

## FACT SHEET 7 – EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Leaders require good communication skills and need to understand the communication process to effectively convey messages in all its forms; symbolic, verbal and non-verbal.

Communication has two aspects;

1. **Receptive Communication** – taking in or gathering information about the other person and the situation at hand, and
2. **Expressive Communication** – giving, sharing and responding to what has been heard.

Receptive communication comes before expressive communication and requires you to listen and gather information before forming a response.

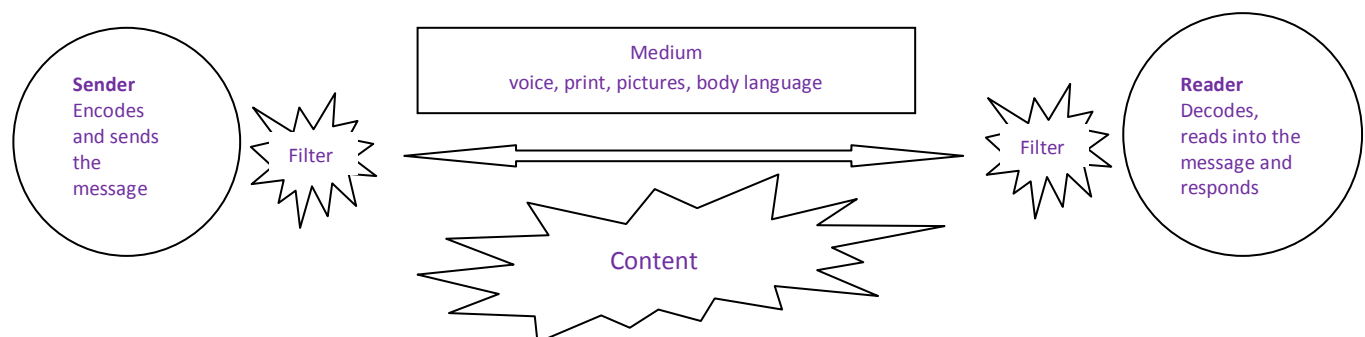
*“Seek first to understand, then be understood.”* (Steven Covey)

Good communications requires you to:

- Learn to listen to both verbal and non-verbal communications.
- Understand the power and influence of body language. Body language (55%) and voice (38%) accounts for 93% of any message with actual words only comprising 7% of the message.
- Gather good information through learning to paraphrase and translate what you have heard in your own words and check with the speaker, and to summarise content and factual details.
- Ask open ended questions to avoid yes/no answers and to continue the dialogue.

The communication process is something that happens between and with people and not something that happens to a person and typically includes;

- **sender** or source of the message
- **message** made up of words, intentions, values, attitudes, knowledge, ideas, beliefs, moods, actions and emotions
- **reader**, the individual or group who will interpret the message possibly quite differently than the sender of the message intends
- **medium** is the way the message is relayed by the sender either face to face, written, verbal, through body language, using symbols or pictures, email, SMS and telephone
- **context** of the environment and circumstances for the communication. The context affects the language used, the degree of formality, how much and what information is shared
- **filters** are the obstacles within the sender and reader that limit the effectiveness and clarity of the message including bias, assumptions, stereotyping, generalising, poor listening and inflexibility



To achieve the goal of effective communication a leader needs to have the ability to use a variety of communication skills and strategies to ensure the message is effectively conveyed and understood.