

Introduction to Business Communication

Business Communication

- Business communication is the process of sharing information between people within the workplace and outside a company. Effective business communication is how employees and management interact to reach organizational goals. Its purpose is to improve organizational practices and reduce errors. It's important to work on both your communication skills and communication processes to achieve effective business communication.

Nature of Communication

- The nature of communication is exchanging ideas, feelings, information, data, or values between two or more individuals in a one-way or two-way system. For a communication process to take place, there should be a sender and receiver (excepting intrapersonal communication in which individuals talk to themselves).
- **Definition:** The nature of communication is defined as the process used to send and receive messages, ideas, or information for a business, organizational or personal reason. Effective communication refers to the continuous process of telling, listening, and understanding.
- A message or information with an organizational or business purpose is planned by the sender to share and promote the interests of the organization. For communication to take place, the exchange of information from one person to another has to take place.

Contd.

- Based on the definition and the process of communication, we can identify the nature of communication as follows:
 - Exchange of information
 - Continuous process
 - Mutual understanding
 - Interpretive
 - Symbolic
 - Response or feedback
 - Social activity

Historical Perspectives on Business Communication

- Ancient Period:
 - History of business communication can be traced back to the period when humans started commercial activities.
 - Records of business transaction were found as early as 3200 BC during Egyptian period.
 - Even in Nepal, business transactions flourished during Lichhavi period with Tibet and records of business transactions and legal documents of business transactions were found.

Contd.

- Industrial Revolution and After:
 - A radical innovation and development in business communication took place during and after the Industrial Revolution in Europe with the boom of industries of mass production which led to the need for more effective and efficient communication system.
 - Nepal also saw a huge development in industries after the introduction of democracy which in return required an efficient form of business communication.

Contd.

- Modern Period:
 - By the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, new models of management were developed and practiced which focused more on social relations, empowering employees and relation between management and workers.
- Contemporary Period:
 - In our own time, globalization and innovation in communication technologies have brought significant changes in business communication practices. It has brought forth the need of teamwork and collaboration in a workplace, as well as the necessity of intercultural communication in the field of business.

Purpose of Business Communication

- **Communicate to Establish Credibility:**

- Credibility means the quality of being believable or trustworthy. Unless the audience finds the communicator believable, communication fails to achieve the goal. Besides the character, the following factors help in establishing credibility.

- ❖ Expertise and competence
- ❖ Professional image
- ❖ Control of emotions
- ❖ Personal ethics and integrity

- **Communicate to Persuade:**

- To persuade is to convince someone to accept our ideas, views, and positions. Business proposals (advertisements) are examples of persuasive communication as they try to convince the investors and the management of the profitability of a proposed business idea. However, persuading an educated person is one of the hardest things to do. Four factors that help us to persuade people according to Jay Conger, Professor of Organizational Behavior at University of Southern California:

- ❖ Establishing credibility
- ❖ Providing a frame for common ground
- ❖ Providing reasons and evidence
- ❖ Connecting emotionally

- **Communicate to Inform:**

- It is about transmitting necessary information to the audience using appropriate channels or medium. Communicating to inform seems like an easiest thing to do but giving information has to follow some conditions:
 - ❖ Information is genuine and true
 - ❖ The audience needs the information
 - ❖ The audience expects the information
 - ❖ Something will change as the result of information.

- **Communicate to Build Goodwill:**

- Goodwill is the reputation of the company in the community, building which is a long term purpose. Goodwill in business communication is the ability to create and maintain positive relationships with others which is build on trust. Integrity, loyalty, openness, consistency, and competence are the five elements of building trust.

- Business communication takes place for the following purposes:
- This communication is held for commanding orders to the employees. Its nature may be directive or non directive. At this level the individual commands his workers to accomplish any particular task.
- It is held to build the relationship between business organizations and its services.
- It is helpful for employees in understanding the rules and policies of the organization. Moreover it helps to transfer the knowledge between higher and lower levels. To spread information in the organization is the main purpose of business communication.
- It helps in evaluation of activities held in the organization. So it helps to assess the outputs of individuals or a team of workers in any organization.
- It is the best source for providing direction. Individuals at higher levels direct the individuals on the lower level in this way help them to accomplish their tasks.
- It helps in effective decision making. Individuals can make decisions easily if they are provided with the right and proficient information.
- Guidance is to be given to the workers about their safety and security during their job.

Functions of Business Communication

- Business is communication. Each and every activity of business involves communication. It helps to perform internal and external activities of business. It acts as a life line for a business. It is nothing new but deals with business activities. Various experts have given various opinion regarding the function of business communication, some of the notable function are highlighted below:
 - **Information function**
 - **Command and instruction function**
 - **Motivational function**
 - **Integration and co-ordination function**
 - **Understanding and insight function**
 - **Relation function**
 - **Solving function**
 - **Decision making function**
 - **Implementation function**
 - **Image building function**

Importance of Business Communication

- As we all know that communication is the means of planning, controlling, and operating a business.
- Strong communication skills help students perform better in other core management courses.
- Along with communication skills, interpersonal skills are highly desired qualities in job candidates.
- The ability of speaking and writing effectively will in fact determine ones performance in other core business courses as well.

- The given factors highlight the importance of excellent communication skills in today's business world:
- **Changes in the workplace:** Workplaces has now become a collaboration of various ethnic, age, culture and regions which demands an effective communication skills for the success of a project.
- **Changes in the management styles:** According to the needs of modern times, organizations have become more participatory which has emphasized on the participatory management style that requires multidirectional communication among the employees.
- **Innovative communication technology:** With the boom of the communication technologies it is mandatory for all organizations to update themselves for the competitive market. With the change in business environment, it is extremely important to have communication skills to work successfully in different environment with different people.
- **Emphasis on information and Knowledge:** Without good quality of communication one cannot think of working and thriving in business world as it needs to gather, organize and transfer data and information in timely and efficient ways.

Components of Business Communication

- The Fundamental components of Business Communication:

- Environment
- Source or sender
- Message
- Channel
- Receiver or Audience
- Feedback
- Noise
- Context

Types of Business Communication

- Among the various types, the following are the major ones:
 - Intrapersonal Communication
 - Interpersonal Communication
 - Intra-organizational Communication
 - Inter-organizational Communication
 - Intercultural Communication