

Communicating in organisational settings

Lecture Outline

1. Diagram the communication process.
2. Identify four common communication barriers.
3. Describe problems with communicating through electronic mail.
4. Explain how non-verbal communication relates to emotional labour and emotional contagion.
5. Identify two conditions requiring a channel with high media richness.
6. Summarise four communication strategies in organisational hierarchies.
7. Describe characteristics of the organisational grapevine.
8. Discuss the degree to which men and women communicate differently.
9. Outline the key elements of getting your message across and active listening.

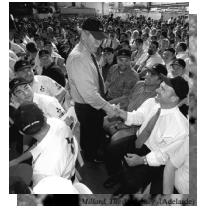
Tom Phillips: master communicator

The uncertain future of Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd (MMAL) has kept chief executive Tom Phillips busy as a corporate communicator. Phillips kept everyone informed of the company's future through town hall meetings (shown here) and visits to the shop floor.

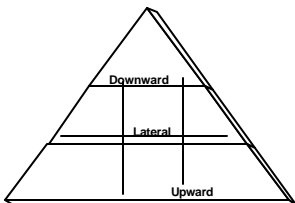


Four functions of communication

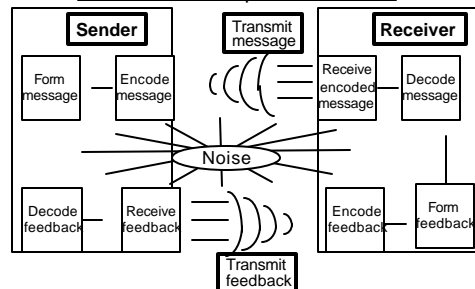
- Knowledge management
- Decision making
- Coordinating work activities
- Fulfilling relatedness needs



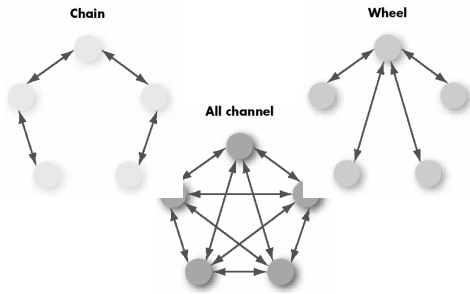
Direction of Communication



Communication process model



Three Common Formal Small-Group Networks



Small-Group Networks and Effectiveness Criteria

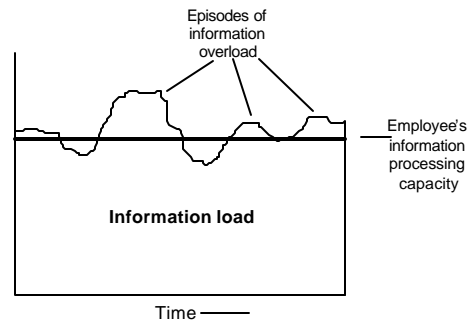
Criteria	Networks		
	Chain	Wheel	All Channel
Speed	Moderate	Fast	Fast
Accuracy	High	High	Moderate
Emergence of a leader	Moderate	High	None
Member satisfaction	Moderate	Low	High

Communication barriers

- Perceptions
- Filtering
- Language
 - jargon
 - ambiguity
- Information overload



Information overload



Managing information overload

- Solution 1: Increase information processing capacity
 - learn to digest information more quickly
 - temporarily work longer hours
- Solution 2: Reduce information load
 - buffering
 - omitting
 - summarising

Computer-Aided Communication

- E-mail
 - **Advantages:** quickly written, sent, and stored; low cost for distribution.
 - **Disadvantages:** information overload, lack of emotional content, cold and impersonal.
- Intranet
 - **A private organisation-wide information network.**
- Extranet
 - **An information network connecting employees with external suppliers, customers, and strategic partners.**
- Videoconferencing
 - **An extension of an intranet or extranet that permits face-to-face virtual meetings via video links.**

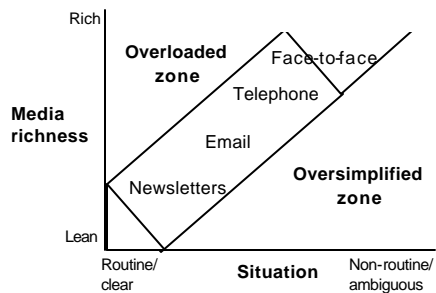
Email emoticons

:~)	Happy
:-}	Smirk
<:-)	Dumb question
:-X	OOPS!
:-j	Tongue in cheek
{}	Hug

Non-verbal communication

- Actions, gestures, facial expressions, etc
- Transmits most info in face-to-face meetings
- Influences meaning of verbal and written symbols
- Less rule bound than verbal communication
- Important part of emotional labour

Hierarchy of media richness



MBWA of Pearse Flynn

Pearse Flynn encourages communication by redesigning buildings and asking staff to write their opinions on sticky notes. The former Alcatel executive (now CEO of Damovo) also practises management by wandering around by chatting with employees in offices and pubs.

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Communicating in hierarchies

- Newsletters and e-zines
 - multi-pronged strategy
- Workspace design
 - need to balance need to concentrate with improved informal communication
- Employee surveys
- Management by walking around

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Organisational grapevine

- Early research findings
 - transmits information rapidly in all directions
 - follows a cluster chain pattern
 - more active in homogeneous groups
 - transmits some degree of truth
- Changes due to Internet
 - email etc becoming main grapevine medium
 - social networks are now global
 - vault.com extends gossip to anyone

Grapevine: benefits and problems

- **Benefits**
 - supplements information
 - strengthens corporate culture
 - relieves anxiety
 - signals that problems exist
- **Problems**
 - suggests lack of concern for employees
 - distortions might escalate anxiety

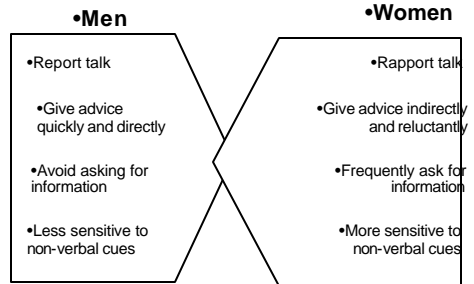
Suggestions for Reducing the Negative Consequences of Rumours

1. Announce timetables for making important decisions.
2. Explain decisions and behaviors that may appear inconsistent or secretive.
3. Emphasize the downside, as well as the upside, of current decisions and future plans.
4. Openly discuss worst-case possibilities—it is almost never as anxiety provoking as the unspoken fantasy.

Cross-cultural communication

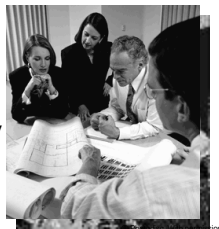
- **Verbal differences**
 - language
 - voice intonation
- **Non-verbal differences**
 - interpreting non-verbal meaning
 - importance of verbal versus non-verbal
 - silence and conversational overlaps

•Gender communication differences

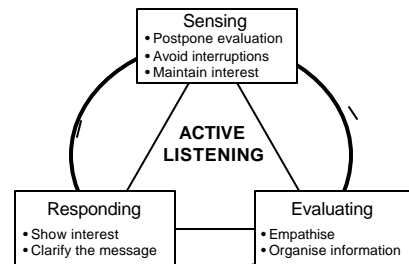


Getting your message across

- Empathise
- Repeat the message
- Use timing effectively
- Be descriptive



Active listening process



Final Exam Questions

- Please note that several multi-choice questions will be reviewed in class, some of which will appear in final exam