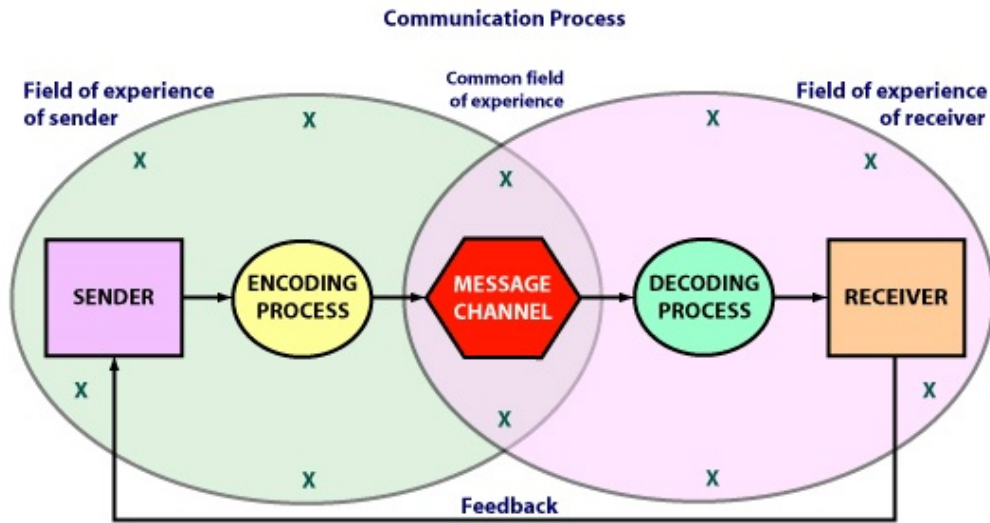


The Communication Process



X - Noise
 Noise exists around the entire process.
 Communication travels from sender to receiver. Feedback from receiver to sender.
 Common field of experience or frame of reference where
 fields of experience of sender and receiver overlap.

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Key Concepts:		
Communication process	Common field of experience	Encoding process
Communication	Symbol	Decoding process
Sender	Semiotics	Feedback
Field of experience	Signifier	Noise
Frame of reference	Signified concept	Counter argue
Receiver	Message channel	

The Communication Process

<p>Communication Process</p> <p>Communication Sender</p> <p>Field of Experience Frame of Reference</p> <p>Receiver</p> <p>Common Field of Experience</p>	<p>The communication process explains how one party (e.g., a marketer) can transfer the meaning of ideas (i.e., the communication) to another party (e.g., a customer). The sender of a communication is the communicator, who brings to the interaction a field of experience or frame of reference (e.g., the sum of one's experiences during one's life, including one's culture and language). The marketer, the salesperson, and the advertiser are examples of a sender. The intended receiver of the communication is the targeted recipient of the communication (e.g., the consumer, the wholesaler, the retailer). The receiver also has a field of experience. The extent to which the two fields of experience overlap reflects the common field of experience.</p>
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In order for communication to take place, one necessary condition is that there is an overlap between the two fields of experience, otherwise, neither party can understand the other party. For example, if the consumer only speaks and understands French, but the marketer only advertises in English, then communication cannot take place (i.e., there cannot be a transfer of meaning), because there is no overlap between the two parties with respect to language.

Symbol
Semiotics

Signifier
Signified Concept

In order for communication to take place, the marketer needs to select the appropriate symbols to represent the ideas that are to be conveyed. A **symbol** is an element within society that conveys a certain meaning. **Semiotics** is the study of the meaning of symbols. A symbol can be an object, a word, a sound, a colour, or anything within society to which a meaning has been attached. The automobile brand names of Jaguar versus Yugo convey two totally different meanings, even if the meaning of the latter brand was not what the marketer intended (i.e., poor quality). A red stop light (the **signifier**) means to stop (the **signified concept**).

Message Channel

The nature of the symbol used to convey the intended meaning of an idea is not independent of the message channel selected to transmit the message. A **message channel** is the means (i.e., medium) by which a communication is transmitted (i.e., passed) from one party to another. Since humans do not have the capability of telepathy, the marketer needs to determine how the meaning of the idea that needs to be communicated will be encoded, but which encoding approach is used also depends on the selected message channel.

Encoding Process

The **encoding process** involves translating an idea or the meaning of an idea (i.e., a mental state) that has

to be communicated (i.e., to translate what has to be communicated), so that it can be communicated to another person. If one wants to communicate the idea of danger, then the word danger can be used, the colour red can be used, or a loud sound can be used. Which approach is used, however, depends on the message channel that is selected to transmit the communication, or, which message channel is selected depends on which approach to encoding is used. Television allows for the use of sound and visuals; radio only allows for sound; newspapers allow only for visuals, and magazines allow for visuals and the sense of smell (i.e., embedded scratch and sniff inserts). Computers connected to the Internet allow for sound and visuals; and the evolving cell phone allows for sound and visuals, including text messaging.

Decoding Process

Once the message has been encoded and transmitted through the message channel, the intended receiver, coming into contact with the communication through one's senses, must now decode the message. The **decoding process** means to translate what has been communicated so that it has meaning to the receiver.

Communication only takes place if the encoding process is correct and the decoding process is correct. If a marketer develops a new toothpaste that makes one's teeth sparkle and wants to communicate this

meaning to the target market, naming the brand Dull-A-Dent reflects an error in the encoding process. When the customer sees an ad for the brand and decodes Dull-A-Dent as a brand that does not brighten one's teeth, at least the decoding is correct, but communication has not taken place (i.e., the intended meaning was not communicated to the customer).

If the marketer names the new toothpaste Sparkles, but the customer thinks of a type of fireworks that glitters and emits sparks when lit, then, while the encoding was correct, the decoding was incorrect, since the intended meaning was not communicated to the customer. However, if the marketer names the new brand of toothpaste SparkleDent to reflect the intended meaning and if after seeing an ad for the brand the customer thinks of the brand as making one's teeth sparkle when used, then communication has taken place: the encoding process and the decoding process were both correct, since the intended meaning was transferred from the sender to the receiver.

Designing an ad for funeral services provides another illustration of the issues related to the communication process. Since, in most countries, the need for such services is associated with a solemn event, a funeral

home would not want to play a heavy metal tune as the background music in one of its ads or would it select bright colours for the parlour setting in the ad. Within different societies, certain music and colours (i.e., symbols) are associated with the solemn ritual surrounding the deceased, others are not.

Feedback

Once the customer has decoded the message sent by the marketer, there is the expectation of some form of **feedback** (i.e., some form of reaction) from the customer. This feedback to the marketer may be immediate, delayed, or not occur at all.

In a personal selling situation, the feedback is usually immediate: the customer responds to the sales person's sales efforts and the sales person then responds to the customer's reaction. In the case of most advertising, however, feedback is delayed (i.e., the customer buys the product sometime later) or there is no feedback. Television ads that require the customer to call within 30 minutes of airing the ad to get the special price advertised provides a measure of immediate feedback for the marketer.

A marketer's objective with respect to a given communication may not be to obtain immediate purchase behaviour. The purpose of a marketing communication may be just to make the customer aware of the

product (i.e., to initialize the first stage of the adoption process), to form or change a customer's attitude (i.e., beliefs and importance scores), or just to reinforce the customer's current attitude toward the product.

Noise

The final issue a marketer has to worry about when considering the communication process is noise.

Noise is anything that interferes with the communication process. Noise can be interference on the television or on the radio while an ad is running; noise can be an external noise, like the sound of a police car siren coming from the street while one is watching a television ad or listening to a radio ad; or noise can be a customer's prior negative attitude toward the product. In the latter case, the customer may start to **counter argue** with the ad (i.e., mentally, and even verbally, start disagreeing with the contents of the ad) so that the intended message is not communicated to the customer.

Counter argue