Welcome to this audio visual presentation on communication.

Communication is more than merely imparting meaning. An idea, no matter how great, is useless until it is transmitted and understood by others. It must include both the transference and the understanding of meaning.

There are four major functions of communication:

- **Control**: Communication acts to control member behavior in several ways.
- **Motivation**: Communication fosters motivation by clarifying to employees what is to be done, how well they are doing, and what can be done to improve performance.
- **Emotional expression**: Communication provides a release for the employee’s emotional expression of feelings and fulfillment of social needs. For many employees, their work group is a primary source for social interaction.
- **Information**: Communication facilitates decision-making. It provides information by transmitting the data to identify and evaluate alternative choices.

Before communication can take place, a purpose expressed as a message to be conveyed, is needed. An example would be “Go to the warehouse and bring back box 123.” The purpose is clear and is conveyed.

The communication model is made up of eight parts: The **source** initiates a message by encoding a thought. **Encoding** is the symbols or letters that contains the message in an understandable form. The **message** is the actual product from the source. The **channel** is the medium through which the message travels. **Decoding** the symbols or letters in the message that must be translated into a form that can be understood by the receiver. The **receiver** is the person receiving the message. **Noise** represents communication barriers that distort the clarity of the message. **Feedback** is used to check how successful the message has been transferred and received.

The **grapevine** is a communication channel that circulates rumors and many unofficial messages in an organization. The grapevine is not controlled by management, yet it is perceived by most employees as being more believable and reliable than formal communication channels, and is largely used to serve self-interests of certain individuals.

We have several types of **computer-aided communication**. **E-mail** is one; the growth of email has been significant. **Instant messaging** is becoming more popular every day and is now rapidly moving into business; it is essentially real-time e-mail. Intranets are networks that only organizational members can access. **Extranets** are links organizations create to connect employees with suppliers, customers, and strategic partners. Video conferencing is an extension of intranet and extranet systems. It permits employees in an organization to have meetings with people at different locations.

Let’s now consider barriers to communication. **Filtering** refers to when a sender purposely manipulates information so it will be seen as more favorable by the receiver. An example would be telling the boss what she wants to hear. Selective perception occurs when receivers selectively see and hear based on their needs, motivations, experience, background, and other personal characteristics. Receivers project their interests and expectations into communication as they decode them.
**Information overload:** When the information we have to work with exceeds our processing capacity, the result is information overload. The result is that receivers tend to select out, ignore, pass over, or forget information. Or they may put it aside until the overload situation is over. The result is lost information and less effective communication. Information overload happens when a person receives more information than one individual can process during a given time period.

A receiver’s emotions at the time a message is received will influence how he or she interprets it. Extreme emotions are likely to hinder effective communication. An employee may be having a bad day at work and will reject a message or idea that he or she would have normally accepted.

Words mean different things to different people. Although English is the common language in most American workplaces, it is far from uniform in usage.

Communication can flow in three different directions.

**Downward communication** flows from one level of a group organization to a lower level. This direction is typically what we think of when managers communicate with workers. The purpose of downward communication may be to assign goals, provide instructions, communicate policies and procedures, and/or provide feedback.

**Upward communication** flows to a higher level in the group or organization. It is used to provide feedback to higher-ups, inform them of progress, and relay current problems. Examples of upward communication are performance reports prepared by lower management for review by middle and top management, suggestion boxes, and employee attitude surveys.

**Lateral** (also called, horizontal) communication takes place among members of the same work group, such as among members of work groups at the same level, among managers at the same level, or among any horizontally equivalent personnel. Lateral communications are often necessary to save time and facilitate coordination. In some cases, these lateral relationships are formally sanctioned. However, they are often created informally to short-circuit the vertical hierarchy and expedite action. Lateral communication can create dysfunctional conflicts. Conflicts occur when the formal vertical channels are breached, when members go above or around their superiors to get things done, or when bosses find out that actions have been taken or decisions made without their knowledge.

**End of presentation**