COMMUNICATION IN MANAGEMENT

A THESIS
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DEDICATION

TO

Sri Venkateswara,
Lord of Seven Hills
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A. Chandramohan Reddy
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Communication -- effective communication, to be precise -- at all levels within an enterprise -- management-to-worker, worker-to-management, person-to-person and department-to-department -- constitutes one of the major problems of the modern industrial system. When the operating managers spend more than ninety percent of their working time in motivating, instructing, counseling, and, listening to, the work force within an enterprise, when the inter-dependence of activities of departments and divisions is characteristic of any enterprise, and when managerial process itself has become a co-operative process, witnessed by the growth of committees and similar management groups within an enterprise -- with these developments, the place of effective communication in business naturally acquires the role it has come to occupy.

In the United States, the rage of automation, the growth of economic power of the labor, and incipient movement for shorter working hours -- these and similar developments pose the management problem: how to wring out of the industrial system enough productivity to keep up the growing trend of the nation's gross national product. Surely, basic to this must be the complete
rapport that the management establishes with the productive groups. This, in turn, brings up the task of effective communication in business and industry.

Indeed, despite the growing attention to quantitative methods, communication looms ever larger in the total management planning. American industry today is undergoing a revolution which places an even greater emphasis on people than what the yesterday's industrial revolution placed on machines. It is no wonder that many companies have been developing for themselves their own sound philosophy of communication. To cite an example, Johnson & Johnson Company once brought its top management staff together for a series of meetings to consider the entire company problem. The result was a draft of company statement -- Communication in Business and Industry, which has become the forerunner for others. Communication in the United States Steel is another example of how a major company views the place of communication in its own management process. Likewise, leading organizations like the National Association of Manufacturers, The National Industrial Conference Board and the American Management Association who are concerned with management of American industry have made extensive surveys and research studies in the field of communication. Moreover, leading universities such as Princeton, Michigan and
Pennsylvania State are sponsoring programs for improving management communication. Indeed, from the industries themselves, the management associations, the professional organizations and the universities comes a wide variety of supporting evidence that communication is obviously a very important part of the management's function.

Scope of the Study

As already indicated a large amount of scattered materials on the subject of communication is available. In addition, there are the writings of experts like Carl Rogers, Roethlisberger, Herbert Simon, Chester Barnard, David Berlo and others. To this all, must be added a large number of field researches in the subject. In view of such available materials, and the need to keep this study within limits, the author had to delimit his presentation of his viewpoints in a strict manner.

Accordingly, this study is concerned with a few basic questions on the subject, and broad answers thereto. Firstly, what exactly is effective communication in business? What are its various facets? What role does it play within an enterprise, and why? These inter-related questions constitute one focal point of the study. Secondly, why has communication come to occupy the place of importance that it does in our times? What have been the stages leading up to the present status that effective communication in business occupies today? Where do prob-
lems come up in the communication process, and why? These questions constitute another focal point of this study.

Making use of published materials of different kinds, and drawing upon the leading writers on the subject, the author has tried to present his thoughts in two major chapters -- the two sets of questions providing the nature and scope of each. It should be specifically mentioned here that the author has not been able to refer to all the leading writers at relevant points. The omission is largely due to the need to conserve space, and prevent the study from becoming unduly lengthy.

As already indicated, the author is firmly of the view that the task of achieving effective communication in business in the specifics of a business enterprise/or work situations is very much a matter of pedestrian effort on the part of those responsible for it. Accordingly, in the fourth chapter, the author undertakes two brief case studies to demonstrate, in a pedestrian manner, how one encounters the breakdown in communication in practical situations. The two case studies are intended to help the development of managerial insight into the problem of effective communication, and also show the application of theory to pragmatic situations. Since the managers are the focal point of the communication system within an enterprise, a few suggestions for managers are made at the end.
CHAPTER II

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION: NATURE, SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE

Introduction

There is no dearth of materials on the subject of communication in business and industry. Nor are the business leaders lacking enthusiasm in recognising its significance. Despite all these, "there seems to be no organized body of knowledge out of which one can derive, for any given organization, an optimum communication system."¹ More than that, it is not difficult to show that from the specifics of a given enterprise one may derive not a single communication pattern but a whole set of them, all logically adequate for the successful performance of management task in question. In other words, in a given situation, many types of communication process may achieve the managerial objective of effectiveness. Which pattern from this set should, then, be chosen? Making experimental surveys of organizational communication, Alex Bavelas and Dermot Barrett conclude: "The choice, in practice, is usually made either in terms of a group of assumptions (often

quite untenable) about human nature, or in terms of personal bias on the part of the chooser." To the student of management, the whole field of communication in business and industry would appear to be extremely indeterminate, if not vague.

Equally disturbing is the point made by P. H. Cook:

There is yet no firmly-established theory of communication which can provide guiding principles guaranteeing that effective communications will be achieved. As a result, much communication practice is dependent on unconfirmed hypotheses, personal hunches and techniques and tricks of doubtful merit."

Yet, communication is so vital to a business enterprise. More than a decade back, Alvin Dodd, then President of the American Management Association observed, that No. 1 management problem today is communication. At the same time, a business enterprise is essentially a human organization, and as such must function through the co-operative and coordinated efforts of the members in it. This calls for communication. The measure of the significance of communication in a business enterprise is not difficult to make. The International Council of Industrial Editors few years ago estimated that managements spent over $112 million a year in publications designed to influence the thinking

\[\text{\textsuperscript{2}}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 311.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{3}}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 284.}\]
of employees, stockholders and customers. John Kusik, Vice President of Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, once estimated that his company handled at least one billion written messages a year and many times that number of oral communications; and, two-thirds of the payroll was spent on sending, transmitting and receiving messages.

Yet again, apart from any lack of established theory, the whole field of communication bristles with difficulties. No wonder that such experts as Peter Drucker and the editors of Fortune once cried out rather in disgust that all this communication was "not worth a damn", while W. H. Whyte warned us that "the great enemy of communication is the illusion of it."

In view of the foregoing, a few basic questions on communication in business and industry may immediately be raised: What is communication? What is the nature and scope? What are the elements in a communication process? What are the many dimensions of communication that prevail in an enterprise? In what follows, attempt will be made to formulate answers to these questions.

Communication: Definition and Nature

"Communication" is derived from the Latin *communicare*, "to make common, to share, to transmit." Based on the root meaning, American Management Association defines communication "as any behavior that results in an exchange

of meaning. Heckman and Huneryager consider it as the process of transmitting and receiving information. Richard Anderson defines it as "the transmission and receipt (including comprehension) of thought, instructions or information." While one may accept the definitions as far as they go, they must be considered too guarded, abstract and tense.

More clarifying is the definition offered by the Special Committee of the National Society for the Study of Communication:

Communication is a mutual exchange of facts, thoughts, opinions or emotions. This requires presentation and reception, resulting in common understanding among all parties. This does not necessarily imply agreement.\(^5\)

Emphasising that it is more the spirit and substance than form or technique that constitute communication in the real world, this is what Charles E. Redfield has to say:

\[\text{(Communication is) the broadfield of human interexchange of facts and opinions and not the technologies of telephone, telegraphs, radio and the like.}^6\]

Placing more positive emphasis is the view-point

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of Louis Allen:

Communication is the sum of all the things one person does when he wants to create understanding in the mind of another. It is a bridge of meaning. It involves a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening and understanding. 7

Illustrative of how communication may be very much intangible, is the following that a company has for its motto:

A wise old owl sat on an oak,  
The more he saw the less he spoke;  
The less he spoke the more he heard;  
Why are we not like that wise old bird?

Considering all these various facets of communication in business, and when it may be effective, Ordway Tead defines it thus:

Communication is a composite (a) of information given and received, (b) of a learning experience in which certain attitudes, knowledge and skills change, carrying with it alteration of behavior, (c) of a listening effort by all involved, (d) of a sensitive interaction of points of view leading to a higher level of shared understanding and common intention. 8

While Tead touches on the purposiveness of communication when he speaks of "shared understanding" and "common intention", Herbert A. Simon is more explicit on this ingredient of communication. According to him:


Communication may be formally defined as any process whereby decisional premises are transmitted from one member of an organization to another ...  

... communication, after all, is not to get something off the mind of the person transmitting it, but to get something into the mind and actions of the person receiving it ...

... communication must reason, plead and persuade, as well as order, if it is to be effective.  

In other words, regardless of its form or technique, communication must be viewed in the perspective of the over-all goals of the organization as a whole and/or the objectives of the various decisional centers that it consist of.

While social communication may be viewed as a process of interacting and interpretative exchange of information, ideas, attitudes and beliefs (without the consensus and action being an integral part of it), the same cannot be obviously said of communication in business. On the contrary, if the enterprise is to subserve its objectives, the process of communication must not only help create the human climate in which individuals make the most of their capabilities but also, at the same time, bend them to motivations and actions to achieve the interests of the enterprise. For, in the final

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10Ibid., p. 164.
analysis, communication relates to the human climate of the enterprise and it is this climate that makes for its success. It is this kind of consideration that led Mary Parker Follet to emphasise on the psychology of consent and participation in *Dynamic Administration*.

To sum up the analysis of the nature of communication in business and industry: it is hard to adequately define it -- partly because it relates to the intangible human climate of the enterprise; subject to this, communication in business may be defined as the totality of the continuing flow of informations, orders, beliefs, attitudes among the human factors throughout the length and breadth of an enterprise -- at once interacting, interpretative, unifying and emerging or progressive -- but all viewed from the decisional premises and effectualization of the objectives of the organization in question.

**Communication: Elements of the Process**

What are the elements involved in business communication? According to Redfield there are five elements in administrative communication:

(a) A communicator (a speaker, sender, issuer) who
(b) Transmits (says, issues, sends)
(c) Stimuli (Message, orders, reports) to a
(d) Communicatee (addressee, respondent, audience) to influence the behavior of the communicatee, as seen in his
(e) Response (reply, reaction)

In the opinion of Lawrence A. Appley, the basic communication process involves the following steps:

(i) Clarifying the idea or problem

(ii) Getting participation in developing a solution to the problem

(iii) Transmitting ideas or decisions

(iv) Motivating others to take action agreed upon and

(v) Measuring the effectiveness of communications.

As will be explained a little later on, communication that takes place in a business enterprise (internal communication) is multi-dimensional. To this must be added the fact that a business enterprise is a social organism, as Chester Barnard has pointed out, and, as such, it has to have communications -- external communication, as it is called -- with various elements of the society of which it is a part. It may also be mentioned here that the business world has become increasingly aware that survival must, in the final analysis, depend on purposive human intercourse within and with the world outside. Keeping these in mind, Appley's analytical frame would appear to be more meaningful than that of Redfield.

Let us now examine the nature and rationale of the elements of communication process as given by Appley.

Firstly, what is 'classification' and why is it
necessary? The beginning of all communication, said Clarence B. Randall, is an idea -- an order or message, for that matter, but something clearly formulated. In other words, the process of communication can begin only with a precise identification of the problem that requires action. This is true in all cases whether communication is upward or downward or lateral or interpersonal within a group or between groups, of which more will be discussed later on.

Secondly, what is participation, and why is it integral to the communication process? This is the method by which others are drawn into the problem. This is done for three purposes: (a) to help the communicator to clarify and test his own thinking by sharing his ideas with others (b) to gather the ideas and suggestions of others in a position to contribute to the solution of the problem and (c) to invite their participation to motivate those responsible for carrying out the decision. It is needless to state such participation requires careful preparation, permissive climate, sensitive listening and willingness to credit others for their contribution. It is here that communication calls for skill on the part of the communicator or authority, as the case may be. It is here that the communication process encounters much of the barriers that Roethlisberger mentions about.

Thirdly, the element of transmission shows itself
when the executive-communicator has to plan carefully what to communicate, when to communicate, whom to communicate, and how best to do it. It is at this stage that the problem of semantics, the nature of the person or the group communicated with, the organizational and psychological barriers get in the way. Accordingly, this is another element in the communication process that bristles with difficulties.

Fourthly, since communication requires not only that it be understood but that it be also accepted and acted upon, motivation becomes an integral part of the communication process. In a complete view of it, communication should not only state what is to be done but should also inspire the recipient to do so. In business, where coordination and team work constitute the cornerstone of managerial process motivation is obviously basic. Indeed, evidence is accumulating that the morale of an organization and in large degree its productivity are directly related to the motivation that the communication process carries with it. For example, employees who know what is expected of them, who know how their work ties with the objectives of the organization, who learn about changes before they take place are also the members of the organization who would work with heightened interest and enthusiasm -- more so when such people feel free to discuss problems with their
superiors and contribute to decisions that affect their work or what they must abide by.

Finally, we come to the evaluation. Various considerations point up to the need for evaluating the effectiveness of the communication process. As already indicated, there is no a priori determined optimum with regard to any communication process in business and industry. Again, the enterprise lives and operates in a changing environment -- human and otherwise. Besides, the business management has by now learnt considerably about the reasons why some conferences and committees succeed and others do not, why counseling in one instance leads to improved performance and in another produces resistance. Given these considerations, constant evaluation of the communication process -- to appraise its effectiveness -- becomes an integral part of it.

It may be observed here that, briefly speaking, in given situations in a business enterprise, communication has four objectives -- knowing, understanding, accepting or believing and finally acting upon the evidence and facts. Given this viewpoint, the aforesaid elements in the process of communication should be obvious. We may, however, illustrate them by means of a typical business situation or problem.

Let us suppose a supervisor has reviewed and found deficiency in the performance of one of his workers and
is confronted with the problem of remedial action. Here, then, is a problem clearly identified requiring action -- the starting point of the communication process. Evaluation of the supervisor is of no purpose unless he shares his findings with the worker. The worker must know where he stands -- the knowledge has to be transmitted. But mere transmission is not enough. The worker must understand the implications of this, and why he stands and where he does. He must also come to accept the supervisor's findings -- that it is fair, just and not biased. His acceptance and such insight is one facet of his participation in the communication process. The other facet is how the supervisor creates permissive climate to let the worker freely react to his findings leading him up to accepting the supervisor's evaluation. This serves the purpose of clarification and testing of what the supervisor has found on his own initiative. Through the permissive climate for the worker to react, he gathers his suggestions towards the solution of the problem he started with. As the worker comes to accept the findings, not only does the worker gets his own understanding of the knowledge but also the supervisor gets his understanding in turn. In short, now he also participates in the solution of the problem -- this, in turn, motivates the worker about remedial action. We have, therefore, at this stage, the second element of the
process -- all-round participation, communicator and communicatee pooling in mutual understanding, identifying the findings as of them both so that the worker gets motivated about what to do next. The second phase obviously involves transmission. Here is where the supervisor does his task with awareness of the temper, psychology and attitude of the worker -- else worker's participation in the form of acceptance of the finding would not have followed. We may, therefore, describe the worker's understanding and acceptance of the supervisor as the other two elements in the process -- participation and motivation. It is needless to mention that when the worker sees the problem for himself -- that is, as the supervisor has found in this case -- he is naturally motivated to remedial action. Finally, acting upon the evidence and facts -- understood and accepted by him -- the worker is led to remedial action on his own or as suggested by the supervisor. To the extent the worker and supervisor move together -- the worker sees the problems as found by the supervisor and believes and accepts it and thus motivated to correct himself -- to the extent of the effectiveness of the communication -- transmitting the facts and evidence to the worker with skill and concern on the part of the supervisor -- is evaluated.

To sum up: any communication process must have
five elements or phases as integral part of it.

Communication: Its Many Dimensions

In the final analysis, a business enterprise is a social organism, as was mentioned earlier; and as such, it is through the totality of the communication process that a business enterprise must subserve its objective. Accordingly, the communication process in practice, tends to be pervasive as the organizational structure of an enterprise. The totality of the communication flow in a typical enterprise may, therefore, be shown diagramatically. This is done in Exhibit 1. Moreover, as a part of the larger society, in which it operates, a business enterprise has many points of contact with the rest of the society -- hence, communication processes with them. To gain a deeper insight into this whole complex the students of business communication generally break it into several parts or dimensions.

Briefly speaking, the types of communication in a business enterprise may be classified thus: (1) formal versus informal (2) downward versus upward versus horizontal (3) internal versus external (4) one-way versus two-way and (5) organizational versus interpersonal. It is needless to mention here that these classifications are not mutually exclusive. For example, communication that is informal might be upward or downward.
TOTAL FLOW OF COMMUNICATION THROUGHOUT ORGANIZATION

Communication: Formal versus Informal

Formal communications are those that are deliberately and consciously established for the proper functioning of the enterprise. They are expressly associated with the organization chart of the enterprise -- the network of formal positions that constitute the anatomy of the enterprise. They generally flow through the lines of authority and do not skip more than one link in the chain of authority. That is, if two individuals in different divisions of the same department wish to communicate, the communication must go to the first division head, from him to the second division head, and thence to the second individual, by-passing the head of the department. Thus, formal communication is the vehicle for enforcing the relationships between positions. This is why, Herbert Simon distinguishes informal type with reference to the "paper flow" from one point to another in an organization -- communications that are based on the manuals of organization practice and procedure. While much of the formal communications are written, oral communications also have their place in a formal communication system. However, according to Herbert Simon, only to a limited extent is any formal system of oral communications ordinarily established in the scheme of organization, and to a certain degree ... oral communication will take place primarily between individuals and their

\[11\text{Ibid.}, \text{p.158.}\]
immediate supervisors, often helped by the physical propinquity of those concerned -- that is, the layout of the organization.

Formal communication may be exemplified. For example, when a manager asks his deputy to do something by virtue of his position or authority, it is formal communication. If a suggestion system is formally adopted in an enterprise, whatever suggestions are made by the subordinate in accordance with the system would be in the nature of formal communication. Again, when an insurance company passed the individual policy files from one to another in the company's office we have an example of "paper flow" kind of formal communication.

As in the society, so also in an enterprise, informal relationship -- commonly referred to as grapevine -- exists around the formal structure of an enterprise. Communications that take place through such relationship is known as informal communication. Through these informal channels -- relationships -- flow of information, advice, even orders constitute informal communication. Generally speaking, informal communications are built around the social relationships -- that formally established relationships providing points of contact between individuals and group may encourage -- such as friendship, even authority relationship -- the latter may be described as primary and the former secondary in nature.
While the two types of communication -- formal and informal -- generally exist together (as they must in as much as the latter is an outgrowth of the former), a few points of distinction between the two may well be made. Firstly, formal communication system is a deliberate process, imposed or planned by the top management of an organization. On the other hand, as Herbert Simon points out, informal communication in any organization is far less deliberate and planned.

Secondly, Robert Dubin points out, flow of formal communication through the length and breadth of an enterprise is often slower than in the case with the informal communication. This is perhaps because formal communications are generally more precise to pass through organizational positions in a predetermined manner. On the other hand, informal communications may range from information to gossip or rumours and are not tied down by the formal organization structure -- on the contrary, according to opportunity and the over-all climate, they may skip levels of organizational structure.

Thirdly, while formal communications are a must for an enterprise to function, informal communications are not. The former may be likened to the arteries of human body through which blood must flow while the latter may be compared to other parts of the human anatomy. To compare differently, while formal communications may
be compared to the constitution of the American system, the informal communication could be considered as equivalent to political machines in the highly decentralized governmental structure of the American system.

Fourthly, while formal communications are, in practice, closely related to organization objectives -- all communication processes must tend to converge, immediately or a little distantly, to them -- the same cannot be said of informal communications in an enterprise. "It must be remembered that the behavior of individuals in organizations is oriented not only towards the organization's goals, but also to a certain extent towards their personal goals, and that these two sets of goals are not always mutually consistent."¹²

Finally, mention may be made of the interesting points made by Herbert Simon:

The informal communication system is sometimes used by organization members to advance their personal aims. From this arises the phenomena of cliques -- groups that build up an informal network of communications and use this as a means of securing power in this organization. Rivalry among cliques, in turn, may lead ... (to situations that) defeat the purpose of informal communications system.¹³

Again:

There has been little systematic analysis of

¹²Ibid., p. 161.

¹³Ibid., p. 161.
the way in which the formal organization structure encourages or hinders the formation of cliques, or of the techniques that can be used by the executives to deal with cliques and minimize their harmfulness ... it may be conjectured that the weakness of formal systems of communications and failure to secure adequate measure of coordination through that system probably encourage the development of cliques. 14

To sum up: originating and developing differently subserving different objectives, different in the scope of their domain and speed, formal and informal communications are inherent in the functioning of any business enterprise -- the larger the enterprise the greater the extent of their prevalence, especially this is true of informal communications; and, an important task of management is to be aware of the one as much as the other, and use skill to coalesce them to enhance the basic objectives of the enterprise.

Communication: Downward, Upward and Horizontal

Communications in an enterprise may also be distinguished by the directions in which they may flow in practice. Downward communication is that which flows from a superior to a subordinate as from the board of directors to executives, from a manager to an assistant manager, from a foreman to his workers. Orders, instructions, policy statements, job sheets, circulars, bulletins, manuals, handbooks -- all these come under downward communication. "In every business organization the most

14 Ibid., pp. 161-162.
frequently used and relied upon dimension of communication is the downward direction ... from the top of the organization (management) down through various levels to the bottom of the organization (workers). It is an essential dimension of transmission because without it a firm would cease to function." It is also used by management to communicate to employees information on company objectives, policy, procedure and so on.

Communication is upward if it passes from subordinates to their chief, as from the rank and file to management, from superintendents to managers, from them to the general manager. Examples of upward communication are activity reports and problems submitted from lower levels, opinions, attitudes, suggestions, complaints and grievances. These examples will also serve to indicate that this type of communication is as important as the other. As Heckman and Huneryager rightly observe:

It is the only dimension of communication via which employees can convey to their superiors their actions, attitudes, and opinions about the multitude of subjects of vital concern to the efficient operation of a business enterprise. As such, it is the only means by which management can determine if the information it has transmitted has been received, understood, and accepted and if proper action has been taken or is being taken to accomplish the objectives of the company. Most important of all is the fact that this direction of information flow is the only way management can discover if the needs of subordinates are being satisfied.  

16Ibid., p. 259.
Important as it for efficient management of an enterprise, upward communication is writ on the organization chart. This direction of communication is rather predicated on the fact that employees not only possess the ability to receive communication, but also possess and must be allowed to use the capacity to transmit information. The management, in other words, must recognize the importance of employees communicating information to them and facilitate the flow of such information. "Unless recognition and facilitation exist, along with proper action by management with respect to the nature of the information transmitted, the inherent desire of people to communicate will be thwarted, and frustration, with all dire implications to a firm, will result."\(^{17}\) Indeed, there are experts who take the view "that a basic reason for the formation of unions and the willingness of employees to join them is the lack of an effective upward communication system in the organization concerned."\(^{18}\) More positively, there is evidence of how such upward communication such as suggestion system, permitting employees to contribute ideas for improvement, has been of immense value to the enterprise -- how, further, by allowing employees to bring their grievances out into the open has helped preventing of major problems.

\(^{17}\)Ibid., p. 260.

\(^{18}\)Ibid., p. 260.
Horizontal or lateral or crosswise communication takes place between two subordinates of the same superior, two departmental managers or any two or more persons who are bound to one another by relationship of equality. In other words, the term refers to the flow -- transmitting and receiving -- of information between departments or people on the same level in an organization. Generally speaking, this is carried on through two major devices: clearance and review and conference process. Through clearance and review, information is gathered from various parts of an organization before a decision is made or action taken. Conferences and committee work comprise a form of horizontal communication, designed to gain understanding and acceptance through group participation.

Though comparatively new and less well charted than the other two, horizontal communication is also vital for efficient operation of any business in as much as co-ordination, especially in a large organization, is a perineal task of management. Heckman and Huneryager illustrate the point by referring to the case of a large company whose sales vice-president, facing falling sales volume pushed hard with the sales drive with considerable success. But as sales began to flow in thick and fast, it caught the manufacturing vice-president unprepared, and the result was that buyers (manufacturers) who had geared their production to the orders they had placed,
found supplies were not coming in as desired by them. Following this, they began to cancel orders. And, all this because there was no prior horizontal communication between the two vice-presidents to help coordinate the heightened sale drive with appropriate production planning.

**Communication: Internal versus External**

Internal communication comprises of various kinds of communication -- upward, downward, lateral, interpersonal, group, etc. -- that take place within an organization. It may be defined as "involving the exchange of information, ideas, plans, policies and procedures among all segments and among all individuals of the organizational structure."\(^{19}\) The authors, Zelko and O'Brien prefer the term 'exchange' to the usual term 'transmitting' in as much as the latter does not imply receiving as the vital part of the communication process. In regard to the definition, the authors make two points. Firstly, it includes "all exchange of ideas between management and employee, management and union, supervisor and worker, worker and worker, and persons in any and all relationships springing from within the organizational structure."\(^{20}\) Secondly, "it involves those relationships


RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

As shown in the above diagram, every one who represents the company to the public is a part of its internal organization. If they are to represent the company properly to the public, employees at all levels -- supervisor A, sales girl B, salesman C, repairman D, and company president P -- must feel that, as a part of the organization, they are well informed. See Zelko and O'Brien, Ibid., p. 26.
that foster a sense of belonging and participating on the part of all employees, as well as giving and receiving, which are the natural components of communication.\(^{21}\)

Turning now to external communication, it may be stated that all organizations -- business or otherwise -- have long been conscious of the fact that they constitute parts of the larger society, and as such, the need to develop public relations as they affect the dissemination of information and promotion of good will and sales. The public relations departments of most companies are constantly striving to improve their employers' status in the public eye. In fact, communication and public relations programs are not to be regarded as distinctly separate. In the nature of things, external communication would comprise of various kinds of community activity and aggressively broadcasting of information about the enterprise.

Though analytically different, as just explained, external and internal communications are very closely related, and improvement in one should lead to the improvement in the other. A company that sets out to improve its internal communication will soon find that its public relations likely improve. All communication, internal and external, adds up to the total public relations program of the company. The relationship between internal and external communications may be shown diagrammatically, as shown in exhibit 2.

\(^{21}\text{Ibid.}, \ p.12.\)
Communication: One-way versus Two-way

As observed earlier, to communicate is to shoot information and hit a target with it. Shooting alone, however, is not communicating. For, to have more than chance probability of hitting a target requires that the sender get the feedback from the target about the accuracy of his shots.\textsuperscript{22} The latter arises partly from the emotive meanings of the language -- written and oral -- and behavior, and partly from the need to ensure participation of the communicatee in the process -- a point that was explained earlier. It is in this context that our present classification has assumed importance in our times.

The distinction between one-way and two-way communication may be easily explained. When a person "A" talks to another, "B" without return talk from the latter, we have the example of one-way communication. In practice, this is equivalent to the boss issuing orders or telling the subordinates what to do. The contrast is when the talk from "A" to "B" is accompanied by return talk from "B" to "A", not as a counter argument but by way of clarification and participation in the making of the final shape of the subject matter of the talk. In business situation, this takes place when a manager speaks, in-

forms and requests, but also listens, answers and interprets -- in other words, encourages and induces the respondent to express his ideas and clarify his doubts about it. Why is this latter factor relevant? Modern management is increasingly coming to appreciate that there is considerable accumulation of relevant knowledge and expertise at the point of decision or action -- namely, respondent "B" in this case; and all these may not be known to the communicator. Accordingly, his involvement and motivation becomes supremely important in decision-making and/or action.

What are the points of merit and demerit of these two types of communication? Demonstrating the differences between the two by means of a suggested parlour game, Leavitt observes thus:

Under experimental conditions these findings have emerged from this game: (1) One-way communication is considerably faster than two-way communication. (2) Two-way communication is more accurate than one-way, i.e., more people in the audience correctly reproduce the drawing under two-way conditions. (3) The receivers, are more sure of themselves and make more correct judgements of how right or wrong they are in the two-way system. (4) The sender finds himself feeling psychologically under attack in the two-way system, because his receivers pick up his mistakes and oversights and let him know about them. The receivers may make side remarks about the sender's intelligence and skill, and, if the receivers are trying very hard and taking the task seriously, they may actually get angry at the sender, and he at them. (5) The two-way method is relatively noisy and disorderly -- with people interrupting the sender and one another, with the slowest man holding up
the rest, and so on. The one-way method, on the other hand, appears neat and efficient to an outside observer, but the communication is less accurate.23

From the above a few points emerge. If appearance is of prime importance — if one wants to be business-like, one-way method is to be preferred. So also is the case if one does not want one's own mistakes to be recognized. The same is the case when one wants to protect his own authority or power — to blame others if the communication has been misunderstood. Similarly, if speed in communication is of supreme importance, merit lies with the one-way communication.

On the other hand, in two-way communication there is relative slowness, but more quality and accuracy. And the communicator will often have to accept much of what blame there is, and it will be apparent to all that he deserves some of it; but he will get his message across.

Drawing from the findings on experimental study of one-way and two-way communication in a parlour game this is what Leavitt has to say with regard to the issue of one-way and two-way communication in industry:

... One encounters apparent conflict between short-run efficiency of two-way communication and the long-run need to maintain power and authority at various levels of hierarchy. Two-way communication makes for more valid communication, and it appears now that more

23Ibid., p. 123.
valid communication results not only in more accurate transmission of facts but also in re-organized perceptions of relationships. Authority, for example, may under ideal conditions of two-way communication cease to serve as a sufficient protection for inadequacy ...24

And:

Two-way communication improves the accurate communication of previously uncoded or insufficiently coded ideas. But two-way communication contributes considerably less to accuracy after the code has been clarified -- after new problems have been programmed and routinized. Coupling this generalization with the notion that new problems occur more frequently in upper organizational echelons, we can also tentatively conclude that two-way communication is more useful within the management group than further down the line.25

While the scale is heavily weighted in favor of two-way communication in business and industry, a few points of practical consideration may well be indicated here. Firstly, in regard to many routine problems and issues, communication in practice tends to be one-way, once novelty of the communication has disappeared. For, when the subject-matter is repetitive, such as instruction about doing a job for which procedure has been well established after two-way communication, people stop asking questions -- they do not have to -- they have learned the code. Keeping this in mind, one may well ask: to what extent is it true in a particular plant to

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24Ibid., p. 126.
25Ibid., p. 127.
say that managers face more new problems per week? Secondly, one-way communication affects morale as well as speed and accuracy and may therefore, be worth discarding for that reason alone.

To sum up: As a primary tool for effecting behavioral change in business, one-way communication has some advantages in speed over two-way, as also of protecting the communicator from having to recognize his own faults; on the other hand, two-way communication has the advantage of greater accuracy and greater feeling of certainty for the receiver, while involving some psychological risks of frustration on the part of the communicator; and, finally, industrial communication from management to workers, from workers up to management, cutting across functional lines of authority -- triaxial, in other words -- following the chain of command to workers and back to management; and as such it is very largely two-way in nature -- i.e., between persons, or one person and a group or between two groups.26

Communication: Organizational versus Interpersonal

Zelko and O'Brien specially refer to this distinction. Organizational communication may be said to consist of broad matters of information that generally flow down the established channels of the structure of the

organization. In a way, these communications take place more as an established procedure than as a conscious effort on the part of top management. There is, therefore, a certain amount of "impersonality" about them, apart from being broad or aggregative in their content, such that no particular consideration is given as to how to communicate them to the employees. The examples of this kind of communication are the employee handbook, company newsletter, annual reports, policy statements and other informations passed on to the employees through the mass of printed medium. In other words, in organizational communication the objective is to see that everyone is informed about the things that he should know regardless of his place in the organization.

One further point about this kind of communication. In the nature of things, these broad and general information flows do not supply any basis for communication in personal relations, and as such fail to solve problems. The point may be illustrated briefly. Suppose a company decides on a production cut back which it expects the employees in the organization to carry out. The policy statement is communicated in the regular manner with no attention to how best to communicate it. And, what is even more, that went into the decision -- cost, material, plant utilization, man-hours and even safety factors -- are not communicated at all. So, the employees "hear"
about them, listen to the rumors and form distorted notions about the communication originally made. Holding, therefore, that company planning and management policy are more and more concerned with broad concept of communication, Zelko and O'Brien warn that all organizational planning for communication be at the worker and personal level.

How does organizational communication {	extit{per se}} come to be inadequate? To this, the authors answer (1) that it is not the distance -- between top-management and the work level -- that makes it so, but (2) that it is generally due to (a) the number of levels through which communication must travel and (b) the extent of decentralization and delegation of authority that are, in fact, practiced. If this diagnosis is correct, remedial measures are clearly indicated: fewer levels of supervision -- more delegation to those who do supervise, perhaps, greater span of control, and more use of management and workers down the line for consultative and multiple management decisions. It is, therefore, no wonder that there is a general tendency in organizational structure to shorten or make fewer lines of authority from top to bottom. Equally evident is the trend in organizational structure towards more delegation of authority, more staff advisory functions for line officials and more consultative or multiple management to hold the total organiza-
tion together.

Perhaps increasingly aware of the inadequacy of organizational communication per se, modern management is becoming more and more preoccupied with inter-personal of face-to-face communication. The National Association of Manufacturers in a national survey of communication in industry came to the conclusion that (1) oral face-to-face communication is the best; (2) supervisors are the key communicators; and (3) employees like to see and hear company executives in person.

What exactly is interpersonal communication?

Raymond W. Peters in his *Communication Within Industry* describes it as follows:

Daily personal discussions between firstline supervisors and employees, and among various levels of management, up to and including the board of directors ... (and) the principal method of two-way communication -- all others, including written are only supplemental aids in the process.

In *Speak Up Management*, Robert Newcomb describes it as day-to-day, man-to-man, personal contact ... (to which) ... no form of printed communication can match in importance of value. Zelko and O'Brien broaden the definition to include all oral exchange of ideas between two people or between single individuals and small groups.

Since it emphasizes personal contacts with employees at all levels of the organization, and as such contacts are obviously so numerous and varied, the practice of it
is enormously difficult. The writings of Roethlisberger on the subject of face-to-face communication and the role of the foreman in industry are sufficiently eloquent on the point. Exhibit 3 is a diagramatic view of interpersonal communication. Interpersonal communication -- oral communication in particular -- is a two way street, a circular process, as explained in the note to the exhibit. The diagram not only shows its circular process -- feedback to the shooting at the target -- but also shows up the enormous difficulties and complexities of the process. A good communicator must know and use the principles of effective speaking; he must be aware of his listeners and be able to analyze them properly and adapt to the situation, that is, overcome barriers.

Despite the fact that not much valid generalization can be made about these difficulties and complexities of communication, in other words, that it is best approached in a pedestrian manner in a given situation. Communication experts are of the view that "if it is approached with a practical analysis of the main types of communication situations, the principles to be applied will become apparent and the necessary skill identified."

In practice, companies have approached the problem of interpersonal communication in different ways. Some have tried to face the problem through the "human relations" program, and appropriate training for the key
CIRCULAR PROCESS IN INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS
SHOWING THE EFFECT OF SITUATION AND BARRIERS

The above diagram shows the simple relationship of one individual talking to another. The communicator is designated as C and the other person listening as L. While C is talking and L is listening (or should be), we sometime analyze this as one-way communication, though incorrect. This is partly true, but L is never without some sort of reaction. C's observation of L's reaction then influence what C says. His communication may be varied accordingly. This in turn affects the reaction of L. As this continues, communication in personal relations becomes a "circular" process gathering momentum as the exchange continues. In the meantime, both C and L are aware that the communication is taking place in a particular situation and barrier effects represented by S and B, which obviously influence both C and L. See Zelko and O'Brien, op. cit., p. 23.
communicators in the organization. Others have developed specialized training in interpersonal relations. One such program is that of the General Motors, *Man to Man of the Job*. This is a program of training to analyze their employees as people. To this has now been added a program of training in speech and oral communication — perhaps in recognition of the fact that language is often a barrier to effective communication at the interpersonal level. The Standard Oil of New Jersey publishes a pamphlet, *Can't We Talk It Over!* to aid training in interviewing and personal relations. The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company includes interviewing as part of its communication training programs.

To sum up the theme of the chapter: as Chester Barnard aptly points out, an "organization, simple or complex is always an impersonal system of coordinated human efforts; always there is purpose as the coordinating and unifying principle"\(^{27}\) — of individuals and people; and, communication — keeping people informed, drawing on them, and giving them opportunities to participate, making use of the scatter of leadership, formal and informal — is the basic management tool to

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ensure the coordination and unity of purpose; and, having to coordinate and unify efforts of a multitude -- at various levels and positions within the organization -- communication takes on the many dimensions that were briefly examined; indeed, to achieve the effectiveness and efficiency in maintaining the integrity of purpose and continuity of contributions towards the same, the main managerial task today "is locating people who are key links in the communication system and seeing that they know how to communicate"; and, finally, as indicated earlier, "the program of action (called forth for the purpose) means more than just theorizing; it means applying theory and taking specific steps,"\(^\text{28}\) -- a broad and inclusive policy to equip all those who must communicate.

\(^{28}\text{Zelko and O'Brien, op. cit., p. 13.}\)
CHAPTER III

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION: IMPORTANCE AND PROBLEMS

Introduction

The previous chapter was devoted to an analysis of the general nature of the communication process in business and industry. It has also examined the major dimensions of communications that prevail in a typical business enterprise. In Chapter I, it was pointed out how modern management is becoming increasingly "communication conscious." These in turn, lead us to raise two major questions: (1) What is the role and significance of communication in business and industry? (2) What are the problems involved in developing a communication system in a typical business enterprise? In this chapter, attempt will be made to answer these questions briefly.

Role and Significance of Communication

Making an analytical study of how a group of persons would work towards a common purpose, this is what Chester I. Barnard has to say with reference to a business organization:

... we have to clearly distinguish between organization purpose and individual motive. It is frequently assumed in reasoning about organizations that common purpose and individual motive are or should be identical. With the exception noted below, this is never

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the case; and under modern conditions it rarely even appears to be the case. Individual motive is necessarily an internal, personal subjective thing; common purpose is necessarily an external, impersonal, objective thing even though the individual interpretation of it is subjective ... (and) ...

The possibility of accomplishing a common purpose and existence of persons whose desire might constitute motives for contributing toward such a common purpose are the opposite poles of the system of cooperative effort. The process by which these potentialities become dynamic is that of communication. 29

The reason is simple. Communication is the primary tool for contact with workers throughout a large organization, and it is the fundamental basis for the interrelationships of groups and individuals -- providing a continuing, pulsating network for the exchange of information and ideas up, down and across the organization structure, at all times, including a similar continuing reverse flow of ideas and suggestions from the work group to management.

In the contexts of Barnard's analysis, the role of communication in business may be put more vividly thus:

Communication is like the impulse that travels along the nervous system of an organism. These impulses carry the signals from one portion of the complex system to another and to a central coordinating agency through which the entire system is kept in balance and functioning. 30

29 Barnard, op. cit., pp. 88-89

Clearly, then, "the essential executive function is to provide the system of communication,"\(^{31}\) "a constant part of all management planning." However, "it does not mean that the management must bare its inner soul to the work group nor review every decision and plan openly," but that "management must consider communicating every decision and plan."\(^{32}\) Such, then, is the global significance of communication in industry.

It is interesting to note here that there are experts who would seem to have some mental reservation on the conclusion just reached. They do so on the ground of lack of factual evidence to support what intuitive reasoning would suggest as obvious. Here is the viewpoint of Jack R. Gibbs in *Communication and Productivity*:

Although in the most global sense it is fairly obvious that communication is related to productivity, it is very difficult to find satisfying evidence of clear relationship between specific communicative programs or acts, on the other hand, and measure of productivity, profit or corporate vitality on the other. Most studies on communication are short term in nature and relate aspects of communication to various personal and group variables that are perhaps assumed to be related to productivity in the long run, but whose relationships are tenuous at best.\(^{33}\)

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The viewpoint of the school that J. R. Gibbs represents may be put differently. According to them, although the effects of good communication system on productivity, morale and efficiency of an enterprise can be measured to some extent through the "feedback" and the long run improvement in the general performance of the enterprise, difficulties of relating the variables to one another must be granted to exist. For, the effectiveness of communication varies from one business to another. In one concern, it may increase productivity, morale and efficiency, and yet, in another concern, it may not be able to bring such a comprehensive effect. The extremists of this school, however, would go further. They would doubt the presumption of cause and effect relationship between communication and efficiency in a business unit. They point out that unless there exists a good morale already, achieving effective communication may be well nigh impossible -- they insist that good morale must precede good communication and not the other way round.

If the view of the school of thought, just mentioned, is granted, the rationale of communication in business would appear to be exploded.

What can we say, then, of this viewpoint? Firstly, the absence of observed correlation between the variables under discussion does not necessarily negative the relationship established through inductive reasoning.
Secondly, the absence of correlation between the particular variables in a given situation may well be explained to be overshadowed by correlation between other variables -- other than those that the critics refer to or are studying. In the situation, the relationship may involve more than two variables. On these two points, the statistical theory of correlation is very clear — to students of business statistics, all this is common knowledge.34 Thirdly, it may be asserted that there is plenty of research evidence — based on case studies — that effective communication does lead to increased efficiency of business enterprise. Besides, the management does not live and operate in a world of certianity — on the contrary, this is a world of probabilistic models, as much in respect of human factors as with others. Accordingly, the correlation that the critics speak of must not be expected to be mathematically exact or measurable in quantitative terms. Fourthly, it may well be that the critics do not allow for time-lag that may characterise the correlation that happen to observe or speak of. Finally, there would seem to be no doubt that in specific situations improved communication may

34See Stockton, Business Statistics, pp. 257-259 where a correlation between a heating oil consumption and domestic business in use is shown to overshadow the correlation between heating oil consumption and temperature, (Cincinnati: South-western Publishing Company, 1962).
be followed by improved morale, efficiency and productivity of the enterprise or any segment of it -- though the improvement may surely be difficult to quantify.

Returning to the point, further observation may well be made of the importance of communication in business organization. According to Chester Barnard, communication is one of the three elements of an organization; "in an exhaustive theory or organization, communication would occupy a center place" and "structure, extensiveness and scope of organizations are almost entirely determined by communication techniques." Further, a business unit is essentially a "cooperative human organization," and as such, "communication ... is also the limiting factor in the size of simple organizations and ... a dominant factor in the structure of complex organizations."35

Of the relevance of communication system in the organization of an enterprise, Barnard takes a more incisive view:

... historically and functionally all complex organizations are built up from units of organization, and consist of many units of "working" or "basic" organizations, overlaid with units of executive organizations; and ... the essential structural characteristics of complex organizations are determined by the effect of the necessity for communication upon the size of a unit organization... 36

35Barnard, op. cit., p. 106.
36Ibid., p. 113
And:

This system of communication, or its maintenance, is a primary or essential continuing problem of a formal organization. Every other practical question of effectiveness or efficiency -- that is, of the factors of survival -- depends upon it. In technical language the system of communication of which we are now speaking is often known as the "lines of authority (of an organization)." 37

Finally, in the conduct of realistic operative situations, communication becomes a central process in work organizations. The highly intricate nature of the cooperative processes of business requires extensive communication for orienting and indoctrinating new people into the firm. Communication is involved in giving direction to work activities, and for coordinating the diverse activities of the people involved. The business firm is constantly confronted with changes in its environment that necessitate corresponding changes in the organization and its operation. In order that the changes may be carried out effectively, it is necessary that extensive communication takes place among the people of the organization.

The actual process of communication is unlimited with respect to its means. The only requirement that any means of interchange has to meet in order to be communication is that there be a meaningful exchange of symbols between the communicators.

37 Ibid., p. 175.
Problems of Communication

Having examined the role of communication in business and industry it is now necessary to turn to the second issue; the problems of establishing and maintaining a communication system in an organization.

There is no dearth of information, case studies, research findings and viewpoints of experts in the field that throw considerable light on the nature of problems encountered in establishing and maintaining a communication system in practical business situations. Drawing on these sources, but without losing oneself in the minutiae of details thereof, the broad nature and scope of the problems that arise within an enterprise in practice may well be indicated. The problems inherent in the very nature of effective communication process, in the dichotomy of relationship between the management and the workers, and finally in that the management structure is composed of diverse human groups, though not as diverse as workers are from the management. To their analysis, we may now turn.

Problem of Effective Communication

In practice, the foremost problem is in making communication systems effective.

In the previous chapter the nature of communication in business was carefully analysed. It is not, therefore, necessary to undertake any lengthy discussion again. It
will suffice here to briefly and more pointedly restate the concept of *effective communication* -- communication system that is dynamic and help furthering the organizational objectives and their changing pattern, as dictated by their social dynamics in which enterprise has to live and survive. From the analysis that was given earlier, effective communication may be briefly defined (1) as the network that adequately provides for the outflow of information, knowledge and expertise to various points in the organization, and at the same time (2) also provides for adequate "feedback" in all directions. So defined, effective communication further requires (3) a free and permissive atmosphere throughout the organization such that the employees have not only to listen but they can also talk; and (4) a conscious "open door" and a company policy of good listening on the part of the management cadre -- the organizational levels above the work level. Only when these four basic conditions are satisfied can we have the basis of effective communication system.

What does this concept of effective communication require in operational structure? As John G. Glover sums up, to be effective, all communication in practice must be based on the following fundamentals: 38

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38Glover, op. cit., p. 165.
(1) Desire to satisfy workers' wishes for current information, whence management must take definite responsibility for communicating information to the workers on company activity, economic changes, relationships of work to employee security, how to do work, and many other prominent factors;

(2) Clareness of intent or purpose of the communication -- and to obtain the same, the meanings of words used in the communication must be known to the persons to whom the communication is directed -- "meaning", in other words, is the foundation of communication;

(3) Language used must be that of, or known to, the person or group for which it is intended -- information must be communicated in understandable language or figures; and

(4) The communication must be subject to only one interpretation.

It is needless to point out here that these operational conditions can be optimal, from an overall perspective, only when the four basics, mentioned earlier, prevail in adequate measure. A word of explanation may be added here. Basically, the amount of knowledge acquired by a person or group, in the work environment, is directly related to the clearness of the meaning of
the communication, the accuracy and completeness of the information transmitted, and the receptiveness, understanding and intelligence of the person or persons to whom the communication is directed, whence the need for a "feedback." Operationally, the greater the amount of knowledge a person possess of how, when, and where to do work, the more effective that work will be performed provided that person has adequate tools of production and the motivated will to work -- whence the requirement of "feedback" to ensure the worker's participation and involvement that alone can motivate him. Efficiencywise, the effectiveness of a willing, trained worker is directly related to the quality, quantity and timeliness of the specific information communicated to him.

Understanding the nature of effective communication, it may be asked immediately: Why must the effectiveness become the foremost problem in practice? Quite a few reasons may be given in reply.

Firstly, we spoke earlier of individual motives and organizational purpose -- of personal motives and incentives, on the one hand, and organizational goals on the other -- and their changing pattern in the dynamics of operating environment. Recall here that personal motives and attitudes may lead organizational members to try to divert an extant communication system to their own uses, and may even lead to withholding of relevant information
from superiors and colleagues, and/or influence the reception given to actual communications that are transmitted to them. To this, must now be added the further point: within the frame of an organization and in practical situations, the ability of an individual to influence others by his communication -- and this is what effective communication must aim at -- will largely depend upon his formal and informal position of authority, and upon the intelligibility and persuasiveness of the communication itself. Given this dichotomy -- of individual versus the organization -- and given further that these must coalesce in practice, the task of achieving effectiveness in human situations must obviously be considered as extremely difficult and a razor edged task. No wonder that despite W. H. Whyte's thesis of "The Organizational Man," this is what Redfield would say of the modern business system:

It is regrettably true that, at a time when the means of communication have reached their greatest development, there is less intelligibility in communication between individuals and groups (organizations) than at any stage in our history.\(^{39}\)

Secondly, making a more philosophical point, what Herbert Simon has to say may be offered as another reason. He says:

... Since an organization is not an organism the only memory it possesses, in the proper sense of

\(^{39}\)Redfield, op. cit., p.ix.
the term is the collective memory of its participants. This is insufficient for organization purposes (partly) because what is available to other members of the organization, and (partly) because when an individual leaves an organization loses that part of its memory.40

Accordingly, the task of effective communication, in dynamic operating situations, tends to become a history of fresh starts, more so because no two human situations are generally alike. When, to this, is added the factor of increasing size of modern organizations, the point made here is not difficult to appreciate.

Thirdly, as already pointed out in the previous chapter, there is no communication system for any business enterprise -- no objectively identifiable communication pattern valid for an enterprise, much as it may provide for free flow of information and knowledge. Indeed, Alex Bavelas and Dermot Barrett particularly ask this question -- Is there "one best way" of communication? -- only to answer it in the negative. They take particular exception to the administrative thinking (that) rests upon the assumption that the optimum system can be derived from a statement of the task to be performed. An effective communication system is essentially pragmatic in nature, and as such, becomes naturally difficult to achieve and/or appraise. The appraisal becomes still more so because the system involves and

40Simon, op. cit., p. 165.
embraces, as it must, the entire management structure, including top management. For nothing is more difficult in human context than self-appraisal.

Finally, generally speaking, despite the blueprint that an enterprise may work with, the basic organization units, the sum of which would constitute the entire organization, and the attitudes, beliefs and motives of those who man them and how they evince them in practice would constitute another hurdle in the way of achieving effective communication throughout the enterprise.

To sum up our points here: a host of difficulties centre around the nature and concept of effective communication; clear as the concept may be, difficulties arise in realising it in fact -- difficulties of bending individuals to organization purpose, for which there is no set rules; experimental and pragmatic perspective that must guide the top management's footsteps in this respect; the need for change and continuing appraisal that it must envisage; the very organizational framework through which effective communication system must be attained in practice and so on.

Problems of workers versus management

One of the danger spots in the communication system is the relationship of management and the workers. What is this relationship? How does it bring up problems for effective communication system?
An organization structure consists of three generally recognized levels of management -- top, middle and lower -- on the one hand, and the work level, on the other. In this dichotomy of workers and management, the former are generally farthest from the management where basic organizational purposes take shape and guide the actions of the enterprise in practice. Added to this a few other considerations: (1) the individuals at the work level generally come from a wide variety of social backgrounds and represent diverse kinds of preparation for work; (2) in the changing social dynamics, characterising business operation today, organizational objectives tend to change, as mentioned earlier; and as such, the problems of communication with reference to work force tend to become a perennial preoccupation of today's management; and (3) it is here, at the work level, more than anywhere else in the organization that informal groups and leaders develop to further accentuate the problem of communication from the organization's perspective. On the other hand, the management group would appear to be relatively cohesive.

Now, in this dichotomy -- the management and workers, and their respective backgrounds -- the first line of management -- the line that must in practice, motivate, induce, persuade and enthuse the workforce to fully participate in the achievement of organizational ob-
jectives -- the first line of management that confronts the workforce in a typical enterprise and the foremen and first-line supervisors. On them, in practical situations, depends the task of effective communication between workers and management, work groups, formal and informal. That such is the case in practice would be evident from the large number of field studies in business by communication experts. In particular, the writings of Elton Mayo, Roethlisberger and Carl Rogers would amply bear out the point. Accordingly, "the key figure in the communication system of any organization is ... particularly every first line supervisor" for it is he "whome the worker regards as the company," "who must interpret company policy to the worker, pass on information, transmit orders and instructions, and be the key link in upward communication from worker to top management, (at the same time) ... speak to workers both individually and in groups, in a variety of settings and relationships, and on a variety of subjects."

Such then is the relationship of the two groups -- the management and the workers, the first-line supervisors and foremen constituting the link between the two.

How does this bring up problems for the communication system in the organization? Without trying to identify what the problem may be, and this may vary from situation to situation, the reasons why problems would
arise in practice may be given.

Firstly, as Peter Drucker points out, "from his position no management function makes much sense, neither top management with its focus on economic responsibility, nor middle management with its focus on technical functions and on the enterprise as an organization. What determines his vision is his job and the job of the people working next to him. Even if he knows what is going on in other parts of the plant, he cannot put these parts together to come up with an understanding of the whole plant, let alone add to it the invisible functions of selling and buying, engineering and research, finance, or the planning for the future which is the top management's responsibility. Yet while the worker sees only a facet, it appears to him nevertheless that he sees the "whole."

Secondly, there is the role of the foremen and first-line supervisors in the organization complex. On the difficulties of their task -- of communication between management and the worker -- there is enough experience. The writings of Roethlisberger and Elton Mayo need only be mentioned here as evidence. Wedged between the workers below and the level of supervisors and management above, they occupy unenviable position in the organization structure. Standing far away from the policy making management, and at the same time with their ears closed to
the plant floor, their task of communication is at once of immense variety and magnitude. No listing of specific items can be exhaustive. In the circumstances, their role as communicator is extremely difficult and complex, if only because they may be viewed as holding the balance between the two groups — management group and work force. No wonder that they have been described as the master and the victim of double talk, putting up two faces — one to the worker and another to the management. As the writings of experts in the field clearly indicate the foreman and the first-line supervisors are often ill-equipped, inadequately informed, insecure in terms of authority in the discharge of their functions — acting as the effective communication link between the upper hierarchy of the organization and the lower operating group on the work floor.

To sum up, problems of effective communication arises partly because of the two large groups — management and workers — that the total organization of an enterprise must in the nature of things consists of; partly because their way of looking at things and the organization differ, as they ordinarily must; and partly because those who must fuse the opposing perspective into a unity of purpose, which is what organization success requires, are not ordinarily in a position to do their delicate job well.
Problems of Groups within the Management Structure

This is not to suggest that there are no problem centers. On the contrary, as experts in the field are apt to point out, the term "supervisor" may be enlarged to mean man at the top -- the president of the company, every management below him until the first-line supervisors are reached -- the top, middle and lower managements; since management is a coordinated effort, the inter-relationship of supervisors is another facet of the management structure. How does this complex pose problems for communication? Once again we advert to the dichotomy of motives -- of these other "supervisors" and the organizational purpose, and the need for the former's participating co-operative effort to subserve the common ends of the enterprise. And, we note: "Top management sees the organization in terms of economic performance, efficiency and productivity, and as one unit in a complex and competitive economy. On the other hand, middle management and supervision (lower management) see the enterprise as a complicated machine, as a collection of "departments" and technical functions, and as sufficient unto itself rather than as a unit in the economy. More often they do not see even that much; each man's vision is confined to the technical function in which he is engaged. He is usually much more conscious of the political and social aspects of the enterprise than the
top management; he is much less conscious of the economic aspects. Every memebrr of top management knows whether the enterprise is doing well financially or not. Few members of the middle management are likely even to be able to find out how the company is doing, let alone relate financial data to their own work. On the other hand, it is typical for top management not to know that a strike is brewing, while the middle management is fully aware of the trouble and understands the real issue. Either management group -- middle and supervisory -- sees only a facet of the whole; top management sees the enterprise as an economic performer, middle management as an administrative entity, or at best as a social and political unit.

To the foregoing, the author would like to add two reflections of his own. Firstly, the usual line-and-staff components of a typical organization structure not only accentuate the problems of coordination, that we saw earlier, but also increase the problems of communication within the management structure. Perhaps more than anywhere else in an enterprise, the status and authority consciousness that characterise the behavior of individual and groups within the broad belt of management structure -- their "technical" approach to daily problems from their own specific positions, sectional and/or specialised perspectives, -- create problems of what may
be called "positional communications." Secondly, though the management structure consists of individuals, holding their specific positions, horizontally and vertically, tend to fall into vested groups, of sales, production, finance, line and staff, for example -- informally, if not formally or openly. Accordingly, the functioning of an enterprise, as a system of coordinated human efforts, runs into peculiarly characteristic problems of conflict -- of communication which we will discuss in more detail later on. What heightens problems here is just this. Relatively to the work level, people in the various management levels are closer to the top management; they are being observed and appraised more directly than the work force, and, correspondingly, their accountability is more urgent. It is this nature of their circumstances further provide the background of the conflict. It is also this that may explain the development of informal organization channels -- grapevine -- and, in turn, explain the conflict of interests, perspectives and responsibility within the management structure -- hence of communication within it.

Communication Problems: A Comparison

In the foregoing, the problems of communication was divided into two broad segments: (1) the foremen and first-line supervisors in relationship with the workers, individually and in groups; and (2) the relationships of
positions within the management structure, vertically as well as horizontally. Now, we may begin to ask what are the similarities and dissimilarities between them?

As indicated earlier, the basics of all communication problems -- are two: (1) the "dual personality" of every participant in an organization, on the other; and (2) the need to bring the "two poles" to a common focus to develop "an impersonal system of coordinated human efforts." Obviously, the development of the common focus must come through operating on the willingness of the members of the organization to cooperate. But, the willingness to cooperate, except as vague feeling or desire for association with others requires self-abnegation, the surrender of control of personal conduct, the depersonalization of personal action, so as to permit cohesion of effort, a sticking together around the organization purpose. What, then, is the nature of this "willingness" from the organization's point of view?

This is what Chester Barnard has to say:

1) there is an indefinitely large variation in its intensity among individuals -- the scale gradually descending from possibly intense willingness through neutral or zero willingness to intense unwillingness or opposition or hatred;

2) The preponderance of persons in a modern society always lies on the negative side with reference to any particular existing or potential organization; and

3) In any case, such willingness of any indi-
vidual as we are speaking of, cannot be constant in degree -- it is necessarily intermittent and fluctuating; the number of persons of positive willingness to serve, but near the neutral or zero point, is always fluctuating in any given organization or enterprise.

Given these characteristics of individual motives and willingness, it is clear why and how the basics of the communication problem must be the same in both segments, referred to earlier.

Where and how do the two segments, then, differ from our point of view? Individuals and groups in the management structure have much larger perspective of the total organization than those at the work level. More so because business enterprises, in practice, move their executives through many positions, laterally and vertically; at the same time, they are probably more mature -- educationally and socially -- than those at the work level. Accordingly, the problems of communication in this segment of an organization tend to be much less severe than is the case in the work level, at least in extensiveness, if not in depth. What is even more, is perhaps the fact that is here, that the problems of communication centre around a few specific considerations -- of productivity, morale, efficiency, methods, scheduling, etc., since the preoccupation here is with operations -- turning out the company's products.

The upshot of the matter is that the two sets of
individuals (or groups) that we have been considering will have different perceptiveness of the organization in which they are members -- of the organization image and its functioning reality. Hayakawa once made the point how the metropolis of Washington would appear different to different people depending on where from they were viewing the capital.

What exactly is the relevance of all this to problems of communication in an enterprise? The question may be answered by reference to Hayakawa's two-fold thesis of "maps and territories" of individuals.

According to one part of the thesis, "we all live in two worlds." One is the world "of that continuum of things that we have actually seen, felt or heard -- the flow of events constantly passing before our senses ... the extensional world." The other "is the world that comes to us through words ... (through) reports, reports of reports, reports of reports of reports ... inferences made from other inferences and so on ... (accumulating) a considerable amount of second-and-third hand information. This is what he calls the verbal world. The verbal world is considered as a map and the extensional world the territory that it is supposed to represent.

Now, what is generally true would also surely be true in the specifics of the relationship of an individual and the organization, of which he is a member.
Here, the extensional world would be the work place and its immediate experience, while the verbal world would relate to the rest of the organization and all that he hears, understands and interprets through the various media, formal and informal -- words, reports, inferences and so on; -- in short, his perceptive view of the organization and its activities outside of his direct experience.

The second part of the thesis is that "the verbal world ought to stand in relation to the extensional world as a map does to the territory it is supposed to represent," and it is pointed out that "there are two ways of getting false maps of the world into our heads: first, by having them given to us; second, by making them up for ourselves by misreading the true map given to us.

Now, turning to our dichotomy -- the work level and the management structure -- it should be asked: what kind of "map-and-territory" relationship generally hold for individuals in each sector? How potent are the dangers of individuals getting false maps from within each sector? What implications do they hold for the problems of communication in an organization? The questions are extremely inter-related and may be taken together.

Clearly, the extensional world of the worker -- confined to his very routine and repetitive small job and those of the fellow workers around him -- is much
smaller than that of those in the management structure -- his territory is much too insignificant compared to the territory of an individual in the management hierarchy. Accordingly, given the total world of the organization for both, the worker's verbal world -- the map to read from -- must, in practice, be vastly larger than that of the individual in the management cadre. Granted this reality in practice, the dangers of getting the false map is very much more for the workers than for management personnel. One has to survey a much larger map than the other -- direct experience of the organization more insignificant for one than for the other. And, given this conclusion, the implications for communication in the two segments -- the work level and management hierarchy -- is clear; quantitatively as well as qualitatively more and varied problems in the first than in the second.

It may be argued, however, that because of the intellectual background of executives and employees in the organizational positions would appear to hold their perspectives more tenaciously than may be the case of individuals at the operating level; and as such the problems of communication in the upper segment would seem to be more intense and more intractable than is the case in the lower segment. Even conceding the point, this conclusion reached would seem to hold why individuals in the
first segment are relatively more security conscious than the second. Their extended training through different positions in the management organizations -- vertically and horizontally -- and large stakes in fringe benefits, etc., are further facts of the situation -- all these reduce the mobility from one organization to another considerably. That this is so would be evident from the experience -- though no field data are available to prove the point -- that attrition of personnel in the managerial cadre is relatively much less. In other words, despite their intellectual background, they would appear to fall into the organizational thinking relatively more easily and completely than those in the other segment of the enterprise. No wonder that W. H. Whyte should be complaining of the emergence of "The Organization Man." In any case, to the extent that communication problems prevail within the management structure they tend to cumulate their impact on the lower organization levels -- the levels of first line supervisors and the workers.

On the other hand, when we move down the organization hierarchy to lower levels that embrace the workers, a different picture emerges. Here, the individuals -- the workers and workgroups -- are farther away from the top of the organization; they are a multitude of extremely diverse social, economical, cultural and family back-
grounds; their viewpoint is on the small jobs of their own and of their fellow workers -- in the work-level, through the process of division of labor, contents of individual jobs are not only far too smaller but are also repetitive and monotonous when compared to those of the other sector. No wonder that today's management is becoming increasingly preoccupied with methods study aiming at job enlargement to help workers' participation and motivation.

It should not however be imagined that the quantum of communication situations within the management structure is insignificant. Far from it, a research study of superior-subordinate pairs, covering individuals holding high middle-management positions in relation to their subordinates, reveals an interesting data as presented in the following page.

From the data, it can be seen that even in job duties, 15 per cent of the pairs agreed on less than half the topics; as to what exactly are the obstacles in the way of subordinate performance, the disagreement between the pairs is striking -- 38.4 percent showing no agreement, and 68.2 percent showing agreement on less than half of the points. As the research study concludes, there is "empirical evidence that substantial communication problems exist at the high management levels in organizations -- problems which one can expect to be reflected
EXHIBIT 4

COMPARATIVE AGREEMENT ON JOB FACTORS BETWEEN 58 SUPERIOR-SUBORDINATE PAIRS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0 Almost No Agreement on Topics</th>
<th>1 Agreement on Less Than Half The Topics</th>
<th>2 Agreement on About Half The Topics</th>
<th>3 Agreement on More Than Half The Topics</th>
<th>4 Agreement on All or Almost All Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job duties</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>39.1%</td>
<td>37.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job requirements (subordinate's qualifications)</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future changes in subordinate's job</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstacles in the way of subordinate's performance</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

in proper organizational efficiency and distortion of or-
organizational goals at lower levels in the hierarchy."

To sum up: in viewing communication problems in
an enterprise, it would appear that it may be approached
in two large segments; in the first segment -- manage-
ment structure per se -- communication problems are per-
haps smaller in extensiveness but greater in depth than
is the case in the other segment -- first-line super-
visors and in relation to the operating level, the en-
vironmental conditions governing the human situations in
the two areas helping to explain these differences in
the communication gaps in the two areas.

Business Communication: Barriers

Taking an overall view of the communication gaps,
as just explained, it may now be asked: what exactly
stands in the way of effective communication in an enter-
prise? What, in other words, are the barriers to it?

Before proceeding to take up the question, two
preliminary points require to be made. One, about the
method of communication. To make the point briefly, we
may quote Chester Barnard thus:

The method of communication centers in lan-
guage, oral and written. On its crudest side,
motions or actions that are of obvious meaning
when observed are sufficient for communication
without deliberate attempt to communicate ... On the other side, ... "observational feeling"
is likewise an important aspect of communica-
tion ... (though not) generally recognised ...
(it is so) because of the limitations of language and the differences in the linguistic capacities of those who use language. A very large element ... is the ability to understand without words, not merely the situation or conditions, but the intentions.\textsuperscript{41}

The upshot of the matter is this: though the techniques (or form) of communication are an important part of any organization and are preeminent problems of many, though communication technique shapes the form and the internal economy of organization and though the subject-matter of communication may dictate the form of communication in some case, such as in regard to technical functions requiring blueprints, for example -- even though such is the significance of the form of communication, media of communication, from our point of view, may well be regarded as very elastic, embracing interacting transference not only of written or oral words but the totality of feelings, attitudes, expression and beliefs back and forth. Such being the case, in communication, we are very much in the realm of psychology.

Two, how the facet of psychology involved in communication might help or hinder effective communication in specific situations is difficult to assess \textit{a priori}. Among other things, the reasons for this are threefold. One relates to the nature of willingness of the members

\textsuperscript{41}Barnard, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 89-90.
of an organization that was given a little while ago. The second relates to the semantics of language, written or oral, that Hayakawa, among others, has particularly emphasized. The third is the attitude, belief, feelings and opinions of individuals and groups involved in the communication process -- those that generally carry a number of meanings for the formal language.

Now, looking at the problem of barriers to effective communication from these perspectives, it may be said that, generally speaking, no exhaustive list of what the barriers may be would appear to be possible. However, there is no dearth of case studies and expert opinion on communication problems in business and industry.

Taking a cross section of these studies and reflections, a partial listing of barriers to effective communication would include:

Obstacles to Communication

1. Lack of communication policy
2. Authoritarian attitude of management
3. Past insincerity or failure of management to keep promises
4. Timidity, indifference, or reluctance to communicate
5. Legal limitations

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6. Resistance to change
7. Unfavorable climate
8. Failure to listen - to emotional content as well as words
9. Overconfidence in ability to know what others are thinking
10. Overestimating the audience's information and understanding its intelligence
11. Lack of empathy
12. Unavailability
13. Failure to make intent clear
14. Inopportune timing
15. Too many items in same message
16. Vague or complicated language
17. Size and complexity of the business
18. Decentralization
19. Poorly defined responsibility and authority
20. Too many levels, resulting in chain loss of detail and solution
21. Physical distance
22. Overloading of supervisors
23. Lack of motive to communicate
24. "Echelon psychology" or status system creating communication obstacles due to differences in rank
25. Fear of consequences
26. Lack of follow-up
27. Failure to appraise attitudes of audience
28. Failure to seek a response
29. Union activities
30. Insufficient communication training
31. Heterogeneity of audience
32. Mind set or defensiveness
33. Jealousies
34. Prejudices
35. Company politics
36. Hostile grapevine
37. Semantics
38. Lack of sufficient equipment facilities
39. Insufficient use of available media
40. Wrong use of media

Given such listing of barriers to effective communication, what is that the management in an organization must need do by way of a program of action? What, in other words, are the gate ways to an effective communication system in an enterprise?
Briefly answering the question, it may be said:
"The crying need in establishing a sound action program in communication is locating people who are key links in the communication system and seeing that they know how to communicate. If they are located, in the process of taking the following steps, there is no mystery to good communication in any company ..." The steps are:

1. Understanding the place and value of communication; 2. Grasping the significance of the total process; 3. Locating the channels of communication; 4. Determining the media and tools; 5. Understanding the problems and barriers to be overcome; 6. Issuing a communication policy; 7. Developing a philosophy and a climate for communication; 8. Including communication planning in all company actions; 9. Allowing time for communicating; and 10. Locating all key communicators and developing their ability to communicate.

These steps require more than mere theorizing; it obviously means applying theory and taking specific steps. Lest this should be considered as mere platitudes the warning may well be given -- warning that, it is in taking these appropriate steps that many "experts" and company executives have, in practice, stalled and bogged down.
CHAPTER IV

DEMONSTRATIVE EXERCISES IN COMMUNICATION

Introduction

In the abstract, the rationale, nature and scope of communication within an enterprise is very well understood and appreciated by the community of business executives. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to state that there is hardly be any business executive today who would deny the urgency of an effective communication system prevailing within his enterprise. In our times, the business executives are vying with each other in recognizing its importance in practice. "And yet," as Dr. David K. Berlo aptly points out, "nearly every organization has too little communication -- too little success with it." How, then, account for this disparity between the theoretical understanding and the 'living up to it' in real business situations? Where, how, and in what manner does effective communication in business founder in the realm of practice?

In the nature of things, in all cases of communication within a business enterprise what is really involved is message-sending and message-receiving, written or oral or behavioral or a combination of all these; and, in all cases, the media invariably are language, thought and action. These in their turn, regardless of the type
of communication just mentioned, have their literal and emotive content. And, extensive researches in the field of communication have now firmly established the point that the literal and emotive meanings of our language, thoughts and actions...Whether we are in the message-receiving or message-sending ends of the communication line, are inseparable. Given this recognition, and the further fact no two business situations are completely alike, it should be evident that "there are an infinite number of reasons why human communication breaks down, and it is impossible ever to anticipate all of them."

Clearly, therefore, no set of firmly established a priori guide-lines, valid for all practical situations, can be offered.

Generally aware of the concept and the need for effective communication in his business how then should the operating executive conduct himself in actual work-a-day environment, functional responsibility or the position in the organizational structure? As managers, we work through other people; we communicate with them to get results -- our role, as managers, is that we are in the "people" business. As managers, we must therefore be able to analyze work situations so as to predict the chances of communication breakdowns, anticipate the problem, and take steps necessary to correct it, realizing, of course some faulty communication may well be inevitable.
To this must be added Dr. Berlo's admonitions of the operating managers. Comparing the role of the feedback in managerial communication with that of a computer, this is what he has to say:

Every one knows that a computer makes an excellent use of feedback. It can be programmed to pay careful attention to all relevant reactions. It does not have an ego, so it does not avoid or distort. It does not get threatened. It is programmed for results ...

We program out computers ... but we do not program ourselves. In many ways we operate as inefficient machines. We ignore or distort the readings people give us, and fail to use information that makes us more effective managers.

What, in other words, this emphasises is that the management should not rely on cliches or rules but develop dispassionate insight into -- facultative perceptiveness of -- the world of communication that surround him generally and/or in specific situations.

To give concreteness to -- to breathe reality into -- what has been said above, two demonstrative case studies in business communication will be undertaken in this chapter. The case studies, taken from the excellent experimental works in communication by David K. Berlo, have been selected with three objectives in mind: (1) to demonstrate the nature of required analysis of work situation to effective communication; (2) to gain and pinpoint purposive insights into the problems of major predictors of faulty communication in practice, generally;
and (3) to represent different levels of organization and operational experience, so as to give the cases some measure of general validity.

The Case of How a Business Lost a Customer

A brief description of the case is given below:

Whitehead, vice-president for sales was deeply involved in an emergency conference when the Southern Regional Manager, Waldo, called from Atlanta. Whitehead's secretary, Dorothy tried to head Waldo off: "They're trying to meet the noon deadline on a report to the President. May I have him call you back this noon?"

"It's the Allied Machinery account, and it can't wait," said Waldo.

"Well, I'll see if he can break away."

"Thanks, Dorothy."

Whitehead was obviously annoyed as Dorothy broke into the conference. "Mr. Waldo is on line five. I told him what you were doing ... but he says it's urgent."

Waldo explained the urgent need to dispatch special parts ordered by Allied and Whitehead promised to arrange air-dispatch the same. He asked Dorothy to tell Oliver of the Shipping Department to fly the Allied order. Oliver being out of his office, his secretary Jane received the message from Dorothy rather sarcastically (remarking Dorothy as the new vice-president of sales). Returning, Oliver overheard the comment of (boiling) Jane and came to know from her about flying the order. He instructed shipping foreman Joe to rush the order who in turn, arranged shipment by a special truck (though costlier than air-dispatch) as he was not told specifically to fly the order. Failing receipt of parts, the next day Allied sent a telegram apparently cancelling the order. Receiving the telegram, Whitehead must have been asking what happened? What went wrong and why?

In terms of situational analysis, two points may be made at the outset. One is that it would serve no useful purpose to ask whose fault it was -- fault that led to the loss of a valuable customer. For, in one sense, it was not
anybody's fault. To put the point differently, no 'witch-hunting' at the end of any unhappy episode may be in the long run interest of the enterprise. It would not undo what has happened nor would it ensure that such things would not happen in future. The other point is that Mr. Whitehead cannot throw up his hand in the air and say, "that's the way the world is." This kind of failure is not only a breakdown in communication but no less a breakdown in managerial effectiveness, serious dollar losses to the enterprise and perhaps significant loss in employee morale. In fine, confronted with analysis of work situation, presently or in retrospect, the management, however harrassed, must steer clear of two extremes -- of "witch hunting" of any kind, and of a "spirit of despair." They are the "don'ts" in the challenge of communication problem.

To turn now to more positive analysis of the work situation involved in the case. Firstly, it is too bad that Waldo's message hit Whitehead at a time when Whitehead's mind was elsewhere. Here was clearly a situation when a message had to compete for attention. Communications research findings clearly indicate that in such a situation faulty communication generally occurs. To generalise the point: the more competition a message has, the more likely that communication will break down.

Secondly, what about Mr. Whitehead's slipping up in not directly speaking to Mr. Oliver? How about replacing
this direct contact by an indirect contact through their secretaries? Did not this bring up the status problem -- one that would not have raised its head if it were a direct deal between the two bosses? Clearly, while conveying the Allied message to Mr. Oliver, Miss Bailey was obviously anxious to leave Jane in no doubt about her status, that her status was higher than that of her. At the same time, Jane was not going to have any of that. Her ego was attacked, and her own status threatened, and as such Jane's reaction was inevitable. In this conflict of ego and status the Allied problem came to be -- however unintentionally on their part -- relatively unimportant.

A few points may be made at this stage. Firstly, the analysis clearly brings out how vital is ego and status to us all. Whenever our ego or status seems threatened, friction and tension must invariably follow, creating distortion all around. Secondly, to avoid the kind of problem that Mr. Whitehead ran into, a manager must know his staff, such as the feud between the secretaries. This would help anticipating problems relative to what he might do in anticipation and/or corrective action -- the points mentioned in the guide-lines earlier. Knowing his staff, and the feud between the two secretaries, Whitehead could have easily predicted it would cause his message to get distorted. Thirdly, looking ahead, if Mr. Whitehead does
not get rid of the status and ego threats that Dorothy and
Jane feel, he will surely have other breakdowns in future,
or else he will be doing everything himself. Fourthly,
even when Jane had communicated the message through Doro-
thy, did Oliver really understand Joe Whitehead? Did he
quite understand what the latter meant by the word "rush"?
Surely, the answer must be in the negative. Here is
where the two were looking at the same world with differ-
ent expectations. Oliver expects Whitehead to ask about
things he does not understand, while Whitehead thinks he
is expected not to ask questions, but to use his judge-
ment. They have been working under quite different ex-
pectations, and faulty communication has ensued.

The Case of Frank and George

Again, taken from Dr. David K. Berlo's experimental
work in this area, let us now turn to another case study
-- mapping a smaller area of the business than the first,
but bringing up the deeper aspect of the problem of com-
munication than the other. This is the case problem of
a foreman and his worker, one of the frequent experiences
at the plant management level.

The case may now be briefly given as follows:

Scene I

Frank: There's trouble on the Number Three line.
The foreman seems to think it's the automatic control.
I don't know what's causing the trouble, but what-
ever it is, get out there and get rid of of it.
George: Okay, I'll check and get it out of there.

Scene II (Next day)

Frank: (Angrily) George, all I want to know is what happened. Just tell me what happened.
George: I've been trying to.
Frank: What do you mean "you've been trying to?" All you've been doing is giving me excuses. I told you what to do. Now I want to know why you goofed it up.
George: No, sir! I didn't goof it up. I did what you told me to do.
Frank: No you didn't. What did I tell you to do?
George: You told me to go out on the line and find out which machine was causing the trouble, and pull it off the line.
Frank: I did not! I know what I told you, I didn't tell you to pull the machine — I told you to fix it. The front office is creaming its head off at me — pulling a perfectly good piece of equipment off the line when all it needed was a little bit of repairing. You don't yank machinery like that, you fix it!
George: That's not what you said to do.
Frank: I did, too — you just botched it up.
George: Look, I'm sorry, Frank. I did my best to follow your instructions.
Frank: Well maybe your best isn't good enough.

* * *

Frank: (throught-voice) What a mess. Well, that's one we bootted. Now wait a minute. I can't let it stop there. If I don't get this straightened out, we'll both be in trouble later. George is not stupid, and he tries to do a good job. (aloud)
George, I shouldn't have blown up like that. I'm sorry.
Frank: Same here. Look, Frank, I try to do the best job I can for you.
Frank: I know you do.
George: I thought you were saying I was stupid ... and it made me mad.
Frank: For a minute, I did think you were stupid ... then I realized that I was blaming you instead of myself. Actually, nobody's to blame, I guess. But we sure did get things fouled up. I don't understand. I thought my instructions were clear as a bell.
George: They were clear — to me.
Frank: Yeah, they were clear to both of us, but we meant totally different things. What did you hear me tell you?
George: I was to go out and get rid of whatever was causing trouble on the Number Three Line.
Frank: That's what I meant for you to do — but not to get rid of the control unit.
George: That's what was causing the trouble!
Frank: Yes, but I never dreamed you'd ... why we all got chewed our last week for writing off too much salvageable equipment. Wait a minute. I didn't tell you that, did I?
George: No sir.

* * * *

The case data poses three important problems for the operating supervisory management: (1) How and why faulty communication develop? What about his reactions at the end of the case? (3) How could Frank have avoided the breakdown? Let us take up these questions in order.

How and why faulty communication came about? It is evident from the case that Frank told George just what to do, and that was that. He assumed that George understood what he meant. He proceeded on the assumption that he had had all the information and ideas, and his subordinate needed to be told what to do, and how to do it -- as if pouring the same out of his own head and dumping into the subordinate. Basically, he was "conveying," so to speak, more than anything else.

About the breakdown in communication. How can we characterise Frank's approach? How different could it have been? Frank was operating on what may be characterised as "conveyor theory of communication." Such a limited view overlooks two vital aspects of communica-
tion. One is that the "meanings aren't in the words we use ... they are found in the people who use them. Meanings come from experience. Our experience differ ... so our meanings differ ... meanings are not in words -- meanings are in people." The other is the role of feedback in communication process, as was pointed out in the earlier chapter. Since communication finally aims to change the behavior of the communicatee to get action and result, the latter's attention to and/or acceptance of our information and ideas becomes vital, whence the feedback as integral to effective communication. And, to ascertain it -- it may often be necessary for the manager/supervisor to:

... go behind what the others say, to see what they mean ... find out from posture, gestures, tones of voice, hesitation in response, the lifted eyebrow ... (for) everything communicates.

Anxious to "convey" himself to his subordinate George, the foreman was clearly remiss on these two points. He did not pause to ascertain his reaction and/or his understanding and acceptance of what he expected him to do. The result was a breakdown in communication between the two.

Now, what should be the reaction of the foreman, given the breakdown in communication, as given in the case? The question is important because the answer to it would provide guidelines for his behavior in future. He must
benefit from his mistakes -- develop his skill in, and facultative preceptiveness of, the art of successful communication -- to be able to predict the chances of a communication breakdown on future occasion -- anticipate problems and take corrective action.

As was pointed out in the previous case, the answer is clear. He must not show the typical first reaction of blaming the other man. Usually, it does not help to view communication breakdown as somebody's fault -- even your own. The effective manager must get rid of the notions of blame and fault. Actually, as has been aptly emphasised by David Berlo, if you continually attach blame to misunderstanding, the misunderstandings get worse, not better -- because people are afraid to admit that they don't understand and they start defending themselves. On the contrary, the manager's job is to create a climate in which people will feel free to take a look at what causes communication problems -- and they don't do that if they feel somebody is going to lower the boom on them afterwards.

If he should avoid the "fault and blame" approach, the manager -- in this case, the foreman -- should not also have doubt about himself -- his competence -- or about his subordinate's attitude. If effective communication involves skill, as mentioned earlier, it also involves a basic faith in people.
How could Frank have avoided the breakdown in communication? What, in other words, could have been the lines of dialogue between Frank and George so as to ensure effective communication?

Here, the author would have to fall back upon Dr. David Berlo's comments on the film strip of the case under consideration. Here are the three other alternatives that the dialogue between Frank and George could have taken according to him:

Let's go back and start over:

Frank: There's trouble on the Number Three line. The foreman seems to think it's the automatic control. I don't know what's causing the trouble, but whatever it is, get out there and get rid of it.

George: Okay, I'll check and get it out of there.

Frank: Oh, George. You're sure you understand?

George: Yeah, I'm sure.

* * * *

(Berlo: No, don't ask him if he understands. All the pressure is on him to say yes ... whether he understands or not. Ask him what he understands. Try it again.)

* * * *

Frank: George, this is important. Now let's check and make sure we're on the same wavelength. What are you going to do?

George: I'm going to check the line. If I find the problem is coming from the automatic control, I'll pull it off the line and replace it.

Frank: No, no. That's not what I said!

* * * *

(Berlo: Wait a minute. Don't start an argument over what was really said. That's not important. What's important is that he gets the right message. Try it once more.)
George: I'm going to pull it off the line and replace it.
Frank: That's not what I mean to say. Don't pull the control unless absolutely necessary. There's a squeeze on about excessive salvage. Try to fix it if at all possible.
George: I think I've got you now. Find the trouble, fix the control if possible. If it takes too much or too long to fix it, pull it off and replace. Okay?
Frank: Okay, but before you pull it, check with me.

* * *

Which of these three could be taken to be optimal from the point of view of effective communication? In the first case, George asking if Frank understood him -- the pressure is all on the latter -- the pressure is on George to say "yes." In the second case -- when George is asking what he understood him to say -- one can read the sign of the beginning of an argument between the two. Surely, these are not the lines of achieving effective communication. When we turn to the third instance the pressures are no more one-sided, more than that, the exact message is got across and communication is very much more effective than in the other cases.

To sum up the case study, the work situation here is much simpler than in the first case; the area and subjects of communication are more straightforward than in the other; yet, typically of such situations at the plant level of our industries, a simple message directly from one person to another did not get across. More than the first, the second case clearly demonstrate how commun-
cation is hard, and has a chance of breaking down at all
times; on the simplicity of the case situation here, it
may be mentioned that of the four predictors that cause
faulty communication in practice, as mentioned in the
earlier case study. Only one would be seen to charac-
terise the case here, namely uncertainty and error in
what is expected.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS: A FEW THOUGHTS FOR THE MANAGER

With the growth and expansion of the business system, and increasing differentiation of functions within it, modern enterprises have become increasingly larger and larger institutions, requiring more and more people to work together to achieve organizational objectives. In the sequel, the need for effective communication has become obvious. It is no wonder that in recent years more and more researches have come to focus on the nature of, and problems in, effective communication within the business.

Making use of the findings of some of these researches and viewpoints of the experts in the field, this study has tried to briefly define, explain, analyze and interpret the meaning, scope and problems of effective communication within a business enterprise. As our presentation will have clearly indicated, the whole subject of effective communication -- by its very nature -- is more of spirit than of concreteness, more intangible than tangible. In the circumstances, there must inevitably be shades of indefiniteness about what constitutes effective communication and how to measure its effectiveness in practical situations. To round up the study, the author, therefore, undertook demonstrative exercises in the ap-
plication of effective communication in specific cases
drawn from the world of business.

Of all the managerial tools, effective communica-
tion is one that no management -- whether of small or
large business -- can afford to do without. It is in-
herent in the management of any human organization, but
very much more so of a business enterprise. The reason
is obvious. In other human organizations -- such as
clubs, fraternities, patriotic organizations of one type
or another -- the members are part of it on the basis of
initial and innate conviction of the organizational ob-
jective. The same cannot be said of the members -- the
employees and executives -- of a business enterprise.
Indeed, the positive task of reconciling the diverse in-
terests of the individuals within an enterprise with the
objectives of the enterprise is what Chester Barnard
would describe as the functions of the executive, whence
the tool of effective communication in business.

Again, whatever the facade of managerial process
in different work environment, -- financial planning,
personnel practice and so on -- no business can achieve
its objective without persuading its employees to the
management point of view. Whether we like it or not,
persuasion is central to managerial competence. And,
effective persuasion, meaningful and purposive per-
suasion, is the core of effective communication.
Yet, this ubiquitous and inalienable tool of management is unique. Unlike any other tools that management makes use of in the managerial process, this tool of effective communication, as already mentioned, is far from being precise, definite and concrete either in concept or in effectiveness. Nor is its achievement in practice easily ascertained. Of this tool, more than any other, it may well be said that "nothing succeeds like success." What may then be the concluding words of this study for the operating managers in business?

Firstly, as managers it is our job to persuade people to accept change which -- by necessity or by choice -- has already been decided on. And, if to persuade people is the heart of managerial responsibility, effective communication is the tool that the management must make use of -- to this, there is no alternative. Let us, therefore, gain skill, insight and perceptiveness of our environment to wield it in the most efficient manner.

Again, as managers, it's our job to motivate, to create, control, and persuade. For, through these all, we change the human elements in the business to top management point of view, to win them over to do what the business objectives require. In short, as managers, we are "change agents." If so, we need to read people, see the world as they see it, and anticipate what kind of communication would be effective; to remember that we
are the "eyes" of the communications networks in an enterprise. The task of achieving effective communication in practice is very much more on our shoulders than any body else's.

Secondly, basic to achieving the same, we must be able to make thorough analysis of our different situations, not from our own point of view but from those of the persons whose behaviors we may be trying to influence to help the objectives of the enterprise. As basic to such analysis, we must be able to answer a lot of questions about our subordinates: What are their beliefs? How do they look at the world? What kind of things make their world fit, and what throws them out of balance? When are they likely to accept change, and when will they resist change by rejecting or distorting or avoiding, openly or covertly, as the case may be? How do we get through to them? Are they the kind of guys who listen carefully to what is said? Or, are they more interested in who said it? Do they weigh the evidence, or are they more likely to go along with people they like?

It may be mentioned here that too often, as managers we introduce change without raising these questions. When we do analyze situations we are prone to do so from our point of view. What is required is analysis from the other man's point of view, with empathy. Analysis of work situations with complete empathy is the first
ground rule in effective communication.

Thirdly, as managers, we must build a relationship with others -- bosses, subordinates and colleagues -- which would cause them to go along with what we may say because we say it -- build up, in other words, what is known, in communication theory as credibility. Without this foundation of credibility about ourselves, all our best efforts at effective communication may well come to naught. This, then, is the second grand rule for achieving effective communication in practice.

How may this credibility be built up? Researches indicate that there are factors that make for it. One is building up a reputation for ourselves -- of our competence, experience and training. As managers, we must know our jobs so thoroughly that we earn a reputation for competence. The second factor is building up our reputation for backing up our men, keeping our word, not making promises that we may not be able to fulfill. Here, let it be remembered that our subordinates learn to trust us only by experience, by what they see us do, as well as what they hear us say. As managers, we must not look on ourselves as mere relay stations in the chain of command. When the manager continually passes the buck to top management, thinking it will keep relations friendly with his subordinates, protecting himself rather than thinking about the company, his attempt will usually backfire. This leads to the
last factor as drive on our part in the role of managers -- energy to see things through, to get job done, even at the risk of being dead tired, ability and willingness to follow through until an objective is accomplished.

Finally, depending on the situation, the effective communication in practice may take us beyond the role of mere persuasion. In practice, as managers we may find ourselves alternating between two broad types of operating environment. One is where, as links in the chain of command, we are only concerned with what has already decided upon. Our role is then simply communicating the top management point of view, large or small, specific or general. In such situations, our role is essentially that of effective persuaders -- persuading people to accept what has already been handed down to us. The other is where, as managers, we are called upon to make decisions, and take responsibilities. In most organizations, where the principle of delegation is fairly at work. This is the major segment of the managers' environment -- as managers take upon themselves considerable actual decision-makings.

In the first situations, effective communication need to comprehend more than effective persuasion. Even in such a restricted environment, field researches have shown again and again, if the subordinates are encouraged to express their opinion, beliefs, ideas and suggestions, the eventual change would be more readily accepted. To
put the point differently, when the subordinates cannot participate in decision-making in any manner, of which more later on, let us, as managers, at least make sure that the subordinates can participate in working out the predetermined change.

In the second set of situations our responsibility for communication in the role of managers need take us further. Here, we should let our subordinates participate in discussing the problem before us before making final decisions -- their participation in such a manner would be firm evidence of our willingness to empathize with subordinates.

In short, the final ground rule for effective communication for us, as the operating managers, would be that, whether it is in trying to implement a change that has already been decided upon -- such as in communicating the top management point of view -- or in making decisions within our domains, as managers, we must ensure our subordinates' participation as best as circumstances may permit -- not merely to achieve our immediate objective but also to improve our credibility trait of empathy, that would stand us in good stead in future -- ensure participation not in a spirit of turning over problems to subordinates but in the hope of better decisions and/or making them feel that they were partners to them.
To sum up: developing credibility for ourselves, consciously cultivating empathy at all times, let us, as managers, follow three precepts in the operating environment -- gain insight into, and develop skill in the analysis of, situations that may pose the problems of effective communication; establish proper support for climate of relationship, with all we may work with, and, finally, keep in mind involving our subordinates in our decision-making and/or working out the change already decided upon.

In closing this study, let us, as managers, be warned that the tool of communication is an extremely delicate and fragile instrument. If handled indifferently, even small communication problems -- such as the ones we took up for case studies -- may bring disaster to the business, as we saw in the first case study. More specifically, let this be our warning to ourselves in the role of managers: ... let's be sure we understand what we mean by empathy and credibility. Empathy is not just a set of techniques. It requires a real concern with what is in the self-interest of the other man. You don't play games with people -- you work to look at the world from their point of view. If you don't ... if you simply treat people as toy soldiers ... they'll know it, and communication will backfire. Your credibility is destroyed the moment improper motives are revealed. Effective communication involves a basic faith in people.
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