Fundamentals of Management
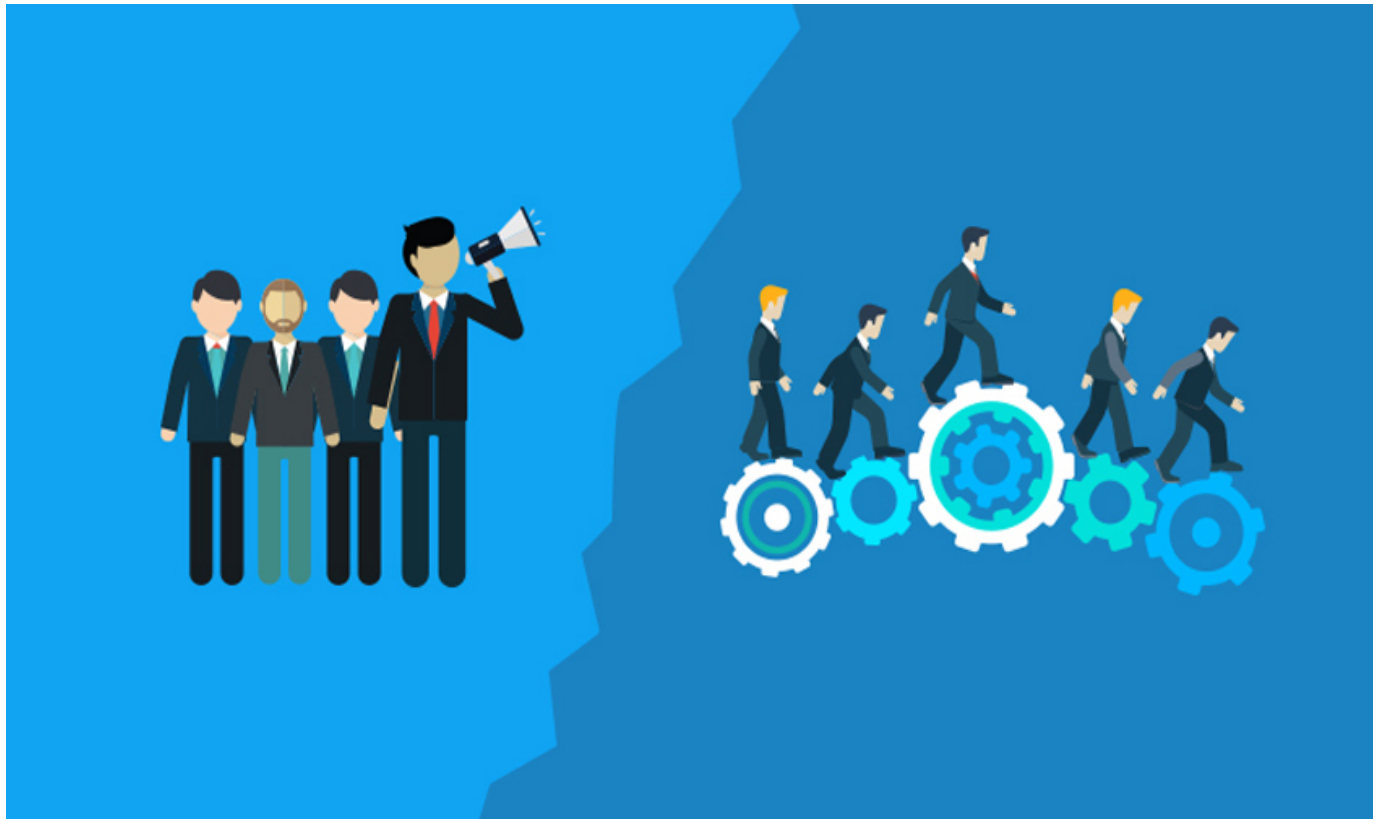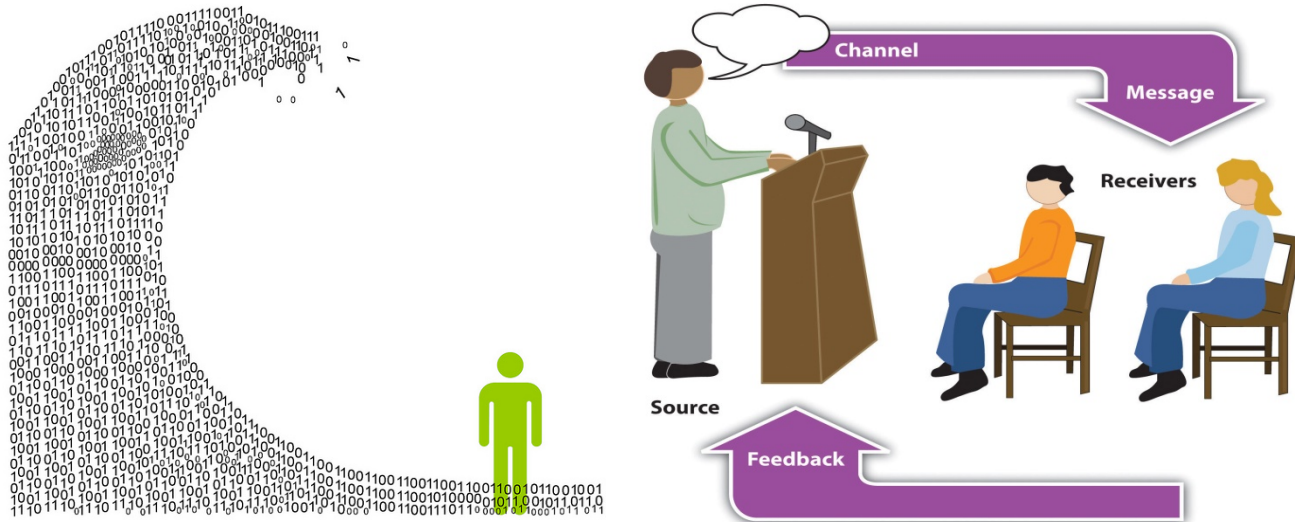
# Part Four: Leading

- <u>Chapter Thirteen: Managing Communication and Information</u>

  - Describe what managers need to know re: communicating effectively.
  - Explain how technology affects managerial communication.
  - Discuss contemporary issues in communication.

Communication

- <u>Communication takes place every day in every organization. In all areas. By all organizational members. In many different forms.</u>

  - Most of that communication tends to be work-related. But, sometimes communication can cause unintended consequences.
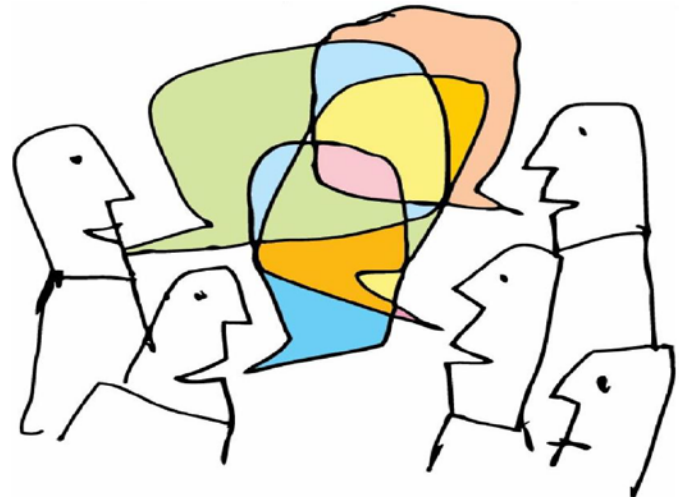
Communication

- <u>Everything a manager does involves communication</u>.

  - The best idea, the most creative suggestion, or the finest plan cannot take form without communication.

    - Managers, therefore, need effective communication skills.
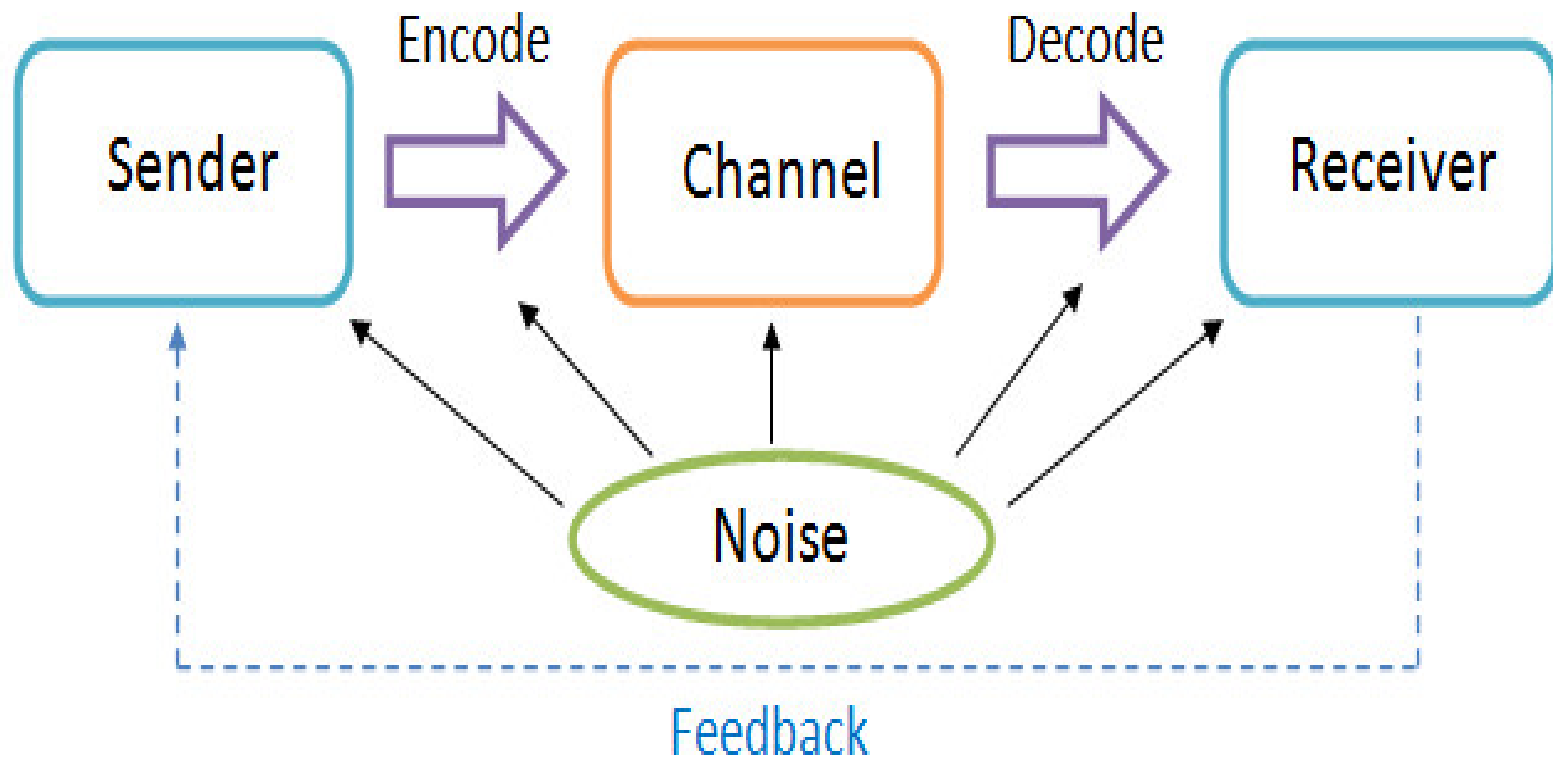
Communication

- <u>Communication can be thought of as a process or flow. And, communication problems occur when deviations or blockages disrupt that flow</u>.

  - Communication is a transfer of understanding and meaning from one person to another.

Communication Process

Encode

Decode

Sender

Channel

Receiver

Noise

Feedback

Communication Process (7 Parts)

- ## Part One and Two:

  - The sender initiates a message by encoding a thought.
  - Encoding is the process of converting a message into symbolic form. Four conditions affect the encoded message:

    1. <u>Skill</u> – ability to encode the message (write, speak, etc.)
    2. <u>Attitudes</u> – we hold predisposed ideas on topics and have biases.
    3. <u>Knowledge</u> – communication is restricted by knowledge of topic.
    4. <u>Social Cultural System</u> – our beliefs and values, which are part of our culture, influence us as a communication source.

Communication Process (7 Parts)

- <u>Part Three</u>:

  - The message is the actual physical product from the source that conveys some purpose.

    - Our message is affected by the code or group of symbols we use to transfer meaning (verbal, written, gesture), the content of the message itself, and the decisions that we make in selecting and arranging both codes and content.
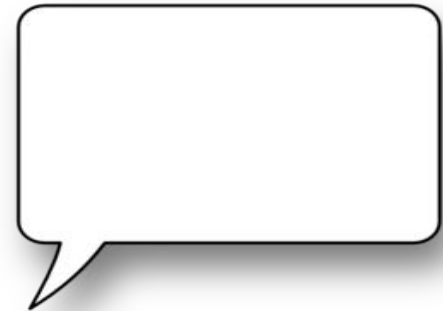
Communication Process (7 Parts)

- <u>Part Four</u>:

    - The channel is the medium through which the message travels. It's selected by the source, who must determine whether to use a formal or informal channel.

        - Formal channels are established by the organization and transmit messages that pertain to the job-related activities of members.
        - Other forms of messages, such as personal or social, follow the informal channels in the organization.

Communication Process (7 Parts)

- <u>Part Five and Six</u>:

  o The receiver is the person to whom the message is directed.

  o However, before the message can be received, the symbols in it must be translated into a form that can be understood by the receiver – the decoding of the message.

  - Just as the encoder was limited by her skills, attitudes, knowledge, and social cultural system, the receiver is equally restricted.

    o Accordingly, the source must be skillful in writing or speaking; the receiver must be skillful in reading or listening.

deCODE
M

Communication Process (7 Parts)

- <u>Part Seven</u>:

  - The final link in communication process is the feedback loop.
  - Feedback is the check on how successful we've been in transferring our message as originally intended.

    - It determines whether understanding has been achieved.

Written Messages vs. Verbal Messages

- <u>Written communications include memos, letters, e-mail, and other forms of digital communication or any other device that transmits written words or symbols</u>.

  - Advantages
    - They are tangible, verifiable, and more permanent than oral communication. Typically both sender and receiver have a record of the communication.
    - They are likely to be well thought out, logical, and clear.
  - Disadvantages
    - Writing may be more precise, but it consumes a great deal of time.
    - Lack of feedback. Also, there is no assurance the written message will be received, and if it is received, no guarantee that the recipient will interpret it as the sender meant.

Grapevine

- <u>The grapevine is the unofficial way that communication takes place in an organization. It's neither authorized or supported by the organization.</u>

  ○ Ironically, good information passes among us rapidly, but bad information travels even faster.

     ✕ In an organization characterized by openness, the grapevine may be extremely accurate.

     ✕ In an authoritative culture, the rumor mill may not be accurate. However, the information may contain an element of truth.

Nonverbal Communication

- <u>**Some of the most meaningful communications are neither spoken nor written - they are nonverbal communications.**</u>

  - The best known areas of nonverbal communication are body language and verbal intonation.

    - <u>Body language</u> refers to gestures, facial configurations, and other movements of the body.

    - <u>Verbal intonation</u> refers to the emphasis someone gives to words or phrases. A soft, smooth tone creates a different meaning from one that is abrasive with a strong emphasis on the last word.

      - "It's not what you say, but how you say it."

Physiology
Expressions
Posture
Gestures

Tonality
Tone
Tempo
Timbe

Words
Predicates
Tone
Key words

Nonverbal Communication

- <u>The fact that every oral communication also has a nonverbal message cannot be overemphasized, as the nonverbal component is likely to carry the greatest impact.</u>

  - Research indicates that 65 to 90 percent of the message of every face-to-face conversation is interpreted through body language.

    - Without complete agreement between the spoken words and the body language that accompanies it, receivers are more likely to react to body language as the "true meaning."

Communication Barriers

- <u>A number of interpersonal and intrapersonal barriers affect why the message decoded by a receiver is different from what the sender intended</u>.
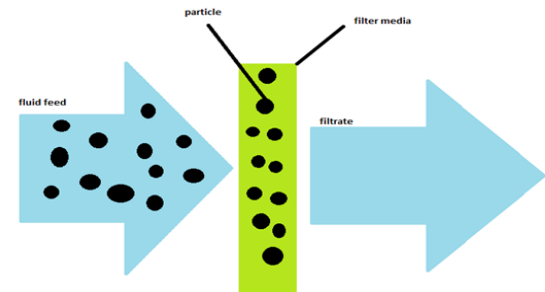
Communication Barriers

- ### Filtering

  - The deliberate manipulation of information to make it appear more favorable to the receiver.

    - For example, when an EE tells his boss what he feels the boss wants to hear, he is filtering information.

      - Filtering is reduced in collaborative work environments.
   - Filtering is reduced by use of email in office communication.

Communication Barriers

- ## Selective Perception

  - Receiving communications on the basis of what one selectively sees and hears depending on his or her needs, motivation, experience, background, and other personal characteristics.

    - Receivers also project their interests and expectations into communications as they decode them.

      - We don't see reality; rather, we interpret what we see and call it reality.

The Perception Process
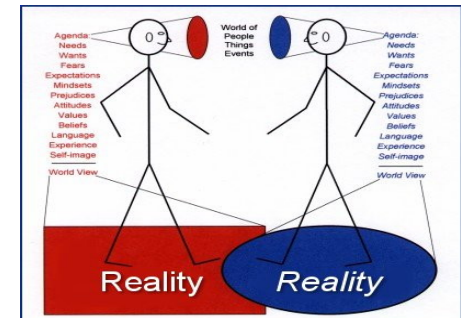
Communication Barriers

- <u>Information Overload</u>

  ○ When the amount of information one has to work with exceeds one's processing capacity.

    ✖ For example, the demands of keeping up with emails, phone calls, faxes, meetings, and professional reading create an onslaught of data that is nearly impossible to process and assimilate.
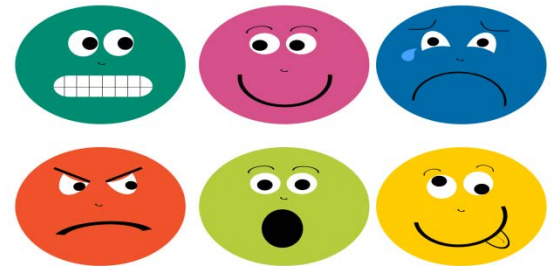
Communication Barriers

- <u>Emotions</u>

  - How the receiver feels when a message is received influences how he or she interprets it.

    - You'll often interpret the same message differently, depending on whether you're happy or distressed.

      - We often disregard our rational and objective thinking process and substitute emotional judgments.

Communication Barriers

- <u>Language</u>

  - Words have different meanings to different people.

    - Receivers will use <u>their</u> definitions of words being communicated.
    - "The meanings of words are not in the words; they are in us."

      - A person's age, education, and cultural background are three of the more obvious variables that influence the language a person uses and the definitions he or she applies to words.

Communication Barriers

- <u>Gender</u>

  - How males and females react to communication may be different, and they each have a different communication style.

    - To keep gender differences from becoming persistent barriers to effective communication, individuals must strive for acceptance, understanding, and a commitment to communicate adaptively with each other.

Communication Barriers

- <u>National Culture</u>

  - Communication differences can also arise from different languages that individuals use to communicate and the national culture of which they are a part.

    - In the U.S., managers rely heavily of memoranda, announcements, position papers, and other formal forms of communication to state their positions on issues.

    - In collectivist countries, such as Japan, managers engage in extensive verbal consultation with EE's over an issue first and draw up a formal document later to outline the agreement made.

Overcoming Communication Barriers

- ## Use Feedback

  - Check the accuracy of what has been communicated or what you think you heard.

    - Many communication problems are directly attributed to misunderstanding and inaccuracies.

      - These problems are less likely to occur if the manager gets feedback, both verbal and nonverbal.

Overcoming Communication Barriers

- <u>Simplify Language</u>

  - Use words that the intended audience understands.

    - Effective communication is achieved when a message is both received and understood.

Overcoming Communication Barriers

- ## Listen Actively

  - ○ Listen for the full meaning of the message without making premature judgment or interpretation or thinking about what you are going to say in response.

    - ✗ Active listening is enhanced by developing empathy with the sender – that is, by putting yourself in the sender's position.

      - ○ An empathetic listener reserves judgment on the message's content and carefully listens to what is being said.

Every good conversation starts with good listening.

Be a Good Listener

Eyes are on the speaker

Brain is thinking about what is being said

Ears listen carefully

Mouth is quiet

Hands are still

Feet are still

Active Listening

- <u>The following 8 specific behaviors are associated with active listening:</u>

1. Make Eye Contact
2. Exhibit Affirmative Nods and Appropriate Facial Expressions
3. Avoid Distracting Actions or Gestures
4. Ask Questions
5. Paraphrase
6. Avoid Interrupting the Speaker
7. Don't Over-Talk
8. Make Smooth Transitions between Roles of Speaker and Listener

Overcoming Communication Barriers

- ## Constrain Emotions

  - Emotions can cloud and distort communication.

    - Recognize when your emotions are running high. When they are, don't communicate until you have calmed down.
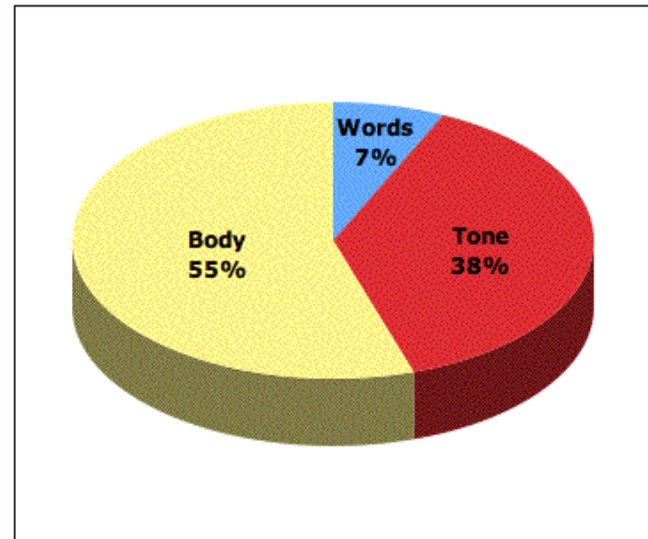
Overcoming Communication Barriers

- <u>Watch Nonverbal Cues</u>

  - Be aware that your actions speak louder than your words. Keep the two consistent.

    - Be sure your actions align with and reinforce the words that go along with them.

Technology and Managerial Communication

- <u>Information Technology (IT) has radically changed the way organizational members work and communicate.</u>

  - Improves manager's ability to monitor individual and team performance.
  - Allows EE's to have more complete information to make faster decisions.
  - Provides EE's more opportunities to collaborate and share information.
  - Allows EE's to be fully accessible 24/7.

    - Technology is constantly changing, and will have a continued influence on how we communicate.

Communication Issues

- <u>A recent survey found that 20 percent of EE's at large companies say they contribute regularly to blogs, social networks, wikis, and other web services.</u>

  - Managers are learning, the hard way sometimes, that all this new technology has created special communication challenges, particularly in the areas of:

    1. Legal and Security Issues
    2. Lack of Personal Interaction

Legal and Security Issues

- <u>Organizations are often affected by the exposure of sensitive or embarrassing information</u>.

  - Managers need to ensure that confidential information is safeguarded, and information systems are protected against hackers and/or spam.

Lack of Personal Interaction

- <u>It can be especially challenging to achieve understanding and collaborate on getting work done when communication takes place in a virtual environment.</u>

  - In response, some companies have banned email on certain days, and others have simply encouraged EE's to collaborate more in person as much as humanly possible.

  - Instead of fighting it, some companies are encouraging EE's to utilize the power of social networks to collaborate on work and to build strong connections.

MESSAGE

S

R

FEEDBACK

Sender   Receiver
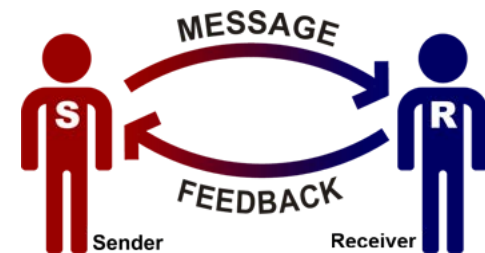
Knowledge Management

- <u>Part of a manager's responsibility in fostering an environment conducive to learning and effective communications is to create learning capabilities throughout the organization.</u>

  - Knowledge management involves cultivating a learning culture in which organizational members systematically gather knowledge and share it with others in the organization, so as to achieve better performance.

    - Today's technologies are helping to improve knowledge management and facilitating organizational communications and decision making.

Knowledge

Knowledge Management

- <u>Managers need to find ways to make it easier for EE's to communicate and share their knowledge, so they can learn from each other ways to do their jobs more effectively and efficiently</u>.

  - One way to do this is to build online information databases that EE's can access. Another way is to develop communities of practice – groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic and who can deepen their knowledge and expertise in that area by interacting on an ongoing basis.

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Knowledge Tree

Customer Service

- <u>**What communication takes place and how it takes place can have a significant impact on a customer's satisfaction with the service and likelihood of being a repeat customer.**</u>

  - Managers in service organizations need to make sure that EE's who interact with customers are communicating appropriately and effectively with those customers. How? By first recognizing the three components in any service delivery process:

    1. The customer
    2. The service organization
    3. The individual service provider

Customer Service

- <u>An organization with a strong service culture already values taking care of customers – finding out what their needs are, meeting those needs, and following up to make sure that their needs were met satisfactorily.</u>

  - Each of these activities involves communication, whether face-to-face, by phone or email, or through other channels.

Customer Service

- <u>Communication is important to the individual service provider or contact EE, as the quality of the interpersonal interaction between the customer and that EE does influence customer satisfaction, especially when the encounter isn't up to par.</u>

  - People on the front line involved with those "critical service encounters" are often the first to hear about or notice service failures or breakdowns. They must decide how and what to communicate during these instances.

    - Their ability to listen actively and communicate appropriately with the customer goes a long way in whether the situation is resolved to the customer's satisfaction or spirals out of control.

    - Another concern for the EE is making sure that he or she has the information needed to deal with customers efficiently and effectively.

Employee Input

- <u>In today's challenging environment, companies need to get input from their EE's.</u>

  - <u>Hold Town-Hall Meetings</u> where information is shared and input solicited.
  - <u>Provide Information</u> about what's going on, good and bad.
  - <u>Invest in Training</u> so that EE's see how they impact the customer experience.
  - <u>Analyze Problems Together</u> – managers and EE's.
  - <u>Make It Easy</u> for EE's to give input by setting up different ways for them to do so (online, suggestion box, preprinted cards, etc.)

Information for Employees

Ethical Communication

- **Ethical communication includes all relevant information, is true in every sense, and it is not deceptive in any way.**

  - On the other hand, unethical communication often distorts the truth or manipulates audiences.

    - Managers can encourage ethical communications by asking these questions:

      - Has the situation been defined fairly and accurately?
      - Why is the message being communicated?
      - How will the people affected by or who receive the message be impacted?
      - Does the message help achieve the greatest possible good while min. harm?
      - Will this decision that appears to be ethical now seem so in the future?
      - How comfortable are you with your communication effort? What would a person you admire think of it?

Ethics
Ethics

Ethical Communication

- <u>Remember that as a manager, you have a responsibility to think through your communication choices and the consequences of those choices</u>.

  - If you always remember that, you're likely to have ethical communication practices.

Six Ethics of Life
Before you Pray - Believe
Before you Speak - Listen
Before you Spend -Earn
Before you Write - Think
Before you Quit - Try &
Before you Die - Live !!!!!

The
END