

have to be done well. "Communicating is not simply what managers spend a great deal of time doing but the medium through which managerial work is constituted" (Hales 1986: 101). Managers take in information through what Sayles (1964) has called monitoring activities, which enable them to be the nerve centers of their units, and they send their information out through what can be called disseminating activities inside the unit and spokesperson activities outside it. Monitoring As monitors, managers reach out for every scrap of useful information they can get--about internal operations and external events, trends and analyses, everything imaginable. They are also bombarded with such information, significantly as a consequence of the networks they build up for themselves. The manager, in contrast, is the relative generalist among them, overseeing it all. He or she may not know as much about any particular specialty as the person charged with it, but usually more than any of them about the whole set of specialties together. And so the manager develops the broadest base of information within the unit. As a consequence of the monitoring activities, the manager becomes the nerve center of the unit--its best-informed member, at least if he or she is doing the job well (Barnard 1938:218). This can apply to the president of the United States compared with the cabinet secretaries and the CEO of a company compared with the vice presidents no less than to a first-line manager compared with the workers. As Morris et al. put it about those school principals: "Inside the building, the principal is the key exchange point, the information switchboard through which all important messages pass" (1982:690). Also shown, within their own heads, managers frame (conceive strategies, establish priorities, etc.) and schedule (their own time). (Homans 1950: 187)...