

**1**

INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION

Your birth was a matter of great joy to your parents. With your first cry you told everyone that you had arrived in this world. When you were hungry you cried and your mother understood that and gave you milk. As a baby your face told your mother that you were not well, or were uncomfortable. Months later when you uttered the first words your parents were thrilled. You also started waving your hands or nodding your head to say 'bye' or 'yes' or 'no'. Then slowly you started speaking. You asked questions because you wanted to know about things around you. Later when you went to school you learned the alphabets. Today you can gesture, speak and write to express yourself or, for the purpose of this study, shall we say, 'communicate' with others.

But what is communication? In this lesson, you will learn what it is, how and why we communicate and different types of communication.

**OBJECTIVES**

After studying this lesson, you will be able to do the following :

- explain the meaning of communication and why human beings communicate;
- state how we communicate, nonverbally or verbally;
- list different types of communication;
- discuss the meaning of intrapersonal communication;
- explain interpersonal communication and its importance;
- differentiate between group communication and public communication.

1.1 UNDERSTANDING HUMAN COMMUNICATION

When we think of exchanging our ideas with others or giving some information to others, we do it in two ways.

**Notes****Fig.1.1: Two people exchanging pleasantries**

We either speak and tell or we just do it without words. When we look back in the history of mankind we find that early man could not speak as we do today.

**Fig.1.2: Early man**

Words and languages, as we use today, developed much later in human history.

However, early human beings expressed their feelings and experiences without using any words.

Their face, expressions and use of head and other organs (body parts) like the hands, could tell others many things. Later language developed and people used words to speak to others or convey feelings. With alphabets, writing gave yet another powerful tool to convey thoughts, ideas and feelings.



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1.2 WHY DO WE COMMUNICATE

We live in a society. Besides ourselves, there are others who may be rich or poor, living in big houses or in huts, literate or illiterate. They may also belong to different religions and communities, often speaking different languages. But still all of them can speak or interact with one another. Such interaction is essential for societies to survive. We ask questions and get answers, seek information and get it.

WE COMMUNICATE TO:

INFORM
MISINFORM
COUNSEL
SELL
BUY
CONFUSE
CONFIRM
ADVISE
TEACH
LEARN
REVEAL
PERSUADE
ACCEPT
AFFIRM
CLARIFY
MOTIVATE
CRITICISE
DENY
CONCEAL

We discuss problems and come to conclusions. We exchange our ideas and interact with others. For doing all these we use communication. Imagine a situation where we are not able to speak and interact with others or think of a family living in the same house without speaking to each other? Such situations can create plenty of problems. When we get angry don't we stop talking to our friends or family members at least for some time? Soon we talk it over or discuss matters and begin normal conversation. If we do not speak to each other we cannot understand each other. So communication can help us to understand each other and solve problems. But what is communication?

1.3 WHAT IS COMMUNICATION?

So far we have seen how we use communication. Now let's try and define communication. But defining communication is not very easy. It means many things to many people. Unlike definitions of a theory or some scientific term 'communication' has no definition accepted by all experts.

We know that when we convey something by words, we may call it a message. If you are used to a mobile phone you would know the term 'SMS'. This SMS is the short form for 'Short Message Service'. Here the messages are short sentences or just a word or a phrase or a sentence like "I am in a meeting". "Please call me at 4:00 p.m" or "congratulations" or "see you at home". These are all messages. They are short and when someone receives them they 'understand' it. For example, take the message "I am in a meeting". Please call



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me at 4:00 p.m”. It does not need any explanation. The moment you read it, you can understand it. Suppose someone has passed an exam. Just send a message “congratulations”. The person who gets it immediately follows it. So shall we use these two words, namely ‘message’ and ‘understand’, and define communication. Let’s try.



Fig.1.3: Mobile phone showing a message received

“Communication is a message understood”. Unless a message is understood we cannot say that communication has taken place. Let’s send a message to someone else’s phone, “where came first”. The person who gets this message would wonder what it means. It does not make any sense. The receiver of the message just does not understand it. So for communication to take place, there are two conditions. First, there should be a clear message. Secondly, that message must be understood by the receiver, for whom it is meant. In society, we all interact with messages.. Without interactions, a society cannot survive. Social interaction is always through messages. So we can also define communication in the following words.

“Communication is social interaction through messages.”

Think of telling someone, “It is very warm today” or “I am bored with the history classes.” In both these cases, we are communicating what ‘we experience’. The weather being warm is what you feel or experience physically. Getting bored with a subject is a different feeling which needs some amount of education or experience in a class room. In both cases we are sharing our feeling or experience with someone else. So we may say that **“communication is sharing of experience.”**

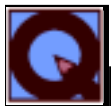


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Fig. 1.4: Two people meeting each other

Can you think of a situation where you cannot communicate with others? In society, we need each other for various things. Unless you communicate with a doctor how will the doctor know what your health problem is. If you want to buy something you have to tell the seller of the goods what you are looking for and you may also ask for the price. Think of a home where parents and children do not communicate with each other. Think of a classroom where the teacher cannot or do not communicate. Communication therefore is essential for our survival.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.1

1. Give any five reasons why we communicate.
2. Define the term communication.
3. State whether the following statements are true or false.
 - i) Communication is a message misunderstood.
 - ii) Social interaction through messages is communication.
 - iii) Sharing of experience cannot be called communication.

1.4 HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE?

Have you heard the story of six people (who could not see) who went to see an elephant? They **touched** different parts of the body of the elephant and decided



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what it was like. The person who touched the big and sturdy side of the elephant claimed that it was like a wall.

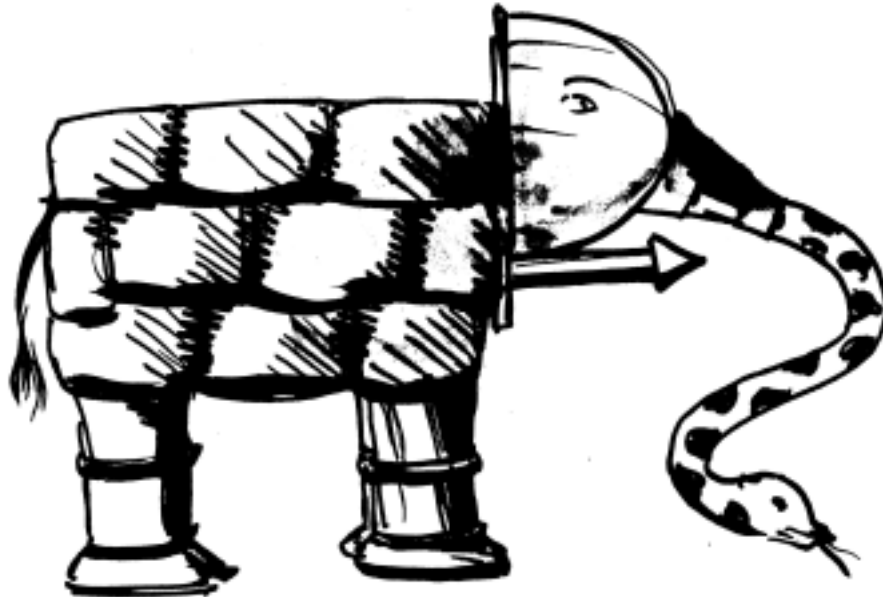


Fig. 1.5: Elephant as seen by the blind people

For the person who touched the sharp tusk of the elephant it was a spear and for the person who touched its trunk it was like a snake. Like this, all others touched other parts of the elephant's body and decided what an elephant looked like. Ear as fan, tail as rope and legs like trees! The visually challenged have to depend on their sense of touch to find out things. Of course, touch is one of the five senses with which all of us communicate.

FIVE SENSES OF COMMUNICATION

Those six men who went to see the elephant touched and found out as they could not see. But most of us who have eyes can see and find out how an elephant really looks like. Touch and sight are channels of communication, so are taste, hearing and smell.

We really use these senses or channels to communicate. Remember how your mother used a spoon and picked a bit of curry and tasted it to check whether



Fig. 1.6: Tasting food



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Fig. 1.7: Listening to music

it had enough salt or other required spices. If she was satisfied with the result, the expression on her face would have told you whether the curry was just right or not. Listen to some sweet sound on the flute. You feel nice and happy. Your face would show joy and peace when you listen to the music. On the other hand if you listen to a loud crashing sound you cover your ears with your hands and your face would indicate the discomfort. Pass through an open public urinal. You will close your nose with your fingers and your face would show what you feel. So we use our five senses- taste, touch, hearing, sight and smell to communicate.

NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION

So far in all the above examples, we probably never used any word or speech. The five senses are natural to us. Speech, on the other hand, is learned. Similarly we use our eyes and hands to convey our feelings, approval or disapproval. Look at the following figure.



Fig 1.8

This indicates a facial expression which we call a 'smiley', conveying happiness.



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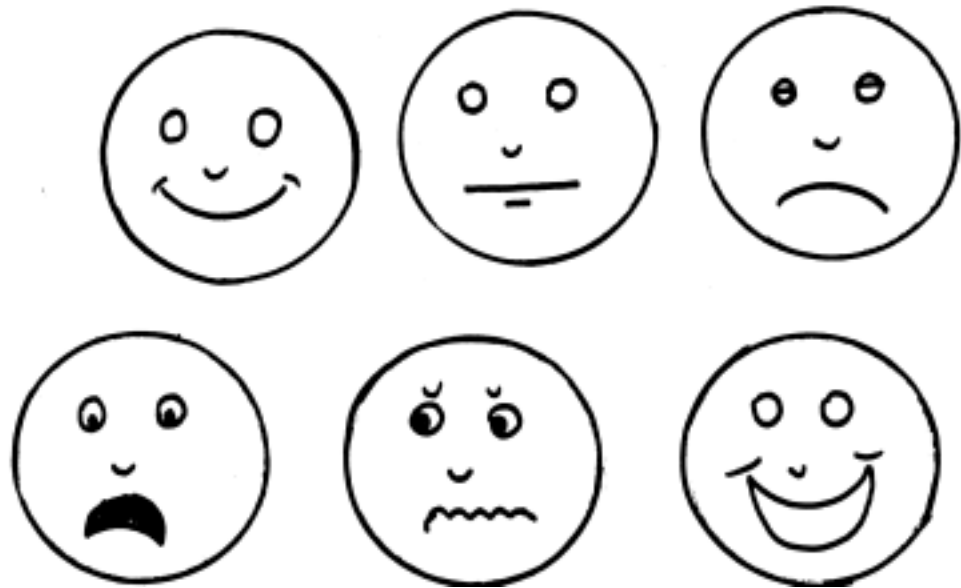


Fig. 1.9: Different human emotions

What can you make out from the above? They are different facial expressions conveying happiness, anger, grief, fear etc.

Look at a policeman at the traffic point. He doesn't speak a word but uses his hands to signal 'stop' or 'go'.



Fig. 1.10: Traffic cop giving signals

Someone asks you, "Are you going to the market" ? You nod your head and say 'yes' or 'no'. The way you nod would make the other person understand.

what you mean. In all the above cases, we express our feelings or experiences without using any words. Here we are communicating messages through the following means: -

- (a) **By expressions on our face.** These include a smile, a nod, looking at the eyes of the other person, for listening or showing interest or narrowing of eyes or raising our eyebrows.



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Fig. 1.11: (a) Showing interest



Fig. 1.11: (b) Raising eyebrows



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(b) **By body movements.** Think of signaling 'bye' when we leave or pointing fingers or what a cricket umpire does when he raises his finger to tell that a batsman is out. In games like cricket there are plenty of such nonverbal signals or think of Gandhiji's three monkeys - speak no evil, see no evil, hear no evil. Shaking hands is common all over the world. But the handshakes may convey different meanings.



Fig. 1.12: (a) Speak no evil



Fig. 1.12: (b) See no evil



Fig. 1.12: (c) Hear no evil



Fig. 1.13: Batsman out !

For example, you extend your hand to shake hands with someone and that person does not respond to you or just touches your palm or tightens the grip. This means that the person wants to keep away from you.

Just touching your palm would mean that the person does not consider you as an equal. A warm right hand shake would mean expression of closeness or friendship.



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Fig. 1.14: Sign of welcome or respect

In India and countries like Nepal or Sri Lanka a 'NAMASTE' or folding both the hands together is a sign of welcome or respect. Almost all around the world folding of hands while praying is practised.

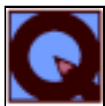
All the above examples show how we communicate without using any words or by using gestures or what may be called body language. Such communication is called '**non verbal communication**' because no words are used to communicate.

According to experts, almost 80% of all communication is nonverbal. Nonverbal communication is also practised by people who are physically challenged as far as their faculty of sight or speech is concerned. . We have already seen the example of the six men who could not see 'seeing' an elephant. Haven't you seen people who cannot speak using the sign language or gestures to communicate? Their ability to communicate nonverbally is worth mentioning.

On the other hand, people who can speak also use nonverbal communication when they speak to others. Think of someone who speaks to a large number of people, like a political leader, (like Sonia Gandhi or L. K. Advani) spiritual or religious leader (like Shri Shri Ravi Shankar or Swami Ram Dev) or social



activists (like Medha Patkar or Aruna Roy). All of them use a lot of nonverbal communication. Look at speakers pointing fingers or raising hands or counting on fingers or moving their arms. Nonverbal communication is not universal or done in the same way by everyone in the world.. Nodding of head may have different meanings for people from different parts of the world. We Indians fold hands to welcome somebody, or to pray. People in Europe fold hands only to pray and saying “NAMASTE” as we do by folding hands is not known to them. They also do not welcome people the way we Indians do in India.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.2

1. Name the five senses used by human beings for communication?
2. What do you understand by nonverbal communication?

1.5 ORAL COMMUNICATION

After man developed speech we started communicating orally. It is like a child who learns to utter words first, and then speak. Oral communication is a skill that is developed or evolved. It uses language. This would mean words and sentences. Words do not stand independently to communicate. If you say ‘sky’ or ‘blue’ or ‘high’ they may not mean much. These words are just symbols. The moment you say the word ‘sky’ the listener would be able to imagine this. ‘Blue’ would mean colour and ‘high’ would mean much above our head. In oral communication we group words into what we call sentences which can convey meanings. Observe the following:

- “The sky is high”
- “The sky is blue”
- “The sky is both high and blue”

In the above groups of words or sentences we have arranged words in such a way that they make some sense. When we say a full sentence where the right word is placed at the right place, using grammar or the rules that govern language, it would result in understanding. Otherwise it will just be using some words without any meaning.

When we talk about India’s ancient wisdom or ‘vedas’, ‘puranas’ and ‘shastras’, they were initially spoken, given orally and passed on from one generation to another. In India, we have this very strong oral tradition. The advantages of oral communication are: -

- i. It is spontaneous and natural.
- ii. It is, therefore, easy for others to understand.



- iii. Choice of words generally suits the listeners .
- iv. It is supported by nonverbal communication.
- v. The communicator or the person who communicates, is always physically available.
- vi. It can develop close relations between the speaker and the listener.

Disadvantages of oral communication: -

- i. Words spoken disappear into thin air. The words are temporary.
- ii. Words are not permanent unlike say written communication.
- iii. What is heard is often forgotten.
- iv. Nonverbal communication that supports oral communication may not be understood by people from other cultures.

Modern modes of communication like telephone invented by Graham Bell in 1876 and radio invented by Marconi in 1901 use oral messages. These inventions have helped in communicating instantly over long distances. You will learn more about radio in a later module.

1.6 WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Language and writing developed much later in man's early history. The earliest script is supposed to be found in China. Until paper was invented by the Chinese and later in Egypt, there was no written communication except on leather scrolls and palm leaves.

Today when we talk about written communication it is limited to people who can write and read. For this one should know the alphabet, script and grammar of the language. For someone to write, say the language English, one should know various parts of speech besides a good knowledge of words or vocabulary. Writing, invention of paper and later invention of printing by Johan Gutenberg in the 15th century, made knowledge available to many more people. Books were the first to appear. Newspapers, magazines and journals slowly became popular. Such written matter helped people in communicating ideas to a larger number of people. Newspapers helped people to be informed about what is happening around the country and the world. Newspapers also inform about the activities of the government.

Writing unlike speech, involves thoughts, correction, editing or rewriting and occurs in isolation. That means for a writer it is an individual activity involving lot of preparation and hard work, unlike speech, which is a shared activity.

Advantages of written communication: -

- i. Written communication gives words and thoughts permanence.
- ii. Knowledge and information became available to people who could read.



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iii. It led to the spread of ideas.

The biggest disadvantage of written communication, however, is that one has to be literate to use written communication.

Forms of written communication

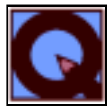
Written communication has many forms. It varies from an intimate personal letter to books and newspapers. All the forms have their own special features. Here is a list of some written forms of communication: -

- | |
|--------------------------|
| LETTERS |
| CIRCULARS |
| ORDERS |
| REPORTS |
| FORMS AND QUESTIONNAIRES |
| MANUALS |
| NEWSLETTERS |
| NEWSPAPERS |
| MAGAZINES |
| HANDBILLS |
| POSTERS |
| BOOKS |
| BULLETIN BOARDS |

Fig. 1.15

For modern man writing is an inseparable tool. Almost everything is written and preserved. Writing has given man history as all human activities and developments are written down by people who write history or historians. The worldwide web and internet have given a new meaning and style to writing.

However, unlike speech, written communication tends to be formal and difficult to follow. The person interested in written communication has to be literate to receive messages. Often writings are not very user friendly unless the writer is a good communicator. You may enjoy a story, a novel or a play but may feel bored when you read essays or books on intellectual issues.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.3

1. State whether the following statements are true or false.
 - a. Writing has given man history.
 - b. Paper and printing were in existence before written communication was developed.

- c. Writing is a shared activity.
- d. The worldwide web and computers have given a new style and meaning to written communication.
- e. Radio is a medium of written communication.



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1.7 TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is described depending upon the situation in which communication takes place. We communicate with ourselves, with others face to face, using a public address system with a large number of people or use radio or television. In this section, you will learn about the different types of communication.

INTRAPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Think of a person driving a scooter on a lonely road. He has put on a helmet on his head to protect himself but it is not properly buckled and tightened. He is riding at high speed and is reaching a narrow junction. A bull comes charging and in order to save himself he applies the brake and he falls down. The helmet flies off as it was not buckled properly. His spectacles also fall. The bull runs off for dear life. What does the scooterist do? Is he saying anything or is he communicating? Think for a while and read further.

Well, he is. First he thanks God for saving him from major injuries. 'Thank God' he sighs. "Who has left this blessed bull to run around freely?" He probably may question himself saying, "I should have put on the helmet properly". He may say many things aloud or tell himself. He in fact is questioning himself or is communicating with himself.



Fig. 1.16: Intrapersonal communication



Let's take another example. Have you ever seen on television some of our great batsmen at the crease? Take for example, Sunil Gavaskar or Sachin Tendulkar batting shown on television? If one of them has faced a ball from a bowler rather carelessly you should see them muttering something or talking to themselves. Strictly speaking, this is no communication at all as no one except the person himself is involved. This type of communication is called intrapersonal communication or communication with oneself.

Intrapersonal communication is communicating with oneself. We all do it. Think of a situation when you spoke to yourself. You went and met somebody and said something silly. Don't you tell yourself "I should not have said that..." or "I shouldn't have behaved that way..." or "I made such a fool of myself...". All these are very common. We all do it as long as we live. In fact this is looking inward or looking at ourselves. This can also be accepting our faults and mistakes, and correcting them. Intrapersonal communication or communicating with oneself is essential for our growth as responsible members of the society. Intrapersonal communication is the first type of communication.

INTER PERSONAL COMMUNICATION

When you come face to face with someone and communicate with that person it is called interpersonal communication. This happens in our daily life. In the morning you get up and meet your parents, brothers or sisters. You wish them or speak to them. When you go outside you meet your friends and talk to them. You go to a doctor and discuss your problems. If you want to book a railway ticket, you go to the booking counter and speak to the person sitting there. All these are examples of interpersonal communication.



Fig. 1.17: Interpersonal communication



Interpersonal communication is communication between persons or one to one communication. Most of us indulge in interpersonal communication every day. Interpersonal communication being face to face generally takes place in an informal, friendly atmosphere. However, there are occasions when it is formal. For example, a police officer questioning a suspect or a lawyer examining a witness in a court.

Let us list some formal and informal situations in which interpersonal communication takes place.

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

FORMAL

- Taking part in meetings or conferences
- Sales counters
- Job interviews

INFORMAL

- Private discussions with friends or family members
- Corridor discussions
- Conversation in canteens or restaurants

Face to face communication would also mean a lot of nonverbal communication and immediate reply to questions. Interpersonal communication is essential in business, organizations and services. There is no substitute for people talking and reacting.

GROUP COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

Let us think of a group of people meeting for a particular reason. It may be a group of residents of a street or *mohalla* or students meeting a teacher or a student leader. In the first case the group will be addressed by a leader or a chairman and then others, who are known to each other, may also participate in a discussion. Such situations in which a group of people, generally known to each other meet and talk to each other are common. This may be called **group communication**.



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Fig. 1.18: (a) Group communication

Have you ever attended an election meeting of a political party? Or heard a religious or spiritual leader giving a discourse? Such meetings and discourses are part of our public life today. Generally there is a stage or a platform or the roof of a vehicle for such a speaker to stand and speak. A microphone and a loud speaker are essential for communication here. Many people, may be hundreds or even thousands can be seen waiting for the speaker to begin. When the leader speaks a large number of people will be listening. One person here is speaking to a large number of people. Such communication is called **public communication**. The speaker can see or identify only those who sit in the front rows. So messages are given not to just one or two persons but to many. Unlike interpersonal communication, here, the speaker cannot see the audience. So it generally lacks the personal touch. Of course there are public speakers who can build immediate rapport or personal touch with the listeners. But unlike in group communication, here, people may not know each other.



Fig. 1.18: (b) Public communication



Public communication may be defined as a situation where many people receive messages from one person. The skills of the person are very important here in this situation. We can think of a number of political and spiritual leaders as excellent communicators. Again, unlike group communication, to reach out to a large number of people, microphones and loud speakers may be used.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.4

1. Fill in the blanks with the appropriate word/s:
 - a. A situation in which a batsman is talking to himself while at the crease is called _____ communication.
 - b. A conversation between two persons is called _____ communication.
 - c. Conversation in a canteen is _____ interpersonal communication
 - d. In _____ communication generally people are known to each other.
 - e. In public communication, generally _____ people receive messages from _____ person.



1.8 WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- > Understanding human communication
 - development of human communication
 - reasons for communication
- > Definition of communication
- > How do we communicate
 - five senses of communication
 - non verbal communication
 - oral communication
 - written communication
- > Types of communication
 - intrapersonal communication
 - interpersonal communication
 - public communication
 - group communication

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**1.9 TERMINAL EXERCISE**

1. Explain the meaning of communication with examples.
2. Discuss the relevance of the five senses of communication in our day to day life.
3. Describe the advantages and disadvantages of oral and written communication.
4. Differentiate between different types of communication with examples.

**1.10 ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS**

- 1.1**
1. Refer to section 1.2
 2. Refer to section 1.3
 3. i) False ii) True iii) False
- 1.2**
1. i) touch ii) sight iii) taste iv) hearing v) smell
 2. Refer to section 1.4
- 1.3**
1. a) True b) False c) False d) True e) False
- 1.4**
- a) intrapersonal
 - b) interpersonal
 - c) informal
 - d) group
 - e) many, one