

## Chapter 1

# Communication and its Types

### Chapter Outline

- What is Communication?
- Process of Communication
- Types of Communication
- Verbal Communication
- Non-verbal Communication
- Role of Communication Skills in Society

### Key Points

- **Communication:** The act of transferring information from one person, place or group to another is communication.
- **Information:** Information is a broader sense of the word.
- **Two forms of communication:** Verbal and non-verbal are two forms of communication.
- **Verbal communication:** This type of communication involves the use of either the spoken or written word. Generally, people feel they are competent speakers.
- **Non-verbal communication:** This form of communication is often referred to as 'body language' although the two terms are not necessarily interchangeable.
- **Oral communication:** Transfer of information from sender to receiver by means of verbal and visual aid.
- **Written communication:** Transfer of information from sender to receiver by means of written documents, messages, post card, Email, etc.

### WHAT IS COMMUNICATION?

The term, 'communication' has been derived from the Greek word **Communicate**, which means "to share". Community, Communion, etc., are the related nouns which have been derived from the Greek verb. A community implies a group of people living in one place, city or country having similar occupations and common interests. The word; 'communication' is called Holy Communion, in the Christian church which is the celebration of Jesus Christ's Last Supper in which He shared His thoughts, feelings and His divine self with His twelve disciples. In general, communion implies sharing and exchange of deep thoughts, ideas and feelings with fellow human beings. The term; 'communication' is concerned with the ways we make others to know or to understand our opinions, feelings, information, etc. This may be done by our speech, writing or bodily movements. The media, manner and objects of communication are always present in commonplace sentence. The members of a speech community have for communication a system of language commonly owned, perceived and recognized. However, there are several languages which are spoken across cultures and societies. For instance, the emergence of English as the sole language of computer and internet has enabled human mobility a matter of common experience, and the world has been reduced to a village.

## PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is a complex process. It does not end with mere transmission of a message or information or idea by the sender. The understanding of feeling by the receiver strikes the right string in him for the intended result. Effective communication is fundamental to the success in our personal and social life. Communication is the lifeline of an organization be it government or a public firm.

Messages do not necessarily produce the intended result. Thus, the success of communication is measured in terms not only of the effective transmission of the message but also from the achievement of intended result. Moreover, communication does not mean or imply agreement. There is always disagreement in the understanding of a message. Disagreement with goodwill is the soul of civilized norm of communication.

The individuals, who accomplish a task of effective management at different levels and stages, initiate and undertake the right kind of communication at appropriate time. It is the right and just communication that stimulates an institution to implement the organization plans willingly and enthusiastically. The process of communication is affected by the background, experiences, objectives and aspirations.

## TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

There are two types of communication (Fig. 1):

1. Verbal communication
2. Non-verbal communication

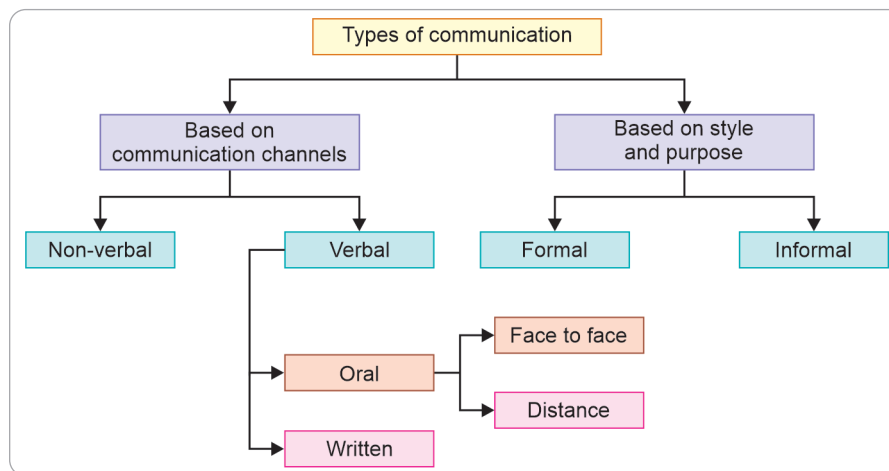


Fig. 1: Types of communication

## Verbal Communication

**Verbal:** Communication involves the use of either the spoken or written word. Generally, people feel they are competent speakers. Nevertheless, problems with communication account for large members of complaints about the health service. Much of this is due to problematic written and verbal communication. Research shows that patients and service users do not receive the message where they perceive health care professionals to be less than interested in them. It is important to speak clearly and concisely and ensure that the receiver understands the message. The use of jargon should be avoided as it has potential to increase patient's anxiety.

## Oral Communication

Man is the only species gifted with language. The language is the commonest and the most important means of communication in all social activities among human beings. Oral communication is necessary

in every sphere of life as in human relationships, business organizations, educational institutes, personal relationships, etc.

Oral communication simply means to convey the ideas, thoughts, views, etc. through verbal expressions. Oral communication skills include the tone, accent, expressions, pronunciation, etc. which are needed for confident and effective communication.



### Tips for Nurses

- Always consider your audience either patient or other health care staff.
- Speak in clear, complete sentences and consider your tone when speaking.

### Types of oral communication

- **Informal oral communication:** In the informal oral communication a speaker is somewhat relaxed, and in this, what is said is not as important as the fact, that it is said at all. It is very vital in establishing relationships. This type of communication is used among the family members, close friends, relatives, and others.
- **Formal oral communication:** In our day-to-day life we meet a lot of people where we have a formal communication. We use formal type of communication in official life or in our business related communication. In our presentations, interviews, meetings, dealing with others, etc. we need formal type of oral communication.

### Importance of oral communication

Oral communication is very important in our day-to-day life as it provides with immediate feedback and clarification. In a number of cases where action is required immediately, it is best to transmit a message orally. Only by a shift of tone, pitch and intensity of voice, various meanings can be conveyed which is not possible in written communication. In oral communication, conversation saves a lot of time, money and energy and on the spot adaptation/withdrawal/acceptance/rejection, etc. can be obtained.

### Elements of oral communication

- **Linguistic communication:** The word communication is derived from the Latin term “Communicare” or “Communico” both of which mean to ‘share’. But communication is not merely a transmission of meaning from one agent to another through sound or symbols. Communication is essentially a social affair. It is a network of interactions and naturally in the process and in the course the sender and the receiver keep on changing their roles. Communication, therefore, is neither momentary event nor an instantaneous one.
- **Communication environment:** Communication environment is the common frame of reference where the entire events of communications occur. At different levels of our consciousness, there is a point of origin where the messages start and for transmitting them to the receiver, the sender becomes the agent. The message exercises an impact on the actual communication and its environment through decoding. The result of the communication by the sender on observing is called the feedback. Furthermore the message sent may not be similar to the message which has been received, as number of factors are responsible for this.
- **Communication process:** Communication, therefore, is a complex concept. It does not end with the mere transmission of a message or an information or ideas, by the sender or the understanding of or feeling of the receiver but with the receiver’s striking the right string for the intended result. Effective communication is fundamental to success in every organization. The process of communication is affected by the background, experiences, objectives any aspirations that both the sender and receiver have in communication in any organization. A message can be communicated through oral channels, face to face conversation, telephone conversations and written channels, like books, articles and letters.

- **Communication in management:** There could even be a meaningful communication occurring without a word being spoken. Communication is vital to the performance of managerial jobs, like interpersonal, informational and that of decision-making ones. In an organization there are many communication channels. These channels can be formal or informal. The manager must consider employer's needs and must communicate to address his needs at all levels.

### Written Communication

In written mode of communication, thoughts, ideas, talks, etc. are passed from one to other person with a mode of written material or format.

Example: Post Card, Messages, Drafts, Written Records, Written Health Records, etc.



### Tips for Nurses

- Always ensure your written communication should be concise and easy to understand.
- Always use approved abbreviations and terminology that is universally accepted.

### Non-verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication is a communication through one's body language and environment referred to all external stimuli other than spoken or written words that include body movement, characteristics of physical appearance, the voice quality and use of space distancing. Body language plays a significant role in communication. We communicate not only through words but also through our whole body. Sometimes our body begins to speak even before we start speaking or the moment, we face an evidence communication is non-verbal. We respond to thousands of non-verbal cues and behaviors including partners, facial expressions, gestures and tone of voice. We can say it is including eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and more—friendliness, acceptance and openness. Everyone uses non-verbal communication all the time whether he/she knows it or not.

**Non-verbal:** Communication, also influences the message. This includes all the actions that accompany speech. Non-verbal communication is often referred to as 'body language', although the two terms are not necessarily interchangeable. It is a very powerful medium for communication. NVC includes physical appearance, gesture, eye contact, facial expression and touch. Physical appearance is important as it creates an immediate impact. For example, on first meeting a nurse, many patients are influenced by whether or not that nurse appears professional. Often, communication occurs through the overall effect of a number of aspects of NVC, for example, a gesture may be only a hand movement, but when combined with limited eye contact it might be interpreted as disinterest or guilt. Touch, whilst an important element of NVC which conveys empathy, support, presence and caring, must be utilized carefully as it can easily be mis constructed.

### Elements of Non-verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication is an essential element in relating to others. Non-verbal communication is often the very first way in which we invite a relationship with another. The elements of body language may broadly be categorized as follows:

- **Personal appearance:** Personal appearance acts as a significant non-verbal clue to what we intend to communicate. The audiences judge us initially from our physical appearance. Our personality creates an impression prior to our speech and it is very difficult to efface it quickly. Characteristics make one person appear pleasing to another. Even though we may say we shouldn't judge the book by its cover, it seems that is exactly what we do.
- **Posture:** Posture refers to the way one stands, sits and walks. The position of hands and legs and other parts of the body reveal not exactly an individual's state of mind—whether he is vibrant, alive, nervous and confident. An efficient speaker stands tall, feet together before a group of people with essential qualities for successful speaking.

- **Facial expression:** Facial expressions are responsible for a huge proportion of non-verbal communication. Consider how much information can be conveyed with a smile or frown. The expressions on a person's face is often the first thing we see, even before we hear him/her.
- **Gesture:** Movements and signals are an important way to communicate meaning without words. Gestures are woven into the fabric of our daily lives. You may wave, point or use your hands when arguing or speaking, often expressing yourself with gestures, without thinking. It is very important to be careful of how you use gestures to avoid misinterpretation.

## ROLE OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN SOCIETY

We all have social circles around us. First comes a small inner circle which consists of people who are especially near and dear that is our family and relatives. In the second circle live close friends with whom we often take our confidence. Third is the circle of acquaintances and colleagues—those with whom we work and our social groups, etc. And lastly come other circles of slight acquaintances.

In actual life, friendships vary from person to person. Communication skill is an art which has to be cultivated. Some people have among other qualities the quality of being a good listener so have more friends than others and have a patient and positive attitude to life. For instance, a positive attitude does not come easily in life. We must not let unpleasant feelings to emerge in us in case of failure in achieving our objects.

We all want to enjoy our life and have a larger circle of friends and acquaintances. We must learn to listen to others, cultivate the art of good conversation, and the art of keep smiling. The moment we meet a person, we form a positive or negative impression of that person. My impression on others may be good, if I am friendly, confident and can converse easily with others. At the same time if my behavior is unfriendly and I fumble with words and ideas, I would certainly give an unfavorable impression on others. People judge a person by what he/she says, how he/she says and whether he/she listens to other persons with interest and attention.

Listening is very important in human relationships. The listener sets in motion: a positive, mutually rewarding process by demonstrating interest in both: the speaker and what the speaker says. If we want the other person to have a positive and supportive attitude toward us we need to have a very positive, optimistic attitude toward life.

### Assess Yourself

1. What is the difference between verbal and non-verbal communication?
2. What is the role of communication in society?

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## Assess Yourself

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