



Introduction & Foundational Theories of Communication

Presented by:

The California-Nevada
Public Health Training Center

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California-Nevada Public Health Training Center

- **Collaboration of:**
 - California State University Fullerton, Dept. of Health Science
 - Loma Linda U., School of Public Health
 - San Diego State U., Grad. School of Public Health (lead)
 - U. of Nevada Las Vegas, School of Community Health Sciences
- **Goal:**
 - Strengthen performance in the core functions and delivery of essential services among public health workers in CA and NV
- **Website:**
 - <http://www.ca-nvpublichealthtraining.org/>

CALIFORNIA-NEVADA Public Health Training Center

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**Provider pending approval by the California Board of Registered Nursing, Provider No. CEP 5694 for [2 hours] Contact Hours
CHES/MCHES Contact Hours: [2 hours]**

1/22/13

Trainers:

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CSU Fullerton Department of Communications

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Learning Objectives

After this tutorial you will be able to...

1. Understand how communication fits into the role of public health.
2. Identify key principles of communication theory.
3. Describe factors that affect good communication.

Topics Covered

- The importance of communication
- Theory versus practice: Why should we care about theory?
- Building a vocabulary: Systems theory in a nutshell
- Organizations as systems
- Transmitters and signals and noise, oh my!
- Know your audience
- Keep it simple, keep it concise, keep it clear
- Review and wrap-up

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

Communication

- A process by which information is exchanged
- Common system of symbols, signs, behavior

Health Communication Contexts

- Interpersonal
- Organizational
- Team-based
- Mediated
- Technological

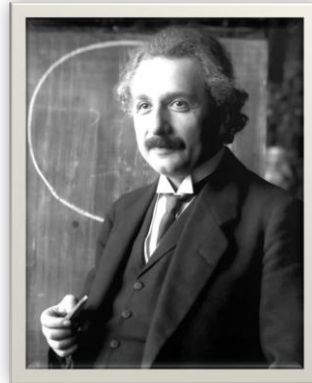
Health Communication Topics

- Patient health education
- Public health education
- Breaking bad news
- Risk & crisis communication
- Social support
- Caregiving
- Legal issues
- Health literacy

THEORY VERSUS PRACTICE: WHY SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT THEORY?

Theory

- Based on a set of facts
- Helps explain & predict
- Many models & theories in communication



BUILDING A VOCABULARY: SYSTEMS THEORY IN A NUTSHELL

Systems Theory

- Broad approach to communication
- Borrowed from natural sciences

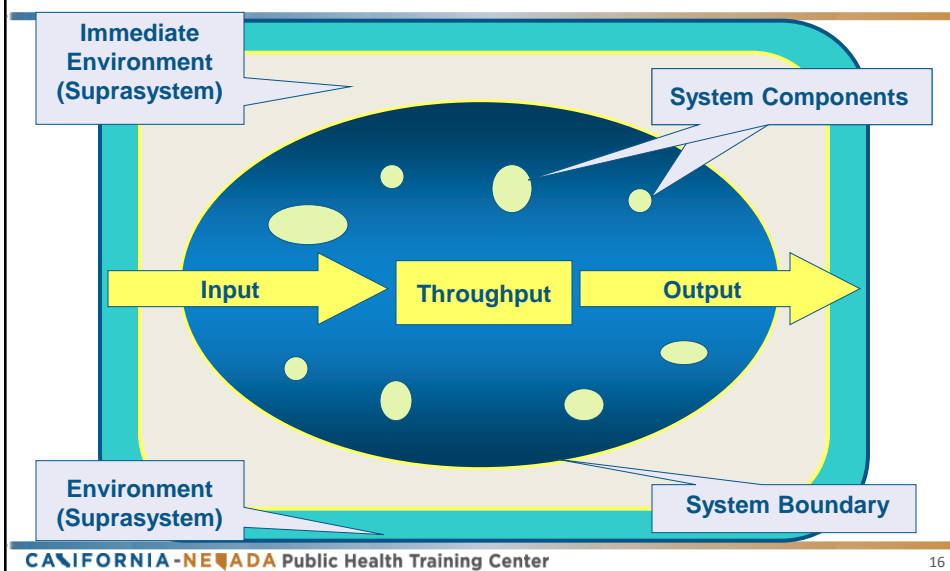
Systems Defined

- Entities formed by
 - sets of things
 - that relate to one another
 - to form a unique whole

Systems Characterized by:

- Objects
- Attributes
- Internal relationships
- Boundaries
- Environment

A General System



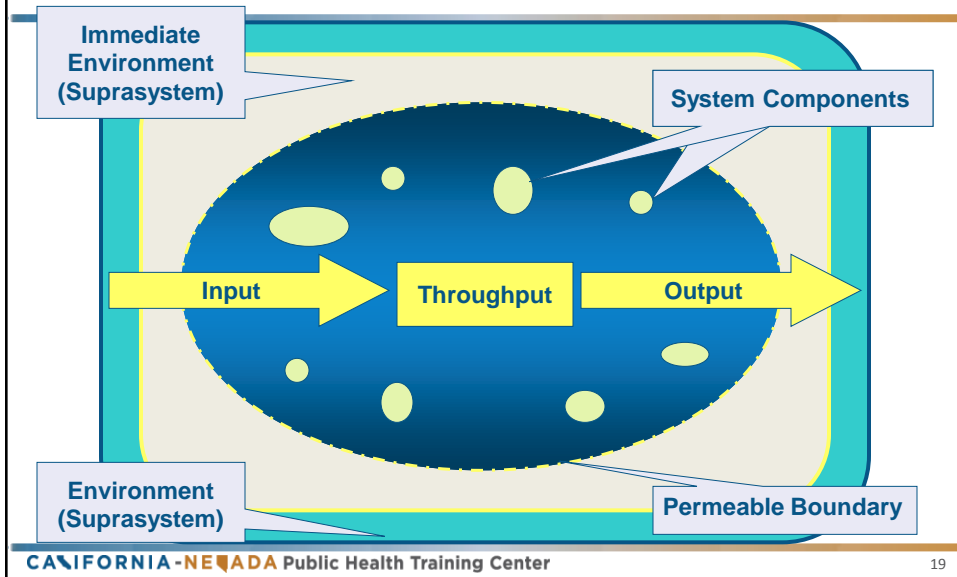
Nature of Systems

- Hierarchical
- Categories
 - Closed
 - Open

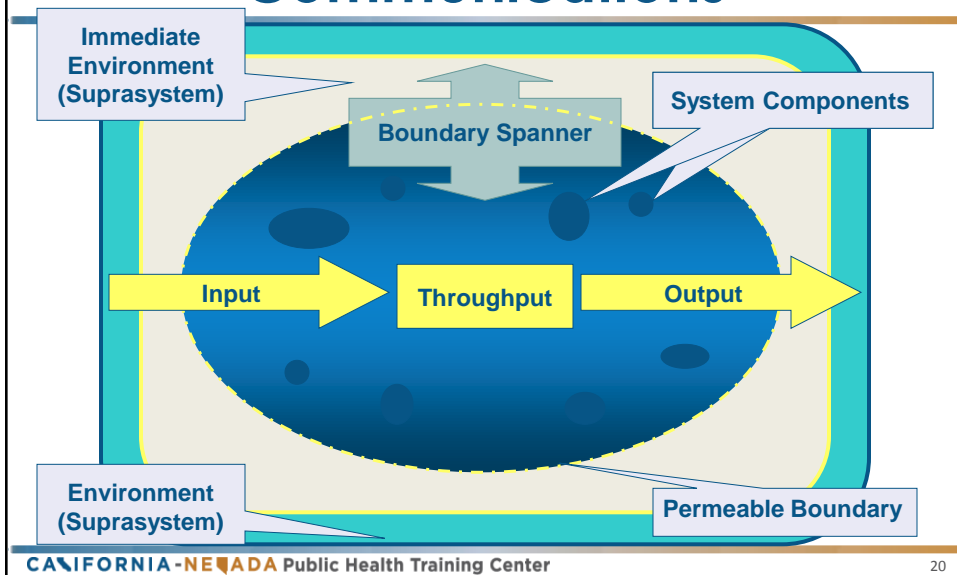


ORGANIZATIONS AS SYSTEMS

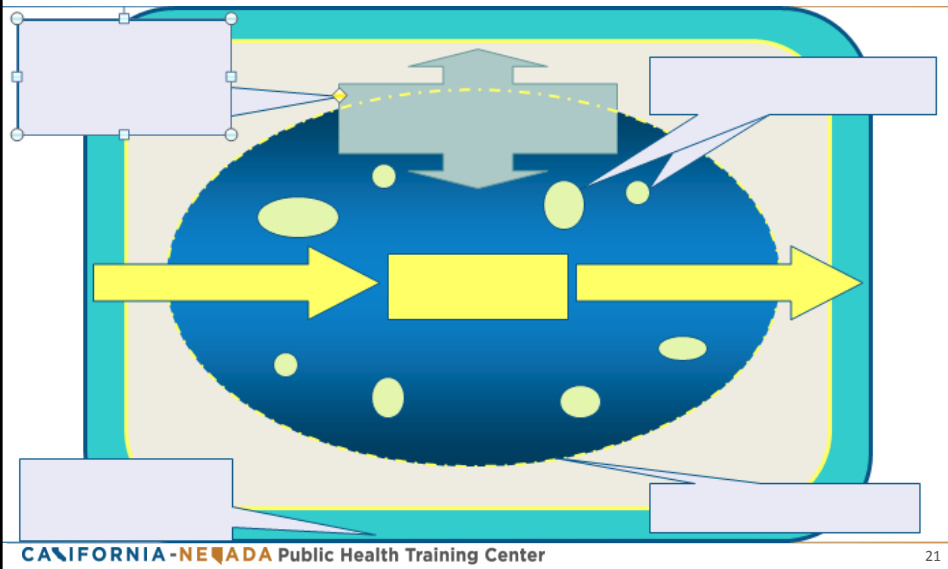
Social System



Internal/External Communications

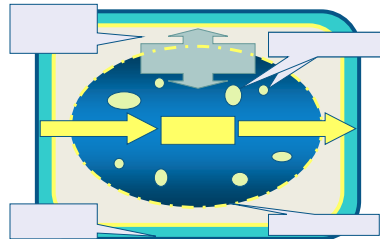


Handout #1



Exercise #1

- Work with a partner
- Consider an organization in which you are personally involved
- Label each system element on your handout based on your organization



15-minute break

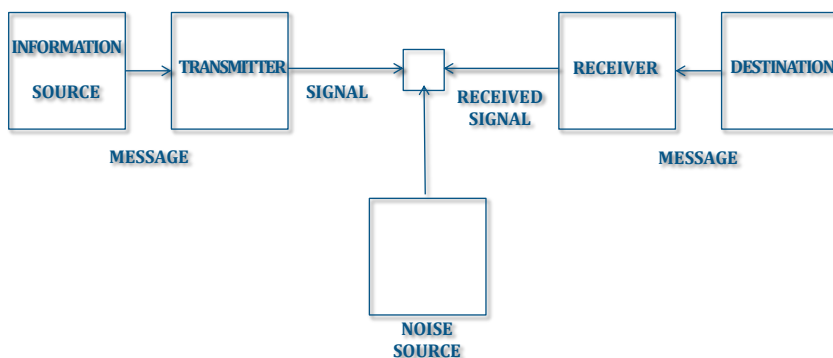


TRANSMITTERS AND SIGNALS AND NOISE, OH MY!

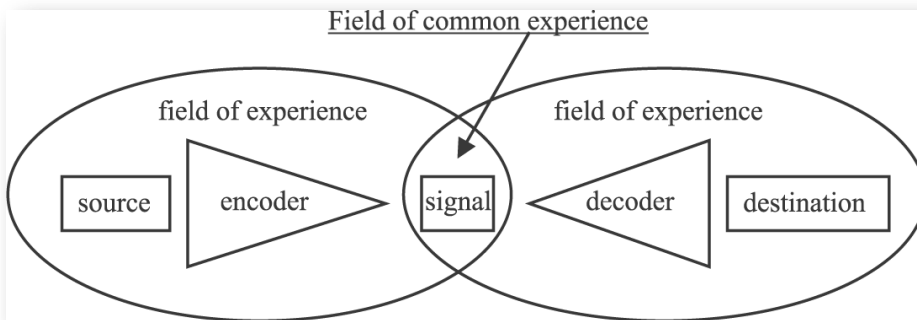
Harold Lasswell's Description

- *Who [says] What [through] which Channel [to] Whom [with] What Effect?*

Shannon & Weaver Model of Communication



Schramm Model of Communication



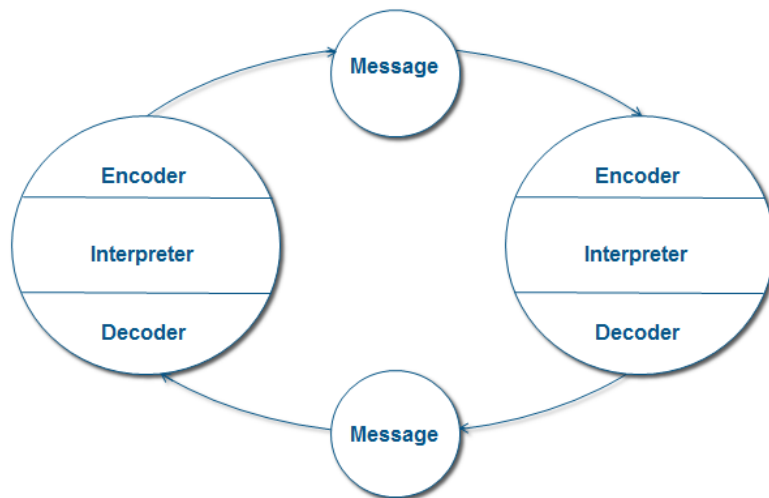
Exercise #2

Tear It Up!

What was missing?



Osgood & Schramm Model of Communication



KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Grunig's Situational Theory of Publics

- People fall into two general categories:
 - Active publics
 - Passive publics

Passive Publics

- May or may not be aware of topic
- Little interest
- Will not seek out information
- Short, repetitive messages best
- “Indirect route” to persuasion

Active Publics

- Interested in topic
- Will seek out information
- Want to know details
- “Direct route” to persuasion

**KEEP IT SIMPLE, KEEP IT
CONCISE, KEEP IT CLEAR**

Written Communication

- Use language appropriate to audience
 - Education
 - Interests
 - Culture
 - Context
- Use simple, declarative sentences (around 16 words)
- Avoid jargon

Oral Presentations

- Tell 'em what you're going to tell 'em
- Tell 'em
- Tell 'em what you told 'em

Visual Aids

- Remember the Three B's:
 - **B**ig
 - **B**old
 - **B**rief

REVIEW AND WRAP-UP

Review & Wrap-Up

- We can't *not* communicate
- Communication encompasses all aspects of healthcare
- Many concepts of communication are grounded in systems theory
- Know the audience to decide:
 - Channels
 - Language
 - Approach
- Keep it simple!

*He who loves practice without theory
is like the sailor who boards ship
without a rudder and compass and
never knows where he may cast.*

~Leonardo da Vinci

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Thank You!



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