



BUSINESS

COMMUNICATION



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PREFACE

Communication, particularly written communication, has always been an important part of business in the twentieth century. The need to communicate to develop and enlarge business has progressively increased, in proportion to the facilities provided in the field of Information Technology. In the current business environment, the concept of 'Globalization' in business has underlined the importance of communicating in English and foreign languages.

In this environment, many universities have justifiably included 'Business Communication' or 'Business Correspondence' as a subject in commerce education. At present the subject deals with communication in English, probably because English is understood and used in many countries of the world and also because historical events have made us Indians familiar with it. However, students should remember that the basics of communication are common to most languages, because international standards have been set for various forms of communication.

Strictly speaking, communication is an inter-disciplinary subject. In the present syllabi, it combines the disciplines of Commerce and English for Specific Purposes. The four authors of this book have taught Commerce, International Business and Foreign Trade, Management, Marketing, Behavioral Science, Management Communication, and English for specific purposes such as Technical and Scientific English, English Literature and English for competitive examinations, collectively - each in his/her own area; This book has evolved out of the combined efforts of the authors.

This book explains the principles of communication and correspondence in simple language and provides models of written communication with explanations, where necessary. The authors sincerely hope that the book will be of use to students of B.Com., B.B.A., B.Com(CA), B.Com(e-Commerce), B.B.M., M.B.A., M.I.B., and M.Com classes. The authors wish the readers' success in their examinations.

This book is meant for all those who want to communicate better. The authors welcome suggestions particularly from teachers who teach this subject.

Chennai 600 040
April 2007

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What is Communication?

Introduction

Communication is the process of sharing information, ideas, concepts and messages between two or more persons. **First**, this process actually takes place between the minds of the persons who are communicating. These persons have to use a medium to convey what is in their minds. A few illustrations will help us to appreciate these sentences better. At most interviews the interviewer desires to know the name of the candidate.

1. This desire is in the mind of the interviewer and he communicates this desire to the candidate using the medium of speech as the appropriate medium.
2. When a student living in a hostel wants some money, he communicates his desire (which is in his mind) to his father using the medium of writing (a letter).
3. An artist communicates the ideas in his mind through his drawings and paintings and a composer of music uses music as his medium of communication.

The **second** important point about communication is that *it is a two-way process*. For example, in the first illustration given above, in response to the interviewer's question: 'What is your name?' the candidate will respond with his name, viz., 'I'm Arun Natarajan.' If the candidate is nervous and does not respond to the question, there is no communication. In the second illustration above, the father of the student may just send his child a money order or enclose a cheque or draft with a letter in which he cautions his son or daughter to be careful while spending the money. In both cases the father is responding to the communication initiated by his child. The comments of the viewers are the response to an artist's work and the appreciation or criticism of his music is the response that a composer gets for his attempt to communicate through music. In the process of communication responses may be positive or negative.

The **third** important aspect regarding communication is the fact that *there is no limit to the number of media that can be used* for communication. The present media in use may be increased either by someone who thinks of a new one or by a scientific invention which adds to the existing media in use. Illustrations of this statement are: the audio-visual presentations at business conventions that came into existence in the last three decades of the twentieth century, the Internet and call-centre.

Given below are a few definitions of the term 'communication' that have come down to us from the experts who have defined the term. These will give us a better understanding of it.

Some Definitions of Communication

1. *The Little Oxford Dictionary* defines 'communication' in these words: 'impart, transmit news, feelings, ideas, etc.'
2. *Webster's Dictionary* states that '*communication* is the act of (*esp.*) exchanging information and *communicate* means to exchange ideas.'

3. Keith Davis states that communication is a process of passing information and understanding from one person to another.
4. Peter Little says: 'communication is the process by which information is passed between individuals and/or organisations by means of previously agreed symbols'.
5. The American Management Association considers communication to be: 'any behaviour that results in an exchange of meaning'.
6. F.G. Meyer defines communication in these words: 'Communication is the intercourse by words letters or messages, the intercourse of thoughts or opinions. It is the act of making one's ideas and opinions known to others.'

William Scott defines communication in these words: '... a process, which involves the transmission and accurate replication of ideas ensured by feedback for the purpose of eliciting actions, which will accomplish organisational goals.'

The seven definitions given above highlight the three points in the introduction and express in concise form the important features in **the process of communication**.

The Process of Communication

According to David Berlo in his book *The Process of Communication*, the elements of the process may be explained as follows: An idea, concept, message, or some information is encoded by the encoder using a medium which can be understood by the decoder (the receiver of the message) who in turn processes it in his mind and responds to it. If the decoder understands the message completely, Fidelity of communication is said to be 100 per cent. Anything that obstructs communication is said to be a barrier to communication. Communication is a two-way process. Communication is initiated by an encoder (sometimes on behalf of others) and this elicits a response or reaction from the decoder depending on how well he has understood the communication or how interested he is in it. This response or reaction is also known as feedback. Feedback need not be in the form of words. It can even be in the form of a reaction like clapping (applause), which is a positive reaction of approval or acceptance of the encoder's message or information. For example, the principal of a college announces a holiday as a token of appreciation for the college volleyball team having won the finals of the university tournament. Berlo's model of communication can be diagrammatically represented as follows:

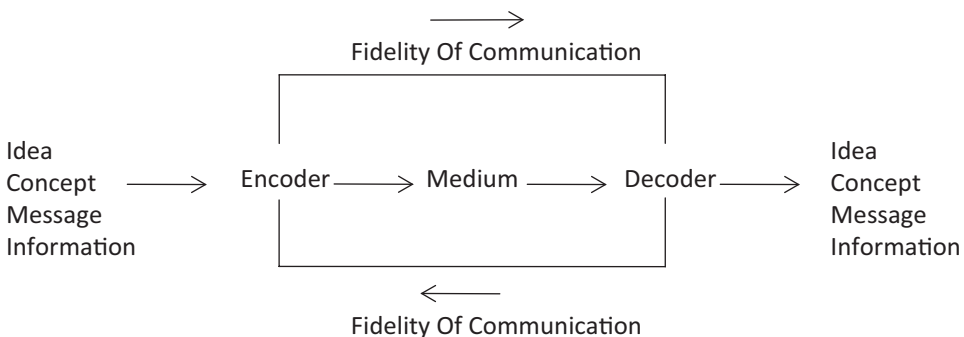
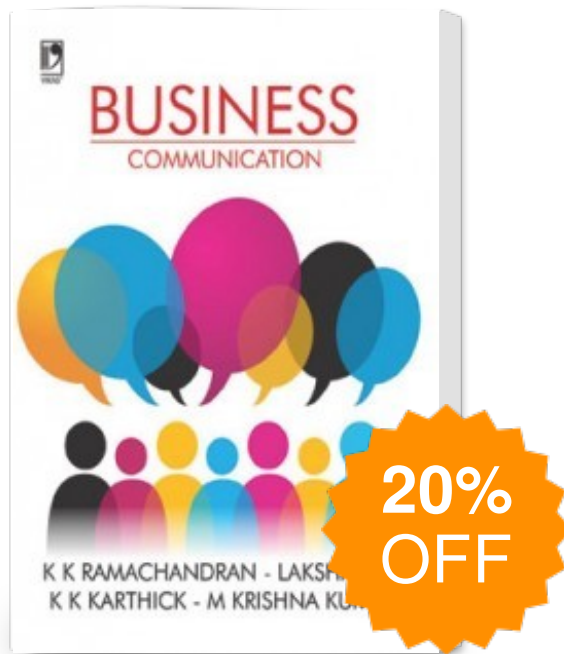


Fig. 1.1 David Berlo Model of Communication

Business Communication



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