


Corporate Communication
BAJMC
Fourth Semester
UNIT 3


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Unit III: [Corporate Communication in Practice]
L: 12
1. Developing a Communication Strategy
2. Perspectives on Organizing Communication: Vertical, Horizontal and Lateral
3. Corporate Identity Audit: Concept And Steps
4. Corporate Advertising: Concept and Functions

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Developing a Communication Strategy

Identify and Prioritize Your Executives' Key Goals

Aim to first understand what each of your business executives sees for the future of the company, and what areas they are truly invested in. In order to collect this information, one of the most useful methods is to **conduct individual interviews with as many of your top-level management employees as possible**. In the interviews, ask them to clearly outline their top priorities for the upcoming year, and ensure everyone agrees on what message they want to put out for the company.


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 **Developing a Communication Strategy**

Conduct In-Depth Employee Surveys
 Your employee insight doesn't stop at high-level management. Employees are at the forefront of your business and are the both **the backbone and driving forces for your organization. Understanding how your own employees perceive your company and brand is critical to understanding how others perceive it as well.** This is how brand ambassadors come to be while you construct your Corporate Communication Strategy, you need to ensure their voices are heard. How they respond will help you uncover the best way to go about communicating with your team as a whole.

Research Your Stakeholders' Input
 Stakeholders are one of the most vital parts of your organization, so if you notice that they are communicating something that isn't confident for the success of your business, you need to adjust your communications strategy to address and fix that perception as quickly as possible. **Communicating with stakeholders, shareholders, and investors in a way that is most effective for their own interests is critical for sustaining success and alignment with long-term plans.**


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 **Developing a Communication Strategy**

Review Your Customers' Comments
 The insight your customers have to offer when it comes to their perception of how your organization is delivering on its promises should not be overlooked. Leverage the **countless online, and often free, measurement tools to not only take advantage of social researching methods,** but also to learn how to start conversations that will get consumers and potential clients talking about your brand in a positive light.

Include Your Suppliers in Your Research
 Suppliers and partners that work closely with your brand can also be great resources for gathering useful information about your strategic corporate communication strategy. Ideally, your suppliers and partners should firmly believe that affiliating themselves with your business is beneficial for their business as well. If this is the case, take note of what it is they say they enjoy most about working with your company. **Utilize that feedback not only to add structure to your partner relationships, but also to help strengthen your corporate communication strategy.**

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 **Perspectives on Organizing Communication**

Perspectives on Organizing Communication: Vertical, Horizontal and Lateral Communication Flows in an Organization

1. Vertical- Downward Vertical and Upward Vertical
2. Lateral/Horizontal
3. Diagonal
4. External

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Vertical, Horizontal and Lateral Communication Flows in an Organization

Downward Vertical Flow of Communication: Communication that flows from a higher level in an organization to a lower level is a downward communication. In other words, communication from superiors to subordinates in a chain of command is a downward communication. **This communication flow is used by the managers to transmit work-related information to the employees at lower levels.** Employees require this information for performing their jobs and for meeting the expectations of their managers. Downward communication is used by the managers for the following purposes -

- Providing feedback on employees performance
- Giving job instructions
- Providing a complete understanding of the employees job as well as to communicate them how their job is related to other jobs in the organization.
- Communicating the organizations mission and vision to the employees.
- Highlighting the areas of attention.

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Vertical, Horizontal and Lateral Communication Flows in an Organization

Organizational publications, circulars, letter to employees, group meetings etc. are all examples of downward communication. In order to have effective and error-free downward communication, managers must:

- Specify **communication objective**
- Ensure that the message is **accurate, specific and unambiguous.**
- Utilize the best communication **technique to convey the message** to the receiver in right form

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Vertical, Horizontal and Lateral Communication Flows in an Organization

Upward Vertical Flow of Communication: Communication that flows to a higher level in an organization is called upward communication. It provides feedback on how well the organization is functioning. The subordinates use upward communication to convey their problems and performances to their superiors.

The subordinates also use upward communication to tell how well they have understood the downward communication. It can also be used by the employees to share their views and ideas and to participate in the decision-making process.

- Leads to a more **committed and loyal workforce** in an organization because the employees are given a chance to raise and speak dissatisfaction issues to the higher levels.
- Grievance Redressal System, Complaint and Suggestion Box, **Job Satisfaction surveys** etc all help in improving upward communication.
- Other examples of Upward Communication are performance reports made by low level management for reviewing by **higher level management, employee attitude surveys, letters from employees, employee-manager discussions etc.**

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Vertical, Horizontal and Lateral Communication Flows in an Organization

Benefits Upward Vertical Flow of Communication

- Sensitive Information:** When the information is of a sensitive nature, it's better to first share it with senior management than the entire organization. For instance, **it may be related to new investments, employee oversights or performance reports.**
- Workplace Relationships:** Vertical communication helps maintain relationships and mutual respect in the workplace. You know you have to go through your team leader before communicating with your manager. This way your **team leader will appreciate your initiative strengthening your rapport with them.**
- Error-Free Work:** Sharing your work in a hierarchy makes it error-free because it's edited and proofread multiple times. First, your **team leader will review it before the manager can sign-off.** This helps organizations stay on track and avoid setbacks.

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Vertical, Horizontal and Lateral Communication Flows in an Organization

Drawbacks Upward Vertical Flow of Communication

- Laziness**
 - Employees may start sleeping on work quality with the belief that it'll be reviewed several times before being finalized. **This leads to complacency in the workplace where employees stop making an effort.** They start relying on others to take care of their tasks for them.
- Subject To Misinterpretations**
 - Messages that are shared verbally are open to interpretation. The way the sender moves, speaks and acts can impact the way the message is received. This can lead to **confusion, misinterpretation and a lapse in judgment.**
- Disgruntled Employees**
 - Oftentimes, employees at the associate-level feel left-out or overlooked because of a hierarchical flow of communication. They may want to **share their ideas with senior management but the layers of authority may end up discouraging them.**

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Vertical, Horizontal and Lateral Communication Flows in an Organization

Lateral / Horizontal Communication: Communication that takes place at same levels of hierarchy in an organization is called lateral communication, i.e., communication between peers, between managers at same levels or between any horizontally equivalent organizational member. The advantages of horizontal communication are as follows:

- It is time saving.
- It facilitates co-ordination of the task.
- It facilitates co-operation among team members.
- It provides emotional and social assistance to the organizational members.
- It helps in solving various organizational problems.
- It is a means of information sharing.
- It can also be used for resolving conflicts of a department with other department or conflicts within a department.

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**Vertical, Horizontal and Lateral
Communication Flows in an Organization**

- **Challenges of lateral communication at work:** Apart from the considerable advantages lateral communication produces for the overall organizational success, it's still not devoid of potential challenges, especially when not orchestrated properly within an organization. Let's break down some of the most common disadvantages of lateral communication to help you **build a challenge-proof lateral communication culture in your organization.**
- **Potential competitiveness between co-workers :** In teams with highly competitive employees, constructive lateral communication will most certainly take a hit. When employees are solely focused on achieving their individual goals, they are more likely to **start exhibiting toxic behavior and poor communication practices.**
- **A territoriality mindset:** Similar to the previous challenge, a territoriality mentality can severely damage lateral communication at the workplace. When teams operate in silos, it can be **quite challenging to shift to more open, and collaborative lateral communication.**

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**Vertical, Horizontal and Lateral
Communication Flows in an Organization**

Features	↔ Lateral communication	↓ Downward communication	↑ Upward communication
Direction	Between employees on the same hierarchical level	From superiors to subordinates	From subordinates to superiors
Nature	Collaborative	Directive	Participative
Purpose	To obtain information, exchange ideas, achieve common goals, solve problems, etc.	To give orders, provide instructions, prescribe guidelines, inform, assign responsibilities, etc.	To provide ideas, give feedback, make complaints, offer suggestions, etc.
Frequency	Frequent	Frequent	Usually frequent
Speed	Fast	Fast	Slow
Effectiveness	Immediate	Usually immediate	Usually limited

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**Vertical, Horizontal and Lateral
Communication Flows in an Organization**

Corporate communication refers to the communication activities of an organization, which can be divided into different forms based on their purpose and target audience. The three most common forms of corporate communication are management communication, marketing communication, and organizational communication.

Management Communication:
Management communication involves the exchange of information between managers and employees. It aims to ensure that everyone in the organization is on the same page regarding the **company's goals, objectives, and policies.** Management communication can take **various forms, such as memos, emails, newsletters, meetings, and presentations.**

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Subject	Vertical communication	Horizontal communication
1. Definition	When information is exchanged between superiors and subordinates of an organization then it is known as vertical communication.	In case of horizontal communication information are exchanged of same rank of an organization.
2. Degree of formality	Vertical communication is more formal than horizontal communication.	It can use both formal and informal channels of communication.
3. Media	It may use both written & oral media, but basically uses the written media.	On the other hand this type of communication more dependent on the oral media.
4. Co-ordination	It enhances the co-ordination between superiors and subordinates.	Co-ordination between the employees of different departments increased through horizontal communication.
5. Secrecy	In this case secrecy can be maintained.	In case of horizontal communication maintaining the secrecy is difficult.
6. Time	As it follows the formal chain it takes more time to transmit messages.	As both formal and informal channels are followed, information can be exchanged faster than vertical communication.

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Vertical, Horizontal and Lateral Communication Flows in an Organization

Diagonal Communication: Communication that takes place between a manager and employees of other workgroups is called diagonal communication. It generally does not appear on organizational chart. For instance **To design a training module a training manager interacts with an Operations personnel to enquire about the way they perform their task.**

External Communication: Communication that takes place between a manager and external groups such as **suppliers, vendors, banks, financial institutes etc.** For instance, **To raise capital the Managing director would interact with the Bank Manager.**

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Vertical, Horizontal and Lateral Communication Flows in an Organization

A diagonal communication network has the following characteristics:

- 1/ Cross-functional Exchange:** Diagonal communication enables communication between employees or teams from different departments or functional areas. For instance, **it might involve interaction between marketing and finance, or between production and human resources.**
- 2/ Non-hierarchical flow:** Unlike vertical communication, which follows the formal chain of command (upward or downward), diagonal communication disregards the hierarchical structure to some extent. **It allows employees at different levels to communicate directly without going through formal channels.**
- 3/ Informal nature:** Diagonal communication often takes place informally, which means it may not adhere to strict protocols or formalities. **It can occur through unplanned conversations, emails, instant messaging, or even during social gatherings.**

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Vertical, Horizontal and Lateral Communication Flows in an Organization

4/ **Middle Management Facilitation:** Middle managers often play a vital role in facilitating diagonal communication, as they **have connections with various departments and can bridge the gap between different levels of the organization.**

5/ **Customer-Centric Focus:** Diagonal communication in an organization enables different departments, such as marketing, sales, and customer service, to collaborate more effectively to serve customers' needs. **Adopting this customer-centric approach can result in higher customer satisfaction and stronger loyalty.**

The function of diagonal communication

- Improves Cross-Functional Knowledge Sharing
- Facilitates Conflict Resolution
- Enhances Customer Service
- Facilitates Change Management

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Corporate Identity Audit: Concept And Steps

A company's corporate identity can be summed up as the way in which all stakeholders, both internal and external, perceive the brand. For this reason, public relations departments should be conducting regular corporate audits, revealing how the company is perceived in the eyes of the people who contribute to its success. Below are six key steps that every corporate audit should include:

Step 1: Define your audit parameters

The first stage of conducting an audit of this nature is to define the elements of a company's corporate identity that should be tested and measured. A holistic corporate **identity audit would include assessing everything from the logo, slogan, mission and vision through to marketing elements, community involvement, and customer services.**

Step 2: Identify your defining features

Which elements of your corporate identity do you feel are your key strong points? This information can be obtained from internal questionnaires, and will give a clear picture as to what the company assumes is its best features. At a later stage, **this data can be placed next to information from public interviews for comparison.**

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Corporate Identity Audit: Concept And Steps


Step 3: Select your interview subjects

The most important thoughts regarding a brand's corporate identity come from outside of the company. Public opinion has a big impact on the success or failure of any organisation. The corporate **identity audit should include interviews or surveys given to both existing and potential customers.**

Step 4: Conduct the audit interviews

In this step the public relations team physically sits down with stakeholders, or sends out surveys, in order to glean feedback regarding perceptions around a brand's corporate identity. By asking the right questions, **PR professionals can find out if people like the brand's logo, whether or not their product packaging is appealing, and if they are doing enough community outreach work.**


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 **Corporate Identity Audit: Concept And Steps**

Step 5: Assess your audit findings
Once the interviews have been wrapped up, and the last of the surveys trickle in, the time comes to assess the responses and draw conclusions. **This step reveals what the public really thinks of the brand, and pinpoints elements of the corporate identity that require urgent alteration.**

Step 6: Strategize opportunities
This step is also known as the repair phase, and is the most productive. It should start with a discussion on the audit's findings, leading into a **problem-solving, brain-storming session for potential remedial actions. Sometimes that which starts off as an exercise in reputation repair becomes the change needed to take a company to greater heights.**

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 **Different Types Of Audit**

Different types of audit

- As a brief recap, an audit examines your financial records and transactions to verify they are accurate. Typically, audits look at your financial statements and accounting books to compare information.
- You or your employees may conduct audits. Or, you might have a third party audit your information (e.g., IRS audits).
- Many business owners have routine audits, such as once per year. If you are not organized or don't keep thorough records, your audits might take more time to complete.
- Types of audits can vary from business to business. For example, a construction business might conduct an audit to analyze how much they spent on a specific project (e.g., costs for contractors or supplies).

Overall, audits help ensure your business is operating smoothly. So, what are the various types of audit?


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 **Different Types Of Audit**

1. Internal audit
Internal audits take place within your business. As the business owner, **you initiate the audit while someone else in your business conducts it.** Businesses that have shareholders or board members may use internal audits as a way to update them on their business's finances. And, **internal audits are a good way to check in on financial goals.** Although there are many reasons you may conduct an internal audit, some common reasons include to:

- Propose improvements
- Monitor effectiveness
- Make sure your business is compliant with laws and regulations
- Review and verify financial information
- Evaluate risk management policies and procedures
- Examine operation processes

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 **Different Types Of Audit**

Types of Internal Audit

Operational Audit: Evaluates the **efficiency, effectiveness, and compliance of internal operations, processes, and procedures.**


Compliance Audit: Ensures adherence to internal policies, procedures, and regulatory requirements.

Information Systems Audit: Reviews the **security, integrity, and reliability of an organization's information systems and data.**

Quality Audit: Focuses on assessing the quality management systems, processes, and procedures to ensure compliance with quality standards and continuous improvement.

Financial Audit: Similar to **external financial audits but conducted internally by a company's own audit department or team.**

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 **Different Types Of Audit**

2. External Audit: An external audit is conducted by a third party, such as an accountant, the IRS, or a tax agency. The external auditor has no connection to your business (e.g., not an employee). And, **external auditors must follow generally accepted auditing standards (GAAS).**


Like internal audits, the main objective of an external audit is to determine the accuracy of accounting records.

Investors and lenders typically require external audits to ensure the business's financial information and data is accurate and fair.

Audit reports

When your business is audited, external auditors usually give you an audit report. Audit reports include details of the audit process and what was found. And, **the report includes whether your financial records are accurate, missing information, or inaccurate.**

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 **Different Types of External Audit**

Financial Audit: Conducted by independent auditors to examine financial statements and ensure compliance with accounting standards, laws, and regulations.


Statutory Audit: Required by law for certain organizations to verify their financial records and statements for accuracy and compliance.

Tax Audit: Conducted by tax authorities or external auditors to verify the accuracy of tax returns and compliance with tax laws.

Compliance Audit: Focuses on evaluating an organization's adherence to laws, regulations, and internal policies.

Operational Audit: Examines the efficiency & effectiveness of an organization's operations, processes, and procedures to identify areas for improvement.

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 **Different Types Of Audit**

Importance of audits
 You must conduct audits regularly to understand different aspects of your business. And, audits can help catch issues early on before they snowball into big mistakes. If you don't conduct audits, you may find yourself reviewing inaccurate information, which can impact your business later.

Before you kick the idea of audits to the curb, think about how they can benefit your small business. Audits can help you:

- Find financial problems
- Catch errors
- Boost your business's bottom line
- Stay organized
- Make better business decisions

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 **4. Corporate Advertising: Concept and Functions**

Advertising done for an entire institution/ company/ organization and not for individual brands or products. This **kind of activity is an extension of the Public Relations (PR)** activity done by the company to improve its image in the minds of the general public and increase its goodwill which is an extremely important intangible asset.

It is a promotional strategy that is designed to not only interest consumers in products and services offered by the company, but also to cultivate a positive reputation .

The corporate advertises **to build its own image**. We know many companies across the globe which have numerous brands under them. HUL, P&G, Volkswagen, General motors are some examples.

These companies invest in **improving the overall perception** of the company itself. They want to prove that the company is **ethical and all its brands and products are secondary**. The primary focus for these companies are their **customers, which is what they try to prove through corporate advertising**.

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 **4. Corporate Advertising: Concept and Functions**

Functions Of Corporate Communications

Corporate communications departments play a key role in how investors, employees and the general public perceive a company. They often report directly to a company's chief executive officer and serve as advisers in managing a company's reputation. They **help leaders prepare for media interviews, develop messages to deliver to investors and employees and suggest new initiatives to keep companies on the cutting edge of communication with their stakeholders**.

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 **4. Corporate Advertising: Concept and Functions**

Media Relations and Communications

This may be the function for which corporate communication managers are best known. Media relations work includes writing and distributing news releases and responding to media inquiries. Corporate communicators oversee all planning **for news conferences, including selecting the site for an event, arranging for banners and other graphics to be displayed at the event,** preparing packets of information to distribute to the media and preparing executives to speak at news conferences.

Media relations also involves arranging for spokespersons to appear on local television and radio programs. Corporate **communicators monitor newspapers, television news broadcasts and other outlets** to see what the media is saying about the company and to devise strategies to address misinformation.

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 **4. Corporate Advertising: Concept and Functions**

Customer and Public Relations

Building relationships with customers and responding to inquiries from the public fall under the public relations function of corporate communications. Duties in this area include **producing newsletters, brochures and other printed materials designed for the general public.**

CC, **manage a company's website and social media presence,** which includes monitoring what customers and clients are saying about the company on social networking websites and responding to inaccurate posts or requests for information.

Communication professionals may **respond directly to calls and emails** from customers (stakeholders) with questions about a company's plans or activities.

CC, arrange for requirements from the company to **make presentations to local community groups** and may facilitate group tours of a company's operations.

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 **4. Corporate Advertising: Concept and Functions**

Advising in Crisis Communication

When an event occurs that **threatens public safety or a company's reputation,** corporate communicators function as advisers to CEOs and senior leaders in managing the crisis.

Special training in the issues unique to crisis communication helps corporate communicators **prepare for events such as chemical spills, violence in the workplace, an accidental death on the job, layoff announcements and allegations of company wrongdoing.**

They often work with staff throughout their organizations to develop crisis communication plans before disaster strikes.

A crisis may require communications staff to work with attorneys, government regulators, political officials, emergency response personnel and communications staff from other companies when developing crisis messages.

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 **4. Corporate Advertising: Concept and Functions**

Internal Employee Communications
In addition to conveying a company's messages to external audiences, corporate communicators may also be called on to function as employee communications managers, which includes **designing printed publications and writing emails to announce company news**, benefits information and training opportunities.

Corporate communicators may facilitate focus groups to **learn what issues matter most to front-line employees**.

They advise senior leaders on how to **improve relationships with their staff and gain support** for their initiatives. The corporate communications staff may also manage a company's Intranet and internal blogs.

Not all corporate advertising is about boosting sales. Sometimes corporate advertising is aimed at building awareness or showcasing the goodwill of the company.

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 **4. Corporate Advertising: Concept and Functions**

The main function of corporate advertising is to **generate and enhance a sense of confidence and appeal among vendors and consumers**. Depending on the exact nature of the corporate marketing approach, the advertising may developed with an eye of enhancing the reputation of the company among its peers in a community or within a given sector of the marketplace. In any application, **the idea is to build the most agreeable public image for the corporation as possible**. The remaining functions of Corporate Communication can be listed as following-

- Boosting employee morale
- Showing investors that the organization is a capable one
- Removing uncertainty or doubts related to the company
- Showcasing a new brand logo, slogan, message and so forth
- Bringing multiple companies together and broadcasting a sense of unity
- Making a socio-economic, moral or political statement
- Showcasing recent major achievements in order to boost customer trust

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