Communication & Presentation Skills

EE-286

Communication skills

- Skills that every individual requires in order to send information to an audience in the most efficient way and receive information from a sender and interpret it correctly

Basics of Technical Communication

✖ **In academic environment**, we encounter various situations involving

+ speech or writing,

+ conversation with friends,

+ professors or office staff to achieve various purposes

+ seminars, group discussions, written tests,

+ examinations

+ and laboratory or project report submissions on diverse topics

Basics of Technical Communication

- Likewise, **when one takes up a profession**, after completing studies, one has to interact with superiors and subordinates, read and write emails, letters, reports and proposals

- All these activities have a common denominator: **the sharing of information**

- <u>The process involving the transmission and interchange of ideas, facts, feelings, or courses of action is known as process of communication</u>

The Communication Cycle

- The communication cycle involves

  - sending information to receiver via a channel in the communication environment.

  - If the message received is the same as message sent, there will be a response

- If there is breakdown in communication, **noise** exists

- **Noise** is defined as any unplanned interference in the communication environment which causes hindrance in the transmission of the message

The Communication Cycle

- **Noise can be classified as Channel and semantic**

- **Channel Noise** is any interference in the mechanics of the medium used to send a message

- **Semantic noise** is generated internally, resulting from errors in the message itself. (e.g., ambiguous sentence structure, faulty grammar, misspelling and incorrect punctuation

General and Technical Communication

- **General purpose communication**
  - messages that are non technical or informal in nature

- **Technical or business communication**
  - messages pertaining to technical, industrial, or business matters

A Quick Comparison of General and Technical Communication

General Communication	Technical Communication
Contains a general message	Contains a technical message
Informal in style and speech	Mostly formal
No set pattern of communication	Follows a set pattern
Mostly oral	Both oral and written
Not always for specific audience	Always for a specific audience
Doesn't involve the use of technical vocabulary or graphics etc.	Frequently involves jargon, graphics etc.

Language as a tool of Communication

- Language employs a combination of words to communicate ideas in a meaningful way.

- By changing the word order in a sentence, one can change its meaning and even make it meaningless.

Characteristics of language

✖ According to the ideas put forward by eminent linguists such as Noam Chomsky and Ferdinand de Saussure, language is:

+ Artificial
+ Restricted
+ Abstract
+ Arbitrary
+ Creative
+ Repetitive
+ Recursive

Characteristics of language

Language is Artificial

- No organic construction between a symbol and its meaning

- It is created by human as it is needed

- For example
  - Word Nice: has changed over hundred of years.
    + Today nice is used to describe something as good in an abstract way.
    + Its Latin root "nescire" meant to be ignorant and in thirteen century English, it came to mean "foolish, stupid".

Characteristics of language

✖ **Language is restricted**
  ✚ Cannot find word to express your feelings

✖ **Language is abstract**
  ✚ To be abstract is to generalize, and to generalize is to leave out many details.
  ✚ For example: different shapes and sizes, and still be called a Table
  ✚ This happens because meanings get associated with symbols and users keep expanding the range of meanings.

Characteristics of language

- **Language is arbitrary**
  - Language keeps changing to include new concepts, and words can attach a number of specific and arbitrary meanings
    e.g. Tree (wooden plant) Vs Family tree

- **Language is creative**
  - Ability to generate so many words every day.
  - (e.g., seminar/webinar, telecast/webcast, edutainment = education + entertainment)

Characteristics of language

✖ Language is repetitive
+ Language has the capacity for redundancy or repetition.
+ This may either improve, or impede effective communication.
+ e.g., All of you meet together to see me in the afternoon, "Personal PIN Number", "huge skyscraper", "bright flash of light", When was the last time you saw a dark flash of light?

✖ Language is recursive
+ Enables to generate any number of sentences using the same basic grammatical templates.
+ For example:
+ This man who is wearing a crumpled suit, which he borrowed from me to wear to his interview, which was on Wednesday, which was the day it was raining

Levels of communication

Human communication takes place at various levels

(1) Extrapersonal

- Communication between human beings [and] non-human entities. (e.g., Human-machine, [a] pet dog wagging its tail)

(2) Intrapersonal Communication

- This takes place within the individual.
- This kind of communication pertains to thinking, which is the basis of information processing.

Levels of communication

(3) Interpersonal communication

- This refers to the sharing of information among people

- In this case, there are few participants involved, interactants are in may or may not be in close proximity to each other and feedback is immediate

- It can be :
    - formal: (e.g., interaction with sales clerk) Or
    - informal: (e.g., casual, friendly)

Organizational Communication

✖ It takes place at different hierarchical levels

✖ With a proper networking system, communication in an organization is possible even without direct contact between employees

✖ This is divided further into:
  + Interpersonal
    ✕ Occurs in conducting work within an organization is classified as internal operational.
  + Extrapersonal
    ✕ The work related communication that an organization does with people outside the organization
  + Personal
    ✕ It occurs without purpose as far as business is concerned.

Mass Communication

✖ Requires a mediator to transmit information such as journals, books, television, and newspaper

✖ This type of communication is more persuasive in nature than any other form of communication

✖ Characteristics of this type of communication are
  ➕ Large reach
  ➕ Impersonality (i.e., participants unknown to each other)
  ➕ Presence of gate keeper
    ✕ mass communication needs additional persons, institutions or organizations to convey the message from sender to receiver.

The flow of communication

✖ Information flows in an organization both formally and informally

✖ **Formal communication**
  ✚ follows the official hierarchy

✖ **Informal communication**
  ✚ does not follow any formal channel
  ✚ This type of communication can flow in various directions:
    ✖ Downward,
    ✖ Upward,
    ✖ Lateral, or
    ✖ Diagonal

The flow of communication

- **Downward communication**
  - flows from a manager, down the chain of command
  - can take any form – memos, notices, face to face interactions, or telephone conversations

- **Upward Communication:**
  - When subordinates send reports to inform their superiors, the communication flows upward

- **Lateral or Horizontal or Horizontal Communication**
  - This form of communication takes place among peer groups or hierarchically equivalent employees

- **Diagonal or cross-wise communication**
  - This type of communication flows in all directions and cuts across functions and levels in an organization.

The flow of communication
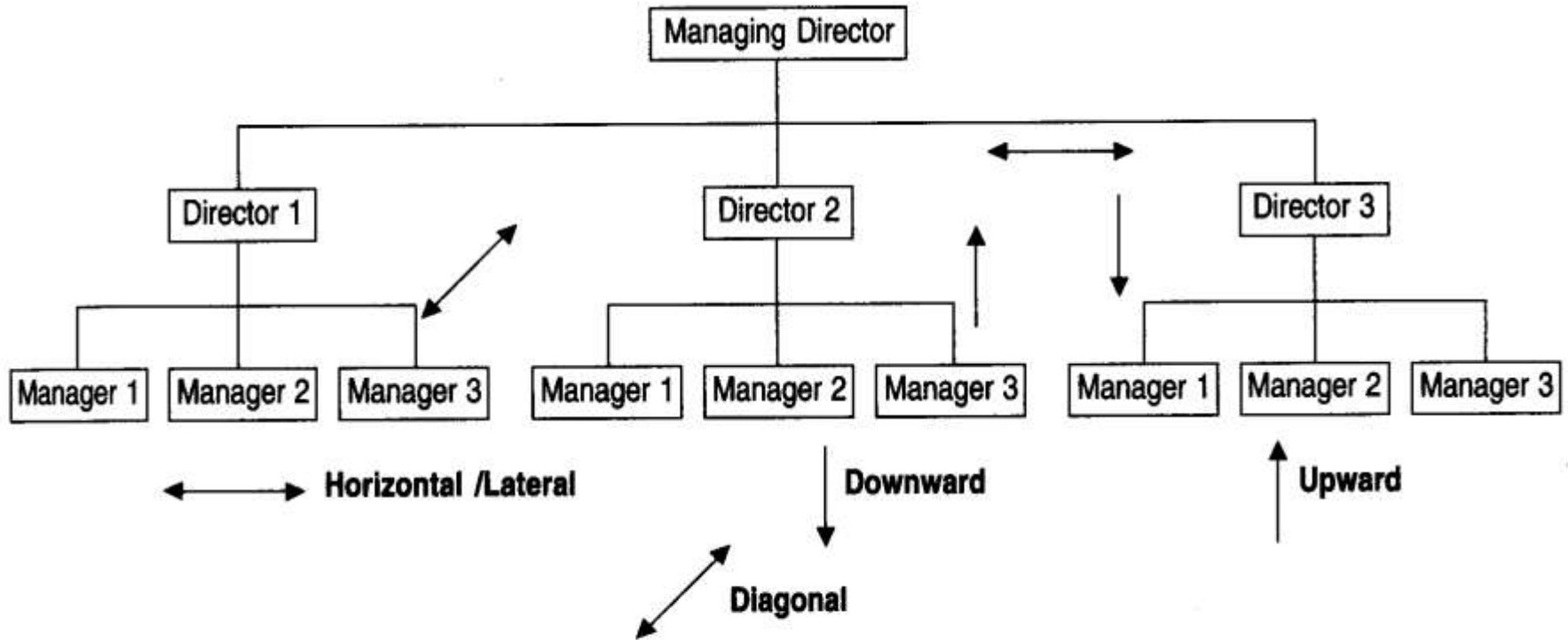
Figure 1.2: FLOW OF COMMUNICATION IN AN ORGANIZATION

Communication Networks

- A variety of patterns emerge when communication combines through vertical and horizontal channels. This is called communication networks

- Two Major categories exist in Communication networks:
  - (1) Formal Network Models
  - (2) Informal Network Models (Grapevine communication)

Communication Networks

(1) Formal Network Models

Five common communication networks come in formal network

- Chain Network
  - Represents a hierarchy in which communication can flow only upward or downward
  - This type of network in direct line of authority
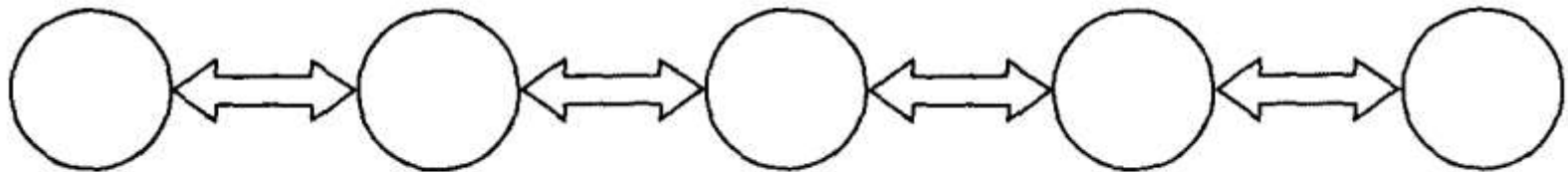
Figure 1.3: CHAIN NETWORK

Communication Networks

(1) Formal Network Models

✖ The Y-network
+ It is a multi-level hierarchy and a combination of horizontal and vertical flow of combination
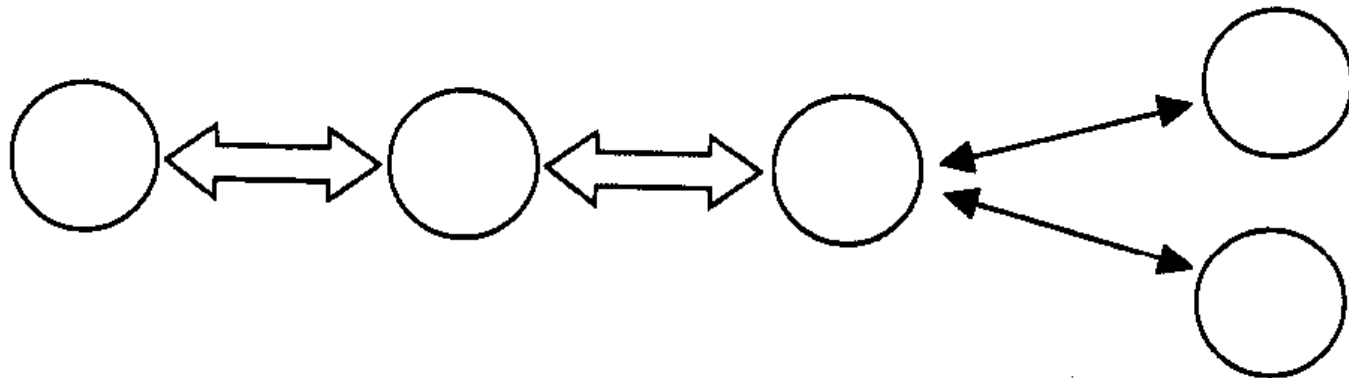+ If we turn the Y upside down, we see two subordinates reporting to one senior, with two levels

Figure 1.4: Y-NETWORK

Communication Networks

(1) Formal Network Models (Contd.)

- The Wheel network
  - Refers to several subordinates reporting to a superior
  - This is a combination of horizontal and diagonal flow of combination.
  - Here though the subordinates are of equal rank, all of them report to one superior and without any inter
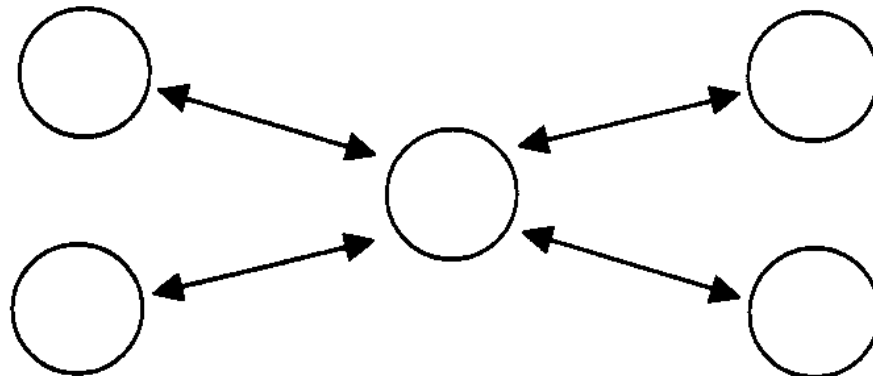
Figure 1.5: WHEEL NETWORK

Communication Networks

(1) Formal Network Models (Contd.)

✖ The circle network

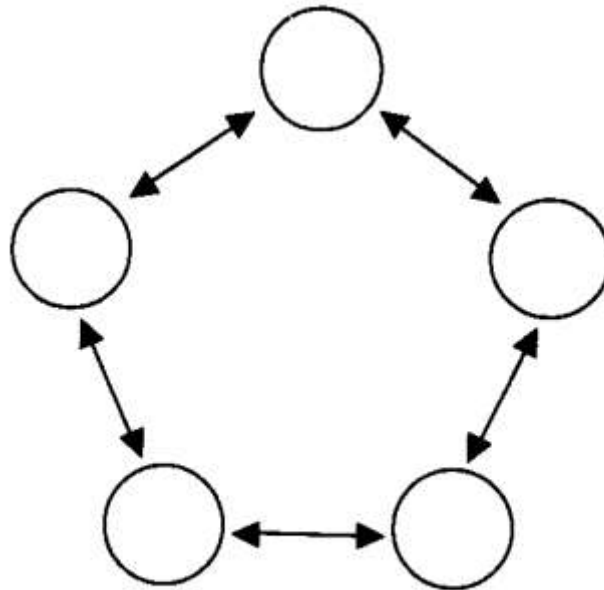➕ Allows employees to interact with adjacent members but no fu...

Figure 1.6: CIRCLE NETWORK

Communication Networks

(1) Formal Network Models (Contd.)

✖   The all-around network

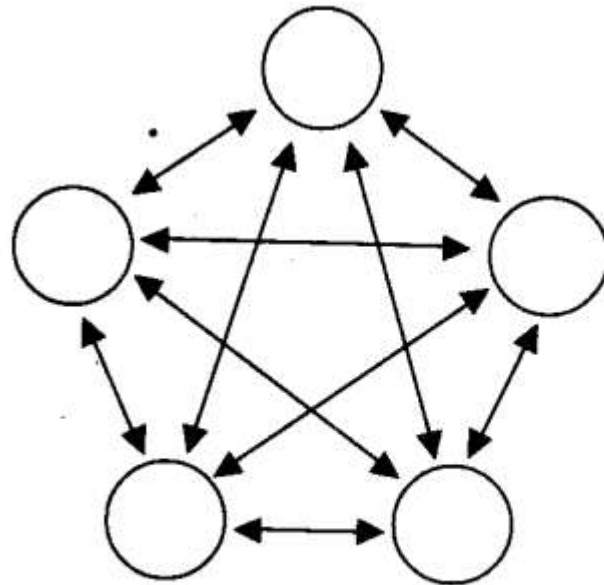   **+**   It is least structured, enables each employee to communicate freely with the others

Figure 1.7:   ALL-CHANNEL NETWORK

Communication Networks

(1) Formal Network Models (Contd.)

- Following features are related to the effective use of communication network

  - No single network is suitable for all occasions

  - The wheel and all-around channel networks are preferred if **speed** of communication is a priority

  - The chain, Y and wheel networks serve best when **accuracy** is crucial

Communication Networks

(2) Informal Network Models (Grapevine communication)

- Beside formal networks, Communication in an organization also travels along an informal network

- These type of networks are sometimes useful for a company

- Like a feedback is obtained upon which future strategy is developed for a company

Communication Networks

(2) Informal Network Models (Grapevine communication)

- Four patterns are shown

  - Single strand
    - The message is passed from one person to another along a single strand

Figure 1.8:   SINGLE STRAND

Communication Networks

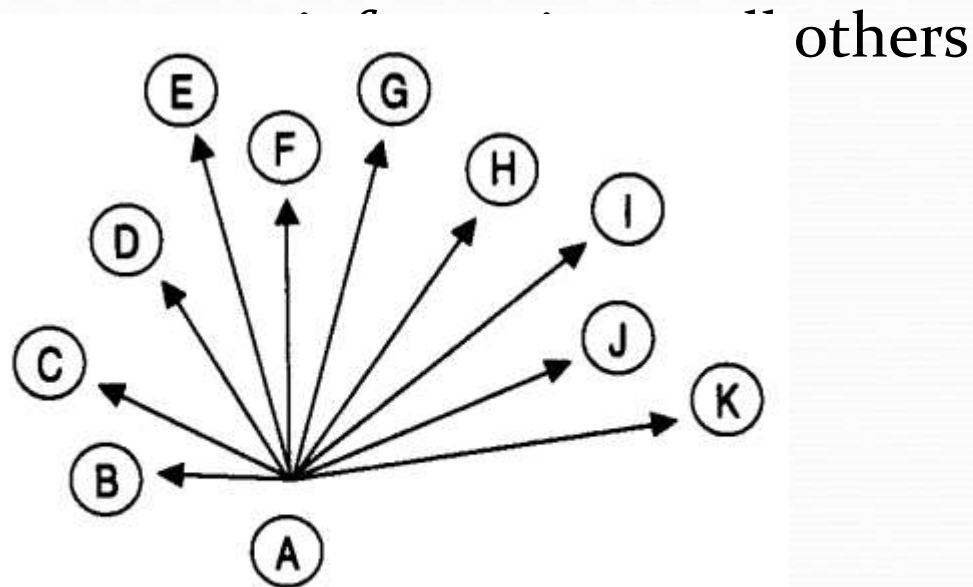**(2) Informal Network Models (Grapevine communication)**

- Gossip Network
  - one person tells information to all others

Figure 1.9: GOSSIP

Communication Networks

(2) Informal Network Models (Grapevine communication)
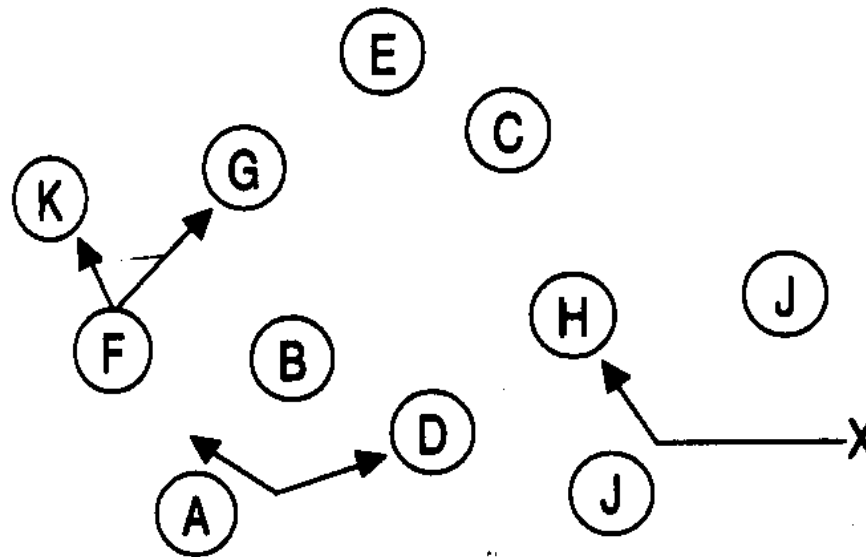
- Probability Network
  - Each pers

Figure 1.10: PROBABILITY

Communication Networks

(2) Informal Network Models (Grapevine communication)
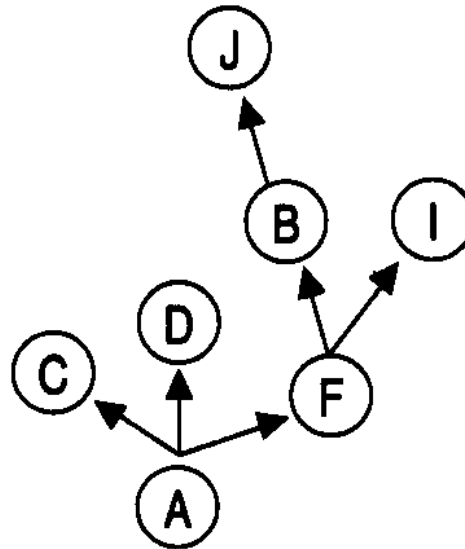
- Clusters
  - (most popular) ~~~~~~~ ted few

Figure 1.11: CLUSTER

Communication Networks

Characteristics of Grapevine

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Not Expensive • Rapid • Multidirectional • If carefully cultivated, is capable of resolving conflicts • A measure of public opinion • Serves as an outlet for anxieties, worries, frustration • Promotes unity, solidarity • Voluntary and unforced	• May be blindly accepted • Reveals some degree of error • Lead to misunderstanding because of incomplete information • Not reliable as no body takes the responsibility for it • Causes damage to the organization because of its excessive swiftness at times (e.g., rumors)

Importance of Technical Communication

- Communication serves as an instrument to measure the success or growth of an organization

- Technical communication in an organization can be divided into two parts
  - Oral and
  - Written

Forms of oral and written communications

Oral Forms	Written Forms
Face to face conversations	Memos
Telephone conversations	Letters
Meetings	Emails
Seminars	Faxes
Conferences	Notices
Dictation	Circulars
Instructions	Newsletters
Presentations	Reports
Group Discussions	Proposals
Interviews (employment, press)	Research papers
	Bulletin
Video conferences	Brochures
Voice conferences	Manuals
	In-house journals

<u>Next Lecture</u>

<u>Technology in Communication</u>

"Wake up! You're the next interesting speaker!"