

## Communication: A Textbook Definition

Communication is defined in the textbooks as the sending and receiving of information among people. At least six messages are involved in the communication process. They can be identified in the following ways.

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- What you mean to say
- What you really say
- What the other person hears
- What the other person thinks is heard
- What the other person says about what you said
- What you think the other person said about what you said

Communicating is like a contract between two or more individuals. The contract starts with talk, then must proceed through an orderly process to an agreement. There is the initial presentation of a message by one person. Second, there is the listening of that presentation by a second person.

For the words to result in true communication there has to be a clarification and an understanding of the message. And finally, there must be some consensus or agreement on what that understanding is.

All of this can make effective communication scary to some people because it requires trust and possibly some risk. But without communication, nothing truly effective can happen.