Communication is a very important aspect of the business world. Good communication can make the difference of millions of pounds in a company. However there are many situations where messages in business are misinterpreted. This can be due to various different factors such as the physical,psychological and cultural barriers that are constantly making communication difficult in business. These problems can usually be combated if the correct steps are taken.

Communication barriers are the largest problems that business face today whilst trying to communicate effectively. Language is a major physical barrier that companies face. During recent years we have seen more and more businesses going global such as Virgin and Dyson. This means that at some stage they have dealings with clients that speak a different language this is where problems tend to occur. For example there are words in some languages that could mean something completely different in English. This can lead to mistakes like wrong orders being made or meetings being arranged for different dates. There are ways to solve these problems by using modern day technology. There are translation systems available which make international communication easier and it stops Language being a physical barrier. One web site I consulted tells us what these modern translation systems are capable of doing. "Automated translation systems will revolutionize communication--and may help Preserve languages at the same time.
From the time of the Tower of Babel, mankind has been stuck between linguistic consolidation and segmentation. On the one hand, the world's numerous languages are a positive source of cultural diversity; on the other, they're an obstacle to our understanding each other.
We are now at the beginning of a revolution that will change the world: Automated translation technology will bring us significantly closer to a universal communication system"(http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=openPageViewer&docId=5000986602). Accents are also known as a huge speech impediment. For example in business if someone in London is trying to complete a business deal with someone in Glasgow who has a really strong Glaswegian accent then it is more than likely that they will have trouble understanding them. This problem could be overcome if written communication was used instead of oral communication over the telephone. This would mean typing up the business deal and then faxing it to the relevant party.

High noise level is also a physical barrier to communication. This is a problem commonly experienced by people who work on a building site. Where the noise level is usually at high volume. This can lead to the misinterpretation of commands given by team leaders on the site. These problems are usually overcome with the workers communicating non-verbally and using body language like hand gestures to get a message across.

In many organisations it is very common for messages to travel through what is known as the grapevine. The grapevine is where messages travel through an organisation informally. The problem with this is that by the time the message travels all the way through a company it has usually been misinterpreted along the way. This means that the original version can be very different from the end product and this is how rumours can start. The grapevine is always going to exist in companies and will probably never be completely stopped. The best way to overcome the problem of rumours starting on the grapevine is for managers to deliver the relevant messages before the rumours start.

Many messages can sometimes be misinterpreted because they haven't been delivered clear enough. This is why to send a good message out people need to try and be more assertive. Assertiveness is defined "Assertiveness is about dealing with differences in what people want from a situation in such a way that both parties wishes are respected" (Business students handbook page 193). If people aren't assertive enough then their message can be seen to be weak. We are told that if you don't deliver messages assertively in the work place "You may end up overloaded,doing work for which you have not had the necessary training" (Business students handbook page 192). These problems can be overcome if people "Believe in their rights, express them calmly but firmly, prepare for any likely conflict" (Business students handbook page 192).

People also have to be aware of cultural barriers like stereotyping. Stereotyping is something that everyone has done at some stage in their lives even if they didn't realise it. This can become a problem whilst communicating. It can make the difference of how much you value a message. For example if someone is delivering a speech to a audience and the speaker is looking scruffy and unshaven and his shirts not tucked in this will mean that the audience will already have a negative perception of the speaker. Due to the fact that they already have a negative perception of the speaker they may not value what is being said at the speech and therefore the relevant message isn't getting across. Many companies are trying to overcome this problem by given their employees classes that make them aware of their stereotypes. It has been proven that if people are made aware pf their stereotypes then there is more chance of stopping them.

In every day life businesses are still having problem because of misinterpreted messages. The physical psychological and cultural barriers will always be around to hinder businesses. However we have now seen that there are certain steps that businesses can take to overcome these problems. They can take advantage of modern technology and be able to buy translators that make international communication easy. Or they can always try different methods of communication to get messages across if they are having trouble. Such as where verbal communication is difficult because of noise levels people can use body language to get the relevant message across.

## References

Sheila Cameron          2002     Business Students handbook

## Website

http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=openPageViewer&docId=5000986602

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