

# *How Does Communication Affect Revolution?*

Julia McElroy

OS24



There are over six billion people currently inhabiting our planet earth. These six billion plus people make up the seven continents, the two hundred ninety six countries within those continents and the six thousand five hundred languages spoken. As human beings, it is part of our natural instinct to communicate with others. Without communication, our societies, civilizations and cultures would be inexistent. We would have no outside influence on our beliefs, ideas and opinions. We would have no insight to what life would be like if we brought change to our society, change that would affect generations and generations to come. Lack of communication from all over the world is not a problem though. Human beings have managed to come up with ways to communicate other than verbally. Through the Internet, television, body language and an ongoing list of the different tracks of communication. Communication is necessary for change to occur.

When asked what I think communication is, I would start to speak but then hesitate. What is communication? In a sentence or two, I would say that communication is projecting your idea and opinion to others and vice versa. Communication is in no way, shape or form one-sided though. In order to send information, one must be able to receive information. Communication is the exchange of information, sending and receiving information at once.

The first types of communication that come to mind are email, verbal communication and the vast largeness of the internet. Though I realize that communication is so much more than this, I really had no knowledge on the subject other than the basics. My peers agreed with me. We know what communication is and how it works, but that was all we knew. We didn't know how big of an idea it was.

Communication is no longer just a word with a definition. Communication has become a broad and vague idea. Communication can no longer be classified as one single thing. The New Oxford American Dictionary definition of communication is: "1) The imparting or exchanging of information or news, 2) Means of connection between people or places in particular," (1). How is information exchanged? What different types of communication are available? Communication has extended into many different avenues. Verbal communication, body language and letters are no longer are the only way to express views or opinions. Forms of communication have changed immensely just in the last fifty years.

Only in 1973 was the first cell phone invented by Martin Cooper of Motorola (2). The 70's also introduced electronic mail, or what we know today as email. Email has been a revolutionary landmark in the world of communication. "Without the online services that provide email servers which host our messaging accounts, we would not have online communication at all," (3). Online communication has become one of the largest decision makers in the society of today. There is no end to online communication and what can be achieved via the Internet. The 'internet generation' though born after the beginning of the World Wide Web, holds the future of the Internet communication in their grasp.

To be considered part of *Generation Z*, or '*The Internet Generation*,' all birthdates must be from 1991 on. The Internet generation is not only considered to be 'tech savvy' and 'individualistic' but is constantly connected to the world around them. The invention of *Facebook* as well as other social networking web sites, lets someone receive updates from a 'friend' of theirs from across the world. Over 500 million people from all over the world hold active *Facebook* accounts. Those 500 million plus people spend over 700 billion minutes on *Facebook* a month and 50% of those users log onto *Facebook* on any given day. *Twitter* lets people post a message (with 140 characters or less) and is available for the whole world to see. With over 200 million "tweets" per day there are over 460 thousand new accounts made daily.

Blogs enable users to create an online journal that the public has access to. *Skype* allows phone calls to be made through the computer, along with face-to-face video chats. Forums or message boards let users make accounts and share their opinions in places where they can discuss and debate topics with others from all over the world. Though that is only the 'internet community', the tracks of the Internet expand into other realms, such as the news.

It is no longer required of households to have a television set to watch the news or to buy a magazine or newspaper. The accessibility of the news on the Internet has caused the spread of news to become far quicker than through paper or television. People can read the headline and then forward it off to someone, who then does the same. The cycle continues on across the country and throughout the world. According to the BBC New Online, "The site records around 14 million unique users a week (around 60 to 70% of visitors are from the UK)," (4). The cultivation of news from around the world being available by the minute on the Internet has created a new form of news delivery. For example, within minutes of President Barack Obama's announcement of the death of Osama Bin Laden, the Internet became one constant stream of information on the death and similar information. If human beings did not have the capability of Internet, the buzz about Bin Laden's death would not have been as large, as quickly. Along with the availability of social networking and online news, email has become one of the largest ways to communicate. There are over 14.4 trillion emails sent every year to over 140 billion different people. The biggest names in email such as *Yahoo! Mail*, *AOL* and *Gmail* are all linked to large search engines as well as different Internet portals (such as auto sales, images, videos, etc). This gives the user the capability to check their email and search the web at the same time. The Internet has caused change all over the world from loss in the print media to a rise in obesity. The world has begun to rely on the Internet for a source of endless information and help.

But if the Internet were to be terminated, the world would suffer far more than they are now. The stock market would crash almost immediately, sending trillions of people into an economic downward spiral. Thus the poverty rate would rise incredibly, which would link to a rise in crime. On the subject of the Internet being erased, Don Reisinger, a writer for *Cnet News*, says that in a word, our world would be chaotic. The world would not just suffer economically with the loss of the Internet, but communication would become almost impossible. Word of mouth would have to suffice due to lack of Internet. It would be come near impossible to spread news quickly (Across the country), let alone the world. But with Internet in the future, our world will continue to progress at a fast rate. The Internet increases productivity and research but also allows news to spread across the world at the drop of a pin. I personally believe that the creation of the Internet is a beautiful invention and has enabled the world to reach places that would have taken many years to get to without Internet. I also believe that it has created a new lifestyle, that for some it benefits but for others it has created a sense of laziness. Today American Society has embraced and accepted the Internet with open arms. The Internet has created an entire new world enabling change to occur universally.

To change is to make or become different in some way, make or form. To revolutionize is to change something radically or fundamentally. To stage a revolution is to forcibly overthrow a government or social order in favor of a new system or to revolve. How does a country 'forcibly overthrow' their government? "Revolution comes as a tool for the masses. An ineffective governing body will assuredly come under intense scrutiny. If the will of the people is not followed, then a government, no matter how strong, will fall under its own corruption," (5). Revolutions enable the struggling people of a country to stand up for what they want for their country. "We become ashamed of our intelligence, and sometimes we imagine some barbarous

state where truth would be effortless; but the cure for this is easy; you are there to show us what such imagining would lead to, and mend our ways,” (6). Revolutions are successful when an entire country begins to see similarly. When the civilians communicate with each other and listen to each other’s ideas. Revolutions tend to start out small but then lead to full civilian over throws of the government. Today there has been a wave or trend of revolutions in the Middle East. On December 17<sup>th</sup> 2010, Tunisian street vendor, Mohammed Bouazizi, performed an act of self-immolation in front of a Government building in an act of protest against the power hungry police authority. This act led to the Tunisian uprising, which forced the president from power. The ripple affect thus started throughout the Middle East. Tunisia was the first country to turn a new life in their government. Soon after the Tunisia revolution began, a ripple affect extended over the Middle East. Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman and Iraq are currently seeing unrest and turmoil involving their governments. “It’s not being driven by nationalism, Islamism or any other 20<sup>th</sup> century “ism”, but by a 21<sup>st</sup> century socially linked-up mass movement of people who are sick of corruption, the lack of representative government, and being poor,” (7). Revolutions are fueled by the ‘common folk’ who see holes in the system every single day. They are the ones that have to suffer because of the flaws in the government, whose lives are determined by government choices that are made for the entire country and not an individual.

Syria borders the Mediterranean Sea with Turkey to the north, Jordan to the south, and Lebanon to the West and Iraq to the East. Over 22 million people reside there, making up the 14 provinces. Syria is currently dealing with unrest that has resulted in with the killing of over 450 protesters. Syrian protestors and civilians want President Bashar al-Assad and his regime to step down, and have a greater voice in running their country. The unrest began on March 15<sup>th</sup> after a protest called ‘Day Of Dignity’ was lead in the city of Damascus. Around ten days later, 100 hundred people were killed in the town of Daraa, where protesting had been under way. The military has been taking over towns such as Daraa with tanks, killing anyone who gets in their way. The Day Of Dignity was organized via the Internet, specifically, on *Facebook*. *Facebook* has been the source for much of the spread of information in Syria, though the Government in Syria has banned *Facebook*. Syria even has a *Facebook* page called “The Syrian Revolution 2011.” The page is written in Arabic, but online translators give a viewer from anywhere in the world, the chance to read what Syrians are saying. Over 4 million Syrians and over 8 thousand Internet hosts use Internet in Syria. There is nearly double the amount of cell phone users than Internet users though and less main line users than Internet users. But how is the rest of the world finding out about the unrest in Syria? What proof are we being given? Due to those 9 million cell phone users, Syrians are able to spread the most current events and protests across the world within minutes of the event happening. Not just by verbally speaking to someone on the other end of the line too. Hundreds of Syrians have taken video of protests and the unrest on their phones, and then forward the clips along. “Syrians had rocks to throw in one hand and their cell phones to record in the other,” (8) Syria is currently prohibiting the international press to enter the country to report on the unrest (CNN, for example). Therefore, the world is learning through each other, using other countries to help spread the knowledge.

The growing unrest in the Middle East is a prime example of how communication and revolution coincide. To hold a revolution is to change an entire country, one way or another. The only way for the people of a country to become unified as one is to communicate with each other. The key to success is communication. Communication in a revolution enables thousands of different thoughts and opinions to be filtered into each other to create one large goal, one large

goal that is worth fighting for. Without communication, a country, holding a revolution or not, will not have success with any goals.

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All statistics about Syria are courtesy of the CIA world Factbook.