The Communication Process

by Sophia

	WHAT'S COVERED

This lesson talks about communication and breaking down the steps of the communication process. By the end you'll be able to answer a few questions: What is the communication process? Why is a confirmation message so important? What are communication filters? How can I be aware of them? Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Communication Process
2. Communication Filters

1. Communication Process

It is possible to break down the communication process into some simple, bite-sized steps:

Sender	Receiver
Initial Message	
	Processing
	Confirmation Message
Processing	
Verification of Match	

	STEP BY STEP

On the left, you can see the **sender,** and the **receiver** is on the right.

1. The sender will send an **initial message.** She's going to start the communication.

2. The receiver is going to process this. He's going to digest the information. He'll send off a **confirmation message** that, hopefully, the sender will receive.

3. In turn, the sender will confirm that this is a match.

What happens when it doesn't go so well? Say the sender here sends the initial message, it is received, and now the receiver sends back a confirmation message indicating what he has interpreted as the priority or the message. The sender discovers that there's been a miscommunication.

Sender	Receiver
Initial Message	
	Processing
	Confirmation Message
Processing	
Miscommunication	

⤳ EXAMPLE Take a look at the full communication process to see how this miscommunication is resolved:

Sender	Receiver
"The delivery of all color-coded icons for the 'Be Clear' campaign are due at 8:00 am this Thursday."	
	Processing: *Color-coded icons due Thursday. Got it!*
	"Will send icons on Thursday!"
Processing: *Did he see 8 am? It has to be 8 am.* **"Please confirm the color-coded icons will be emailed to me no later than 8 am on Thursday. Thank you!"**	
	Processing: *Didn't see that. 8:00 am is going to be tough. Shoot. I can commit to 10 am.* **"8:00 is not realistic due to longer rendering processes. Can 10:00 am work? If not, let's discuss alternate solutions."**

The receiver's confirmation of the initial message is pretty vague. Our sender senses the miscommunication because the receiver did not confirm the time of 8 AM. Now you can see this could be a change in the communication, and it can go on and on, zigzagging back and forth until they have established a clear set of communication.

Not all communication follows this long, zigzag approach. Sometimes communication works really well, just like this:

⮒ EXAMPLE

Sender	Receiver
"The delivery of all color-coded icons for the 'Be Clear' campaign are due at 8:00 am this Thursday."	
	Processing: *Color-coded, 8 am Thursday, all icons, "Be Clear" campaign. Got it!*
	"You will receive all color-coded icons for the 'Be Clear' campaign by 8 am this Thursday!"
Processing: *Excellent. We are on the same page.*	
"Thank you!"	

It's important to have clear, concise communication. What if the receiver never sent a confirmation message at all? What would happen here?

⮒ EXAMPLE

Sender	Receiver
"The delivery of all color-coded icons for the 'Be Clear' campaign are due at 8:00 am this Thursday."	
	Processing: *Color-coded, 8 am Thursday, all icons, "Be Clear" campaign. Got it!*
	Confirmation message:
Processing: *If I haven't heard, there must not be an issue.*	

The sender may make assumptions because of the lack of confirmation. In the scenario above, this works, but this could still cause issues. The sender doesn't know if he's received the message. She doesn't know that he can deliver this. He may usually come through, but look back to a previous example. He couldn't make that 8:00 AM deadline.

You can see why the confirmation message is absolutely critical in the communication process. This is what could have happened instead:

⮒ EXAMPLE

Sender	Receiver
"The delivery of all color-coded icons for the 'Be Clear' campaign are due at 8:00 am this Thursday."	
	Processing: *Color-coded, 8 am Thursday, all icons, "Be Clear" campaign. Got it!*
	Confirmation message:
Processing: *I need to know if he received the message and if there are obstacles in his way.* **"Please confirm you have received this message."**	
	Processing: *Oh shoot! I thought I sent a reply.*
	"Apologies for the delay in response. Yes, all color-coded icons for the 'Be Clear' campaign will be delivered on Thursday by 8 am."
Processing: *Excellent!* **"Thank you! We are on pace for meeting our goal."**	

Because she sent a request for confirmation, everyone is accountable, and there's clear communication.

📄 **TERMS TO KNOW**

Sender
   The person moving information from him- or herself to another person.

Receiver
   The person receiving information from the sender.

Initial Message
   Information shared by the sender that begins the communication process.

Confirmation Message
   The receiver's explanation of his or her understanding of the initial message.

2. Communication Filters

Various elements may cause miscommunication. These elements are called communication filters. There are two types: internal and external. These are things that interrupt the communication process.

- **Internal filters** come in the form of cultural backgrounds, language differences, different contexts, emotions, and personal bias.
- **External filters** are elements introduced by the environment or the method of communication, such as noise, audio distortion, penmanship, or on-the-go communication. Just being aware of these elements helps elevate your level of communication.

Internal	External
Cultural backgrounds Language differences Context Emotions Personal bias	Noise Audio distortion Handwriting On-the-go communication

IN CONTEXT

Take a look at an example where filters get in the way and interrupt the flow of communication. Say there is an urgent situation that needs to be handled right now. It is important to let the receiver of any message know the external filters you're experiencing, such as being on the bus and sending the message from a smartphone.

Sender	Receiver
"The delivery of all color-coded icons for the 'Be Clear' campaign are due at 8:00 am this Thurs. On that note, the colors need high level scans to evaluate the logos are client approved. Did you ever round back with Jeff to get the budget confirmed for this?" - sent from my iPhone	*Processing:* *Color-coded, 8 am Thursday, all icons, "Be Clear" campaign. Got it. Are the colors due for client approval Thursday at 8 am as well? There are budgets for icons and color scans... which one does she need confirmed?*

Now there are some issues with the initial message due to filters. One example is that the smartphone's autocorrect has changed "ensure" to "evaluate." The message should read: "On that note, the colors need high-level scans to ensure the logos are client-approved."

You can see all the things this initial message has left the receiver wondering. Filters have impaired communication.

✅ SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned how the **communication process** involves the sender, the receiver, the initial message, and the confirmation message. Not sending a confirmation message, or sending one that misinterprets the sender's intent, can threaten the goal. **Communication filters** can be internal and external. They can interrupt the communication process.

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📄 TERMS TO KNOW

Confirmation Message

The receiver's explanation of his or her understanding of the initial message.

External Filter

External elements that interfere with the communication process.

Initial Message

Information shared by the sender that begins the communication process.

Internal Filter

Internal elements that interfere with the communication process.

Receiver

The person receiving information from the sender.

Sender

The person moving information from him/herself to another person.