**Chapter 13**

**COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

Chapter Outline

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Changes from 5e to 6e Chapter 13

* Chapter 13 was Chapter 10 with the same title in the 5e.
* The chapter has been updated, and 93 percent of the references are new to this edition.
* The introduction to the first section has been rewritten.
* The section on Information Technology has been reorganized, rewritten, and condensed.
* There is a new Join the Discussion Ethics & Social Responsibility 13–1 The Grapevine, and Click Fraud and advertising to children have been deleted.

Lecture Outline

Communication is part of one of the three major skills needed by managers (Chapter 1). All of the management roles (interpersonal, informational, and decisional) and management functions (planning, organizing, leading, and controlling) require effective communication skills.

**Communication** is the process of transmitting information and meaning. There are two major types, or levels, of communication: organizational and interpersonal.

I. ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

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| Learning Outcome (LO) 13–1. Describe the three ways communication flows through organizations.  Formal communication flows vertically downward and upward through the chain of command. Formal communication flows horizontally between colleagues and peers. Informal communication flows through the grapevine in any direction. |

Organizational communication flows formally in vertical and horizontal directions and informally through the grapevine.

**A. Vertical Communication**

**Vertical communication** is the flow of information both downward and upward through the organizational chain of command. It is also called *formal communication* because information that flows this way is recognized as the officially sanctioned information.

**1. Downward Vertical Communication**

When top-level management makes decisions or creates policies and procedures, these are often communicated down the chain of command to employees. Downward communication occurs when higher-level managers tell those below them what to do and how to do it.

**2. Upward Vertical Communication**

When employees send a message to their bosses, they are using upward communication.

**B. Horizontal Communication**

**Horizontal communication** is the flow of information between colleagues and peers. It is formal communication, but it does not follow the chain of command; instead, it is multidirectional. Horizontal communication is needed to coordinate within a department, among team members, and among different departments. Most employees spend more time communicating with peers than with managers.

**C. Grapevine Communication**

The **grapevine** is the informal flow of information in any direction throughout the organization. It is informal communication because it is not official or sanctioned by management. Grapevine information can begin with anyone in the organization and can flow in any direction.

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| **Review Question (RQ) 13–1. What are the differences among vertical, horizontal, and grapevine communication?**  Vertical communication is the flow of information both downward and upward through the organizational chain of command. It is also called formal communication because information that flows this way is recognized as the officially sanctioned information. Horizontal communication is the flow of information between colleagues and peers. It is formal communication, but it does not follow the chain of command; instead, it is multidirectional. The grapevine is the informal flow of information in any direction throughout an organization. It is informal communication because it is not official or sanctioned by management. |

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| **Communication Skills Question (CSQ) 13–1. Select an organization with which you are familiar. How can the flow of communication be improved?**  Answers will vary. |

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| **CSQ 13–2. Is the grapevine helpful or harmful to most organizations? Should managers try to stop grapevine communication? Why or why not?**  Answers will vary. The grapevine can’t be stopped, but managers can use it to help the firm. |

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| WORK APPLICATION Example student answer  **13–1. Give an example of vertical (upward and downward), horizontal, and grapevine communication at a company where you work or have worked.**  Over the summer I worked for an ice cream shop. My boss, the owner, did not work at the ice cream shop. However, every day he would call to give us any instructions for the day (downward vertical communication), to find out if we were busy, and to know how many cases of ice cream we sold that day (upward vertical communication). Throughout the day, my peers and I would communicate (horizontal communication) as we waited on customers, stocked the ice cream, cleaned up, etc. The owner was known as a playboy, so it was common for rumors to be spread (grapevine communication) about whom he was dating lately. |

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| **APPLYING THE CONCEPT Answers**  AC 13–1—Communication Flow  c 1. Horizontal. This is communication between colleagues in different departments.  a 2. Downward vertical. A manager is delegating down the chain of command.  d 3. Grapevine. This gossip about a mistake that is going through the grapevine.  c 4. Horizontal. If they take turns helping each other, it is most likely a peer communication.  b 5. Upward vertical. The manger had the authority to tell the other person to write a report (downward) . The employee is now reporting upward with the report completed.  . |

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| **JOIN THE DISCUSSION: ETHICS & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY—13–1**  The Grapevine  Answers will vary based on opinion. |

D. **Information Technology**

*Data* are unorganized facts and figures, whereas *information* is data converted into a form that helps people do their jobs. Useful information has three qualities:

* Timely—current and available when you need it
* Relevant—suited to the situation, accurate, complete but concise
* Understandable—in a form that is easy to comprehend

*Information* *technology* *(IT)* refers to the technology used to store, process, and distribute useful information. IT has enabled productivity gains that have reduced the cost of information and has created new opportunities. IT is critical to the learning organization, which needs to be innovative in order to remain competitive.

**1. The Internet**, **E-Commerce, Wireless, and Cloud Computing**

The *Internet* is a global collection of computer networks linked together to exchange data and information, and the *World Wide Web (WWW)* is a segment of the Internet in which information is presented in the form of Web pages.

*Electronic commerce* (*e-commerce)* consists of the buying and selling of products and services over electronic systems, typically the Internet. Exhibit 13–2 illustrates the various types of e-commerce**.**

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| **CSQ 13–3. Which e-commerce methods have you used? Which one do you use most often?**  Answers will vary. |

The trend toward *wireless communication* continues, as people are becoming increasingly mobile. E-commerce is also being called *mobile commerce (m-commerce)*, as wireless handheld devices such as cell phones and personal digital assistants (PDAs) are being used to conduct business.

The idea behind *cloud computing* is that companies store data and software on the Internet, then access it and run it all over the Web from their office computers, which thereby don’t need as much storage space, nor as much expensive software.

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| **CSQ 13–4. Wireless phones and handheld devices are blurring work and home life. Is this positive or negative? Should people stay connected and work while on vacation?**  Answers will vary. |

**2. The Dark Side of the Internet and Cellphones**

**Personal issues.** Employees are working harder and the boundaries of work and time off are blurring.

**Computer Crime,** **Identity Theft, and Cyber Theft.** These crimes hurt companies and individuals.

**Workplace Lost Productivity.** Multitasking, such as checking messages constantly, disrupts concentration and the time it takes to get the job done.

**Personal Time Lost Productivity.** Employees are doing personal thing on the job, so employers are monitoring and banning personal technology on the job.

**JOIN THE DISCUSSION: ETHICS & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY—13–2**

Should companies ban cell phones at work?

Answers will vary based on opinion.

II. THE INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION PROCESS AND COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

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| LO 13–2. List the four steps in the interpersonal communication process.  (1) The sender encodes the message and selects the transmission channel. (2) The sender transmits the message through a channel. (3) The receiver decodes the message and decides if feedback is needed. (4) The receiver may give feedback, make a response, or send a new message through a channel. |

**A. The Communication Process**

The **communication process** takes place between a sender who encodes a message and transmits it through a channel to a receiver who decodes it and may give feedback. Exhibit 13–3 illustrates the communication process.

**Step 1. The Sender Encodes the Message and Selects the Transmission Channel**

**Encoding the Message.** The *sender* of the message is the person who initiates communication. The *message* is the information and meaning communicated. **Encoding** is the sender’s process of putting the message into a form that the receiver will understand.

**Selecting the Transmission Channel.** The message is transmitted through a **communication channel**; the three primary channels are oral, nonverbal, and written. The sender should determine the most appropriate channel to meet the needs of the situation.

**Step 2. The Sender Transmits the Message**

After the sender encodes the message and selects the channel, he or she transmits the message through the channel to a receiver(s).

**Step 3. The Receiver Decodes the Message and Decides if Feedback Is Needed**

The person receiving the message decodes it. **Decoding** is the receiver’s process of translating a message into a meaningful form. The receiver interprets the meaning of the message and decides if feedback—a response or a new message—is needed. With oral communication, feedback is commonly given immediately. However, with written communication, feedback may be delayed.

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| **RQ 13–2. What is the difference between encoding and decoding?**  Encoding is the sender’s process of putting the message into a form that the receiver will understand. Decoding is the receiver’s process of translating a message into meaningful form. |

**Step 4. Feedback: A Response or a New Message May Be Transmitted**

After the receiver decodes the message, he or she may give feedback to the sender. You should realize that the role of sender and receiver can be changed during a communication exchange.

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| WORK APPLICATION Example student answer  **13–2. Give an example of a message that might be transmitted in a work setting. Be sure to illustrate the four steps in the communication process, state the channel, and note if feedback was given.**  The following may be used if you are quitting your job because you found a better one:  **Step 1.** I encoded the message and selected oral face-to-face communication.  **Step 2.** I told my boss at the end of the day.  **Step 3.** My boss decoded the message and decided to give me feedback.  **Step 4.** My boss responded with feedback saying that I had done a good job and that he was sorry to lose me. He wished me good luck in my future job. |

**B. Communication Barriers**

Exhibit 13–4 depicts a number of common barriers to communication.

**1. Perception**

As messages are transmitted, receivers perceive them and translate them so that they make sense. *Semantics* and *jargon* can be communication barriers, because the same word often means different things to different people.

To overcome perception problems, you need to consider how the other person will most likely perceive the message and try to encode and transmit it appropriately. Thus, the choice of words is important. Be careful not to use jargon with people who are unfamiliar with the terminology, especially people from countries with different cultures.

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| **CSQ 13–5. What does perception have to do with encoding and decoding?**  Encoding and decoding are based on perception. As messages are transmitted, receivers perceive them and translate them so that they can make sense. To overcome perception problems, when encoding, you need to consider how the other person will most likely perceive the message and try to encode and transmit it properly. |

**2. Information Overload**

There is a limit to the amount of information people can understand at any given time. Information overload is a common problem because we are often presented with too much information to comprehend in a short period of time.

To minimize information overload, send messages in a quantity that the receiver can understand. When sending an oral message, do not talk for too long without checking to be sure the receiver understands the message as you intended.

**3. Channel Selection**

Use of an inappropriate channel can result in missed communication.

Before sending a message, give careful thought to selecting the most effective channel.

**4. Noise**

Noise during the transmission of a message can disturb or confuse the receiver. Noise is anything that interferes with message transmission.

To overcome noise, you need to consider the physical surroundings before transmitting a message. Try to keep noise to a minimum. If possible, stop the noise or distraction or move to a quiet location.

**5. Trust and Credibility**

During communication, receivers take into account the trust they have in the senders, as well as the senders’ credibility. When receivers do not trust senders or do not believe senders know what they are talking about, they are reluctant to accept the message.

To improve others’ level of trust in you, be open and honest with people. If people catch you in a lie, they may never trust you again. To gain and maintain credibility, get the facts straight before you communicate, and send clear, correct messages.

**6. Poor Listening**

People usually hear what the sender is saying, but often they do not listen to the message or understand what is being transmitted. Poor listening is sometimes the result of not paying attention or other distractions.

One method to help ensure that people listen to your message involves questioning them and having them paraphrase the message back to you.

**7. Emotions**

Everyone has emotions, and emotions can interfere with communication and make it difficult for people to be objective and to listen.

When communicating, you should remain calm and be careful not to make others emotional by your behavior.

**8. Filtering**

*Filtering* is the process of altering or distorting information to project a more favorable image.

To help eliminate filtering, you should treat errors as a learning experience rather than as an opportunity to blame and criticize employees.

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| **RQ 13–3. What is filtering?**  Filtering is the process of altering or distorting information to project a more favorable image. |

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| **CSQ 13–6. Which communication barrier do you think is the most common, and which barrier do you believe has the most negative effects on communication?**  Answers will vary. |

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| WORK APPLICATION Example student answer  **13–3. Give two examples of different communication barriers you encountered at work. Explain how each barrier could have been overcome.**  *Noise:* My boss was out of town, and she called me from Chicago to tell me what time her flight would arrive at the Hartford airport, so I could pick her up. I was in my dorm room, which was full of people talking, and the music was blasting. It was so noisy I could hardly hear her. She told me to pick her up at 4:00 p.m., but I thought she said 2:00 p.m. So, I was at the airport two hours early. To overcome the barrier, I should have told everyone to be quiet and to turn down the music.  *Perception:* My boss told me to hang an advertised special poster in the left side of the window. We have a large window. After I hung the poster, my boss said to move it up higher. I should have asked for details of where he wanted it the first time. The second time I asked, “How many feet down from the top of the window do you want the poster?” |

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| **APPLYING THE CONCEPT Answers**  AC 13–2—Communication Barriers  g 6. Emotions. Being told to chill out is a sign of emotions running high.  b 7. Information overload. The listener is so overwhelmed with all the information given, he or she doesn’t know what to say.  h 8. Filtering. The person is making performance sound better than it actually is.  a 9. Perception. There is a difference in the interpretation of “a little while.”  e 10. Trust and credibility. If the person had credibility, the other person would do the job his or her way. |

III. MESSAGE TRANSMISSION CHANNELS

When encoding a message, the sender should give careful consideration to selecting the channel. Channels (the way in which messages are transmitted) include oral, nonverbal, and written forms. Exhibit 13–4 lists the major message transmission channels.

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| LO 13–3. State the major advantages and disadvantages of oral communication and written communication.  The major advantages of oral communication are that it is usually easier and faster than written communication and encourages feedback. The disadvantage is that there is usually no record of communication.  The major advantage of written communication is that it is a record of what was communicated. The major disadvantages are that it usually takes longer and hinders feedback. |

**A. Oral Communication**

The five most common channels for oral communication are face-to-face conversations, meetings, presentations, telephone conversations, and voice mail messages. The major advantage of oral communication is that it is usually easier and faster than written communication and encourages feedback. The disadvantage is that there is usually no record of such communication.

**1.** **Face-to-Face Conversations**

Most managers should communicate one on one, face to face with employees. Face-to-face communication is the appropriate channel for delegating tasks, coaching, disciplining, sharing information, answering questions, checking progress toward objectives, and developing and maintaining good interpersonal relations.

**2. Meetings**

The most common type of meeting is the brief, informal get-together of a manager with two or more employees. Meetings are appropriate for coordinating employee activities, delegating a task to a group, and resolving employee conflicts.

**3. Presentations**

As a professional, you will very likely be required to make presentations to others on the job. Public speaking skills help you advance. Be sure to begin your presentation with a purpose statement and an overview of the main points to be covered; discuss your main points in the detail necessary to get the message across; and summarize the purpose, main points, and any action required of the audience. Use PowerPoint effectively.

**4.** **Telephone Conversations**

The telephone is the appropriate channel for quick exchanges of information and for checking up on something; phone calls often save managers from having to travel. However, a telephone conversation is an inappropriate channel for discussing or dealing with personnel matters.

**5. Voice Mail**

Voice mail is most commonly used to leave messages for people who don’t answer the phone and sometimes in place of written messages. Voice mail is appropriate for sending short messages containing information that need not be in written form.

**B. Nonverbal Communication**

**Nonverbal communication** consists of messages sent without words.It includes the *setting* of the communication (physical surroundings) and *body language.* The impact of any face-to-face communication is dependent on body language, which includes (1) facial expressions (eye contact and a wink or a smile, frown, or a dirty look); (2) vocal quality (not the words used, but the way they are said—calmly or urgently, fast or slowly, softly or loudly); (3) gestures (such as moving the hands, pointing and signaling, and nodding the head); and (4) posture (sitting up straight or slouching, leaning back or forward, crossing arms and/or legs).

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| **RQ 13–4. What is the difference between setting and body language?**  The setting refers to where the communication takes place (physical surroundings), whereas body language includes facial expressions, vocal quality, gestures, and posture. |

To make communication effective, you should be aware of your nonverbal communication and make sure it is consistent with your oral communication. You also want to be aware of other people’s nonverbal communication because it reveals their feelings and attitudes toward the communication. When talking to people, use nonverbal communication to convey openness to messages. Smile, face the person, and use appropriate eye contact; lean forward a bit and gesture frequently to convey that you are listening and are interested. Do not cross your arms or legs (signs of being closed to communication), and speak in a pleasant, calm tone of voice.

**C. Written Communication**

Nothing can reveal your communication weaknesses more clearly than poorly written letters, memos, reports, e-mails, and so on. The major advantage of written communication is that it provides a record of what was communicated. The major disadvantages are that it usually takes longer and it hinders feedback.

You are likely to encounter the following kinds of written communication in the workplace:

*Memos* are commonly used to send interorganizational messages.

*Letters* are commonly used to communicate with people outside of the organization. In today’s business world, memos and letters are sent electronically (in the form of e-mails or faxes) more often than they are sent through the mail. Sending written communication electronically saves time and paper.

*Reports* are used to convey information, evaluation, analysis, and/or recommendations to management or colleagues. Reports can also be sent by fax or as an attachment to e-mail.

*Bulletin board and blog notices* usually supplement other forms of communication.

*Posters (or signs)* are commonly used as reminders of important information, such as a mission statement or safety instructions. Posters can also be nonverbal, or graphic, communication. An example is the universal symbol that bans or forbids some activity: a picture of what you are not supposed to do, circled and with a line through it.

*Newsletters* are used to convey general information to all employees.

Written communication is appropriate for transmitting general information, for saying thank you, for messages requiring future action, for formal or official messages (especially those containing facts and figures), and for messages that affect several people in a related way.

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| **RQ 13–5.** **What is the difference between nonverbal and oral and written communication?**  Both oral and written communication uses words, but nonverbal doesn’t use words. |

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| WORK APPLICATION Example student answer  **13–4. Give an example of an oral message and a written message you received at work, and specify the channel of each.**  *Oral message:* My boss would always give me my assignments using face-to-face conversation.  *Written message:* All of the employees received a memo regarding the company picnic. |

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| **JOIN THE DISCUSSION: ETHICS & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY—13–2**  Advertising  Answers will vary based on opinion. |

**D. Combining Channels**

Nonverbal communication and oral communication are almost always combined. You can also combine oral and written communication (as in a presentation) or even oral, nonverbal, and written communication. Using combined channels is appropriate when the message is important and you want to ensure that employees attend to and understand it. For example, managers sometimes send a memo, then follow up with a personal visit or telephone call to see if there are any questions.

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| **CSQ 13–7. Which message transmission channel do you use most often in your personal and professional life? What is your strongest and weakest channel? How can you improve on your weakness?**  Answers will vary. |

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| **APPLYING THE CONCEPT Answers**  AC 13–4—Channel Selection  d 16. Telephone. The phone is the fastest way to find out if the letter is at the mail room.  i 17. Poster. A sign on the wall near the light switch should help remind them to turn off the lights. You could tell them of the problem at a meeting (b) or by memo (e), in addition to the poster.  b 18. Meeting. Getting together as a group would be an effective way to give the assignment. A memo/written instructions (e) could also be used at the meeting.  a 19. Face-to-face. An oral discussion and reprimand are in order. Also, a memo/written warning (e) may be placed in the employee’s file.  g 20. Report. It is best to give a written record that can be placed in your file. Face-to-face communication (a) could also be used to reinforce the report. |

**E. Selecting the Message Transmission Channel**

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| LO 13–4. State a general guide to channel selection.  As a general guide, use rich oral channels for sending difficult and unusual messages, less rich written channels for transmitting simple and routine messages to several people, and combined channels for important messages that employees need to attend to and understand. |

It’s important to select the most appropriate channel of transmission for any message.

*Media richness* refers to the amount of information and meaning conveyed through a channel. The more information and meaning, the “richer” the channel. Face-to-face communication is the richest channel because it allows the sender and receiver to take full advantage of both oral and nonverbal communication. The telephone is less rich than face to face because most nonverbal cues are lost when you cannot see facial expressions and gestures. All forms of oral communication are richer than written communication because oral communication allows transmission of at least some nonverbal cues, which are lost with written messages.

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| **RQ 13–6. What is media richness?**  Media richness refers to the amount of information and meaning conveyed through a channel. The more information and meaning, the “richer” the channel. |

As a general guide, use oral channels for sending difficult and unusual messages, written channels for transmitting simple and routine messages to several people, and combined channels for important messages that recipients need to attend to and understand.

IV. SENDING MESSAGES

**A. Planning the Message**

The vast majority of messages you send and receive in the workplace are quite simple and straightforward. Many such messages are transmitted orally and face to face or in a brief memo, e-mail, or fax. Such straightforward messages need minimal planning, because they are routine. However, sometimes the message you need to transmit is difficult, unusual, or especially important. For these kinds of messages, the richer the channel, the better.

Before sending a message, you should answer these what, who, how, when, and where questions:

* *What?* What is the goal of the message? What do you want the result of the communication to be? Set an objective.
* *Who?* Determine who should receive the message.
* *How?* With the receiver(s) in mind, plan how you will encode the message so that it will be understood. Select the appropriate channel(s) for the audience and situation.
* *When?* When will the message be transmitted? Timing is important.
* *Where?* Decide where the message will be transmitted (setting).

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| **RQ 13–7. What should be included in your plan to send a message?**  Before sending a message, you should answer these what, who, how, when, and where questions:  *What?* What is the goal of the message? What do you want the end result of the communication to be?  *Who?* Determine who should receive the message.  *How?* With the receiver(s) in mind, plan how you will encode the message so that it will be understood. Select the appropriate channel(s) for the audience and situation.  *When?* When will the message be transmitted? Timing is important.  *Where?* Decide where the message will be transmitted (setting). |

**B. The Message-Sending Process**

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| LO 13–5. List the five steps in the process of sending face-to-face messages.  The face-to-face message-sending process involves five steps: (1) Develop rapport. (2) State your communication objective. (3) Transmit your message. (4) Check the receiver’s understanding. (5) Get a commitment and follow up. |

When sending a face-to-face message, follow these steps in the **message-sending process**:

**Step 1. Develop rapport.** Put the receiver at ease. It is usually appropriate to begin communication with small talk related to the message.

**Step 2. State your communication objective.** It is helpful for the receiver to know the objective (result) of the communication before you explain the details.

**Step 3. Transmit your message.** Tell the receiver(s) whatever you want them to know calmly and with respect.

**Step 4. Check the receiver’s understanding.** When giving information, you should ask direct questions and/or paraphrase. Simply asking, “Do you have any questions?” does not check understanding.

**Step 5. Get a commitment and follow up:** If the message involves assigning a task, make sure that the recipient can do the task and have it done by a certain time or date. When employees are reluctant to commit to the necessary action, managers can use persuasive power within their authority. Follow up to ensure that the necessary action has been taken.

Model 13–1 lists the five steps in the message-sending process.

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| WORK APPLICATION Example student answer  **13–5. Recall a specific task that a boss assigned to you. Identify which steps in the face-to-face message-sending process he or she did and did not use.**  I had to do a mass mailing for my boss. My boss did not develop rapport (step 1) or state the communication objective (step 2); he just started by giving me the step-by-step instructions (step 3). After he was done explaining how to do the task, he asked me to paraphrase what he had just told me to make sure I understood what to do (step 4). He made sure I was able to finish it by the end of the day, and he checked on me periodically throughout the day to see how it was going (step 5). |

**C. Checking Understanding: Feedback**

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| LO 13–6. Describe paraphrasing and explain why it is useful.  Paraphrasing is the process of restating a message in one’s own words. The receiver uses paraphrasing to check understanding of the transmitted message. If the receiver can paraphrase the message accurately, communication has taken place. If not, communication is not complete. |

**Feedback** is the information that verifies a message. Questioning, paraphrasing, and inviting comments and suggestions are all means of obtaining feedback that check understanding. The best way to make sure communication has taken place is to get feedback from the receiver of the message through questioning and paraphrasing. **Paraphrasing** is the process of restating a message in one’s own words.

**1. The Common Approach to Getting Feedback on Messages and Why It Doesn’t Work**

The most common approach to getting feedback is to send the entire message and then ask, “Do you have any questions?” Feedback usually does not follow because people tend not to ask questions: To ask a question, especially if no one else does, is often considered an admission of not paying attention or not being bright enough to understand the message.

After managers send a message and ask if there are questions, they often make another common error. They assume that if no one asks a question, the communication is complete. In fact, recipients may have misunderstood the message. When this occurs, the result is often wasted time, materials, and effort.

**2. How to Get Feedback on Messages**

You should use the following four guidelines when seeking feedback on messages:

1. *Be open to feedback.* There are no dumb questions. When someone asks a question, you need to be responsive and patiently answer and explain things clearly. If people sense that you get upset if they ask questions, they will not ask. Also, if managers get upset with employees who bring them bad news (negative feedback), employees will tend to avoid these managers and keep bad news to themselves.
2. *Be aware of nonverbal communication.* Make sure that your nonverbal communication encourages feedback. For example, if you say, “I encourage questions,” but you look at people as though they are stupid or you act impatient when they do ask, people will learn not to ask questions. You must also read nonverbal communication accurately. For example, if you are explaining a task to an employee and he has a puzzled look on his face, he is probably confused but may not be willing to say so. In such a case, you should stop and clarify things before going on.
3. *Ask questions.* When you send messages, you should know whether recipients understand the messages before taking action. Direct questions about the specific information you have given will indicate if the receiver has been listening and whether he or she understands enough to give an appropriate reply. If the response is not accurate, you need to repeat the message, giving more examples or elaborating further.
4. *Paraphrase.* The most accurate indicator of understanding is paraphrasing. How you ask the receiver to paraphrase will affect his or her attitude. For example, saying, “Tell me what I just said so that I can be sure you will not make a mistake as usual” would probably result in defensive behavior or an error by the employee. Consider these examples of proper requests for paraphrasing:

“Now tell me what you are going to do so that we will be sure we are in agreement.”

“Would you tell me what you are going to do so that I can be sure that I explained myself clearly?”

Notice that the second statement takes the pressure off the employee. The sender is asking for a check on his or her own ability, not that of the employee. These types of requests for paraphrasing should result in a positive attitude toward the message and the sender. They show concern for the employee and for communicating effectively.

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| **RQ 13–8. What are the four ways to get feedback on messages?**  The four ways to get feedback on messages are (1) Be open to feedback. (2) Be aware of nonverbal communication. (3) Ask questions. (4) Paraphrase. |

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| **CSQ 13–8. When sending messages, how effective are you at checking the receiver’s understanding? Can you improve? If so, how?**  Answers will vary. |

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| WORK APPLICATION Example student answer  **13–6. Recall a past or present boss. How effective was this person at getting feedback? Was the boss open to feedback and aware of nonverbal communication? Did the boss ask questions and ask you to paraphrase?**  My past boss was not good at getting feedback. She really was not open to feedback, especially criticism. She paid no attention to nonverbal communication. For example, I watched a few times when my boss gave instructions to others. I could see that employees had a look of confusion on their faces, but my boss just kept giving instructions without stopping to clarify things. She would question by saying, “Any questions?” My boss never used paraphrasing with me. |

VI. RECEIVING MESSAGES

The third step in the communication process requires the receiver to decode the message and decide if feedback is needed. With oral communication, the key to successfully understanding the message is listening.

Listening is one of the most important business and personal skills you can develop.

**A. The Message-Receiving Process**

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| LO 13–7. List and explain the three parts of the process of receiving messages.  The three parts of the message-receiving process are listening, analyzing, and checking understanding. Listening is the process of giving a speaker your undivided attention. Analyzing is the process of thinking about, decoding, and evaluating the message. Checking understanding is the process of giving feedback. |

The **message receiving-process** includes listening, analyzing, and checking understanding. The message-receiving process is illustrated in Model 13–2.

**1.** **Listening**

*Listening* is the process of giving a speaker your undivided attention. As the speaker sends the message, you should be doing the following:

* *Paying attention.* When people begin to talk, stop what you are doing and give them your complete attention immediately. If you miss the first few words, you may miss the message.
* *Avoiding distractions.* Keep your eyes on the speaker. Do not fiddle with pens, papers, or other distractions. If you are in a noisy or distracting place, suggest moving to a quiet spot or talking later.
* *Staying tuned in.* While the other person is talking, try not to let your mind wander. Also, do not tune out the speaker because you do not like something about the person or because you disagree with what is being said. If the topic is difficult, ask questions. Do not think about what you are going to say in reply; just listen. As you listen, mentally paraphrase the message to stay tuned in so you don’t drop information.
* *Not assuming and interrupting.* People make listening mistakes when they hear the first few words of a sentence, finish it in their own minds, and miss the second half. Listen to the entire message without interrupting the speaker.
* *Watching nonverbal behavior.* Your goal is to understand both the feelings and the content of the message. People sometimes say one thing and mean something else. So watch as you listen to be sure that the speaker’s eyes, body, and face are sending the same message as the verbal message. If something seems out of sync, get it cleared up by asking questions.
* *Asking questions.* When you feel there is something missing or contradictory in what is being said, or when you just do not understand, ask direct questions to get the person to explain the idea more fully.
* *Taking notes (when appropriate).* In work settings, part of listening is writing down important things (such as instructions) so that you can remember them later and documenting them when necessary.
* *Conveying understanding.* The way to let the speaker know you are listening to the message is to use verbal cues, such as “uh-huh,” “I see,” and “I understand.” You should also use nonverbal communication, such as eye contact, appropriate facial expressions, nodding of the head, or leaning slightly forward in your chair to indicate you are interested and listening.

**2. Analyzing**

*Analyzing* is the process of thinking about, decoding, and evaluating the message. Poor listening is caused in part by the fact that people speak at an average rate of 120 words per minute, but they are capable of listening at a rate of 600 words per minute. The ability to comprehend words more than five times faster than the speaker can talk allows the listener’s mind to wander. As the speaker sends the message, you should be doing two things:

* *Thinking.* To help overcome the discrepancy between your listening speed and people’s rate of speaking, use the speed of your brain positively. Listen actively by mentally paraphrasing, organizing, summarizing, reviewing, and interpreting often. These activities will help you do an effective job of decoding the message.
* *Waiting to evaluate until after listening.* When people try to listen and evaluate what is said at the same time, they tend to miss part or all of the message. You should listen to the entire message first, then come to your conclusions. When you evaluate, base your conclusion on the facts presented rather than on stereotypes and politics.

**3. Checking Understanding**

*Checking understanding* is the process of giving feedback. After you have listened to the message (or while listening if it’s a long message), check your understanding of the message by doing two things:

* *Paraphrasing.* Give feedback by paraphrasing the message back to the sender. When you can paraphrase the message correctly, you convey that you have listened and understood the other person.
* *Watching nonverbal behavior.* As you speak, watch the other person’s nonverbal communication. If the person does not seem to understand what you are talking about, clarify the message before finishing the conversation.

Effective listening requires responding to the message to ensure mutual understanding.

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| **RQ 13–9. Why should you listen, analyze, and then check understanding?**  You have to listen first so that you can hear the message. You analyze second so that you can think about, decode, and evaluate the message. You should check understanding third to be sure that the message has been communicated effectively. |

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| **CSQ 13–9. When receiving messages, how effective are you at listening? Can you improve? If so, how?**  Answers will vary. |

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| WORK APPLICATION Example student answer  **13–7. Refer to the Self-Assessment. What is your weakest listening skill? Give an example of how your listening skills have had an impact on you at work?**  I’d have to say my weakest listening skill is tuning people out who do not agree with my views. It impacts me at work because when I get into an argument, I don’t really listen to the other person’s point of view. Instead, I just press mine on the other person. What I need to do to improve is paraphrase what the other person has said before I make my point. Paraphrasing will force me to listen. |

VI. RESPONDING TO MESSAGES

The fourth and last step in the communication process is responding to the message. However, not all messages require a response.

With oral communication, the sender often expects the receiver to respond to the message. When the receiver does respond, the roles are reversed, as the receiver now becomes the sender of a message. Roles can continue to change throughout the conversation.

**A. Response Styles**

As a sender transmits a message, how the receiver responds to the message directly affects the communication. The response should be appropriate for the situation. Five typical response styles are shown in Exhibit 13–8.

**1. Advising**

*Advising responses* provide evaluation, personal opinion, direction, or instructions. Advising tends to close or limit discussion or direct the flow of communication away from the sender to the receiver.

Giving advice is appropriate when you are explicitly asked for it. However, automatically giving advice tends to build dependence. Managers need to develop their employees’ abilities to think things through and to make decisions.

**2. Diverting**

*Diverting responses* switch the focus of the communication to a new message—in other words, they change the subject. Like advising, diverting tends to redirect, close, or limit the flow of communication. Diverting responses used during the early stages of receiving the message may cause the sender to feel that the message is not worth discussing or that the other party’s message is more important.

A diverting response can be appropriate when either party is uncomfortable with the topic. Diverting responses may be helpful when they share personal experiences or feelings that are similar to those of the sender, even though they change the topic.

**3. Probing**

Probing responses ask the sender to give more information about some aspect of the message. Probing can be useful when a listener needs to get a better understanding of the situation. When probing, “what” questions are preferable to “why” questions.

Probing is appropriate during the early stages of listening to a message to ensure that you fully understand the situation. After probing, responses in other styles are often needed.

**4. Reassuring**

Reassuring responses are given to reduce the intensity of the emotions associated with the message. Essentially you’re saying, “Don’t worry; everything will be OK” or “You can do it.” You are trying to calm the sender.

Reassuring is appropriate when the other person lacks confidence. Encouraging responses that give praise can help employees develop confidence.

**5. Reflecting**

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| LO 13–8. Define reflecting responses and state when they should be used.  Reflecting responses paraphrase the message and communicate the sender’s understanding and acceptance. Reflecting responses are appropriate to use when coaching and counseling. |

**Reflecting responses** paraphrase the message and communicate understanding and acceptance to the sender.When reflecting, be sure *not* to use the sender’s exact words, or the person may feel you are mimicking him or her, not understanding, or not listening closely. Reflecting in your own words leads to the most effective communication and the best human relations.

Reflecting responses should be used when coaching and counseling. Such responses help make the sender feel listened to, understood, and free to explore the topic in more depth. As the communication progresses, it is often appropriate to change to other response styles.

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| **CSQ 13–10. Which response style do you use most often?**  Answers will vary. |

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| WORK APPLICATION Example student answer  **13–8. Recall two oral messages you received and your responses to them. Identify your response style, and give examples of responses you might have given using two other response styles.**  1. *Sender:* This order needs to be ready by 5:00 p.m. today.  *Me:* (1) Why does it need to be ready by 5:00? Can’t it wait until tomorrow? (probing response)  (2) I can’t have it ready by 5:00. (advising response)  (3) I’ll take care of it. (reassuring response)  2. *Sender:* Please wait on that customer at the counter.  *Me:* (1) I’ll be there in a minute after I put this merchandise back. (reassuring response)  (2) Why do I have to do it? (probing response)  (3) When do I get to go on break? (diverting response) |

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| **APPLYING THE CONCEPT Answers**  AC 13–4—Response Styles  d 16. Reassuring. In essence, the boss is saying, “Don’t worry; I’ll take care of it.”  a 17. Advising. To ignore the swearing is advice.  b 18. Diverting. Talking about health is changing the subject.  e 19. Reflecting. This statement essentially paraphrases the message to the sender.  c 20. Probing. Asking for details of the situation is probing. |

**B. Dealing with Emotional People**

Understanding emotions to some extent depends on one’s level of *emotional intelligence*. Emotional intelligence has five dimensions: (1) self-awareness, or understanding your own emotions; (2) self-management, the ability to manage your own emotions; (3) self-motivation, the ability to persist through failure and setbacks; (4) empathy, the ability to understand others’ emotions and to see things from their perspective; and (5) social skills that allow one to handle others’ emotions. Emotionally intelligent people are stable. One’s level of emotional intelligence is also called one’s *emotional quotient*, or EQ (to parallel the notion of intelligence quotient, or IQ).

When dealing with emotional people, keep the following in mind:

* Feelings are subjective; they tell us people’s attitudes and needs.
* Feelings are usually disguised as factual statements.
* Most important: feelings are neither right nor wrong.

People cannot choose their feelings or control them. However, they can control how they express feelings. You should avoid getting caught up in others’ emotions. Staying calm when dealing with an emotional person works much better than getting emotional, too.

**1. Calming the Emotional Employee**

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| LO 13–9. Discuss what should and should not be done to calm an emotional person.  To calm an emotional person, do not make statements that put the person down. Make reflective empathic responses that let the emotional person know you understand how he or she feels. Paraphrase the feelings. |

When an employee comes to you in an emotional state, *never* make condescending statements such as “You shouldn’t be angry,” “Don’t be upset,” “You’re acting like a baby,” or “Just sit down and be quiet.” These types of statements only make the feelings stronger. You may get employees to shut up and show them who is boss, but effective communication will not take place. The problem will still exist, and your relations with the employee will suffer because of it, as will your relations with others who see or hear about what you said and did.

**2. Reflective Empathic Responding**

**Empathic listening** is understanding and relating to another’s feelings. The empathic responder deals with feelings, content, and the underlying meaning being expressed in the message. Empathy is needed to develop human relationships based on trust. Don’t argue with emotional people. Instead, encourage them to express their feelings in a positive way. Empathically let them know that you understand how they feel. Do not agree or disagree with the feelings; simply identify them verbally. Paraphrase the feeling to the person.

After you deal with emotions, you can proceed to work on content (solving problems). It may be wise to wait until a later time if emotions are very strong. You will find that just being willing to listen to others’ feelings is often the solution.

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| WORK APPLICATION Example student answer  13–**9. Recall a situation in which a manager had to handle an emotional employee. Did the manager follow the guidelines for calming an emotional person? Did the manager use reflective, empathic responses?**  The place where I used to work based raises on cost of living and merit. My boss only gave me a raise based on the cost of living. I was angry because I thought I deserved a merit raise too, so I went to complain. My boss did not try to calm me down, nor was he empathic. He did not even explain why I did not get a merit raise. He just said, “Just be glad you have a job. Don’t complain and get back to work.” I was much more angry when he said this. I responded, “Thanks for nothing” and went back to work. Our relations were cool after that. |

**C. Criticism**

**1. Giving Criticism**

An important part of the manager’s job is to improve employee performance through constructive criticism. When criticizing, be honest, but don’t be too negative, and give recommendations for improvement.

Criticism that moves upward is a different matter. Even when bosses ask, they usually don’t want to hear personal criticism. The first rule of thumb is to never publicly criticize your boss, even if specifically asked to do so. You are better off airing criticism in private. Don’t criticize your boss behind his or her back, either.

**2. Getting Criticism**

If you ask someone for critical feedback, remember that you are asking to hear things that may surprise, upset, or insult you or hurt your feelings. If you become defensive and emotional (and it is hard not to when you feel attacked), the person will stop giving feedback. If you want to improve your performance and your chances of having a successful career, seek honest feedback. When you get criticism, whether you ask for it or not, view it as an opportunity to improve, stay calm (even when the other person is emotional), and don’t get defensive. Use the feedback to improve your performance.

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| **RQ** 13–**10. Why is criticism important to the individual and organization?**  Criticism should be used to improve performance. |

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| WORK APPLICATION Example student answer  **13–10. How would you rate yourself on your ability to accept criticism without getting emotional and defensive? How could you improve your ability to accept criticism?**  I’m not great at accepting criticism. When my boss criticizes me, I tend to become defensive and find excuses, or blame someone else, for the shortcoming. What I really need to do is just listen without being so concerned about being caught making a mistake. I should realize that we all make mistakes. I should own up to them, view them as learning experiences, and work at not repeating the same ones again. |

VI. INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND NETWORKS

Like any system, an information system has input, transformation, and output. Information systems (IS) have data as their input, and they transform the data into information to help employees do their jobs and make decisions. These systems are used to communicate with employees throughout organizations and on the interpersonal level.

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| **RQ 13–11. What takes place during the information systems process?**  Through the information systems process, input data are transformed or processed into output information. |

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| **CSQ 13–11. What is the relationship between information and the management functions?**  Managers use information to plan, organize, lead, and control. |

**A. Types of Information Systems**

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| LO 13–10. Describe the three primary types of information systems and their relationship.  Transaction processing systems (TPS) are used to record routine repetitive transactions. Management information systems (MIS) transform data into information and are used by managers to perform their work and to make routine decisions. Decision support systems (DSS) are used by managers to make nonroutine decisions. TPS are related to MIS because their totals are included in MIS. DSS are related to MIS, which include TPS totals, because they use MIS databases. |

The three primary types of information systems are transaction processing systems, management information systems, and decision support systems.

**1. Transaction Processing Systems (TPS)**

*Transaction processing systems* are used to handle routine and recurring business matters.

**2. Management Information Systems (MIS)**

*Management information systems* transform data into information employees need to do their work. Managers’ work usually consists of running their units or departments, and the information provided by management information systems is commonly used for making routine decisions.

*Executive information systems (EIS)* are a form of management information system used by top-level managers. Executive information systems place greater emphasis on integrating external data and information with internal information on critical success factors, which are often industry specific. In other words, executive information systems focus more on development and revision of nonroutine strategy, whereas management information systems focus more on strategy implementation.

**3. Decision Support Systems (DSS)**

*Decision support systems* use managers’ insights in an interactive computer-based process to assist in making nonroutine decisions. They use decision rules, decision models, and comprehensive databases. Decision support systems are more flexible than management information systems. However, a decision support system can interact with a management information system by applying specific mathematical operations to the information available in the management information system. These data manipulations allow managers to evaluate the possible effects of alternative decisions.

*Expert systems* are computer programs designed to imitate the thought processes of a human being. They build on a series of rules (if-then scenarios) to move from a set of data to a decision.

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| **APPLYING THE CONCEPT Answers**  AC 13–5—Types of Information Systems  b 21. Management information system. The shipment of an order will be in the database of the management information system.  d 22. Decision support system. The manager is faced with a decision.  a 23. Transaction processing system. Accounting software is used to record transactions.  e 24. Expert system. The intuitive manager is an expert. Software can be developed to trace his or her thought process.  c 25. Executive information system. The CEO is a top-level manager. |

**B. Information Networks**

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| LO 13–11. List the components of an information network.  The components of an information network include connections between employees from headquarters and remote locations, suppliers and customers, and databases. |

*Information networks* apply information technology to connect all employees of an organization to each other, to suppliers, to customers, and to databases. Information networks are used to integrate information systems, and at many organizations, networks are the primary means for employees to learn how to do their jobs, to find information, and to solve problems. Exhibit 13–7 illustrates the components of an information network.

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| **CSQ 13–12. What is the difference between a computer network and an information network?**  A computer network connects independent computers directly together (P2P). An information network connects all employees together, to suppliers, to customers, and to databases. Components of the information network may not be linked together by a computer. |

LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ANSWERS

The chapter summary is organized to answer the learning objectives for Chapter 10. They are also found at the end of the chapter and can be used as short answer questions on exams.

*These learning objectives are included in the test bank in the concept section.*

13–**1. Describe the three ways communication flows through organizations.**

Formal communication flows vertically downward and upward through the chain of command. Formal communication flows horizontally between colleagues and peers. Informal communication flows through the grapevine in any direction.

13–**2. List the four steps in the interpersonal communication process.**

(1) The sender encodes the message and selects the transmission channel. (2) The sender transmits the message through a channel. (3) The receiver decodes the message and decides if feedback is needed. (4) The receiver may give feedback, make a response, or send a new message through a channel.

13–**3. State the major advantages and disadvantages of oral communication and written communication.**

The major advantages of oral communication are that it is usually easier and faster than written communication and encourages feedback. The disadvantage is that there is usually no record of such communication.

The major advantage of written communication is that it is a record of what was communicated. The major disadvantages are that it usually takes longer and hinders feedback.

13–**4. State a general guide to channel selection.**

As a general guide, use rich oral channels for sending difficult and unusual messages, less rich written channels for transmitting simple and routine messages to several people, and combined channels for important messages that employees need to attend to and understand.

13–**5. List the five steps in the process of sending face-to-face messages.**

The face-to-face message-sending process involves five steps: (1) Develop rapport. (2) State your communication objective. (3) Transmit your message. (4) Check the receiver’s understanding. (5) Get a commitment and follow up.

13–**6. Describe paraphrasing and explain why it is useful.**

Paraphrasing is the process of restating a message in one’s own words. The receiver uses paraphrasing to check understanding of the transmitted message. If the receiver can paraphrase the message accurately, communication has taken place. If not, communication is not complete.

13–**7. List and explain the three parts of the process of receiving messages.**

The three parts of the message-receiving process are listening, analyzing, and checking understanding. Listening is the process of giving a speaker your undivided attention. Analyzing is the process of thinking about, decoding, and evaluating the message. Checking understanding is the process of giving feedback.

13–**8. Define reflecting responses and state when they should be used.**

Reflecting responses paraphrase the message and communicate the sender’s understanding and acceptance. Reflecting responses are appropriate to use when coaching and counseling.

13–**9. Discuss what should and should not be done to calm an emotional person.**

To calm an emotional person, do not make statements that put the person down. Make reflective empathic responses that let the emotional person know you understand how he or she feels. Paraphrase the feelings.

13–**10. Describe the three primary types of information systems and their relationship.**

Transaction processing systems (TPS) are used to record routine repetitive transactions. Management information systems (MIS) transform data into information and are used by managers to perform their work and to make routine decisions. Decision support systems (DSS) are used by managers to make nonroutine decisions. TPS are related to MIS because their totals are included in MIS. DSS are related to MIS, which include TPS totals, because they use MIS databases.

13–**11. List the components of an information network.**

The components of an information network include connections between employees from headquarters and remote locations, suppliers and customers, and databases.

WORK APPLICATION SAMPLE ANSWERS

(Most of the answers are actual student answers or based on student answers. You may give these answers as part of your lecture before, after, or in place of getting student answers.)

*These work applications are included in the test bank in the application section.*

13–**1. Give an example of vertical (upward and downward), horizontal, and grapevine communication at a company where you work or have worked.**

Over the summer I worked for an ice cream shop. My boss, the owner, did not work at the ice cream shop. However, every day he would call to give us any instructions for the day (downward vertical communication), to find out if we were busy, and to know how many cases of ice cream we sold that day (upward vertical communication). Throughout the day, my peers and I would communicate (horizontal communication) as we waited on customers, stocked the ice cream, cleaned up, etc. The owner was known as a playboy, so it was common for rumors to be spread (grapevine communication) about whom he was dating lately.

13–**2. Give an example of a message that might be transmitted in a work setting. Be sure to illustrate the four steps in the communication process, state the channel, and note if feedback was given.**

The following may be used if you are quitting your job because you found a better one:

**Step 1.** I encoded the message and selected oral face-to-face communication.

**Step 2.** I told my boss at the end of the day.

**Step 3.** My boss decoded the message and decided to give me feedback.

**Step 4.** My boss responded with feedback saying that I had done a good job and that he was sorry to lose me. He wished me good luck in my future job.

13–**3. Give two examples of different communication barriers you encountered at work. Explain how each barrier could have been overcome.**

*Noise:* My boss was out of town, and she called me from Chicago to tell me what time her flight would arrive at the Hartford airport, so I could pick her up. I was in my dorm room, which was full of people talking, and the music was blasting. It was so noisy I could hardly hear her. She told me to pick her up at 4:00 p.m., but I thought she said 2:00 p.m. So, I was at the airport two hours early. To overcome the barrier, I should have told everyone to be quiet and to turn down the music.

*Perception:* My boss told me to hang an advertised special poster in the left side of the window. We have a large window. After I hung the poster, my boss said to move it up higher. I should have asked for details of where he wanted it the first time. The second time I asked, “How many feet down from the top of the window do you want the poster?”

13–**4. Give an example of an oral message and a written message you received at work, and specify the channel of each.**

*Oral message:* My boss would always give me my assignments using face-to-face conversation.

*Written message:* All of the employees received a memo regarding the company picnic.

13–**5. Recall a specific task that a boss assigned to you. Identify which steps in the face-to-face message-sending process he or she did and did not use.**

I had to do a mass mailing for my boss. My boss did not develop rapport (step 1) or state the communication objective (step 2); he just started by giving me the step-by-step instructions (step 3). After he was done explaining how to do the task, he asked me to paraphrase what he had just told me to make sure I understood what to do (step 4). He made sure I was able to finish it by the end of the day, and he checked on me periodically throughout the day see how it was going (step 5).

13–**6. Recall a past or present boss. How effective was this person at getting feedback? Was the boss open to feedback and aware of nonverbal communication? Did the boss ask questions and ask you to paraphrase?**

My past boss was not good at getting feedback. She really was not open to feedback, especially criticism. She paid no attention to nonverbal communication. For example, I watched a few times when my boss gave instructions to others. I could see that employees had a look of confusion on their faces, but my boss just kept giving instructions without stopping to clarify things. She would question by saying, “Any questions?” My boss never used paraphrasing with me.

13–**7. Refer to the Self-Assessment. What is your weakest listening skill? Give an example of how your listening skills have had an impact on you at work**

I’d have to say my weakest listening skill is tuning people out who do not agree with my views. It impacts me at work because when I get into an argument, I don’t really listen to the other person’s point of view. Instead, I just press mine on the other person. What I need to do to improve is paraphrase what the other person has said before I make my point. Paraphrasing will force me to listen.

13–**8. Recall two oral messages you received and your responses to them. Identify your response style, and give examples of responses you might have given using two other response styles.**

1. *Sender:* This order needs to be ready by 5:00 p.m. today.

*Me:* (1) Why does it need to be ready by 5:00? Can’t it wait until tomorrow? (probing response)

(2) I can’t have it ready by 5:00. (advising response)

(3) I’ll take care of it. (reassuring response)

2. *Sender:* Please wait on that customer at the counter.

*Me:* (1) I’ll be there in a minute after I put this merchandise back. (reassuring response)

(2) Why do I have to do it? (probing response)

(3) When do I get to go on break? (diverting response)

13–**9. Recall a situation in which a manager had to handle an emotional employee. Did the manager follow the guidelines for calming an emotional person? Did the manager use reflective, empathic responses?**

The place where I used to work based raises on cost of living and merit. My boss only gave me a raise based on the cost of living. I was angry because I thought I deserved a merit raise too, so I went to complain. My boss did not try to calm me down, nor was he empathic. He did not even explain why I did not get a merit raise. He just said, “Just be glad you have a job. Don’t complain and get back to work.” I was much more angry when he said this. I responded, “Thanks for nothing” and went back to work. Our relations were cool after that.

13–**10. How would you rate yourself on your ability to accept criticism without getting emotional and defensive? How could you improve your ability to accept criticism?**

I’m not great at accepting criticism. When my boss criticizes me, I tend to become defensive and find excuses, or blame someone else, for the shortcoming. What I really need to do is just listen without being so concerned about being caught making a mistake. I should realize that we all make mistakes. I should own up to them, view them as learning experiences, and work at not repeating the same ones again.

REVIEW QUESTION ANSWERS

*These review questions are included in the test bank in the concept section.*

13–**1. What are the differences among vertical, horizontal, and grapevine communication?**

Vertical communication is the flow of information both downward and upward through the organization chain of command. It is also called formal communication because information that flows this way is recognized as the officially sanctioned information. Horizontal communication is the flow of information between colleagues and peers. It is formal communication, but it does not follow the chain of command; instead, it is multidirectional. The grapevine is the informal flow of information of information in any direction throughout an organization. It is informal communication because it is not official or sanctioned by management.

13–**2. What is the difference between encoding and decoding?**

Encoding is the sender’s process of putting the message into a form that the receiver will understand. Decoding is the receiver’s process of translating a message into meaningful form.

13–**3. What is filtering?**

Filtering is the process of altering or distorting information to project a more favorable image.

13–**4. What is the difference between setting and body language?**

The setting refers to where the communication takes place (physical surroundings), whereas body language includes facial expressions, vocal quality, gestures, and posture.

13–5. **What is the difference between nonverbal and oral and written communication?**

Both oral and written communication uses words, but nonverbal doesn’t use words.

13–**6. What is media richness?**

Media richness refers to the amount of information and meaning conveyed through a channel. The more information and meaning, the “richer” the channel.

13–**7. What should be included in your plan to send a message?**

Before sending a message, you should answer these what, who, how, when, and where questions:

*What?* What is the goal of the message? What do you want the end result of the communication to be?

*Who?* Determine who should receive the message.

*How?* With the receiver(s) in mind, plan how you will encode the message so that it will be understood. Select the appropriate channel(s) for the audience and situation.

*When?* When will the message be transmitted? Timing is important.

*Where?* Decide where the message will be transmitted (setting).

13–**8. What are the four ways to get feedback on messages?**

The four ways to get feedback on messages are (1) Be open to feedback. (2) Be aware of nonverbal communication. (3) Ask questions. (4) Paraphrase.

13–**9. Why should you listen, analyze, and then check understanding?**

You have to listen first so that you can hear the message. You analyze second so that you can think about, decode, and evaluate the message. You should check understanding third to be sure that the message has been communicated effectively.

13–**10. Why is criticism important to the individual and organization?**

Criticism should be used to improve performance.

13–**11. What takes place during the information systems process?**

Through the information systems process, input data are transformed or processed into output information.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS ANSWERS

Applications may also be used as class discussion questions or written assignments to develop communication skills.

*These communication skills questions are included in the test bank in the skills section.*

13–**1. Select an organization with which you are familiar. How can the flow of communication be improved?**

Answers will vary.

13–**2. Is the grapevine helpful or harmful to most organizations? Should managers try to stop grapevine communication? Why or why not?**

Answers will vary. The grapevine can’t be stopped, but managers can use it to help the firm.

13–**3. Which e-commerce methods have you used? Which one do you use most often?**

Answers will vary.

13–**4. Wireless phones and handheld devices are blurring work and home life. Is this positive or negative? Should people stay connected and work while on vacation?**

Answers will vary.

13–**5. What does perception have to do with encoding and decoding?**

Encoding and decoding are based on perception. As messages are transmitted, receivers perceive them and translate them so that they make sense. To overcome perception problems, when encoding, you need to consider how the other person will most likely perceive the message and try to encode and transmit it properly.

13–**6. Which communication barrier do you think is the most common, and which barrier do you believe has the most negative effects on communication?**

Answers will vary.

13–**7. Which message transmission channel do you use most often in your personal and professional life? What is your strongest and weakest channel? How can you improve on your weakness?**

Answers will vary.

13–**8. When sending messages, how effective are you at checking the receiver’s understanding? Can you improve? If so, how?**

Answers will vary.

13–**9. When receiving messages, how effective are you at listening? Can you improve? If so, how?**

Answers will vary.

13–**10. Which response style do you use most often?**

Answers will vary.

13–**11. What is the relationship between information and the management functions?**

Managers use information to plan, organize, lead, and control.

13–**12. What is the difference between a computer network and an information network?**

A computer network connects independent computers directly together (P2P). An information network connects all employees together, to suppliers, to customers, and to databases. Components of the information network may not be linked together by a computer.

**13–1. Select an organization with which you are familiar. How can the flow of communication be improved?**

Answers will vary.

APPLYING THE CONCEPT ANSWERS

*There are similar questions in the test bank in the application section.*

**CASE ANSWERS**

WellPoint

13–1. **Discuss WellPoint organizational communications and its use of information technology.**

As indicated in the case, WellPoint needs to have good *horizontal communications* with the government and health-care providers. Much of the communications is through the *Internet* and *e-commerce. Business-to-business (B2B)* is used by WellPoint as it collaborates primarily with hospitals, doctors, workplaces, etc. to offer health benefits, plans, and services to their patients and employees. However, it also does have B2C.

13–2. **Describe some of the potential communication barriers created by the Affordable Care Act and how to overcome them.**

The Affordable Care Act itself created *information overload* as it was more than 1,000 pages, and it was ambiguous in many places, creating *perception* problems as to what parts of the bill actually mean. With the government, there are also potential *trust and credibility* problems regarding its ability to regulate and participate in the health-care industry effectively. When it comes to increasing cost, many people get *emotional* and may *filter* theinformation. A major issue is the uncertainty. Therefore, to overcome these barriers to communications, the government really needs to make the law clear to all parties how the law affects them as it unfolds over the years—which is a very difficult task.

13–3. **Identify the types of information systems WellPoint needs to operate effectively.**

Transaction processing systems (TPS) are used to handle routine business matters, such as record keeping. Being a leading health benefits company that keeps records of more than 34 million members places great importance on TPS information technology. This includes e-medical records for all of the members. Within WellPoint, the management information systems (MIS) allow employees to coordinate information throughout the company.

13–4. **Do some research and find out how WellPoint and other health-care providers are dealing with changes brought about through the Affordable Care Act.**

Answers will vary.

13–5. **How has the Affordable Care Act affected you and your family and the organizations you work for?**

Answers will vary, largely based on student work experience.

Cumulative Case Questions

13–**6.** **What types of external environment changes is WellPoint facing in the healthcare industry? (Chapters 2 and 6)?**

WellPoint is dealing with increased competition, ever-changing medical and information technology, and the government’s role in financing and regulating healthcare. With the Affordable Care Act, government regulations—a change in strategy and structure—may be needed. There has been and continues to be resistance to the law.

13–**7.** **How do creative problem solving and decision making and innovation have to do with this case? (Chapters 4 and 6)**

The new law creates problems for WellPoint and the health-care industry. It needs to be creative to deal with the changes in the law as it makes decisions on how to change operation in line with the changes in the law. As stated in the case, “driving innovation to control costs and improve the quality of care everyone receives” is essential.

13–**8.** **How does the Affordable Care Act affect human resources managers? (Chapter 9)**

The human resources managers are the ones that oversee the health-care benefits of employees. With the change in the law, some companies have already changed their health-care benefits. Certain-size companies that don’t offer health insurance will either have to offer coverage or pay a fine for each employee without health insurance.

SKILL BUILDER 13–1 IDEAS AND ANSWERS

Giving Instructions

*Total Time* (35–45 minutes)

To keep the exercise to fewer than 35 minutes, have students skip answering the questions in the Integration section in procedures 2 and 3.

*Recommended approximate time for a 45-minute period:*

8:00 Procedure 1 2 minutes

8:02 Procedure 2 20 minutes (15 minutes for Drawing; 5 minutes for Integration)

8:22 Procedure 3 20 minutes (15 minutes for Drawing; 5 minutes for Integration)

8:42 Sharing 3 minutes

8:45

You may find that your students will take more or less time than recommended.

Instructor Preparation for This Exercise

You or an assistant will have to make copies of Drawings 1 and 2. You need the total to at least equal to half the number in the class. I make lots of extras and collect them at the end of the exercise. The ones not written on can be reused. Pass out Drawing 1 first.

Doing Skill Builder 13–1 in Class

Objective

To develop your ability to send and receive messages (communication skills).

Preparation

No preparation is necessary except reading and understanding the chapter.

Experience

Students will plan, give, and receive instructions for the completion of a drawing of three objects.

Procedure 1 (2 minutes)

Break the class into groups of two. If there are an odd number of students in the class, use one student as an observer.

Procedure 2 (15–20 minutes)

One person in the group will play the role of manager, and the other person will play the role of employee. The person in the role of manager will describe for the person in the role of employee a drawing of three objects (provided by the instructor) so that the employee can duplicate the drawing based on what the manager describes. While giving instructions, the manager is not to show the original drawing to the employee. The instructions may be given orally or in writing, or both, but the manager should not use any hand gestures. The manager must give the instructions for all three objects before the employee begins drawing them. Once the employee begins drawing, the manager should watch but may no longer communicate in any way. When the employee is finished drawing, the manager shows the employee the original drawing. Partners should then discuss how each person did and answer the questions in the Integration section.

Procedure 3 (15–20 minutes)

Same as procedure 2, except group members switch roles and a different drawing (provided by the instructor) will be used.

Sharing

Volunteers give their answers to the Apply It section.

Testing on Skill Builder 13–1

For this exercise, you can focus on having students list the five steps in the message-sending process, with only giving directions for the first object of the drawing they gave instructions for in class. Be sure students know exactly what to expect on the exam. Giving the instructions for the test question below is very helpful.

Test Question and Answer (Also found in Test Bank)

Instructions

Start by stating which drawing (1 or 2) you are giving instructions for and the three object shapes. List the first step in the message-sending process, followed by what you would say to the employee for this step. List step 2 of the process, followed by what you would say. List step 3 of the process, but only give instructions for object 1. List steps 4 and 5, followed by what you would say for each step.

**Giving Instructions.** For this question, use the drawing you gave instructions for during the in-class Skill Builder 13–1.

Solution

**Step 1. Develop rapport.**

Answers will vary.

**Step 2. State your communication objective.**

You will be drawing three objects (diamond, rectangle, triangle or square, circle, hexagon) to specifications.

**Step 3. Transmit your message.**

Answers will vary with the drawing and the object started with.

**Step 4. Check the receiver’s understanding.**

Please paraphrase how you will draw the object to be sure we agree.

**Step 5. Get a commitment and follow up.**

Do you feel confident you can do it? I’ll check it against the drawing when you are done.

Grading

You can give equal weight for listing the five steps and the responses, or you can give more points for the transmitting of the message.

Drawings

See pages 321 and 322 for full-page drawings, which you need to have copied and to bring to class.

**Drawing 1 Giving Instructions (Skill Builder 1)**

**[INSERT]**

**Drawing 2 Giving Instructions (Skill Builder 1)**

[INSERT]

**BEHAVIOR MODELING IDEAS**

Situational Communications

Showing the video takes around 12 minutes. If you stop the video at the pause points, it will take longer. The video may also be followed by a class discussion, which will vary the time required. This video addresses a scenario between two managers, Steve and Darius, who meet to discuss faulty parts. Students should realize that neither manager is the other’s boss; therefore, situational communication rather than situational management is appropriate.

The video can be used to explain how to use the model, and it illustrates the four situational communication styles, as explained in Skill Builder 13–2. The video can be shown as an introduction to Skill Builder 13–2 or as an independent video.

When showing this video, you have two major options: (1) Show the video, pausing it to give students time to place their answers to procedure 1, and then go over the answers given below. (2) Pause, but do not give the answers until after showing all four scenes. (The answers are on the video.) I personally give the answers after each scene. I try to get students to realize that they must focus on the behavior as being primarily task oriented (autocratic), relationship oriented (participative), both (consultative), or neither (empowering).

Scene 1. (E) Empowering low task-/low relationship-oriented behavior

Scene 2. (P) Participative low task-/high relationship-oriented behavior

Scene 3. (C) Consultative high task-/high relationship-oriented behavior

Scene 4. (A) Autocratic high task-/low relationship-oriented behavior

At the end of the video, the following question is posed: “Which style would produce the best and worst results?” As stated in the video, the appropriate style is autocratic. The autocratic communication style would get the best results. Students should realize this as they watch the video scenes. The second-best communication style is consultative. Either the autocratic or consultative styles will produce good results. However, participative and empowering will get the worst results because the manager is not willing to change without force, which is not provided with participative and empowering styles.

SKILL BUILDER 13–2 IDEAS AND ANSWERS

Analyzing Communication Styles

*Total Time* (10–75 minutes)

You may select any length of time to spend on this exercise. Do as many situations as you have time to do in the allotted time, and give the students the answers to the remaining situations not covered. To save class time, you can cover the Situational Communication Model (Model 13–3) and situation 1 in class (prior to procedure 1), then have the class do the other 11 situations for homework. You can quickly give them the answers during the next class meeting.

*Recommended approximate time for a 60-minute period:*

8:00 Show and discuss the Behavior Modeling Video 20 minutes

8:20 Procedure 1 5 minutes

8:25 Procedure 2 5 minutes

8:30 Procedure 3 25 minutes

8:55 Conclusion 3 minutes

8:58 Apply It 2 minutes

9:00

Times will vary. If you need more time for procedures 1 and 2, take it and cut back the time on procedure 3. You can give students the answers to the situations not covered.

Doing Skill Builder 13–2 in Class

Objective

To develop skills for using the most appropriate communication style based on the situation.

Preparation

Students should have completed the Self-Assessment preparation for this exercise.

Experience

Students will work at selecting the appropriate communication style for situations 2 through 12 in the Self-Assessment: Determining Your Preferred Communication Style.

Procedure 1 (5–10 minutes)

Review the Situational Communication Model (Exhibit 13–10) and explain how to apply it to determine the appropriate communication style for situation 1. (Answers are given at the end of the exercise.)

Procedure 2 (5–10 minutes)

Have students work alone to complete situation 2 of the Self-Assessment: Determining Your Preferred Communication Style using the model. Have the students use the Answer Form on the next page to write in their answers. Go over the recommended answers.

Procedure 3 (25–55 minutes)

1. Break the class into groups of 2 to 3. As a team, have students apply the model to situations 3 through 7. Have students record their answers on the Answer Form. Go over the appropriate answers when all teams are done or the time is up.
2. Break the class into new groups of 2 to 3 and do situations 8 through 12. Have students record their answers on the Answer Form. Go over the appropriate answers.

Conclusion

Lead a class discussion and/or make concluding remarks.

Sharing

Volunteers give their answers to the Apply It section.

Answer Form

**Instructions:** Refer to the Situational Communication Model 13–3 . First, determine if there is sufficient time to engage in two-way communication. On the Time line, place Y (yes) or N (no). Second, assess the level of information you have. On the Information line, place A (autocratic), C (consultative), P (participative), or E (empowering). Next, assess the other person’s capability and likelihood of accepting a message. On the Acceptance and Capability lines, place A (autocratic), C (consultative), P (participative), or E (empowering). Based on your analysis, then select the appropriate communication style for the situation—S1A (autocratic), S2C (consultative), S3P (participative), or S4E (empowering).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Situation | Time | Information | Acceptance | Capability | Style |
| 1 | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ |
| 2 | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ |
| 3 | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ |
| 4 | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ |
| 5 | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ |
| 6 | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ |
| 7 | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ |
| 8 | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ |
| 9 | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ |
| 10 | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ |
| 11 | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ |
| 12 | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ |

\*Recommended answers to the 12 communication situations appear at the end of the exercise on page 329.

Testing on Skill Builder 13–2

Four situations similar to the 12 in this exercise are in the Test Bank. However, they are not multiple-choice questions. When I go over procedure 2 during the exercise, I explain to students how they will be tested as I go over situation 2 in the test format below.

**Note:** The four lines do not appear when the computer test is printed. I tell students to set up the test this way.

Variables:

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Communication Style:

Behavior:

Action Taken:

Test Questions and Answers (Also in Test Bank)

Instructions

For the Variables line, write the numbers 1 to 4. To the right of the four numbers, write the four variables. To the left of the four numbers, write the answers to each variable from the Situational Communication Model that represents the style to use based on the variable. Fill in the Communication Style, Behavior, and Action Taken lines with the appropriate answers.

Variables:

Communication Style:

Behavior:

Action Taken:

1. **Situational Communication.** You have just walked into the back of the room, where your employees are working in the front. There is a lot of smoke, which they do not realize, in the back of the room. Your employees are very highly capable and like to participate in decision making. As a situational communicator, you should do what?

Solution

**Variables:**

No 1. Time

When there is no time, the autocratic style is used regardless of the other variable answers.

**Communication Style:**

Autocratic

**Behavior:**

High task/low relationship

**Action Taken:**

Yell “fire” and tell everyone to get out of the room.

Second-Best Answer

**Variables:**

One of four variables must have S2C.

**Communication Style:**

Consultative

**Behavior:**

High task/high relationship

**Action Taken:**

Yell “fire” and tell everyone to get out of the room. Show your concern for their safety.

1. **Situational Communication.** You are an expert professor in your field. When going over the answers to the exam, a few students disagree with the recommended answer you gave. You check the answer and know that it is correct. The students get average grades and do not have a good explanation for your answer being wrong. As a situational communicator, you should do what?

Solution

**Variables:**

Yes 1. Time

S1A–S2C 2. Information

S4E 3. Acceptance

S2C 4. Capability

**Communication Style:**

Consultative

**Behavior:**

High task/high relationship

**Action Taken:**

Explain why the answer the students are giving is not correct and why your answer is.

Second-Best Answer

**Variables:**

One of four variables must have S1A.

**Communication Style:**

Autocratic

**Behavior:**

High task/low relationship

**Action Taken:**

Tell the students your answer is correct.

1. **Situational Communication.** Your coworker, Chris, usually does an excellent job. However, the work Chris is doing has slipped lately. You are concerned because it is affecting your work as well. You think Chris has a family problem, and you know Chris does not like to be told what to do. As a situational communicator, you should do what?

Solution

**Variables:**

Yes 1. Time

S2C–S3P 2. Information

S3P–S4E 3. Acceptance

S3P 4. Capability

**Communication Style:**

Participative

**Behavior:**

Low task/high relationship

**Action Taken:**

Approach Chris as a concerned friend who is willing to help. Explain how Chris’s work is affecting yours in a supportive manner without telling Chris what to do.

Second-Best Answer

**Variables:**

One of four variables must have S2C.

**Communication Style:**

Consultative

**Behavior:**

High task/high relationship

**Action Taken:**

Approach Chris as a concerned friend who is willing to help. Explain how Chris’s work is affecting yours in a supportive manner without telling Chris what to do. However, if necessary, state that you will go to the boss if performance does not improve soon.

1. **Situational Communication.** You work in the accounting office. Chris has come to you stating that there are a few questions for you to answer about the budget. Chris has done an excellent job of preparing and staying within the budgeted amounts in recent years. As a situational communicator, you should do what?

Solution

**Variables:**

Yes 1. Time

S3P–S4E 2. Information

S3P–S4E 3. Acceptance

S4E 4. Capability

**Communication Style:**

Empowering

**Behavior:**

Low task/low relationship

**Action Taken:**

Simply answer Chris’s questions.

Second-Best Answer

**Variables:**

One of four variables must have S3P.

**Communication Style:**

Participative

**Behavior:**

Low task/high relationship

**Action Taken:**

Be very supportive in answering Chris’s questions as you work on developing your relationship.

*Recommended Answers to Skill Builder 13–2*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Situation | Time | Information | Acceptance | Capability | Style | Mgt. Styles | Points |
| 1 | yes | P–E | P–E | P–E | S3P | a. S1A  b. S2C  c. S3P  d. S4E | 0  1  3  2 |
| 2 | yes | C | C | C–P | S2C | a. S2C  b. S4E  c. S1A  d. S3P | 3  0  1  2 |
| 3 | yes | C | P–E | E | S4E | a. S3P  b. S4E  c. S1A  d. S2C | 2  3  0  1 |
| 4 | yes | A | A | P | S1A | a. S4E  b. S2C  c. S3P  d. S1A | 0  2  1  3 |
| 5 | yes | C | C | P | S2C | a. S1A  b. S2C  c. S4E  d. S3P | 0  3  1  2 |
| 6 | yes | C | P–E | P–E | S3P | a. S3P  b. S4E  c. S1A  d. S2C | 3  1  0  2 |
| 7 | yes | A | A | P–E | S1A | a. S2C  b. S3P  c. S1A  d. S4E | 2  1  3  0 | |
| 8 | yes | P–E | P–E | P–E | S4E | a. S4E  b. S1A  c. S2C  d. S3P | 3  0  1  2 | |
| 9 | no | — | — | — | S1A | a. S3P  b. S1A  c. S4E  d. S2C | 1  3  0  2 | |
| 10 | yes | A | C–P | A | S2C | a. S1A  b. S4E  c. S2C  d. S3P | 2  0  3  1 |
| 11 | yes | P–E | C–P | P–E | S3P | a. S2C  b. S3P  c. S1A  d. S4E | 1  3  0  2 |
| 12 | yes | P–E | P–E | P–E | S4E | a. S3P  b. S2C  c. S4E  d. S1A | 2  1  3  0 |