

Learning Objectives

- ❑ Describe the functions and process of communication.
- ❑ Contrast downward, upward, and lateral communication through small-group networks and the grapevine.
- ❑ Contrast oral, written, and nonverbal communication.
- ❑ Describe how channel richness underlies the choice of communication channel.
- ❑ Differentiate between automatic and controlled processing of persuasive messages.
- ❑ Identify common barriers to effective communication.
- ❑ Discuss how to overcome the potential problems of cross-cultural communication.

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LO 1

Describe the Functions and Process of Communication

- Communication serves five major functions within a group or organization:
 - Management
 - Feedback
 - Emotional sharing
 - Persuasion
 - Information exchange

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LO 1

Describe the Functions and Process of Communication

- Communication acts to *manage* member behavior in several ways.
 - Authority hierarchies and formal guidelines.
 - Job descriptions and company policies.
 - Workgroup teasing or harassing.

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LO 1

Describe the Functions and Process of Communication

- Communication creates *feedback* by clarifying to employees what they must do, how well they are doing it, and how they can improve their performance.
- Formation of goals, feedback on progress, and reward for desired behavior all require communication and stimulate motivation.

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LO 1

Describe the Functions and Process of Communication

- Communication within the group is a fundamental mechanism by which members show satisfaction and frustration.
- Communication, therefore, provides for the *emotional sharing* of feelings and fulfillment of social needs.

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LO 1

Describe the Functions and Process of Communication

- Like emotional sharing, *persuasion* can be good or bad depending on if, say, a leader is trying to persuade a workgroup to believe in the organization's commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR) or to, conversely, persuade the workgroup to break the law to meet an organizational goal.
- Persuasion can benefit or harm an organization.

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LO 1

Describe the Functions and Process of Communication

- The final function of communication is *information exchange* to facilitate decision making.
- Communication provides the information individuals and groups need to make decisions by transmitting the data needed to identify and evaluate choices.

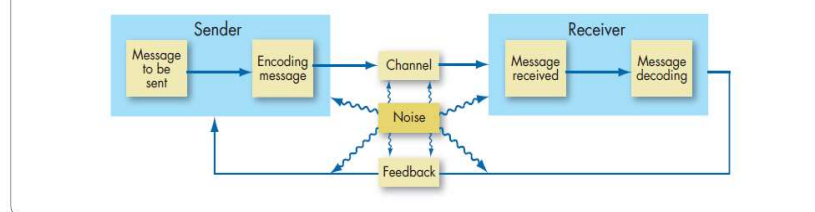
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LO 1

Describe the Functions and Process of Communication

Exhibit 11-1 The Communication Process



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LO 2

Contrast Downward, Upward, and Lateral Communication

- **Downward communication:** flows from one level to a lower level.
 - Assign goals, provide instructions, communicate policies and procedures, and provide feedback.
 - Downward communication must explain the reasons why a decision was made.
 - One problem is the one-way nature of downward communication.

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LO 2

Contrast Downward, Upward, and Lateral Communication

- **Upward communication:** flows to a higher level in the group or organization.
 - Provide feedback to higher-ups, inform them of progress, and relay current problems.
 - Communicate in headlines, not paragraphs.
 - Support your headlines with actionable items.
 - Prepare an agenda to make sure you use your boss's attention well.

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LO 2

Contrast Downward, Upward, and Lateral Communication

- **Lateral communication:** takes place among members of the same work group, among members of work groups at the same level, among managers at the same level, or among any horizontally equivalent personnel.
- Often necessary to save time and facilitate coordination.
 - May be formally sanctioned.
 - Can create dysfunctional conflicts.

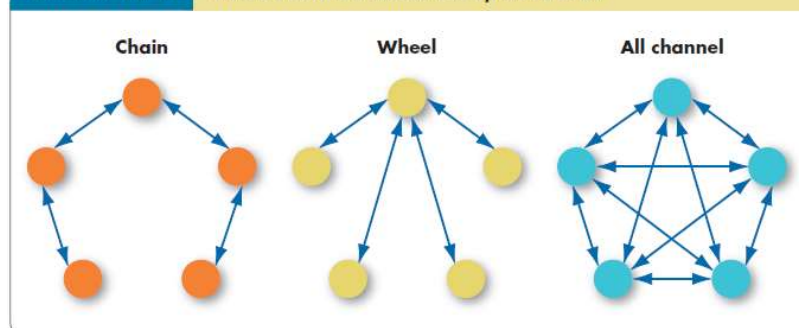
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LO 2

Contrast Downward, Upward, and Lateral Communication

Exhibit 11-2 Three Common Small-Group Networks



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LO 2

Contrast Downward, Upward, and Lateral Communication

Exhibit 11-3

Small-Group Networks and Effective Criteria

Criteria	Networks		
	<i>Chain</i>	<i>Wheel</i>	<i>All-Channel</i>
Speed	Moderate	Fast	Fast
Accuracy	High	High	Moderate
Emergence of a leader	Moderate	High	None
Member satisfaction	Moderate	Low	High

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LO 2

Contrast Downward, Upward, and Lateral Communication

- The informal communication network in a group or organization is called the **grapevine**.
- It gives managers a feel for the morale of their organization, identifies issues employees consider important, and helps tap into employee anxieties.

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LO 2

Contrast Downward, Upward, and Lateral Communication

Exhibit 11-4 Dealing with Gossip and Rumors

1. **Share** the information you have, and the information you don't—where there is good formal communication with much information, there is no need for rumors. When you don't know information that others are seeking, discuss when you will know and follow up.
2. **Explain**, explain, explain. As a manager, discuss what decisions are made and why they were made, as well as the plan going forward.
3. **Respond** to rumors noncommittally, and then verify for yourself the truths you can. Make certain to gather all sides of the story.
4. **Invite** employees to discuss their concerns, ideas, suggestions, thoughts, and feelings about organizational matters. Help them frame their thoughts into more objective viewpoints.

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LO 3

Contrast Oral, Written, and Nonverbal Communication

➤ Oral Communication

- The primary means of conveying messages. Speeches, formal one-on-one and group discussions, and informal rumor mills or grapevines are popular forms of oral communication.
 - Meetings
 - Videoconferencing and conference calling
 - Telephone

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LO 3

Contrast Oral, Written, and Nonverbal Communication

➤ Written Communication

- Letters
- PowerPoint
- E-mail
- Instant Messaging
- Text Messaging
- Social Media
- Aps
- Blogs

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LO 3

Contrast Oral, Written, and Nonverbal Communication

Exhibit 11-5 Allocation of Time at Work for Managers and Professionals



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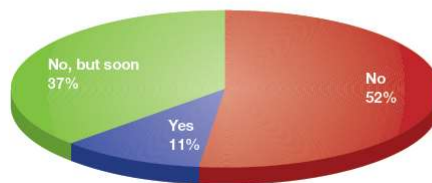
Source: Based on M. Chui et al., "The Social Economy: Unlocking Value and Productivity through Social Technologies," McKinsey & Company, July 2012, http://www.mckinsey.com/mgi/tech/social_economy.

LO 3

Contrast Oral, Written, and Nonverbal Communication

OB POLL

Do You Use Social-Networking Sites to Research Job Candidates?



Note: CareerBuilder survey of over 2,000 hiring professionals.

Source: Based on CareerBuilder at <http://www.careerbuilder.com/JobPoster/Resources/page.aspx?pagever=2012SocialMedia&template=none>.

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LO 3

Contrast Oral, Written, and Nonverbal Communication

➤ Nonverbal Communication

- Includes body movements, the intonations or emphasis we give to words, facial expressions, and the physical distance between the sender and receiver.
- Body language can convey status, level of engagement, and emotional state.

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LO 3

Contrast Oral, Written, and Nonverbal Communication

Exhibit 11-6 Intonations: It's the Way You Say It!

Change your tone and you change your meaning:

Placement of the Emphasis	What It Means
Why don't I take you to dinner tonight?	I was going to take someone else.
Why don't I take you to dinner tonight ?	Instead of the guy you were going with.
Why don't I take you to dinner tonight ?	I'm trying to find a reason why I shouldn't take you.
Why don't I take you to dinner tonight ?	Do you have a problem with me?
Why don't I take you to dinner tonight ?	Instead of going on your own.
Why don't I take you to dinner tonight ?	Instead of lunch tomorrow.
Why don't I take you to dinner tonight ?	Not tomorrow night.

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LO 3

Contrast Oral, Written, and Nonverbal Communication

- Physical distance also has meaning.
 - What is considered proper spacing between people largely depends on cultural norms.
 - A businesslike distance in some European countries feels intimate in many parts of North America.
 - Distance may indicate aggressiveness or sexual interest, or it may signal disinterest or displeasure with what is being said.

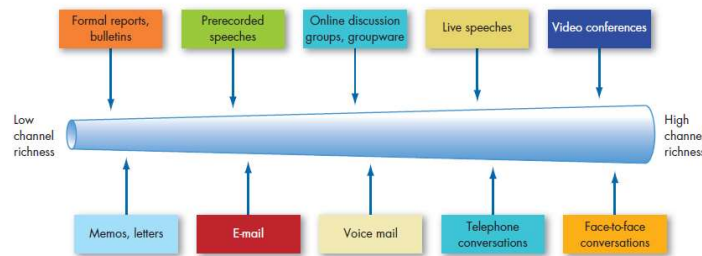
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LO 4

Channel Richness and Choice Of Communication Channel

Exhibit 11-7 Information Richness and Communication Channels



Source: Reproduced from R. L. Daft and R. A. Weis, *Organizational Behavior* (Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt, 2001), 311.

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LO 4

Channel Richness and Choice Of Communication Channel

- The choice of channel depends on whether the message is routine.
- Routine messages tend to be straightforward and have a minimum of ambiguity.
 - Choose *oral communication* when you need to gauge the receiver's receptivity.
 - *Written communication* is more reliable for complex and lengthy communications.

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LO 4

Channel Richness and Choice Of Communication Channel

- Know your audience and use good grammar.
 - Letters
 - Text messaging
 - Social media
 - Blogging

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LO 4

Channel Richness and Choice Of Communication Channel

- Information Security
 - Electronic information
 - Physical information
 - Information that employees know
- Most companies monitor employee Internet use and e-mail records, and some use video surveillance and record phone conversations.

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LO 5

Persuasive Communication

- **Automatic processing:** a relatively superficial consideration of evidence and information.
 - It takes little time and low effort, but it lets us be easily fooled by a variety of tricks, like a cute jingle or glamorous photo.
- **Controlled processing:** a detailed consideration of evidence and information relying on facts, figures, and logic.
 - Requires effort and energy, but it's harder to fool someone who engages in it.

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LO 5

Persuasive Communication

- Rules of thumb for determining the choice of processing:
 - Interest level
 - Prior knowledge
 - Personality
 - Message characteristics
- Match your message to your audience

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LO 6

Identify Common Barriers to Effective Communication

- Barriers to Effective Communication
 - **Filtering**
 - Selective perception
 - Information overload
 - Emotions
 - Language
 - Silence
 - **Communication apprehension**
 - Lying

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LO 7

Overcoming Problems in Cross-Cultural Communication

- **Cultural Barriers**
 - Caused by semantics – words mean different things to different people.
 - Caused by word connotations – words *imply* different things in different languages.
 - Caused by tone differences.
 - Caused by differences in tolerance for conflict and methods for resolving conflicts.

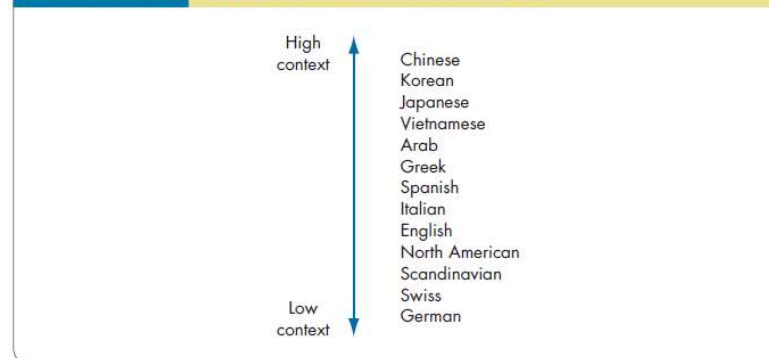
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LO 7

Overcoming Problems in Cross-Cultural Communication

Exhibit 11-8 High- versus Low-Context Cultures



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LO 7

Overcoming Problems in Cross-Cultural Communication

➤ A Cultural Guide

- Know yourself.
- Foster a climate of mutual respect, fairness, and democracy.
- State facts, not your interpretation.
- Consider the other person's viewpoint.
- Proactively maintain the identity of the group.

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Implications for Managers

- Remember that your communication mode will partly determine your communication effectiveness.
- Obtain feedback from your employees to make certain your messages—however they are communicated—are understood.
- Remember that written communication creates more misunderstandings than oral communication; communicate with employees through in-person meetings when possible.

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Implications for Managers

- Make sure you use communication strategies appropriate to your audience and the type of message you're sending.
- Keep in mind communication barriers such as gender and culture.

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