

Elements of communication

Sender/ Encoder

The sender is the individual who initiates the communication. This person is also known as “encoder”. The sender should mentally visualize the communication from the receiver’s point of view. The sender prepares his message for transmission by converting it into a signal. The signal is composed of systematic group of symbols. If the sender uses effective or incorrect language, partial or total breakdown of communication is likely to occur.

Receiver/ Decoder

The receiver is the individual to whom the message is directed. Receiver’s response or reaction is depend on a number of factors including how much the individual knows about the topic, his receptivity to the message and the relationship between sender and receiver. The process of translating the symbols into ideas and interpreting the message is called decoding. If the sender and the receiver have a common field of experience, the receiver’s understanding of the message will be closer to what the sender intended.

Message

The message is the information being transmitted. It is seen by sender as well as receiver message could be verbal (written or spoken) or non-verbal (body language, signs, expressions). The selection and interpretation of message may differ dramatically because of differences in psychology and situation for the persons who are serving as sender or receiver.

Channel/ Medium

The communication channel or medium joins the source to the receiver. Number of channels is available to the communicator but the decision regarding choice of channel is an important one. The entire process of encoding and decoding depends upon the proper selection of channel. The choice of channel depends upon several factors. It is influenced by the inter relationship between the sender and the receiver. It also depends upon the urgency of the message being send. Generally, if message requires an immediate answer then oral channel may be a better choice and if its subject requires filing for future reference, a written communication is necessary. Choice of channel also depends upon that your receiver is inside or outside your organization.

Feedback

Feedback is the receiver’s response to the message. The sender can judge the extent of success of his communication on the basis of receiver’s feedback. The receiver communicates his reaction back to sender either through words, symbols, or gestures. Feedback is in fact reversal of the communication process where the receiver becomes the sender and sender becomes the receiver. Thus feedback of the information makes the communication process complete. The basic purpose of providing feedback is to permit the sender to evaluate the effectiveness of his or her communication.