In this recording we summarise the content of chapter 26 Communication in Organisations. Studying this chapter should help you identify the main functions of communication; describe the communication process and distinguish between formal and informal communication; contrast different lines of (downward, upward and lateral) communication within organizations; review common barriers to communication within the context of organizations; evaluate the use of committees within organizations; .

Introducing the chapter, the authors start with 1. The communication that takes place in an organisation is an important influence in the success of that organisation, Clampitt (2010). Philip Clampitt, a Business Professor at the University of Wisconsin, defines communication as the transmission and or reception of signals through some channel(s) that humans interpret, based on a probabilistic system that is deeply influenced by context. We transmit by talking, writing, texting, illustrating and touching. We receive by listening, reading, watching, or feeling. Signals can be verbal, non-verbal, or visual and we use an ever-changing array of channels, including face-to-face, mobile phones and e-mails to send messages and information to others.

2. Communication is central to understanding organisational behaviour. Communication serves many functions within the organisation: control, motivation, emotional expression and information dissemination. Communication is related to employee satisfaction (see chapter 6 and 21) and in chapter 13 we discussed its role in developing organisational culture. Managers help develop culture through communication. They must communicate values, the mission and organisational purpose, goals and the expected way of doing things. They tell stories, issue rewards and sanction punishments. Communication also plays a major role in strategy (chapter 16), performance management (chapter 18) and decision-making in particular. In the previous two chapters we discussed change management and recognised the need to communicate with employees and convince them of the need to make change. This communication not only helped remove barriers to change but also helped motivate the change itself. Interpersonal communication is important in building and sustaining relationships at work.

3. Managers must understand how they can make the communication process and enabling technologies work for them. In order to do this they must understand the importance of communication, how communication takes place, how technology may enable communication, and must understand the barriers to communication if they are to become competent communicators, able to persuade and motivate others and build trusting relationships. Such matters and related theories, tools and techniques will be explored in this chapter..

The key concepts discussed within this chapter are:
Communication - the activity of conveying information; Formal communication. - Formal communication involves presenting information in a structured and consistent manner. Such information is normally created for a specific purpose, making it likely to be more comprehensive, accurate and relevant than information transmitted using information communication. An example of formal communication is an accounting statement. See Informal communication.; Informal communication. - This describes information that is transmitted by informal means, such as casual conversations between members of staff. The information transmitted in this way is often less structured and less detailed than information transmitted by formal communication. In addition, the information may be inconsistent or may contain inaccuracies. Furthermore, the information may also include a subjective element, such as personal opinions. See Formal communication.; Lateral communication - communication within an organisation which exist between individuals in different departments or sections, especially between individuals on the same level; vertical communication - communication flows up and down the management hierarchy; .

Other terms discussed include:

Asynchronous communication; Channel richness; Communication climate in an organization; Communications; Feedback (in the context of interpersonal communic; Filtering; Noise; Nonverbal communication; .

Summarising and concluding, the author(s) make the following comments - 25. Communication affects organisational performance and is central to an understanding of organisational behaviour. Effective communication is required to ensure that the goals, feedback and other management messages to employees are received as ntended. Trust and clarity help ensure efficiency and effectiveness. Through effective communication, managers can develop productive employees. Effective communication requires an understanding of the communication process, an ability to select the correct channel, deliver the right message in the right form, in the right place and at the right time. This chapter has explored a number of concepts, tools and techniques to assist with these issues..

We have now reached the end of the chapter 'Communication in Organisations'.

There are a number of references for this chapter where further reading opportunities are identified for you.
Additionally, there are questions or activities to help develop and test your understanding of this chapter