# WHEN COMMUNICATION BECOMES UNHELPFUL

Communication in an organisation is normally used as a way of getting a message across so that work can be done. However, there are times when oral communication can be used in ways that are unhelpful to the achievement of organisational goals

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| **Definition: Gossip**  Gossip is the unauthorised spreading of information about another individual or individuals. |

Individuals may tell stories about people which may or may not be true using what is called ‘The Grapevine’. There are various reasons for doing so, but gossip does not usually help to build cohesive teams or trust within organisations. The test of whether we should pay attention to information or not revolves around whether it:

* is found to be true
* encourages others
* is useful to you

This implies that we should always look for evidence to support what others are saying.

There are times when managers use gossip or rumour to test out an idea and to see what the reaction is. Doing so occasionally might work, but doing so regularly will erode trust in the relationship between a manager and their employees.