

Barriers to Effective Communication

(communication skills I)

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Definition of the Barrier to Communication:

‘Any obstacle or problem in the process of Communication which hinders/obstructs the process of Communication is called Barrier.’



Why does communication break down?

- On the surface, the answer is relatively simple. I have identified the elements of communication as the sender, the encoding, the message, the medium, the decoding, the receiver, and the feedback. If noise exists in these elements in any way, complete clarity of meaning and understanding does not occur.
- The author, George Bernard Shaw wrote, “The greatest problem with communication is the illusion that it has been accomplished”.



PHYSIOLOGICAL BARRIERS

- Physiological barriers to communication are related with the limitations of the human body and the human mind (memory, attention, and perception). Physiological barriers may result from individuals' personal discomfort, caused by ill-health, poor eye sight, or hearing difficulties.



PHYSIOLOGICAL BARRIERS: POOR LISTENING SKILLS

- Listening skills can have a major impact on the effectiveness of communication. A typical speaker will say about 125 words per minute, while a listener can receive 400-600 words per minute. Therefore, about 75% of listening time is free time, which can distract the listener. Barriers to communication here include not paying attention or daydreaming, so some or all of the message gets lost in the communication process.



PHYSIOLOGICAL BARRIERS: INFORMATION OVERLOAD

- It is essential to control the flow of the information, else the information is likely to be misinterpreted or forgotten or overlooked. As a result, communication may get distorted.



PHYSIOLOGICAL BARRIERS: INATTENTION

- At times, we just do not listen but only hear. Sometimes we are not attentive or unable to focus on something, this can cause barrier in effective communication.



PHYSIOLOGICAL BARRIERS: EMOTIONS

- At times it happens that people do not develop interest in communicating with their fellow employees due to the feelings of fear, mistrust, anger or annoyance, that may arise within their minds and these are stated to be emotional barriers.



PHYSIOLOGICAL BARRIERS: POOR RETENTION

- Human memory cannot function beyond a limit. One cannot always retain all the facts/information about what is being told to him/her especially if he/she is not interested or not attentive. This leads to communication breakdown.



SOCIAL BARRIERS

- Social barriers to communication include the social psychological phenomenon of conformity, a process in which the norms, values, and behaviours of an individual begin to follow those of the wider group. Social factors such as age, gender, socioeconomic status, and marital status may act as a barrier to communication in certain situations.



CULTURAL BARRIERS

- Communication also takes place between people belonging to different nationalities, religions, castes, creeds, races, ethnicities etc. In other words, when two persons are communicating with each other, there may be differences in their cultural backgrounds. It is vital to overcome all the barriers that might occur within the course of communication.



CULTURAL BARRIERS

- A cultural barrier occurs when people of different cultures are unable to communicate with each other efficiently and this inability may be due diverse factors such as different backgrounds, languages, customs, viewpoints, ideas, notions and so forth.



LINGUISTIC BARRIERS

- Language is the means which is said to be the most effective means of communication with others. The language provides understanding of the content that an individual is willing to express or communicate with the others. When two persons or groups of people are involved in communicating with each other and if a common language is used that is understandable to all individuals then their objectives will be fulfilled and the process of communication will be made effective.



SEMANTIC BARRIER

- The words we choose, how we use them, and the meaning we attach to them cause many communication barriers. The problem is semantic, or the meaning of the words we use. The same word may mean different things to different people.



PAST EXPERIENCE

- If someone has awful experiences in the past related to some particular situation, then he/she will try to avoid communication in that situation.



PHYSICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DISTRACTIONS

- Physical distractions are the physical things that can get in the way of the communication process. A basic physical distraction can be the environment – the room may be too hot or too cold, or chairs can be uncomfortable



PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS

- Barriers or problems arising due to the stress or psychological problems are psychological barriers.
- Psyche means mind. Psychological barriers arise in the minds. Human mind is very complex thing to understand. We face many times some conflicts due to situations or surrounding events. So these barriers are bound to arise. But the real problem is that people do not accept that these barriers exists in their minds.



THANK YOU!

