



**19MEE312**

**PRINCIPLES  
OF  
MANAGEMENT**



## UNIT V

### CONTROLLING

#### Barriers to Effective Communication

The factors which obstruct the effectiveness of communication is known as **Communication Barriers**. These barriers cause a mismatch between understanding of the message by the sender and the receiver. These barriers can occur at any stage of the communication process.

Communication is an indispensable element in human relationships. Humans interact with one another through communication. The term 'communication' is derived from the Latin word 'communis', which means common. Therefore, communication is defined as an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions, or emotions to create mutual understanding. It is the sum of all things one person does in order to create understanding in the minds of others.

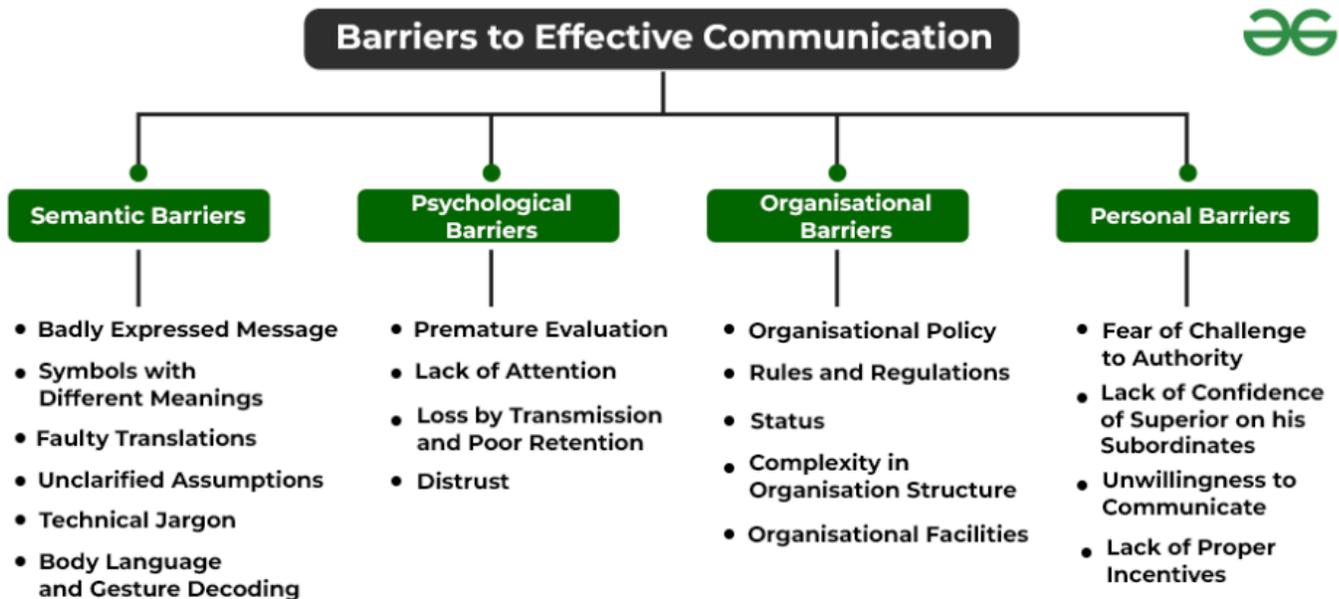
Communication is a process by which people create and share information with one another in order to reach common understanding.



## Classification of Barriers to Communication

The barriers to communication can be broadly classified as:

1. Semantic Barriers
2. Psychological Barriers
3. Organisational Barriers
4. Personal Barriers



### 1. Semantic Barriers

The branch of science that deals with the meaning of words and sentences is known as Semantic. The problems and obstructions in the process of encoding and decoding message into words or impressions is known as **Semantic barriers**. This barrier arises because different words mean different things to different people. A breakdown in communication can occur when two individuals



attach different meanings to a word. For example, for organisations, 'Profits' may mean growth and efficiency, but for employees, it may mean excess funds generated by paying inadequate wages and benefits.

Some of the common forms of Semantic Barriers are as follows:

- **Badly Expressed Message:** When a message lacks clarity and precision, it is said to be a badly expressed message. Communication becomes ineffective when the language of the message is vague, imprecise, or there is the use of wrong words or omission of needed words.
- **Symbols with Different Meanings:** The same words may carry different meanings to different people, and can convey different meanings under different situations. *For example*, words like effect and affect, ideal and idle, advice and advice, bear and bare, etc., sounds similar, but they have different meanings.
- **Faulty Translations:** Sometimes, people do not understand the language in which a message is given by the sender. In such cases, it becomes necessary to translate the message into a language, which is understandable by the receiver. The translator should be proficient enough to translate the language, otherwise, this can also be a barrier to communication.
- **Unclear Assumptions:** The receiver may have different assumptions if the sender does not clarify the assumptions about the message. For example, a boss may say, 'Complete the work'. Here, the boss has not mentioned the day and date when the work has to be completed. He may mean to complete the work by tomorrow, but subordinates may understand it as a week's target.



- **Technical Jargon:** Technical Jargon or terminology are used by many experts and specialists to communicate messages. Such jargon is not understood by the common people, which leads to poor communication.
- **Body Language and Gesture Decoding:** Non-verbal or gestural communication is also an effective means of communication. Facial expressions, gestures, body language, etc., should correspond to the language. The receiver may get confused and can misunderstand the message if verbal language does not match the body language.

## 2. Psychological Barriers

Barriers which arise on the account of emotional and psychological status of the sender and receiver of the message are known as **Psychological Barriers**. For example, a person who is under stress cannot communicate properly.

Some of the common forms of Psychological Barriers are as follows:

- **Premature Evaluation:** The tendency of forming a judgement before listening to the entire message is known as premature evaluation. This distorts understanding and acts as a barrier to effective communication. This can also lead to prejudices against communication.
- **Lack of Attention:** Communication can be less effective, and the message can be misunderstood if proper attention is not given to it. This inattention may arise due to the preoccupied mind of the receiver. *For example*, a superior gave instructions to operate a new software, however, the subordinate was preoccupied with other personal issues. Such lack of attention makes the communication process one-way and ineffective.



- **Loss by Transmission and Poor Retention:** There is loss of or transmission of inaccurate information when communication passes through various levels or channels in the organisation. It is more common in the case of oral communication. Poor retention also acts as a barrier when people are unable to retain the information for a long time.
- **Distrust:** Lack of mutual trust between the sender and the receiver also acts as a barrier to communication. Parties involved in communication cannot understand the message in an original sense when they do not believe each other.

### 3. Organisational Barriers

In an organisation, communication has to pass through various levels and channels, hence it may not reach the same place as it was sent by the sender. Organisation structure, rules and regulations, authority relationships, etc., act as a barrier to effective communication.

Some of the Organisational Barriers are as follows:

- **Organisational Policy:** Effectiveness of communication is affected by organisational policy. The communication process is hampered if the policy is not supportive of the free flow of communication. **For example**, in a centralised organisation, free communication is not encouraged, and communication has to follow through a proper channel only.
- **Rules and Regulations:** The process of communication is affected by rigid and cumbersome rules and regulations. The channels and the subject matter are already prescribed through, which the messages are to be communicated. These prescribed rules, regulations, and channels are rigid and can act as barriers.



- **Status:** Psychological distance is created between superior and subordinate because of status. Such statuses stand in the way of true and accurate communication. Subordinates are also not allowed to express their feeling freely if the manager is status conscious.
- **Complexity in Organisation Structure:** Organisation structure can also act as a barrier to communication. If there are many managerial levels in an organisational structure, then communication gets delayed and distorted.
- **Organisational Facilities:** If facilities like frequent meetings, conferences, suggestion boxes, complaint boxes, etc., are absent in an organisation, then effective communication is hampered.

#### 4. Personal Barriers

The effectiveness of communication is influenced by the personal factors of both sender and the receiver.

Some of the Personal Barriers are as follows:

- **Fear of Challenge to Authority:** If a superior fears that a particular communication can hamper his authority, then he may withhold such communication, as he always wants to maintain a higher position and prestige in the organisation.
- **Lack of Confidence of Superior on his Subordinates:** When superiors do not have faith or confidence on the competence of their subordinates, then communication is said to be hampered. When there is a lack of trust and confidence in subordinates, the superior may not take advice or suggestions from the subordinates.



- **Unwillingness to Communicate:** Unwillingness to communicate can be another reason for ineffective communication. Many times, subordinates do not communicate with their superiors because they believe that if the information is not correct or appropriate, it will adversely affect them.
- **Lack of Proper Incentives:** Subordinates also do not take initiative to communicate, when there is no motivation or incentives for communication. For example, if there is no reward for the suggestion given by the subordinates, then they will not take initiative.

**Reference:** <https://www.geeksforgeeks.org/process-of-controlling/?ref=lbp>