

BUSINESS VITAMINS

Communication Barriers

Introduction

Communication is an integral instinct of all living things. At its simplest, communication is any exchange of information between two entities, challenges to effective communication are more obvious than ever before. The intended communicate will often be disturbed and distorted leading to a condition of misunderstanding and failure of communication. Communication barriers are anything within your organization that prevents people from receiving or understanding messages, ideas, and information. These barriers can also prevent messages from being sent effectively, causing a disconnect within the company. It can include any parameter that limits the purpose or channel of communication between the transmitter and the receiver. Also, it can be anything that prevents or disables communicators to deliver the right message to the right person at the right time, or a receiver to get the right message at the right time. 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. The Barriers to effective communication could be of many types like linguistic, psychological, emotional, physical, and cultural etc. Hence it is important that the communicator seeks feedback to check that their message is clearly understood.

Definition

Communication Barriers are anything that hinders or disable the Communicators to deliver the right message to the receiver.

When to use it

Tackling communication barriers prevents us to have miscommunication and allow us to make sure that the right message was received by the receiver.

Details

The process of communication has multiple barriers. There are many reasons why interpersonal communications may fail to provide the rightful message on time to the receiver. Here some common Barriers to effective communication:

Language Barriers:

Clearly, language and linguistic ability may act as a barrier to communication. However, even when communicating in the same language, the terminology used in a message may act as a barrier if it is not fully understood by the receiver(s). For example, a message that includes a lot of specialist jargon and abbreviations will not be understood by a receiver who is not familiar with the terminology used. As nurses, we are especially prone to making this mistake. We must remember to use language that can be understood by the receiver.

Psychological Barriers

The psychological state of the receiver will influence how the message is received. For example, if someone has personal worries and is stressed, they may be preoccupied by personal concerns and not as receptive to the message as if they were not stressed. Stress management is an important personal skill that affects our interpersonal relationships. Anger is another example of a psychological barrier to communication. When we are angry it is easy to say things that we may later regret and also to misinterpret what others are saying. More generally, people with low self-esteem may be less assertive and therefore may not feel comfortable communicating - they may feel shy about saying how they really feel, or read negative sub-texts into messages they hear. Physiological Barriers - Physiological barriers may result from the receiver's physical state. For example, a receiver with reduced hearing may not grasp the entirety of a spoken conversation, especially if there is significant background noise.

Physical Barriers

An example of a physical barrier to communication is geographic distance between the sender and receiver(s). Communication is generally easier over shorter distances as more communication channels are available and less technology is required. Although modern technology often serves to reduce the impact of physical barriers, the advantages and disadvantages of each communication channel should be understood so that an appropriate channel can be used to overcome the physical barriers.

Attitudinal Barriers

Attitudinal barriers are behaviors or perceptions that prevent people from communicating effectively. Attitudinal barriers to communication may result from personality conflicts, poor management, resistance to change, or a lack of motivation. Effective receivers of messages should attempt to overcome their own attitudinal barriers to facilitate effective communication.

EXAMPLES:

Some examples of common barriers to effective communication include:

- The use of jargon. Over-complicated or unfamiliar terms.
- Emotional barriers and taboos.
- Lack of attention, interest, distractions, or irrelevance to the receiver.
- Differences in perception and viewpoint.
- Physical disabilities such as hearing problems or speech difficulties.
- Physical barriers to non-verbal communication.
- Language differences and the difficulty in understanding unfamiliar accents.
- Expectations and prejudices which may lead to false assumptions or stereotyping. People often hear what they expect to hear rather than what is actually said and jump to incorrect conclusions.
- Cultural differences. The norms of social interaction vary greatly in different cultures, as do the way in which emotions are expressed. For example, the concept of personal space varies between cultures and between different social settings.