

# Course N°12

## Communication Barriers

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# Introduction

Communication is a process that covers series of steps involving among others, encoding, decoding and transmission.

For assure effective communication, all the parties and instruments will have to play their part as envisaged.

# Introduction

At every stage of the communication process, however, there are barriers, which hinder or dilute the flow of communication.

The barriers to communication may arise out of behavioral differences, differences in skills and understanding as well as physical factors.

While some kinds of barriers like behavioral differences and differences in skills may be commonly applicable to all methods of communication, barriers arising out of physical factors may be specific to the method of communication adopted.

# Definition

The communication Barriers are the problems that arise at every stage of the communication process. they have the ability to create misunderstanding and confusions. Louis.E.Boone

# Definition

There are a lot of causes of **misunderstanding** and **misinterpretation** of the message communicated.

As the process of communication involves sender, channels and receiver; the problem of communication usually lies with either one or more of them.

There may be certain flaws in encoding and decoding the message, the channels used may be defective or faulty.

# Barriers categorizes

Some of these barriers may be categorized into the following groups:

- 1 Semantic Barriers,
- 2 Physical Barriers
- 3 Organizational Barriers and
- 4 Psychological Barriers.

# 1-Semantic Barriers:

- Semantic barriers are concerned with problems and obstructions in the process of encoding and decoding of message into words or impressions.
- The same words or sentences may be understood or interpreted differently by different individual's causing confusions and misunderstanding.
- The main cause of semantic barriers may be lack of good communication skills.

# 1-Semantic Barriers:

The various reasons for different interpretations or meanings resulting in semantic barriers may be discussed as:

**1-1- Badly expressed message**

**1-2- Words/ symbols with different meaning**

**1-3- Faulty translations**

**1-4- Unclear assumptions**

**1-5- Body language and gesture decoding**

**1-6- Technical Jargon**



**1-1- Badly expressed message:** Use of inadequate, incorrect words, omission of important words etc. may distort the message. The badly expressed message fails to convey the intended meaning of the message.

**1-2- Words/ symbols with different meaning:** Some words may have multiple meanings. While communicating a message sender may use a word with specific meaning but if there are alternative meanings then the receiver may perceive the meaning in accordance to his/ her understanding and ability. Different perceptions lead to ineffective communication.

**1-3-Faulty translations:** The communication may be ineffective if the translation of the original message is done by a translator who may not be proficient with both the languages. The use of wrong words or incorrect understanding of the content may result in different meaning of the translated message.

**1-4-Unclarified assumptions:** Some communications are backed by assumptions, which may be interrupted differently by different individuals.

**1-5-Body language and gesture decoding:** If the body language or gestures of a person do not match with the words used to communicate his/her instructions then the receiver may get confused and perceive the information wrongly.

**1-6- Technical Jargon:** If people with specific expertise use technical words or jargons while explaining the unskilled people from different field, the communication may transfer in parts due to lack of clarity in information. The receivers may not have sufficient knowledge to understand the meaning of technical words used.

# 2-Physical Barriers:

**2-1-Noise**

- Physical noise**
- Visual noise**
- Psychological noise**
- Written noise**

**2-2-Improper time**

**2-3- Distance**

## 2-Physical Barriers:

**2-1-Noise:** Any disturbances or interferences that reduce the clarity and effectiveness of communication are called as noise. It may be physical and psychological, written or visual. Noise distracts the persons communicating and acts as barrier to communication.

**Physical noise:** Loud noise of speaker playing outside or noise due to machines affects listening process of persons communicating.

**Visual noise:** The late arrival of employee's results in distraction of superior's attention .

**Psychological noise:** Mental trouble and turmoil affect the receiver's listening and understanding the message. Similarly inattentiveness and indifferences of the listener make communication ineffective.

**Written noise:** Bad handwriting and incorrect typing irritates the reader not to speak of understanding the contents .

**2-3-Improper time:** Improper timing of communication also hinders the process of communication, e.g., an order at closing hour to execute an urgent work, may cause resentment in the employee who has to catch train for going back to his home. Message requiring action in distant future may be forgotten. A phone call at midnight, interrupting sleep, further irritates the receiver, if message is not urgent.

**2-4- Distance:** The distance between sender and receiver acts as a barrier in the communication process as the sender has to speak loudly to convey the message, similarly in import-export transactions because of distances of miles, communication may be ineffective if proper use of Fax and Telephone is not made.

# 3-Organizational Barriers:

**3-1-Organizational rules and regulations**

**3-2-Non conduction of Meetings in time**

**3-3-Wrong choice of channel**



# 3-Organizational Barriers:

## **3-1-Organizational rules and regulations:**

Strict organizational rules and regulations can slow down communication and discourage employees from sharing new ideas. When communication rules are flexible and open, employees feel motivated and encouraged to express their creativity and opinions.

## **3-2-Non conduction of Meetings in time:**

Some organizations hold staff meetings to listen to employee complaints and suggestions. When these meetings do not happen, communication becomes less free, and the gap between leaders and employees gets wider.

### **3-3-Wrong choice of channel:**

There are many mediums and channels of communications available, like face to face, oral communication, telephone, Email and audiovisual. Each channel is not ideal and perfect in every situation. For Eg., written communication is required in case of formal relations, but communicating with the illiterate people, this channel fails. Illiterate people are to be communicated properly with the support of pictures.

## 4-Psychological Barriers:

Psychological barriers arise from motives, social values, different perceptions etc. and these creates a psychological distance, cause misunderstanding among people at work and hinder the communication process.

**4-1- Selective Perceptions**

**4-2- Premature Evaluation**

**4-3- Different comprehension of reality**

**4-4- Distrust**

**4-5- Loss of transmission and poor retention**

## **4-1- Selective Perceptions:**

Our senses have limits, so we only perceive selected symbols based on our needs and experiences.

This selective perception means we cannot communicate everything fully.

Different perceptions can cause neutral words with positive meanings to be misunderstood or seen as negative, leading to miscommunication and ineffective communication.

## **4-2- Premature Evaluation:**

People tend to judge or evaluate messages too quickly, often before hearing or reading the entire message. This premature judgment stops them from fully understanding the communication, leading to misunderstandings and ineffective communication. This behavior is often due to being judgmental or having prejudices against the message.

### **4-3- Different comprehension of reality:**

Reality is not absolute concept; it is relative to different persons. Each person's has unique sensory receptors and mental filters. As a result our abstractions, inferences and evaluations are different.

### **4-4- Distrust:**

Distrust between the sender & receiver may act as a barrier in effective communication. If two people do not trust each other, they may either try to **hide or keep back information** or **do not try to understand the message in original sense**. In fact, they may be suspicious towards each other and try to find hidden meanings in the message.

#### **4-5-Loss of transmission and poor retention:**

If communication passes through various levels or channels it may result in complete loss of transmission of inaccurate information.

Transmission of inaccurate information in case of oral communication may be due to lack of attention or retention amongst people.