Chapter 1—Establishing a Framework for Business Communication

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. What are differences in education level, experience, and culture or distractions such as noise, uncomfortable room temperature, and interruptions all examples of?
   a. feedback
   b. diversity
   c. decoding
   d. interference

   ANS: D   PTS: 1   REF: p. 5   MSC: Higher Order

2. Sharon, an executive travelling on an international assignment, is preparing instructions to email to her staff during the trip. What is Sharon doing?
   a. encoding
   b. decoding
   c. interfering
   d. giving feedback

   ANS: A   PTS: 1   REF: p. 4   MSC: Higher Order

3. Javon explains a new policy to his staff which prohibits the use of office computers for personal email. Several of the employees frown at the news and one staff member makes a sarcastic remark. What is Javon's staff doing?
   a. encoding
   b. decoding
   c. interfering
   d. giving feedback

   ANS: D   PTS: 1   REF: p. 5   MSC: Higher Order

4. Jeff receives an email from his boss, Sharon, who is on an international trip. As Jeff interprets the instructions from the email, what is he doing?
   a. encoding
   b. decoding
   c. interfering
   d. giving feedback

   ANS: B   PTS: 1   REF: p. 4   MSC: Higher Order

5. Which of the following is an example of an internal message?
   a. a radio advertisement for a new product
   b. an annual report posted on a company website
   c. a memo explaining new procedures sent to staff in the shipping department
   d. an email requesting information about software sent to several outside technology firms

   ANS: C   PTS: 1   REF: p. 9   MSC: Higher Order

6. A manager is faced with having to lay off some of his staff due to financial losses that the company has suffered. Which of the following channels of communication would be the least effective method for sharing the news with employees?
   a. an email to all affected employees
   b. a face-to-face meeting with each employee
   c. a personal telephone call to each affected employee
   d. a well-written, empathetic letter to each affected employee

   ANS: A   PTS: 1   REF: p. 4   MSC: Higher Order

7. When does intrapersonal communication occur?
   a. when two people are involved in the process
   b. when a person processes information individually
   c. when teamwork dynamics contribute to the feedback
   d. when individuals from two different organizations communicate effectively

   ANS: B   PTS: 1   REF: p. 9   MSC: Remember

8. Chantal is the manager of the claims department for a large insurance company. She has a one-hour meeting with her staff to explain the new claim form which the company will introduce next month. What is this type of organizational communication?
   a. upward
   b. grapevine
   c. horizontal
   d. downward

   ANS: D   PTS: 1   REF: p. 7-8   MSC: Higher Order

9. Two colleagues are discussing a project. What level of communication are they engaging in?
   a. group
   b. public
   c. interpersonal
   d. organizational

   ANS: C   PTS: 1   REF: p. 9   MSC: Higher Order

10. Which statement most accurately describes the grapevine in an organization?
    a. It has a single, consistent source.
    b. It is typically no more or less accurate than other channels.
    c. It serves no necessary purpose; thus, managers should work to eliminate it.
    d. It passes a message from person to person until it finally reaches the end of the line.

    ANS: B   PTS: 1   REF: p. 6   MSC: Higher Order

11. What communication channel is created by management to detail lines of responsibility?
    a. formal
    b. informal
    c. feedback
    d. grapevine

    ANS: A   PTS: 1   REF: p. 5   MSC: Remember

12. Which of the following would be the best strategy for improving the effectiveness of horizontal communication in an organization?
    a. Add a comment box to the staff lunch room.
    b. Hold company-wide meetings once a month.
    c. Encourage people within the organization to be available to one another.
    d. Managers should send newsletters to lower-level employees once a month.

    ANS: C   PTS: 1   REF: p. 8-9   MSC: Higher Order

13. A supervisor on the night shift at a manufacturing plant is told to dump chemicals used in the refining process rather than dispose of them properly according to safety regulations. The owner of the company insists that the chemicals are not harmful to the environment, but the supervisor knows that the dumping is illegal. The supervisor believes that he will lose his job if he reports the problem to authorities. Which potential cause of unethical behaviour does this situation exemplify?
    a. excessive emphasis on profits
    b. unwilling to stand for what is right
    c. obsession with personal advancement
    d. uncertainty about whether an act is wrong

    ANS: B   PTS: 1   REF: p. 12   MSC: Higher Order

14. Many leading figures in recent corporate scandals were never convicted of a crime. Which of the following best describes their behaviour?
    a. behaviour that is illegal yet ethical
    b. behaviour that is legal yet unethical
    c. behaviour that is illegal and unethical
    d. behaviour that is both legal and ethical

    ANS: B   PTS: 1   REF: p. 12-13   MSC: Higher Order

15. Which of the following is NOT an example of how technology has changed communication in the workplace?
    a. More people are telecommuting.
    b. Information can be shared easily with people around the world.
    c. Synergy decreases as stakeholders access internal and external databases.
    d. Software allows individuals to create and present visually appealing documents.

    ANS: C   PTS: 1   REF: p. 15   MSC: Higher Order

16. Which of the following are NOT barriers to intercultural communication?
    a. changing technology
    b. translation limitations
    c. ethnocentrism and stereotypes
    d. chronemics, proxemics, and kinesics

    ANS: A   PTS: 1   REF: p. 14-15   MSC: Higher Order

17. What is the single most important aspect of successful teamwork?
    a. diversity
    b. shared leadership
    c. effective communication
    d. problem solving and consensus

    ANS: C   PTS: 1   REF: p. 18   MSC: Remember

18. Which of the following best describes *data integrity*?
    a. data is secure
    b. data is accurate
    c. data is organized
    d. data is available online

    ANS: B   PTS: 1   REF: p. 15   MSC: Remember

19. Which statement best illustrates the concept of culture?
    a. Cultural differences can create communication challenges.
    b. Developing ethnocentrism helps enhance international communication.
    c. Stereotyping allows one to form accurate mental pictures of different cultures.
    d. A person's diversity skills and patterns of behaviours are determined from birth.

    ANS: A   PTS: 1   REF: p. 14   MSC: Remember

20. Which of the following best defines *chronemics*?
    a. the study of personal space requirements
    b. the study of barriers, stereotypes, and diversity
    c. the study of expressions, gestures, and symbols
    d. the study of how cultures interpret the use of time

    ANS: D   PTS: 1   REF: p. 14   MSC: Remember

21. Which statement does NOT accurately reflect the communication process?
    a. The sender should select an appropriate channel for each message they send.
    b. Receivers use both verbal and nonverbal cues to interpret and decode messages.
    c. It is the sender's responsibility to reduce and cope with interferences when communicating.
    d. Thinking about how a message will be received is an important step in the encoding process.

    ANS: C   PTS: 1   REF: p. 4-5   MSC: Higher Order

22. Which of the following best describes the common attitude that North Americans have about the concept of time?
    a. Time is money.
    b. Time is not important.
    c. Time is easy to come by.
    d. Time spent talking is time wasted.

    ANS: A   PTS: 1   REF: p. 15   MSC: Higher Order

23. Which statement does NOT accurately reflect organizational communication?
    a. The grapevine is an example of a formal communication channel.
    b. Communication in an organization can be downward, upward, or horizontal.
    c. Many companies are using newsletters and blogs to share information with staff.
    d. A person's ability to communicate effectively will affect their success in the workplace.

    ANS: A   PTS: 1   REF: p. 6   MSC: Higher Order

24. You are faced with a work-related ethical dilemma. What should you do when deciding what action to take?
    a. Check with colleagues to see if they would take the action.
    b. Check the company code of ethics to see if the action is prohibited.
    c. Check the legal implications and feel free to take the action if it is not illegal.
    d. Check legal implications and the company code of ethics, and then decide if the action is personally ethical.

    ANS: D   PTS: 1   REF: p. 12-13   MSC: Higher Order

25. Which statement concerning teams is NOT true?
    a. A group must go through a developmental process to begin functioning as a team.
    b. Team members often need training in problem solving, goal setting, and conflict resolution.
    c. The self-directed work team can become the basic organizational building block to help assure success.
    d. Skills for successful participation in team environments are the same as those for success in traditional organizations.

    ANS: D   PTS: 1   REF: p. 17-18   MSC: Higher Order

26. Which statement best describes a work team?
    a. Work teams occasionally experience a drain on their collaborative energy; this drain is referred to as synergy.
    b. Work team members typically set their own goals without management input and plan how to work to achieve those goals.
    c. Employees in a self-directed work team handle a wide array of functions and generally work with a minimum of direct supervision.
    d. Although the concept of work teams has been widely used in Canada for some time, it has not gained significant support in other countries.

    ANS: C   PTS: 1   REF: p. 17   MSC: Higher Order

27. Which statement accurately describes communication in successful work teams?
    a. It replaces vertical information flow with horizontal flow.
    b. It is characterized by shared leadership and effective communication.
    c. It is the same as the process of communication in traditional organizations.
    d. It places reduced emphasis on listening, problem solving, and conflict resolution.

    ANS: B   PTS: 1   REF: p. 17   MSC: Higher Order

28. Which statement best describes the role of a leader in a self-directed work team?
    a. The role of leader can change.
    b. There are no leaders in self-directed work teams.
    c. The member with the highest rank is named the leader of the team.
    d. The member with the most effective leadership style becomes the leader.

    ANS: B   PTS: 1   REF: p. 17   MSC: Higher Order

29. Which of these is NOT a key factor influencing business communication?
    a. ethical constraints
    b. evolving technology
    c. diversity challenges
    d. organizational structure

    ANS: D   PTS: 1   REF: p. 9   MSC: Remember

30. Which statement concerning stereotyping is NOT true?
    a. Stereotyping occurs across all cultures.
    b. Stereotyping interferes with the observer being able to understand the other person.
    c. Stereotyping is reinforced when the observer sees a behaviour that conforms to the stereotype.
    d. Stereotyping aids in communication by categorizing cultures into distinct groups that have similarities.

    ANS: D   PTS: 1   REF: p. 14   MSC: Higher Order

TRUE/FALSE

1. People communicate to satisfy needs in both their personal and professional lives.

   ANS: T PTS: 1 REF: p. 2

2. Communication can be defined as the process of exchanging information and meaning between or among individuals.

   ANS: T PTS: 1 REF: p. 2

3. A basic purpose of communication is to persuade others.

   ANS: T PTS: 1 REF: p. 2

4. If the sender uses words the receiver does not understand, the receiver will have difficulty encoding the message.

   ANS: F PTS: 1 REF: p. 4

5. The sender's primary objective is to decode the message so that the message received is as close as possible to the message that is sent.

   ANS: F PTS: 1 REF: p. 4

6. When encoding a message, an effective communicator will use empathy for the receiver's position.

   ANS: T PTS: 1 REF: p. 4

7. While the sender of a message is responsible for effective encoding and the receiver for effective decoding, both have responsibility for addressing interferences.

   ANS: T PTS: 1 REF: p. 5

8. Interferences, or barriers, to communication can be completely overcome by skilled communicators.

   ANS: F PTS: 1 REF: p. 5

9. In spite of its poor reputation, the grapevine is in reality no more or less accurate than other channels.

   ANS: T PTS: 1 REF: p. 6

10. Skilled managers can eliminate informal communication systems within their organizations.

    ANS: F PTS: 1 REF: p. 7

11. Stakeholders are those affected by decisions and can include people inside and outside an organization.

   ANS: T   PTS: 1   REF: p. 10

12. *Ethics* refers to the formal rules and policies of an organization or business.

   ANS: F   PTS: 1   REF: p. 10

13. When the ABC Company makes a legal decision that complies with contractual agreements, one can accurately assume that it is an ethical decision because it is legal.

   ANS: F   PTS: 1   REF: p. 12-13

14. Employees should set aside their own personal value systems when making ethical decisions in the workplace.

   ANS: F   PTS: 1   REF: p. 13

15. The Pagano Model is a system used by managers to maximize work team effectiveness.

   ANS: F   PTS: 1   REF: p. 13

16. Learning about other cultures and being sensitive to diversity reduces ethnocentrism.

   ANS: T   PTS: 1   REF: p. 14

17. Stereotypes help us understand and communicate effectively with diverse audiences.

   ANS: F   PTS: 1   REF: p. 14

18. Though people around the world speak different languages, nonverbal communication, such as gestures and facial expressions, generally has the same meanings to all cultures.

   ANS: F   PTS: 1   REF: p. 15

19. *Kinesics* refers to how a culture perceives time and its use.

   ANS: F   PTS: 1   REF: p. 16

20. Effective communication is perhaps the most important aspect of successful teamwork.

   ANS: T   PTS: 1   REF: p. 17

SHORT ANSWER

1. Describe the steps in the communication process and explain why challenges can occur.

   ANS:
   Five steps are involved in the process:
   1. The sender encodes a message.
   2. The sender selects an appropriate channel and transmits the message.
   3. The receiver decodes the message.
   4. The receiver encodes a message (feedback) to clarify any part of the message not understood.
   5. The sender and receiver remove or minimize interferences (barriers) that hinder the communication process.

   Breakdowns can occur at any stage of the process as limitations of the sender, receiver, or both cause incomplete or faulty communication to occur. Barriers or interferences can also cause breakdowns.

   PTS: 1   REF: p. 4-5

2. Explain the challenges involved for both the sender and the receiver in the communication process.

   ANS:
   People communicate to inform, persuade, or to entertain using a common system of symbols, signs, and behaviours. The sender selects and organizes a message in such a way that the message received is as close as possible to the message sent. Knowing the receiver's educational level, culture, and experiences come into play when encoding a message. The receiver is then involved in listening carefully, without distractions, to interpret the message so that it has meaning to him or her. Both the sender and the receiver have equal responsibility to be effective in encoding and decoding the message.

   PTS: 1   REF: p. 5

3. List six barriers to intercultural communication and provide an example of each barrier.

ANS:
Six barriers to intercultural communication are:
- *Stereotypes:* North Americans are sometimes viewed as overly friendly, blunt, and childlike.
- *Interpretation of time:* Many Latin Americans believe that important things take more time than unimportant things.
- *Personal space requirements:* Arab business people stand very close to each other compared to U.S. business people.
- *Body language:* The symbol for "okay" in North America means "zero" in France and a vulgarity in Brazil.
- *Translation limitations:* The Japanese concept of "indebtedness" has no direct English equivalent.
- *Ethnocentrism:* A Korean business person who believes that Koreans are better than people from other cultures.

PTS: 1   REF: p. 14-15

4. Discuss the major strengths of teams.

ANS:
Teams make workers happier by empowering them to shape their own jobs. Teams increase efficiency by eliminating layers of management, opening lines of communication, and increasing interaction between employees and management. Teams enable a company to draw on the skills and imagination of the whole work force. Teams provide a level of expertise that is unavailable on the individual level. Teams help companies deliver higher-quality products or services at faster speeds and lower costs.

PTS: 1   REF: p. 16-17

5. List and explain four ethical dimensions of business behaviour; give two examples of behaviours that fit each dimension.

ANS:
Dimension 1 Behaviour that is illegal and unethical
Dimension 2 Behaviour that is illegal, yet ethical
Dimension 3 Behaviour that is legal, yet unethical
Dimension 4 Behaviour that is both legal and ethical

Student views as to what is ethical will vary. Examples can include situations similar to the following:

Dimension 1   An employee stealing merchandise from the company he works for
                An employee altering accounting records to hide money stolen from a business

Dimension 2   A physician accepting a $100 gift from a pharmaceutical representative
                A manager telling an employee not to buy a new house when the company has not yet made public that a layoff is coming

Dimension 3   A person in a management position having an affair with a subordinate
                An employer reading personal email generated by an employee

Dimension 4   An employer firing an employee who is failing to do his/her job
                A manager who gives a pay raise to her most productive workers

PTS: 1   REF: p. 11-13

CASES

1. **Ethical Dilemma in Publishing**

Laurence heads the advertising department for a chain of local weekly newspapers. His friend, who writes news, shared an upcoming news story to be printed in the next edition. The story discloses that a local quick oil change firm has been cited for illegally dumping used oil and that customers have alleged that they paid for oil changes that were not made. As a major advertising client, the oil change firm is placing a full-page ad that mentions its environmentally safe handling methods and trustworthy service. Answering the six questions in the Pagano Model, help Laurence decide what action, if any, he should take.

ANS:
The Pagano Model includes the following questions for determining legal/ethical response:
1. Is the proposed action legal? Laurence knows there is a conflict in what the reporter has written and what the client claims. Laurence should encourage his reporter friend to check that sources were reliable and make the publisher aware of the conflict.
2. What are the benefits and costs to the people involved? The client's reputations would be harmed if the illegal actions are reported. The public deserves to know the truth. The paper would lose the revenue from the client if the ad is not accepted.
3. Would you want the action to be a universal standard? If other parties accepted gain from enterprises they knew operated unethically, there would be no purpose in behaving ethically. Businesses would be encouraged to do what is wrong.
4. Does the action pass the light-of-day test? Readers would view the contradiction in reporting and published ads as a mixed message about the importance of ethical behaviour.
5. Does the action pass the Golden Rule test? Most people would not want to be misguided about the social responsibility of an unethical firm.
6. Does the action pass the ventilation test? A friend would likely say that the desire to earn money from the sale of the ad should not overrule the need to report fairly.

PTS: 1   REF: p. 13