, we say, it is a sum total of everything; It is verbal; it is written; it is nonverbal; all of it as verbal, you know, communication or written communication, or nonverbal symbols - all of these actually are included in what we refer to as communication.

So, communication is a sum total of everything - verbal, written, and nonverbal symbols, which are made by a sender to create an understanding in the receiver. Now, whenever we communicate, there are two parties; there is a sender, and there is a receiver. And the sender has something to convey; he has something to share; he has something to transmit. It could be an idea; it could be information; it could be thoughts; it could be feelings; anything; and he would want to convey this to another person; the another person being a receiver. So, the sender actually uses verbal means, nonverbal means, written means, and all of these he uses to try to communicate what he wants to share. He tries to basically use verbal, nonverbal and written means to share, or to transmit whatever he wants to say, whatever he wants to communicate, and he tries to create an understanding in the minds of the receiver.

So, when we talk of communication we say, it is the process of transmission of ideas, information, thoughts, feelings, anything from a source to a destination. The source being the sender and the destination being the receiver. Now, how does he do it? He does it through a channel or through a media and that is why we say that there are three essential parties in the communication proces- there is a sender, there is a receiver, and there is a media or there is a channel.

So, communication is a sum total of everything - verbal, nonverbal, written, you know - any of these means which are used by the sender to create an understanding in the receiver. The sender uses verbal means, nonverbal means, written means to try to convey something to the receiver. And what is this something? This something could be ideas, it could be information, it could be feelings, it could be emotions, it could be anything. Now this brings us to the definition of communication.

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Now communication is defined as the spread of thoughts from the sender to the receiver through a media with the receiver having a proper understanding of what the sender wants to say or what the sender has said. So, communication is defined as a spread of thoughts from the sender to the receiver through a media or through a channel with the receiver having a proper understanding of it. Greenberg, a very famous author, you know, of books on Organizational Behaviour, a very famous psychologist, has actually defined communication as the process by which a person, group or organization transmits some type of information to another person, group or organization. So, if you look at this definition, we say it is a process by which a person, or a group, or an organization, transmits some type of information to another person, another group or organization. So, the person who sends or transmits, the group or the organization that sends or transmits is the sender.

And what does he send? He sends something. What is this something? This something is the message. So, the sender conveys something, and this something is a message. And again, it is transmitted to another person, another group or another organization. So they become the receivers. So, again here, if we see, there are three parties which are essential in the communication process. One is the sender, the other is the receiver.

And the third is the channel or the medium, through which the information is transmitted or through which the message is conveyed.

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Now what are the features of communication? So, first and foremost that, three parties are essential. As I just said, there is a sender, there is a receiver, there is a channel. Now the sender

can also be called the communicator, and the receiver can also be referred to as the communicatae, and the media here, or the channel is something through which the message gets transmitted. So, three parties are essential - the sender or the communicator, the media or the channel, and the receiver or the communicatae.

The other important element here is that there has to be something which has to be transmitted. So, there is something which is transmitted, and this something is a subject matter of communication - could be facts, could be figures, could be information, could be feelings, could be emotions, anything. So, there is something which has to be transmitted. And the third feature of communication is that there is an element of transfer and understanding in communication. Until and unless the receiver understands what the sender is trying to convey, until and unless the receiver understands what the sender is trying to convey, until and unless the receiver is able to comprehend what the sender wants to convey, communication is incomplete. So, as you saw in the previous slide, when I said that, it is a process by which an idea is transmitted or an information is transmitted with the receiver having a proper understanding of it. So, here again we are emphasizing it that whenever we communicate, there has to be an element of understanding. Until and unless the message is conveyed in the manner it should have been done so, and as long as there is a proper understanding of it, only and only then do we say that communication has been effective. So, in order for communication to be effective, it is very essential that there is an understanding by the receiver in the intended manner as so sent by the sender. So, there is an element of transfer and understanding in communication.

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Importance of Communication

- Communication is one of the functions of management.
- Effective communication acts as a basis for organizations to function successfully.
- Communication in the organizational context helps in the following ways:
- An essence of social behaviour; man is a social animal.
- Communication helps establish human relationships, and fosters them.
- For many employees their work groups are the primary sources for sharing information over job satisfaction, service conditions and social interaction.
- Communication is a primary source of social interaction, and helps release of emotional expressions and feelings.



Now coming to the importance of communication. Communication is absolutely important. Man is a social animal. Right from the day we are born, we communicate. Even in prehistoric times, where there was no formal language as such, man used to communicate with sounds, noises, symbols. So, communication is something which is very very essential. It has been a part of human life. Right from the inception of human life on the planet, some form of communication has happened. It is the same for animals. Animals also communicate. So, communication is something which is absolutely essential. But when we talk of communication in our personal lives, we start communicating the day we are born in some way or the other. We cannot talk but we express what we want to say as babies. Soon we learn the language. As we learn the language, we start speaking, gradually we start writing.

And very often we learn one language; we learn few languages; sometimes we learn multiple languages and through language we try to convey what we want to say. Now communication is absolutely essential, it is indispensable to us. And in the context of organizations also, it is something which is one of the most important functions of management. So, communication is regarded one of the functions of management, the other functions being planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling. Now directing has sub-functions of leadership, motivation and communication. And herein we say communication is all pervasive. It is a very very important function of management, and all pervasive. No function in the organization can be performed, until and unless there is communication.

Like for example, when we plan, when we organize resources, when we staff, when we hire, when we train our resources, when we motivate them, when we control our resources, our manpower, in any and every form, we need to communicate. So, communication is one of the most important functions of management. All other - functions planning, organizing, staffing, directing, controlling - they all make use of communication, and that is why we say communication is all pervasive. It is one of the very important functions of management. Now effective communication acts as a basis for organizations to work effectively, to function successfully. And communication helps in a number of ways some of which I will discuss with you now. As I just said, it is an essence of social behaviour. Man is a social animal; he cannot live without communicating. So, in an organizational context, first and foremost we communicate to develop human relationships and foster them.

Whether it is our working relationships with our peers, with our colleagues, with our seniors, with our superiors, with our subordinates with anybody - we need to communicate, and we need to forge working relationships with them. With the need to forge working relationships with them, we need to communicate. That becomes a part of our formal working relationships, but even in our day-to-day lives in the organization, we also communicate informally with a large number of people. And we establish informal relations. We communicate. These formal and informal relations also get fostered with and through communication. As we join an organization, and we have to, you know, get accustomed to the organization, to the kind of work we have to do, to the nature of the job, to do our duties, to our responsibilities, while we are working with superiors, subordinates, peers, colleagues - we just need to communicate with them all the time.

So, for many employees, the work groups are the primary sources of sharing information, whether it is with respect to the job, the duties, the responsibilities, or it is also discussing issues about working conditions, service conditions, job satisfaction, and overall social interaction. So, communication is a primary source of social interaction. And whether it is formal relationships or informal relationships, communication also helps us release our emotional expressions, our feelings, our opinions, our beliefs, our thoughts, our ideas. So, whether formal relationships or informal relationships, communication is required to deal with issues pertaining to the job, to

deal with issues pertaining to working conditions, to deal with issues pertaining to off the job, our personal lives, etc. So, communication is very, very important. It is a primary source of social interaction, and it helps release our feelings, our emotional expressions. So, not only is it, you know, that we share work-related matters, we also share, you know, other matters, personal matters, and so, communication is a primary source of social interaction. It will not only help us share, our ideas, our thoughts, our opinions, but also helps us share feelings and emotions. So, communication is very very essential to man as a social animal, whether he is working in the organization, or he is leading a personal life at his home. So, communication becomes very very very important.

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 Communication helps manage people's behaviour. Communication provides for information exchange which is essential in planning, organization, staffing, directing and control. 	
It helps dissemination of objectives, plans, goals and policies of an organization.	
 It helps in developing plans, organizing resources in the most effective and efficient manner, hiring, training, developing and appraising manpower in the organization, leading people (directing, motivating, coordinating etc.), controlling performance, and building a good human relations climate in the organization. It has been found that managers spend their time in face-to-face discussion, or over telephonic conversations with subordinates, colleagues, supervisors, stakeholders or outsiders. 	
 In case there is problem of conversing with others personally over phone, manage adopt different means of communication such as writing letters or sending emai memos, reports, etc. Information exchange facilitates decision making. 	0

The second is communication helps manage people's behaviours. As I just said, we have five functions of management - planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling, and in order to perform any of these functions, we need communication. Communication provides for information exchange. And as I said, it is all pervasive. Whether we have to plan, whether we have to organize, whether we have to staff, whether we have to direct, whether we to control, for all of these functions, we need to communicate. Like, for example, when we talk of planning. So, whether planning in the organization is top-down or bottom-up, we need to communicate. Top-down is when, the goals are formulated by the top management and executed by the middle and the lower levels of the organization. Bottom-up is when, you know, some kind of a planning

is done at the bottom level and it gradually is communicated to the middle level and the top level for authorization and finalization of goals.

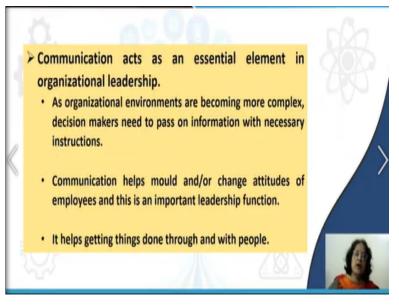
Whether it is top-down or bottom-up, in both cases, you see, there has to be communication. Once objectives are decided, goals are decided, then again there has to be communication so that these goals, these objectives, the plans, the procedures, the policies are percolated down to the lower levels of the organization, and across the organization. So, communication helps in dissemination of objectives, plans, goals and policies in the organization. It helps you in developing plans, organizing resources, hiring, training, developing, appraising manpower, controlling their performance, leading them. Leading here, as I said, motivating, directing, coordinating them, controlling their performance, providing them feedback about their performance, and showing them the right path so that employees can achieve their goals in a proper manner.

So, if we see, in all of these functions, communication is required. It will help you plan, organize, staff, hire people, train people, direct people. It will help you in controlling their performance as I just said, by giving them regular feedback about their performance so that employees can be motivated to work harder and improve upon their performance, so that they can reach the goals, and overall, in order to build good human relations in the organization, good human relations climate in the organization, communication becomes very, very, very essential. So, communication is something which helps manage people's behaviour, it helps companies, you know, it helps managers perform all the various functions of planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling. So, all the functions whether it is planning, whether it is organizing, whether it is staffing, whether it is directing, whether it is control, all of these functions need to be performed and communication helps managers perform all these functions. Setting of goals, organizing resources, hiring people, training them, developing them, motivating them, directing them, coordinating their activities, controlling their performance, and for building good human relations climate in the organization, communication is very, very essential. It has been seen that managers spend a lot of their time in face-to-face discussions, telephonic discussions, conversations with their subordinates, with their peers, with their colleagues, with their supervisors, with stakeholders both within and outside the organization, and in case there is

problem of conversing face-to-face or on the phone, managers also use a large number of other means, like writing letters or sending emails; in today's day and age texting, instant messaging; and of course, the traditional format of memos and reports are also there which are, you know, written down and shared across the organization. So, managers not only converse and communicate face-to-face or over telephone, but they also, you know, have different other means, like writing letters or memos or reports or sending emails, instant texting, SMSing, chatting, and so forth.

So, all this kind of an information exchange and you know, dissemination of information, facilitates organizational functioning. It helps perform the various functions of management. It also helps hugely in decision making and implementation and execution of the decisions.

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Now, communication also acts as an essential element in the organizational leadership. So, as we all know, you know, companies today operate in highly complex environments. And as these environments are becoming very complex, decision makers need to pass on information, timely information, updated information with necessary instructions. And leaders in the organization must actually be able to influence the subordinates or the followers willingly and enthusiastically to be able to achieve organizational goals. And on order to influence subordinates to be willingly and enthusiastically, you know, moving towards achievement of these goals, communication again becomes very, very essential. So, communication helps managers in their functioning. It

helps managers to change the attitudes or mould the attitudes of employees. And you know, it influences them towards willingly and enthusiastically achieving organizational goals. And so, getting things done through and with people is an important task of the manager and of the leader. And so, communication helps leaders getting things done through and with people.

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Communication promotes motivation by clarifying to employees what is expected by them, and how they should go about achieving their goals. In this way, communication facilitates feedback about what people are doing, how well are they doing that and how they can improve themselves.

Communication helps control behaviours.

- Communication helps regulate members' behavioural responses in different ways.
- Organizations have their authority structure, hierarchical modes of operation and rules and regulations which are shared across the organizations, and employees need to abide by these.

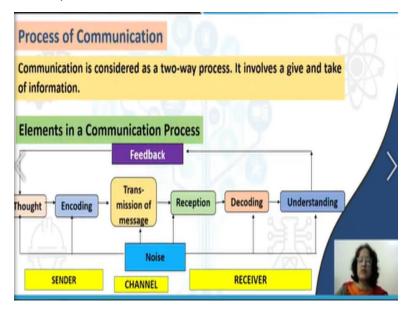
Communication also helps in motivating people. So, motivation again, has been derived from the Latin word 'movere' which means 'to move'. And you know, motivation is a reported urge or an inner tension within a person to move towards a particular goal. And managers have this huge task on them to be able to motivate their employees so that they reach the goals and the organizational goals, and so managers use a large number of monetary as well as a non-monetary incentives so that they can actually motivate their people. And communication here is one of the ways through which managers and leaders can actually motivate their employees, their subordinates, their peers to be able to reach goals. So, communication provides motivation by actually clearly specifying to the employees what is expected of them and how they should go about achieving goals.

In this way, communication also facilitates feedback about what people are doing; how well they are doing it; What would be the way in which they could perform better; how they can improve themselves. So, in this way, communication through feedback, people will be able to realize that what is the kind of work they are doing? are they doing it in the right way; how can they

improve themselves? And this feedback from the manager to the subordinates, through communication can be a vital tool in motivating the employees. I am repeating. Whenever employees are working on a job or a task, they know what to do; but through regular feedback from the superior or from the manager, the employees get to know that, are they doing the right thing; How well are they doing it; and if they are not doing it in the right way, what would they be doing to improve themselves, and through regular constant feedback from these superiors, or from the managers, the employees get to know about their performance. And so that keeps them motivated to improve themselves on the job so that they can attain their goals in the best possible manner. Communication also helps control behaviours of people; it helps regulate members responses in different ways.

Any and every organization has an organizational structure; they have an authority structure; they have the hierarchical modes of operations; they have their rules and regulations which are shared across the organization, and people have to abide by these. So, in this way, you know, communication helps control behaviours of people. As I just said, the feedback is also a control mechanism and through feedback also people's behaviours can be controlled.

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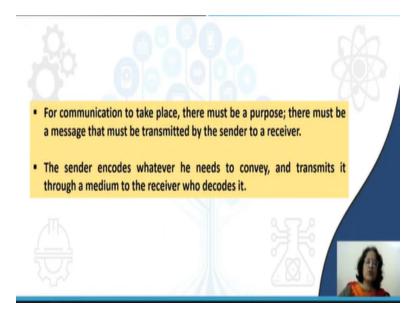


So, coming to the process of communication: Now communication is considered to be a two-way process. Now, why is it a two-way process? Because as I just said, a short while ago, we have three elements; we have the sender, we have the receiver and we have the channel or the

medium. Now in order for communication to be effective, it is very important that the receiver understands the message in a manner that it is intended to be as sent by the sender.

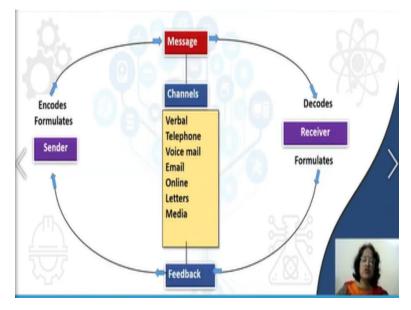
And to ensure that the message is actually being received in the right manner by the receiver, and has been understood, you know, in the right fashion by the receiver, there is an element of a feedback, which has to go from the receiver to the sender. Now that is why we say that communication is a two-way process. An effective communication is one, where the sender says something to the receiver, and the receiver responds either to verbal or written on nonverbal means and ensures to the sender, that he has been able to understand what the sender intended to say. If not, the sender would have to reframe his message so that an appropriate understanding can happen at the receiver's end. So, this way communication is a two-way process, where there is a sender, there is a receiver, there is a channel. The sender has a thought which he wants to convey; he has something to convey; the thought could be an idea, could be information, could be facts, could be figures that is encoded through symbols, through letters, through words; and the message is transmitted via a channel. It is received as a part of reception by the receiver who decodes it to extract meaning out of it. And thereafter, there has to be an understanding in the minds of the receiver about what the sender wanted to convey, and then the receiver responds via the feedback. Now across all the stages which we see and across that the entire process, there is also an element of noise which could be physiological as well as psychological. We will talk about it in a few moments from now.

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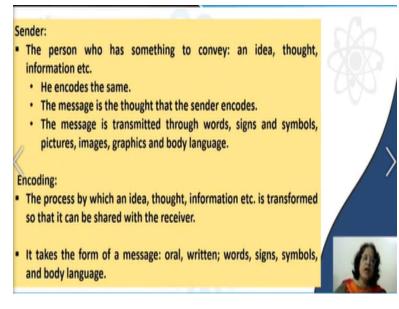
So, for a communication to take place there has to be a purpose; there has to be a message which has to be transmitted from the sender to the receiver. The sender will encode whatever he wants to convey, and then he will transmit it through a channel or through a medium to the receiver who will then decode it.





So, if you see here, the sender has a message; he has something to convey; he encodes it. Whatever he wants to convey, whatever thoughts, ideas, facts, figures, feelings - whatever he wants to convey, he encodes it through a message. The message is decoded by the receiver who formulates a feedback which goes to the sender. And the different channels could be verbal, could be via telephone, could be voicemail, could be email, could be through online modes, could be through written letters. Any and every form of media can be chosen to actually express the message.

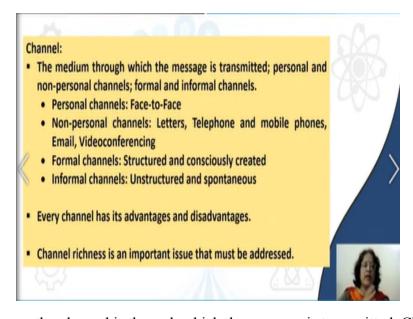
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So, the sender has something to convey. He encodes it. The message is the thought that the sender encodes, and it is transmitted through words, through signs, through symbols, through pictures, through graphics, through images, through body language. And the manner in which, or the process by which, the idea or the thought or the information, is transformed so that the receiver can understand it well, is encoding.

Encoding has to be such that the language used or the symbols used are something which the receiver can properly decode and comprehend. So, the process by which the idea or the thought or the information is transformed so that it can be shared with the receiver is what we refer to as encoding. And it will take the form of a message, as an oral message or a written message; it could be words, it could be signs, it could be symbols, it could be body language.

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Now, the medium or the channel is through which the message is transmitted. Channels could be personal, could be non personal, could be formal channels, could be informal channels. Personal channels are face-to-face channels, when two people talk to each other, face-to-face. Non personal channels are through letters, through telephone, through mobile phones, through email. Today, we have a hybrid mode in the form of the video conferencing, where people may not meet each other, face-to-face but they are able to see each other through the video mode. And today, especially in today's day and age, this is something which is really very popularly used where people are sitting across the world in different places, and get to communicate with each other through the online mode, through video conferencing where they can see each other, and you know, talk to each other through the Internet, and through video conferencing. Now when we talk of channels in the organization, channels in the organization can be formal channels of communication; can be informal channels of communication. Formal channels of communication are those which are actually clearly structured, consciously created, based on authority relationships, based on the lines of authority, and could happen between superiors and subordinates through clear cut flows of communication or paths of communication, as officially prescribed by the organization. So, they are highly structured and consciously created; officially prescribed paths or flows of communication; and it is based on the organizational structure, on the hierarchy, and clear cut authority and responsibility relationships.

Informal channels of communication are those which are cut across the organizational hierarchy and they are unstructured, loose spontaneous. It is not essentially between superior subordinate, but it could be between anybody in the organization. And it is free flow; it is a free flow of communication which does not follow prescribed paths of flow of communication. So, we will be talking about these formal channels and informal channels of communication in another lecture, where we be talking about certain networks - formal channel networks and informal channel networks of communication. At the moment, formal channels are those which are officially prescribed channels of flow of communication, and informal channels are those which are spontaneous, and not created or not consciously create, but they emerge on their own and they absolutely unstructured.

Now both formal and informal channels, personal channels, nonpersonal channels - they have their advantages and disadvantages. And whenever these channels are used, they have to be context dependent. In a particular situation, in a particular environment, personal channels may be better than a non-personal one, and in other cases, non-personal may be better. Similarly, formal and informal channels of communication have their own advantages and disadvantages, and which of these to be used will depend from situation to situation. Channel richness is an important issue that needs to be addressed which we shall be discussing in another lecture, where we will see that it typically talks about, you know, the fact that different channels have different abilities with respect to effective flow of communication. So, a particular channel or a media may be effective for a purpose, may not be effective for another purpose.

So, channel richness actually says and specifies that different channels actually, you know, have their different abilities with respect to transmission of messages. So, not all channels will be effective all the time, and channels differ with respect to their ability to transmit messages. Channels differ with respect to their ability to successfully transmit messages and that is what is channel richness which we shall be discussing later.

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- The person who receives the idea, thought, information etc.
- · He is the recipient of the message, and decodes it.
- Decoding:
 - The process by which the receiver understands and comprehends what the sender wants to convey.
- Reasons for improper decoding and understanding by the receiver may be that the language of sender is not understood by the receiver(s), vocabulary used is too difficult to understand, technical terms and jargons have been used, words have double meanings, and there is information underload and overload.



And then there is a receiver who receives the idea or the thought or information. He is the recipient of the message. He decodes the message, and decoding is the message is the process by which the receiver tries to understand what the sender wants to say. Now at this point in time, and during decoding, there may be certain perceptual errors and distortions. There could be large number of reasons for improper decoding and inappropriate understanding by the receiver.

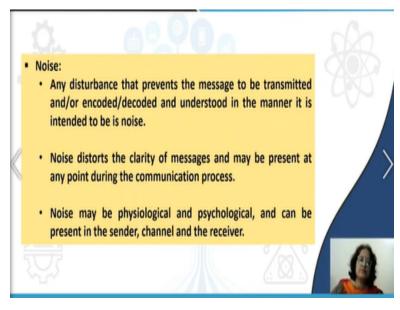
It could be that the language used by the sender is not understood by the receiver. It could be that the vocabulary used is too difficult to understand. Terms, technical terms and jargons have been used which the receiver is not familiar with. Words could have double meaning and there could also be problems of too much of information or too little of information. Both information overload and underload could also lead to distortions and errors in understanding.

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And then there is the feedback, which I just said. It moves from the receiver to the sender, and it basically helps the sender to understand whether the message has been received in the manner it was intended to be. And feedback can be in spoken or written form. It can also be in non-verbal language. It could be facial expressions, body language, gestures, etc.

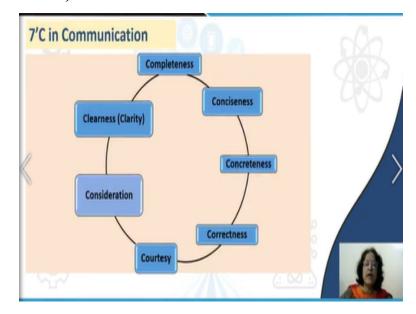
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Now lastly coming to the noise. Now any disturbance that prevents the message to be transmitted, during the encoding stage, or during the transmission stage, or during the decoding stage, is actually noise. So, noise distorts the clarity of the message. Now noise could be physiological and psychological; like for example, while a message is being encoded if the

sender is preoccupied with something else;he is not in a positive mood state; he is busy; something is disturbing him - so he may not be able to encode the message in a proper manner. And the same thing may happen at the decoding end. It may also happen that the receiver is preoccupied or busy or not in a good positive mood state. So, either during the encoding stage or during the decoding stage there could be noise. And this is psychological noise which can affect the sender, which can affect the receiver.

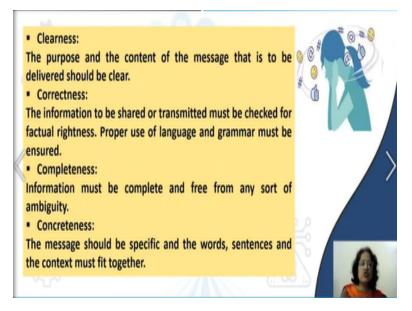
Noise can also be physiological if there is a loud sound, you know, during transmission of a message, or if the internet and the bandwidth is not right while a video call is on, or if for example, you know, there is a disturbance in the signal - all of these could be noises; a part of the noise which could be physiological.



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Now, lastly, we come to the 7 Cs of communication. When we talk of communication, any and every communication should be complete, concise, concrete, correct. Messages should be transmitted in a quote courteous manner, keeping in mind, you know the receiver and the environment. So, there has to be an element of consideration and the message has to be clear and should possess clarity.

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So, the purpose and the content of the message that is to be delivered should be clear. Whatever information is transmitted must be checked for factual correctness. Proper language and grammar must be ensured. The information should be complete; it should not be too much; it should not be too less. Ambiguous messages should be avoided at all costs. Message should be specific in terms of words, in terms of sentences, and so there has to be concreteness.

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And any and every message should be kept short and simple, and to the point. Polite approach is essential. Herein, body language has a role to play; your facial expressions, your eyes gestures, a smile on your face, you know, a body language is all very essential to develop a rapport with the

receiver. And the receiver also should have the same, you know, should also follow the same courteous approach for the sender.

And finally, there has to be consideration which implies that communication must be so strategized that it keeps the interest of the audience or of the receivers in mind.

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So, we have these references which you can look up to, you can read. Some of these textbooks,

some of these reference books. So, you can, you know, have a look at them.

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With this I come to an end of the first lecture on the topic "Communication". We shall be continuing with the topic in the next lecture. Thank you.