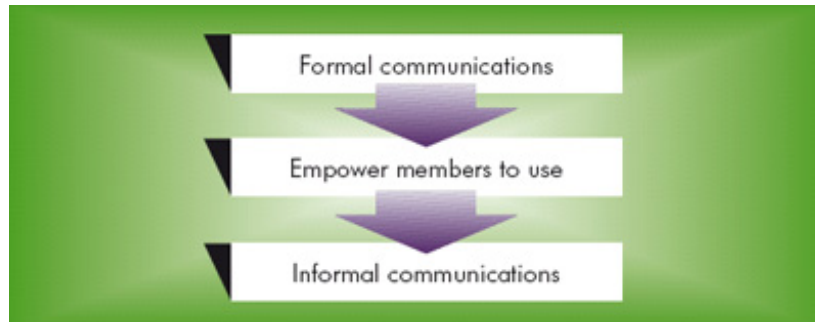


## Using effective communications

### Formal and informal communications



#### **Formal communications**

Formal communications within an organisation are those that take place through well-known channels.

For example, the expansion of policy at UNISON comes from a formal procedure where it is dictated from the members upwards. Members discuss policy issues in their branches. Delegates from the branches then meet at the Annual Conference and debate and agree policy.

Formal communications would also include all of the paper-based and electronic communications that are available to members as well as the meetings that take place.

*The expansion of policy at UNISON comes from a formal procedure where it is dictated from the members upwards.*

#### **Informal communications**

Informal communications are those that are not based upon any set measures. This does not mean that such relations are outside the networks of the organisation. They allow people to take the initiative into their own hands. This enables them to come up with ideas and plans.

For example, UNISON helps to share facts and skills through the publication of a communications catalogue – this is a system of formal relations. These formal communications help to empower members who are dealing day-to-day with problems and issues in the branches. This then leads to a new process.

Through informal communications with employers and their representatives, members feel that they are being supported. This helps them to take ownership of many problems as they work towards resolving them.