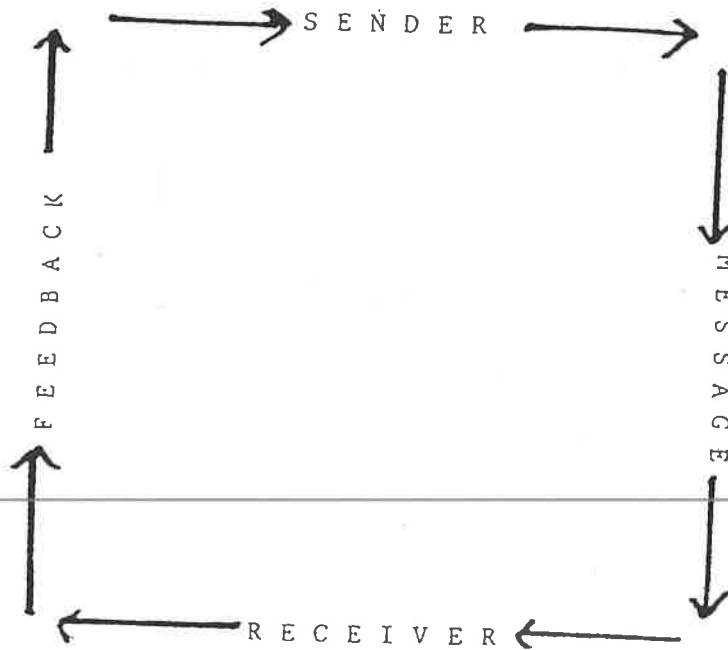


# COMMUNICATION SKILLS

## The Elements of Communication

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### Commonly Held View of Oral Communications



The square is broken, why?

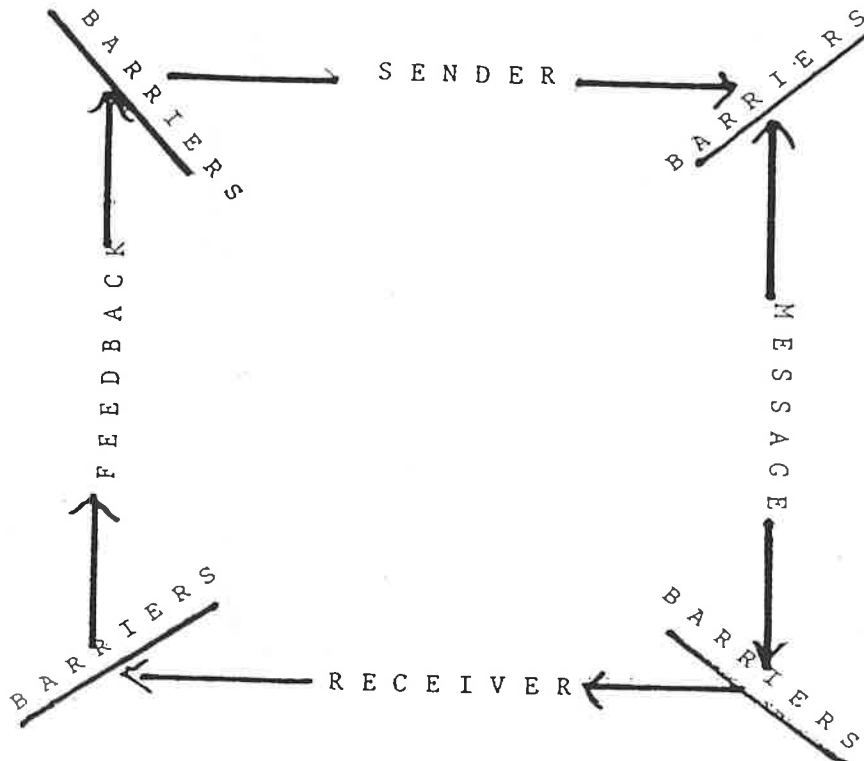
See next page

## COMMUNICATION SKILLS

### The Elements of Communication

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#### Commonly Held View of Oral Communications



Since so many possibilities of misunderstanding exist, the communicator must have a firm grasp of the mechanisms of the communication process. The message itself is never independent of the medium chosen to communicate it, and it is never received in quite the same manner that the sender intended. Usually the message sent and the message received are similar enough to permit understanding, despite interferences that may occur.

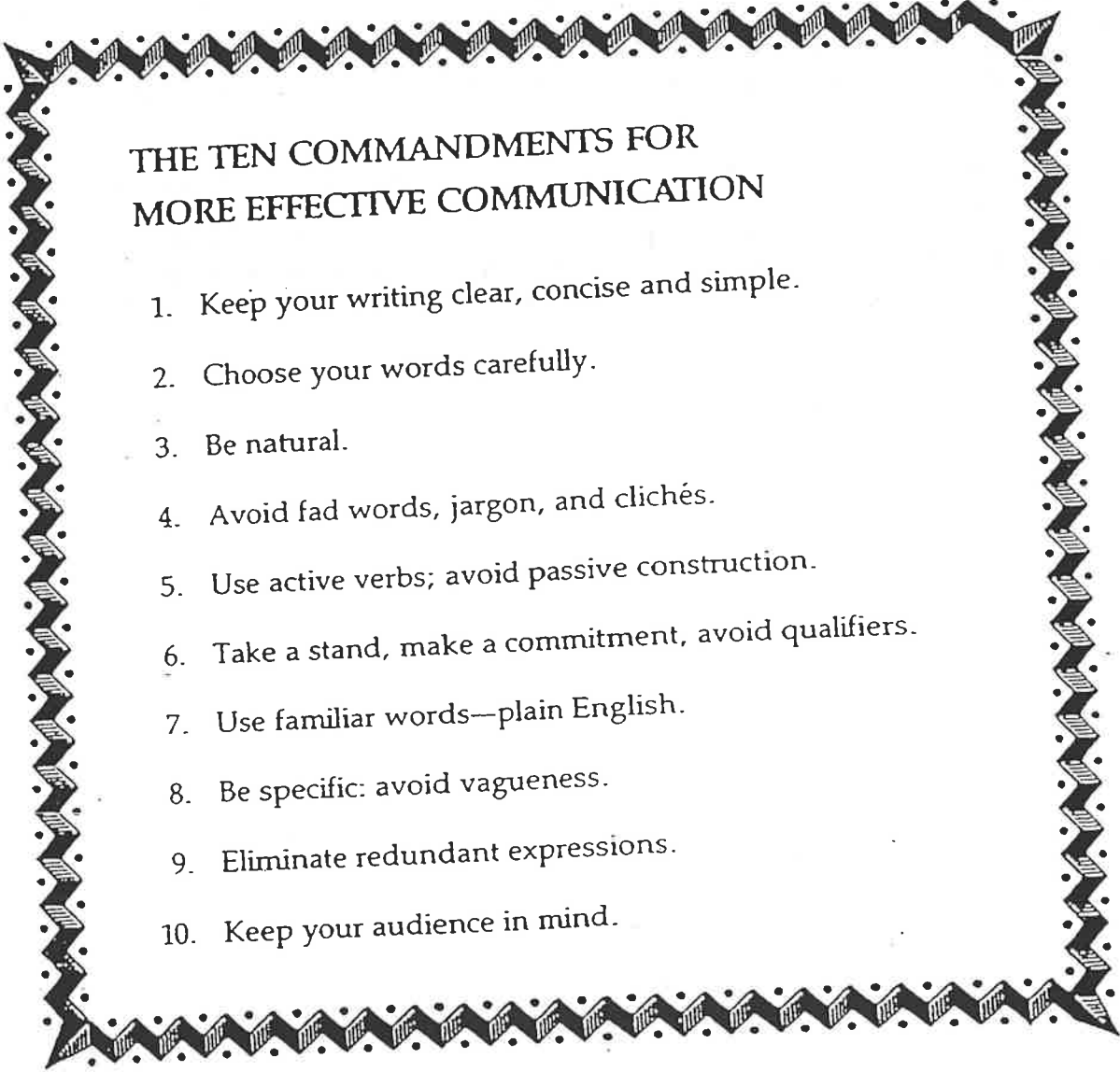
## Introduction to Communication

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### Rationale

Communication is a process by which people pass and exchange information, often to influence the thoughts, feelings, and actions of others. Effective communication promotes cooperation. It eliminates misunderstanding, confusion, and feelings of distrust. It is therefore necessary for workers at all levels of the organization to understand the basics of communication and the various factors that alter messages.

Communication skills affect the ability of workers to achieve goals. Management leadership depends upon how effectively a manager can pass information on to others. Planning and organizing manpower and resources, promoting organizational and personnel relationships, and solving complex problems involving individuals and groups are examples of responsibilities that require communication skills.



## THE TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR MORE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

1. Keep your writing clear, concise and simple.
2. Choose your words carefully.
3. Be natural.
4. Avoid fad words, jargon, and clichés.
5. Use active verbs; avoid passive construction.
6. Take a stand, make a commitment, avoid qualifiers.
7. Use familiar words—plain English.
8. Be specific: avoid vagueness.
9. Eliminate redundant expressions.
10. Keep your audience in mind.

## COMMUNICATION SKILLS

III. Barriers to effective communication can begin with the sender. His or her personal motives, prejudices, and psychology begin to alter the message. The manner in which the message is encoded is affected by the way the sender perceives the situation. The sender must be aware that this same situation may be perceived differently by the receiver. The sender's thinking may be poorly organized, the message may include too much or too little information, or the grammar or sentence structure may be unclear.

### A. Types of Barriers

1. Emotional blocks - Little or none of the message comes through to the receiver. The receiver hears all messages only in reference to his or her own needs and cannot hear messages that do not relate to his or her own interest.
2. Hostility - Hostility may arise because the receiver is angry with the sender of the message, or the nature of the subject matter itself arouses hostility. In either case, the message sent is often not received.
3. Hidden agendas - These are present when people bring ulterior motives to their interactions. One worker may reject the ideas of a second worker because the first worker feels it is to his or her competitive advantage to do so.
4. Defensiveness - A worker's insecurity may distort a simple question into an accusation, and he or she may justify a certain behavior as a protection against the perceived attack.
5. Personal ideas and beliefs - If the receiver holds strong views on a subject, he or she will ignore the sender's point of view and concentrate on imposing his or her views on the sender. In the process, the original message is lost.
6. Position or status - A worker may feel threatened by the supervisor simply because of the difference in their positions. This can prevent the worker from conveying his or her message. Such barriers also occur downward. These barriers are often a matter of perception, that is, how the worker perceives what is said, rather than what is said.
7. Simple inarticulateness - Due to a verbal deficiency, the sender may distort or misinterpret the true message being sent. If the sender is unaware of his or her deficiencies, the message may become totally lost or misconstrued by the receiver, and a barrier will be created.
8. Physical environment - This can create conditions that hinder communication. A hot, stuffy room with poor air circulation is not conducive to effective message sending and receiving. Also, a person's physical state at the time may be distracting him or her from either sending a clear message or hearing the message being sent.

### B. Personal Behaviors that Create Barriers to Communication

1. Making hasty judgments
2. Being too general
3. Interrupting

4. Mishandling not being understood
5. Talking too much
6. Being too bossy
7. Talking down to people
8. Asking leading questions
9. Being sarcastic
10. Arguing
11. Emphasizing
12. Having poor listening habits

#### IV. Supervisors as Communicators

- A. Role and responsibility
- B. External and internal aspects of communicating effectively
- C. Need to reflect, remain sensitive and aware
- D. What needs to be done to enhance communication (techniques, awareness, practice)

Information, specific examples will be generated from the participants. This section can begin or end with the administration of the two questionnaires, a Self-Analysis Worksheet and a Listening Inventory, that follow.

#### V. The Elements of Communication

##### A. Verbal

1. Choice of words
2. Choice of approach
3. Technical language
4. Formal vs. informal
5. Organization of message

##### B. Non Verbal

1. Silences
2. Interruptions
3. Body language (posture, gestures, eye contact)
4. Facial expressions
5. Physical appearances (dress, age, height, weight, male/female)

##### C. Paralinguistics

1. Tone
2. Rate
3. Pitch
4. Accents
5. Laughter
6. Distracters