**Stages of Communication**

Communication is a key component to living a successful life. Possessing effective communication skills can improve your career, your relationships, and increase your people skills. There are seven stages to basic communication. By knowing and understanding these stages you will be able to better communicate in your personal and professional life.

**Sender -** Know the message you want to communicate and make sure that message contain useful and correct information.

**Encoding –**Encoding is the process where the information you would like to communicate gets transferred into a form to be sent and decoded by the receiver. The ability to deliver the message clearly as well as be able to discard any confusing or potentially offensive themes such as cultural issues, or missing information is imperative in this stage.

**Channel –**Channels are the way you convey your message.These channels include verbal such as telephone, and face-to-face conversations as well as non-verbal such as e-mail and text messaging. Each individual channel has its strengths and weaknesses in terms of communicating. For example, it is better to give instructions non-verbally rather than expecting the person you are communicating with will remember everything you tell them. You would also never critique or criticize anyone through a non-verbal channel at the risk of having a misunderstanding.

**Decoding –**Decoding is on the receiving end of communication. This stage is just as important as encoding. Communication can go downhill at this stage if the receiver is not practicing active listening skills or if they do not possess enough information to accurately decode the message.

**Receiver –**Know your audience. Each individual person on the receiving end of your message already has their own ideas and thoughts that will absolutely influence the way they translate your message. By getting to know your audience better you will be able to have a better understanding of how they will react to what you are trying to communicate.

**Feedback –**As you are communicating your message your audience will provide you with non-verbal and verbal reactions. You will be able to asses while communicating your message if it is being conveyed accurately by paying close attention to non-verbal cues first such as returning eye contact, head nodding etc.

**Context -**Context is the environment in which your message is being delivered. For example, If you’re making a work presentation chances are you will be speaking more professionally, than if you were conversing casually with a neighbor or friend.