

Chapter Two:

Communication in business organization

- Communication concepts
- Critical Components of Communication
- Types of Communication Flow

Communication:

is a process by which information is exchanged between or among individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, and behavior -- resulting in shared meanings between sender and receiver

Organizational Communication

- ❖ Communication: A process through which **people act together**, create, sustain, and manage **meanings** through the use of verbal and non-verbal signs and symbols within a particular context.
- ❖ Interpersonal & Organizational Dimensions

Organizational Communication Networks

A. Formal Communication Networks

1. Three Types of Communication Flow

- Downward information flow
 - Elements that flow downward
- Upward information flow
 - Factors that allow upward communication to be effective
- Horizontal information flow

2. Limitations for Formal Communication Network

- Limit Lower-level employees' access to decision makers
- Each link in the communication chain is a potential source of blockage or distortion

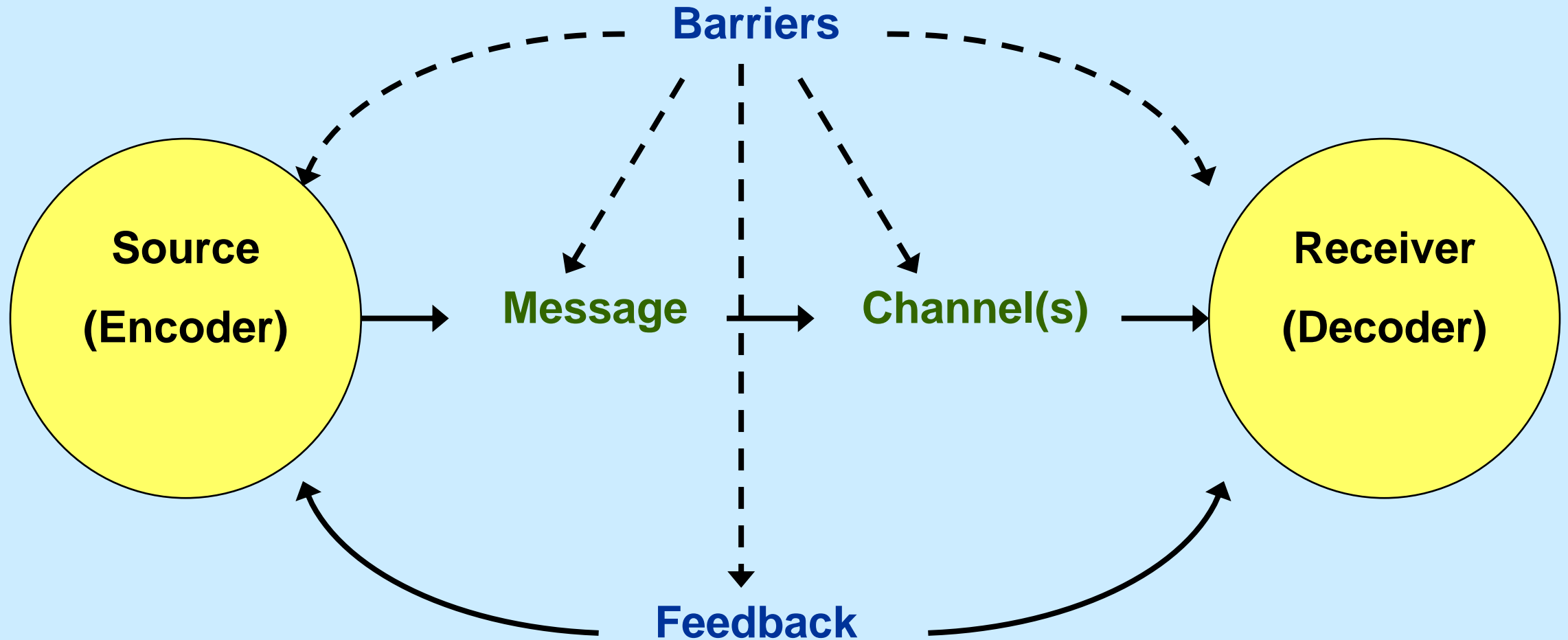
B. Informal Communication Networks

1. Grapevine Communication
2. Management by Walking Around (MWA)

Critical Components of Communication

1. Source
2. Message
3. Channel
4. Receiver
5. Feedback

Critical Components of Communication



Assessment of Communication Channel

METHOD	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Phone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Speed■ Permits give-and-take of questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Words and figures might be misunderstood■ No record of conversation■ Might be interruption of ongoing work
In Person	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Visual■ Permits better meeting of minds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The time may not be convenient to you or the other person
Informal Note / Memo	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Brief■ Can be filed “for the record”■ Permits considered statement■ Greater impact than spoken words	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ No immediate reply■ Your memo is at the mercy of a routine delivery and the bulk of receiver’s mail, or his disinclination to check his in-box.

Assessment of Communication Channel (cont'd)

METHOD	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Formal Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Complete■ Permits time for organizing material■ Can be reported to others■ Authoritative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Requires considerable time
E-mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Speed■ Reduced cost■ Convenience■ Open communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Overuse■ Message overload■ Less face-to-face communication

Functions of Communication in Organization

Function	Characteristics
1. To inform	Provides needed information to personnel; usually conducted in a written format
2. To regulate	Involves the communication that is directed toward regulatory policies within the organization; information usually not satisfying
3. To integrate	Focuses on coordination of task, work assignment, and group coordination

Functions of Communication in Organization (cont'd)

Function	Characteristics
4. To manage	Focuses on getting personnel to do what is needed, establishing relationships with personnel
5. To persuade	Attempts to influence the employee to do something in particular
6. To socialize	Focuses on the individual being integrated into the communication networks. It means being told whom one should talk to and what one should talk about

Three Types of Communication Flow

Type	Advantages
Downward	❖ Lets managers direct activities of employees
Upward	❖ Helps managers monitor performance and obtain ideas
Lateral / Horizontal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Promotes flow between departments or among peers❖ Helps employees to do their job efficiently❖ Depends on the degree of cross-functional interaction required by the organization

Downward Information Flow

Five Elements that Generally Flow Downward in All Organizations:

1. Job instruction
2. Rationale - explanation of a duty or assignment
3. Ideology - encourages employees to “buy into the organization” → loyalty
4. Information; regulations; changes in benefits
5. Feedback - performance appraisal.

Downward Information Flow (cont'd)

Best Bets for Improving Downward Communication:

1. Small group meetings that permit exchange of information
2. Company publications
3. Supervisory meetings between managers and direct subordinates
4. Mass meetings of employees
5. Other methods: bulletin boards, inserts in pay envelopes, public address announcements, posters, audiovisual presentations

Upward Information Flow

Four Factors that Are Most Likely to Influence Upward Communication:

1. Positive tone
2. Appropriate time
3. Messages that support current policy
4. Right person

Upward Information Flow (cont'd)

Best Bets for Improving Upward Communication:

1. Informal discussions with one or a few employees
2. Discussions between higher management and first-level supervisors
3. Attitude surveys
4. Outside counseling
5. Discussions with union representatives
6. Suggestion systems
7. Internal publications with complaint or question / answer columns

Limitations for Formal Communication Network (cont'd)

Example:

The amount of information loss

Board of Directors 100%



Vice Presidents 63%



General Supervisors 56%



Plant Managers 40%



General Foremen 30%



Workers 20%

Informal Communication Networks

Grapevine communication

- Contains a mix of business and personal messages
- FACTS + ASSUMPTIONS + OPINIONS
- enable the organization to function efficiently

Communication Climates:

Supportive (Open) Vs Defensive (Close)

In Supportive Climates	In Defensive Climate
■ Managers view themselves and their employees as equal	■ Managers view themselves as superior
■ Managers ask questions and analyze answers	■ Managers pass judgment
■ Communication is straightforward	■ Communication is manipulative, full of hidden meanings and ambiguity
■ Managers encourage group problem solving	■ Managers impose solutions
■ Managers are flexible and willing to change their views	■ Managers are dogmatic and certain about answers
■ Managers empathize with employees	■ Managers are indifferent to employees' feelings

Barriers to Effective Communication

- A. Climate control – closed or inadequate communication climate**
- B. Emotional interference**
- C. Information overload**
- D. Defensiveness**
- E. Poor listening skills**
- F. Cultural differences**

Ways to Overcome Barriers

- A. promote an open communication climate
- B. Avoid defensive reactions
- C. Facilitate feedback from others by listening with open mind
- D. Understand intercultural communication