In two to three well developed paragraphs, define and discuss “Noise” and provide an example of a time when “Noise” distorted a message you were trying to send, or a message you were receiving.

Noise is any type of interference that obstructs a message the sender is trying to send. Beebe (2008) expresses noise as, “interference, either literal or psychological, that hinders the accurate encoding or decoding of a message.”

Noise is not simply the environment in which the communication is occurring; rather noise can include anything that is distracting from the accuracy of the message. Some general examples of noise can include: the surroundings, the thoughts of the sender, the thoughts of the receiver, as well as the physical aspects of the sender and receiver (hunger, tired, stressed, etc.).

A specific example that has occurred in my life, in which noise has distorted the message I was intending was a recent conversation I had with my spouse. I had just arrived home from work and asked how her day was. Later that evening, she said, “So, did you get it?” I looked strangely at her and said, “Get what?” As she was telling me about her day, she had asked me to do a very important task. I did not “hear” her because of noise. The noise that was present in that situation, now that I reflect on it, was: I was tired after a long day of work, I was riffling through the stack of mail while she was talking, I was thinking about when (and how) I was going to pay the bills, and the kids were running through the house.

References: