



# **Interactive Communication Course**

## **Textbook**

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# **Chapter 1 - Introduction to Communication**

## **Communication in the workplace**

**T**his course covers the subject of communication as it applies to the workplace. The emphasis will be on communication between people and we will focus mostly on verbal communication.

The things you will learn about communication will of course be applicable to your life in general, but we will leave that up to you to work out how this would apply to you.

You may find out that something you learn about the workplace is very useful at home or in a social situation.

For example, knowing how to deal with an angry client in a bank, in an accounting practice, or in a government office has very useful applications in a tough social situation. You will face tough situations at home, in your communities or in life in general. This may also be true for many other things you learn about on this course. The skills you will learn on this course can be applied in many different situations.

## **Live Communication**

Many universities, schools or colleges teach communication as it relates to business covering aspects of communication such as how to write business letters or emails and various other communication types that are useful at work.

In this course our emphasis is one-on-one communication, whether it is face-to-face, over the table, or in writing. This will include talking to clients, colleagues or any actual live communication interaction. You could call it the "Interactive Communication Course".

## **Course Outline**

We will start this course by reviewing with you the basic ingredients of communication, or a formula or model for communication, and then take each ingredient in turn and complete practical exercises that improve your ability to communicate in various workplace or life circumstances.

## Chapter 2 - What is Communication?

From a good dictionary we can find our first answer to this question.  
The American Heritage dictionary describes communication as:

1. The exchange of thoughts or ideas, messages or information, by speech, writing or behaviour
2. Something communicated; a message

If you read the many books and articles about this subject what you will find is that many, many people have a lot to say about it.

For our purposes, in this course, we want to concentrate on the simple basics of the subject and how you can use this to become more effective in the workplace, either as an employee or as a manager, executive or business owner.

### Example 1: Speech

Let us take from the first definition above, "an exchange of thoughts or ideas by speech", for example.

- a) You see a friend of yours and immediately want to greet them. This thought in your mind first has to be changed from a thought into words. The words you choose to translate your thought may be in any language you know. If it is English, for this example, you translate your thought into the word "hello" or whatever word you choose that the other person will understand.
- b) Now you say "Hello". You just send across to your friend this communication or greeting.
- c) Your friend sees you and says, "Hey my friend, nice to see you!"
- d) Above, we selected one part of the definition of communication, "an exchange of thoughts by speech".

As you can see, our example here fits perfectly into that definition.

### Example 2: Writing

Let us now take "an exchange of thoughts or ideas by writing".

- a) You work in the bank and deal with clients who may need loans, credit cards or accounts opened and so on. You open your computer and start writing an email. Your thought is to ask your client a question about the loan they have requested from the bank. You need to translate your thought into English first. For this example, let us assume you need their physical address for their loan application. You write your request in this email and send it off.
- b) Your client answers you and tells you their physical address and thanks you for your service.

This example fits our definition above very well.

### Example 3: Writing

Another example of “an exchange of thoughts by writing”:

- a) You compose a text message to a friend on your mobile phone asking them to meet you at lunchtime for a chat.
- b) Your friend replies confirming the time and place.

This has been “an exchange of thoughts by writing”.

### Example 4: Behaviour

Now we will look at “an exchange of thoughts or ideas by behaviour”.

- a) You see your friend in the distance at the university. You are too far away to shout a greeting but you both see each other. You put up a thumb and your friend waves back at you.
- b) You both have big smiles on your faces. You both notice this.

This has been “an exchange of thoughts by behaviour”.

### Summary so far

If we refer to the first definition above, we can see that in all 4 examples we have given so far there has been an exchange of thoughts and ideas, and there has at the same time been an exchange of messages and information. Even just saying “hello” has conveyed a message and the information that you have been greeted. This is communication.

### Example 5: Objects

Please note: If you have a look at the above definition and explanations, you will be able to see that it is also true that an object, for instance a ball, exchanged between two people could be a communication as well.

- a) Let us assume a soccer player sees his team-mate far up the field near the opponent’s goal, passes a long shot to him, he receives the ball, gets around a defender and then cleverly shoots the ball toward the opposing goalkeeper, to try and score a goal.

Look over the definition above and decide if this is also a communication.

## Example 6: Message

Now looking at the second definition above; “something communicated; a message”:

- a) You see your friend and decide to give them a greeting and you do this. Your friend receives this communication, which is also a message, and the communication is complete. The message is what was communicated. It is very similar to the first definition. All it says is that part of communication is the message you are communicating. It is the content of the communication.
- b) Your teacher asks the class to stop talking and to listen. This is a communication with a message.

We can say, therefore, that communication is an exchange or a transfer of an idea, a thought, a message, information, from one person to another.

## The Communication Sequence: Explained

Many clever people have looked at this subject and tried to break it down into its exact parts.

From the above definition, we can work out and already see a few things as being true:

- Someone starts the communication
- Another person needs to be present as part of this communication and to receive it
- A thought, an idea, a message or information, is sent across to the other person
- The communication goes across in a manner that involves speech, or writing, or some physical action or behaviour
- The communication travels along a channel, through the air or the internet or some other way
- For a sequence of communication to be complete, the other person acknowledges that the communication has been received and usually replies to it
- They need to communicate in a way that the other person will understand, otherwise the communication will not succeed.

In addition, we can see that:

- The first person has to notice the other person is there
- The second person has to notice the first person
- The distance between them is not too great for the communication to be received
- Interference by noise or some other occurrence is not too much to stop the communication
- A sequence of communication is interactive.

## More examples of a communication sequence

Mbali says to Khanyisile "How are you?"

Khanyisile answers "I am fine thank you."

Mbali acknowledges by a nod or saying "good" or a similar word.

This is a sequence of communication. Here is another one.

Ntsiki says "Pass me the pen please."

Larissa passes the pen to Ntsiki.

Ntsiki says "Thanks Larissa." (Or he could just raise his thumb)

## The Communication Sequence

We can now describe the communication sequence in a numbered sequence. By doing this, we can identify all the pieces that make up the sequence of communication, or all the factors involved. The main parts of the sequence have been highlighted.

1. The person who starts the communication (The point of origin). The person changes the idea into words, the message, and sends it to the other person
2. The communication itself, which travels through or across to the intended person
3. The person who receives the communication (The point of receipt)

In addition:

4. The person communicating has the attention of the person who is receiving the communication. As we noted earlier, they notice each other
5. The person communicating wants (intends) to get the communication across. This is basically obvious
6. Both of these people are consciously participating, so that communication can occur
7. The two people share a common language
8. The distance between the two people is not too great and they are part of the same channel of communication. There is also not too much noise on this channel to interfere with the communication
9. The Receipt Point hears the communication, and understands it

We can see the full sequence has been completed and it is interactive:

10. The Receipt Point answers in some way
11. The Point of Origin acknowledges the answer

An exact copy of what was sent across from the cause point, is received at the Receipt Point. If the Receipt Point does not receive a copy of what was sent, then understanding cannot take place and the communication has failed.



## Basic Communication Formula

The component parts of the communication formula are at least therefore:

Point of origin, sending, distance along a channel, the amount of noise or interference, receipt point, the message, intention, attention and understanding

All the above can be reasoned out from the definition and the sequence we have covered. This basic formula shows the individual parts of communication that must be contained in the sequence, for it to work properly.

In addition to what we have said above, many great thinkers have applied their minds to this subject. We will review some of what they have said in the next chapter.

After having a look at how communication developed over the years, we will end the next chapter with an expanded understanding of the communication sequence, and the full formula for communication.



## Chapter 3 – The History of Communication up to Modern Times

The information you have learned so far covers the basics of communication. It may be of use for you to know the history of this subject in a very brief form. Going back 2,400 years, people have been looking at and studying this subject.

You will not be tested on dates in exams on this course. The history of this subject is simply to show you how we arrived at the present time with this course. Knowing how current communication formulas developed, is valuable.

### 400 BC: Original Communication Models

It is interesting to know that many years ago, approximately 400 years before Jesus Christ was born, or 1,000 years before the Prophet Muhammad, a great thinker called Socrates, who was in favour of open communication, encouraged face-to-face communication as the best way to build community, consensus, and trust.

So, today, while technology has increased the speed and frequency of our communication, it is no substitute for face-to-face communication to convey meaning and gain understanding. Even in a world where millions of emails are sent and received per minute across 100's of countries, as well as billions of SMSes and texts, real understanding between two people is still very important indeed.

Great Greek philosophers, from those early years, all agreed on the 3 important parts of communication:

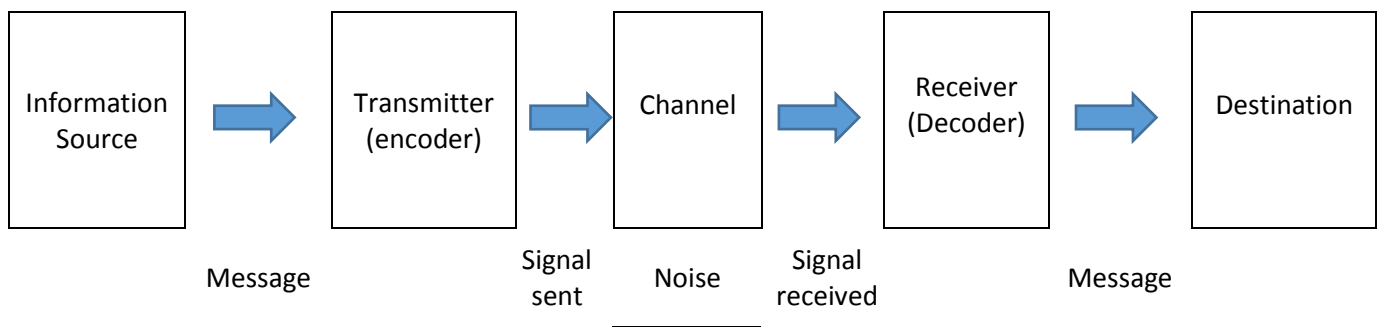
- a) The word
- b) The speaker
- c) The listener or the audience

The “word” referred to by these Greek philosophers, would be the “thought” or “message” in our definition above.

Aristotle was another Greek philosopher from 384-322 BC and he studied this subject in great detail.

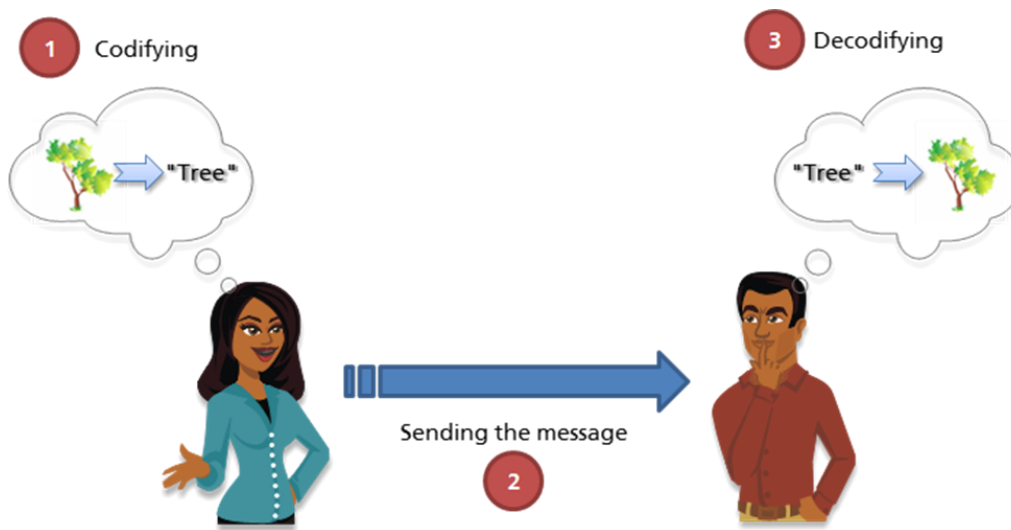
### 1949 AD: Shannon-Weaver Model

Coming much closer to modern times, we see that in 1948 Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver created a formula for communication, which has been widely used in many subjects:



Notice that the message is first encoded at the point of origin, then decoded at the receipt point. In this sense, the 'encoding' could be from a thought into language.

'Decoding' at the other end of the communication line would be receiving the written or spoken language and understanding the thought behind the words.



'Encoding' could also be taking a piece of paper, such as a fax, and encoding it into an electronic flow that can travel along a telephone wire.

'Decoding' in this example would be the fax machine at the other end of the line receiving this electronic signal and decoding it back into a piece of paper with words on it.

'Channel' here could mean the air from voice to ear, or it could mean through an electronic wire or through a cell phone network.

'Signal' could mean the message is sent verbally using sound. If the message was written, it could be sent electronically by email, for example. In each communication, the signal is relevant. It is the 'carrier wave' of the message.

This formula has been used over the years to help create physical communication systems such as fax and telephone systems. When the authors above created this formula, they were involved in the telephone production business. To make telephones in a factory, engineers need drawings and exact specifications to help them make the product correctly. This formula was used for this purpose. It does not necessarily cover everything we need to know about person-to-person verbal, interactive, communication.

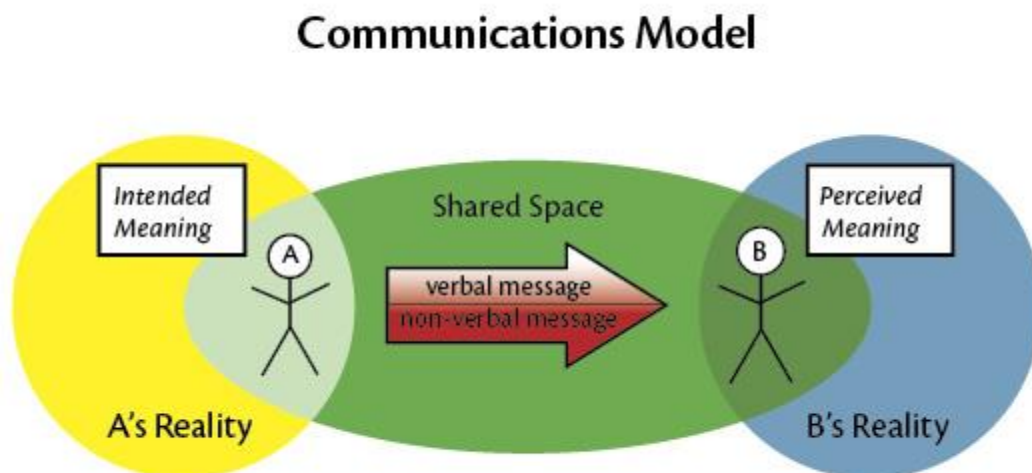
## 1960 AD: Berlo's Model

In 1960, David Berlo said a simple version of the formula is:  
Source → Message → Channel → Receiver

[David K. Berlo from the universities of Illinois and Michigan USA, published, in 1960, his book *Process of Communication*, which looked at the nature of communication].

## Judy Baker: Success Notes

Judy Baker from Success Notes has her version of how this works.



This drawing shows a little more this time. It shows that the meaning of the communication is intended to be a certain way. It also shows that the Receipt Point can perceive this communication in their own way, which may, or may not, be the same as what was intended.

It also suggests that there can be verbal communication and non-verbal. In our earlier definition, and our formula, we saw that an object can be the thing that allows a communication to occur. This would be an example of non-verbal communication. More examples of non-verbal communication will be shown below.

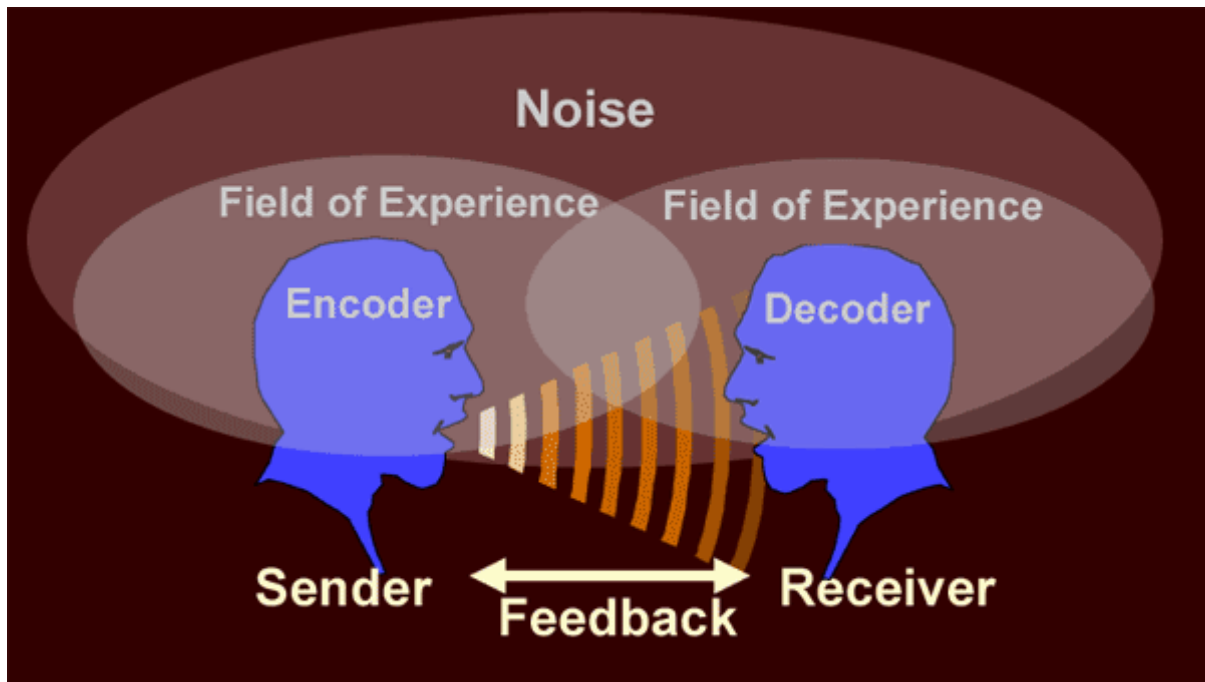
Another point this makes is that the shared reality or the shared understanding between the two people is relevant to communication. As we said earlier, the fact that two people know and speak the same language, would be something that creates a shared reality.

If this were two doctors talking about their patients, this common knowledge would represent their shared reality. Shared reality obviously makes communication more effective.

This example in the drawing, also focuses on interactive communication.

## Field of Experience

The field of military leadership training added their views to this discussion and made the point that two people communicating must share a common reality of some kind, if the communication process is to work effectively.



We can see that this description of communication has used the earlier understanding of the communication formula, originally described by Shannon-Weaver.

Field of experience would include shared reality, or work experience, or professional experience. It can be any type of shared field of experience. This could apply to two children in primary school or two engineers on a construction site.

## Encoding, Decoding and Copying

When a physical communication, like an email, is sent from point A to point B, it is taken from the original thought, encoded into electronic waves, sent across, and, at point B, it is received as a copy of what was sent from the sender. It is received as a copy and then decoded back to written words on an email.

In a verbal communication, it is sent from point A to point B as well. It starts as a thought, it is encoded into language, sent across verbally, using sound, and it is received and decoded from words back into a thought. The receiver gets the same thought that the sender had.

Notice that the first thing that happens when the receiver hears the words, a copy of these words is made, and then this is followed by the decoding, then by understanding, because of some form of shared reality that exists between the two communicators.

Once the verbal communication is received by the receiver, it is copied, then it is translated (decoded) into understanding. If you heard someone say "gobbledygook." You would hear this and make a copy of it, but you would have no understanding. If you heard someone say "Blue is a nice colour" you would make a copy of this and immediately you would have understanding (by decoding the words into the original idea behind the words). Even though these two things happen very fast, they are still three separate activities. First a copy, then decoding, then understanding.

This is logical and easy to demonstrate, as we have in this example.

## Communication Formula in Full

In chapter 2, we said:

The component parts of the communication formula are at least therefore:

Point of origin, sending, distance along a channel, the amount of noise or interference, receipt point, the message, intention, attention and understanding

Author L Ron Hubbard wrote extensively on the subject of communication and he uses the word 'duplication' in his formula. This is another word for a copy of what was sent. A duplicate is received, before understanding occurs. His basic formula for communication, written in 1954, is:

*Cause, distance, effect, with intention, attention, duplication and understanding*

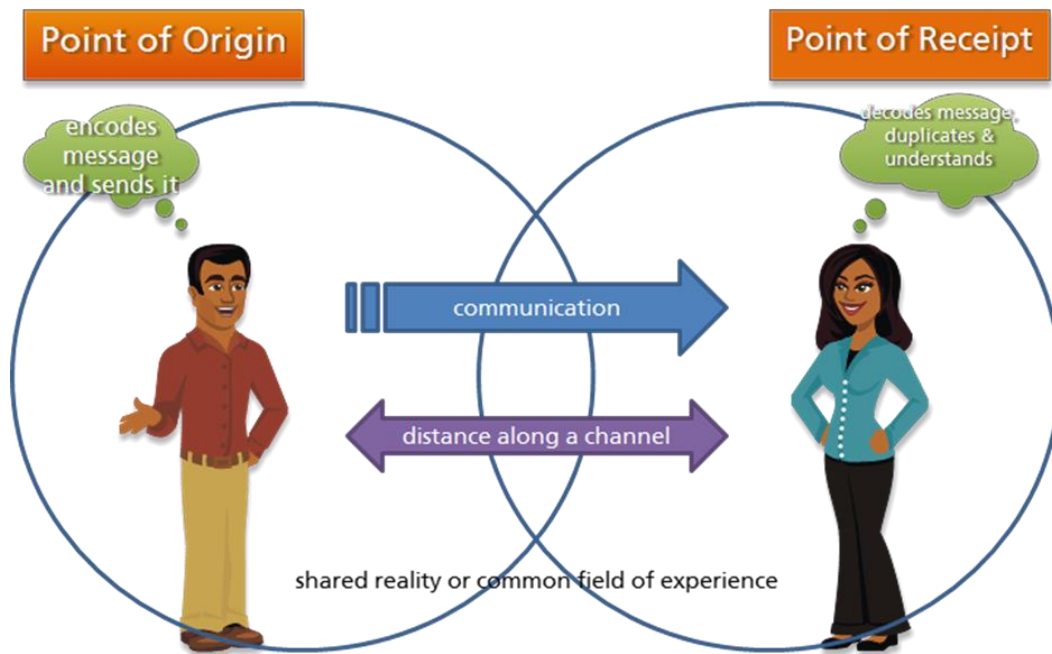
All the research above, from 400 BC to present time, has contributed to an overall workable formula, for our purposes in this course.

If we combined all this knowledge of a full formula for communication, we would now have:

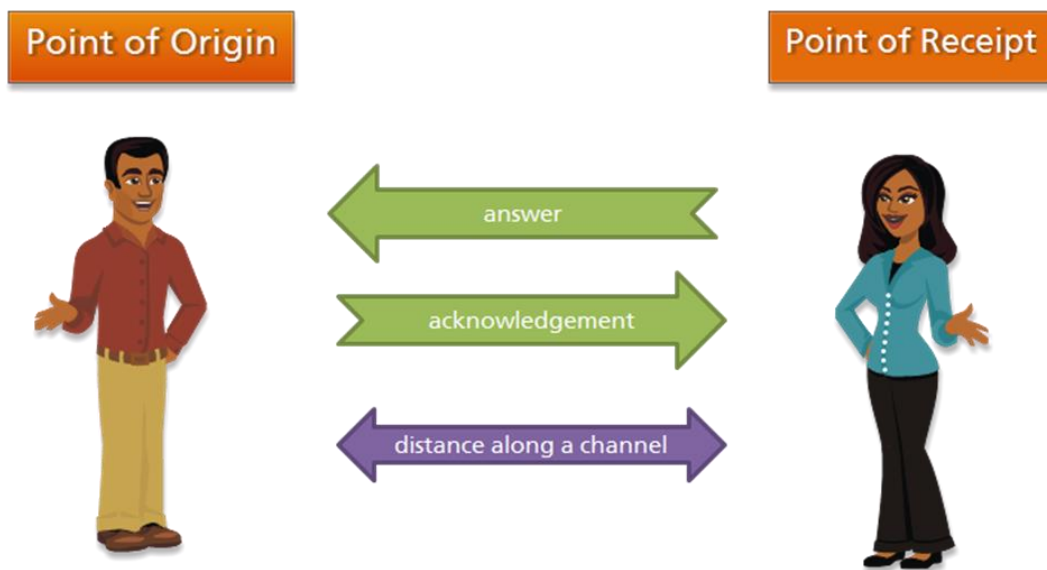
Point of origin, encoding, distance along a channel, the channel, sending the communication across, the amount of noise or interference, receipt point, message, intention, attention, duplication, decoding and understanding, within a shared reality.

The above is a combined definition. It takes all previous knowledge and shows us one fairly comprehensive communication formula. It shows us components of what needs to be present for communication to be most effective.

## Interactive Communication



## Interactive Communication



Looking over this formula you can see that communication that follows this sequence or formula does not have to be interactive.

In common business and social use, communication is interactive.

Communication that follows this definition but is not spoken, or non-verbal, can be seen below.

What's happening here? Are these pictures showing communication?







## Chapter 4 - Interactive Communication

From the above information we can see that communication has a very workable formula and this can be understood and used by us.

When you talk to another person or interact with a customer in any business or organization or even personally, then we will see that there is such a thing as interactive communication.

Interactive communication has two parts. One is the communication sequence and the other is two-way communication.

### Communication Sequence

As we showed you in Chapter 2, there is a sequence of communication. This is where one person says something and the other person answers and gets an acknowledgment. It is interactive because there is a response in the form of an acknowledgment.

Leila says, "Hi Suzie, I found your pen". Suzie says "Wow thanks. I was looking for it all over the place!"

This is one sequence of communication. It has point of origin, distance, receipt point, encoding and decoding, a channel, intention, attention, duplication, understanding and an acknowledgement from Suzie back to Leila.

### Two-way Communication

In this case, the communication sequence happens but then the other person also communicates back, and a new sequence takes place. The communication is also interactive.

Leila says, "Hi Suzie, I found your pen". Suzie says "Wow thanks. I was looking for it all over the place!" Leila says "No problem. I am happy to help."

Suzie says "Where did you find it? Was it in the academy?" Leila replies "No, actually it was on a shelf in the storeroom. I just happened to see it." Suzie lifts her hand to her mouth "Oh my goodness, I was in there last week. That's where I left it. Thanks again Leila."

Leila smiles, waves and then leaves.

Above we have at first a simple communication sequence and then later an interactive series of communications, back and forth between Leila and Suzie.

## Example: Banking client 1

While Siphon is working at a bank, a client comes in to be assisted with an account they have at the bank. The client sits down after being shown to the chair in front of his desk and the following communication could take place:

Siphon:	"Good morning Mrs Van Heerden, my name is Siphon."
Client:	"Hi Siphon, I just need to see my balance because the ATM outside is out of order."
Siphon:	"No problem. If you don't mind, I need to see your ID book before I am able to go ahead."
Client:	"Sure." She digs into her bag and gets out the ID book and hands it to Siphon.
Siphon:	"Thank you."

The rest of the communication continues normally.

Notice the sequence above and compare it to the information that was covered in the chapter before this one.

Siphon was 'the point of origin' first. He intended to get his communication across, she understood Siphon. She did what Siphon asked and he acknowledged her by saying 'thank you'. Perfect. At this point of the interaction this can also be called a sequence of communication.

Siphon:	"Good morning Mrs Van Heerden, my name is Siphon."
Client:	"Hi Siphon, I just need to see my balance because the ATM outside is out of order."

Now, the communication continues back and forth with a new sequence each time. This is called two-way communication.

But each sequence has a short point of origin, receipt point, acknowledgment sequence and many of these sequences make up interactive two-way communication.

Notice that Siphon acknowledges the client in the next sequence at the beginning.

Siphon:	"No problem. If you don't mind, I need to see your ID book before I am able to go ahead."
Client:	"Sure." She digs into her bag and gets out the ID book and hands it to Siphon.
Siphon:	"Thank you."



## Example: Banking client 2

Now let us see how it could go wrong.

Mrs Van Heerden sits down at Sipho's desk:

Sipho:	"How are you?"
Client:	"I am fine thank you."
Sipho:	"I'm fine. What is your problem?"
Client:	"I don't have a problem. What is your name by the way?"
Sipho:	"Sipho."
Client:	"I just need my balance because the ATM outside is not working."
Sipho:	"Really? It was working this morning. Can I check for you?"
Client:	"Sipho, I have just checked, and I am sure, and THIS is the reason I am seeing you. (Getting a bit angry). If it is too much trouble for you, can you please ask someone else to help me?"

So, you have just lost the client and her confidence and if you keep up with this you may lose your job as well. By this example, can you see just how important the correct simple communication is in the workplace?

## Some additional points about communication

In the example above, where Sipho did not do well with the client, there were a few things that happened that we can take note of. Consider or think about these important points:

- Making the other person wrong for what they say
- Being judgmental (judging the other person to be good or bad or right or wrong or questioning their statement or reason for doing something)
- Making less of the other person
- Being rude
- Not completing a sequence of communication

Review the above examples to see if any of these situations apply.

## The Importance of Acknowledgements

An acknowledgement is something that is said or done to let the other person know that what they said has been received, noted and understood.

Another definition of acknowledgement is that you admit to the truth of something. If I owe you R 20.00 and I admit to this, I acknowledge this debt to you. This is not the definition we are using here.

A different definition of acknowledge is as above, to let the other person know their communication has been received and understood. It does not mean that you AGREE with what they have said. You may agree or disagree with something that has been said, but in either case you are able to acknowledge that you understand what they have said.

In the example above, Sipho asks for the ID book, the client hands it over, and Sipho acknowledges this. Various words can be used to acknowledge the other person's communication. "Good, thank you, fine, I heard that, I understand, got it", and any other words that may be typical in your language or culture.

In South Africa we have: sharp-sharp or shap-shap, no worries, excellent, beautiful, baie dankie and so forth. Some acknowledgements would be used with friends, socially, and others are more appropriate while working or as a professional.

No matter what environment you are in, at work or not, acknowledgements are a very important part of communication between people.

## **Being Willing to Communicate**

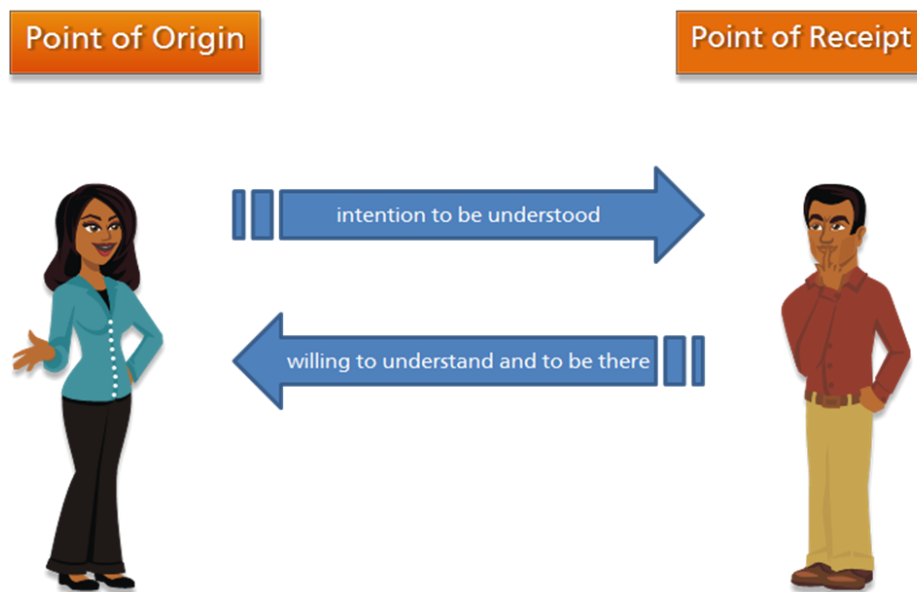
Looking at all the information you have read so far about communication and reviewing the formula for communication, we are now able to identify how to correctly communicate and where things can go wrong.

A very important factor when facing all the many situations you will encounter in the workplace, is your *willingness to be there* and communicate, even if the situation is very tough or where emotions are 'high', and the client is angry or upset.

When we say 'be there' we mean to be present, attentive, interested and comfortable.

The more willing you are to simply 'be there' and communicate, the more successful you will be in the years to come. Hubbard's writings cover this point extensively.

## Interactive Communication



### Examples of not being willing to communicate

Here are some examples of things that would make you not willing to communicate:

- Being shy or nervous so that you are not concentrating on what is being said
- Feeling a lack of confidence about communicating to someone in some situation (an interview, a group you have to talk to, a presentation you have to make or something similar)
- Not being able to 'be there' comfortably when a client walks into the business and starts shouting at you and calling you all kinds of nasty things because they are angry for some reason
- Standing in front of a group of serious 'white guys' and having to explain why you were late
- Being called to a disciplinary hearing for some reason, at your new company
- Attending a high-powered meeting of executives and being asked to present something
- Being shouted at by someone while in front of other people

There could be many hundreds of these reasons for being less willing to just 'be there' and face the person in front of you and be comfortable doing so. They will differ from person to person. These are listed here to give you an idea about this subject and the vital nature of communication skill.

To confront means to 'face up to'.

Another definition of confront means to 'oppose'. This is not the definition we are using here.

In our definition confront simply means that we are able and willing to 'be there' in front of the other person, to communicate comfortably to them and to receive their

communication; in other words, to 'face' the person comfortably, *in any situation in life or in the workplace*.

### **Situation 1: Simple**

You are at a client service counter or at reception and a client walks in. The client greets you and asks for an envelope. You hand it over, pleasantly, and the client thanks you and leaves.

This was easy. You were able to face the situation or 'be there' and experienced no discomfort.

### **Situation 2: Tougher**

In this situation the client is a bit emotional and just says "Envelope!" and puts out their hand. You need to be more composed than the first situation. You handle it with a professional approach and greet the person and hand over the envelope with a smile. This required that your ability to "be there" was a little higher than the first situation.

### **Situation 3: Even tougher**

Here the client walks up and says "Where is the manager!? This place is so unprofessional! All I wanted was an envelope, and, do you think they had one for me? No!!! Can you give me one?"

They put out their hand, fingers clicking, whilst sighing and mumbling and looking very aggressive.

This situation requires even more ability to confront, to face, to be there and not be thrown by the situation.

### **Situation 4: Stressful**

The client shouts at someone across from you. They walk up to you aggressively. "Who are you?! Are you as useless as that girl over there!?? Probably! What a disgusting bank!!" "Aren't there any white people around here!???"

You stay calm and professional. You ask how you can be of help. You find the envelope. You deal with the abuse gracefully. You remain there and you manage and control the communication effectively.

This requires a much higher degree of ability on your part.



## Practice

The best way to improve your ability to deal with all these different types of situations, is to practice what we have learned so far.

We will have some practical exercises later in the course that will improve your ability to communicate in all types of situations.

## Final word: The non-answer

When you have a conversation with someone, anything goes, because a conversation is a conversation and is not regulated in any way.

When doing your job in the workplace, or many times outside of work, it is good to know the difference between an answer to your question or a non-answer.

You can ask a question and get an answer directly. That is great.

Also, you can ask a question and get a "comment" that has nothing to do with your question at all.

You can also ask a question and get a "personal communication" from the other person that needs to be handled before getting an answer to your question.

We see from the above that there are two types of non-answer.

### Personal Communications

When you ask a question, the other person can answer you, or they may say something personal about themselves or their experiences, feelings, health, emotions or thoughts that they have. These are often referred to as "personal communications". The origin or source of the communication is about them. Things such as such as:

"I don't feel that well"

"I am quite hungry now"

"I keep wondering about the next course and if it's going to be tough"

"I am actually a bit afraid of speaking in front of other people"

"I am actually very thirsty"

"Your office is very cold. I am freezing".

"Wow, guess what, I just passed with 95% in my maths exam!"

If you are asking a question and the person comes back with a personal communication, you deal with it, handle it, then bridge back to your question and get an answer. This can be practiced until you can do it skilfully and smoothly and naturally.

## Comments

Sometimes when you ask a question, the person may come back with a comment about something that does not answer your question. A comment is not personal, about themselves, it is about anything else, but not an answer to your question.

Here you acknowledge the comment and bridge back to your original question and get it answered.

You are a consultant in a bank and a client walks in and you introduce yourself and ask how you can help. The client says "Gee, the traffic is really bad today?"

This is a comment about the traffic on the roads and, in day-to-day interactions with people, this is a normal comment for someone to make in conversation. You bridge back to your question by saying something like "I agree Mrs van Heerden. It really gets bad sometimes." "Mrs Van Heerden, how can I assist you?"

The differences in the types of answers you may be given in the workplace will be practised in the communication drills that follow the theory of communication.

## Chapter 5 - Communication Drills

Now that we have covered what communication is, we can put this knowledge into practice and improve our communications skills by doing some very specific drills or training exercises.

If we take each important part of the communication sequence and practice it, we will improve, on a gradient or step-by-step, our overall communication ability.

This part of the course is organized into a set of 9 drills.

According to Random House dictionaries, a drill is “A task or exercise for teaching a skill or procedure by repetition”.

1. We will do these drills in pairs or study partners or with a study partner where one is the learner and the other is the coach. Then we ‘switch-around’ and the other becomes the coach assisting the learner. [The person working with you is referred to as your study partner in our courses]
2. We read the first drill
3. We then practice the first drill until we have practiced this skill to a very good point
4. We then learn about the next drill and continue through all 9 drills.

Once we have completed all 9 drills, we will have covered every part of the communication sequence and each of these 9 skills add up to one major skill, the skill of being able to communicate much more effectively in all situations. The drills are CD 1 to 9. CD is Communication Drill.

This may be tough, but remember that over the last 14 years over 11,000 learners, just like you, have completed these drills and have told us many, many times that this course was THE course that changed their ability to communicate effectively.

So many learners have told us that we somehow found the “real me” inside somewhere, and assisted them to bring into being this “real me”. What we know is that the “real me” each one refers to, is in fact an able, competent, confident, smart and lovely person. You!

Based upon what you have learned so far, what we need to do, in order to get our communications skills even better, is to take each part and practice it. The communication formula and sequence has been divided into 9 practical exercises or drills:

1. Practicing simply ‘being there’ with eyes closed
2. Practice ‘being there’ with eyes open
3. Practice ‘being there’ with eyes open and with your study partner doing everything in their power to distract us and to stop us from ‘being there’. This toughens us up a bit
4. Practice getting our communication across to the other person
5. Practice acknowledgements

6. Practice \*half-acknowledgements
7. Practice getting our questions answered
8. Practicing 'Interactive Communication: Incl. Non-Answers'
9. Practising 'Interactive Communication: Conversational',

\*We have covered acknowledgements. A half-acknowledgement is when we want the person to continue speaking. If your mom, for example, is talking to you, and you say something like, "and then?" or "Uha" (uhmm) or "continue", or even more so, you nod or smile while she is talking, all these let the other person know you are listening and they should keep talking. This is a half-acknowledgement. A proper acknowledgement like "Okay" or "Fine" or "Good", tends to end the communication.

CD 1 to 3 cover the 'Point of Origin' of the full formula, for example. CD 3 covers 'noise or interference on the channel' as well as 'Point of Origin'. The Point of Origin in the communication formula, includes you, and you are the one that has to be able to 'be there' in order to communicate effectively. The rest cover all other points of the full formula.

This is the sequence of how we will proceed on this course:

- Read the drills one-by-one to get familiar with the process
- Read the article called "The Role of your Study Partner"
- Read the first drill again before doing the first drill
- Do the first drill
- Read the second drill
- Do the second drill
- Continue until the end of drill 9
- Refer back to the "The Role of your Study Partner" article as needed

Your facilitators will now give you the Interactive Communications Drills Booklet and get you started on the first drill.

Work hard at getting through these drills and we will see you afterwards with shining skills and greater ability!

"The communication course boosted my confidence, everyone who knows me will agree when I say I am shy and quiet but what they didn't know is that I am also a very opinionated person. They didn't know that because I haven't been confident enough to share my views. It all started changing when I started the communication course.

"The other morning in the bus I got into some kind of argument with the bus driver, because she didn't issue me with a bus ticket, and I was standing waiting for her to give me one. When she said she had given me one I would usually just stand there and not say anything but that day I stood there and I told her that she is making a mistake, she got angry and said that I was taking her for a fool. I then stood in front of everyone and asked if anyone had an extra ticket by mistake, an old lady came forward with the ticket and gave it to me and then the driver apologised.

"I have many success stories which will not fit on this page. My life has changed for the better. At home everyone is amazed by my communication. I am even using the skills on social networks.

"I enjoyed the course so much that I would do it again and again. I am applying everything I learnt. I also got the opportunity to get to know myself better. Through the communication drills I discovered the real me. Even the person I have been teaming up with was astonished at some point.

"One factor that affected my ability to express myself confidently was the poor quality of my English. After the study course it got better and better. From the bus saga to starting communication with strangers at Young Designer Emporium Shop to commenting on Facebook, telling people how to use and acquire communication skills. I am surprising myself every day.

"I would like to thank you for helping me 'bring back me'. Even if I leave today, I will still say I graduated with you. I still have some nervous gestures, but I am not afraid to say how I feel and that's the most important part for me. Thank you." [Nandipa Mpalala]



## **Chapter 6 – The Role of your Study Partner**

**I**n many of our courses you may be asked to work with another person who is on the same course as you. This person is known as your study partner.

You may be asked to complete a practical exercise by, for example, drawing something you have learned in a way that shows you have really understood what was taught. Your study partner would check this with you and make sure you did understand it. You would then do the same for your study partner in return.

Your role as a study partner might be very simple like checking the definition of a word with your study partner. It may also be much more complex, for example when doing the interactive communication course drills. These are practical exercises that require you both to be alert and interested and caring.

All the tips for being a good coach with your study partner are described below. Learn them well and the golden rule is, if you find you are not progressing or it becomes confusing then you simply call your facilitator.

### **1. Taking care of your study partner**

Part of your function or role as a study partner is to treat them with respect and to understand you are both 'in this together'. If you pass and your study partner fails a drill, then it is just as if you failed the drill. You care for them and assist them and work with them until you are both through the practical exercise and successful.

Most of the time this is straight forward and simple. On the interactive communication course there is quite a lot of coaching that each study partner does with each other.

You work with your study partner and do what is asked on each item of the checksheet. Sometimes you are a coach during a practical exercise. Once you have completed your job as a coach, you exchange roles and your study partner becomes the coach and helps you to get through the practical exercise.

### **2. Getting assistance**

There may be times that the work you are doing with your study partner becomes complicated or you may experience some difficulty. This is not unusual and simply means that you need to call your facilitator over to help you get through the exercise.

### **3. Coaching them through a practical drill**

Let us assume the checksheet asks you to draw a sketch of something you have learned. You draw it and show your study partner. Once your study partner agrees you have got it right, you get your study partner to draw it and you check for understanding. This is simple. You take turns.

## **4. Coaching with understanding**

When coaching, you do it with understanding. You use real examples as best you can and you try and be as real as you can when 'acting out' a scene as part of the practical exercise.

If a practical exercise asks you to be an angry client, then make it as real as possible.

Keeping it as real as possible helps the training process and you both get more out of the course this way.

## **5. Having the intention and purpose to help your study partner to pass the drill or practical exercise**

This is about your expectations for your study partner. If you expect them to get the drill right, if you expect them to do well, if you expect them to pass, they will.

Your intention therefore would be to work with your study partner, expecting them to do well and pass the drill.

The purpose you are working with is the purpose of the drill. The purpose of the drill is explained in the article that provides the write-up of the drill.

You work together to achieve the purpose of the drill or practical exercise.

## **6. One at a time**

Coach your study partner on one thing at a time. If they are having difficulty with one thing, keep going until your study partner masters the drill. Sometimes this means that they may need to go back to an earlier drill to redo that drill, and then come back to the current drill.

If you push your study partner past where they are capable, at that time, they will become confused and will not be able to complete the drill successfully. The Lifelong Learning Skills course gave examples of what happens when you do 'too much too fast', or learning something out of sequence. Do the drills in sequence, completing the one you are on, completely, before moving on. Keep this in mind when coaching.

Coach your study partner on one thing at a time.

## **7. Self-coaching**

If you are the coach then you are the coach. Your study partner must not 'self-coach' by saying "Oh, that was wrong" or something similar. That is your job. Gently remind your study partner to not self-coach, take on the role of coach, and get on with the drill.



## **8. Just observe (no opinions)**

When coaching your study partner, and you see something done incorrectly, you point it out and continue the drill. Do not say "I think that was wrong" or "My opinion is that was not perfect" or something like that. Just observe, and when you see something done incorrectly, point it out and return to the drill. No discussions are necessary.

Do the drill. Point out errors and continue with the drill until your study partner gets it right.

## **9. Justifying**

If you correct your study partner for doing a drill incorrectly, there may be times that they try and justify why they did what they did. They may try to explain or reason with you why they did something. This is not helpful to the process of the drill.

Just show you understand and continue with the drill.

You do not take up and discuss or argue about their reasons or explanations. Just do the drill.

After a while of doing the drill, as it is described, you will both get better and better at it until you have the drill done perfectly.

If you get into a tricky situation while doing a drill, call your facilitator.

## **10. Getting upset**

Some of the practical exercises you do with your study partner can become quite tough to complete. This is intended.

In life and at work, you will face situations from time to time that are quite tough. You may have an angry client or a client that is just plain rude or even racist. They may say things that upset you. Part of the reason for doing communication drills is to improve your ability to deal with all types of situations in a professional manner.

When doing the communication drills, you may find your study partner becomes upset. This is fine. The action you take is to show them you understand and to keep doing the drill. Together you will be able to get through these drills and come out the other side more competent and self-confident.

If your study partner cannot get through that drill, after your facilitator has reviewed it with you, you may be asked to simply go back to the earlier drill, do that one again, then come back to the current one and try again. You will get through it.

Getting through tough drills is a process of growing and building your confidence and your professionalism. It is a good thing and we encourage you to tackle these situations with courage!

## **11. Acknowledge good work**

As part of the process of working with your study partner you may be focused on noticing the errors and correcting them.

It is also true that part of this process is noticing when they do something well, and acknowledging them for this.

It is important to give positive feedback from time to time!

As a final comment, a good coach gets the study partner through the drill. This is the role of a coach.

Use these tips well.

## Chapter 7 - Communication in all areas of life

Communication is basic to all parts of life. It is probably the most important skill you have both personally and at work. Here are some thoughts about what others have said about the importance of communication.



Today we have access to many, many different ways of communicating. These ways of communicating include tweets, texts, SMS's, WhatsApp, BBM (BlackBerry Messenger or similar), Facebook, LinkedIn, Skype, FaceTime, email, cell phones, blogs, landline phones, satellite phones, YouTube, websites, and even more.

Today our choices of the way we communicate are increasing more and more. The interesting point to remember though, is that the basics and the formula and the nature of interactive communication has not changed, as you can see in the chapters you have covered above.

Communication and your understanding of what communication is, is central to life. Here are some quotes from some of those who have thought about this subject:

"Yet only through communication can human life hold meaning". Paulo Freire

"Communication - the human connection - is the key to personal and career success". Paul J. Meyer

"Intelligence, knowledge or experience are important and might get you a job, but strong communication skills are what will get you promoted". Mireille Guiliano

"Deep LISTENING is miraculous for both listener and speaker. When someone receives us with open-hearted, non-judging, intensely interested listening, our spirits expand." Sue Patton Thoele



"The art of communication is the language of leadership." James Humes

"The way we communicate with others and with ourselves ultimately determines the quality of our lives". Anthony Robbins

"Communication skill improves relationships, family life, human interaction, internet or technology skills, career progress, leadership or management ability and how well you do in life in general".

"The most important skill you can have in life is the skill of communication."

[Authors]

# Glossary

**Aristotle:** See Greek philosophers.

**Baie dankie:** This is Afrikaans for 'very much' (baie) and 'thank you' (dankie).

**Blogs:** A journal written on-line and accessible to users of the internet. Full name: weblog. A shared, on-line journal, where people can post diary entries about their personal experiences and hobbies; "postings on a blog are usually in chronological order."

**Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver:** Shannon was a mathematician and electronic engineer who figured out that mathematical formulas could be created within the design of electronic devices and started the path toward what we have today with many different applications of this design theory.

He worked at Bell Labs in the late 1900's and through the Second World War. Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone and founded Alexander Bell Laboratories which later changed hands a few times to become simply Bell Labs.

In 1948 he wrote an article in Bell's technical journal, "A Mathematical Theory of Communication." This work focuses on the problem of how best to encode the information a sender wants to transmit.

Later, he co-authored a book with Warren Weaver, also called "The Mathematical Theory of Communication", which reprints Shannon's 1948 article and includes Weaver's popularization of it, which made this information accessible to the non-specialist.

**David K. Berlo:** In 1955, David K. Berlo, at the age of 29, received his doctorate degree in the study of communication from the University of Illinois. In 1960, his book *Process of Communication*, was published, which looked at the nature of communication. In 1960, David Berlo expanded Shannon and Weaver's model of communication and created another.

The Source-Message-Channel-Receiver Model (SMCR) of communication separated the model into clear parts and has been expanded upon by other scholars.

**Expect:** to regard as probable or likely; anticipate: "he expects to win". This can also be a strong 'thought' or personal decision, for example, "I fully expect to do well in my new job."

It also means to decide that (something) is required or necessary; "the boss expects us to work late today"; from Latin *exspectāre* to watch for, from *spectāre* to look at.

**Formula:** a general relationship, principle, or rule stated, often as an equation, in the form of symbols. It is also a method, pattern, or rule for doing or producing something, often one proved to be successful; from Latin: form, rule.

**Greek philosophers:** Around 600 BC through to later times, many famous wise men developed their views of the world and life. These were people like Socrates, Aristotle and Plato, for example. They are still studied in modern times.

**Illinois:** This is a state (like a province in South Africa) in the Midwestern United States. Chicago is the largest city in Illinois.

**Intention:** an act or instance of determining mentally the visualized action or result.

**Intent, intention:** Intent implies a sustained unbroken commitment or purpose, while intention implies an initial aim or plan. Intent adds mental power to an intention. An intention is an aim (as distinct from capability) to execute a specified course of action.

**Interactive:** Allowing or relating to continuous two-way transfer of information between a user and the central point of a communication system, such as a computer or television or, two or more persons acting upon or in close relation with each other; interacting.

**Judy Baker:** Judy is the President of the Board of the Bay Area Independent Publishers Association (San Francisco USA). Her business expertise includes strategies for turning expertise into information products. She started a company called Completely Creative. "I help coaches and consultants reveal or enhance the true essence of their business. I mentor entrepreneurs in the art of client attraction, Visual and Verbal Communications and Results-Based Marketing". She writes articles under the name Success Notes.

**Justify:** To prove or show (a person, action, opinion) to be just, right, desirable or reasonable. "How can the government justify the spending of millions of pounds on weapons when there is so much poverty in the country?"

Also, it means; to be a good excuse for. "Your state of anxiety does not justify your being so rude to me"; from the Latin 'just' meaning 'fair'.

**L. Ron Hubbard:** Primarily an author, he wrote extensively on many subjects including communication, education and study. He also covered subjects like philosophy, organization and the humanities. (1911 to 1986)

**Michigan:** This is a state (like a province in South Africa) in the Midwestern United States. Detroit is the largest city in Michigan, known as Motor City due to many vehicle manufacturer headquarters being in Detroit. It is near Illinois and also has a border with the country of Canada.

**Model:** (see formula). A simplified description of a system designed to assist with calculations and predictions. A communication model is a simpler description of a more complex subject.

**National Communication Association (NCA):** This is a not-for-profit membership-based scholarly society founded in 1914. NCA's mission is to advance Communication as the discipline that studies all forms, methods, media, and consequences of communication through human, social, scientific, and aesthetic channels.

NCA promotes the widespread appreciation of the importance of communication in public and private life, the application of competent communication to improve the quality of human life and relationships, and the use of knowledge about communication to solve human problems.

NCA's office is located in Washington, DC, USA.

**Prophet Muhammad:** (570-632 AD). The prophet believed by Muslims to be the channel for the final unfolding of God's revelation to mankind: popularly regarded as the founder of Islam. He began to teach in Mecca in 610 AD but persecution forced him to flee with his followers to Medina in 622. After several battles, he conquered Mecca (630 AD), establishing the principles of Islam (embodied in the Quran) over all Arabia. Medina and Mecca (Makkah) are cities in Saudi Arabia which is a country in the Middle East area of the world.

**Socrates:** See Greek philosophers.

**Washington, DC, USA:** The USA is the United States of America sometimes called America or 'The US'. Washington DC is where the US President's home and offices are, called the White House. Washington DC is also the seat of the national government of the USA. The USA has 50 states (provinces in South Africa) and one of them is called Washington or Washington State. Washington DC is a district, not a state, and this district is known as the District of Columbia (nothing to do with the country of that name in South America) or DC. This is why this area of the USA is called Washington DC.

**Weblog:** Sometimes called a blog. See definition of blog, above.