

TOPIC

INDIVIDUALS IN THE
ORGANIZATION

COMUNICAITON

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Content

Communication – key terms and learning outcomes

- **Dimensions of social intelligence, and explain the importance of these capabilities, especially for manager**
 - **The main components of the interpersonal communication process**
 - **The main barriers to effective interpersonal communication**
 - **Nature and significance of non-verbal communication**
 - **Organizational communication**
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Why study communication?

Communication is central to understanding organizational behaviour for several reasons:

- communication affects organizational **performance** and individual **career** prospects;
 - very few people work alone, and the job of most managers involves interacting with other people, often for **more than 90 per cent of their time**;
 - communication is seen **as a problem** in many organizations;
 - in an increasingly diverse multicultural society, sensitivity to the norms and expectations of other cultures is **vital to effective cross-cultural communication**;
 - **new technology** is radically changing our patterns of communication.
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Why study communication?

- Everything significant that happens in an organization involves communication: hiring a training staff, providing feedback, purchasing supplies, solving problems, dealing with customers, deciding strategy.
 - However, **communication** is often **interrupted by hierarchical structures, power and status differences**, the design of jobs, the **nature** of (part-time, temporary) employment, physical layouts, and rules.
 - Henry Mintzberg (2009) emphasizes the need for managers to have ‘**information competencies**’, or a **range of communication skills**.
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Why study communication?

- *Are you able to 'feel' what others are feeling?*
 - *Can you 'read' what's happening in complex social settings?*
 - *Do you use that understanding to manage your relationships?*
 - If so, then you have **social intelligence.**
 - **Social intelligence the ability to understand the thoughts and feelings of others and to manage our relationships accordingly.**
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Why study communication?

Social intelligence

social awareness	<i>primal empathy</i>	'reading' others' emotions intuitively from small clues (such as a brief facial expression)
	<i>attunement</i>	understanding the other person through complete and sustained attention and careful listening
	<i>empathic accuracy</i>	explicit understanding, through observation and inference, of what someone feels and thinks
	<i>social cognition</i>	knowing how the social world works and what is expected; reading the social signals
social facility	<i>synchrony</i>	harmoniously orchestrating our interactions with the right gestures (smiles, nods, posture, timing)
	<i>self-preservation</i>	ability in interactions to trigger desired emotional responses in others; charisma
	<i>influence</i>	shaping the outcomes of interactions with tact and control, tuning actions to fit the circumstances
	<i>concern</i>	capacity for compassion, sharing others' emotions of elation or distress

Interpersonal communication

- Normally, as soon as one person stops talking, another takes their turn.
 - The **currency** of conversation is **information**. We ask you the time. You tell us the time. Information has been transmitted. Interpersonal communication has been achieved.
 - We do not receive communication **passively**. We have to **interpret** or **decode** the message.
 - To the extent that we interpret communication from others in the manner they intended, and they in turn interpret our messages correctly, then communication is effective. However, communication is an **error-prone process**.
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Eurocommunications fog

With the growth in membership of the European Union, the problems of translating communications, both written and spoken, have multiplied (*The Economist*, 2004).

So we need guides to what, for example, English and French speakers actually mean.

English speaker

French interpreter

Actual meaning

I hear what you say

He accepts my point of view

I disagree and do not want to discuss it further

With the greatest respect

He is complimenting me

I think you are wrong or foolish

By the way

This is not important

The main aim of this discussion

I'll bear that in mind

I will act on that

I will do nothing about that

Correct me if I'm wrong

Correct him if he's wrong

I'm correct, please don't contradict me

French speaker

Literal English

Actual meaning

Je serai clair

I will be clear

I will be rude

Il faut la visibilité Européenne

We need European visibility

The EU must indulge in some pointless international grand-standing

Il faut trouver une solution pragmatique

We must find a pragmatic solution

I am about to propose a highly complex, theoretical, legalistic, and unworkable way forward

Interpersonal communication

Noise factors outside the communication process which interfere with or distract attention from the transmission and reception of the intended meaning.



Source: www.CartoonStock.com

Interpersonal communication

Troops were given the following advice to avoid causing offence in the Arab world:

- **gestures** - Avoid the 'OK' sign which widely means the 'evil eye'.
- **shaking hands** - It is disrespectful for a man to offer his hand to a woman.
- **social interaction** - There is no 'personal space'; Arab culture stresses the need to 'share the breath' of a companion.
- **conversation** - Men should not question other men about the women in their family.

Charm offensive

British soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan were given a guide to social interaction, with advice on conversation topics, responding to hospitality, and how to read gestures (Evans, 2008).

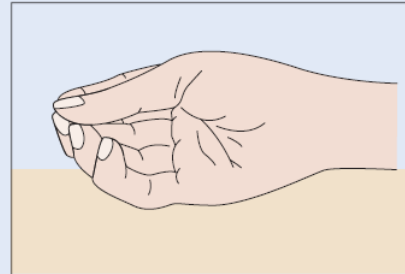
The Arab world: an introduction to cultural appreciation



- Extending both open palms towards a person indicates enthusiasm or 'excellent'
- A single, downward nod is the most common expression for 'yes'



- Touching the outer edges of the eyes with the fingertips signifies assent or 'OK'



- Holding the right palm out with the palm upward, with the tips of the thumb and fingers touching and the palm moving up and down, means 'calm down', 'more slowly' or 'be patient'



- Patting the heart repeatedly means 'I've had enough' (usually used at mealtimes)

Interpersonal communication

We assume that **organizations function better** where

- communications are open,
 - relationships are based on mutual understanding and trust,
 - interactions are based on cooperation rather than competition,
 - people work together in teams, and
 - decisions are reached in a participative way.
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Interpersonal communication

The main barriers to effective organizational communication are:

- **power differences** - Research consistently shows that employees distort upward communication, and that superiors often have a limited understanding of subordinates' roles, experiences and problems.
 - **gender differences** - Men and women use different conversational styles which can lead to misunderstanding; men tend to talk more and give information while women tend to listen and reflect more.
 - **physical surroundings** - Room size and layout influence our ability to see others and our readiness to participate in conversations and discussions.
 - **language** - Even within one country, variations in accent and dialect can make communication difficult.
 - **cultural diversity** - Different cultures have different norms and expectations concerning formal and informal conversations; lack of awareness of those norms creates misunderstanding.
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Interpersonal communication

Maureen Guirdham (2002) offers this advice for improving our communications:

- **face-to-face** - When we are able to speak with someone directly, we can use the feedback constantly to check the coding and decoding processes, and to correct mistakes and misunderstanding.
 - **reality checks** - We should not assume that others will necessarily decode our messages in the way we intended, and we should check the way in which our messages have been interpreted.
 - **place and time** - The right message delivered in the wrong place or at the wrong time is more likely to be decoded incorrectly, or even ignored, so choose the time and place with sensitivity and care.
 - **empathetic listening**- See things from the other person's point of view, consider the thinking that may have led to their behaviour, decode the message the way they might decode it, listen attentively to feedback.
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Verbal communication

- Verbal means ‘**in words**’, which can be either spoken or written. ‘Verbal agreement’ and ‘verbal warning’ can thus refer either to oral or to written communication, and both are contrasted with non-verbal communication.
- Most conversations involve exchanges of information or meaning. How do we get the information we want? We achieve this through a range of questioning techniques.
- The first basic distinction in questioning strategy is between **closed** and **open questions**.
- **Closed questions** invite a factual statement in reply, or a simple yes or no response.
- **Open questions**, in contrast, invite the person responding to disclose further information.

Predict the differences in response to these two questions:

- Will you have dinner with me this evening?
 - What are you doing this evening?
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Questioning techniques

question type	illustration	uses
closed	Did you enjoy the movie?	to get a 'yes' or 'no' answer; to obtain factual information; to establish conversation control
open	What did you think of that movie?	to introduce a subject; to encourage further discussion; to keep the other person talking
probe	Can you tell me more about that?	to follow up an open question; to get more information; to demonstrate interest
reflective	You thought the acting was poor?	to show interest and concern; to encourage further disclosure of feelings and emotions
multiple	What did you think of the movie, and wasn't the star excellent in that role, and didn't you think that the ending was predictable?	confuses the listener; gives them a choice of question to which to respond
leading	You didn't see anyone leaving the house?	to get the answer that you expect to hear (so, why ask?)
hypothetical	What would happen if. . . ?	to encourage creative thinking

Conversation control signals

signal	example	meaning
lubricators	'uh huh'; 'mmm, mmm' and other grunts and groans	I'm listening, keep talking, I'm interested
inhibitors	'what !'; 'really', 'oh', and similar loud interjections	I'm surprised, I don't agree, I've heard enough of this
bridges	'I'd like to leave that and move on to ask you about . . .'	I'd like to make a clean link to the next conversation topic
pauses (1)	about two seconds silence	in normal conversation: same as lubricators
pauses (2)	silence of three seconds or longer	in a threat context: I'm going to wait until I get an answer
pauses (3)	silence of three seconds or longer	in a counselling context: I'll give you time to think

Non-verbal communication

- When we interact with others **face-to-face**, we are constantly sending and receiving messages through our signs, expressions, gestures, postures, and vocal mannerisms.
- In other words, **non-verbal communication** accompanies our verbal communication.
- Non-verbal communication is popularly known as **body language**.

oculesics: eye behaviour

kinesics: body and limb movements

proxemics: the use of space

paralanguage: tone and pitch of voice

facial expressions

posture

chromatics: the use of colour

chronemics: the use of time

haptics: bodily contacts

Non-verbal communication

Typical **male courtship gestures** involving non-verbal communication include:

- preening (straightening tie, smoothing hair),
 - thumbs-in-belt (pointing towards genitals),
 - turning his body to face a female,
 - pointing his foot towards her, holding her gaze,
 - hands on his hips, dilated pupils, and the ‘leg spread’ (crotch display).
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Non-verbal communication

Women, on the other hand, have a much richer repertoire of non-verbal courtship behaviour which includes:

- preening gestures such as touching hair, smoothing clothing;
 - one or both hands on hips;
 - foot and body pointing towards the male;
 - extended eye contact or ‘intimate gaze’;
 - thumbs-in-belt, but often only one, or thumb protruding from pocket or handbag;
 - flushed appearance;
 - the head toss, to flick hair away from face (used even by women with short hair);
 - exposing the soft smooth skin on the wrists to the male;
 - exposing the palms of the hands;
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Non-verbal communication

Women, on the other hand, have a much richer repertoire of non-verbal courtship behaviour which includes:

- the sideways glance with drooped eyelids ('you caught me looking at you');
 - wet lips, mouth slightly open;
 - fondling cylindrical objects (stem of wine glass, a finger);
 - the knee point, one leg tucked under the other, pointing to the male, thighs exposed;
 - the shoe fondle, pushing the foot in and out of a half-on half-off shoe;
 - crossing and uncrossing the legs slowly in front of the man;
 - gently stroking the thighs (indicating a desire to be touched).
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How many of these non-verbal courtship gestures, male and female, are illustrated here?

- straightening tie, smoothing hair
- leg spread

- foot and body pointing towards the male
- extended eye contact or 'intimate gaze'
- the head toss, to flick hair away from face
- the sideways glance with drooped eyelids
- wet lips, mouth slightly open
- the knee point, one leg tucked under the other, pointing to the male, thighs exposed
- gently stroking the thighs (indicating a desire to be touched)



Aspect of non-verbal communication is ‘paralanguage’

Meaning 1	Why don't I take YOU to dinner tonight?	I was going to take someone else.
Meaning 2	Why don't I take you to dinner tonight?	Instead of the guy you were going with.
Meaning 3	Why DON'T I take you to dinner tonight?	I'm trying to find a reason why I shouldn't take you.
Meaning 4	WHY don't I take you to dinner tonight?	Do you have a problem with me?
Meaning 5	Why don't I TAKE you to dinner tonight?	Instead of going on your own.
Meaning 6	Why don't I take you to DINNER tonight?	Instead of lunch tomorrow.
Meaning 7	Why don't I take you to dinner TONIGHT?	Not tomorrow night.

Emotional intelligence

- Non-verbal communication is one way in which we display emotion.
 - While often embarrassing, an open show of emotion can sometimes be desirable.
 - Emotions are a key source of motivation. Inability to display and share feelings can be a handicap.
 - **Emotional intelligence** the ability to identify, integrate, understand, and reflectively manage one's own and other people's feelings.
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The five dimensions of emotional intelligence

Dimension	Definition	Hallmarks
1. Self-awareness	the ability to recognize and understand your moods, emotions, and drives as well as the effect you have on others	self-confidence, realistic self-assessment, self-deprecating sense of humour
2. Regulating feelings	the ability to control your disruptive moods and impulses; the propensity to suspend judgement, to think before acting	trustworthiness and integrity; comfort with ambiguity; openness to change
3. Motivation	a passion to work for reasons beyond status and money; a propensity to pursue goals with energy and persistence	high achievement need, optimism even in the face of failure, organizational commitment
4. Empathy	the ability to recognize and understand the emotional makeup of others; skill in dealing with the emotional responses of others	expertise in building and retaining talent; cross-cultural sensitivity; service to clients and customers
5. Social skills	effectiveness in managing relationships and building networks; ability to find common ground, to build rapport	effectiveness in leading change; persuasiveness; expertise in building and leading teams

Organizational communication

- Those are traditionally **one-way-top-down** modes of communication.

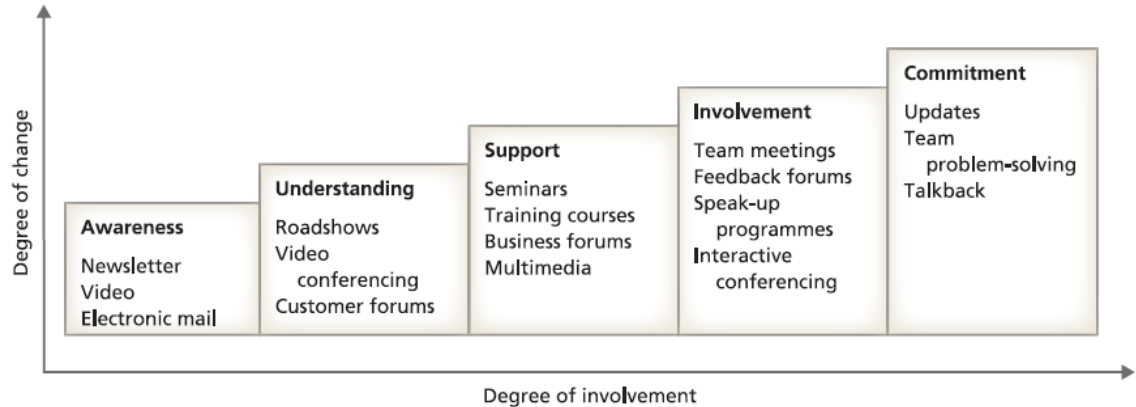
Organizations use a range of mechanisms for communicating with employees, such as

- the management chain of command;
 - regular meetings with senior and/or middle managers;
 - in-house newspapers and magazines;
 - company intranet;
 - noticeboards;
 - videos and in-house television;
 - conferences and seminars;
 - employee reports;
 - team briefings;
 - email, intranet, blogs, podcasts.
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Organizational communication

Two-way exchanges are more effectively achieved through methods such as:

- ‘speak out’ programmes in which problems are taken to counsellors;
- suggestion or ‘bright ideas’ schemes;
- open door policies;
- the appraisal system;
- quality circles;
- attitude surveys;
- interactive email (where managers guarantee to reply).



Open and closed communication climates

Open, supportive communication climate

Descriptive: informative rather than evaluative communication

Solution-oriented: focus on problem-solving rather than on what is not possible

Open and honest: no hidden messages

Caring: emphasis on empathy and understanding

Egalitarian: everyone valued regardless of role or status

Forgiving: errors and mistakes recognized as inevitable, focus on minimizing

Feedback: positive, essential to maintaining performance and relationships

Closed, defensive communication climate

Judgemental: emphasis on apportioning blame, making people feel incompetent

Controlling: conformity expected, inconsistency and change inhibited

Deceptive: hidden meanings, insincerity, manipulative communication

Non-caring: detached and impersonal, little concern for others

Superior: status and skill differences emphasized in communication

Dogmatic: little discussion, unwillingness to accept views of others or compromise

Hostile: needs of others given little importance

RECAP

- The capabilities that make up social intelligence involve a combination of awareness – what we sense about others – and facility – how we act on that awareness.
 - Managers spend a lot of time interacting with others, and it becomes more important to understand the thoughts and feelings of others in a more culturally diverse population.
 - Communication involves an exchange of meaning, achieved through the processes of coding, transmission, decoding, and feedback.
 - Face-to-face communication allows instant feedback; coding and decoding problems arise with other forms of communication where feedback is delayed or absent.
 - The main barriers to effective communication include power and gender differences, physical surroundings, language variations, and cultural diversity.
 - Barriers can be overcome through face-to-face communication, by checking decoding, by paying attention to context, and by seeing things the way the other person does.
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RECAP

- Getting appropriate information from someone else involves the effective use of different questioning methods: open, closed, probe, hypothetical, and reflective.
 - Effective communication involves the use of a range of simple conversation controls: lubricators, inhibitors, bridges, and pauses.
 - Active listening involves a range of verbal and nonverbal skills.
 - Communication methods differ between high context and low context cultures.
 - Non-verbal communication includes facial expressions, eye behaviour, gesture and posture, distance between ourselves and others, and paralanguage.
 - If the verbal and non-verbal messages which we are sending are inconsistent, the verbal will be discounted and the non-verbal accepted.
 - Emotional intelligence concerns the ability to identify, integrate, understand, and reflectively manage one's own feelings and the feelings of other people.
 - As with social intelligence, understanding your own emotions and the emotions of others is a key skill for all of us, particularly for managers, and its importance is heightened in culturally diverse organizational settings.
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**We can share our
thoughts and ask
questions**



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