

3 Theories & Perspectives

Lesson 03: Communication on an Organizational Level

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Where are we?

Episode 1.1: Social & Cultural Sciences & Paradigms

Episode 1.2: Communication on an individual level

Episode 1.3: Communication on an organizational level

Episode 1.4: Communication on a social level, communication as culture



Learning outcomes

Learning outcome 1:

Describe the diverse nature of contemporary practices of sustainability communication on an individual, organizational and societal level, the relationship of strategic communication practices to other public communication practices, the role of stakeholders and publics and the communication practitioners in and outside of organizations (corporate, NGO, political and educational institutions etc.)

Learning outcome 2:

Develop comprehensive and well-founded knowledge in sustainability communication as field of study, an understanding of how other disciplines relate to the field and an international perspective on the field.

Learning outcome 3:

Understand the key elements of communication theories, strategies and tactics, and, thus, the character and operationalization of best practice sustainability communication planning frameworks.

Learning outcome 4:

Advance your understanding of social and civic responsibility and develop an appreciation of the philosophical and social context of sustainability communication. Advance your knowledge and respect of ethics and ethical standards in relation to communication of, about and for sustainability.

Learning outcome 5:

Anticipate and Interpret current issues and challenges of a world in transformation and social change. Develop a deep understanding of and skills to create change, develop advocacy, leadership and authorship in and for sustainability communication.



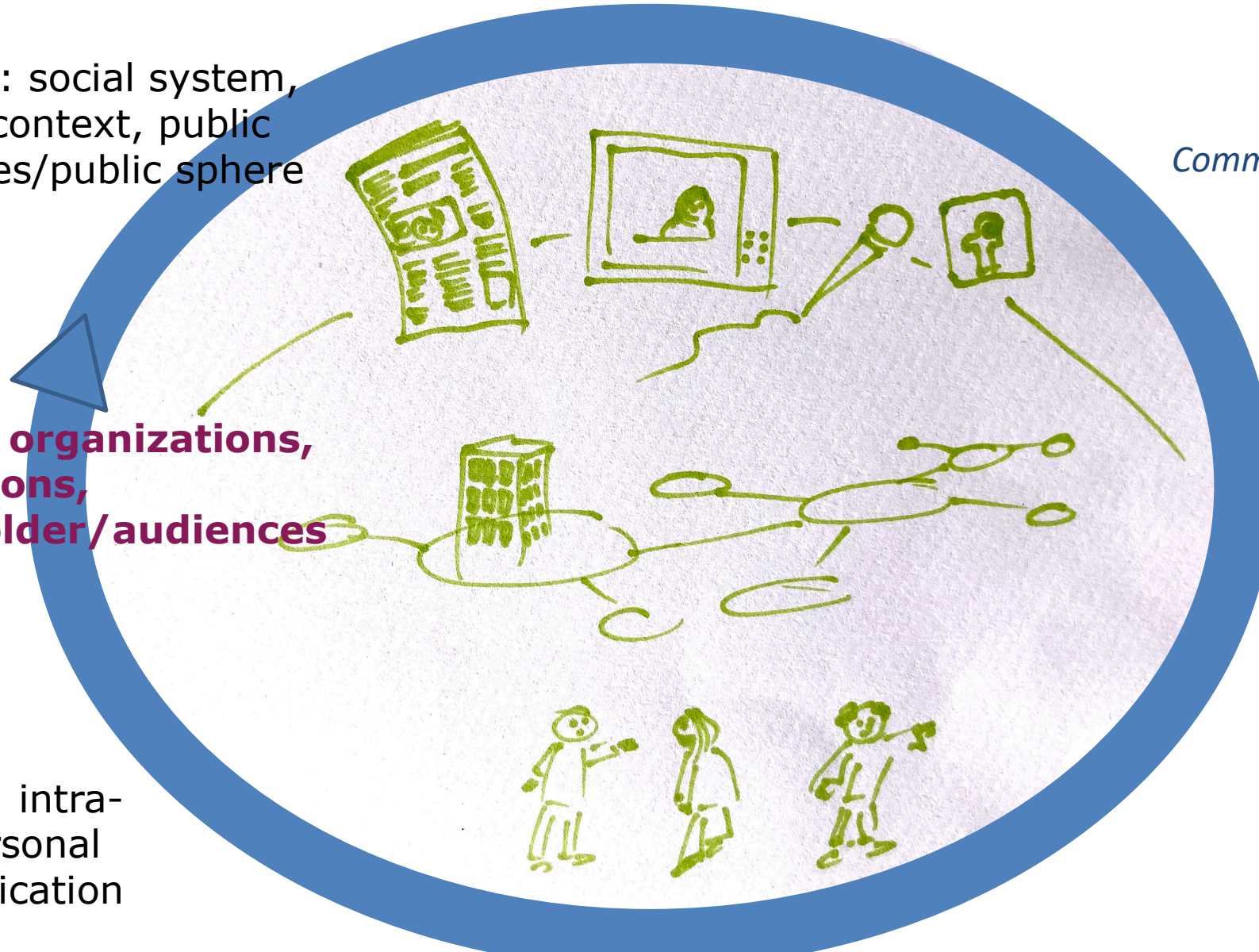
Recap

_MACRO: social system,
cultural context, public
discourses/public sphere

Communication

**_MESO: organizations,
institutions,
stakeholder/audiences**

_MICRO: intra-
/interpersonal
communication



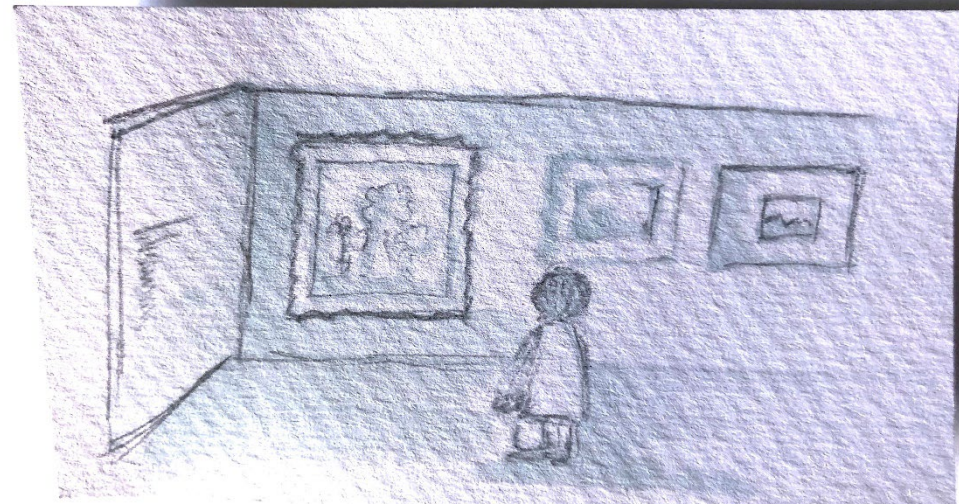
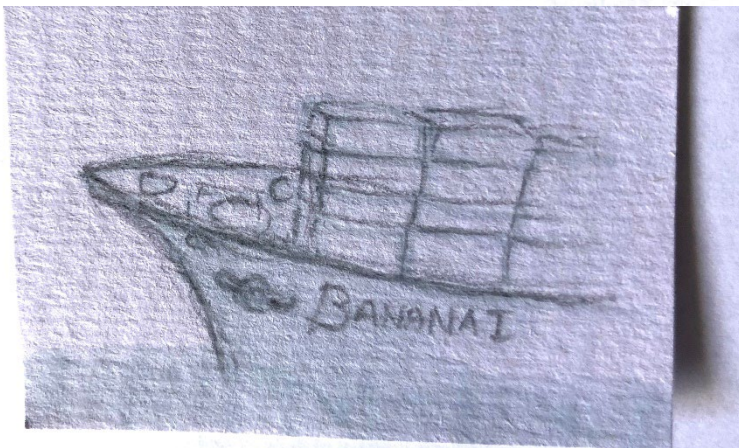
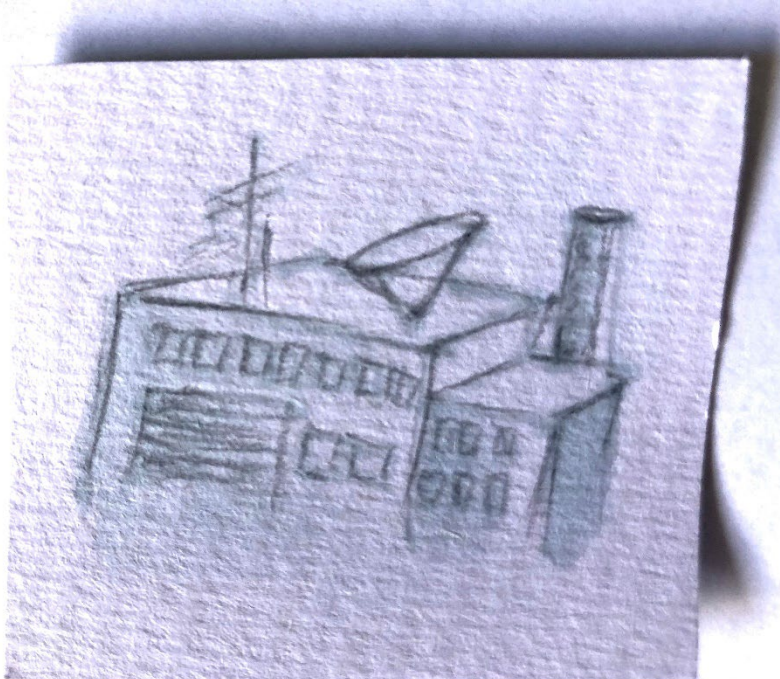


Overview

- A. Organizations
- B. Communication & Organization
- C. Strategic Communication

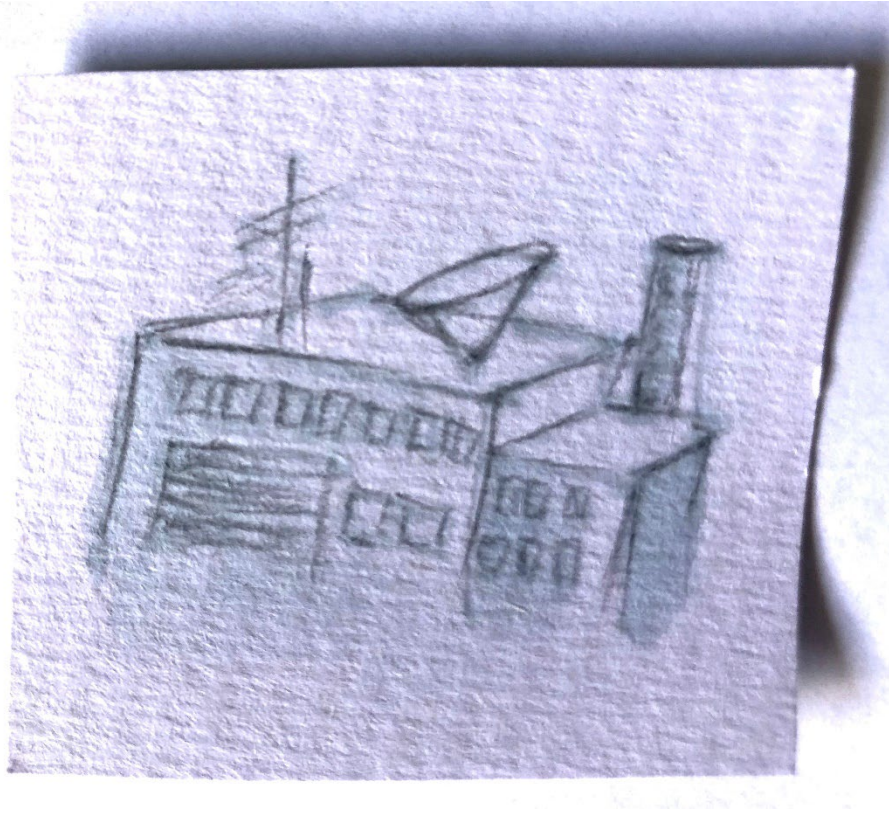


A. Organizations





A. Organizations



_formal



_informal



A. Organizations

An organization

- consists of a group of people
- ... who work together to achieve a common purpose;
- an organization is bigger than the individuals and groups that comprise it, but smaller than the society that gives it its context and environment



B. Organizations & Communication

Media
Release



Sources:

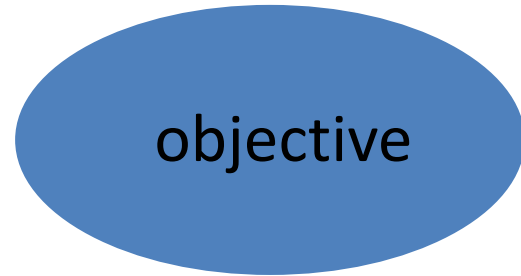
Photo "Newspaper" by AbsolutVision on Unsplash

Photo "Meeting" by 2H Media on Unsplash

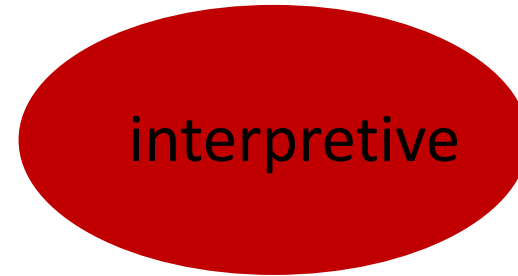




B. Organizations & Communication



pragmatic



constitutive



B. Organizations & Communication



communication is not only an outcome of „organization“ (a structure)...



...but as well a basic process of „organization“ (organizing; organization as a process), communication as social practice



C. Strategic Communication



Strategic communication (structural perspective)

the purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfill its mission (Hallahaan, 2007, p. 3; Holtzhausen & Zerfass, 2015)

understanding “how a certain set of audience attitudes, behaviours, or perceptions will support those objectives” is what makes communication strategic (Paul, 2011, p. 5).



Communication management (process related, constitutive perspective)

constitutive flows of communication (McPhee & Zaug, 1995, Putnam & Nicotera, 2007; Schoeneborn et al., 2016)

Questions: narratives, discourses, interaction, interrelatedness, power, negotiation processes



Outlook

Organizations are „embedded“ and therefore related to the society
Developments, change and transformation processes – as well as issues
and crises affect organizations





Reflection

Think about any organization you're „embedded“ in, this can be your University, your „tribe“ / family, your sports club, the church or any kind of business you're working for.

1. How would you describe the communication flows within the organization, hierarchical? Network like? What are the barriers in those communication flows?
2. How does our organization communicate with the environment, the „stakeholder“, like competitors, potential new members / employees, guests etc.?
3. What about the difference between formal communication (information flows), and informal communication /rumors, coffee kitchen chats etc.)? How much does informal communication actually „define“ the organization – or the organization's reputation, image and what you think it stands for?