

Overcoming Barriers for More Effective Communication

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North Carolina Institute for Public Health (NCIPH)

- Service arm of the Gillings School of Global Public Health at UNC-Chapel Hill
- Since 1999 has served as a bridge between academia and partners in community organizations and government agencies

Deliver training, conduct research and provide technical assistance to transform the practice of public health for all



Session Objectives

- Describe barriers to effective communication
- Review the advantages of effective communication
- Identify strategies to foster effective communication



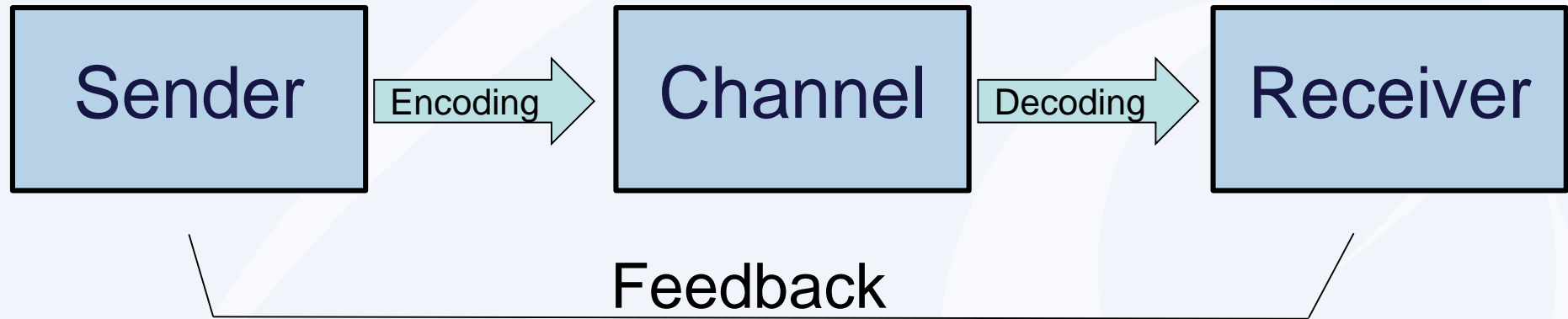
Communication

...the act of transferring information from one place to another

Categories of communication:



The Communication Process



Workplace Communication

- A strategic agenda topic
- Central to organizational culture
- Connects others to the mission and vision
- Essential to building trust and maintaining valued relationships





“The art of communication is the language of leadership.”
James Humes



What are some common barriers?



The goal is to convey a message that is understood.



Communication Barriers...

- Use of jargon
- Lack of attention/interest
- Difference in perception or viewpoint
- Language differences
- Physical disabilities to non-verbal communication
- Message incongruency
- Emotional barriers
- False assumptions and stereotyping
- Cultural differences
- Unclear roles in chain of communication
- Avoidance
- Information overload



Principles of Effective Communication

- **Clarity** - make it as simple as possible
- **Objective** - there should be a defined purpose
- **Understanding the receiver** - know your audience
- **Consistency** - don't conflict with existing messaging
- **Completeness** - include as many details as possible
- **Feedback** - provide opportunity for reactions/follow-up
- **Time** - don't wait too late or it will be devalued



Strengthening Interpersonal Skills...

- ✓ **Verbal Communication**
- ✓ **Non-Verbal Communication**
- ✓ **Listening**
- ✓ **Negotiation**
- ✓ **Problem Solving**
- ✓ **Decision Making**
- ✓ **Assertiveness**



Step 1: Crafting your Message...

- To motivate (to work harder or smarter)
- To inform (about the results of a process or facts needed to make a decision)
- To persuade (to make a certain decision)
- To educate
- To entertain
- To inspire



Message Video



Step 2: Selecting a Channel...

Newsletter

Emails

Water cooler chat

Photos

Weekly staff meeting

Facebook post

Distribution List

10 minute team huddles

Individual phone calls

FLOW DIAGRAM

Daily IM

Written Report

Power point presentation

Teleconference call

Departmental Memos

VIDEO CONFERENCING



Channel Video



Step 3: Recipient Interprets Message

- What do they need to hear?
- How much do they already know?
- What perspectives do they bring with them?

Be sure to eliminate as many obstacles to clear understanding (*noise*) as possible.



Interpret/Decoding Video



Step 4: Feedback to the Sender

- Takes communication from one-way to two-way
- Lets the sender know the recipient interpreted the message or how they reacted to it
- Allows time for suggestions and criticisms that may be helpful in the future



Step 5: Measure Effective Communication

Goal: Establish a Common Understanding

Effective communication is when the intended message of the sender is the same as the interpreted message of the receiver.

What questions can you ask?



Effective vs Efficient



Tips for More Effective Communication



- Be specific
- Confirm receipt of message
- Provide proper follow-up and check understanding
- Emphasize the positive
- Conduct an assessment (*start small*)
- Encourage a culture of sharing and collaboration
- Make communication part of your strategic agenda



Group Examples



Reviewing Communication

Think about the following factors:

Who is the communicator?

What message(s) were exchanged?

What (if any) noise distorts the message?

What is the context of the communication?

How is feedback given?



Barriers Come in Different Forms

Language

Physical

Systematic

Psychological



References

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