

Types of communication

There are various types of communication which are described below:

Written communication: In an agricultural extension system, this type of communication can take different forms such as memorandum, reports, letter, bulletins, notes, newsletters, newspapers and farm magazines, handbills and computers through surfing the net.

Verbal communication: Verbal communication is all about the use of spoken words through a face-to-face situation, telephone calls, visits, town orators or through electronic media. These are **the most common forms of communication in an agricultural extension system.**

Combination of written and verbal communication: This involves both the verbal and written communication.

Focused Interactions: This primarily results from an actual encounter between two persons. This implies that the two persons involved are completely aware of the communication happening between them.

Unfocused interactions: This occurs when one simply observes or listens to persons with whom one is not conversing. This usually occurs at stations and bus stops, as well as on the street, at restaurants, etc.

Expressive skills (Non - verbal) are required to convey message to others through words, facial expressions and body language.

Listening skills are skills that are used to obtain messages or information from others. These help to clearly understand what a person feels and thinks about you or understand the other person closely.

Skills for managing the overall process of communication help to recognize the required information and develop a strong hold on the existing rules of communication and interaction

Intrapersonal communication refers to communication with an individual through his/her senses, which enables him/her to take decisions. It is more or less an electrochemical action of the body taking place within ourselves and it is sometimes referred to as soliloquizing. In fact, intrapersonal communication is the basis of all other forms of human communication. Without an effective system of intrapersonal communication, an organism will not be able to function properly in its environment or to be open to external forms of communication. Eg. Individual is watching, say, football match on T.V. or film, his eyes and ears receive information and communicate it to his brain. If what he sees and hears is interesting to him, his intrapersonal communication system will indicate that and he will continue watching that football match. If he finds it uninteresting, his brain will send a message to his muscles that will result to taking a decision either to put off the TV or to leave his room and go to the market.

Interpersonal Communication is a two-way, two-some or dyadic communication. It is a face-to-face encounter or transactional exchange of information. This type of communication is the basic means of effecting behavioural change. It incorporates psychological processes (perception, learning and motivation) as well as language. Of relevance to interpersonal communication is listening sensitivity and non-verbal communication. As people interact in interpersonal context, they exchange ideas, attitudes emotions and opinions. Interpersonal communication is an interaction of a conversational nature.

Mass Communication means sending messages through a mass medium to a large number of people. For mass communication to exist, we need an intermediate transmitter of information called a mass medium. A lot of mass media are used in mass communication such as newspapers, magazines, film, radio, television, internet, books or combination of these. Mass communication messages are directed at a group of people via mass medium. Books were the first mass media, followed by newspapers, magazines, film, radio, television and now the advent of the World Wide Web (www).

Barriers of Communication

Barriers of communication are as follows:

a. Relating to communicator

1. In-effective environment
2. Unorganized efforts to communicate
3. Standard of correctness
4. Standard of social responsibility
5. Cultural values and social organisations
6. Incorrect concept of communication process

b. Relating to the transmission of message

1. Incorrect handling of the channels
2. Wrong selection of channels
3. Physical distraction
4. Use of inadequate channels in Parallel

c. Relating to receiver

1. Attention of the listeners
2. Problems of cooperation, participation and involvement
3. Problem of homogeneity
4. Attitude of the audience towards the communicator

According to Bovée and Thill (2000), communication barriers are usually due to a number of factors: (1) differences in perception and language, (2) Poor listening, (3) Emotional interference, (4) Cultural differences, (5) Physical distraction.

Differences in perception and language

Simply put, all of us have different mental images of the world or reality. Even if we experience the same thing, we may still think of it in different ways. We remember details of an experience based on what we think are worth remembering. So a speaker and a listener may not be able to understand what one is talking about because both have different things in mind. Language, too, is arbitrary. The words that we use may mean differently to different people

Poor listening

Having ears of our own does not necessarily mean we are good listeners. Listening is a skill that needs harnessing. Sometimes, it is a matter of attitude; we are not just interested in what people say because we may be more concerned with the way everyone looks. *Focus* on the message and the *sincerity* to understand what another person is saying are crucial elements in good listening.

Emotional interference

One's state of mind and psych has direct effect on how he/she communicate effectively and also one's ability to decode or understands and relate to a message being communicated. Emotional and sentimental state of mind such as happiness, madness, excitement, agitation, nervousness, or fearfulness constitutes critical barriers to engaging in effective communication. Emotions affect the shape of communication. It is hard to be able to analyse issues objectively when you are very emotional. You may not be able to think more realistically and truthfully about the content of the message being sent or received.

Cultural differences

Nationality, age, education, social status, economic position, and religion are just some of the sources of cultural differences. If you share very little life experience with your co-communicator, successful communication may be difficult to achieve. The same difficulty may be experienced in the workplace:

even the sight of your boss might create a certain distance that will make communication an agonizing experience. Much worse is when you do not know how to deal with the boss; this is because different cultures deal with power relations differently.

Physical distraction

Of course, everything around may be cause for some distraction: noise coming from vehicles, faulty phone connection, unclear photocopy, loud music, poor lighting, and health problems, among others.. They may result in loss of concentration and failure to understand what is being communicated by the other party. Physical distractions are the physical things that get in the way of communication. These physical distractions are common on farms. If the phone rings, the tendency is to answer it even if the caller is interrupting a very important or even delicate conversation.

Two people talking facing each other without a desk or truck-door between them have a much more open and personal sense of communication. Uncomfortable meeting places may include a place on the farm that is too hot or too cold. Another example is a meeting room with uncomfortable chairs that soon cause people to want to stand even if it means cutting short the discussion. Noise is a physical distraction simply because it is hard to concentrate on a conversation if hearing is difficult.