

Process of Communication

The process of communication consists of the following steps or stages:

(i) Message:

This is the background step to the process of communication; which, by forming the subject matter of communication necessitates the start of a communication process. The message might be a factor an idea, or a request or a suggestion, or an order or a grievance.

(ii) Sender:

The actual process of communication is initiated at the hands of the sender; who takes steps to send the message to the recipient.

(iii) Encoding:

Encoding means giving a form and meaning to the message through expressing it into – words, symbol, gestures, graph, drawings etc.

(iv) Medium:

It refers to the method or channel, through which the message is to be conveyed to the recipient. For example, an oral communication might be made through a peon or over the telephone etc.; while a written communication might be routed through a letter or a notice displayed on the notice board etc.

(v) Recipient (or the Receiver):

Technically, a communication is complete, only when it comes to the knowledge of the intended person i.e. the recipient or the receiver.

(vi) Decoding:

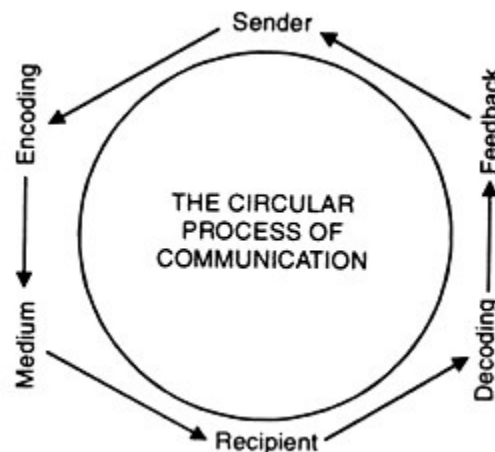
Decoding means the interpretation of the message by the recipient – with a view to getting the meaning of the message, as per the intentions of the sender.

It is at this stage in the communication process, that communication is philosophically defined as, 'the transmission of understanding.'

(vii) Feedback:

To complete the communication process, sending feedback to communication, by the recipient to the sender is imperative. 'Feedback' implies the reaction or response of the recipient to the message, comprised in the communication.

All told, communication is a circular process, as illustrated, by means of the following circular diagram:



Principles of Communication:

In order to be effective and meaningful, the managerial function of communication must be guided by the following principles:

(i) Principle of Understanding:

Communication must be such, as transmits understanding of the communication message to the recipient as per the intentions of the sender. A practical application of this principle requires that the message must be clearly expressed whether made orally or in writing.

Further, the message must be complete – leaving no scope for any doubts likely to confuse the recipient and compel him towards a misinterpretation of the message.

(ii) Principle of Attention:

Communication must be made in such a manner, that it invites the attention of the recipient to it. For a practical application of this principle, it is imperative that not only must the message be expressed in a pleasant and sound manner; but also the purpose of the sender in making communication, must be absolutely clarified.

(iii) Principle of Brevity:

The message to be communicated must be brief; as usually the recipient, specially an executive, would not have much time to devote to a single piece of communication. However, brevity of the message must not be sought at the cost of clarity or completeness of the message. The sender must strike a balance among these three factors -brevity, clarity and completeness.

(iv) The Principle of Timeliness:

The communication must be timely i.e. it must be made at the high time, when needed to be communicated to the recipient. An advance communication carries with it the danger of ‘forgetting’, on the part of the recipient; while a delayed communication loses its purpose and charm, and becomes meaningless, when the right time for action on it has expired.

(v) The Principle of Appropriateness (Or Rationality):

The communication must be appropriate or rational, in the context of the realization of organizational objectives. Communication must be neither

impracticable to act upon; nor irrational, making no contribution to common objectives.

(vi) Principle of Feedback:

Communication must be a two-way process. The feedback (or reaction or response) of the recipient to the message, must be as easily transferable to the sender, as the original communication made by the sender.

The idea behind emphasizing on the feedback aspect of communication is that it helps the sender to modify his subsequent communications in view of the reactions of the recipient – making for better and improved human relations.

(vii) Principle of the Constructive and Strategic Use of Informal Groups:

The management must not hesitate in making a constructive and strategic use of informal groups, for ensuring and facilitating speedier communication in emergency situations. Such a use of informal groups would also help develop good human relations by upgrading the status of informal groups and their leaders.

However, management must assure itself that rumors are not spread by informal groups and for this, a guard over the manner of functioning of informal groups, while transmitting a formal communication, is but imperative.