

## Communication Barriers

Communication Barriers are the **various obstacles and hurdles** which arise in between of an effective communication leading to misunderstandings and misinterpretations by the receiver. In the above example noise was the communication barrier.

### Role of communication barriers in ineffective communication

Let us now understand in details what the barriers to an effective communication are and how they lead to an ineffective communication.

- **Noise** - Noise plays an important barrier to effective communication. Imagine you want to pass on some information to a person standing next to a blaring mike. Do you think, the sender will ever be able to interpret it correctly? Do you think the receiver in this case is to blame? In this case, because of the blaring mike, the information will never reach the person in its desired form. Any presentation or speech delivered in a noisy classroom or auditorium is pointless as the information would never fall on the ears of the listeners. Try sharing some information with your friend in an overcrowded bus or a noisy market, correct information will never reach the recipient and he would never be able to interpret it correctly or respond accordingly. Here noise is an external communication barrier and it results in the distortion of the message.
- **Unorganized Thought** - Unorganized and haphazard thoughts also are instrumental in poor communication and a very important barrier to effective communication.

Mike to Monalisa - "Please come at 2 pm, okay not 2 come at 2.30 pm instead, fine let us freeze it for 3 pm"

Monalisa is bound to get confused as Mike himself is not clear about the timings. The sender must pass on crystal clear information to the receiver. The sender must first be himself very clear what he wants to communicate and then only begin the conversation. Abstract ideas, haphazard thoughts lead to ineffective communication. First know what you have to communicate and then only speak.

- **Wrong interpretations** - Wrong interpretations again play a very important role in miscommunication. An information can be wrongly interpreted by the receiver leading to a complete mess. "Tom went for a bash yesterday night". The word bash can be decoded as beating as well as a party. The sender might convey his message to the recipient in order to provide some necessary information but the receiver might misinterpret it. It is the responsibility of the receiver to give proper feedback to the speaker and clear all the doubts before ending the conversation. Don't keep things within yourself; ask if you are not clear with anything.
- **Not Understanding the receiver** - The boss once wanted to address his young team. He quoted examples from the year 1950 - the year when his team members were not even born. Don't you think, all the young chaps will lose interest after sometime? That's the importance of understanding the recipient. Don't just prepare a speech, learn more about the culture, habits, thought process of your listeners. The sender must understand the receiver first and then pass on the information. If a sender is sad and you want to give

him some exciting news, he will neither respond nor understand and hence the effect will for sure get nullified. Not understanding the receiver again is a barrier to effective communication.

- **Ignoring the content** - One should lay emphasis on the content of his speech. The **content has to be clear, crisp and above all interesting**. Don't just speak; take some time to find out what you are speaking. Find out whether the content is relevant or not? During presentations, the speaker must use interesting words, funny one liner to capture the attention of the listeners. Don't make your speech monotonous otherwise the listeners after sometime will definitely fall asleep. One should be smart enough to understand when to crack a slight joke in mid of a conversation. It really works. Don't just speak for the heck of it, understand what you are speaking and try to make it more interesting, crisp and above all relevant.
- **Avoiding the Listener** - Imagine yourself attending a seminar where the speaker is simply reading from his notes and for once has not made any eye contact with you. You will never be able to relate with the speaker and hence never bother to find out what he wants to convey. Don't just go on. Create a friendly atmosphere and then start communicating. Don't just come to the point, one can ask questions from the listeners like what's new?, Lovely weather or even use compliments like wonderful crowd, enthusiastic group. Don't avoid your listeners, make an eye contact with them to effectively communicate.
- **Not confirming with the recipient** - Always cross check with the listeners, whether they have received the correct information or not. For instance, if you are sharing some important contact no, do make it a habit to verify the number with the receiver whether the receiver has noted it correctly or not. Use words like **"Did you get it? "Am I Audible?"** in between the conversation. Try to find out whether the listener is getting your message or not. Take pauses in between, simply don't rush. Make a habit to **spell out words**. If you want to pass on your email id to your team, it is better to spell out each word of the email account. Another effective way is to break each word into alphabets, like ant can be communicated as a as in alpha, n as in Netherlands, t as in tango. The error rate will definitely go down and the communication will be more effective.
- **Not understanding the mood of the recipient** - Try to understand the interest or the mood of the second party and read the mind of the other person. Don't just start speaking, understand the mood of the other person first and then share the information. If you think, the receiver is in the pink of his moods, don't give him sad news, he will never bother to listen. Wait for the correct time and then communicate if you want your communication to create an impact.
- **Low pitch and tone** - Sometimes even the pitch and tone can play a communication barrier. Your content might be accurate, crisp and even related, but if your pitch is low your information will never reach the listeners bang on. The tone has to be crystal clear and loud for passing on correct information. Remember to give the correct pause after each sentence and don't forget the punctuation marks. Remember you are communicating not only for the first benchers but the people on the last bench are also a part of the communication. Be loud and clear but don't shout.
- **Impatient Listener** - The listener also has to be patient enough to absorb the complete information and then respond accordingly. Always jot down your points and start off with your queries once the sender is through with the communication. Don't just jump in

between the conversation as it leads to unnecessary confusions, misunderstandings and conflict and the communication never reaches any conclusion.

- **Different cultural level** - In any organization, an individual can never think on the same line as his boss does. There is always a difference in their thought process. The work pressure, lack of transparency between the team members are also the barriers which lead to an ineffective communication. These barriers are called **internal barriers**.

Thus to conclude, any obstacle which comes in between an effective communication are called communication barriers. They result in distortion of the message and the goal is never accomplished. External barriers arise from the external environment and external factors where as internal barriers are present within the individual like tensions, work pressure, high expectations, peer rivalry etc. It is of prime importance to get rid of the above barriers for an effective communication and the proper flow of information between the sender and the receiver.