

Being an effective communicator in our professional and personal lives involves learning the skills to exchange information with clarity, empathy, and understanding. For communication to be effective, it must be clear, correct, complete, concise, and compassionate.

➤ Introduction - What is communication?

Communication has been defined as “the transfer of information from one person to another, irrespective of whether or not it elicits confidence.”

➤ Importance of communication in at work

- Communication is necessary to people who work cooperatively and need to coordinate their activities.
- It is essential for sharing knowledge from one person to another.
- Communication is used to substitute understanding and knowledge on several issues like jobs to be performed, work status, responsibilities, suggestions, methods to be used, arrangements and situational factors.



➤ Importance of communication skills

Communication skills are indispensable for the successful future and career. In today's competitive world, communication skills in business are the most coveted quality of an educated person.

Reading, writing and listening cautiously are the three most important communication skills for students.

Here are enlisted some reasons why communication skills are so important:

- Good communication passes information along. If you can effectively communicate, then people understand you much better.
- Good communication makes good relationships. If you can effectively communicate, then other people know what you need and want, and you can let them know your feelings without being misunderstood.
- Effective communication helps you to win over others to agree with you in a persuasive setting.
- Good communication gives you self-esteem. People with effective communication skills are more confident
- Good communication makes peaceful communities. Most wars are caused by people not communicating effectively and not being able to manage each other.

➤ Importance of Listening

Listening is so important is the amount of time people spend doing just that listening. Recent studies that focus on the workplace show that, on an average, personnel at all levels spend about 32.7 per cent of their time listening while speaking takes up 25.8 per cent of their time and writing 22.6 per cent.



How to be a Good Listener?

Regardless of whether the situation calls for appreciative, active listening, listening skills can be improved with critical discrimination or conscious effort.

- **Be Motivated to Listen:** When you resolve that you will listen, an improvement in your listening skills will become immediately noticeable.
- **Be Prepared to Listen:** Sometimes you need to make some preparation beforehand in order to listen effectively to a particular piece of communication.
- **Be Objective:** From your own experiences, you would have noticed that you are more receptive to a message when you approach it with an open mind. To be objective, one must avoid jumping to conclusions.
- **Be Alert to All Cues:** Look for the speaker's main ideas. The speaker's voice quality, inflection, emphasis and body movement can all offer vital clues to what the speaker feels is most important.
- **Use Feedback:** Using feedback is one way we can get more from our communication.
- **Use Verbal and Non-verbal Cues to understand the Speaker**

Verbal Communication and Non-verbal Communication

Verbal communication needs the use of words, vocabulary, numbers and symbols and is prepared in sentences using language. Dominating linguistic skill is a skill that each and every one should develop to improve relationships and interactions.

Nonverbal Communication through is through gestures, smile, frown, eye contact and body position. On scientific analysis, it has been proved that verbal communication accounts only for 7% whereas non-verbal communication accounts for over 93% and hence non-verbal communication needs serious consideration.



Body Language

Our bodies send non-word messages through arms, fingers, expressions, posture, and so on. For example, happiness, surprise, fear, anger and sadness usually are accompanied by definite facial expressions and eye patterns.

Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal communication disagrees from other forms of communication in that there are few participants involved, the interactants are in close physical proximity to each other and feedback is immediate.

BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

The barriers may also be defined as obstructions or blockades, hurdles, and stoppages in effective system of communication.

- **Noise as a Barrier**
- **Language Differences**
- **Information Overload**

Managers are bordered with a pool of information. It is necessary to control this information flow else the information is likely to be misinterpreted or forgotten or overlooked. As a consequence, communication is less effective.

- **Inattention**

At times we just not listen, but only hear.

- **Time Pressures**

Frequently in organization the targets have to be achieved within a specified time period, the failure of which has adverse consequences. In a haste to meet deadlines, the formal channels of communication channelled.

- **Emotions**
- **Poor Retention**

Human memory cannot function outside a limit. One can't always retain what is being told especially if he is not interested or not attentive. This leads to communication collapse.

OVERCOMING BARRIERS IN COMMUNICATION

Barriers can be overcome if sufficient effort is put into the communication process.

Measures to overcome barriers in communication

- **Fostering good relationships:** Strong relationships must be forged between the employer and employee to avoid any misunderstandings
- **Purposeful and well-focused communication:** Communication should be purposeful and aimed at an individual.
- **Coordination between superior and subordinates:** There should be good and proper coordination and co-operation between the superior and subordinate for effective communication.
- **Avoid technical language:** Specialized language should be avoided. Efforts should be made to use language commonly understood by the receiver and sender of the message.
- **Accuracy:** There should be accuracy in the message to be carried between both parties for the communication to improve its effectiveness.
- **Right feedback**
- **Clarity**

Thus, in order to communicate effectively, there is need to overcome all barriers and also develop skills to improve existing communication abilities.