

# Factors Affecting Communication

## Fastrack REVISION

- ▶ Communication is the exchange of ideas, facts, attitudes and wishes between or among human beings. This exchange becomes fruitful only when the receiver understands the meaning of the message in the way the sender encoded.
- ▶ The perspective of communication not only checks the way the message transmits information and influences the individual; it also examines the way that message creates, sustains and changes cultures and communities.
- ▶ Communication is one of the most crucial systems which needs to be developed in all the areas. It does not matter how good, well-formed and well developed the communication system is, obstacles that hamper its effectiveness do occur within the system. These barriers can be avoidable or unavoidable depending on various factors, therefore, an individual should imbibe all the required skills, attitudes and traits so that he/she can effectively overcome these barriers in communication.
- ▶ **Factors Affecting Communication:** The main aim of any communication is for the receiver to interpret the message as encoded by the sender. Because of a few distortions in the process of communication, the goal is often not achieved. Communication barriers are the things or conditions that obstruct the communication. Being able to recognise and understand those barriers will eventually help in defeating and overcoming them.
  - ▶ **Language:** The process of communication is both verbal and written. In all the types of communication, language is the vehicle of thought. If there are huge differences between the sender and receiver, in terms of language and if the sender is not aware of them while sending the message, communication will surely get affected. Poor choice of words, weak sentence structure and inappropriate punctuation also hamper the communication.
  - ▶ **Feeling:** The psychological state of the communicator as well as the receiver will definitely influence how the message is sent, received and perceived. The process of communication becomes more effective when the sender shows enthusiasm and the receiver is receptive. The mood and feelings of both the parties, thus, affect the process of communication.
  - ▶ **Environment:** All the factors that affect communication are not caused by people. There are many environmental factors that hamper the effectiveness of communication. Messages may get blocked or misinterpreted due to environmental factors like location or situation where the communication takes place.
  - ▶ **Visual Perception:** The visual perception refers to the brain's ability to make sense of what the eyes see. Perception is the processing, interpreting, selecting and organising of information. Your thought about your classmates that he/she is intelligent and smart because he/she wears spectacles could be incorrect. Human beings can filter information to match it with their own thoughts, beliefs and judgements. What you see and interpret, is not always true.
  - ▶ **Past Experience:** The impact of previous communication strongly determines the effectiveness of further communication between the same sender and receiver. If the past experience has been bitter, the future communication between them will surely be ineffective. If someone has had an awful experience in the past related to some particular situation, one would avoid communication in that situation.
  - ▶ **Prejudices:** Prejudice is a 'negative attitude towards someone or a group' based on little or no experience. Prejudice means 'prejudgement'. It grows from stereotypes or the beliefs about specific groups of people. These beliefs promote prejudice and discrimination. It is used in reference to a preconceived judgement of someone due to their social class, gender, race, ethnicity, disability, age, gender, religion, etc. People who believe that they are prejudiced have difficulty in performing to the best of their ability.
- ▶ **Types of Communications Barriers**
  - ▶ **Linguistic Barriers:** Language is one of the main barriers that limits and hampers the effectiveness of communication. It is the most important tool of communication. Almost every area or region in the world has its own distinct language or dialect which may render communication ineffective.





- **Psychological Barriers:** There are various mental and psychological issues that may be barriers to effective communication. The psychological state of the communicator as well as the receiver definitely influences how the message is sent, received and perceived.
- **Emotional Barriers:** The Emotional Quotient (EQ) of a person determines the comfort and ease with which they can communicate. A person who is emotionally mature will be able to communicate more effectively. On the other hand, people who let their emotions take over will face certain difficulties. For example, when we are angry, it is easy to say things that we may regret later and also misinterpret what others are saying.
- **Physical Barriers:** Physical barriers such as noise, environment, surroundings, etc., are the most obvious barriers to effective communication. Messages may get blocked or misinterpreted due to the location or situation where the communication takes place. For example, if you have a meeting in a restaurant, the environment ambience, loud music, large crowd, etc., can cause distractions or discomfort.
- **Cultural Barriers:** As a result of globalisation, we have people from several parts of the world working together. Different cultures have a different meaning for several basic values of society. Dressing, religion, thoughts, food, drinks and the general behaviour are drastically different in one culture from another. Therefore, it is important that we take these different cultures into consideration while communicating. This is known as being culturally appropriate.
- **Attitudinal Barriers:** Some people like working alone and remain to themselves. These people are introverts and not very social. Others like to be social or sometimes over friendly. Both these cases may become a barrier to communication. Attitude issues like ego and inconsiderate behaviour can also cause severe strains in the communication channels. Personality traits like shyness, anger and social anxiety may be worked upon and there are various courses and training available for the same. Whereas, traits such as egocentric behaviour and selfishness may not be correctable.
- **Perception Barriers:** Perception is understanding of the world around us. Everyone perceives the world in a unique way and interprets what has been perceived in yet another unique way. Same message can be interpreted differently by different people. Different people perceive the same things differently.
- **Physiological Barriers:** Certain disorders, diseases or other physical limitations may also hamper the effectiveness of communication between various channels. The shrillness of voice, dyslexia, hyperactivity or even headache are examples of physiological barriers to effective communication. However, these barriers are not critical as these can easily be compensated, removed, repaired and worked upon.
- **Technological Barriers:** Technology at all levels is developing at a very rapid rate and as a result, it becomes difficult to keep up with. Therefore, sometimes technological advancement may become a barrier. Excessive use of electronic communications has also hindered our verbal skills and emotional intelligence.
- **Stereotyping and Prejudice as Barriers:** Stereotyping causes us to epitomise or symbolise a person, a group, an event or a thing on oversimplified ideas, beliefs or opinions. People, who believe are prejudiced, have difficulty in performing to the best of their ability. We are prejudiced when we start relating a person to someone else in the past. Prejudices like Basketball players are stereotyped as tall and young people are more energetic than the old, are common. Stereotyping can substitute our thinking, analysis and open-mindedness to a new situation.

## Practice Exercise

### ? Multiple

#### Choice Questions

Q 1. Which of the following checks the perspective of communication?

- a. The way a message is created and sent
- b. The way a message is perceived and sustained
- c. The way it has influenced people
- d. All of the above

Q 2. Which of the following is the cause for a message to become ineffective?

- a. Poor vocabulary and weak sentences
- b. Lot of jargon and local colloquialism
- c. Both a. and b.
- d. None of the above

Q 3. Visual Perception depends upon which of the following things?

- a. What the eyes see
- b. What the ears hear
- c. What the nose smells
- d. What the hands touch





- Q 4. Prejudice is a negative attitude towards someone or a group based on our .....  
 a. relationship                      b. behaviour  
 c. societal norms                      d. experience
- Q 5. The improper usage of which of the following things may change the complete meaning of a sentence?  
 a. Grammar                              b. Punctuation  
 c. Tense                                      d. All of these
- Q 6. Communication becomes fruitful only when:  
 a. the sender sends it effectively  
 b. the receiver receives it  
 c. the receiver understands the message in the way the sender encoded it  
 d. None of the above
- Q 7. The barriers/obstructions make the process of communication:  
 a. Ineffective                              b. effective  
 c. Interesting                              d. lengthy
- Q 8. The factor that is not caused by people to affect communication is:  
 a. visual perception                      b. feelings  
 c. prejudice                              d. environment
- Q 9. The conception of an idea is always a result of:  
 a. visual perception                      b. environment  
 c. past experience                      d. feelings
- Q 10. When we categorise people on the basis of prejudice, we stop treating them as:  
 a. human beings                              b. superiors  
 c. Individuals                              d. All of these
- Q 11. Which of these are ways to overcome communication barriers?  
 a. Respecting each other's differences  
 b. Using a translator  
 c. Not communicating at all  
 d. Both a. and b.
- Q 12. Which of the following statements about the communication is correct?  
 a. The study of communication is imperative  
 b. It is one of the most crucial systems  
 c. Developing communication skills can benefit us in all aspects of life  
 d. All of the above

- Q 16. The ..... that comes to our mind on seeing something is our perception.
- Q 17. Perception is the processing, interpreting, ..... and ..... information.

## ? Assertion and Reason

### Type Questions

**Directions (Q. Nos. 18-21):** In the questions given below, there are two statements marked as Assertion (A) and Reason (R). Read the statements and choose the correct option.

- a. Both Assertion (A) and Reason (R) are true and Reason (R) is the correct explanation of Assertion (A).  
 b. Both Assertion (A) and Reason (R) are true, but Reason (R) is not correct explanation of Assertion (A).  
 c. Assertion (A) is true, but Reason (R) is false.  
 d. Assertion (A) is false, but Reason (R) is true.
- Q 18. **Assertion (A):** The perspective of communication not only checks the way the message transmits information and influences the individual; it also examines the way that message creates, sustains and changes cultures and communities.  
**Reason (R):** Communication is one of the most crucial systems which needs to be developed in all the areas.
- Q 19. **Assertion (A):** The main aim of any communication is for the sender to interpret the message as encoded by the receiver.  
**Reason (R):** Communication barriers are the things or conditions that obstruct the communication.
- Q 20. **Assertion (A):** The psychological state of the communicator as well as the receiver will definitely influence how the message is sent, received and perceived.  
**Reason (R):** A message that has a lot of jargon and abbreviations will be understood by a receiver who is not familiar with the language used.
- Q 21. **Assertion (A):** A tired speaker, an over-worked writer, and a bored listener cannot do justice to the process of communication, no matter how good their intentions are.  
**Reason (R):** There are many environmental factors that hamper the effectiveness of communication.

## ? Fill in the Blanks

### Type Questions

- Q 13. The perspective of communication explores the ....., ....., medium and ..... of the message.
- Q 14. Direct communication is possible only when the sender and receiver ....., ....., ..... and ..... the same language.
- Q 15. Team meetings should be conducted in a room which is neither too ....., nor too .....

## Answers

1. (d) 2. (c) 3. (a) 4. (d) 5. (d) 6. (c)  
 7. (a) 8. (d) 9. (c) 10. (c) 11. (d) 12. (d)  
 13. form, content, pattern  
 14. speak, read, write, understand  
 15. warm, cold  
 16. first thought  
 17. selecting, organising  
 18. (b) 19. (d) 20. (c) 21. (b)



## ? Case Study Based

Questions

### Case Study 1

Effective communication in the workplace is not always straightforward and barriers can easily get in the way. They cause messages to become distorted, subsequently leading to confusion, misunderstanding and even offense in some cases. There are many reasons why interpersonal communications may fail. In many communications, the message may not be received exactly the way the sender intended and hence it is important that the communicator seeks feedback to check that their message is clearly understood.

There exist many barriers to communication and these may occur at any stage in the communication process. Barriers may lead to your message becoming distorted and you therefore risk wasting both time and/or money by causing confusion and misunderstanding. Effective communication involves overcoming these barriers and conveying a clear and concise message.

**Q 1. The inability to communicate using a language is known as .....**

- a. Physical Barrier
- b. Linguistic Barrier
- c. Interpersonal Barrier
- d. Organisational Barrier

**Q 2. People of different cultures are unable to communicate due to .....**

- a. Physical Barrier
- b. Linguistic Barrier
- c. Cultural Barriers
- d. Organisational Barrier

**Q 3. Which of these are ways to overcome language barriers?**

- a. Respecting each other's differences
- b. Using a translator
- c. Not communicating at all
- d. Using your own language for comfort

**Q 4. Which of these is NOT a common communication barrier?**

- a. Linguistic barrier
- b. Interpersonal barrier
- c. Financial barrier
- d. Organisational barrier

### Answers

1. (b) 2. (c) 3. (b) 4. (c)

### Case Study 2

Barriers to communication are things that get in the way of a message being received. They could be physical, such as loud music playing, or emotional, such as when a person is too angry or fearful to listen to what another individual is saying. Culture, language and social status can also represent barriers to effective communication. Managers need to be aware of barriers and how to overcome them to improve the communication process. Some common barriers to effective communication include:

- (i) The use of jargon. Over-complicated or unfamiliar terms.
- (ii) Emotional barriers and taboos.
- (iii) Lack of attention, interest, distractions or irrelevance to the receiver.
- (iv) Differences in perception and viewpoint.
- (v) Physical disabilities such as hearing problems or speech difficulties.
- (vi) Physical barriers to non-verbal communication.
- (vii) Language differences and the difficulty in understanding unfamiliar accents.

**Q 1. What do you mean by jargon?**

**Q 2. What is linguistic barrier?**

**Q 3. Write some examples of emotional barriers.**

**Q 4. What do you mean by Physical barriers?**

### Answers

- 1. Jargon is the language of specialised terms used by a group or profession.
- 2. Linguistic barriers are simply obstacles that arise during language use.
- 3. Anger, frustration, humour, sadness are some examples of emotional barriers.
- 4. Physical barriers such as noise, environment, surroundings, etc., are the most obvious barriers to effective communication.

## ? Very Short Answer

Type Questions

**Q 1. What do you understand by communication barriers?**

**Ans.** The communication barriers are the things or conditions that obstruct communication.

**Q 2. Enlist any two things that make the comprehension of message difficult for the receiver.**

**Ans.** The two things that make the comprehension of message difficult for the receiver are:

- (i) Difficult language
- (ii) Use of jargon and local colloquialism

**Q 3. What do you understand by visual perception?**

**Ans.** The first thought or thing that comes to our mind on seeing anything is known as visual perception.



**Q 4. What do you understand by the term prejudice?**

**Ans.** Prejudice is a negative attitude towards someone or a group based on little or no experience.

**Q 5. How does prejudice affect our communication?**

**Ans.** Prejudice forms an opinion about the person. When we communicate, we already have a notion about the receiver's ability. This notion may cause overconfidence or may lead to a poor perception of the receiver. This prejudgment affects communication.

**Q 6. What is the perspective of communication?**

**Ans.** The perspective of communication checks the way a message transmits information and influences an individual. It also examines the way that message creates, sustains and changes cultures and communities.

**Q 7. Discuss the role of environment in communication.**

**Ans.** Environment plays a significant role in achieving the aim of communication. If it is not taken care of, it can easily obstruct the effectiveness of communication. If the sender or the receiver are not comfortable with the surroundings where the communication takes place, the communication will surely be affected.

**Q 8. Why is it important to study the process of communication?**

**Ans.** Communication is a vital life skill and developing it can benefit us in all aspects of life, both professional and social. Moreover, good communication skills are very important for overall development and success.

**Q 9. What do you understand by barriers to communication?**

**Ans.** Barriers to communication means complete clarity of the meaning and understanding does not occur. The intended communicate will often be disturbed and twisted leading to a condition of misunderstanding and will make the entire process of communication futile.

**Q 10. Write the names of any four different types of barriers to effective communication.**

**Ans.** The names of any four different types of barriers to effective communication are as follows:

- (i) Linguistic barriers
- (ii) Emotional barriers
- (iii) Physical barriers
- (iv) Cultural barriers

**Q 11. Name some of the psychological barriers which can mislead the process of communication.**

**Ans.** Some psychological barriers which can mislead the process of communication are:

- (i) Negative body image
- (ii) Stigma
- (iii) Fear of failure
- (iv) Lack of confidence

## ? Short Answer

### Type Questions

**Q 1. How do the barriers to communication affect the process of communication?**

**Ans.** Barriers can damage the clarity and the meaning of the message. The intended communicate will often be disturbed and twisted leading to a condition of misunderstanding and will make the entire process of communication futile. These barriers can block, filter or distort the message as it is encoded and sent, as well as when it is decoded and received.

**Q 2. What is the importance of language in the process of communication?**

**Ans.** Language is the most important tool of communication. It is the basic and the vital element which makes the process of communication possible. It helps us to learn and transmit knowledge and express feelings, ideas and emotions to others. Language is the key to the social lives of humans. We can use it as an instrument to transfer communication among people.

**Q 3. What do you understand by Linguistic Barrier?**

**Ans.** Language is one of the main barriers that limits and hampers the effectiveness of communication. It is the most important tool of communication. Almost every area or region in the world has its own distinct language or dialect which may render communication ineffective.

**Q 4. Explain Psychological Barriers.**

**Ans.** There are various mental and psychological issues that may be barriers to effective communication. The psychological state of the communicator as well as the receiver definitely influences how the message is sent, received and perceived. Some people may have a stage fear, speech disorders, phobia, depression, stress, etc. All these conditions are very difficult to manage sometimes and will surely limit the ease of communication.

**Q 5. What do you understand by the term EQ in communication?**

**Ans.** EQ stands for Emotional Quotient. The Emotional Quotient (EQ) of a person determines the comfort and ease with which they can communicate. A person who is emotionally mature will be able to communicate more effectively. On the other hand, people who let their emotions take over will face certain difficulties. For example, when we are angry, it is easy to say things that we may regret later and also misinterpret what others are saying.



# CHAPTER TEST

## Multiple Choice Questions

- Q 1. Which of the following things may make the entire process of communication futile?
- Noise and distraction
  - Wrong interpretation of the message and faulty channel/medium
  - Both a. and b
  - None of the above
- Q 2. Which of the following situation can impede the process of communication?
- Unwell sender or receiver
  - Loud music
  - Faulty channel
  - All of the above
- Q 3. Which of these is not a common communication barrier?
- Linguistic barrier
  - Interpersonal barrier
  - Financial barrier
  - Organisational barrier
- Q 4. Which of the following is an example of psychological barrier to communication?
- Foreign language
  - Stress and anxiety
  - Stereotyping
  - Dyslexia

## Fill in the Blanks

- Q 5. Communication is the creation and ..... of meaning.
- Q 6. Communication barriers ..... the process of communication.
- Q 7. Communication becomes more effective when the sender shows ..... and the receiver is .....
- Q 8. Prejudice means .....

## Assertion-Reason Type Questions

Directions (Q. Nos. 9-10): In the questions given below, there are two statements marked as Assertion (A) and Reason (R). Read the statements and choose the correct option.

- Both Assertion (A) and Reason (R) are true and Reason (R) is the correct explanation of Assertion (A).
  - Both Assertion (A) and Reason (R) are true, but Reason (R) is not correct explanation of Assertion (A).
  - Assertion (A) is true, but Reason (R) is false.
  - Assertion (A) is false, but Reason (R) is true.
- Q 9. Assertion (A): The impact of previous communication strongly determines the effectiveness of further communication between the same sender and receiver.  
Reason (R): Environment is the processing, interpreting, selecting and organising of information.

- Q 10. Assertion (A): When we categorize people on the basis of such beliefs, we do not consider them as unique individuals.  
Reason (R): Everyone has their own perception. We all see and take things from our own perspectives.

## Case Study Based Questions

- Q 11. There are many reasons why interpersonal communications may fail. In many communications, the message (what is said) may not be received exactly the way the sender intended. It is, therefore, important that the communicator seeks feedback to check that their message is clearly understood.

The skills of Active Listening, Clarification and Reflection may help but the skilled communicator also needs to be aware of the barriers to effective communication and how to avoid or overcome them. There are many barriers to communication and these may occur at any stage in the communication process. Barriers may lead to your message becoming distorted and you therefore risk wasting both time and/or money by causing confusion and misunderstanding. Effective communication involves overcoming these barriers and conveying a clear and concise message.

- Which of the following ways help to overcome barriers to effective communication?
  - Use simple language
  - Take help of a translator to overcome differences in language
  - Use visuals
  - All of the above
- Environmental barriers are the same as ..... noise.
  - Physiological
  - psychological
  - physical
  - sociological
- What if the full form of EQ?
  - Emotional Questions
  - Emotional Quotient
  - Emotional Queries
  - Emotional Quote
- The shrillness of voice, dyslexia, hyperactivity or even headache are examples of .....
  - Physiological Barriers
  - Linguistic Barriers
  - Cultural Barriers
  - Organisational Barriers

- Q 12. We communicate with people throughout each and every day. We communicate through conversation, our expressions and body language, social media, email, telephone, etc. We rely on our communication skills to further our friendships, plan vacations, repair marriages, order dinner,

purchase a car, express our opinions, ask for help, negotiate deals, accept job offers, etc.

Since we communicate so frequently through various modes, we should be experts. We're not. The Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) surveyed 400 companies with 1,00,000 or more employees. SHRM found that the companies reported losing \$62.4 million per year in revenue due to poor communication. That's \$62.4 million per company, which totals more than \$24 billion dollars.

The process of communication has multiple barriers. The intended communicate will often be disturbed and distorted leading to a condition of misunderstanding and failure of communication. The Barriers to effective communication could be of many types like linguistic, psychological, emotional, physical and cultural etc.

(i) **What is the full form of SHRM?**

(ii) **How many companies are surveyed by SHRM?**

(iii) **What is the main reason reported for losing revenue by the companies per year?**

(iv) **What do you mean by perception in communication?**

### **Very Short Answer Type Questions**

**Q 13. Why is it important to have a right attitude for effective communication?**

**Q 14. Write some examples of physiological barriers.**

**Q 15. Define the term shrillness.**

**Q 16. Explain the term Dyslexia.**

**Q 17. How language as barrier to communication, may be avoided?**

**Q 18. Write any two measures to overcome barriers in effective communication.**

### **Short Answer Type Questions**

**Q 19. Explain Cultural Barriers.**

**Q 20. Explain Physical Barriers to the effective communication.**

**Q 21. What do you mean by Perception Barrier?**

