**2 2.1 The communication model** (‘process of communication’) Whilst there are many different ways in which organisations can collect, share and disseminate information they are all based on the same underlying communication mode.

**Components of the communication process**

**Sender**: The sender generates a message and selects the most appropriate communication method.

**Encoding:** The message is then encoded and transmitted to the intended recipient (known as the receiver).

**Receiver/decoding**: The receiver decodes (interprets) the message to understand what the message is about and what action (if any) is required.

**Feedback**: The receiver then provides feedback to the original sender to show that they have received and understood the message.

**2 2.3 Methods of communication**

The following table demonstrates the four key methods of communication:

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| **Methods** | **Explanation and Examples** |
| Written | * Reports, e-mails, letters |
| Oral | * Face-to-face discussion, videoconferencing, noticeboards |
| Pictorial | * Examples: Charts, drawings , graphs Note that the prime purpose of visual aids is to communicate with greater clarity and increase the level of understanding among the audience. |

**2 2.4 Communication media**

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| **Medium** | **When most Appropriate** |
| Telephone | * Idea for most informal and some formal communication. |
| Teleconference | * When more than two individuals in remote locations need to share a telephone conversation. * Often used for internal communication (common) and sometimes for external communication too (less common). |
| Fax | * Copies of documents need sending to a different physical location. * Note that faxes have largely been superceded by the sending of emails with electronic copies of the documents attached. |
| Letter | * Formal external communication that requires an audit trail (proof). |
| Advertisement | * Designed primarily for external individuals and groups. |
| Videoconference | * An upgraded version of teleconferencing that includes vision with the voice. * Frequently used for internal meetings between groups of employees in remote locations. |
| Drawings, graphs and charts | * Used to enhance information and make complicated information easier to understand. * Typically used as part of another medium – e.g. reports or letters |
| Face-to-face | * Appropriate to a multitude of situations occurring both internally and externally, formally and informally. * Examples might include a formal internal employee appraisal or an informal external client meeting. |
| Memoranda | * Normally restricted to internal use for disseminating infromation to staff by management – e.g. quarterly sales summaries or notice of a fire alarm test. |
| Financial documents | * These documents can include both internal (e.g. forecasts and analyses for assisting with purchasing and sales strategies) and external (e.g. annual report and accounts, or business plan for a bank loan application). |
| E-mail | * E-mail is widely used (arguably over-used leading to ‘drowning in email’!) throughout organisations both internally and externally, formally and informally. * Often used internally for ‘posting’ information such as instruction manuals and policies and procedures. * Could also be adopted for external use for keeping customers up-to-date with product offerings, technical updates and other company information. |

**2 2.4 Barriers to effective communication**

Definition: Barrier to communication Any circumstance that prevents the message from being communicated as intended by the sender to the recipient.

There are many reasons why the message that the sender sends is not the message that the receiver receives and interprets. Barriers might include:

Issues in the relationship between the sender and receiver that can lead to bias.

Noise – physical interference that damaged the message as it was being communicated

Confusing and conflicting messages leading to distortion.

Selecting the wrong channel, for example trying to explain a complicated concept with words when a diagram and logical written explanation would be more effective.

Suffering interruptions and distractions during transmission of the message Receiver does not provide feedback.

Lack of information – for example contextual information that is critical to understanding how to interpret a message.

Faulty systems – e.g. weak mobile phone signal. Stereotyping assumptions that the recipient has a particular level of understanding.

Use of technical jargon or complicated language.

Poor listening skills of the receiver – lack of attention, ability to absorb information or perceptual selection (in simple terms ‘selective hearing’ – i.e. hear only what they want to hear).

Non-verbal signs that contradict a verbal message (for example shaking the head – which would imply “no” – whilst actually saying “yes”).

Information overload. This can become a huge issue particularly with emails whereby the recipient is so swamped with the volume of messages that they are simply unable to read, interpret and act on all the communications received.

Differences in education and/or social background leading to cultural differences and varying interpretations of the same message. For example in many countries around the world a ‘thumbs-up’ is a positive ‘good news’ gesture (meaning “ok”, “yes”, or ‘I approve”), whereas in some countries such as Afghanistan, Nigeria, parts of Italy, Greece and South America is it an offensive obscene insult.

Sender and receiver speak different languages

Sender and receiver dislike each other and do not trust each other.

The recipient of the information may be biased either due to personal or cultural differences.

Physical distance between sender and recipient, for example Sydney- Australia and New York-USA time zones making arranging a videoconference difficult.

Filtering of Information – this refers to the sender’s deliberate suppression or manipulation of information so that it may be seen in a more favourable perspective by the receiver. It includes concealment of information by the sender which is not considered to be in accordance with the expectations or viewpoints of the receiver.