**Unit – I:**

The role of and process of communication. Barriers to communication Surmounting barriers to communication, Types of communication; Listening process–Elements of good listening– improving listening competence. Importance of feedback – Principles of feedback.

1. **The role of and process of communication**

The word communication arises from the Latin word “communicare”, which means “to share”. Communication is the basic step for the exchange of information.

**Communication** can be defined as the process of exchange of information through means such as words, actions, signs, etc., between two or more individuals.

***Objectives of Communication***

Various objectives of Communication are:—

1) **Information:** One of the most important objectives of communication is passing or receiving information about a particular fact or circumstance.

2) **Advice:** Advice is an important objective of communication as it involves personal opinions and is likely to be subjective. Advice is given to influence his/her opinion or behavior.

3) **Order:** Order is an authoritative communication. The downward flow of information is dominated by orders. Orders may be written or oral, general or specific, procedural or operational, mandatory or discretionary.

4) **Suggestion:** Suggestion enjoys great advantage over other means of communication like advice or order. Suggestion is supposed to be very mild and subtle form of communication.

5) **Persuasion:** It is an important objective of communication. In the office or the factory, the lazy, the incompetent and the disgruntled workers have o be persuaded to do their work.

6) **Education:** Education is a very conscious process of communication. The main purpose of education is to widen knowledge as well as to improve skills.

7) **Warning:** Warning is a forceful means of communication as it demands immediate action. If employees do not abide by the norms of the organization, or violate the rules and regulations, it may become necessary to warn them.

8) **Raising Morale:** Morale boosting is only possible through communication. High morale results in better performance.

9) **Motivation:** Motivation energizes and activates a person and channelizes his behavior towards the attainment of desired goals.

Thus, motivation as a form of communication is very crucial in handling human behavior.

***Need for Communication***

For any living being, while co-existing, there occurs the necessity of exchange of some information. Whenever a need for exchange of information arises, some means of communication should exist. While the means of communication can be anything such as gestures, signs, symbols, or a language, the need for communication is inevitable.

Language and gestures play an important role in human communication, while sounds and actions are important for animal communication. However, when some message has to be conveyed, a communication has to be established.

**Process of communication**

Communication simply means exchange of ideas & information between two persons. A person sends a message to another person and gets the response from the receiver on the message. This whole phenomenon can be explained as under.

**1. Sender’s thoughts:-**

The very first step in the process of communication is generation of thought in the sender’s mind. These thoughts may be about a request, order, inquiry production or any other such activity.

**2. Encoding / Message:-**

The thought generated in the mind of sender is ambiguous and unable to be communicated unless it is put into a receivable form. This step is known as encoding where the sender converts his thought into a message by means of a language. For example, a sender thinks about having a job. Now, he will put his thought on a paper. That is called job application. In his way, his thought becomes a message.

**3. Transmission through media:-**

Once a thought is converted into message, it should be transmitted to the receiver through a suitable medium. This media might be electronic media as T.V., E-mail, radio etc. or it may be print media like newspaper, magazines, letters or merely sound that is transmitted through the medium of air.

**4. Noise and Barriers:-**

While transmitting the information to the receiver, the sender faces lots of barriers. These noise and barriers are explained as under:

**(i) On sender’s side:-** Noise and barriers may take place during the process of encoding.

Some of them may be caused by distraction, lack of concentration, typing mistake, poor language etc.

**(ii) In the medium:-** Some barriers are caused by medium such as poor transmission on T.V. and radio misprinting in newspapers etc.

**(iii) On receiver’s side:-** The receiver can also create certain barriers to the receiving of message such as poor reading ability, emotions, lack of concentration etc.

**5. Decoding by Receiver:-**

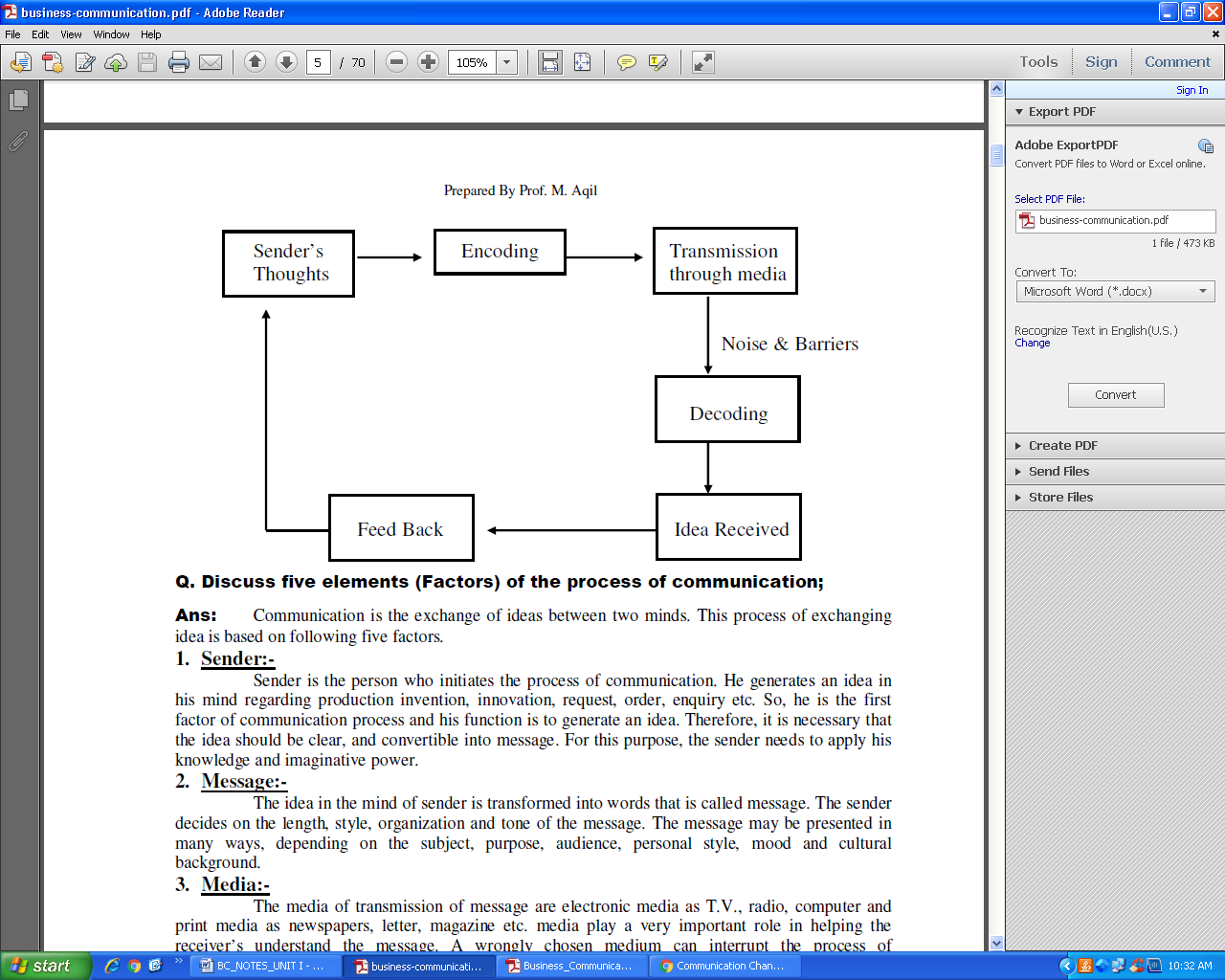
Having received the message form the sender, the receiver attempts to understand and interpret the message. This process of converting the language of message into thoughts is known as decoding. For instance, the receiver, having received job application, reads the application and understands the message conveyed by the applicant.

**6. Idea Received:-**

As soon as the process of decoding is finished, the idea given by the sender is received by the receiver. It means the thought that was generated in the mind of sender has been transmitted to the mind of receiver. In our example, the sender wanted to inform the receiver about his thought of having a job. Now the sender has got this idea.

**7. Feed back:-**

Process of communication is incomplete until the receiver responds to the sender. This response may be negative, positive, or for further enquiry. It means when the receiver of job application welcomes or regrets the sender, the process of communication is deemed to be complete.

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***Five elements (Factors) of the process of communication***

Communication is the exchange of ideas between two minds. This process of exchanging idea is based on following five factors.

**1. Sender:-**

Sender is the person who initiates the process of communication. He generates an idea in his mind regarding production invention, innovation, request, order, enquiry etc. So, he is the first factor of communication process and his function is to generate an idea. Therefore, it is necessary that the idea should be clear, and convertible into message. For this purpose, the sender needs to apply his knowledge and imaginative power.

**2. Message:-**

The idea in the mind of sender is transformed into words that is called message. The sender decides on the length, style, organization and tone of the message. The message may be presented in many ways, depending on the subject, purpose, audience, personal style, mood and cultural background.

**3. Media:-**

The media of transmission of message are electronic media as T.V., radio, computer and print media as newspapers, letter, magazine etc. media play a very important role in helping the receiver’s understand the message. A wrongly chosen medium can interrupt the process of communication; Selection of medium depends upon message, audience, urgency and situation.

**4. Receiver:-**

Receiver is the person who gets the message from the sender, decodes it, understands it and interprets it.

**5. Feed Back:-**

Having understood the message, the receiver responds to the sender in yes or no or asks further questions. This process is called feedback.

1. **Barriers to communication , Surmounting barriers to communication**

Each communication must be transmitted through an appropriate medium. An unsuitable medium is one of the biggest barriers to communication.

**Physical Barriers:—**

* **Noise:** Noise in a factory, external disturbance in telecom facilities, poor writing, bad photocopies etc.
* **Time and Distance:** It can also act as a barrier to communication.

**Semantic Barriers:—**

* **Interpretation of Words:** It is quite possible that the receiver of a message does not assign the same meaning to a word as the transmitter had intended. This may lead to miscommunication.
* Words carry different meanings, shades or flavors to the transmitter and receiver.
* To minimize semantic barriers, we should—
* Use familiar words.
* Clarify the shades.
* As far as possible, use words with positive connotations.

**Barriers caused by different comprehensions of reality are:—**

* **Abstracting** means picking up few details and leaving out others.
* **Slanting** means giving a particular bias or slant to the reality.
* **Inferring** means drawing inferences from observation.

**Socio-Psychological barriers:—**

* **Attitude and Opinions:** We react favorable or are hostile according to our personal benefit.
* **Emotions:** We cannot transmit nor receive anything correctly if our mind is agitated.
* **Closed Mind:** We hold our opinion so rigidly that we just refuse to listen.
* **The Source of Communication:** We react according to the trust we have in the source of communication.
* **Inattentiveness:** We unconsciously become inattentive if communication contains new idea or if we don‘t like an idea.
* **Faulty transmission:** Part of the message is last in transmission and can also act as a barrier.
* **Poor Retention:** Oral messages in particular are lost due to poor human retention.
* **Status Consciousness:** We are over-conscious of our lower or higher rank and do not express ourselves candidly.

**Surmounting barriers to communication**

1. **Eliminating differences in perception:** The organization should ensure that it is recruiting right individuals on the job. It’s the responsibility of the interviewer to ensure that the interviewee has command over the written and spoken language. There should be proper Induction program so that the policies of the company are clear to all the employees. There should be proper trainings conducted for required employees (for eg: Voice and Accent training).
2. **Use of Simple Language:** Use of simple and clear words should be emphasized. Use of ambiguous words and jargons should be avoided.
3. **Reduction and elimination of noise levels:** Noise is the main communication barrier which must be overcome on priority basis. It is essential to identify the source of noise and then eliminate that source.
4. **Active Listening:** Listen attentively and carefully. There is a difference between “listening” and “hearing”. Active listening means hearing with proper understanding of the message that is heard. By asking questions the speaker can ensure whether his/her message is understood or not by the receiver in the same terms as intended by the speaker.
5. **Emotional State:** During communication one should make effective use of body language. He/she should not show their emotions while communication as the receiver might misinterpret the message being delivered. For example, if the conveyer of the message is in a bad mood then the receiver might think that the information being delivered is not good.
6. **Simple Organizational Structure:** The organizational structure should not be complex. The number of hierarchical levels should be optimum. There should be a ideal span of control within the organization. Simpler the organizational structure, more effective will be the communication.
7. **Avoid Information Overload:** The managers should know how to prioritize their work. They should not overload themselves with the work. They should spend quality time with their subordinates and should listen to their problems and feedbacks actively.
8. **Give Constructive Feedback:** Avoid giving negative feedback. The contents of the feedback might be negative, but it should be delivered constructively. Constructive feedback will lead to effective communication between the superior and subordinate.
9. **Proper Media Selection:** The managers should properly select the medium of communication. Simple messages should be conveyed orally, like: face to face interaction or meetings. Use of written means of communication should be encouraged for delivering complex messages. For significant messages reminders can be given by using written means of communication such as : Memos, Notices etc.
10. **Flexibility in meeting the targets:** For effective communication in an organization the managers should ensure that the individuals are meeting their targets timely without skipping the formal channels of communication. There should not be much pressure on employees to meet their targets.

**Seven C’s of Effective Business Communication**

The message is said to be effective when the receiver understands the same meaning that the sender was intended to convey. For any communication in business, in order to be effective, it must have seven qualities. These seven attributes are called **seven C’s of effective business communication**.

1. Correctness
2. Clarity
3. Conciseness
4. Completeness
5. Consideration
6. Concreteness
7. Courtesy
8. **Correctness**

At the time of encoding, if the encoder has comprehensive knowledge about the decoder of message, it makes the communication an ease. The encoder should know the status, knowledge and educational background of the decoder. **Correctness means**:

* + Use the right level of language
  + Correct use of grammar, spelling and punctuation
  + Accuracy in stating facts and figures

*Correctness in message helps in building confidence.*

1. **Clarity**

**Clarity demands the use of simple language** and easy sentence structure in composing the message. When there is clarity in presenting ideas, it’s easy for the receiver/decoder to grasp the meaning being conveyed by the sender/encoder.

*Clarity makes comprehension easier.*

1. **Conciseness**

A concise message saves time of both the sender and the receiver. **Conciseness**, in a business message, can be achieved by avoiding wordy expressions and repetition. Using brief and to the point sentences, including relevant material makes the message concise. Achieving conciseness does not mean to loose completeness of message.

*Conciseness saves time.*

1. **Completeness**

**By completeness means** the message must bear all the necessary information to bring the response you desire. The sender should answer all the questions and with facts and figures. and when desirable, go for extra details.

*Completeness brings the desired response.*

1. **Consideration**

**Consideration demands to put oneself in the place of receiver** while composing a message. It refers to the use of You attitude, emphases positive pleasant facts, visualizing reader’s problems, desires, emotions and his response.

*Consideration means understanding of human nature.*

1. **Concreteness**

Being definite, vivid and specific rather than vague, obscure and general leads to concreteness of the message. Facts and figures being presented in the message should be specif.

*Concreteness reinforces confidence.*

1. **Courtesy**

In business, almost everything starts and ends in courtesy. **Courtesy means not only thinking about receiver but also valuing his feelings.**Much can be achieved by using polite words and gestures, being appreciative, thoughtful, tactful, and showing respect to the receiver. **Courtesy builds goodwill**.

*Courtesy strengthen relations*

1. **Types of communication**

People communicate with each other in a number of ways that depend upon the message and its context in which it is being sent. Choice of communication channel and your style of communicating also affect communication. So, there different types of communication.

**Types of communication based on the communication channels used** are:

1. Verbal Communication
2. Nonverbal Communication

## Verbal Communication

Verbal communication refers to the form of communication in which message is transmitted verbally; communication is done by word of mouth and a piece of writing. Objective of every communication is to have people understand what we are trying to convey. **In verbal communication remember the acronym KISS** (keep it short and simple).

When we talk to others, we assume that others understand what we are saying because we know what we are saying. But this is not the case. Usually people bring their own attitude, perception, emotions and thoughts about the topic and hence creates barrier in delivering the right meaning.

So in order to deliver the right message, you must put yourself on the other side of the table and think from your receiver’s point of view. Would he understand the message? How it would sound on the other side of the table?

**Verbal Communication** is further divided into:

* + Oral Communication
  + Written Communication

### Oral Communication

In oral communication, Spoken words are used. It includes face-to-face conversations, speech, telephonic conversation, video, radio, television, voice over internet. In **oral communication**, communication is influence by pitch, volume, speed and clarity of speaking.

**Advantages**  
It brings quick feedback. In a face-to-face conversation, by reading facial expression and body language one can guess whether he/she should trust what’s being said or not.

**Disadvantage**   
In face-to-face discussion, user is unable to deeply think about what he is delivering.

### Written Communication

In written communication, written signs or symbols are used to communicate. A written message may be printed or hand written. In written communication message can be transmitted via email, letter, report, memo etc. Message, in written communication, is influenced by the vocabulary & grammar used, writing style, precision and clarity of the language used.

**Written Communication is most common form of communication being used in business.** So, it is considered core among business skills.

Memos, reports, bulletins, job descriptions, employee manuals, and electronic mail are the types of written communication used for internal communication. For communicating with external environment in writing, electronic mail, Internet Web sites, letters, proposals, telegrams, faxes, postcards, contracts, advertisements, brochures, and news releases are used.

**Advantages**

Messages can be edited and revised many time before it is actually sent.  
Written communication provides record for every message sent and can be saved for later study.  
A written message enables receiver to fully understand it and send appropriate feedback.

**Disadvantages**   
unlike oral communication, written communication doesn’t bring instant feedback.  
It takes more time in composing a written message as compared to word-of-mouth and number of people struggles for writing ability.

## Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication is the sending or receiving of wordless messages. We can say that communication other than oral and written, such as **gesture**, **body language**,**posture**, **tone of voice** or **facial expressions**, is called nonverbal communication.**Nonverbal communication is all about the body language of speaker.**

Nonverbal communication helps receiver in interpreting the message received. Often, nonverbal signals reflect the situation more accurately than verbal messages. **Sometimes nonverbal response contradicts verbal communication** and hence affect the effectiveness of message.

Nonverbal communications have the following three elements:

**Appearance**  
Speaker: clothing, hairstyle, neatness

Surrounding: room size, lighting, decorations, furnishings

Body **Language**  
facial expressions, gestures, postures

**Sounds**  
Voice Tone, Volume, Speech rate

**Types of Communication Based on Purpose and Style**

Based on style and purpose, there are two main categories of communication and they both bears their own characteristics. Communication types based on style and purpose are:

1. Formal Communication
2. Informal Communication

## Formal Communication

## In formal communication, certain rules, conventions and principles are followed while communicating message. **Formal communication occurs in formal and official style**. Usually professional settings, corporate meetings, conferences undergoes in formal pattern.

**In formal communication, use of slang and foul language is avoided and correct pronunciation is required**. Authority lines are needed to be followed in formal communication.

## Informal Communication

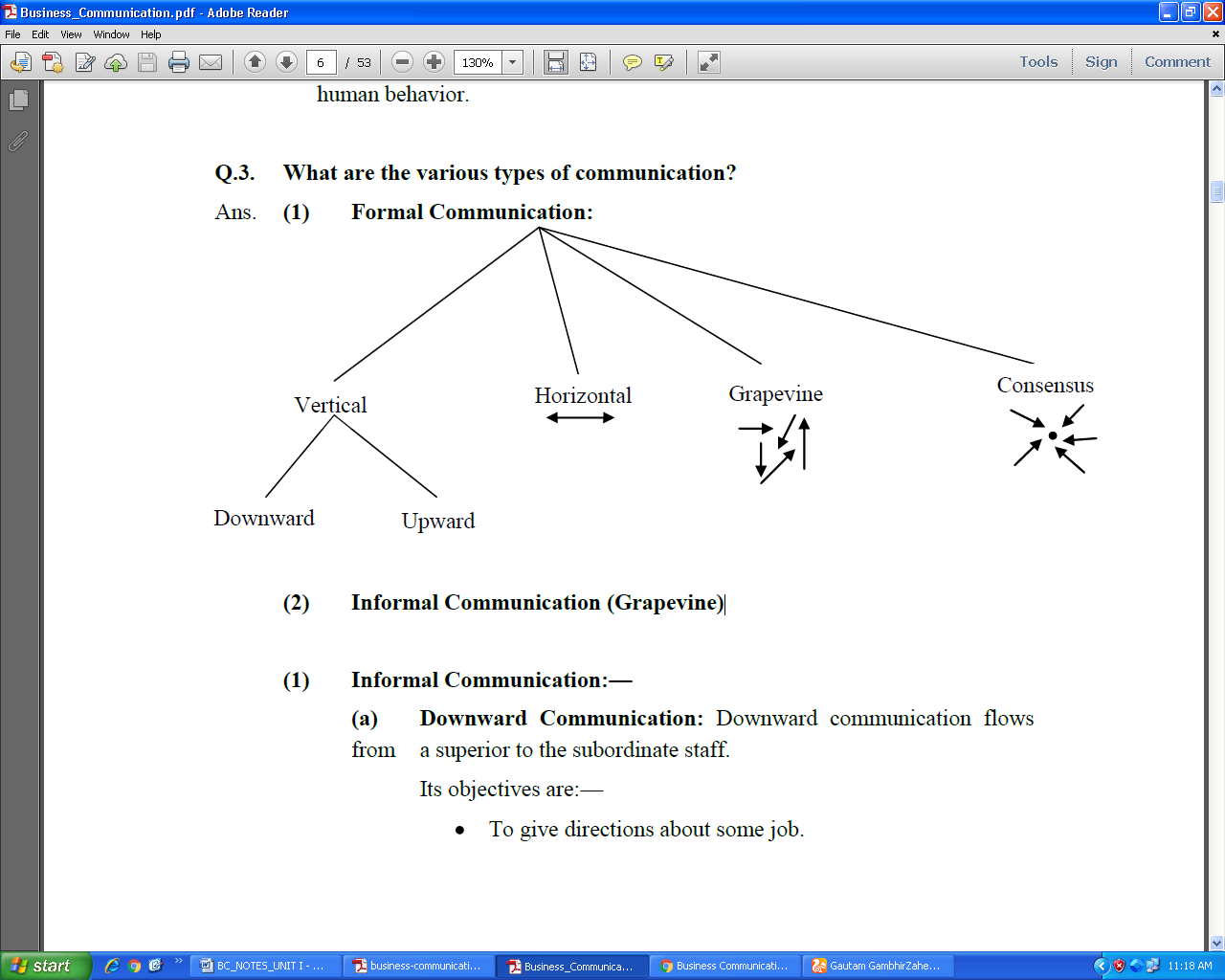
Informal communication is done using channels that are in contrast with formal communication channels. It’s just a casual talk. It is established for societal affiliations of members in an organization and face-to-face discussions. It happens among friends and family. **In informal communication use of slang words, foul language is not restricted**. Usually, Informal communication is done orally and using gestures.

**Informal communication, unlike formal communication, doesn’t follow authority lines**. In an organization, it helps in finding out staff grievances as people express more when talking informally. **Informal communication helps in building relationships.**

## Types of Business Communication

**1) Formal Communication**

**2) Informal Communication (Grapevine)**

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**(1) Informal Communication:—**

**(a) Downward Communication:** Downward communication flows from a superior to the subordinate staff.

Its objectives are:—

1. To give directions about some job.
2. To explain policies and procedures.
3. To convey assessment of performance.
4. To explain the rationale of the job.

Its limitations are:—

1. Under communication or over communication.
2. Delay.
3. Loss of information.
4. Distortion.
5. Resentment by subordinate staff.

To make it effective:—

1. Managers should be adequately informed.
2. Managers should be clear how much to communicate.
3. Information should be passed on to the correct person.

**(b) Upward Communication:** Upward communication moves from the subordinate staff to the superiors.

Its importance is:—

1. Provides feedback to the superiors.
2. Releases the pent up emotions of the subordinate staff.
3. Provides the superiors with useful suggestions.
4. Promote harmony.

Its limitations are:—

1. Employees are reluctant to express themselves.
2. Employees fear that their criticism may be interpreted as a sign of their personal weakness.
3. Great possibility of distortion.
4. Bypassed superiors feel insulted.
5. Resentment by subordinate staff.

To make it effective:—

1. Superiors should take initiative to get close to the subordinate staff.
2. Keep the lie of communication short.

**(c) Horizontal Communication:—** It flows between people at the same level.

1. It is important for promoting understanding and coordination among various people or departments.
2. It is carried on through face to face discussion, telephonic talk, periodical meetings & memos.

**(d) Consensus: —** Consensus is the process of arriving at agreement through consultation.

**(2) Informal Communication:—**

Grapevine:—

1. It is an informal channel of communication.
2. Primarily a channel of communication of horizontal communication, it can flow even vertically and diagonally.

It is of 4 types:—

1. *Single strand:* Flows like a chain.
2. *Gossip:* One person tells everyone else.
3. *Probability:* Information may move from anybody to anybody.
4. *Cluster:* Moves through selected group.

Importance:—

1. Emotional relief.
2. Harmony and cohesiveness in the organization.
3. Fast channel.
4. Provides feedback.

Demerits:—

1. Distortion of information.
2. May transmit incomplete information.
3. Travels with destructive swiftness.
4. Keep an eye on rumor-managers.
5. Use it primarily for feedback.
6. Contradict rumors promptly.
7. **Listening process–Elements of good listening– improving listening competence.**

* Listening: the process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and/or nonverbal messages; to hear something with thoughtful attention.
* Effective communication is 2-way depends on speaking and listening
* ***Listening* V/S Hearing**
* Hearing- physical process; natural; passive
* Listening- physical & mental process; active; learned process; a skill
* Listening is hard!
* You must choose to participate in the process of listening.

**Listening**

* the psychological process of receiving, attending to, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken or nonverbal messages
* Hearing = physiological
* Listening = psychological

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1. **Receiving**

It refers to the response caused by sound waves stimulating the sensory receptors of the ear; it is physical response.

1. **Understanding**

It is the stage at which you learn what the speaker means-the thoughts and emotional tone.

1. **Remembering**

It is important listening process because it means that an individual has not only received and interpreted a message but has also added it to the mind's storage bank.

But just as our attention is selective, so too is our memory- what is remembered may be quite different from what was originally seen or heard.

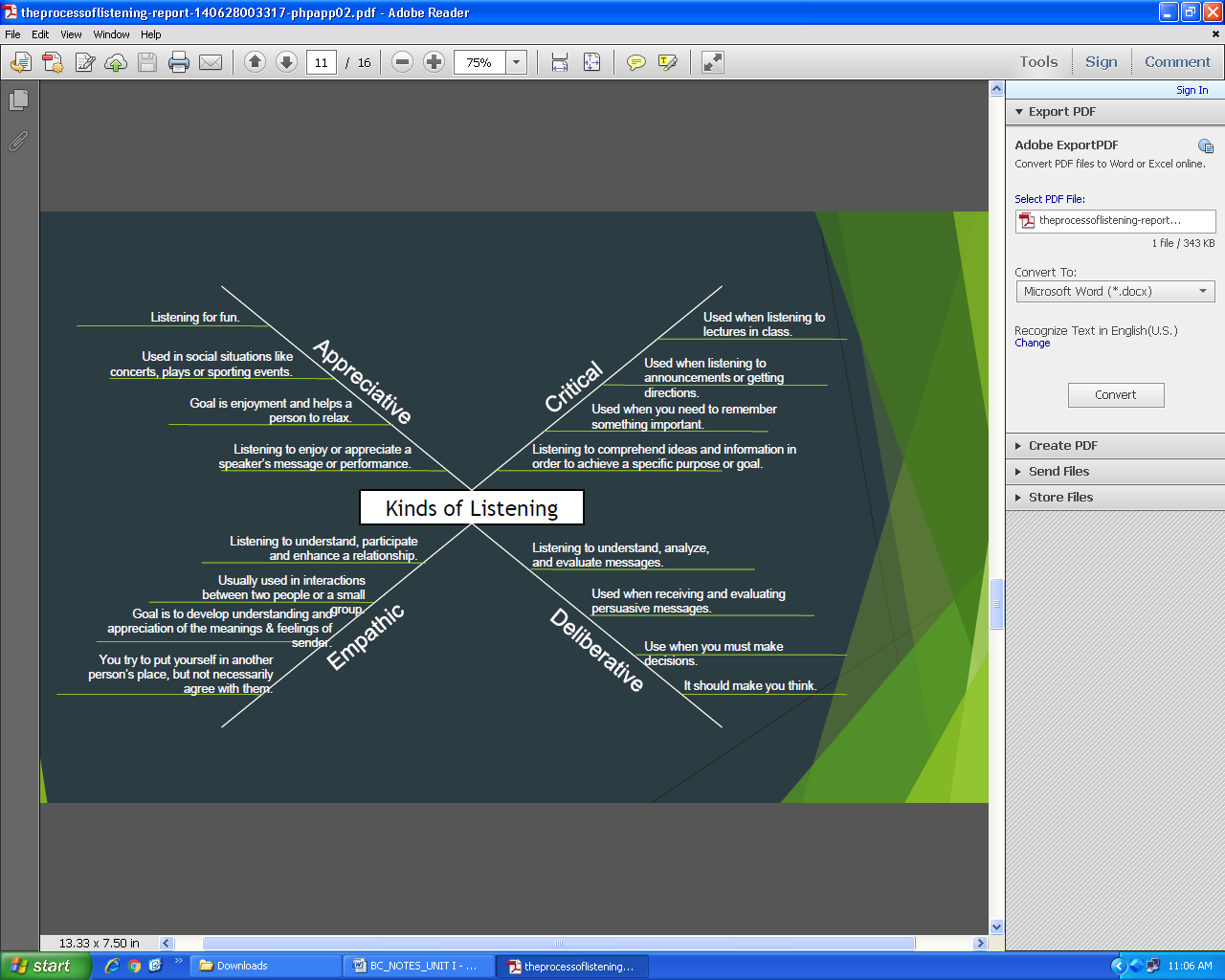
1. **Evaluating**

It consists of judging the messages in some way. At times, you may try to evaluate the speaker’s underlying intentions or motives.

Often this evaluation process goes on without much conscious awareness.

1. **Responding**

This stage requires that the receiver complete the process through verbal and/or nonverbal feedback; because the speaker has no other way to determine if a message has been received.



***Elements of Effective Listening***

1. Empathy – The ability to see the world as the other person sees it, to understand what it feels like to be that person, and to communicate that understanding convincingly to the other person.
2. Acceptance – A good listener is able to hear what someone is saying and accept the other person’s perspective without judging. Accepting their feelings does not mean you agree or feel the same way; it respects that that is how they feel.
3. Understanding – A good listener seeks to understand, rather than to change, persuade, or convince.

***Listening Competence at Each Stage of the Listening Process***

We can develop competence within each stage of the listening process, as the following list indicates (Ridge, 1993):

1. To improve listening at the receiving stage,
   * prepare yourself to listen,
   * discern between intentional messages and noise,
   * concentrate on stimuli most relevant to your listening purpose(s) or goal(s),
   * be mindful of the selection and attention process as much as possible,
   * pay attention to turn-taking signals so you can follow the conversational flow, and
   * Avoid interrupting someone while they are speaking in order to maintain your ability to receive stimuli and listen.
2. To improve listening at the interpreting stage,
   * identify main points and supporting points;
   * use contextual clues from the person or environment to discern additional meaning;
   * be aware of how a relational, cultural, or situational context can influence meaning;
   * be aware of the different meanings of silence; and
   * note differences in tone of voice and other paralinguistic cues that influence meaning.
3. To improve listening at the recalling stage,
   * use multiple sensory channels to decode messages and make more complete memories;
   * repeat, rephrase, and reorganize information to fit your cognitive preferences; and
   * Use mnemonic devices as a gimmick to help with recall.
4. To improve listening at the evaluating stage,
   * separate facts, inferences, and judgments;
   * be familiar with and able to identify persuasive strategies and fallacies of reasoning;
   * assess the credibility of the speaker and the message; and
   * Be aware of your own biases and how your perceptual filters can create barriers to effective listening.
5. To improve listening at the responding stage,
   * ask appropriate clarifying and follow-up questions and paraphrase information to check understanding,
   * give feedback that is relevant to the speaker’s purpose/motivation for speaking,
   * adapt your response to the speaker and the context, and
   * Do not let the preparation and rehearsal of your response diminish earlier stages of listening.
6. **Importance of feedback**
7. **Feedback is always there.** If you ask someone in your organization when feedback occurs, they will typically mention an employee survey, performance appraisal, or training evaluation. In actuality, feedback is around us all the time. Every time we speak to a person, employee, customer, vendor, etc., we communicate feedback. In actuality, it’s impossible not to give feedback.
8. **Feedback is effective listening.** Whether the feedback is done verbally or via a feedback [**survey**](https://www.snapsurveys.com/), the person providing the feedback needs to know they have been understood (or received) and they need to know that their feedback provides some value. When conducting a survey, always explain why respondents’ feedback is important and how their feedback will be used.
9. **Feedback can motivate.** By asking for feedback, it can actually motivate employees to perform better. Employees like to feel valued and appreciate being asked to provide feedback that can help formulate business decisions. And feedback from client, suppliers, vendors, and stakeholders can be used to motivate to build better working relations
10. **Feedback can improve performance.** Feedback is often mistaken for criticism. In fact, what is viewed as negative criticism is actually constructive criticism and is the best find of feedback that can help to formulate better decisions to improve and increase performance.
11. **Feedback is a tool for continued learning.** Invest time in asking and learning about how others experience working with your organization. Continued feedback is important across the entire organization in order to remain aligned to goals, create strategies, develop products and services improvements, improve relationships, and much more. Continued learning is the key to improving.

**Principles of feedback**

Whether you are giving formal or informal feedback, there are a number of basic principles to keep in mind.

1. Give feedback only when asked to do so or when your offer is accepted.
2. Give feedback as soon after the event as possible.
3. Focus on the positive.
4. Feedback needs to be given privately wherever possible, especially more negative feedback.
5. Feedback needs to be part of the overall communication process and ‘developmental dialogue’. Use skills such as rapport or mirroring, developing respect and trust with the learner.
6. Stay in the ‘here and now’, don’t bring up old concerns or previous mistakes, unless this is to highlight a pattern of behaviours.
7. Focus on behaviours that can be changed, not personality traits.
8. Talk about and describe specific behaviours, giving examples where possible and do not evaluate or assume motives.
9. Use ‘I’ and give your experience of the behaviour  (‘When you said…, I thought that you were…’).
10. When giving negative feedback, suggest alternative behaviours.
11. Feedback is for the recipient, not the giver – be sensitive to the impact of your message.
12. Consider the content of the message, the process of giving feedback and the congruence between your verbal and non-verbal messages.
13. Encourage reflection. This will involve  posing open questions such as:

(a) Did it go as planned? If not why not?

(b) If you were doing it again what would you do the same next time and what would you do differently? Why?

(c) How did you feel during the session? How would you feel about doing it again?

(d) How do you think the patient felt? What makes you think that?

(e) What did you learn from this session?

1. Be clear about what you are giving feedback on and link this to the learner’s overall professional development and/or intended programme outcomes.
2. Do not overload – identify two or three key messages that you summarise at the end.

* Emphasizing that responding to the senders’ communication is vital and that feedback is fundamental to effective communication, Parsloe (1995) suggests that: ‘Communication is a two-way process that leads to appropriate action… in the context of developing competence, it is not an exaggeration to describe feedback as “the fuel that drives improved performance”.’