COMMUNICATION – MANAGERIAL TOOL

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ABSTRACT
Communication entails putting information across to all beings (humans/animals, plants) by means of a wide range of signs and/or technical, biological, psychological and social devices whereas management is the art of achieving the company's goals by the subordinates. Thus, communication becomes an important part of the management functions. The relation between communication and management is bidirectional and its main role is to influence the employees' behaviour. Within the company, there are many communication styles with a direct or indirect impact on management.

KEYWORDS: *managerial communication, management process, ascendent communcation, descendent communication, communication styles*

1. The Manager's Role and Communication

Management represents the art of accomplishing the goals of the organization by means of the subordinates[1]. Hence, managers must collect data to set the objectives, let their collaborators know their expectations, find out the collaborators' ideas, expectations and fears regading the objectives they have set, communicate the corresponding corrective measures to be taken. As a result, communication plays a major role in carrying out the managerial functions.

The relation between communication and managerial process can be illustrated as follows in figure 1.

**Managerial communication** aims at **influencing peoples' behaviour**.

Tradionally, the manager's role within the organization is to **plan**, **organize**, **staff**, **direct** and **control** the subordinates' activities and resources: material and financial.

Little importance is given to the relationship between the manager and the other employees. Managers are not supposed to deal with feelings and emotions that are normally avoided and supressed within the organization.

However, it is the very neglecting of interpersonal factors that often leads to people's inefficiency and the organization's unaccomplished objectives.
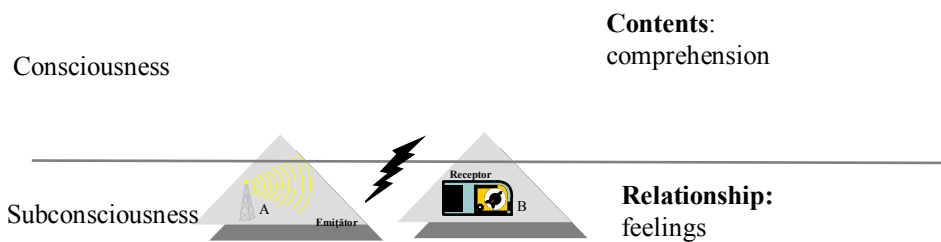
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[1] Mary Parker Follet
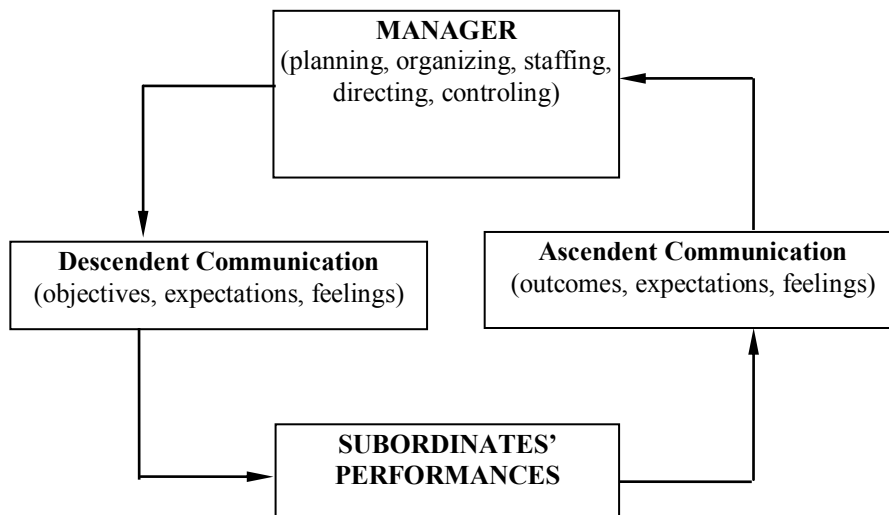
Figure 1 Management Process and Communication
(**Source**: Henry Albers, *Principles of Management: A Modern Approach*, John Wiley & Sons, 1990)

Each channel of communication consists of contents and relationship

Consciousness

Contents:
comprehension
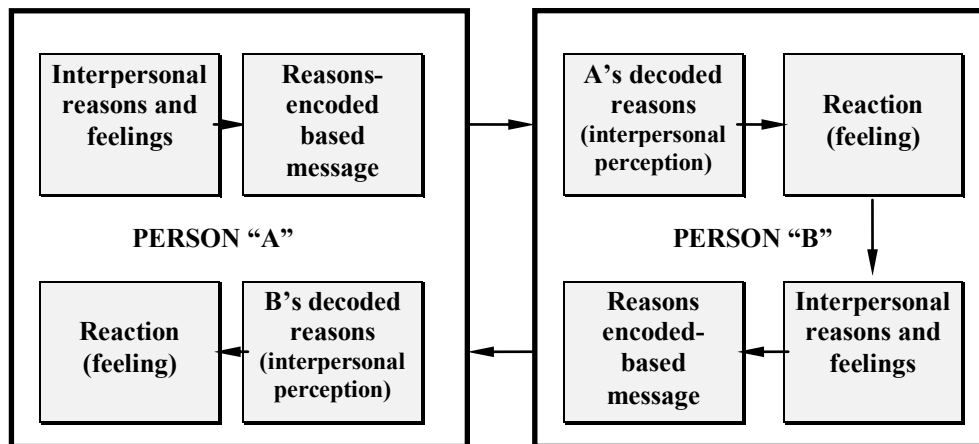

Subconsciousness

Relationship:
feelings

The type and level of feelings determine the level of comprehension and message acceptance. Communication takes place within the participants' relationship. Efficient communication relies on a positive relationship. No communication technique can replace a relationship. Building relationships takes time and effort and implies generosity. That is offering something of your knowledge, being patient, kind, loving, upright and consistent. All this is just a prerequisite for sound stable relationships. It is all we can do. Each of us is responsible for its part of the relationship, we cannot and we do not need to assume responsibilities for the whole relationship – for this implies two interlocutors.

The above described model may assist us in identifying a series of causes likely to trigger communication problems:

1. A person may not be aware of his/her interpersonal reasons.
2. The reasons may be encoded for fear of punishment and lack of self-confidence.

3. The interpersonal perception emerges while decoding the interlocutor's reasons.
4. Communication misunderstandings are likely to come up as a result of failure in feelings acknowledge and control.

Interpersonal reasons and feelings	**Reasons-encoded based message**	**A's decoded reasons (interpersonal perception)**	**Reaction (feeling)**
PERSON "A"		**PERSON "B"**	
Reaction (feeling)	**B's decoded reasons (interpersonal perception)**	**Reasons encoded-based message**	**Interpersonal reasons and feelings**

Communication is a process by means of which people exchange information based on a common system of symbols, signs and patterns of behaviour.

Source	Encoding	Channel	Decoding	Receiver

Disturbances   Disturbances

Feedback
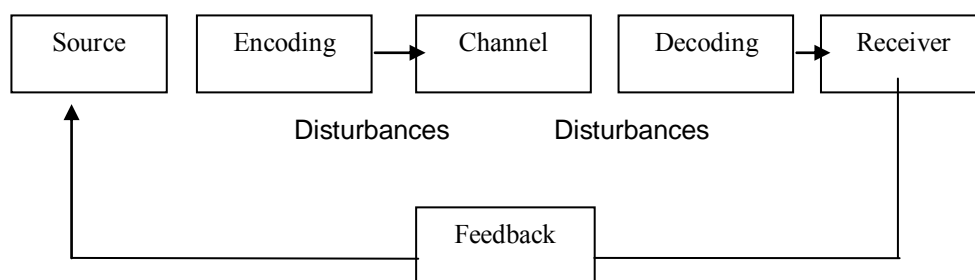
The components of this process are as follows:
- **Source** – message sender
- **Encoding** – oral or written symbols used to transmit the message
- **Message** – what the sender wants to transmit
- **Channel** – medium used to send the message
- **Decoding** – message interpretation by the recipient
- **Receiver** – message recipient
- **Feedback** – the information used to determine the accuracy of message transmission and interpretation.
- **Disturbances** – any factor likely to disturb the process of communication.

2. Communication Styles

The communication style may be defined as a particular pattern of interpersonal behaviour in a given situation. In fact, there are no „right" or „wrong" communication styles, rather apropriate or inappropriate to certain circumstances. Within companies, there have been identified six communication styles: controlling, egalitarian, structuring, dynamic, withdrawal and relinquishing.

The following table illustrates the main characteristics of each of the communication styles mentioned above:

Communication style	Characteristics
CONTROLLING	▪ One-way communication ▪ Communicators stick to their ideas ▪ Communicators employ power and manipulation to reinforce their message
EGALITARIAN	▪ Two-way communication ▪ Communicators stimulate others to express their ideas and opinions ▪ Communication is open and fluid ▪ Communication is friendly and warm, based on mutual understanding
STRUCTURING	▪ Structure - oriented communication ▪ Communicators inform others about procedures, regulations, standards to be implemented and carried out ▪ Communication focuses on problem solving
DYNAMIC	▪ Short and straight forward message ▪ Communicators are fair and direct ▪ Pragmatic and action-oriented communication contents
RELINQUISHING	▪ Deferential communication ▪ Communicators are highly receptive to others' points of view ▪ Communicators shift the responsibility for communication to the receiver
WITHDRAWAL	▪ Communicators avoid discussion ▪ Disinterest and unwillingness to participate in the discussion ▪ Decisions made independently, not interactively ▪ Communicators shift the topic of conversation and verbally harrass their interlcutor

By way of conclusion, it is worth mentioning that there is no communication style considered to be „the best", each style must be employed in due time and in the right situation. The use of communication styles according to circumstances requires the manager's intelligence and practice, good self-esteem and knowledge of his subordinates.

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