

A **Advantages or Benefits**

The advantages of oral or verbal communication may be stated as follows :

1. **Facilities of close contact** : It is very helpful to facilitate close contact between the sender and the receiver.
2. **Speedy transmission** : As it takes the form of speech and listening, it can be made quickly and promptly. It ensures quick and prompt transmission.
3. **Easy feedback** : The sender of the message can get the feedback immediately.
4. **Better human relations** : It is useful for maintaining and improving human relations and motivation.
5. **Co-operation and co-ordination** : It helps to bring co-operation and build co-operative team spirit.
6. **Better relationship in the organisation** : It fosters a better superior-subordinate relationship.
7. **Easy understanding** : It facilitates understanding of each other and helps to avoid conflict among the senders and receivers.
8. **Means of motivation** : It acts as a motivating factor in the subordinates.
9. **Confidentiality** : It maintains confidentiality of the subject matter of message as the messages are sent through personal contact.

D **Disadvantages or Limitations**

The disadvantages of oral or verbal communication may be stated as under :

1. **No lasting effect** : It is apt more to be forgotten, misconstrued or ignored. It may be easily distorted, either unwillingly or with the desires of either party.
2. **No documentary proof** : It is inappropriate for the purpose of recording and future reference. Such communication cannot be maintained as a permanent record.
3. **Not suitable for distant communication** : Messages cannot be transmitted to distant places. So it is not suitable for long distance communication.
4. **Possibility of denial** : There may be denial of oral or verbal communication by the sender as well as the receiver.
5. **Not applicable for long-term communication** : Messages with long term significance cannot be communicated verbally.
6. **Problem in following the content** : The subordinates who are not experienced, cannot follow the contents of the message.
7. **Inappropriate for controversial matter** : Any controversial matter cannot be communicated verbally because of difference of opinions in between the sender and the receiver.

2.5.3 Distinction between Oral Communication and Written Communication

Basis of Difference	Oral Communication	Written Communication
1. Definition/Meaning	Oral communication is the process of communication which is sent by the sender through the words of mouth.	Written communication means the communication in written forms.
2. Form	Oral communication takes the form of speech and listening.	Written communication takes the form of letter, notices, circulars, bulletins, telegrams, telex, manuals etc.

requirements of an organisation. The grapevine is an informal person to person communication network of employees that is not officially sanctioned by the organisation. It communicates information of special importance to employees. Grapevine may be of different types such as, single strand, group or gossip chain, probability chain, cluster chain etc.

The grapevine has the following characteristics :

- (i) It is not controlled by Management;
- (ii) It is perceived by most employees as being more believable and reliable than formal communiques issued by top management.
- (iii) It is largely used to serve self-interests of those people within it.
- (iv) It emerges from the social and personal interaction of the employees.
- (v) It occurs in the place of work only.
- (vi) It follows oral communication.
- (vii) It begins and ends anywhere in the organisation.
- (viii) It is a people-oriented process of communication.
- (ix) It considers people's talk about the things that affect their work and the people they know.
- (x) It carries the information that cannot be discussed in formal channels of communication.

28 Formal Communication and Informal Communication

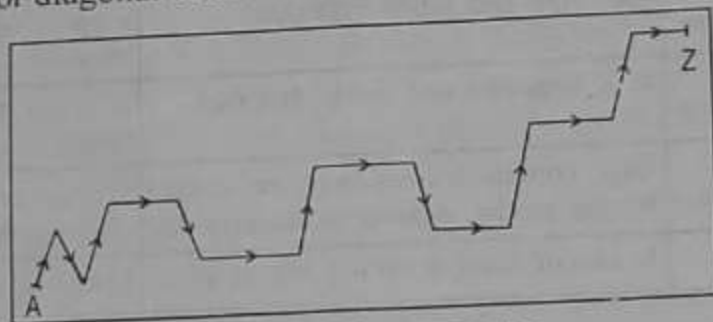
Formal communication is the process of sending messages or information by the superiors to the subordinates in a planned, prescribed and designated manner. On the other hand, informal communication is a casual communication by the employees to satisfy personal needs and relationship in the organisation. These two types of communications differ to some extent in their nature and extent of communication.

Distinction between formal communication and informal communication may :

Basis of Difference	Formal Communication	Informal Communication
1. Definition/Meaning	Formal communication relates to the flow of information in the formal organisational structure.	Informal communication is the process of sending messages by one person to another in some informal way.
2. Form	It follows the chain of command in any structured organisation.	It takes the form of gossip and exchange of passion or management of any organisation.
3. Functions	It involves the transmission of official message or information in a prescribed and designated manner.	It involves the transmission of personal message or information in some informal manner.
4. Basis of Communication	It is based on formal relationship in the structured form of organisation and is normally grown up in structured form.	It is based on informal relationship and is normally grown up in the organisation.
5. Nature	It is explicit and routine type of communication.	It is implicit, spontaneous, flexible, dynamic and varied in nature.
6. Distortion	It refers to the downward, upward and horizontal communications.	It refers to the grapevine type of communication.
7. Types	It is lost or distorted while it passes from one level of management to another.	It is much free and less distorted.
8. Source	It arises to maintain authority-subordinate relationship in the organisation.	It arises out of the natural desire owing to social interactions of the individuals.

Communication across the organisation makes it possible to give and receive information faster than by everyone communicating up and down the formal chains of command. But it is experienced that managers at higher levels are better informed than lower level managers and communications are more effective when they come from an immediate superior, and upward communication is better achieved when subordinates feel close to their supervisors and the supervisor is easily accessible. Hence, crosswise relationship creates barriers to effective communication.

The crosswise or diagonal communication may be shown in the following diagram :



Crosswise Communication

Advantages / Benefits of Crosswise or Diagonal Communication

The advantages or benefits of crosswise or diagonal communication may be stated as follows :

- (i) It helps to create proper co-ordination in the organisation.
- (ii) It enhances the morale of the lower level employees of the organisation.
- (iii) It helps to improve mutual understanding among the superiors and subordinates.

Disadvantages/Limitations of Crosswise or Diagonal Communication

The disadvantages or limitations of crosswise or diagonal communication may be stated as under :

- (i) The problem of encroachment may arise in the process of communication.
- (ii) The suggestions given by the subordinates are given less importance.
- (iii) It may lead to complex network of communication.

26 Informal Communication

Informal communication takes the form of gossip. It goes underground and turn secretive. Informal communication may be internal and external. Internal informal communication is the casual communication among the employees in the form of e-mail, face to face conversations and phone calls which do not follow the chain of command of the organisation. External informal communication is a casual communication with suppliers, customers, investors and other outsiders in the form of face to face conversations, e-mail and phone calls. They become more dysfunctional. Such communication has grapevine characteristics. Informal communication, commonly referred to as grapevine, is used by wise managers to supplement formal communication. The grapevine can be effective, accurate and helpful in managing people.

Objectives of Informal Communication

The objectives of informal communication may be stated as under :

Basis of Difference	Oral Communication	Written Communication
3. Nature of contact	It facilitates close contact between the sender and the receiver.	It cannot create close contact between the sender and the receiver.
4. Width of communication	It can communicate message quickly to a group of persons around the speaker.	It can communicate to a large number of persons at a time to different places.
5. Suitability	It is inappropriate for the purpose of recording and future reference.	It is an appropriate method for the purpose of recording and future reference.
6. Distortion	It is forgotten and easily distorted.	It is not forgotten and not easily distorted.
7. Denial of message	Oral communication may be denied by the sender as well as the receiver.	Written communication cannot be denied by the sender or the receiver.
8. Impression	It cannot leave a lasting impression.	It can leave a lasting impression.

2.5.4 Implied or Silent or Gestural Communication

Implied or silent communication is nothing but gestural communication which arises from nodding of head, twinkling of eyes, movement of hands, facial expression etc. Sometimes a hand shake conveys easily what so many words cannot do.

2.5.5 Non-verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication is the process of communication without words. Here messages are sent through facial expressions, clothes, posture, tone of voice or body movements. Non-verbal cues are used to express superiority, dependence, dislike, respect, love and other feelings.

2.5.6 Crosswise or Diagonal Communication

Crosswise or diagonal communication has the horizontal flow of information with the people of different levels who have no direct reporting relationship. This type of communication is used to speed information flow, to improve understanding and to co-ordinate efforts for the achievement of organisational objectives. Such communication cuts across the functions and levels in the organisation. This type of communication also occurs when individual members of different departments are grouped into task teams or project organisation.

The proper safeguards of crosswise or diagonal communication rest in the understanding between superiors and subordinates, such that—

- (i) Crosswise relationship will be encouraged;
- (ii) Subordinates will refrain from making decision or policy commitments beyond their authority; and
- (iii) Subordinates will keep their superiors informed of any important inter-departmental activities.

Crosswise communication is also known as Diagonal Communication. Diagonal communication refers to contact with persons of higher or lower status in other departments. Crosswise relationships exist between personnel in one division and personnel of equal, lower or superior status in other divisions. Direct communication between them substitutes for making communication effective. A message follows the chain of command upward through one or more superiors, horizontally across a level of organisation and then downward to the particular recipient.

Two-way Communication

Two-way communication is a process where there is direct interaction about the message or information between the sender and the receiver. The sender directly passes information to the receiver and the receiver responds to the information sent by the sender. This is why, there is the least possibility of misunderstanding between the two parties of communication. This method of communication is the combination of upward communication system and downward communication system. Under two-way system of communication, the upper level management or supervisor give instructions to the lower level employees or subordinates and the lower level employees or subordinates can convey messages or information about their grievances. As a result, there is little chance of misunderstanding between the supervisors and the subordinates.

25 Express Communication

Express communication is the process of sending message by one person to another either in the form of written letters, notes, bulletins, telegrams, telexes, manuals etc. or oral / verbal.

2.5.1 Written Communication

Written communication means the communication in written form. The messages are first written by the sender and then sent to the receiver. Written communication takes the form of letters, notes, notices, circulars, bulletins, telegrams, telexes, manuals etc. It is the formal way of

9. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of written communication. [C.U. B.Com. '08] (2.5.1)
10. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of oral or verbal communication. [WBSUB '09] (2.5.2)
11. Distinguish between oral communication and written communication. (2.5.3)
12. Write notes on crosswise or Diagonal communication. (2.5.6)
13. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of Informal communication. (2.6)
14. How grapevine is treated as an integral part of informal communication? (2.7)
15. Distinguish between formal communication and informal communication. (2.8)



communication. If it is well thought-out and carefully drafted, it creates no problem of interpretation and confusion. Written form of communication is indispensable when orders, policy matters, rules and regulations, instructions and directives are required to be transmitted.

Advantages or Benefits

The advantages of written communication may be summarised as under :

1. **No confusion in interpretation** : It creates no problem of interpretation and confusion if it is carefully drafted and a well thought-out message is sent. Besides, the messages sent are less prone to errors.
2. **Permanent or lasting effect** : It is more stable and long lasting. It can be used for future reference.
3. **Wide range of communication** : It can be communicated to a large number of persons at a time to different places.
4. **Evidence of facts or events** : It has the advantages of providing records, references, evidences etc. for any dispute or litigation in future.
5. **Uniformity in sending messages** : It helps to promote uniformity in policy matters and procedures.
6. **Reduction in cost** : It can reduce cost in some cases.
7. **Preservation of information** : It can be preserved and kept in the office file.
8. **Easy to understand** : The receiver has enough time to interpret and scrutinize the communication before responding or taking action.

Disadvantages or Limitations

There is scope of misunderstanding in written communication. The disadvantages of written communication may be summarised as under :

1. **Loss of credibility** : If it is frequently changed and modified, it may lose credibility and acceptance. It is not often properly read or understood.
2. **Rigid in nature** : It is slower and more rigid and does not allow exchanges.
3. **Problem of interpretation** : Unless it is well thought-out and carefully drafted, it may pose problems of interpretation and may even cause irritation or confusion. Sometimes it is interpreted differently by different persons.
4. **Time consuming process** : The sender of the message cannot know or determine the reaction or response of the receiver immediately, i.e., it is a time consuming process of communication. Immediate feedback of the message is not possible.
5. **Lack of confidentiality** : The written message loses its confidentiality.
6. **Non-flexibility** : When message is transmitted through such communication, it cannot be changed or got back immediately.
7. **Difficulty in writing** : There are some messages which cannot be written in proper language.

2.5.2 Oral or Verbal Communication

Oral communication is the process of communication which is sent by the sender through the words of mouth. It takes the form of speech and listening. It consists of words arranged in meaningful patterns. Such communication takes place across the table through discussions, telephones and in meetings and conferences. Oral communication carries a variety of social and work related news and tends to be rather accurate and faster than most formal communication.

- (i) To satisfy personal needs such as need for relationship with others.
- (ii) To counter the effects of boredom or monotony.
- (iii) To make attempt to influence the behaviour of others.
- (iv) To serve as a source of job-related information that is not provided by formal channels.

Advantages

The advantages of Informal Communication may be stated as under :

1. **Transcending of barriers and boundaries** : Informal communications transcend the barriers and boundaries of the formal channels.
2. **Free from distortion** : Informal communication is much free and less distorted. It works to fill the gaps of formal communication.
3. **Speedy and effective process** : It is much faster, better listened to, carry reader conviction and interpersonally more effective.
4. **Spontaneous efforts** : It is implicit, spontaneous, flexible, dynamic and varied in nature.
5. **Closer social relationship** : It arises out of the natural desire owing to social interaction of the individuals. So, it helps to strengthen the social relationship among the employees. It promotes better human relations.
6. **Quick problem-solving and decision-making** : It helps to solve the problems in the organisation quickly and decisions can be taken quickly.
7. **Provision for freedom of expression** : It provides an opportunity for the expression against fear, doubts and grievances.
8. **Satisfaction of urge and needs** : It satisfies the urge of the people to know what is happening in the organisation. It satisfies the social needs of the people also.

Disadvantages

1. **No authenticity** : Informal communication is more prone to be irresponsible, ill-informed, gossiping and mischievous. Sometimes, it takes the form of rumor.
2. **Non-assignment of responsibility** : No responsibility can be assigned to this communication, as it takes the form of speech and listening.
3. **Difficulty in controlling** : It is difficult to control false rumour which may create or give rise to discord and conflict among the employees.
4. **Weakening of harmony and integrity** : Developing group or faction policies among the employees, weakens harmony and integrity of the organisation.
5. **Non-dependability** : As it has no system and order, so a manager cannot depend upon such communication. Sometimes, it gives incomplete information.
6. **Leakage of information** : It leads to leakage of confidential information as it moves from person to person.

27 Grapevine – An Integral Part of Informal Communication

Grapevine is a term used in the civil war to describe the telegraph lines strung loosely from tree to tree and resembling a grapevine. The term grapevine probably arose because it was thought to be a long, winding means of communication from one point to another like a real grapevine. It arises from the social and personal interests of people rather than the formal