What is Communication?

- Can anyone define it?
  - The act of expressing yourself in a way that you are quickly and easily understood
- How do we know that good communication has happened?
Task 1

- Ever heard of Chinese whispers?
- Let's try it out...
Good Communication

- Effective communication (what works) happens between two people when the receiver interprets the message in the same way the sender intended it.
- Each of us needs to share thoughts, needs, and feelings, and we do it by communicating.
Process of Communication

The Communications Process

1. Source → Encoding
2. Encoding → Channel
3. Channel → Decoding
4. Decoding → Receiver

Feedback

Context
Communication Goals

- To change behavior
- To get and give Information
- To get action
- To persuade
- To ensure understanding
Most common ways to communicate

- Speaking
- Visual Images
- Writing
- Body Language
We need to improve communication... as

70 % of our communication efforts are:
- misunderstood
- misinterpreted
- rejected
- distorted or
- not heard

6 people talking in a 2 people conversation!!
Common Communication Errors:

- Finishing others’ sentences
- Preparing our response before someone has completed speaking
- Multitasking while ‘listening’
- Filtering content or meaning based on the speaker
- Speaking for others (we…)
Distortions in Communication
Avoiding Misunderstandings

• Misunderstandings happen when we don’t communicate clearly. Both sender AND receiver have a responsibility to clarify messages to avoid misunderstanding.
• Often we are communicating a message that is a bit different from the one we are trying to send.
• Sometimes our unconscious (not at the top of our minds) feelings are shown in nonverbal behavior.
• It is important that we are aware of all the messages we are sending.
Being Effective as a Communicator

- Sending - send a message clearly and accurately to the receiver.
  - Be SPECIFIC (detailed) when you’re telling someone something.
  - Send the same message verbally and non-verbally.

- Example: Jack’s mother yelled at him for not putting away his clothes. While she was yelling at him, she was smiling at the same time. Jack was confused by this message and didn’t know what to do…
• Receiving - How to hear and correctly understand a message someone is sending us.
• What does it feel like when you’re talking to someone and you can tell they’re not listening to you? What does that look like?
  ○ Again, it’s all about non-verbals.
• What does it feel like when you don’t think you are understanding what someone is telling you?
Key Principles of Effective Communication

1. Make sure body language, words and tone are aligned.
2. Maintain appropriate eye contact
3. Improve voice quality
4. Listen actively; it builds the block of good understanding and communication
5. Pause for effect: give time for explanation, evaluation and development of thoughts
6. Summarize all keys points.
7. Empathize with the receiver of the message
8. Keep it simple
9. Repeat if necessary
10. Be confident
Essentials of good communication

- Knowledge
  - Spontaneity in conversation
  - Level of conversation
- Organising your thoughts
- Participating in discussions
- Body Language
  - Show v Tell
- Being a good listener
  - Listening v hearing
How to be an active listener

- Set the stage
- Ensure mutual understanding
- Understand body language
- Suspend judgment
- Behaviors that hinder effective listening
  - Act distracted (look at your watch!)
  - Tell your own story without acknowledging theirs
  - Give no response
  - Invalidate response, be negative
  - Interrupt
  - Criticize
Techniques to improve listening skills

**PARAPHRASE**
Restate what was said in your own words

**SUMMARIZE**
Pull together the main points of a speaker

**QUESTION**
Challenge speaker to think further, clarifying both your and their understanding
Two basic types of questions

1. Closed questions:
   ◦ Get a one-word response and inhibit thought.
   ◦ Questions begin with who, when and which

2. Open-ended questions:
   ◦ Invite unique thought, reflection or an explanation.
   ◦ Questions begin with how, what and how come (not why!).
Practice Questioning

- Rephrase the following closed questions to make them open-ended:

1. Are you feeling tired?
2. Isn’t it a nice day?
3. Was the last activity useful?
4. Is there anything bothering you?
5. So everything is fine, then?
Adding colour to communication

- Images – Describe, relive
- Show, don’t tell
- Use audience’s senses
  - Sight
  - Sound
  - Touch
  - Taste
  - Smell