

Paper –Principles and Practice of Management

Dr. James Hussain

Paper Code-MB-101,

Assistant Professor (Guest Faculty)

MBA, Sem-I

[Email,-mbajames123@gmail.com](mailto:mbajames123@gmail.com)

Topic- Barriers in Communication

is probably no surprise that managers frequently cite communication breakdown as one of their major problems. The problem of communication arises because there are various obstacles which may entirely prevent a communication, filter part of it out, or give it incorrect meaning. These obstacles are known as communication barriers. These barriers may operate in organisational communication as well as in non-organisational communication. Different barriers of communication may be grouped as semantic barriers, emotional or psychological barriers, organisational barriers, and personal barriers. Some of these barriers operate in all types of communication while others may be more relevant for organisational communication.

SEMANTIC BARRIERS

Semantics is the science of meaning, as contrasted with phonetics, the science of sounds. All communications are symbolic, that is, these use symbols (words, pictures, actions, etc.) that suggest certain meanings. Semantic barriers arise from limitations in the symbols with which we communicate.

EMOTIONAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS

Emotional or psychological factors are the prime barriers in interpersonal communication. The meaning ascribed to a message depends upon the emotional or psychological status of both the parties involved. In a communication, apart from the message, there is a meta message, that is,

what one gets out of a message when decoding. Meta-message is the most pungent thing in a sweet-word language. In getting a meta-message, the emotions of the receiver play a vital role and he may not be at a wavelength as that of the communicator Keith Davis opines that these "exist in the people's minds or because of their actions such as being hard to contact or difficult to understand. These barriers to communication are just as effective as an actual physical wall.

ORGANISATIONAL BARRIERS

An organisation being a deliberate creation for the attainment of certain specified objectives, day-to-day happenings within it require being regulated in such a manner that they contribute to attain these objectives in the most efficient manner. This is usually through a variety of official measures such as designing the organisational arrangements for performance of various activities, prescribing various policies, rules, regulations, and attempted procedures, laying down of norms of behaviour, Instituting a reward and punishment system. etc.

PERSONAL BARRIERS

While the organisational factors discussed above are, no doubt, important influences operating on communication, a host of factors internal to the two parties-sender and receiver to this process also exert important influences on its operation, as communication is basically an interpersonal process. Here, for the sake of convenience in the analysis, these barriers have been analysed separately and these are relevant in the case of downward and upward communication.

Barriers in Superiors

The role of superiors in communication is very vital. Because of their hierarchical relationships with subordinates, they act as barriers in a number of ways discussed below

1. Attitudes of Superiors. The attitudes of superiors towards communication in general or in any particular direction affect the flow of messages in different directions. For example, if this attitude is unfavourable, there is greater possibility that messages would not flow adequately from and/or to superiors.
2. Fear of Challenge to Authority. A person in the organisation always tries to get a higher position and prestige to satisfy his needs. As such, managers in general try to withhold the information coming down the line or going up as frequent passing of information may disclose their weakness.
3. Insistence on Proper Channel. One of the basic features of superiors exercising the authority is that they wish to remain in communication links and they do not like any type of bypassing in communication. Communication through bypassing may, sometimes, be necessary but superiors treat this as thwarting of their authority and block the flow a communication.
4. Lack of Confidence in Subordinates. Superiors generally perceive, correct or otherwise that their subordinates are less competent and capable, they are not able to advise superior or they may not have some information coming upwards.