Business Communication: Introduction

(S2)

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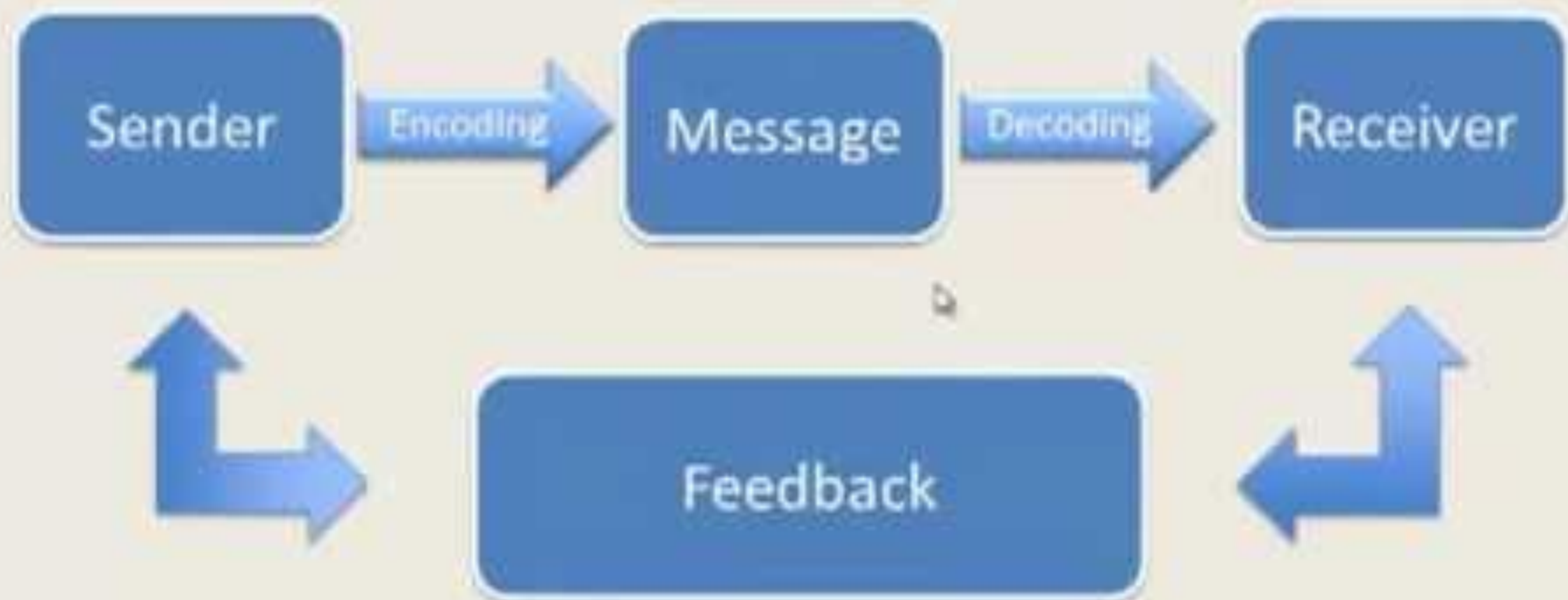
Outline

- What is Communication?
- Components of the communication process.
- Types of communication
- Barriers to effective communication

What is Communication?

Communication is defined as the process of **conveying** or **transmitting a message** from one person to another through a **proper medium**.

How the Communication Process Works

Components of the communication process

The Sender

- **Sender / Encoder** is a person who transmits the message.
- A sender makes use of **symbols** (words or graphic or visual aids) to convey the message and **produce the required response.**

The Message

- **Message** is **a key idea** that the sender wants to communicate.

  - The process of conversion of subject matter into symbols is called **encoding**.

The Receiver/ Recipient

- **Recipient / Decoder** is a person for whom the message is intended/ targeted.
- **Decoding:** Receiver **converts the symbols, words or signs** received from the **sender into meaningful information.**

The Feedback

- Feedback <u>helps the sender in confirming the correct interpretation of a message by the decoder.</u>

- Feedback may be **verbal** (through words) or **non-verbal** (smiles, sighs, etc.). It may take **written** form also in form of letters and emails.

The Context

The context may **be physical**, **social**, **chronological or cultural**.

The Physical Context

- Communication always takes place in **some physical context.**

- This context can influence the <u>content</u> and <u>quality</u> of interaction.

Physical context

- Imagine how discussing a problem with one's boss might be received differently in each of the following settings:
  - In boss' office.
  - Over lunch at a local restaurant.
  - At a company picnic or party.

The Social Context

- The **social context** refers **to the nature of the relationship between the communicators**, as well as **who is present**.

Social context

- Imagine, for instance, the difference in asking a manager for a raise under a variety of different social contexts:
    - You and the manager have been friends for several years.
    - *She or he is a member of your football team.*
    - You and the manager are cousins,
   - Y*ou have had an ongoing* personal conflict with the manager.

The chronological context

- It is **the ways in which time influences interactions.**
- Imagine asking for a raise in these situations:
  - What time of day is it (first appointment in the morning or last in the afternoon)?
  - What are the communicator's personal preferences for time (a morning person or a late- starter)?
  - Is it before, during, or after work hours?
  - Is this a busy time of year (holiday season, tax time)?

The cultural context

- This context includes **the cultural backgrounds of both communicators**.

- Imagine how just a few differences in backgrounds might influence communication between the following people:
  - Men and women.
  - Arabs anf Jewish.
  - Americans and Japanese.

Types of communication
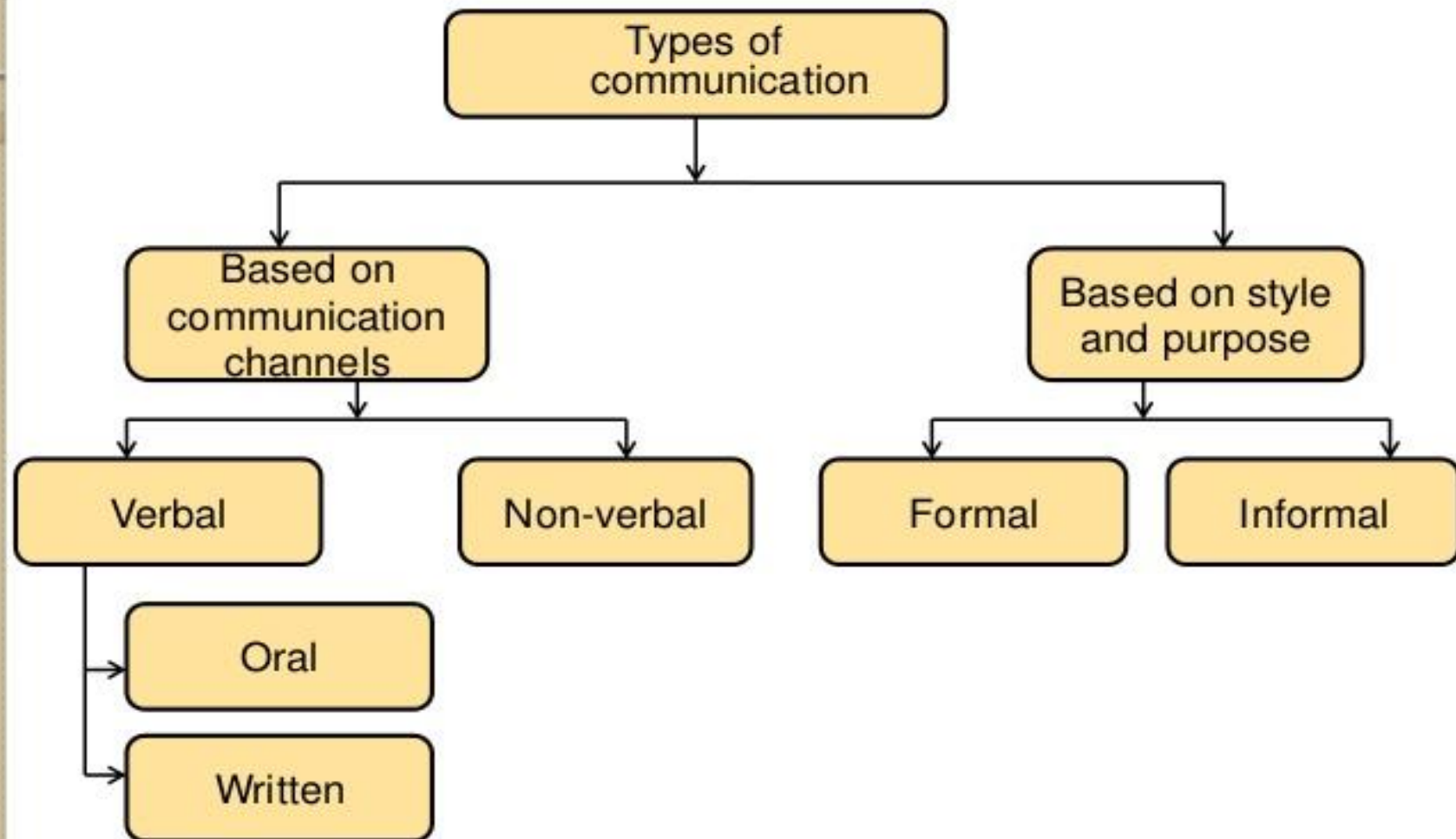
Verbal Communication

Verbal communication is based on language: written or oral.

Oral Communication

Direct conversation (Face –to- face)

Mediated conversation (teleconferencing, or voice mail.)

Written Communication

- It involves more careful choice of words, correct sentences, cohesion and coherence of ideas.

Advantages of written Communication

Permanent

Easier to understand

Prepared in advance

Less prone to errors

Non verbal Communication

- Often also called **body language**.
- Information is exchanged through non-verbal ways.
    - Silence
    - Eye contact
    - Touch
    - Body space and proximity
    - Posture
    - Facial expression
    - Gesture …

Formal Communication

It includes all instances where communication has to take place in a **formal setting** and for a **formal purpose.**

Formal Communication in Business

- **Formal communication networks** are systems designed by management to **<u>dictate who should talk to whom to get a job done.</u>**

- Formal Communication in organizations can be:
  - **Downward communication**
  - **Upward Communication**
  - **Horizontal Communication**

Downward communication

It occurs whenever **superiors initiate messages to their subordinates** (instructions, orders, feedback, explanations, directions,…)

Upward Communication

- It includes **messages from subordinates to superiors to** convey messages like:
    - *Report what they have done*
    - *Communicate problems*
    - *Make suggestions*

Horizontal Communication

- It consists of **messages between members of an organization with equal rank.**
- It serves purposes like:
  - *Coordinating tasks*
  - *Sharing information*
  - *Solving problems*
  - *Building rapport*

Informal Communication

- Also called **Grapevine communication**.
- It includes instances of **free** communication between people who are linked on a personal level.

Functions of Informal Communication

Insists on formal messages

Completes formal messages

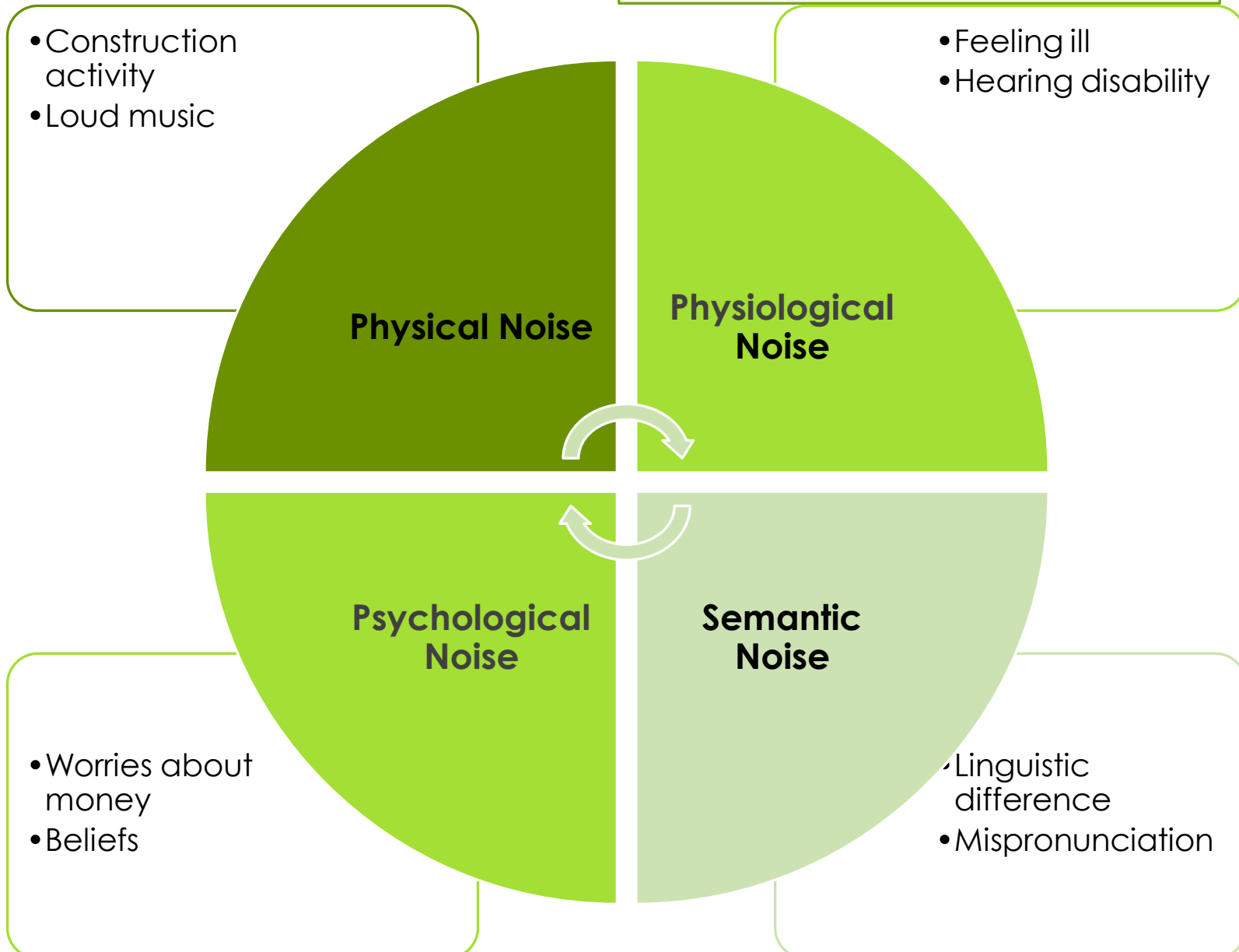*Delivers messages more quickly*

Correct formal messages

Barriers to Effective Communication

The term communication scholars use for factors that interfere with the exchange of messages is **Noise**.

- The most obvious type of noise is **external noise** (also called **physical noise).**

- This includes **sounds that distract communicators**, such as the babble of voices in the next room or the annoying ring of someone's cell phone in a meeting.

Physiological noise: **Hearing disorders** fall into this category, as do **illnesses and disabilities** that make it difficult to send or receive messages.

The **psychological noise** <u>interferes with understanding</u>; it happens **<u>inside the sender or receiver's head</u>**, like self-centeredness, defensiveness, hostility, fear.

- The **semantic noise**, which is related to the linguistic tool.

  - If the speaker and listener do not share the same language/ accent,.. They may have problems communicating effectively.

- Construction activity
- Loud music

- Feeling ill
- Hearing disability

Physical Noise

Physiological Noise

Psychological Noise

Semantic Noise

- Worries about money
- Beliefs

- Linguistic difference
- Mispronunciation

Can you think of other examples of Noise?????