

# 1. Introduction to Communication

Communication is the process by which information is **transmitted** and **understood** between two or more people.

## Communication Functions at work:

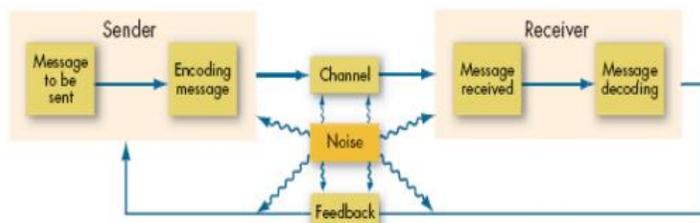
1. Coordinate and control (*influence*) behaviour
2. Foster motivation for what is to be done
3. Enable knowledge management and transfer
4. Provide information needed to make decisions

## The big challenges

- Globalisation
  - Led to outsourcing, multinational corporations & the complexity of global interconnections (e.g. global recession)
- Terrorism
  - War on terror & homeland security
  - Focus on developing border security and first-response orgs (hospitals, military)
- Climate change
- Changing demographics
- Multinationals...communicating across cultures
- Outsourcing – workers in different countries with different working conditions
- Virtual organisations – connecting through technology
- Mutual dependence

## Macro to micro

Perceptual models of communication:



Early models of communication were highly simplistic, arguing that communication could be conceptualised with a SMCR model – in which a Source transmits a Message through a Channel to a Receiver.

However, communication is also about intricate networks and the creation of meaning systems in families and cultures etc.

Noise: language, cultural barriers etc. This will disrupt how a message is communicated.

# 2. Founding approaches

## Classical theories of management

- It is important to study the history of management thinking because it changes slowly – we learn from previous theories and practices
- The classical theories grew out of the industrial revolution
  - Shift from agricultural based society to industrial factories and manufacturing

Classical management theory refers to the **specialisation** of labour – breaking down labour into simple parts.

Theorist	Theory & Features
Henri Fayol	<p><b>1. Elements of management – what managers should do:</b> → Planning, organising, command, coordination &amp; control</p> <p><b>2. Principles of management – how managers should enact these elements</b> → Principles of structure: Scalar chain (strict vertical hierarchy), unity of command, unity of direction, division of labour, order &amp; span of control → Principles of power: centralisation, authority and responsibility &amp; delegation → Principles of reward: remuneration, equity, tenure stability → Principles of organisational attitude: subordination of individual interest to general interest, initiative, esprit de corps</p> <p>Henri Fayol’s theory is a <b>prescriptive theory</b>. It prescribes the way an organisation <i>ought</i> to run. It does not adequately describe or explain the ways in which organisations actually function (no ideal type).</p>
Max Weber	<p>Weber’s <b>Theory of Bureaucracy</b> has been termed an ‘ideal type’ theory – lays out the features of an idealised organisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bureaucracy should be operated through a clearly defined hierarchy</li> <li>• Hierarchy characterised by division of labour</li> <li>• Bureaucracy is characterised by the centralisation of decision making and power</li> <li>• Emphasises the importance of <b>rules</b> for organisational functioning</li> <li>• Functioning of authority – bureaucracies work through a system of authority, power and discipline:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Legitimate/traditional authority, charismatic authority &amp; rational-legal authority (dominates)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><u>Difference from Fayol</u> – Weber emphasises that bureaucracies are relatively <b>closed systems</b> (shut off from influences in external environment).</p>
Frederick Taylor	<p><u>Contrast to Fayol</u> – focus on micro level of organisational functioning. Taylor is not concerned with structure but with relationship and control.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Systematic soldiering</b> – social pressure to keep productivity down and wages up (minimise rate busting due to piecework pay)</li> <li>• There is one best way to do every job – determined through <b>time and motion studies</b></li> <li>• Proper selection of workers for job &amp; importance of training</li> <li>• Inherent difference between management and workers – advocates <b>strict</b></li> </ul>

## Metaphors

The Industrial Revolution had profound impacts on how people worked and thought about work. Unsurprisingly, a **machine metaphor** is central to classical organisational theories - with communication being the oil that helps it run efficiently.

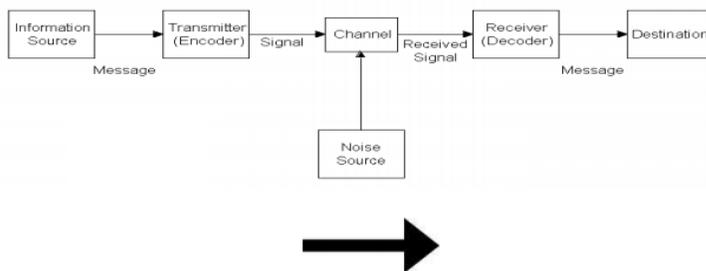
- One aspect of the machine metaphor is the importance of **specialisation** – every part of the ‘machine’ has a specific function
  - This specialisation of tasks is also called the division of labour
- A second aspect is **standardisation**, which includes the notion of **replaceability**
- A third notion is that machines are **predictable** – there are rules that govern the way a machine is built and how it operates

Communication processes take on particular characteristics in these machine-like organisations.

Content of communication	Task
Direction of communication flow	Vertical (downwards) – little feedback
Channel of communication	Usually written – handbooks, instructions
Style of communication	Formal

## Metaphors in communication: the arrow

The Shannon-Weaver Mathematical Model, 1949



Effective expression = effective communication!

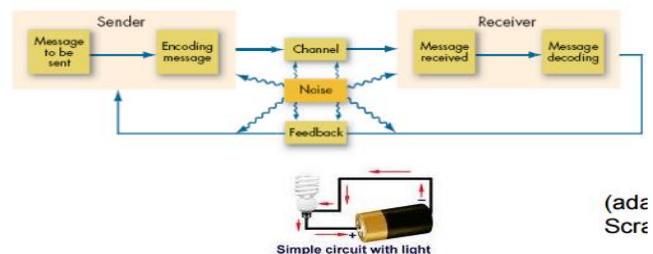
Effective expression should enable communication – as long as we are clear.

This connects to assumptions in the classical theories of management – when communication comes down from management to workers it needs to be written and formal (procedures).

## The circuit

This model says we should **check** if information is understood.

If people receive and understand function, than we have achieved effective communication.

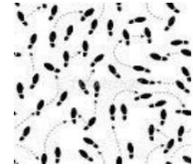


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Understanding = effective communication

## The dance

Communication is a complicated set of manoeuvres. It is not as simple as sending and receiving messages or thinking about channels.

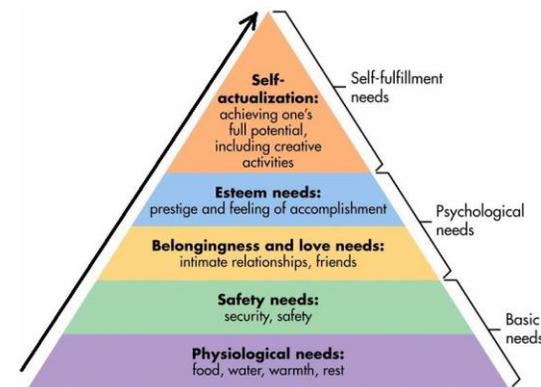


## Changing perspectives on organisations

Classical theorists pay little attention to the **individual needs** of employees, to non-financial rewards in the workplace, or to the prevalence of social interaction in organisations. The only valued contribution of employees was **physical labour**.

Human relations and HR perspectives – looking for more scientific ways to improve productivity:

- The **Hawthorne studies** led to new insights (although not necessarily correct ones)
  - **Elton Mayo** – look at aspects of task environment that maximise output (*illumination studies, bank wiring room studies*)
  - **Discovered social and emotional needs of workers** – *Hawthorne effect*
- People are more complicated/have more to offer than is assumed under the classical management approaches



## Human relations approach

**Human relations theories** were proposed as a reaction to classical management systems and to evidence that meeting human needs is a critical aspect of organisational performance. This approach was inspired by the Hawthorne studies, and illustrated by:

Theory	Features
<b>Maslow's theory</b>	<p>Most well-known – intuitive theory (easy to understand)</p> <p>This theory is based on the premise that humans have needs that are hierarchy ordered. Asserts that managers must understand what level an employee's needs are at to know how to motivate them – shows employees differ.</p> <p>He makes three key assumptions about needs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. These needs are hierarchy ordered (5 basic needs)</li> <li>2. We need to satisfy lower level needs before we can move up</li> <li>3. Once a need has been satisfied, it is no longer a motivator</li> </ol> <p><u>Criticisms</u>: Limited empirical evidence to support this theory – order, whether they should be ordered at all, whether there are any other needs. Third key assumption is questionable (unsupported) – validity?</p>
<b>Theory X and Theory Y [McGregor]</b>	<p>According to McGregor, there are two perspectives about human nature (<i>X and Y</i>). McGregor advocates that management practices should be guided by <b>Theory Y</b> – in order to maximise motivation employers must try to give employees <i>participation, autonomy, influence, challenging work and responsibility</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Theory X</b> – the assumption that employees dislike work, are lazy, dislike</li> </ul>

responsibility and must be coerced to perform (must use threats and forms of punishment to inspire work).

- **Theory Y** – assumption that employees like work, are creative, seek responsibility, and can exercise self-direction.

Criticisms: No evidence to confirm universality of both these assumptions.

## Human resources approach

The **human resources approach** acknowledges contributions of classical and, especially, human relations approaches to organising.

HR theorists recognise that individuals in organisations have feelings that must be considered and also recognise that individual labour is an important ingredient for meeting organisational goals.

- Focused on the **needs** of people
- Fulfilling these needs will make people happy
  - Happy worker = productive worker

	<b>Classical approach</b>	<b>Human relations approach</b>	<b>Human resources approach</b>
<b>Communication content</b>	Task	Task and social	Task, social and innovation
<b>Communication direction</b>	Vertical (downward)	Vertical and horizontal	All directions, team-based
<b>Communication channel</b>	Usually written	Often face-to-face	All channels
<b>Communication style</b>	Formal	Informal	Both, but especially informal

# 3. Human resources and systems approaches

## Human resources perspective today

Human resources is about empowerment, engagement and flourishing. There is a move towards managers becoming **leaders**, with a focus on **process**:

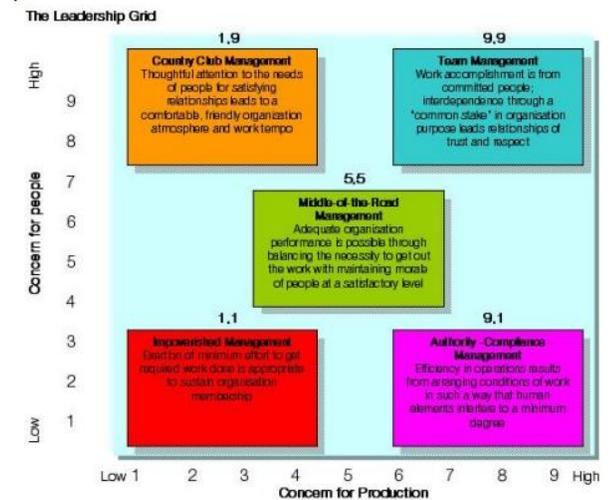
- Balancing the **task** needs of the organisation and the **relationship** needs of employees
- For the organisation to become **participative** – values and encourages contributions from all
- Managers encouraged to focus on leadership and development of others, rather than managing tasks
  - Focus on process (how things get done) rather than what gets done (task)

→ “A good leader inspires others with confidence in him/her; a great leader inspires them with confidence in themselves”

## Blake and Mouton’s Leadership Grid

Limitations:

- × Prescriptive – does not take into account context
- × Does not account for agency



## Likerts System IV

### Rensis Likert: Systems 1-4 Organizations



- **System 1: Punitive Authoritarian**  
[Hard X] Mgm't. doesn't trust employees
- **System 2: Paternalistic**  
[Hard X] Mgm't. has condescending confidence and trust in employees
- **System 3: Consultative**  
[Soft X] Mgm't. has substantial trust, but not complete trust in employees
- **System 4: Interactive**  
[Y] Mgm't. trusts & collaborates with employees

1. **System I: exploitative authoritative organisation** – motivation through threats, fear, downward and inaccurate communication, top-level decision making, giving of orders, top-level control
2. **System II: benevolent authoritative organisation** – motivation through economic or ego rewards, limited communication, decision making at the top, goal setting through orders and comments, top-level control
  - a. Managers believe this style is 'best for the workers'
3. **System III: consultative organisation** – control rests primarily at upper levels of hierarchy, before decisions are made employees are consulted & views considered, high level of communication
4. **System IV: participative organisation** – decision making performed by every employee, goals set by complex work groups, communication extensive, control at all levels, contributions highly valued

## Insights into organisations and how individuals contribute

Fundamental to both human relations and human resources approaches is:

- How we motivate/engage people so that they:
- Want to work in the organisation (**strive**)
- ...and are able to work effectively (**thrive**)