



Barriers to communication

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Abstract

Communication is successful when it is understood by the receiver. The receiver must get the meaning of the message as exactly as the sender wants to convey it. From our own experience we know that communication can never be hundred percent complete. So many factors are involved in the process of communication and something can always go wrong. There may be so many reasons for the failures of communication or miscommunication. Miscommunication does not imply disagreement. It is called lack of communication. The factors that cause failure of communication are referred to as “barriers to communication”. Communicating with others is a part of everyday life. In large part, communication is about explicit language speaking and writing words but communication is also about implicit messages, such as tone, or eye contact. In recent years the importance of professional communication has increased manifold. This is because of growing complexity in organizational behavior. There has been rapid industrial growth and great advance in business management techniques. There is also the impact of modern technology on professional communication. This is because of growing complexity communication techniques have to meet the demands of fast changing business words. There is content need for review and modification of professional communication system. There is constantly growing realization by the professionals about the importance of professional communication. To meet the challenges of rapid industrial growth and globalization business houses are giving greater attention to professional communication techniques. The ability to communicate effectively has become Key to success of a business venture. The present paper is an attempt to attract the attention of the readers towards the importance of Communicative English.

Keywords: communication, miscommunication, disagreement, barriers to communication, interruption

Introduction

Barriers to Communication

Noise

In the linguistic parlance ‘noise’ is referred to as interference or interruption. Often an oral communication is impeded through interruption. If two persons are interacting, third person comes and interrupt conversation; it is a barrier to communication. If there is a telephone call which impedes been spoken to him. This kind of barrier to communication is known as “noise” and this is the commonest barrier to communication as it happens quite often.

Code

To ensure effective communication the addresser and the addressee must share the same language. If the addressee speaks French and the addresser speaks English this language barrier will affect the process of communication. Even if they share the same language the level of difference in the competence in the use of language of the sender and receiver may affect the smooth process of communication and may act as barrier to communication. In the case of oral communication the accentual patterns of the sender and the receiver may differ and may create barrier to communication.

Vocabulary

If the sender uses the subject specific vocabulary if may not be understood by the receiver. If the speaker is a scientist and the listener knows nothing about science the terminology used by

the sender will not be understood by the receiver. This will act as a barrier of communication.

Background

To make the communication effective and successful the sender and the receiver must share common background and assumptions. Lack of common background may make the comprehension of the message difficult and act as a barrier to communication.

Cultural Differences

If the sender and the receiver do not share common culture the use of culture specific vocabulary may impede the smooth process of communication and may act as barrier to communication.

Environmental Disturbances

Environmental disturbances can impede communication. Even physical distance between the sender and the receiver can harm the process of communication.

The Emotional states

Effective communication may be affected by the emotional states of the sender and the receiver. Mental state like anxiety, fear, lack of mutual trust and rivalry may become barrier to communication.

In addition to general barriers to communication discussed above there are some sender specific and receiver specific

barriers, i.e. lapses on the part of the sender and lapses on the part of the receiver which act as barrier to communication.

Barriers on the art of the sender and how to overcome them

1. If the message is not properly planned before its delivery, the transmission of the message will not be smooth and it will lack clarity, precision and accuracy. The sender of the message should plan his message ahead. He / She should be very clear in his / her mind about the contents of the message and choose the right channel or medium of communication.
2. Sometimes the sender assumes that the receiver will understand what has already been conveyed. He / She assume that the receiver is supposed to know the background and context of the matter. Depending on these assumptions he / she leave gaps in the communication. These assumptions can become a barrier to communication. To overcome this barrier while planning the message the sender should try to understand the receiver's background and his / her knowledge of the subject. He / She should use the familiar terms and try to anticipate the problems likely to be faced by the receiver in understanding and interpreting the message.
3. An English word has many different meanings. It is possible that the same word may convey two different meanings to two different persons. If the sender and the receiver assign different meanings to the word the message may be misunderstood. In such cases it will be helpful if the sender chooses his / her words carefully keeping in mind the problems that the receiver is likely to face. He / She may explain the meaning of technical and unconventional words. He / She may even restate the main points to ensure that the message has been correctly received.
4. If the sender lacks command over language and is unable to use appropriate and exact words the message will not be correctly understood by the receiver. The sender is expected to have complete command over language and he / she must choose his /her words very carefully. In the case of oral communication there should be no inconsistencies between verbal and non-verbal language. Facial expressions, gestures and postures should be according to the verbal language.
5. In professional dealings feelings like hatred, indifference, jealousy and prejudices have no place. While communicating the message the sender should take care that his / her personal liking or disliking or moods do not affect the smooth run of the communication.

Barriers on the part of the receiver

1. The communication may not be received or understood correctly because of some lapses at the receiver's end. In the case of oral communication there may be disturbances caused by the noise coming from a roaring bike or from the music being played during a marriage professions. Such barriers to communication can be avoided if the receiver of the communication receives the communication in a place likely to be invaded by such noises.

2. If the listener does not have the professional attitude towards his / her job or the professional training He / She may become inattentive. He / She may not pay the requisite attention to the communication due to boredom or because the subject is not of his / her interest. The kind of behaviour / conduct comes in the category of unprofessionalism. A great manager / leader has to rise above all these factors and pay due attention to whatever is being communicated to him / her.
3. Some receivers suffer from weaknesses like rigid beliefs and non-flexible approach. They are not interested in new ideas. This is also a barrier to communication. The receiver of the communication must rise above all these weaknesses and shows great maturity in receiving and welcoming new ideas and information.
4. Where there is prejudice against the sender, where the receiver mistrusts the sender the message is likely to get distorted. The receiver should have an open mind and a positive attitude. When the receiver shows such attitude of trust and goodwill the communication is successful.

Other barriers to communication

The formal communication network of an organization plays an important role in making the communication successful and effective. If this network limits the flow of communication to an

Direction, downward, upward, horizontal, it affects the proper and smooth flow of communication.

The formal channel of a company must be efficient and error proof. This will eliminate any chance of barrier to communication.

Some organization adopt deceptive tactics by hiding the relevant information wholly or partially. This is a negative approach and amounts to barrier to communication. It is in the overall interest of the company to see that the communication flow freely. It should be honest and frank. Such an attitude pays in the long run.

The ability to plan well, the ability to choose and decide what to say and what not to say is a great virtue of the sender. It helps in the smooth flow of communication.

Since effective communication plays an important role in the successful conduct of an organization it becomes incumbent on both the sender and the receiver to make the communication efficient by eliminating all barriers to communication.

Overcoming barriers to communication

The following steps can help to overcome the barriers to communication:

1. The sender must plan his message keeping in mind the cultural, social, geographical and educational background of the receiver.
2. The sender of the message should create an atmosphere of friendliness and mutual trust through the use of polite language and kind gestures.
3. The sender must give consideration to 'what to convey' 'where to convey' and 'when to convey'.
4. In case of face-to-face interaction the addresser should reinforce his/her words with action.

5. The message to be communicated must be clear. Simplicity of language will ensure clarity of the message. The sender should use only denotative word. Connotations suggest some extra meaning and may create confusion in the mind of the receiver.

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