

## Communication barriers

No matter how good the communication system in an organization is, unfortunately barriers can and do often occur. This may be caused by a number of factors which can usually be summarized being as due to physical barrier, languages and organizational, emotional and personal barriers.

A communication becomes successful only if the receiver understands what the sender is trying to convey. When your message is not clearly understood you should understand that you should understand that you should understand that your message is facing a barrier.

A communication barrier can occur at any stage and make the process of relaying key information less effective, which can jeopardize your success.

Commonly experienced barriers:

Noise

Emotions

Lack of planning

Filtering information

Wrong & unclarified assumption

Loss by transmission

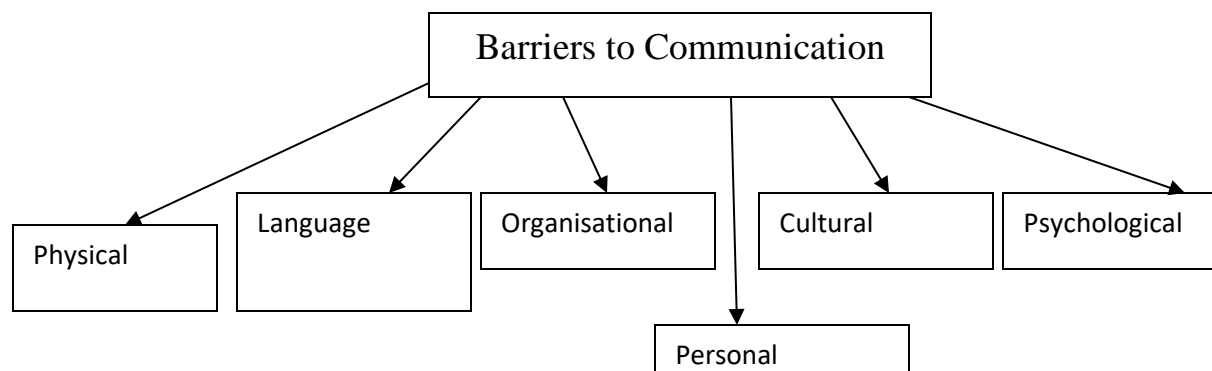
Goal conflict

Culture

Offensive style

Social psychological barriers

Time distance



Let's understand the different barriers to effective communication.

- Language barriers:

Language is needed for any kind of communication. And communication becomes tough if people don't understand each other's language. This is known as a language barrier to communication.

But a difference in language isn't the only kind of communication barrier. The use of jargon and technical language also creates barriers to communication.

We have heard lawyers discussing a case or doctors talking among themselves about a patient, but not necessarily understood the conversation. Not everyone can understand legal and medical jargon. However, lawyers and doctors regularly interact with their clients who are not from the same profession and are able to convey their points to them by explaining the case, legal or medical, in simple language.

Excessive use of jargon, ambiguous words, or technical terminology is another kind of language barrier. We can overcome these by keeping communication clear and appropriate for the target audience. If we practice doing this, we will be able to make an impact at our workplace.

The barrier created due to the improper knowledge of language, work phrases etc.

- **Variety of Meaning:** For example a person may be present at function and receive a present and present some thoughts on budget. In these three contexts the meaning of word “present” is varied.
  - **Individual linguistic ability:** bad knowledge of various language results in communication error. The speaker may not be able to convey his/her emotions if not knowing the audience’s language.
  - **Unfamiliar accents:** If the listener or the orator does not understand accent of a particular language, they will not be able to understand and interact in that particular language.
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- **Psychological barriers:**

One of the chief barriers to open & free communication is the psychological or emotional barrier. It is comprised mainly of fear, mistrust & suspicion. The roots of our emotional mistrust of others lie in our childhood & infancy when we were taught to be careful for what we said to others.

Sometimes people have a habit of starting an argument when someone counters their opinion. As a result, people tend to avoid them and this affects their personal as well as professional relationships.

Psychological barriers such as anger, fear, jealousy, insecurity, shyness, and close-mindedness can always damage communication, and in turn, relationships.

This includes:

1. Selective listening
2. Lack of ability to communicate
3. Premature evaluation
4. Psychological & emotional barriers
5. Inattention
6. Difference in speed of talking and listening
7. Emotional attitude
8. Inferring
9. Defensiveness
10. Barriers due to resistance to change
11. Status block
12. Self centered attitude

13.Lack of trust & confidence

14.Attitudinal clash with sender

15.Group Identification

If we know how to connect with our listener, we can avoid the complicated situations that arise due to these barriers.

- **Cultural barriers:**

These come into this category

1. Values and norms
2. Non verbal communication
3. Social relationship
4. Perception
5. Concept of time
6. Use of voice
7. Concept of space
8. Specialist language
9. Thinking process
- 10.Appearance (color, texture of skin, eyes of body, way of dressing)

The global market has opened up lots of opportunities for business. However, due to cultural barriers, people or companies often miss out on these opportunities.

Language differences can lead to misinterpretations, the activity of labeling people can create stereotypes, and behavioral patterns can form mental blocks. Also, different cultures in different places can turn into strong communication barriers.

We can handle cultural barriers by Conscious nurturing of cross-cultural sensitivity .

- **Physical barriers:**

We all know how celebrated physicist Stephen Hawking, who wrote the genre-defining book *A Brief History of Time*, overcame his challenging physical disabilities and excelled in his career.

“Obviously, because of my disability, I need assistance. But I have always tried to overcome the limitations of my condition and lead as full a life as possible. I have traveled the world, from the Antarctic to zero gravity,” he was quoted as saying.

His words are inspiring. Physical barriers such as hearing impairment, defects in vision, speech problems, or learning disabilities such as dyslexia affect communication, but they can be overcome with proper training and practice.

Physical barrier in an organization includes large working areas that are physically separated from others.

Like 1. Marked out territories empires into which strangers are not allowed

2. Closed office doors, barriers screens, separate areas for people of different status.

Physical barriers may include:

Noise

Physical Distance

Improper time

Information overload

- **Attitudinal barriers:**

Discrimination on the basis of gender, race, or religion also hampers communication. Prejudice, suspicion, and emotional aggressiveness often affect communication. They arise because of the refusal to change or a lack of motivation. Effective listening, feedback, problem-solving, and being open to change can help us eliminate attitudinal barriers in communication.

- **Organizational barriers:**

Organizational hierarchy can be a problematic communication barrier. Even a family may have a power hierarchy, leading to a lack of transparency or a communication barrier. The solution to this is to establish a clear dialogue with the right people.

Here's an example. Rajan was used to working in a small and tightly-knit start-up. When a lucrative job in a multinational company was offered to him, he jumped at it. Two months later, frustrated, he was on the verge of resigning.

Rajan was unable to grasp the organizational hierarchy and the proper process to go through for specific tasks. His immediate boss was wise enough to solve his problem and retain him.

The factors internal to the organization which adversely affect the flow of communication are called barriers

This include;

1. Organization polity
  2. Complex organizational structure
  3. Rules and regulations
  4. Facilities
  5. Status difference
  6. Wrong choice of channel
- **Personal Barriers:** Same as psychological barriers(in most of the books)

Here are some of the ways to remove communication barriers:

1. Choose appropriate words and communication channels
2. Be an active listener, let the other person feel you are involved in the conversation
3. Minimize distractions such as noise
4. Analyze feedback and implement the required change
5. Be compassionate, unbiased, and inclusive
6. Focus on forming constructive and long-lasting bonds
7. Use of simple and meaningful language
8. Developing patience to listen and understand others



9. Shortening the line of communication
10. Keeping it short
11. Giving due importance to gesture and tone
12. Developing mutual trust
13. Co-ordination
14. More use of informal & face to face talks
15. The communication audit
16. By having a personal touch in communication
17. By communication to express not impress

## Conclusion

Removing communication barriers is a gradual but essential process. This skill is the need of the hour in today's highly competitive world.