

In-service Education Packet Communication Barriers



Communication is a process beginning with a sender who encodes the message and passes it through some channel to the receiver who decodes the message.

Communication is fruitful if and only if the messages sent by the sender is interpreted with same meaning by the receiver. If any kind of disturbance blocks any step of communication, the message will be destroyed. Due to such disturbances, managers in an organization face severe problems. Thus the managers must locate such barriers and take steps to get rid of them.

Effective communication requires messages to be conveyed clearly between communicators, but along the way there are many communication barriers that can create misunderstandings and misinterpretations of your message.

There are several barriers that affects the flow of communication in an organization. These barriers interrupt the flow of communication from the sender to the receiver, thus making communication ineffective. It is essential for managers to overcome these barriers. The main barriers of communication are summarized below.

Successful communication requires knowing what barriers to communication exist and how to navigate around these roadblocks.

Physical Barriers – These barriers are those that separate people from each other and mark territories. This type of barrier can often be seen in the workplace where offices and closed doors stop communication.

Language Barriers – Not using words another can understand will certainly stop your message from being conveyed. This not only applies to actual languages, but that of expressions, buzz words, and other jargon. If one is not familiar with your language, misinterpretation will occur.

Gender Barriers – Variation exists among masculine and feminine styles of communication. While women often emphasize politeness, empathy, and rapport building, male communication is often more direct. Meshing these two styles without awareness could be become a barrier.

Interpersonal Barriers – These are barriers are created to distance themselves from others. These can be done through withdrawal, meaningless rituals which keep one devoid of real contact, superficial activities through pastimes, and more.

Perceptual Barriers – Different world views can create misunderstanding. Without thinking, one might only view a message from their mindset rather than looking to see it from another viewpoint.

Cultural Barriers – Ethnic, religious, and social differences can often create misunderstandings when trying to communicate. These differences can also affect perceptual factors, as mentioned above.

Emotional Barriers – Trouble listening can occur if one is consumed with emotion. Hostility, anger, fear, and other emotions make it hard to hear outside of one's self.

Overcoming these barriers to communication is no easy task. It takes great awareness and a willingness to adapt and look at communication from new perspectives. But, if you begin to focus on how these communication barriers are affecting your everyday conversation, you will be well on your way to becoming an effective communicator.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Written communication has great significance in today's business world. It is an innovative activity of the mind.

Effective written communication is essential for preparing worthy promotional materials for business development. Speech came before writing. But writing is more unique and formal than speech. Effective writing involves careful choice of words, their organization in correct order in sentences formation as well as cohesive composition of sentences. Also, writing is more valid and reliable than speech. But while speech is spontaneous, writing causes delay and takes time as feedback is not immediate.

Advantages of Written Communication

- ✓ Written communication helps in laying down apparent principles, policies and rules for running of an organization.
- ✓ It is a permanent means of communication. Thus, it is useful where record maintenance is required.

- ✓ It assists in proper delegation of responsibilities. While in case of oral communication, it is impossible to fix and delegate responsibilities on the grounds of speech as it can be taken back by the speaker or he may refuse to acknowledge.
- ✓ Written communication is more precise and explicit.
- ✓ Effective written communication develops and enhances an organization's image.
- ✓ It provides ready records and references.
- ✓ Legal defenses can depend upon written communication as it provides valid records.

Disadvantages of Written Communication

- ✓ Written communication does not save upon the costs. It costs huge in terms of stationery and the manpower employed in writing/typing and delivering letters.
- ✓ Also, if the receivers of the written message are separated by distance and if they need to clear their doubts, the response is not spontaneous.
- ✓ Written communication is time-consuming as the feedback is not immediate. The encoding and sending of message takes time.
- ✓ Effective written communication requires great skills and competencies in language and vocabulary use. Poor writing skills and quality have a negative impact on organization's reputation.
- ✓ Too much paper work and e-mails burden is involved.

Non Verbal Communication

Non verbal communications is the communication of feelings, emotions, attitudes, and thoughts through body movements / gestures / eye contact, etc.

The components of non verbal communication include:

- **Kinesics:** It is the study of facial expressions, postures & gestures. Did you know that while in Argentina to raise a fist in the air with knuckles pointing outwards expresses victory, in Lebanon, raising a closed fist is considered rude?

- **Oculesics:** It is the study of the role of eye contact in non verbal communication. Did you know that in the first 90 sec - 4 min you decide that you are interested in someone or not. Studies reveal that 50% of this first impression comes from non-verbal communication which includes oculesics. Only 7% of comes from words - that we actually say.
- **Haptics:** It is the study of touching. Did you know that acceptable level of touching vary from one culture to another? In Thailand, touching someone's head may be considered as rude.
- **Proxemics:** It is the study of measurable distance between people as they interact. Did you know that the amount of personal space when having an informal conversation should vary between 18 inches - 4 feet while, the personal distance needed when speaking to a crowd of people should be around 10-12 feet?
- **Chronemics:** It is the study of use of time in non verbal communication. Have you ever observed that while AN employee will not worry about running a few minutes late to meet a colleague, a manager who has a meeting with the CEO, a late arrival will be considered as a nonverbal cue that he / she does not give adequate respect to his superior?
- **Paralinguistics:** It is the study of variations in pitch, speed, volume, and pauses to convey meaning. Interestingly, when the speaker is making a presentation and is looking for a response, he will pause. However, when no response is desired, he will talk faster with minimal pause.
- **Physical Appearance:** Your physical appearance always contributes towards how people perceive you. Neatly combed hair, ironed clothes and a lively smile will always carry more weight than words.

Remember, “what we say” is less important than “how we say it” as words are only 7% of our communication. Understand and enjoy non verbal communication as it helps forming better first impressions.

Language Barriers

Language barrier is a figurative phrase used primarily to indicate the difficulties faced when people who have no language in common attempt to communicate with each other.

More than 46 million people in the United States do not speak English as their primary language, and more than 21 million speak English less than “very well.” Persons who have limited English proficiency are less likely to have a regular source of primary care and are less likely to receive preventive care. They also are less satisfied with the care that they do receive are more likely to report overall problems with care and may be at increased risk of experiencing medical errors.

Since federal laws stipulate no one can be denied or forced to wait for medical care due to language barriers, some healthcare providers resort to secondary strategies like drawings and hand signals to compensate for gaps in communication. Still, the possibility for error is simply too high. To help alleviate these issues, patients are often

urged to bring a bilingual friend or familiar member to explain their medical problems. Hospitals and healthcare facilities, based on the population they serve, translate documents to ensure patients complete all required paperwork properly. Brochures and resources are provided to those who speak limited English to help facilitate their participation in American society and encourage them to take ownership of their health.

Because most health care organizations provide either inadequate interpreter services or no services at all, patients who have limited English proficiency do not receive needed health care or quality health care. Often, persons enlisted to help patients communicate with health care providers are not trained interpreters; instead, they are fellow patients or are family members, friends, untrained nonclinical employees, or non-fluent health care professionals. Reliance on such ad hoc services has been shown to have negative clinical consequences.

Many health care providers do not provide adequate interpreter services because of the financial burden such services impose. However, these providers fail to take into account both the consequences of not providing the services and the potential cost benefits of improving communication with their patients. The failure of health care providers to consider these issues is at least partially attributable to the paucity of data documenting the full costs and benefits of interpreter services. To acquire a better understanding of these costs and benefits, we assessed the impact of implementing a new interpreter service program on the cost and utilization of health care services among patients with limited English proficiency.

Tips for Communicating with Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing People

Deafness is a fact of many people's lives ... more than 22 million Americans have some form of hearing loss. Like their hearing counterparts, deaf people build successful careers, have families, watch television, go to the movies, talk on the telephone, play sports, and travel throughout the world.

Most deaf people don't view their deafness as a disability or as a problem that should be fixed. For many of them, it's a natural part of a cultural experience that they share with friends, both deaf and hearing.

Deaf culture is a sense of community among deaf people. Cultural activities can include communicating in American Sign Language (ASL), sharing information about resources that can enhance deaf people's lives, performing and attending theatrical events with no spoken language, joking about the experience of being deaf, and reflecting on role models and events important to deaf people.

All of us have our own way of doing things, and deaf people are no different. Deaf people communicate in different ways, depending on several factors: age at which deafness began; type of deafness; language skills; amount of residual hearing; speech reading skills; speech abilities; personality; family environment; educational background; and personal preference.

Some deaf people use speech or sign language only ... or a combination of sign language, Finger spelling, and speech ... or writing ... or body language and facial expression. You can communicate with deaf people in several ways. The key is to find out which combination of techniques works best with each deaf person. Keep in mind that it is not how you exchange ideas, but that you do.

To Communicate with a Deaf Person in a One—to-One Situation:

Get the deaf person's attention before speaking. Call out the person's name; if that is not successful, a tap on the shoulder, a wave, or another visual signal usually does the trick.

Key the deaf person in to the topic of discussion. Deaf people need to know what subject matter will be discussed in order to pick up words that help them follow the conversation. This is especially important for deaf people who depend on speechreading.

Speak slowly and clearly, but do not yell, exaggerate, or over pronounce. Exaggeration and overemphasis of words distort lip movements, making speechreading more difficult. Try to enunciate each word without force or tension. Short sentences are easier to understand than long ones.

Look directly at the deaf person when speaking. Avoid turning away to write on the board, look at a computer screen, or pull something from a file while speaking.

Do not place anything in your mouth when speaking. Mustaches that obscure the lips, smoking, pencil chewing, and putting your hands in front of your face all make it difficult for deaf people to follow what is being said.

Maintain eye contact with the deaf person. Eye contact conveys the feeling of direct communication. Even if an interpreter is present, continue to speak directly to the deaf person. He/she will turn to the interpreter as needed.

Use the words —I'll and —you'll when communicating through an interpreter, not "Tell him..." or "Does she understand?"

Avoid standing in front of a light source, such as a window or bright light. The glare and shadows created on the face make it almost impossible for the deaf person to speech read.

First repeat, then try to rephrase a thought if you have problems being understood, rather than repeating the same words again. If the person only missed one or two words the first time, one repetition usually helps. Don't hesitate to communicate by pencil and paper if necessary, as particular combinations of lip movements sometimes are difficult to speech read. Getting the message across is more important than the medium used.

Use pantomime, body language, and facial expression to help supplement your communication. A lively speaker always is more interesting to watch.

Be courteous to the deaf person during conversation. If the telephone rings or someone knocks at the door, excuse yourself and tell the deaf person that you are answering the phone or responding to the knock. Do not ignore the deaf person and carry on a conversation with someone else while the deaf person waits.

Use open-ended questions that must be answered by more than “yes” or “no”. Do not assume that deaf people have understood your message if they nod their heads in acknowledgement. A coherent response to an open-ended question ensures that your information has been communicated.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guarantees equal opportunities in the workplace for people with disabilities. Accommodations made will vary depending on deaf employees’ job responsibilities, technical skills, and communication preferences as well as the characteristics of the organization.

It generally is not necessary to make major modifications in the work area to accommodate a deaf employee. There are some things you can do, however, to make the work area more accessible and therefore more comfortable for a deaf employee.

Consider the deaf person’s sensitivity to noise. It is a myth that deaf people can work in noisy environments that hearing people cannot tolerate. Most deaf people have some residual hearing and are bothered by loud noises. A noisy environment may create a barrier to communication for someone who wears a hearing aid. Loud or background noises can interfere with and distort the sound amplification of a person’s hearing aid, making speech discrimination difficult. Loud noises also may further damage whatever residual hearing the deaf person has.

Consider the buddy system for a new deaf employee. This can make the job transition much easier for the deaf person. A co-worker can be asked to check a deaf employee’s awareness of emergency situations, such as fires or evacuation.

Use signaling devices if a deaf employee works alone in an area. Most of these devices are inexpensive and can be incorporated easily into existing alarm systems. Alarms to warn of fire or gas leaks by use of a flashing light and audio signal can plug into regular electrical outlets. Other devices indicate machine malfunction, doorbells, and ringing telephones.

Minimize vibration in the work area. Vibration can distort the sound being received by a hearing aid, making it difficult for the deaf person to concentrate on work or a conversation. Since it is not always possible to eliminate vibration, it is best to arrange meetings in a location where vibration can be minimized.

Use visual clues to enhance communication. Use of a round or oval table during meetings will facilitate the line of sight between people, as will semicircular seating arrangements. Open doors or panels in offices allow deaf people to see into rooms before entering. A good line of sight between the deaf employee and the secretary also will facilitate telephone communication.

Use paging devices to contact deaf employees in the field. Radio frequencies have been set aside by the Federal Communications Commission to permit the use of “tactile pagers” vibrating paging devices that can be used to contact or warn deaf employees in the field or in remote locations. Such pagers usually can be incorporated into existing security paging systems.

Always ask deaf people if they prefer written communication. Do not assume that this is the preferred method. When using writing as a form of communication with deaf people, take into consideration English reading and writing skills. Their skills may depend on whether they were born deaf or became deaf later in life, what teaching method was used in their education, and which communication method they prefer.

Keep your message short and simple. Establish the subject area, avoid assumptions, and make your sentences concise.

It is not necessary to write out every word. Short phrases or a few words often are sufficient to transfer the information.

Do not use yes or no questions. Open-ended questions ensure a response that allows you to see if your message was received correctly.

Face the deaf person after you have written your message. If you can see each other’s facial expressions, communication will be easier and more accurate.

Use visual representations if you are explaining specific or technical vocabulary to a deaf person. Drawings and diagrams can help the person comprehend the information.

COMMUNICATIONS BARRIERS AND CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

In order to provide optimal quality care to our patients/clients, the Agency will facilitate communication with sensory-impaired patients/clients and patients/clients with limited formal education. The Agency shall attempt to arrange for bilingual staff members or an interpreter to work with non-English speaking patients/clients.

1. When the Agency assigns a staff member who does not speak the patient/client's language, the Agency will provide the services of a qualified interpreter at no charge to the patient at any home visit. The Limited English Proficiency (LEP) person may prefer or request to use a family member, friend or significant other. Children and other patients will not be used to interpret in order to ensure confidentiality of information and accurate communication.
2. Interpreters will be used when no one is available in the home to provide interpretive services.
3. Cultural considerations for all patients/clients shall be respected and observed. Where such considerations impede the provision of prescribed health care or treatment, personnel shall notify the supervisor and physician in an effort to accommodate the patient/client.
4. Every effort will be made to obtain the services of an available interpreter when necessary for persons using sign language. The Agency will advise/refer regarding telecommunications devised for the deaf.
5. Educational materials, visual aids and/or special devices will be used as needed to facilitate communication.
6. Written and verbal communication will be at an educational level that the patient/client will understand.
7. When a significant portion of the caseload does not speak English, written materials are provided in a language understandable to patients/clients.
8. Obtaining an outside interpreter if a qualified interpreter on staff is not available. An interpreter will be obtained from one of the following:

Accredited Language Services - 1-800-322-0284
Verbatim Solutions 1-800-575-5702
www.languageline.com
9. Communicating with persons who are deaf or hard of hearing the agency will use the state relay system.

Communication Barriers Post Test

Employee name: _____

Date: _____

Score: _____

1. Communication is a process beginning with a sender who encodes the message and passes it through some channel to the receiver who decodes the message.
 - a. True
 - b. False

2. What is considered some roadblocks to communication?
 - a. Physical barriers
 - b. Language barriers
 - c. Gender barriers
 - d. All of the above

3. The Limited English Proficiency (LEP) person may prefer or request to use whom to interpret for them?
 - a. Friend
 - b. Family member
 - c. Significant other
 - d. Any of the above

4. If the patient/client needs an interpreter provided who pays for the interpreter?

- 5. Who should not be used as an interpreter?**
- a. A minor**
 - b. Another patient**
 - c. Someone the patient/client approves**
 - d. A and B**
- 6. What documents, if needed, be converted to the patient/clients native language?**
- a. Information/Admission packet**
 - b. Consents**
 - c. Bill of Rights**
 - d. Grievance procedure**
 - e. All of the above**
- 7. What type of laws stipulate that no one can be denied or forced to wait for medical care due to language barriers?**
-
- 8. What federal agency guarantees equal opportunities in the workplace for people with disabilities?**
-
- 9. What items are used to facilitate communications?**
- a. educational materials**
 - b. visual aids**
 - c. special devices**
 - d. all of the above**

10. What are some techniques that can be used to communicate with the deaf person?

- a. Get the deaf person's attention before speaking.**
- b. Look directly at the deaf person when speaking.**
- c. Do not place anything in your mouth when speaking.**
- d. All of the above**