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Subject: **AECC English**

TOPIC:
BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

I had covered the basics and introduction to this topic with a few of your, however, in order to complete the same, please refer to the content below.

Noise:
- Any interference in the message sent and the message received leads to the production of 'noise'. The term communication barrier, or that which inhibits or distorts the message, is an expansion of the concept of noise.
- Noise here does not mean sound, but a break or disturbance in the communication process. If noise occurs because of technological factors, it is not too much of a problem as it can be removed by correcting the technological faults. However, if the noise is due to human error, the parties involved in the communication process need to take corrective measures.
- Noise is defined as any unplanned interference in the communication environment, which affects the transmission of the message.
- Noise can be classified as **channel** and **semantic**.
  Channel noise is any interference in the mechanics of the medium used to send a message. Familiar examples of channel noise are distortion due to faulty background, noise in telephone lines, or too high a volume or pitch from loudspeakers. In written communication, illegible handwriting can be termed as channel noise. Whereas channel noise develops externally, semantic noise is generated internally, resulting from errors in the message itself. It may be because of the connotative (implied) meaning of a word that is interpreted differently by the sender and the receiver. For example, the word 'condescend' may have been used in a positive manner, implying grace or dignity of manner, but the receiver might interpret it in a negative manner, related to a (baseless) assumption of superiority. Other examples of semantic noise are ambiguous sentence structure, faulty grammar, misspellings, and incorrect punctuation.

CLASSIFICATION OF BARRIERS

A barrier acts like a sieve, allowing only a part of the message to filter through; as a result, the desired response is not achieved. To communicate smoothly and effectively in an organization, irrespective of your position, you need to know how barriers operate, why they cause misunderstandings, and how to minimize their negative impact. How often have you said, 'I meant to say this and not that'? Even with the best intentions, communication barriers crop up and our written and spoken messages are misunderstood.

If we classify barriers according to the processes of message formation and delivery, we can identify three types:
- Intrapersonal
- Interpersonal
- Organizational

Let's briefly looks at each of these:

Intrapersonal Barriers
- Individuals are unique because of differences in perceptions, experiences, education, culture, personality, etc.
- Each of us interprets the same information in different ways, as our thinking varies. These differences lead to certain inbuilt or intrapersonal barriers. Some examples of intrapersonal barriers could be:
- Wrong assumptions: Wrong assumptions are generally made because the sender or the receiver does not have adequate knowledge about the other's background or entertains certain false concepts, which are fixed in his/her mind.
- Varied perceptions: This is when different individuals hold different viewpoints about the same situation.
- Differing background: Backgrounds can be different due to different education, culture, language, environment, financial status, etc. Our background plays a significant role in how we interpret a message.
- Wrong inferences: Inferences are more dramatic than facts, and for this reason they can provide more scope for gossip and rumour to spread. When professionals analyse material, solve problems, and plan procedures, it is essential that inferences be supported by facts to avoid miscommunication.
- Blocked categories: In general, we react positively to information only if it is in consonance with our own views and attitudes. Conversely, when we receive information that does not conform to our personal views, habits, and attitudes, or appears unfavourable to us, we tend to react negatively or even disbelieve it. Rejection, distortion, and avoidance are three common, undesirable, and negative reactions to unfavourable information.
- Categorical thinking: People who feel that they 'know it all' are called *pansophists*. This type of thinking exists in people who feel that they know everything about a particular subject, and therefore refuse to accept any further information on that topic.This type of thinking can pose a major barrier, leading to a failure in communication. In such instances, the receivers refuse information because of their 'know-it all' attitude.

Interpersonal Barriers
- Intrapersonal barriers stem from an individual's attitudes or habits, whereas interpersonal barriers occur due to the inappropriate transaction of words between two or more people.

- The two broad categories into which these barriers can be classified are: Inefficient communication skills and Negative aspect nurturing in the climate.
- Interpersonal barriers creep in as a result of the limitations in the communication skills of the encoder or the decoder, or of both. In addition, they may also occur because of some disturbance in the channel or medium of communication. If two people are involved in communication, the traits that distinguish them as individuals can be the root cause of a communication problem. The most common reasons for interpersonal barriers are:
- Limited vocabulary: Inadequate vocabulary can be a major hindrance in communication. At times, we find ourselves searching for the exact word or phrase that would be appropriate for what we are trying to express.
- Incompatibility of verbal and non-verbal messages: A communicator should acclimatize himself to the communication environment, think from the angle of the listener, and then communicate. Misinterpreted non-verbal communication acts as another barrier to effective information flow instead of enhancing and enlivening verbal communication.
- Emotional outburst: Excessive emotional involvement can be an obstacle in communication. For example, extreme anger can create such an emotionally charged environment that a rational discussion becomes impossible.
- Communication selectivity: When the receiver in a communication process pays attention only to a part of the message, he/ she is imposing a barrier known as communication selectivity.
- Poor listening skill: A common obstacle to communication is poor listening habits. We should remember that listening and hearing are not the same. Hearing is a passive exercise while listening requires careful attention and accurate decoding of the signals received from the speaker.
- Noise in the channel: As discussed earlier, noise interferes in the transmission of signals. Noise is any unwanted signal that acts as a hindrance in the flow of communication. It is not necessarily limited to audio disturbances, but can also occur in visual, audio-visual, written, physical, or psychological forms. All these forms of noise communicate extraneous matter which may distract the receiver from the message, and even irritate him/her

Organizational Barriers
- Communication barriers are not only limited to an individual or two people but exist in entire organizations. Every organization, irrespective of its size, has its own communication techniques, and each nurtures its own communication climate.
- Without going into much detail, a few types of organizational barriers could be: Too many transfer stations, Fear of superiors, Negative tendencies, Use of inappropriate media, and Information overload.