

Introduction to Organizational Communication

1. What Is Organizational Communication?

- **Definition** – The systematic exchange of information, meaning, and symbols among members of an organization to achieve goals.
 - **Scope** – Encompasses formal (reports, memos, meetings) and informal (water?cooler talk, instant messages) interactions.
 - **Purpose** – Aligns individual actions with the organization’s mission, builds relationships, and supports decision?making.
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2. Why It Matters

Benefit	Explanation
Improved Coordination	Clear messages reduce duplication and errors.
Enhanced Employee Engagement	Open communication fosters trust and commitment.
Better Decision?Making	Timely, accurate information leads to smarter choices.
Organizational Agility	Rapid sharing of insights helps adapt to change.
Conflict Reduction	Transparent dialogue prevents misunderstandings.

3. Core Models of Organizational Communication

Model	Key Idea	Typical Use
Classical (Transmission) Model	Linear flow: sender ? message ? channel ? receiver.	Formal directives, policies.
Interactive Model	Adds feedback loops; communication is two?way.	Team meetings, performance reviews.

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Model	Key Idea	Typical Use
Transactional Model	Simultaneous sending and receiving of messages; context and relationships shape meaning.	Collaborative projects, cross-functional work.
Network Model	Emphasizes informal ties, social networks, and information flow across nodes.	Knowledge sharing platforms, communities of practice.

4. Channels & Media

Channel	Characteristics	Best Practices
Face-to-Face	Immediate feedback, rich non-verbal cues.	Use for sensitive or complex topics.
Written (emails, memos, reports)	Provides record, can be precise.	Keep concise; use clear subject lines.
Digital Collaboration Tools (Slack, Teams, Asana)	Real-time, searchable, integrates workflow.	Set channel purpose; limit notifications.
Meetings (in-person & virtual)	Structured discussion, decision point.	Agenda-driven; assign action items.
Social Media & Intranet	Broad reach, informal tone.	Align tone with corporate culture; moderate content.

5. Common Barriers

1. **Physical Barriers** – Distance, poor acoustics, inadequate technology.
2. **Psychological Barriers** – Stress, bias, fear of retaliation.
3. **Semantic Barriers** – Jargon, ambiguous language, cultural differences.
4. **Organizational Barriers** – Hierarchical silos, unclear authority lines.
5. **Technological Barriers** – Incompatible systems, lack of training.

Mitigation Tips

- Standardize terminology and style guides.
- Provide communication training and coaching.
- Use multiple channels to reinforce key messages.
- Encourage a culture of open feedback.

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6. Communication Roles and Responsibilities

Role

Primary Communication Tasks

Top Management Vision articulation, strategic announcements, modeling transparency.

Middle Managers Translating strategy into operational goals, facilitating two-way dialogue,