

Chapter 1: Understanding Communication

Multiple Choice

1. Your author discusses numerous propositions about communication. An implication of them for managers is that they need to ____
 - a. explore the context of employees
 - b. increase the use of “black holes”
 - c. be less reliant on time sequencing
 - d. all of the above

Ans: a

2. The “Law of Large Numbers” implies that ____
 - a. any message sent to enough people could be interpreted in almost any conceivable way
 - b. for any message, we should expect some unreasonable interpretations
 - c. communicators have fallen into “black holes”
 - d. all of the above
 - e. a and b

Ans: e

3. What is true regarding primary and secondary messages?
 - a. Most message receivers should pay more attention to primary messages than secondary messages
 - b. Secondary messages are not as powerful as primary messages
 - c. Most message receivers do not react to secondary messages
 - d. None of the above

Ans: d

4. What is true about high-context cultures?
 - a. They communicate in ways that depend on the shared experiences and relationships of the communicators
 - b. Examples of high-context cultures are Germany, Sweden and the U.S.
 - c. The message itself relays much of the contextual information
 - d. All of the above

Ans: a

5. Your author presents a “typical” (but incorrect) model of communication. What does it convey?

- a. Context exists outside of communicators
- b. Communicators share the same context
- c. The typical model does not include context
- d. a and b

Ans: d

6. Your author discusses the “blackout” tactic. Which of the following statements are true about this technique?
- a. It helps to clarify the speaker’s meaning
 - b. It signals the speaker’s sensitivity to other potential interpretations
 - c. It magnifies the “law of large numbers” principle
 - d. All of the above
 - e. a and b

Ans: e

7. What does the following describe? “This acts as a lens through which issues are viewed, highlighting certain images and refracting others. When we share this with others we manage meaning because we assert that our interpretations should be taken as real over other possible interpretations.”
- a. framing
 - b. secondary messages
 - c. context construction
 - d. the law of large numbers

Ans: a

True/False

8. Meanings cannot be constructed without an actual verbal message from a sender.

Ans: false

9. “Context” and “situation” represent similar concepts.

Ans: false

10. In deciphering meaning, the content of communication is usually more important than the context of communication.

Ans: false

11. According to your author, credibility is an “efficiency tool,” as it helps people pay attention to messages from sources they deem competent, dynamic and have their best interests in mind.

Ans: true

12. Time sequencing does not have a significant impact on context construction.

Ans: false

13. Your author argues that there is usually one primary message in each communication event.

Ans: false

14. The most effective communicators minimize ambiguity in messages.

Ans: false

15. Senders of communication are most often the cause of communication breakdowns.

Ans: false

Short Answer

16. Explain the “law of large numbers.” Provide an example that pertains to a communication situation.

17. List 3 ways in which a probabilistic view of communication can help leaders communicate more effectively. Provide examples.

18. How does the context influence the interpretations of a communicator’s content? Provide an example.

19. Provide an example of the “multiple messages” feature of communication.

20. How does the idea of context help explain the power of the “under promise, over deliver” advice?