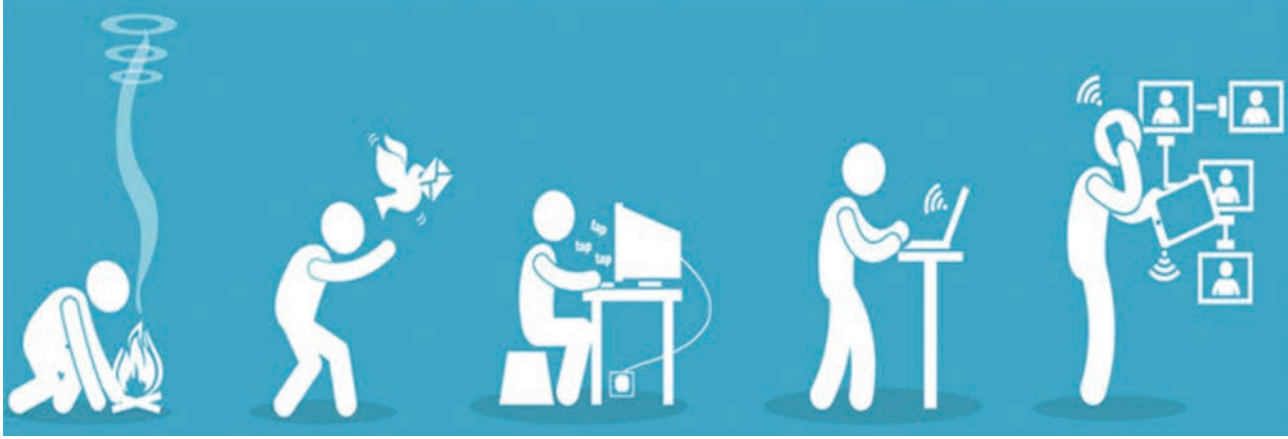


Unit 10



COMMUNICATION SKILLS



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this chapter, the students will be able to

- ❖ define Communication
- ❖ process of Communication
- ❖ elements of Communication
- ❖ why Communication is important in nursing?
- ❖ types and Levels of Communication
- ❖ list out the Barriers of Communication
- ❖ effective communication



திருக்குறள்:

சொல்லுக சொல்லைப் பிறிதோர் சொல் அச்சொல்லை
வெல்லுஞ்சொல் இன்மை அறிந்து.

விளக்கம்:

வேறோரு சொல் அந்தச் சொல்லை வெல்லும் சொல்லாக இல்லாதிருந்தால் அறிந்த பிறகே சொல்லக்கருதியதைச் சொல்லவேண்டும்.

Explanation:

"The words used should be carefully selected so that no other words can effectively replace them."
Which means, there should not be any ambiguity in the words used.

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Communication is the exchange of information, thoughts and emotions among people using speech or other means. Therapeutic practice involves the oral communication of public health officials and nurses on the one hand and the patient or his relatives on the other. It is a two way process.

Communication is a vital element in Nursing in all areas of activity and in all its interventions such as prevention, treatment, therapy, rehabilitation, education and health promotion.



Communication leads to community, that is, to understanding, intimacy and mutual valuing.

- Rollo May

10.2 DEFINITION

Communication can be defined as a transaction and message creation. The entire process occurs in a context consisting of physical space, cultural and social values and psychological conditions

A process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behaviour also exchange of information

Communication is a skill that you can learn. It's like riding a bicycle or typing. If you're willing to work at it, you can rapidly improve the quality of every part of your life.

- Brian Tracy

Communication is the art of being understood.

- Peter Ustinov

10.3 COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Communication is a process of exchanging information, ideas, thoughts, and emotions through speech, signals, writing, and behaviour.

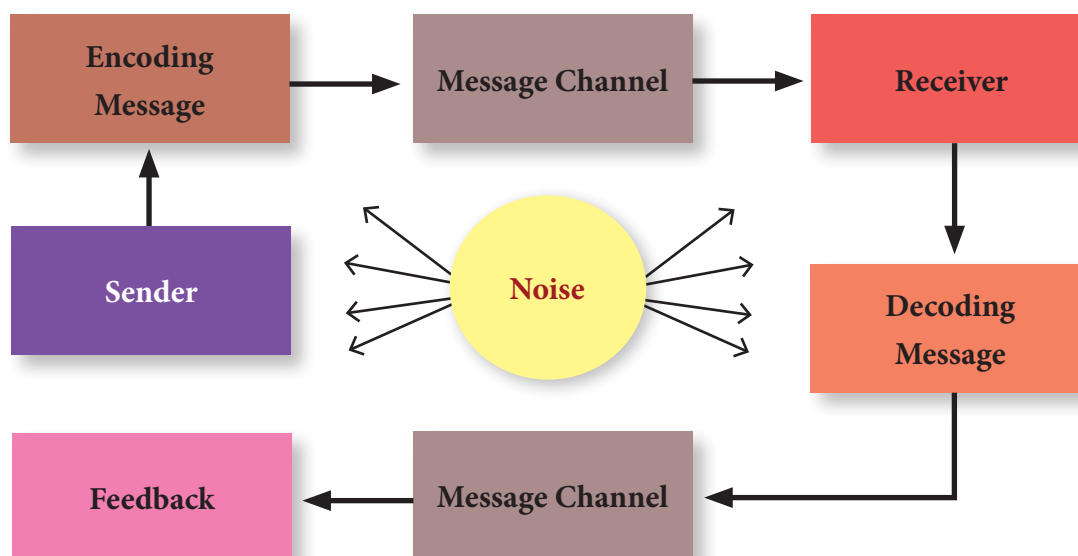
Let's put all these components together to build a model of the communication process:

1. A sender encodes information
2. The sender selects a channel of communication by which to send the message
3. The receiver receives the message
4. The receiver decodes the message
5. The receiver may provide feedback to the sender

10.3.1 Elements of Communication-

- ❖ Source of communication
- ❖ Receiver
- ❖ Sensory receptor
- ❖ Message carriers
- ❖ Messages
- ❖ Responses
- ❖ Feedback
- ❖ Situation or context

THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS



10.4 WHY COMMUNICATION IS IMPORTANT IN NURSING

Communication in nursing is essential in patient safety, health and well-being, because nurses are at the centre of patient care, it is their responsibility to facilitate dialog. As nurses assume more complex roles and care for all age group and different culture people, they will need to strengthen their communication skills.

1. Helps to understand and to exchange ideas to the patient, relatives, doctors and other health care team members.
2. Generate trust between nurse and patients.
3. Reduces the interpersonal tensions and improves interpersonal relationship.
4. Helps to modify the nurses behaviour

When you can present your own ideas dearly, specifically, visually, and most important, contextually – in the context of a deep understanding of another’s paradigms and concerns – you significantly increase the credibility of your ideas.

- Stephen R.Covey

5. Helps to influence others behaviour
6. Prevent disorder in the ward
7. Provides effective leadership

10.4.1 The following are Simple Guidelines Nurses can follow to improve their Communications Skills.

Be Flexible

Every person has a preferred method of communicating, whether in-person, by phone or via the internet.

Learn to Listen

Speaking and writing are only part of communicating — listening is equally essential. With improper listening properly, they will miss important information of the patient. Listening errors are often the results of multitasking.

Do not make Assumptions

Assuming a patient knows what you mean can result in costly errors. Nurses can ask patients to repeat instructions, which can reveal any misunderstandings or gaps in information.

Read Body Language

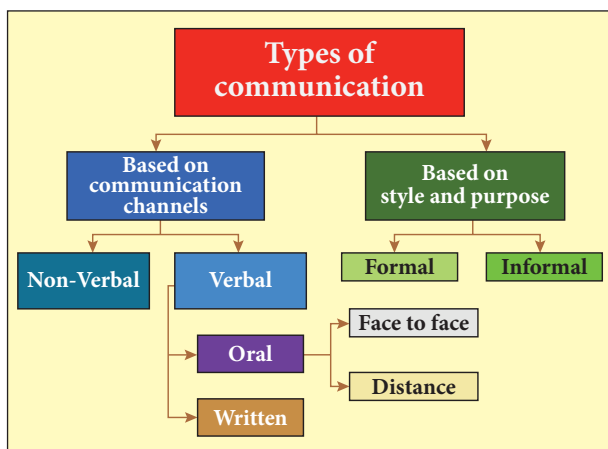
Your behaviour, attitude and posture can affect a patient's perception.

Strengthen Writing Skills

Communication includes writing as well as speaking. Depending on the role or speciality, you may be responsible for a lot of writing.

10.5 TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

People communicate with each other in a number of ways that depend upon the message and its context in which it is being sent. Choice of communication channel and your style of communicating also effects communication. So, there are variety of types of communication.



10.5.1 Verbal Communication

Verbal communication refers to the the form of communication in which message is transmitted verbally; communication is done by word of mouth and a piece of writing. Usually people bring their own attitude, perception, emotions and thoughts about the topic and hence creates barrier in delivering the right meaning.



A professional is expected to be clean, neat, well groomed, professionally dressed, and odour free. Professional behaviour reflects warmth, friendliness, confidence and competence. Professional speak in a clear, well modulated voice, listen to others, help and support colleagues, and communicate effectively. Being on time, well organized, well prepared, and equipped for the responsibilities of the nursing role also communicate professionals. Also the common elements of professional communication is “Courtesy, Use of names, Trustworthiness, Autonomy and responsibility, Assertiveness”.



Verbal Communication is further divided into

1. Oral Communication
2. Written Communication

1. Oral Communication

In oral communication, colloquial words are used. It includes face-to-face conversations, speech, telephonic conversation, video, radio, television, voice over internet. In oral communication, communication is influenced by pitch, volume, speed and clarity of speaking.





Advantages of Oral communication

It brings quick feedback. In a face-to-face conversation, by reading facial expression and body language one can know it is understood.

Disadvantage of oral communication

In face-to-face communication, user is unable to deeply think about the message delivered.

2. Written Communication

In written communication, written signs or symbols are used to communicate. A written message may be printed or hand written. In written communication message can be transmitted via email, letter, report, memo etc.



Written Communication

Advantages of written communication

Messages can be edited and revised many times before it is actually sent. A written message enables receiver to fully understand it and send appropriate feedback.

Disadvantages of written communication

Unlike oral communication, written communication doesn't bring instant feedback.

10.5.2 Non-Verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication is the sending or receiving of wordless messages. We can say that communication other than oral and written, such as appearance of the speaker, clothing, hairstyle, use of cosmetics Surrounding: gestures, body language, posture, tone of voice or facial expressions, is called nonverbal communication. Non-verbal communication is all about the body language of the speaker.



10.6 LEVELS OF COMMUNICATION

1. Intra-personal communication
2. Inter-personal communication
3. Public communication
4. Mass communication
5. Small Group communication

Now, let us learn about the types of communication in detail.

1. Intra-personal Communication

Intra-personal communication means communicating to myself, hearing myself talk, feeling about myself more and thinking are examples of intra-personal communication.



2. Inter-personal Communication

Inter-personal communication happens when you communicate directly with other people in a one to one or in a small group. The words 'inter' and personal suggest that 'Inter-personal' means communication between to different individuals.



3. Public Communication

Public communication takes place in a situation where many people receive messages largely from one source. For example, it can be a movie, television show, a speech, advertisement, political lecture, committee report etc.



4. Mass Communication

Mass communication is public communication transmitted through electronically or mechanical means. Books, magazines are all examples of mass communication.



5. Small Group Communication

Communication is within formal or informal groups or teams. It is group interaction that results in decision making, problem solving and discussion within an organization.



STUDENT'S ACTIVITY

Do a role play in a group, discussing in handling person/patient of different language not known to the group.

10.7 BARRIERS OF COMMUNICATION

Barriers to effective communication can retard or distort the message or intention of the message being conveyed. This may result in failure of the communication process or cause an effect that is undesirable.



Types of Barriers

- ❖ **Physical Barriers:** Physical Barriers are often due to the nature of the environment like noise, invisibility, etc.
- ❖ **Organisational Barriers:** It refers to the problem with the structures or systems in



the place in an organization. E.g., a lack of supervision or training or policy.

- ❖ **Personal Barriers:** It is due to psychological problems of individuals. E.g., lack of motivation or dissatisfaction in work.
- ❖ **Ambiguity of words/Phrases:** Words sounding the same but having different meaning can convey a different meaning altogether. Hence the communicator must ensure that the receiver receives the same meaning.
- ❖ **Individual linguistic ability:** The use of jargon, difficult or inappropriate words in communication can prevent the recipients from understanding the message.
- ❖ **Physiological Barriers:** These may result from individual's personal discomfort, caused by ill health, poor eyesight or hearing difficulties.

- ❖ **Bypassing:** This happens when the communicators (sender and the receiver) do not attach the same symbolic meanings to their words.
- ❖ **Cultural Barriers:** Strong beliefs, customs, attitudes, religious, sentiments, illiteracy may influence communication.
- ❖ **Fear of being criticized:** This is a major factor that prevents good communication.
- ❖ **Gender Barriers:** Most communicators show a difference in thought, often have a set of agenda. This is noticeable among the different genders.

How to Overcome the Barriers of Communication



- ❖ **Clarify the idea** – The communicator must be clear about what he wants to communicate.
- ❖ **Completeness of the message:** The message should be relevant to the nature and purpose of communication.
- ❖ **Understand the receiver:** The communicator should be aware of the total physical and human setting.
- ❖ **Use appropriate channels:** The channels should be appropriate to the message.
- ❖ **Consistency in communication:** The message should be consistent with objective.
- ❖ **Feedback:** It involves effective participation and improves mutual understanding.
- ❖ **Simplified structure:** The communication can be strengthened by simple procedure and regulating the information flow.
- ❖ **Improve listening:** The sender and receiver must listen with attention, patience and empathy.
- ❖ **Mutual trust and confidence:** It improves the effectiveness of communication.



STUDENT'S ACTIVITY

Identify your communication barrier and what effort you are going to take to overcome from your communication barriers.

10.8 EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

When the nurse communicates well, patient/other people will understand what the nurse is trying to convey and will accept it. Let's begin with a clear understanding of what communication is, effective communication

- ❖ Achieves shared understanding
- ❖ Stimulates others to take actions to achieve goals/ideas.
- ❖ Directs the flow of information to help people overcome barriers to open up in discussion.
- ❖ Channels information to encourage people/patient to think in new ways and to act more effectively.

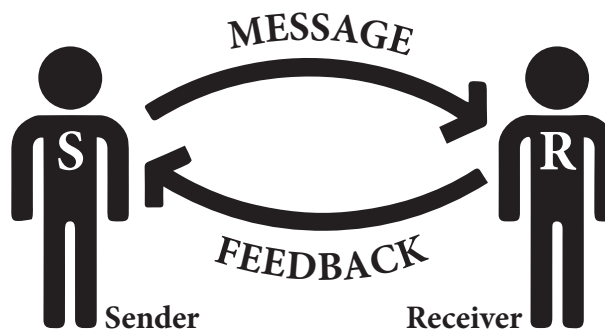


Skills for Effective Communication

- ❖ Express your feelings
- ❖ Present yourself well
- ❖ Give and receive compliments
- ❖ Learn to say “no” when it's necessary
- ❖ To solve problems effectively
- ❖ Effective communication is a key to getting along with others.

10.8.1 Methods of Effective Communication

The important strategies to enhance the communication are described in the following sections.



Attention Skills

The sender needs to pay attention to what he or she is trying to communicate, and choose the best words and body language to communicate with. The receiver needs to pay attention to what is being communicated by listening and watching. Attention is primarily governed by the type of attitude sender or receiver has towards each other during communication.



Effective communication helps us to:

Anticipate problems, decisions, co-ordinate, work flow, supervise others, develop relationship and promote products a services.

Rapport Building

Rapport building is important in both our professional and personal lives

- ❖ Use nonthreatening and 'safe topics' for initial small talk.
- ❖ Listen to what the other person is saying and look for shared experiences or circumstances this will give you more to talk about in the initial stages of communication.
- ❖ Try to inject an element of humour.
- ❖ Be conscious of your body language and other nonverbal signals you are sending.
- ❖ Show some empathy.

Empathy Skills

Empathy skills are very important in good communication. Empathy is the ability to see

the world as another person, and to share and understand another person's feeling, need, concern, and/or emotional state.

10.8.2 Guidelines for Effective Communication



1. Clarity of purpose

- ❖ In the first place we must make a careful analysis of what exactly we wish to communicate.
- ❖ But any effort made in this direction proves to be fruitful.
- ❖ As George Bernard Shaw says, "The major mistake in communication is to believe that it happens."

2. Shared activity

- ❖ Let us forget that effective communication is the responsibility of all persons in the organisations.
- ❖ They may be at any level managerial or non-managerial. They are all working towards a common goal.

3. Common set of Symbols

- ❖ The encoding and decoding of the message should be done with symbols that are familiar to the sender and the receiver.



- ❖ It is an immutable condition of communication that the code or set of symbols be mutually understood.

4. Focus the needs of the receiver

- ❖ Whenever we communicate we must keep in mind the needs of the receivers and the message / information.
- ❖ It should be our endeavour to see that whatever we communicate should be of value to the receiver, both in the short run and in the distant future.
- ❖ Our awareness of the needs of the receiver will make him more receptive.

5. Use Feedback

- ❖ Use Feedback, exhorts Stephen Robbins, a renowned authority on organisational behaviour. As the model of the communication process given in the preceding chapter shows, communication is complete only when the message is understood by the receiver.
- ❖ We can never know whether communication / message is understood unless the sender gets feedback.
- ❖ Many communication problems arise because of misunderstandings and inaccuracies.

6. Active Listening

- ❖ Active or 'participative' listening is as important as any other element in the process of communication.
- ❖ It shows, again, that communication is a joint responsibility of both the sender and the receiver.

7. Controlling Emotions

- ❖ Emotions play an important role in interpersonal relationships between superiors, subordinates and colleagues in an organisation.
- ❖ It should therefore, be an important aim of communication to create an environment in which people are motivated to work toward the desired goals of the enterprise while they achieve their personal goals.

8. Politeness

- ❖ This leads us to the tone of voice aspect of communication.
- ❖ Everybody knows that politeness pays and it is reflected so very 'loudly' both in words and actions.

9. Eliminate noise

- ❖ Every possible effort must be made to eliminate the element of noise that distorts communication at the transmission stage.
- ❖ It becomes especially important in the wake of modern technological advancement.
- ❖ Anything going wrong with the equipment or any disturbance in the transmission line is bound to defeat the very purpose of communication.

10. Clarify Assumptions

- ❖ No effective communication can be based on assumptions.
- ❖ The sender of the message must first clarify his assumptions and then go ahead with proper encoding of the message.



11. Avoiding Connotations and Ambiguities

- ❖ Semantic problems can be solved by using simple language and avoiding connotations.
- ❖ Care must be taken to see that the receiver of the message does not have to go beyond the text of the message.
- ❖ A sender should, therefore use denotative words and expressions in preference to connotative ones.
- ❖ It is also necessary to avoid all ambiguity that means using words with double meaning.

12. Socio-psychological aspect

As communication is a two-way process involving both the sender and the receiver, both should make conscious efforts to understand each other's cultural and socio-psychological background.

- ❖ As a golden rule for effective communication one must remember, "First understand, then be understood."
- ❖ An effective communication is an informed communicator.

13. Completeness

- ❖ One must also endeavour to send a complete message, furnishing all necessary facts and figures.
- ❖ Incomplete communication annoys the receiver, as a result they do not get proper feedback.
- ❖ The message should be so organised that the receiver is not left in doubt about any aspect of the message.

14. Conciseness

- ❖ Completeness does not mean inclusion of unnecessary details or diversions.
- ❖ An effective communication is concise and crisp.

- ❖ The sender should be clear headed and properly focused in her/his vision.

15. Proper use of body language

- ❖ Proper use of body language is of paramount important, especially in oral communication.
- ❖ No oral communication can be successful or effective if we do not take care of our body language.
- ❖ In the first place there must be good eye contact with the person to whom we are communicating.
- ❖ The movement of our hands and feet must be graceful.
- ❖ Every listener observes carefully how we walk and how we talk.
- ❖ Our gait says a lot about us.
- ❖ A warm handshake can do wonders.
- ❖ Holding our head straight on our shoulders shows confidence.



When we use speech to communicate ideas and opinions as well as our emotions and innermost feelings, We communicate each of these by using a variety of elements, which includes:

- The tone of voice
- The emphasis used in speech
- The content of the speech
- The use of figurative language
- The use of humour in speech
- The pace of delivery
- The pronunciation used
- The pitch of our voice
- The use of inferred speech

10.8.3 Some tips for Effective Communication



1. Learn to express yourself

Help others to get to know you better, so they will know what to expect from you. They will also help you to get knowledge because they will give information about themselves.

2. Learn good listening skills

Careful listening avoids misunderstanding. Give your undivided attention to the patient/speaker. If you need more information ask questions. Be informative by trying to say something positive even if you don't like it.

3. Learn to be assertive

Express what you have to say with frankness without being aggressive. To be assertive means not to say 'Yes' when you want to say 'No'.

CONCLUSION

Communication is a powerful therapeutic tool and an essential nursing skill that influences others and achieves positive health outcomes. Communication is an exchange of facts, ideas, views, opinions, emotions, informations etc. The basic elements of communication are the referent the sender, the message, the channels, the receiver, the feedback and the environment. Nurses use interpersonal, intrapersonal, public and mass interaction to achieve positive change and health goals.

Effective communication helps us to anticipate problems, decisions, co-ordinate workflow, develop relationship and promote services. Barriers of communication may result in failure of the communication process or cause an effect that is undesirable. Communication refers to verbal and non verbal behaviour within a social context. It includes all symbols and clues to give and receive meaning.

A-Z GLOSSARY

Communication (தகவல் தொடர்பு)	-	It means of sending or receiving information.
Verbal Communication (வாய்மொழி தகவல் தொடர்பு)	-	Relating to (or) in the form of words.
Non-Verbal Communication (சொற்களற்ற சைகை வழி தகவல் தொடர்பு)	-	Communication in a form other than written or spoken words, such as gestures, facial expressions or body language.
Intra personal (தனிப்பட்ட)	-	A communicators internal use of language or thought.
Barriers (தடைகள்)	-	A fence or other obstacle that prevents movement or access.
Empathy Skills (பரிபூரண திறமைகள்)	-	It is understanding someones thoughts and emotions.
Body Language (உடல்மொழி தகவல் தொடர்பு)	-	The conscious and unconscious movements and postures by which attitudes and feelings are communicated.
Completeness (முழுமையான)	-	The state or condition of having all necessary or appropriate parts.
Conciseness (உணர்வு)	-	Effective words is concise, with no unnecessary words while communicating.
Feedback (பின்னூட்டம்)	-	Information about reactions to a product, a persons performance of a task.



EVALUATION



I. Choose the correct answer:

1. Communication refers to, behaviour within a social context.
 - a. verbal
 - b. non-verbal
 - c. verbal and non verbal
 - d. none of the above
2. Which is the process of exchanging information, ideas, feelings etc.
 - a. communication
 - b. information
 - c. conversation
 - d. all of the above
3. Interpersonal communication is:
 - a. interaction between two
 - b. internal thoughts
 - c. interaction with small group of people
 - d. all of above
4. Non-Verbal communication includes;
 - a. Smile
 - b. Smell
 - c. Laugh
 - d. Staring
5. This barrier may result from individual's personal discomfort caused by ill health.
 - a. physical
 - b. Environment
 - c. Physiological
 - d. Organisational
6. Which does involve effective participation and improves mutual understanding.
 - a. Feed back
 - b. Sender
 - c. Receiver
 - d. Noise
7. As a golden rule for effective communication one must remember. "First understand, then be understood".
 - a. Psychological
 - b. Social
 - c. Socio-psychological
 - d. Cultural
8. What can be defined as a transaction and message creation?
 - a. Communication
 - b. Verbal Communication
 - c. Mass communication
 - d. information
9. Which refers to the non verbal signals that you use to communicate your feelings and intention?
 - a. Communication
 - b. Body language`
 - c. Verbal communication
 - d. None of the above
10. Barriers of effective communication are
 - a. Being defensive
 - b. Summarising
 - c. Perceptions of individuals
 - d. All the above

II. Write short answer for the following questions:

1. Define communication
2. What are the elements of communication?
3. What is effective communication?

III. Write short notes for the following questions:

1. Why communication skill is important to nurses?
2. Explain communication process.
3. What are the simple guidelines Nurses can follow to improve their communication skills?
4. Write short notes about Verbal and non verbal communication.



IV. Answer the following questions in detail:

1. Explain levels of communication.
2. What are the barriers of communication and how to overcome from the barriers?
3. Write about any 10 guidelines for effective communication.

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