



Chapter 7

Directing

CBSE Syllabus

- Concept and Importance
- Elements of Directing
- Motivation – Concept, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, financial and non-financial incentives
- Leadership – Concept, styles - authoritative, democratic and laissez faire
- Communication – Concept, formal and informal communication; barriers to effective communication, how to overcome the barriers

7.1 Concept, Elements and Importance of Directing

Concept of Directing

In the ordinary sense, directing means giving instructions and guiding people in doing work. In our daily life, we come across many situations like a hotel owner directing his employees to complete certain activities for organising a function, a teacher directing his student to complete an assignment, a film director directing the artists about how they should act in the film etc. In all these situations, we can observe that directing is done to achieve some predetermined objective.

In the context of management of an organisation:

Directing refers to the process of instructing, guiding, coaching/counseling, motivating and leading the people in an organisation to achieve organisational objectives.

Elements of Directing

Directing function of management has four main elements: (i) Supervision, (ii) Motivation, (iii) Leadership and (iv) Communication.

1. Supervision

The term supervision can be understood in two ways. Firstly, it can be understood as an element of directing and secondly, as a function performed by supervisors in the organisational hierarchy.

As an element of directing: Supervision being an element of directing, every manager in the organisation supervises his/her subordinates. In this sense, supervision can be defined as follows:

Supervision is the process of guiding the efforts of employees and other resources to accomplish the desired objectives. It means overseeing what is being done by subordinates and giving instructions to ensure optimum utilisation of resources and achievement of work targets.

As the function to be performed by supervisor: Supervision is a managerial position in the organisation hierarchy at the operative level *i.e.*, immediately above the worker. The functions and performance of the supervisor are vital to any organisation because he is directly related with workers whereas other managers have no direct touch with bottom level workers.

2. Motivation

Motivation means incitement or inducement to act or move. In the context of an organisation, it means the process of making subordinates to act in a desired manner to achieve certain organisational goals.

"Motivation means a process of stimulating people to action to accomplish desired goals."

– William G. Scout



3. Leadership

Leadership is the process of influencing the behaviour of people by making them strive voluntarily towards achievement of organisational goals. Leadership indicates the ability of an individual to maintain good interpersonal relations with followers and motivate them to contribute for achieving organisational objectives.

"Leadership is the art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically towards the achievement of group goals."

–Harold Koontz and Heinz Weihrich

4. Communication

The word communication has been derived from the Latin word 'communis' which means 'common' which consequently implies common understanding. Communication is defined in different ways. Generally, it is understood as a process of exchange of ideas, views, facts, feelings etc., between or among people to create common understanding.

"Communication is a process by which people create and share information with one another in order to reach common understanding."

–Rogers

Characteristics/Features of Directing

1. Directing initiates action.

Directing is a key managerial function. A manager has to perform this function along with planning, organising, staffing and controlling while discharging his duties in the organisation. While other functions prepare a setting for action, directing initiates action in the organisation. *Thus, directing is an executive function.*

2. Directing takes place at every level of management.

Every manager, from top executive to supervisor performs the function of directing. The directing takes place wherever superior-subordinate relations exist.

3. Directing is a continuous process.

Directing is a continuous activity. It takes place throughout the life of the organisation irrespective of people occupying managerial positions.

4. Directing flows from top to bottom.

Directing is first initiated at top level and flows to the bottom through organisational hierarchy. It means that every manager can direct his immediate subordinate and take instructions from his immediate boss.



We can observe that in organisations like Infosys, Tata, BHEL, HUL the managers may change but the directing process continues because without direction the organisational activities cannot continue further.

Importance of Directing

The importance of directing can be understood by the fact that every action in the organisation is initiated through directing only. Directing guides towards achievement of common objectives. Through directing, managers not only tell the people in the organisation as to what they should do, when they should do and how they should do but also see that their instructions are implemented in proper perspective. Very often, this becomes an important factor in the efficient and effective functioning of the organisation.

The points which emphasise the importance of directing are presented as follows:

1. Initiates action

Directing helps to initiate action by people in the organisation towards attainment of desired objectives.

For example, if a supervisor guides his subordinates and clarifies their doubts while performing a task, it will help the worker to achieve work targets given to him.

2. Integrates employees efforts

Directing integrates employees efforts in the organisation in such a way that every individual effort contributes to the organisational performance. Thus, it ensures that the individuals work for organisational goals.

For example, a manager with good leadership abilities will be in a position to convince the employees working under him that individual efforts and team effort will lead to achievement of organisational goals.

3. Guides employees

Directing guides employees to fully realise their potential and capabilities by motivating and providing effective leadership.

A good leader can always identify the potential of his employees and motivate them to extract work up to their full potential.

4. Facilitates introduction of needed changes in the organisation

Directing facilitates introduction of needed changes in the organisation.

Generally, people have a tendency to resist changes in the organisation. Effective directing through motivation, communication and leadership helps to reduce such resistance and develop required cooperation in introducing changes in the organisation.

For example, if a manager wants to introduce new system of accounting, there may be initial resistance from accounting staff. But, if manager explains the purpose, provides training and motivates with additional rewards, the employees may accept change and cooperate with manager.

5. Brings stability and balance in the organisation

Effective directing helps to bring stability and balance in the organisation since it fosters cooperation and commitment among the people and helps to achieve balance among various groups, activities and the departments.



Is directing required at planning stage? Give reason to support your answer.

Concept of Motivation

Motivation means incitement or inducement to act or move. In the context of an organisation, it means the process of making subordinates to act in a desired manner to achieve certain organisational goals.

While discussing about motivation, we need to understand three inter related terms — motive, motivation and motivators.

1. Motive

A motive is an inner state that energises, activates or moves and directs behaviour towards goals.

Motives arise out of the needs of individuals. Realisation of a motive causes restlessness in the individual which prompts some action to reduce such restlessness.

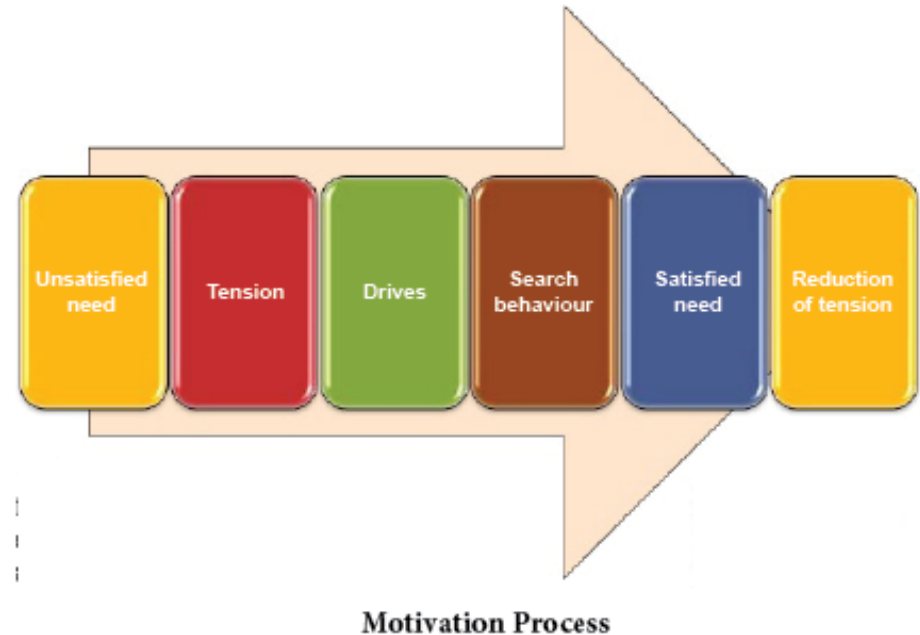
For example, the need for food causes hunger an account of which a man searches for food. Some such motives are – hunger, thirst, security, affiliation, need for comfort, recognition etc.,

2. Motivation

Motivation is the process of stimulating people to action to accomplish desired goals.

Motivation Process: Motivation process is based on human needs. Motivation depends upon satisfying needs of people. An unsatisfied need of an individual creates tension which stimulates his or her drives. These drives generate a search behaviour to satisfy such need. If such need is satisfied, the individual is relieved of tension.

Example: Golu is very hungry since he did not have breakfast in the morning. By 2 p.m., he became restless and started walking on the road in search of a hotel for snacks or meals. After walking for about 1 km, he could find a hotel where roti and dal was available for ₹100. Since he had only ₹200 in his pocket, he paid ₹ 100 and had a satisfying meal. After taking a meal, he felt that he had regained energy.



3. Motivators

Motivator is the technique/incentive used to motivate people in an organisation to improve performance. Managers use diverse motivators/incentives like pay, bonus, promotion, recognition, praise, responsibility etc., in the organisation to influence people to contribute their best.



Top Tip

Incentive means all measures which are used to motivate people to improve performance. These incentives may be broadly classified as financial and non-financial. For example, pay and bonus are financial incentives, whereas promotion, recognition, praise, responsibility etc. are non-financial incentives.

DEFINITIONS OF MOTIVATION

- ❖ “Motivation means a process of stimulating people to action to accomplish desired goals”
—William G. Scout
- ❖ “Motivation refers to the way in which urges, drives, desires, aspirations, strivings or needs direct, control and explain the behaviour of human beings.”
—Mc Farland
- ❖ “Motivation is a complex force starting with keeping a person at work in an organisation. Motivation is something which moves the person to action and continues him in the course of action already initiated.”
—Dubin
- ❖ “Motivation is a process which begins with a physiological or psychological need or deficiency which triggers behaviour or a drive that is aimed at a goal or incentive.”
—Fred Luthans

Features of Motivation

1. Motivation is an internal feeling.

The urge, drives, desires, aspirations, striving or needs of human being, which are internal, influence human behaviour. *For example*, people may have the urge or desire for possessing a motorbike, comfortable house, reputation in the society. These urges are internal to an individual.

2. Motivation produces goal directed behaviour.

For example, the promotion in the job may be given to employee with the objective of improving his performance. If the employee is interested in promotion, it helps to produce a behaviour to improve performance.

3. Motivation can be either positive or negative.

Positive motivation provides positive rewards like increase in pay, promotion, recognition etc.

Negative motivation uses negative means like punishment, stopping increments, threatening etc. which also may induce a person to act in the desired way.

4. Motivation is a complex process.

Motivation is a complex process as the individuals are heterogeneous in their expectations, perceptions and reactions. Any type of motivation may not have uniform effect on all the members.

Maslow's Need Hierarchy Theory of Motivation

Maslow's Need Hierarchy Theory is considered fundamental to understanding of motivation. Abraham Maslow, a well-known psychologist in a classic paper published in 1943, outlined the elements of an overall theory of motivation. His theory was based on human needs. He felt that within every human being, there exists a hierarchy of five needs. These are:

1. **Basic Physiological Needs:** These needs are most basic in the hierarchy and corresponds to primary needs. Hunger, thirst, shelter, sleep, etc. are some examples of these needs.
In the organisational context, basic salary helps to satisfy basic physiological needs..
2. **Safety/Security Needs:** These needs provide security and protection from physical and emotional harm.
Examples: job security, stability of income, Pension plans etc.
3. **Affiliation/Belonging Needs:** These needs refer to affection, sense of belongingness, acceptance and friendship.
4. **Esteem Needs:** These include factors such as self-respect, autonomy status, recognition and attention.
5. **Self Actualisation Needs:** It is the highest level of need in the hierarchy. It refers to the drive to become what one is capable of becoming. These needs include growth, self-fulfilment and achievement of goals.



Maslow's Need Hierarchy Theory

Assumptions of Maslow's Need Hierarchy Theory

1. People's behaviour is based on their needs. Satisfaction of such needs influences their behaviour.
2. People's needs are in hierarchical order, starting from basic needs to other higher level needs.
3. A satisfied need can no longer motivate a person; only next higher level need can motivate him.
4. A person moves to the next higher level of the hierarchy only when the lower need is satisfied.

Role of Maslow's Theory in Motivation of Employees

Maslow's Theory focuses on the needs as the basis for motivation. It helps managers to realise that need level of employee should be identified to provide motivation to them.

Financial Incentives

Financial incentives refer to incentives which are in direct monetary form or measurable in monetary term and serve to motivate people for better performance. These incentives may be provided on individual or group basis.



Top Tip

In the context of existing economic system, money has become a means to satisfy the physical needs of daily life and also of obtaining social position and power. Since, money has the purchasing power, it becomes a very important incentive for every individual.

1. Pay and allowances

For every employee, salary is the basic monetary incentive. It includes basic pay, dearness allowance and other allowances. Salary system consists of regular increments in the pay every year and enhancement of allowances from time-to-time. In some business organisations, pay hike and increments may be linked to performance.

2. Bonus

Bonus is an incentive offered over and above the wages/salary to the employees.

3. Perquisites

In many companies, perquisites and fringe benefits are offered such as car allowance, housing, medical aid, and education to the children etc., over and above the salary.

These measures help to provide motivation to the employees/managers.

4. Profit Sharing

Profit sharing is meant to provide a share to employees in the profits of the organisation. This serves to motivate the employees to improve their performance and contribute to increase in profits.



5. Co-partnership/ Stock option

Under this incentive scheme, employees are offered company shares at a set price, which is lower than market price. The allotment of shares creates a feeling of ownership to the employees and makes them to contribute for the growth of the organisation.

In Infosys, the scheme of stock option has been implemented as a part of managerial compensation.

6. Productivity linked wage incentives

Several wage incentive plans aim at linking payment of wages to increase employee productivity at individual or group level.

7. Retirement Benefits

Retirement benefits such as provident fund, pension, and gratuity provide financial security to employees after their retirement. This acts as an incentive when they are in service in the organisation.

Non- financial Incentives

All the needs of individuals are not satisfied by money alone. Psychological, social and emotional factors also play important role in providing motivation. Non-financial incentives mainly focus on these needs.



Top Tip

Sometimes, monetary aspect may be involved in non-financial incentives as well. However, the emphasis is to provide psychological and emotional satisfaction rather than money driven satisfaction. For example, if an individual gets promotion in the organisation, it satisfies him psychologically more as he gets a feeling of elevation, increase in status, increase in authority, challenge in the job, etc. Though promotion involves payment of extra money, non-monetary aspects over-ride monetary aspects.

1. Employee Recognition programmes

Most people have a need for evaluation of their work and due recognition. They feel that what they do should be recognised by others concerned.

Recognition means acknowledgment with a show of appreciation.

When such appreciation is given to the work performed by employees, they feel motivated to perform/work at higher level.

Some examples of employee recognition are:

- Congratulating the employee for good performance
- Installing award or certificate for best performance
- Rewarding an employee for giving valuable suggestions
- Displaying on the notice board or in the company news letter about the achievement of employee
- Distributing mementos, complementaries like T-shirts in recognition of employee services



Employee Recognition: Congratulating the employee for good performance

2. Job security

Employees want their job to be secure. They want certain stability about future income and work so that they do not feel worried on these aspects and work with greater zeal.

However, there is one negative aspect of job security. When people feel that they are not likely to lose their jobs, they may become complacent.



In India, this aspect is more important considering the inadequate job opportunities and too many aspirants for these jobs.

3. Career Advancement Opportunity

Every individual wants to grow to the higher level in the organisation. Managers should provide opportunity to employees to improve their skills and be promoted to the higher level jobs.

Appropriate skill development programmes, and sound promotion policy will help employees to achieve promotions. Promotion works as a tonic and encourages employees to exhibit improved performance.

4. Employee participation

'Employee participation' means involving employees in decision making of the issues related to them.

In many companies, these programmes are in practice in the form of joint management committees, work committees, canteen committees etc.

5. Status

In the organisational context, status means ranking of positions in the organisation.

- The authority, responsibility, rewards, recognition, perquisites and prestige of job indicate the status given to a person holding a managerial position.
- Psychological, social and esteem needs of an individual are satisfied by status given to their job.

6. Job Enrichment

Job enrichment is concerned with designing jobs that include:

- greater variety of work content requiring higher level of knowledge and skill;
- give workers more autonomy and responsibility; and
- provide the opportunity for personal growth and a meaningful work experience.

If jobs are enriched and made interesting, the job itself becomes a source of motivation to the individual.

7. Organisational Climate

Organisational climate indicates the characteristics which describe an organisation and distinguish one organisation from the other.

- These characteristics influence the behaviour of individuals in the organisation. Some of these characteristics are—individual autonomy, reward orientation, consideration to employees, risk-taking etc.
- If managers take positive measures regarding these aspects, it helps to develop better organisational climate.

8. Employee Empowerment

'Employee empowerment' means giving more autonomy and power to subordinates.

Empowerment makes people feel that their jobs are important. This feeling contributes positively to the use of skills and talents in the job performance.

7.3 Leadership: Concept; Styles — Authoritative, Democratic and Laissez Faire

Concept of Leadership

Meaning of leadership

Leadership is the process of influencing the behaviour of people by making them strive voluntarily towards achievement of organisational goals.

Leadership indicates the ability of an individual to maintain good inter-personal relations with followers and motivate them to contribute for achieving organisational objectives.

DEFINITIONS OF LEADERSHIP

- ❖ “Leadership is the art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically towards the achievement of group goals.” —Harold Koontz and Heinz Weihrich
- ❖ “Leadership is the activity of influencing people to strive willingly for group objectives.” —George Terry
- ❖ “Leadership is a set of interpersonal behaviours designed to influence employees to cooperate in the achievement of objectives.” —Glueck
- ❖ “Leadership is both a process and property. The process of leadership is the use of non-coercive influence to direct and coordinate the activities of the members of an organised group towards the accomplishment of group objectivities. As a property, leadership is the set of qualities or characteristics attributed to those who are perceived to successfully employ such influence.” —Gay and Strake

Features of leadership

1. Leadership indicates ability of an individual to influence others.
2. Leadership tries to bring change in the behaviour of others.
3. Leadership indicates inter-personal relations between leaders and followers.
4. Leadership is exercised to achieve common goals of the organisation.
5. Leadership is a continuous process.

Leadership Styles

Leadership style refers to a leader's behaviour.

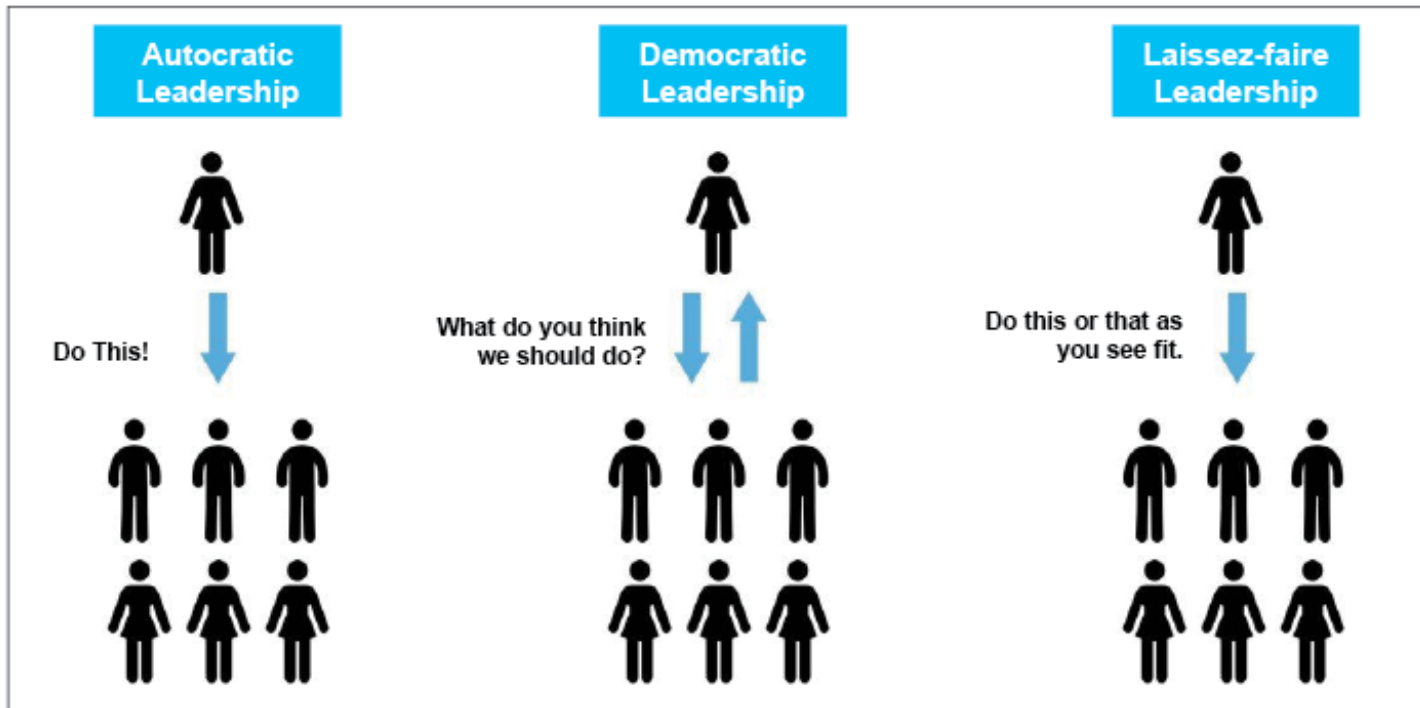
Behavioural pattern which the leader reflects in his role as a leader is often described as the '*style of leadership*'.

A leadership style depends on:

- the leader's philosophy, personality, experience and value system;
- the type of followers;
- the atmosphere prevailing in the organization; and
- the 'use of authority' by the leader.

The most popular classification of leadership styles is based on the 'use of authority'. Depending on the use of authority, there are three basic styles of leadership:

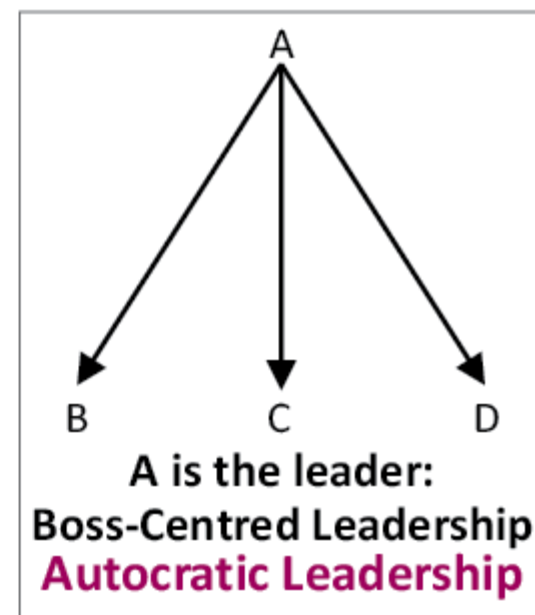
- (i) Autocratic, (ii) Democratic, and (iii) Laissez-faire



Three basic styles of leadership: based on the use of authority

1. Autocratic or Authoritarian leadership style

- An autocratic leader gives orders and expects his subordinates to obey those orders.
- This leader is dogmatic i.e., does not change or wish to be contradicted.
- He determines the policies for the group without consulting them.
- He does not give information about future plans but simply tells the group what immediate steps they must take.
- If a manager is following this style, then communication is only one-way with the subordinate only acting according to the command given by the manager.
- His following is based on the assumption that reward or punishment both can be given depending upon the result.
- Under this style, all decision making power is centralized in the leader as shown in the diagram. He does not give the subordinates any freedom to influence his decision. It is like *"bossing people around."*



Advantages/Benefits:

- (i) This style should normally be used on rare occasions. However, this leadership style is effective in getting productivity in many situations like in a factory where the supervisor is responsible for production on time and has to ensure labour productivity.
- (ii) Quick decision-making is also facilitated.



Top Tip

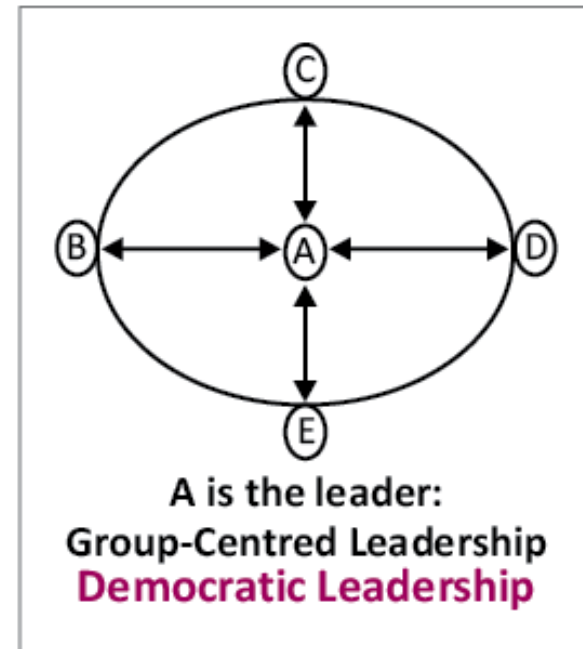
There may be variations also. Autocratic leaders may listen to everyone's opinion, consider subordinates ideas and concerns but the decision will be their own.

2. Democratic or Participative leadership style

- A democratic leader develops action plans and makes decisions in consultation with his subordinates.
- He works out the policies with the acceptance of the group. He exercises more control by using forces within the group.
- He never asks people to do things without working out the long-term plans on which they are working.
- He respects the other's opinion and supports subordinates to perform their duties and accomplish organisational objectives.

Advantages/Benefits:

- This improves the attitude of the employees towards their jobs and the organisation thereby increasing their morale.
- Using this style is of mutual benefit – it allows them (subordinates) to become part of the team and helps leaders (seniors) to make better decisions.

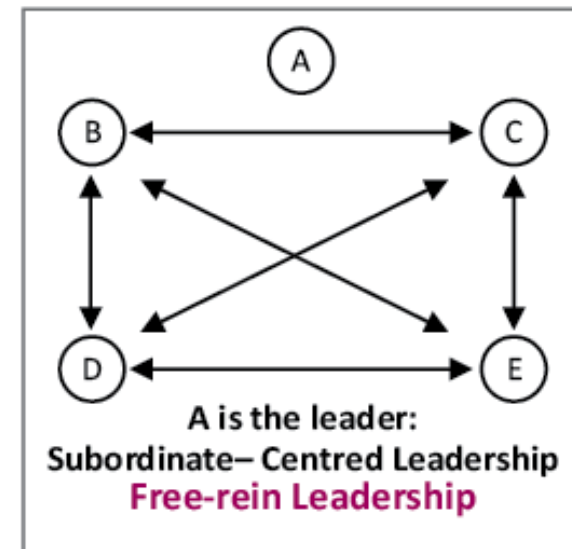


Top Tip

Democratic or Participative leadership style is more common now-a-days, since leaders also recognise that people perform best if they have set their own objectives.

3. Laissez-faire or Free-rein leader style

- A free-rein leader does not believe in the use of power unless it is absolutely essential.
- The leader gives a high degree of independence to his followers so as to formulate their own objectives and ways to achieve them. At the same time, the subordinates assume responsibility for the work to be performed.
- He depends largely upon the group to establish its own goals and work out its own problems. Group members work themselves as per their own choice and competence resolving issues themselves.
- The manager (leader) is there only to support them. He exists as a contact man with the outsiders to bring information and the resources the group requires for accomplishing the task assigned.



Top Tip

This leadership style is known as 'laissez-faire' which means – "no interference in the affairs of others."
[French: 'laissez' means to let/allow and 'faire' means to do.]

LEADERSHIP IS SITUATIONAL.

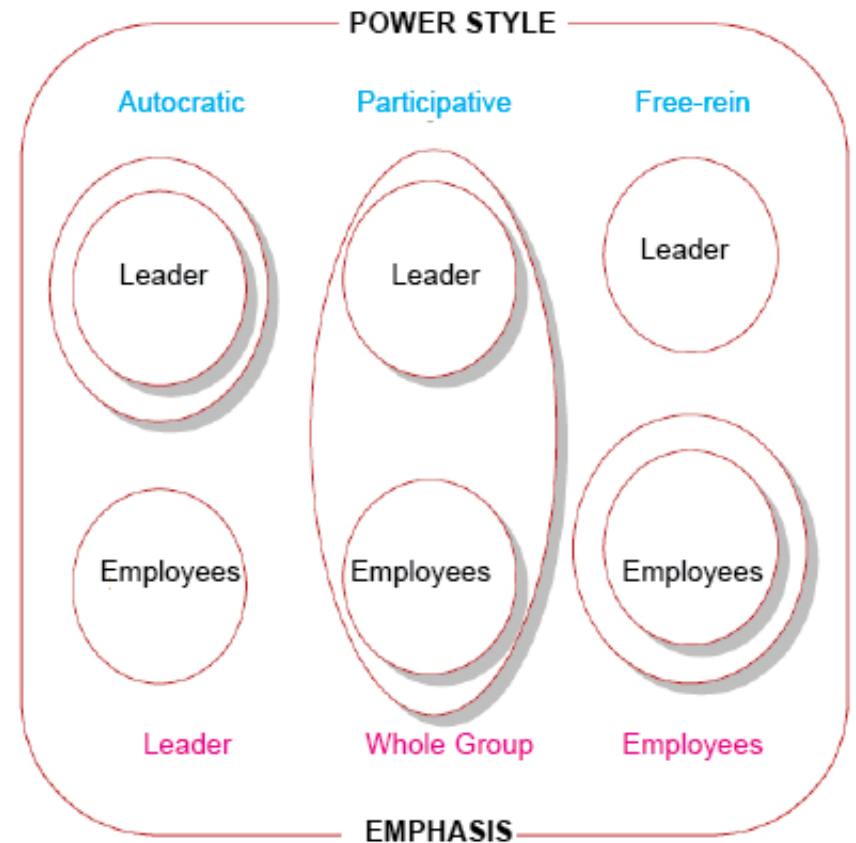
Depending upon the situation a leader may choose to exercise a combination of these styles when required. Even a laissez faire leader would have certain rules to be followed while doing work and a democratic leader may have to take his own decision in an emergency situation.

Thus, a leader may use all styles over a period of time but one style tends to predominate as his normal way of using power.

Example: Mr. Neel Madhav, CEO of Shree Radhey Publications Pvt. Ltd., distributes the work for the month. He delegates the work to his staff Ms. Vrinda, Ms. Divya, Ms. Shreya and Mr. Gopal as per his discretion. *(Mr. Neel Madhav is behaving as an autocratic leader)*

Mr. Neel Madhav has realized that in absence of Ms. Shreya, the work will not get over as scheduled. He discusses with his staff members to meet the dead line. Everybody decided to do over time and planned to stay back accordingly. *(Mr. Neel Madhav is behaving as a democratic leader)*

The staff plans to organize a party in honor of Ms. Shreya as she got promoted. Mr. Neel Madhav asks the other members of staff to fix the venue and the menu for the occasion. *(Mr. Neel Madhav is behaving as a free rein leader)*



7.4 Communication: Concept, Types and Barriers

Concept of Communication

Meaning of Communication

Communication is the process of exchange of information between two or more persons to reach common understanding.

DEFINITIONS OF COMMUNICATION

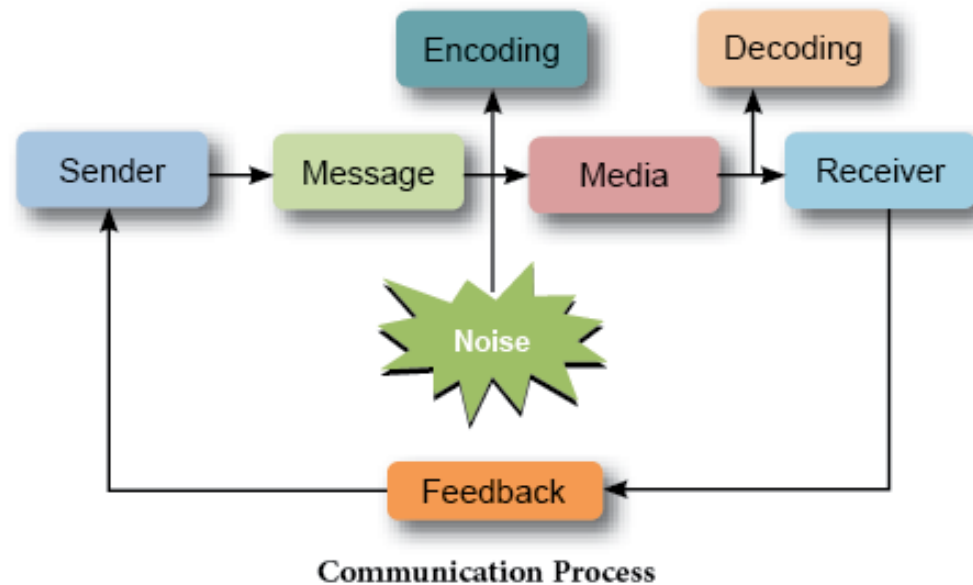
- ❖ “Communication is a process by which people create and share information with one another in order to reach common understanding.”
—Rogers
- ❖ “Communication is transfer of information from the sender to the receiver with the information being understood by the receiver.”
—Harold Koontz and Heniz Weihrich
- ❖ “Communication is the sum of all things one person does when he wants to create understanding in the mind of another. It involves systematic and continuous process of telling, listening and understanding.”
—Louis Allen

Elements of Communication Process

Communication process involves elements like source, encoding, media/channel, receiver, decoding, noise and feedback. The process is represented in the figure.

The elements involved in communication process are explained below:

1. **Sender:** Sender means person who conveys his thoughts or ideas to the receiver. The sender represents source of communication.
2. **Message:** It is the content of ideas, feelings, suggestions, order etc., intended to be communicated.
3. **Encoding:** It is the process of converting the message into communication symbols such as words, pictures, gestures etc.
4. **Media:** It is the path through which encoded message is transmitted to receiver. The channel may be in written form, face to face, phone call, Internet, etc.
5. **Decoding:** It is the process of converting encoded symbols of the sender.
6. **Receiver:** The person who receives communication of the sender.
7. **Feedback:** It includes all those actions of receiver indicating that he has received and understood message of sender.
8. **Noise:** Noise means some obstruction or hindrance to communication. This hindrance may be caused to sender, message or receiver. *Some examples of noise are:*
 - (i) A poor telephone connection
 - (ii) An inattentive receiver
 - (iii) Faulty decoding (attaching wrong meanings to message)
 - (iv) Ambiguous symbols that lead to faulty encoding
 - (v) Gestures and postures that may distort the message
 - (vi) Prejudices obstructing the poor understanding of message



Formal and Informal Communication

Communication taking place within an organisation may be broadly classified as formal and informal communication.

Formal Communication

Formal communication flows through official channels designed in the organisation chart. This communication may take place between a superior and subordinate, a subordinate and superior or among same cadre employees or managers. Formal communication may be further classified as – Vertical and Horizontal.

1. **Vertical communication:** Vertical communication flows vertically i.e., upwards or downwards through formal channels.
 - (i) *Upward communication* refers to flow of communication from a subordinate to superior.
Examples: Application for grant of leave, submission of progress report, request for grants, etc.
 - (ii) *Downward communication* refers to communication from a superior to subordinate.
Examples: Sending notice to employees to attend a meeting, ordering subordinates to complete an assigned work, passing on guidelines framed by top management to the subordinates etc.
2. **Horizontal or lateral communication:** Horizontal or lateral communication takes place between one division and another. *For example,* a production manager may contact marketing manager to discuss about schedule of product delivery, product design, quality etc.



Top Tip

Formal communications may be oral or written but generally recorded and filed in the office.

Informal Communication

Communication that takes place without following the formal lines of communication is called informal communication.

Workers chit chatting in a canteen about the behaviour of the superior, discussing about rumours that some employees are likely to be transferred are some examples of informal communications.

Features

- (i) The informal communication arises out of needs of employees to exchange their views, which cannot be done through formal channels.
- (ii) Informal system of communication is generally referred to as the '*grapevine*' because it spreads throughout the organisation with its branches going out in all directions in utter disregard to the levels of authority.

Positive Aspects

- (i) Sometimes, grapevine channels may be helpful as they carry information rapidly and, therefore, may be useful to the manager at times.
- (ii) Informal channels are used by the managers to transmit information so as to know the reactions of his/her subordinates.

Negative Aspects

- (i) The grapevine/ informal communication spreads rapidly and sometimes gets distorted. It is very difficult to detect the source of such communication.



Informal Communications: Generate rumours which are not authentic. People's behaviour is affected by rumours.

- (ii) It also leads to generate rumours which are not authentic. People's behaviour is affected by rumours and informal discussions and sometimes may hamper work environment.



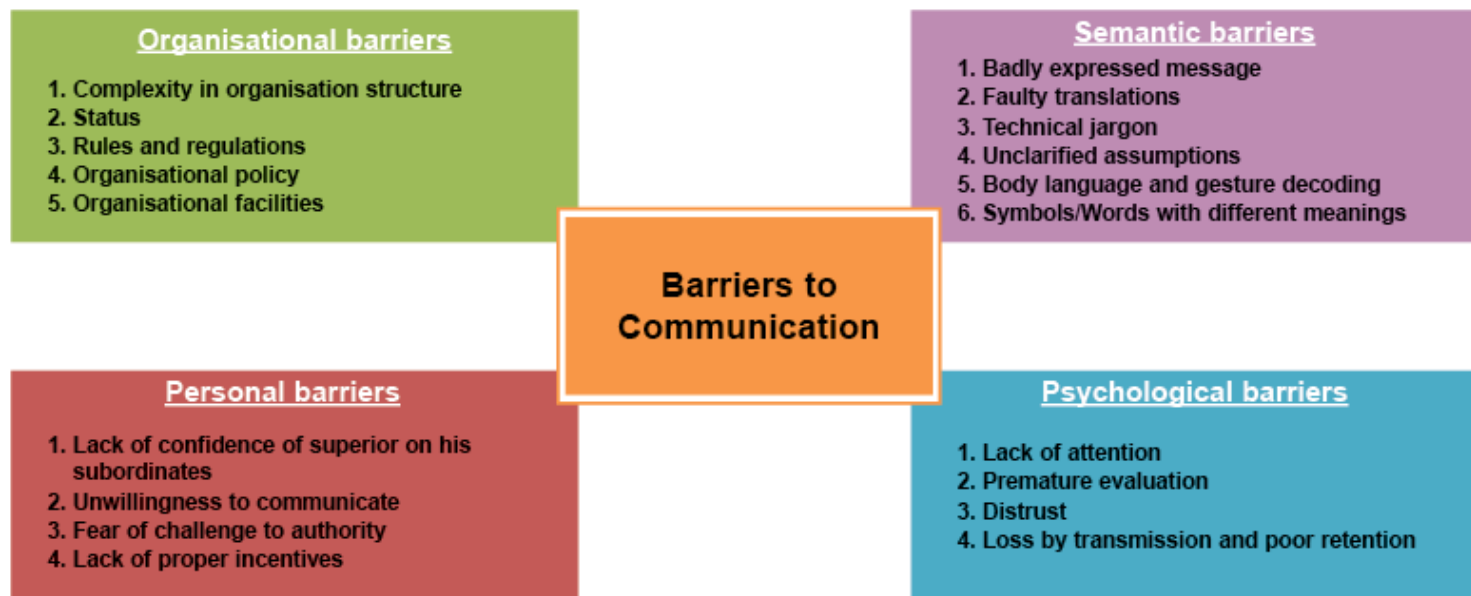
Top Tip

An intelligent manager should make use of positive aspects of informal channels and minimise negative aspects of this channel of communication.

Barriers to Communication

It is generally observed that managers face several problems due to communication breakdowns or barriers. These barriers may prevent a communication or filter part of it or carry incorrect meaning due to which misunderstandings may be created. Therefore, it is important for a manager to identify such barriers and take measures to overcome them.

The barriers to communication in the organisations can be broadly grouped as: (i) semantic barriers, (ii) psychological barriers, (iii) organisational barriers, and (iv) personal barriers.



Semantic barriers

Semantic barriers are concerned with problems and obstructions in the process of encoding and decoding of message into words or impressions.

Normally, such barriers result on account of use of wrong words, faulty translations, different interpretations etc.

1. **Badly expressed message:** Sometimes, intended meaning may not be conveyed by a manager to his subordinates. These badly expressed messages may be an account of inadequate vocabulary, usage of wrong words, omission of needed words etc.
2. **Faulty translations:** Sometimes, the communications originally drafted in one language (e.g., English) need to be translated to the language understandable to workers (e.g., Hindi).
If the translator is not proficient with both the languages, mistakes may creep in causing different meanings to the communication.
3. **Technical jargon:** Generally, specialists use technical words, e.g. tariff, quotas, etc. while explaining to persons who are not specialists in the concerned field. Therefore, they may not understand the actual meaning of many such words.
4. **Unclear assumptions:** Some communications may have certain assumptions which are subject to different interpretations. *For example*, a boss instructs his subordinate, "Take care of our guest". The boss means that subordinate should take care of transport, food, accommodation of the guest until he leaves the place. But the subordinate interprets that the guest should be taken to hotel with care. Actually, the guest suffers due to these unclear assumptions.
5. **Body language and gesture decoding:** The body movement and gestures of communicator matters so much in conveying the message. Every movement of body communicates some meaning. If there is no match between what is said and what is expressed in body movements, communications may be wrongly perceived.

6. **Symbols/Words with different meanings:** A word may have several meanings. Receiver has to perceive one such meaning for the word used by communicator. Wrong perception leads to communication problems.

For example, consider these three sentences where the word 'value' gives different meaning in different contexts.

- (a) What is the value of this ring?
- (b) I value our friendship.
- (c) What is the value of learning computer skills?

Organisational barriers

Organisational barriers are related to organisation structure, authority relationships, rules and regulations, etc.

Some of these barriers are:

- 1. **Complexity in organisation structure:** If the organisation structure is complex having a large number of managerial levels, communication gets delayed and distorted as number of filtering points are more.
- 2. **Status:** Status of superior may create psychological distance between him and his subordinates. A status conscious manager may not allow his subordinates to express their feelings freely.
- 3. **Rules and regulations:** Rigid rules and cumbersome procedures may be a hurdle to communication. Similarly, communications through prescribed channel may result in delays.
- 4. **Organisational policy:** If the organisational policy is not supportive to free flow of communication, it may hamper effectiveness of communications. *For example,* in an organisation with highly centralised pattern, people may not be encouraged to have free communication.
- 5. **Organisational facilities:** Organisational facilities like frequent meetings, suggestion box, complaint box, social and cultural gathering, transparency in operations etc., will encourage free flow of communication. Lack of these facilities may create communication problems.
If facilities for smooth, clear and timely communications are not provided, communications may be hampered.

Personal barriers

Personal barriers to communication are related to the personal factors of both sender and receiver.

Some of the personal barriers of superiors and subordinates are mentioned below:

1. **Lack of confidence of superior on his subordinates:** If superiors do not have confidence on the competency of their subordinates, they may not seek their advice or opinions.
2. **Unwillingness to communicate:** Sometimes, subordinates may not be prepared to communicate with their superiors, if they perceive that it may adversely affect their interests.
3. **Fear of challenge to authority:** If a superior perceives that a particular communication may adversely affect his authority, he may withhold or suppress such communication.
4. **Lack of proper incentives:** If there is no motivation or incentive for communication, subordinates may not take initiative to communicate. *For example*, if there is no reward or appreciation for a good suggestion, the subordinates may not be willing to offer useful suggestions.

Psychological barriers

Psychological barriers are related to the state of mind of both sender and receiver of communication.

Some of the psychological barriers are:

1. **Lack of attention:** The pre-occupied mind of receiver and the resultant non-listening of message acts as a major psychological barrier. *For example*, an employee explains about his problems to the boss who is pre-occupied with an important file before him. The boss does not listen to the message attentively and the employee is disappointed.

2. **Premature evaluation:** Sometimes, people evaluate the meaning of message before the sender completes his message. Such premature evaluation may be due to pre-conceived notions or prejudices against the communication.
3. **Distrust:** Distrust between communicator and communicatee acts as a barrier. If the parties do not believe each other, they cannot understand each other's message in its original sense.
4. **Loss by transmission and poor retention:** When communication passes through various levels, successive transmission of the message results in loss of, or transmission of inaccurate information. This is more so in case of oral communication.
Poor retention is another problem. Usually, people cannot retain the information for a long time if they are inattentive or not interested.



Psychological (or emotional) factors also act as barriers to communications. For example, a worried person cannot communicate properly and an angry receiver cannot understand the real meaning of message.

How to overcome barriers? – Improving Communication Effectiveness

1. Clarify the ideas before communication.

The problem to be communicated to subordinates should be clear in all its perspective to the executive himself. The entire problem should be studied in depth, analysed and stated in such a manner that is clearly conveyed to subordinates.

2. Communicate according to the needs of receiver.

The level of understanding of receiver should be crystal clear to the communicator. Manager should adjust his communication according to the education and understanding levels of subordinates.

3. Consult others before communicating.

Before actually communicating the message, it is better to involve others in developing a plan for communication. Participation and involvement of subordinates may help to gain ready acceptance and willing cooperation of subordinates.

4. Be aware of languages, tone and content of message.

The contents of the message, tone, language used, manner in which the message is to be communicated are the important aspects of effective communication.

- The language used should be understandable to the receiver and should not offend the sentiments of listeners.
- The message should be stimulating to evoke response from the listeners.

5. Ensure proper feedback.

The communicator may ensure the success of communication by asking questions regarding the message conveyed.

The receiver of communication may also be encouraged to respond to communication. The communication process may be improved by the feedback received to make it more responsive.

6. Be a good listener.

Manager should be a good listener. Patient and attentive listening solves half of the problems. Managers should also give indications of their interest in listening to their subordinates.

7. Follow up communications

There should be regular follow up and review on the instructions given to subordinates. Such follow up measures help in removing hurdles if any in implementing the instructions.

8. Communicate for present as well as future.

Generally, communication is needed to meet the existing commitments to maintain consistency, the communication should aim at future goals of the enterprise also.

9. Convey things of help and value to listeners.

While conveying message to others, it is better to know the interests and needs of the people with whom you are communicating. If the message relates directly or indirectly to such interests and needs it certainly evokes response from communicatee.