

Fundamentals of Organizational Communication

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Chapter 1



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Learning Objectives

- 1.1** Examine the factors that have changed organizations and the way people work
- 1.2** Recognize communication to be fundamental to the process of organizing
- 1.3** Describe communication in the information- rich world
- 1.4** Recognize communication as a key to organizational excellence
- 1.5** Report communication competency as a personal and organizational need
- 1.6** Describe the human communication process
- 1.7** Develop awareness of our personal communication competencies

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Learning Objectives

- 1.8** Distinguish among interpersonal, small-group, and organizational communication
- 1.9** Identify descriptions of organizations
- 1.10** Definitions of organizational communication
- 1.11** Assess personal development needs



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What is Organizational Communication?

Organizational communication is a field of study and a practice that involves the exchange of verbal and nonverbal messages in the context of a formal organization¹². It describes the structure and style of interaction among individuals within an organization and with external stakeholders³⁴. It also refers to the way an organization gives information about its aims and activities to the public and its employees⁵.



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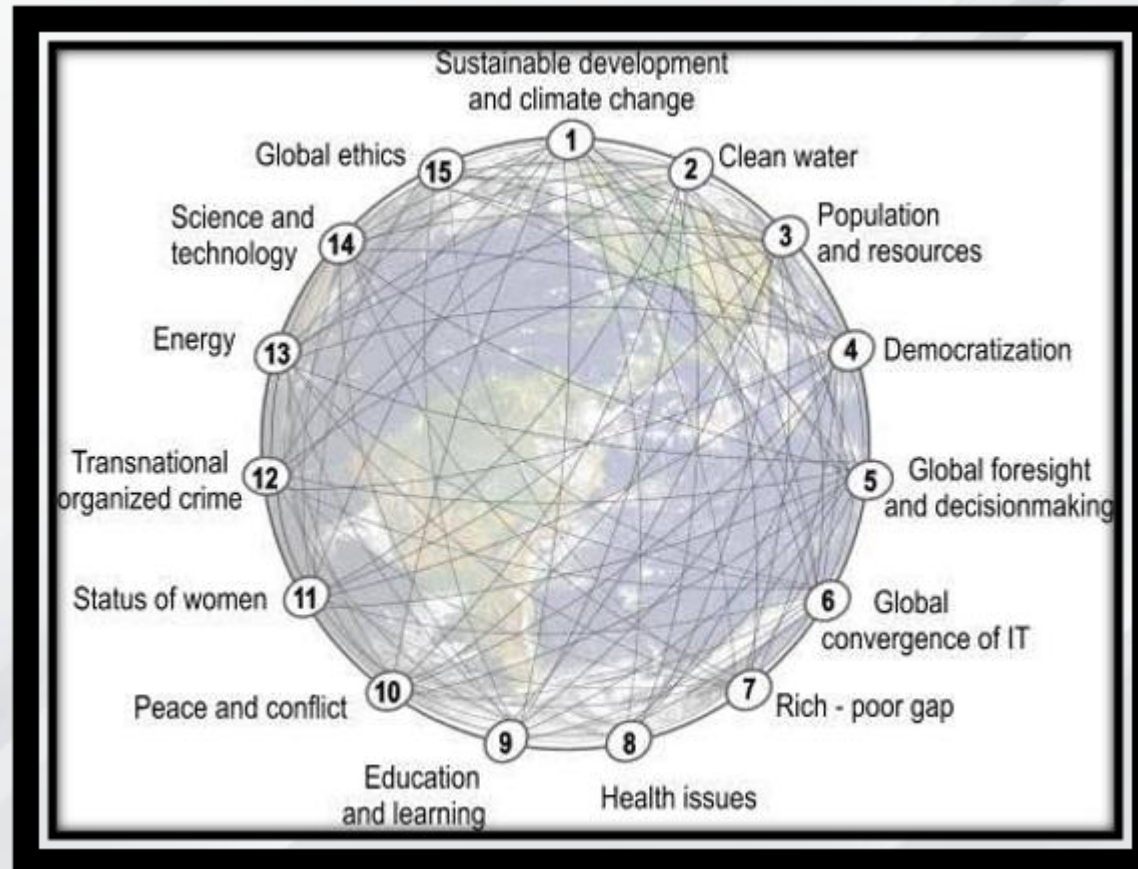
The Changing Nature of Organizations and Work

Objective 1.1 Examine the factors that have changed organizations and the way people work



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1.1 The Changing Nature of Organizations and Work



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1.1 The Changing Nature of Organizations and Work Cont.

- Turbulent period
- Contemporary organizations

Point 1 – Turbulent period

- One of the more turbulent periods of history
- Unprecedented opportunities and unprecedented problems
- Uncertainty and change have become the norm
- Creativity and innovation are more important than ever

Point 2 – Contemporary organization

- New relationships between organizations and employees
- Old social contract replaced by frequent employment shifts

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Challenges for Individuals and Organizations

Objective 1.2 Recognize communication to be fundamental to the process of organizing





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1.2 Challenges for Individuals and Organizations

- Organizational and individual environments
- Organizational and individual challenges

Point 1 – Organizational and individual environments

- Complex, fragile, turbulent, and uncertain environments
- Enormous opportunities for innovation and change

Point 2 – Organizational and individual challenges

- Problems of sharing our planet, our humanity, and a global rule book
- Requirement to continually learn and build new competencies

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The Communications Era

Objective 1.3 Describe communication in the information- rich world



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1.3 The Communications Era

Complex communications environments

- Postindustrial information society and conceptual age

Point 1 – Complex communications environments

- World more interconnected than ever
- Globalization and nature of innovation

Point 2 – Postindustrial *information society* and *conceptual age*

- Rapid change associated with mass production of information

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Communication: The Key to Organizational Excellence



Objective 1.4 Recognize communication as a key to organizational excellence

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1.4 Communication: The Key to
Organizational Excellence

Communication excellence
- Future employees

Point 1 – Communication excellence

- Key to organizational excellence
- More than just efficient management of large volumes of facts

Point 2 – Future employees

- Competent communicators at all organizational levels
- Excellence depends on the abilities, commitment, and creativity of all organizational members



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Excellence in Communication: Communication Competency

Communication competency

- Components of communication competency

Components of communication competency

- Competency arises out of four basic components: process understanding, interpersonal sensitivity, communication skills, and ethical responsibility
- Competence comes from the interaction of three primary elements: theory, practice, and analysis

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Organizational Communication: A Competency-Based Approach

Objective 1.6 Report communication competency as a personal and organizational need



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1.6 Organizational Communication: A Competency-Based Approach

Point 1 – Knowledge

- Learning of theory and principles
- Exploration of the interactive process nature of human communication

Point 2 – Sensitivity

- Ability and willingness to understand what others feel and do
- Examination of our personal “theories-in-use” about communication and organizations

Point 3 – Skills

- Developing important analytical capabilities
- Ability to communicate effectively in a variety of settings
- Applying knowledge and sensitivity to case studies and individual experiences

Point 4 – Values

- Taking personal responsibility for effective communication
- Developing values through discussion of personal responsibility

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Understanding Human Communication

Objective 1.7 Describe the human communication process



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1.7 Understanding Human Communication

- Defining Communication

- Human communication
- Shared realities

Defining Communication

Point 1 – Human communication

- Constituting experience of working together and making sense of what it means
- Use of symbols or words to attempt to create mutual understanding

Point 2 – Shared realities

- Communication is an attempt to construct shared realities
- Create present reality through sharing realities



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Human Communication: Messages and Constitutive Processes

Objective 1.8 Develop awareness of our personal communication competencies



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1.8 Human Communication: Messages and Constitutive Processes (1 of 5)

Source/Receiver

Point 1 – Sending messages

- Individual in a communication is both sender and receiver
- Talk to send messages

Point 2 – Receiving messages

- Monitor nonverbal reactions of others
- Use of technology to rapidly exchange messages

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1.8 Human Communication: Messages and Constitutive Processes (1 of 5)

Encoding/Decoding

Point 1 – Encoding

- Process of formulating messages, choosing content and symbols to convey meaning
- Determining what we want to be understood
- Determining how we believe that it can best be presented

Point 2 – Decoding

- Process of assigning meaning to message symbols received
- Taking what we see and hear and interpreting it

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Please compose a communication message using below symbols



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1.8 Human Communication: Messages and Constitutive Processes (2 of 5)

Message

Point 1 – Source

- Sends messages in any combination of the five senses
- Intent of the message

Point 2 – Meaning

- Decoding of messages
- Messages serve as symbols for meaning

Channel

Point 1 – Medium

- Link between source and receiver
- Includes the five senses and technology
- Channels used in combination

Point 2 – Distortion of messages

- Message distortion in reception – technological and sensory
- Selection of channel is a message in itself

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1.8 Human Communication: Messages and Constitutive Processes (3 of 5)

Noise

Point 1 – Types of noises

- Interference contributing to discrepancies in decoding
- Physical distractions, channel interference, communicative competence, etc

Point 2 – Presence of noise

- Always present in some form
- Type of noise contributes to the meanings assigned

Competence

Point 1 – Impression of competence

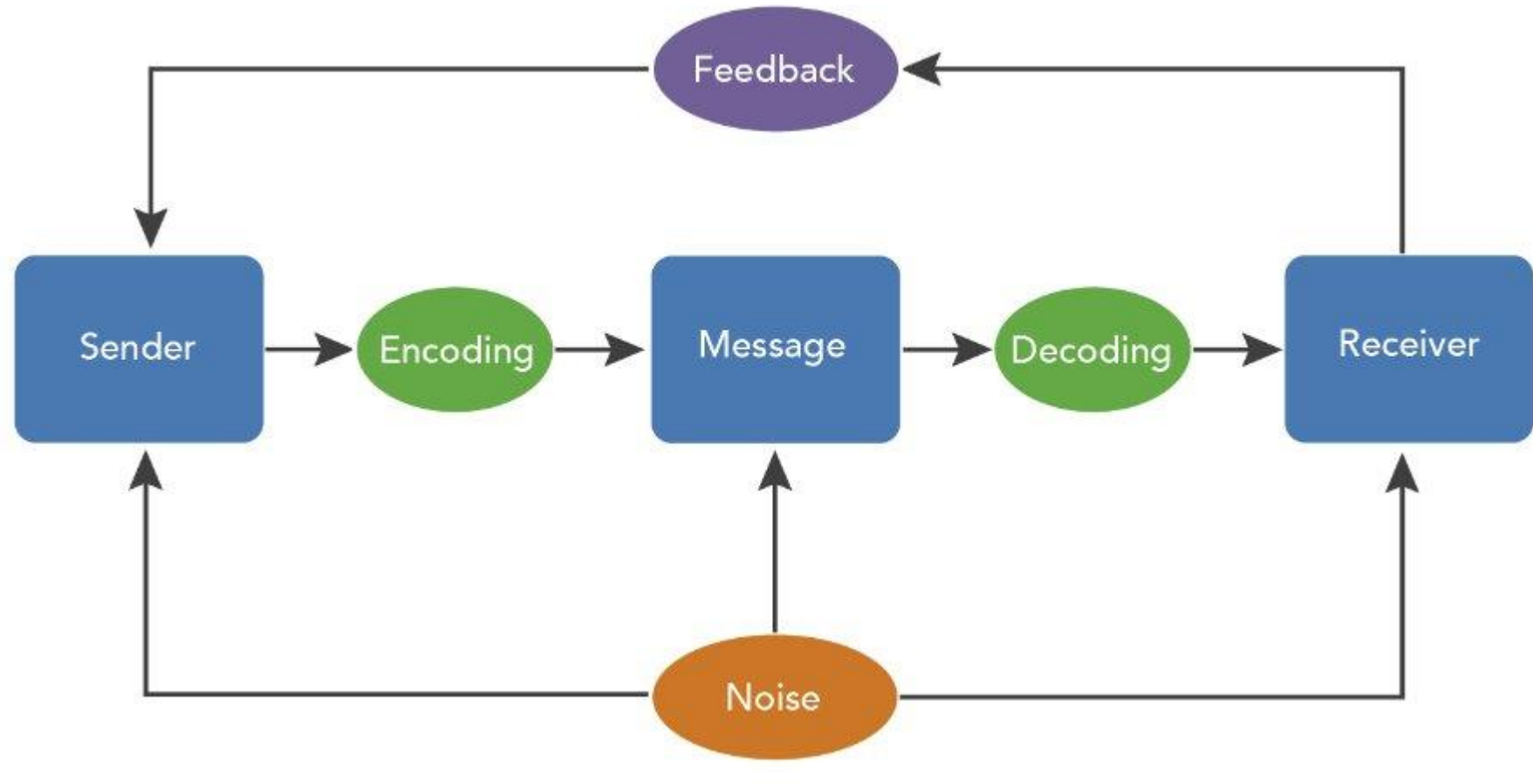
- Ability to generate shared realities contributes to the impression of our own competence
- We continually evaluate and form impressions about others' competence

Point 2 – Encoding/decoding messages

- Impressions contribute to encoding/decoding messages
- Contributes to communication effects and evaluation of the effectiveness of

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Messages and Constitutive Processes Model



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1.8 Human Communication: Messages and Constitutive Processes (4 of 5)

Field of Experience

Point 1 – Familiarity

- What we do depends on our experiences
- Behavior depends on familiarity to situations

Point 2 – Situation specific

- May relate to evaluations of self-competence
- Common fields of experience enable easier communication

Communication Context

Point 1 – Communication interaction environment

- Includes the specific time and place of the interaction
- Includes roles, relationships, and status of participants

Point 2 – Communication intentions

- Context contributes to our intentions

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1.8 Human Communication: Messages and Constitutive Processes (5 of 5)

- Realities and Effects
 - Communication realities
 - Ethics

Realities and Effects

Point 1 – Communication realities

- Result, consequence, or outcome of the communication exchange
- Effect can be immediate or delayed

Point 2 – Ethics

- Evaluation of ethics influence future interactions
- Ethical perceptions of past interactions influence perceptions of future communication

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Communication as Constitutive of Shared Realities

Objective 1.9 Distinguish among interpersonal, small-group, and organizational communication



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1.9 Communication as Constitutive of Shared Realities

- Shared realities
- Types of communications

Point 1 – Shared realities

- Communication is the attempt to construct *shared realities*
- Culture and context influence communication
- Communication is dynamic and ever-changing

Point 2 – Types of communications

- Interpersonal
- Group
- Public
- Organizational

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Twenty-First Century Concepts of Organizations

Objective 1.10 Identify descriptions of organizations



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1.10 Twenty-First Century Concepts of Organizations

- Organizing
- Types of organizations

Point 1 – Organizing

- Purposeful activities as a result of communication behaviors
- Communication seeks to bring order out of chaos
- Five features of all organizations

Point 2 – Types of organizations

- Family-owned, social justice, and volunteer organizations
- Partnerships, entrepreneurial opportunities, home-based work, and global ventures
- Temporary, local, regional, or global organizations

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Definitions of Organizational Communication

Objective 1.11 Survey definitions of organizational communication



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1.11 Definitions of Organizational Communication (1 of 3)

Organizational Communication as Process

Point 1 – Process

- Ongoing
- Ever changing
- Evolutionary
- Culturally dependent

Point 2 – Process occurrence

- Occurs in developing strategy, planning, decision making, and executing the work organization
- Occurs during unexpected crises, changes in the external environment, encounter competitors

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1.11 Definitions of Organizational Communication (1 of 3)

Organizational Communication as People

Point 1 – Organizational communication

- Contributes to creating relationships
- Assists in achieving diverse purposes

Point 2 – Organizational communication occurrence

- Occurs between people who share work and interpersonal relationships
- Occurs between people who are geographically separated
- Occurs across networks of people with a variety of objectives

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1.11 Definitions of Organizational Communication (2 of 3)

Organizational Communication as Messages

Point 1 – Message creation

- Transmission of verbal and nonverbal behaviors
- Sharing of information
- Communicators are linked together by channels

Point 2 – Message description

- Frequency
- Amount
- Type
- Fidelity

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1.11 Definitions of Organizational Communication (2 of 3)

Organizational Communication as Meaning

Point 1 – Role taking

- Occurs as individuals interact in the ever-changing organizational context
- Organizational communication is the symbolic behavior which affects all organizational activities

Point 2 – Multiple meanings

- Does not create a singular set of meanings
- Interactions of ever-changing behaviors create multiple perceptions of events and multiple realities

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1.11 Definitions of Organizational Communication (3 of 3)

Organizational Communication as Constitutive of Organizations

Point 1 – Context Definition

- Organizing, decision making, planning, controlling, and coordinating
- Seeks to reduce environmental uncertainty
- People, messages, and meaning
- Intentional and unintentional messages
- Reflects the purpose of the organization
- Process through which individuals and organizations attempt goal-oriented behavior

Point 2 – Competencies

- Interpersonal abilities
- Effectiveness in complex and changing environments

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**Self-Assessment of Personal Development Needs:
Your Personal Workbook**

Objective 1.12 Assess personal development needs



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1.12 Self-Assessment of Personal Development Needs: Your Personal Workbook

- Self-development exercises
- Self-analysis for career planning
- Influences on career choices
- Achievements, skills, and values
- Current status of career planning
- Resume development



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