

## **Q1: What are the Channels of Communication?**

**Ans.** The channels of communication within an organization are of two types: Formal and Informal.

1. Formal Channel is that where the bosses and the subordinates interact with one another. This kind of communication is very formal and is largely conducted through written messages. It is of three types:
  - i) Downward Communication
  - ii) Upward Communication
  - iii) Horizontal or Lateral Communication

Downward and upward communication is also known as **Vertical Communication**.

**Downward Communication:** In Downward communication, the information flows from the upper management down to the employees of the lower ranks. Through downward communication, the management gives information to the employees about the policies or policy changes of the organization. Moreover through downward channel, the bosses persuade the lower staff to work with devotion and suggest about improvement of work. Other elements of downward communication are orders, advice, counseling, warning etc.

**Upward Communication:** Communication from lower staff to the upper management is known as upward communication. The lower staff often seeks guidance about certain things from their bosses. They also provide them information about certain problems they are facing in their day-to-day work. Requests are made for leave, for increment of salary, for bonus etc. If the subordinate staff has complaints against their colleagues, the communication again is sent to the superiors.

**Horizontal/ Lateral Communication:** This kind of communication takes place among peers or the employees of equal rank. The channels of this type of communication are face to face conversations, meetings, telephone etc. The barriers here are professional rivalries, mutual jealousies, the clash of egos etc.

2. **Informal channel** of communication is casual in nature. It consists of gossip-mongering, loose talk, conversation between friends and family etc. This kind of communication consists of Grapevine communication.

**Grapevine:** Besides the formal communication channels, there is the informal communication channel that goes on in an organization. This consists of loose talk, gossip-mongering among the staff of equal or near equal ranks. This kind of communication is called Grapevine because it spreads like a grapevine at a fast speed, and in all directions. Grapevine revolves around family affairs, personal matters, rumours etc. There are various

advantages of grapevine. It offers emotional relief and diversion to the employees who remain in stress most of the time. It transmits information very fast. Employees sometimes take advantage of this channel to float news about their new policies. If the feedback is positive, they announce the new policies.

## **Q2: What are the Fundamental Tools of Communication?**

All living beings communicate with each other through sounds, gestures or language. Human beings communicate with each other through language, postures or gestures. There are two fundamental tools of communication:

- i) **Non Verbal** (Signs, symbols, pictures, postures, gestures, body language, sound, face expression)
- ii) **Verbal** (Language, Mass media/Print media, Electronic media)

### **Non-Verbal Communication**

Signs, symbols and pictures have been used to convey ideas since ages. In Egypt, painted pictures on coffins of mummies, signs and symbols were used as a language, and the same have been decoded also by the researchers. Postures and gestures are also the tools of non-verbal communication. A pull of hand means 'come', nod means 'yes', shaking head sideways means 'no'. A scowl on the face, pulled down eyebrows, express dislike, anger and hate. A sneer is a clear signal for derision.

### **Verbal Communication**

Language is the most effective tool of communication. A good speaker must speak in clear voice, correct language; and the listener should also have no physical barriers to hear properly. He should have a fair knowledge of the language in which the process of communication takes place. Verbal communication can be further classified as follows:

1. **Mass Media/Print Media:** The mass media, comprises of newspapers, magazines, books, radio, film, television and more recently satellite TV and cable TV. Mass media is broadly divided into print and electronic media. While the print media are the oldest, the electronic media are products of the 21<sup>st</sup> century technological revolution.
2. **Electronic Media:** It comprises of radio, TV, cinema and internet. Electronic media provides instant communication and is quicker than print media.
3. **Internet and E-mail:** The internet or the World Wide Web, has proved to be a revolutionary tool of communication, so far as the speed is concerned. The single most

common use of the internet is for the exchange of electronic mail or e-mail. It has emerged as the cheapest and the most reliable way to communicate with loved ones all over the world.

4. **Smartphone and Blog:** of late, the smart phones have excelled in the field of electronic media, as a tool of communication. You can use it as fax, camera, radio, for e-mail, chatting and to tweet. You can use facebook to connect with your near and dear ones and send blogs.

A blog is a type of website that is usually arranged in chronological order from the most recent entry at the top of the main page to the older entries towards the bottom.