

Five Types of Communication

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Communication is a very basic and fundamental process for human beings. However, when a [brand](#) wants to communicate with their customers, then the communication takes another form. Similarly, there is communication involved between teams as well. There are various types of communication between [people](#) as well as between teams.

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What is communication?

Communication is the act of sending information or ideas via speech, visuals, writing or any other such method. The Communication model has a sender who is sending the message and the receiver who is receiving the message. In between, the speech or ideas need to be simple enough to be decoded and understood by the receiver. If the ideas are not presented properly, then decoding is improper and the receiver does not understand.

Based on the types of senders and receivers involved, we can define various types of communications. If we take an example of communication between teams, you will see the higher amount of formal communication as compared to informal. On the other hand, when we consider personal communication and communication between the group of personal friends, you will find these types of communication to be more informal in nature.

In essence, below we discuss the various types of communication used between people or between teams.

5 Types of Communication

Let us delve deep into the 5 types of communication observed between the group of people or a formal team.

1) Verbal Communication

Verbal communication can also be called as Oral communication. In very simple terms, any communication that happens orally between people is known as verbal communication. The objective of such communications is to ensure that people understand whatever you want to convey. Because of its very nature, verbal communications is more quick and precise than email communication.

In the era of messaging via Whatsapp or using email, people still prefer personal meetings or phone calls (or face to face [skype](#) calls) because they are effective and much more convenient in conveying the message.

Nowadays, Verbal communication is an important aspect and is looked as a key strength in an [individual](#).

A manager or an executive [needs](#) to have good



verbal communication skills. A manager has to handle a team of people and he needs to be skilled to convince the team of people in acting like he wants them to. Executives meet many customers who are each different in terms of their understanding and talking skills. Thus, Executives need excellent verbal communication skills.

The higher up an organization you go, the better should be the verbal skills that you have. This is because you need to ensure that your speech is precise and to the point and does not leave any scope for any misunderstanding.

An M.D or a C.E.O may be giving a television interview which is being watched by 100's of stakeholders of the company. Their speech and verbal communication need to be precise so that they don't mess up or are not misunderstood. Even in tough times, the verbal communication skills of these leaders play a major part in consoling the crowd.

Example of people who were great at the verbal type of communications.

- Nelson Mandela
- Martin Luther King
- John F Kennedy
- Mahatma Gandhi

2) Non-verbal / Interpersonal communication



How do you make people feel when you enter the room? Is your body language strong and are you standing straight and erect or are you slouched and tired? Are you clean shaven, looking your immaculate best for a team meeting or are you shabby with shirts that are not ironed? When you shake hands, do you do so strongly or do you just brush your hand against others?

The above were some examples of Non-verbal communications or interpersonal communications. One of the HR requirements for new joiners in an organization is for them to have good interpersonal skills. This basically means that the employees should brush up on their non-verbal skills.

If you were in a sales meeting and you have not achieved your target, how will you react? Will you be steady and calm or will you panic and stutter? These are important non-verbal skills and your growth might depend on them.

A manager who panics and who is not good at non-verbal communication will generally not be a favorite with his team members. This is because his team members do not look up to him. A manager who stutters, who is not well dressed, who has the wrong body language or someone who is not a strong personality, will not gather a huge following behind him.

However, people with good personalities go a long way in motivating the employees below them. If an employee is demotivated, just keeping a hand on their shoulder and saying a few motivating words is enough for the employee. Taunting them or making faces when talking to them, ignoring them completely or imitating them will demotivate the employee even further. Thus, non-verbal skills play a major role in office culture.

As employees grow into managers and as managers grow into leaders, they become better and better at a non-verbal type of communications. They know that their own calm headed behavior at times of panic is what will keep the team in check. Similarly, they don't let their teams get complacent when the going is good.

Example of the Non-verbal type of communications

In [Customer service](#), non-verbal and interpersonal skills play a huge role. Imagine you were unhappy with a [product](#) and you went to the customer service department. Instead of understanding your problem, the customer service executive gives a rude reply. Repeatedly you visit them and even though the problem is not resolved, you don't get a satisfactory answer.

Compare that with a customer service department which smiles when you come in. They reassure you that they are on top of your problem. They are proactive and update you themselves on when to expect the problem to be resolved. Later on, they follow up whether you were satisfied with the response and if there was anything they could do further.

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This smile, the body language of reassurance, the listening ability are all non-verbal type of communications. A good customer service executive will pay special attention to them and will ensure that you leave satisfied! Hiring good customer service executives, who have great interpersonal skills, is the sign of a good organization which is focused on [customer satisfaction](#).

3) Written Communications

There are many many ways that written communications can be used. The number of ways is ever increasing with the penetration of smartphones and the internet. One of the most common forms of written communications used till date is Email. But slowly, written type of communications is becoming more informal with Whatsapp and other online messaging apps being used regularly.

All different forms of written communication can be formal or informal. If today, we visit a court of law, you will find that even Whatsapp messages are considered to be legal in nature. In fact, there have been so many cases of celebrities brought under the scanner because of wrong written communications on their social media account.

Thus, the above example is further proof that written communication needs to be used safely and effectively. In fact, written communication between friends can be informal but this type of communication between working professionals should always be formal so that any misquoted words are not misused with ill intent.

The advantage of written communication is that it acts as the final word once a decision has been taken. When you quote your prices to the customer, when you rank a dealer on top, when you promote an employee or when you launch a [new product](#), you use written communication to communicate the update to your team and your employees.

A problem with written communication is that it becomes too formal and might incite ego or various political problems when written communication is used. Newspapers are perfect examples of written words which create controversy.

There is a very apt quotation "Words are mightier than swords". A wrong email delivered in the wrong hands can cause the world to turn upside down. The many emails and documents released by Edward Snowden which brought the US government under the scanner, are perfect examples of how to use written documents safely and privately otherwise they can bring a whole organization tumbling down (whether justified or not is a different discussion)



shown to the doctors and dropped with the doctors.

These informative pamphlets have all the information about the medicine so that doctors can feel confident in suggesting the medicine to their patients. Similarly, many different industries are using visual communication to help interaction with their customers so that they can communicate their ideas better. Explainer videos as a concept is rising and is becoming as one of the best types of communication observed on websites.

There are many elements in visual communication that can be used by marketers or companies.

- Colors (such as brand colors)
- Design (logo and brand design)
- Advertising
- Animations
- Illustrations
- Typography
- Presentations
- Video resume's

In person to person communication too visual communication plays a role. Consider the diagrams made by teachers on blackboards when explaining a concept to a class of students. Or we can also take the example of graphs made in powerpoints by managers when doing a powerpoint presentation to a team of executives or seniors.

To summarize, the type of communication most common are

In teams

- Formal Communication
- Verbal Communication and Non-verbal communication
- Written communication
- Visual communication

In group of people

- Informal Communication
- Verbal and Non-verbal communication
- Informal written communications

Above were all the different types of communications used by a group of people or between the team.