



Communication Barriers and Solutions at Flight Foods Ltd.

Module: LCLM4003

Effective Teamworking and Communication
Group 2 - Weekend

Tutor: Mohammad Rahman

Group Members:

Pamela Keijema

2440400 – Team Leader

Jaroslav Rosocha

2437834

Antonin Slivka

2437115

Svitlana Komarova

2431408

Presentation Overview

01

Case Study Background

Understanding Flight Foods Ltd. and its operational challenges.

02

Key Communication Barriers

Identifying specific barriers affecting clear communication.

03

Theoretical Explanations

Applying communication models to analyse the root causes.

04

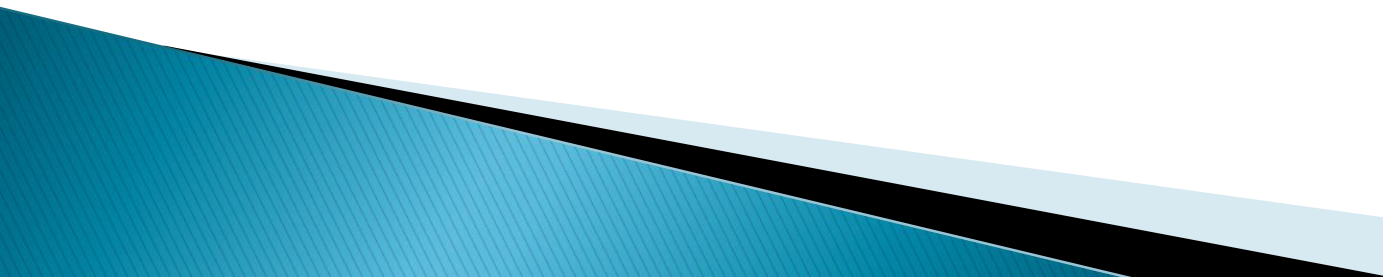
Proposed Solutions

Practical recommendations to overcome communication issues.

05

Conclusion & References

Summarising findings and crediting sources.



Case Study Background

Flight Foods Ltd.

Flight Foods Ltd. is a medium-sized manufacturer specialising in ready meals for various airlines. Their primary objective is to increase their market share within the competitive airline catering industry.

However, the company is currently facing a significant challenge: instead of growing, their market share is **declining** due to a surge in customer complaints.

Airline complaints include:

- Undercooked food
- Poor packaging
- Contamination (e.g., meat in vegetarian meals)



Internal Operations: A Closer Look



While the factory floor is spacious, well-lit, and adequately ventilated, it is dominated by **old, noisy machinery** which creates a challenging working environment.

The workforce comprises 40 employees, with ages ranging from 16 to 60. A significant aspect of the team composition is their diverse background: most employees are **immigrants from five different cultural groups**.

Furthermore, a considerable number of these employees speak **limited English**, posing an immediate challenge for clear and effective communication within the workplace.

Manager's Perspective: Gary's Challenges



Untrained Staff

Staff are not formally trained in food hygiene before commencing work.



Language Obstacles

Language barriers prevent workers from fully understanding critical instructions.



On-the-Job Learning

Gary trains employees on the job, which often leads to errors.



Ineffective Signs

Heavy reliance on written signs proves to be largely ineffective.



Youthful Struggles

Younger workers experience greater difficulty grasping instructions.

Key Communication Barriers

Barrier 1: Language Differences

- Multilingual Workforce:
 - The majority of staff speak different native languages, creating immediate communication gaps.
- Limited English:
 - Many employees have limited English proficiency, making it difficult to comprehend verbal and written instructions.
- Misinterpretation Risks:
 - This linguistic diversity often leads to misinterpretation of crucial instructions, particularly those related to food safety.
- Hygiene Errors:
 - Direct consequences include hygiene lapses, such as leaving raw chicken out overnight, posing significant health risks.



Barrier 2: Noise & Physical Distractions

"The constant hum and clang of machinery make it impossible to hear properly. We just guess sometimes."

Noisy Environment

The factory floor is filled with old, loud machinery, creating a constant din.

Difficulty Hearing

It's incredibly hard to hear verbal instructions clearly over the machine noise.

High-Stress Setting

A busy, high-stress environment further reduces workers' attention and comprehension.



Barrier 3: Cultural Differences & Ineffective Training

Cultural Differences

- **Diverse Interpretations:**
- Workers from multiple cultures may have varying understandings of rules, authority, and best practices.
- **Instructional Nuances:**
- Instructions might be interpreted differently based on cultural norms, leading to unintended outcomes.

Ineffective Training

- **No Structured Program:**
- Absence of a formal, structured training program.
- **"On-the-Job" Reliance:**
- Heavy reliance on informal "on-the-job" learning, which is often inconsistent.
- **Signs Insufficient:** Written signs alone are insufficient to convey complex food safety procedures.
- **Youth Confusion:** Younger employees, in particular, show confusion, highlighting training deficiencies.
- **Inconsistent Understanding:** This results in inconsistent understanding and application of critical food safety rules.

Barrier 4: Manager's Own Behaviour

Stressed & Unprepared

Gary frequently arrives tired and stressed, impacting his ability to lead effectively.

Reduced Credibility

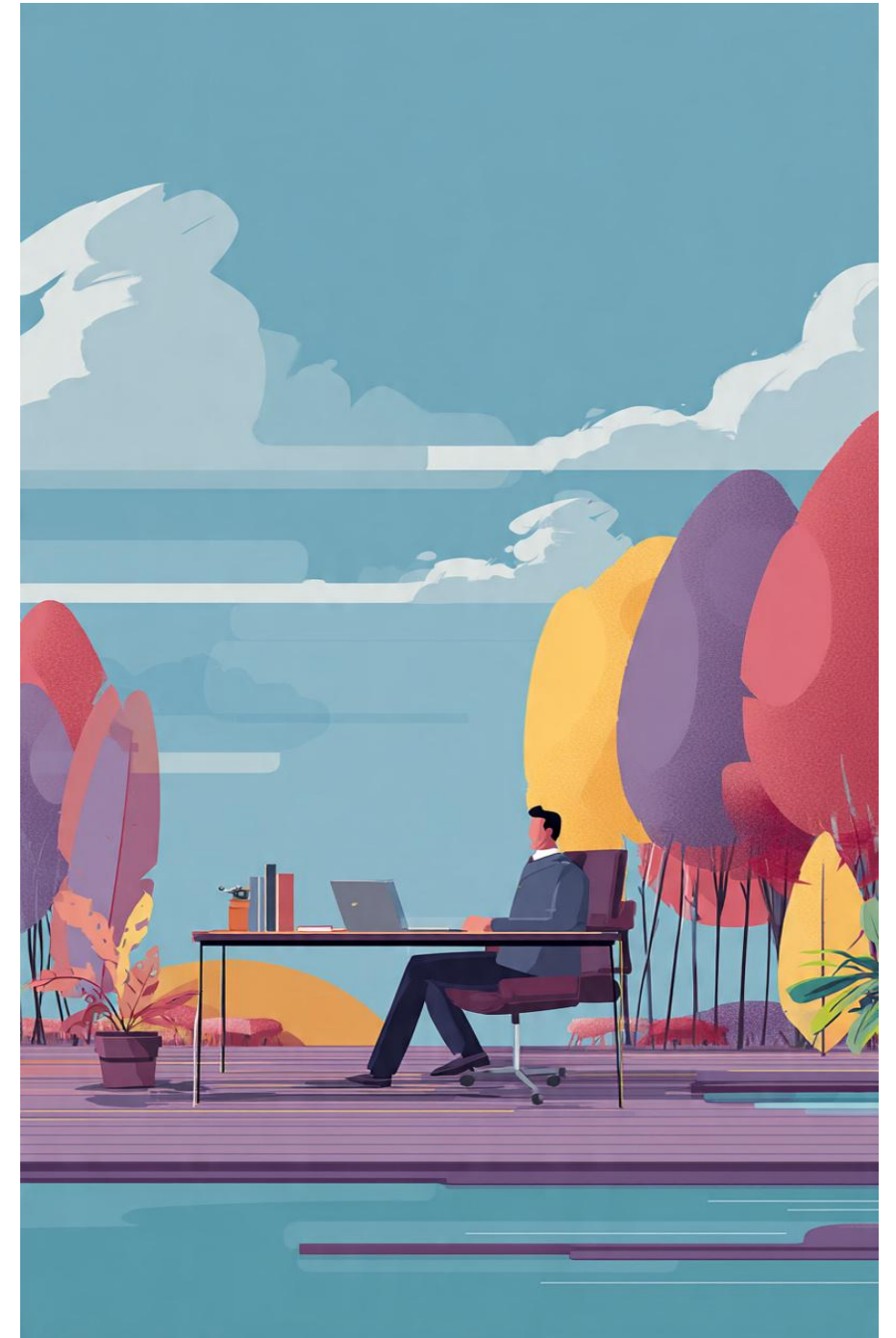
These behaviours undermine his leadership effectiveness and the trust of his team.

Poor Personal Hygiene

His occasional lapses in personal hygiene reduce his credibility as a manager.

Workflow Confusion

His inconsistent behaviour contributes to overall confusion and disorganisation in the workflow.



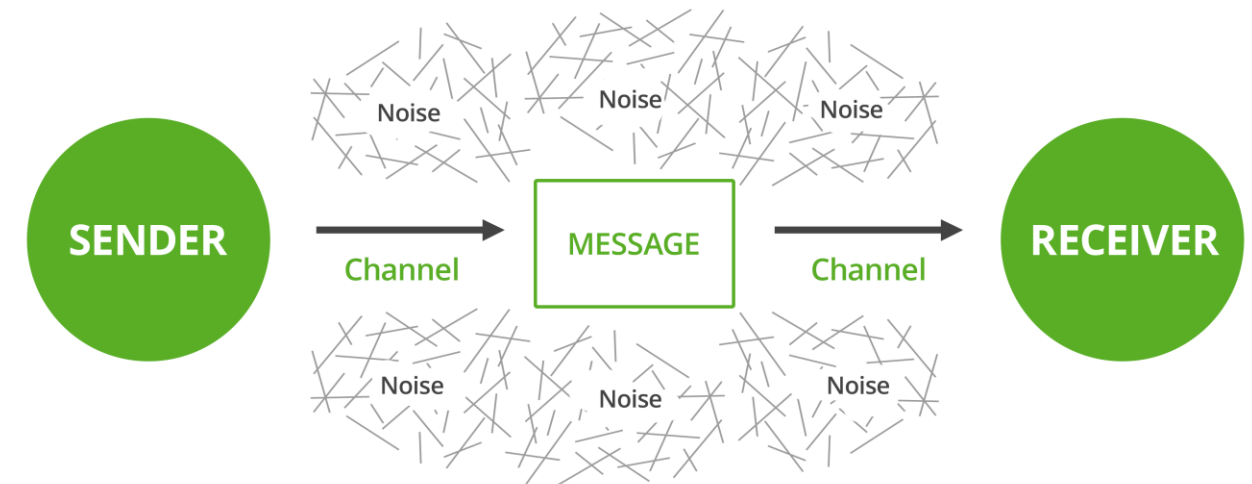
1. Theoretical Models Explaining Barriers

Shannon & Weaver Model: Noise & Distortion Linear Model of Communication

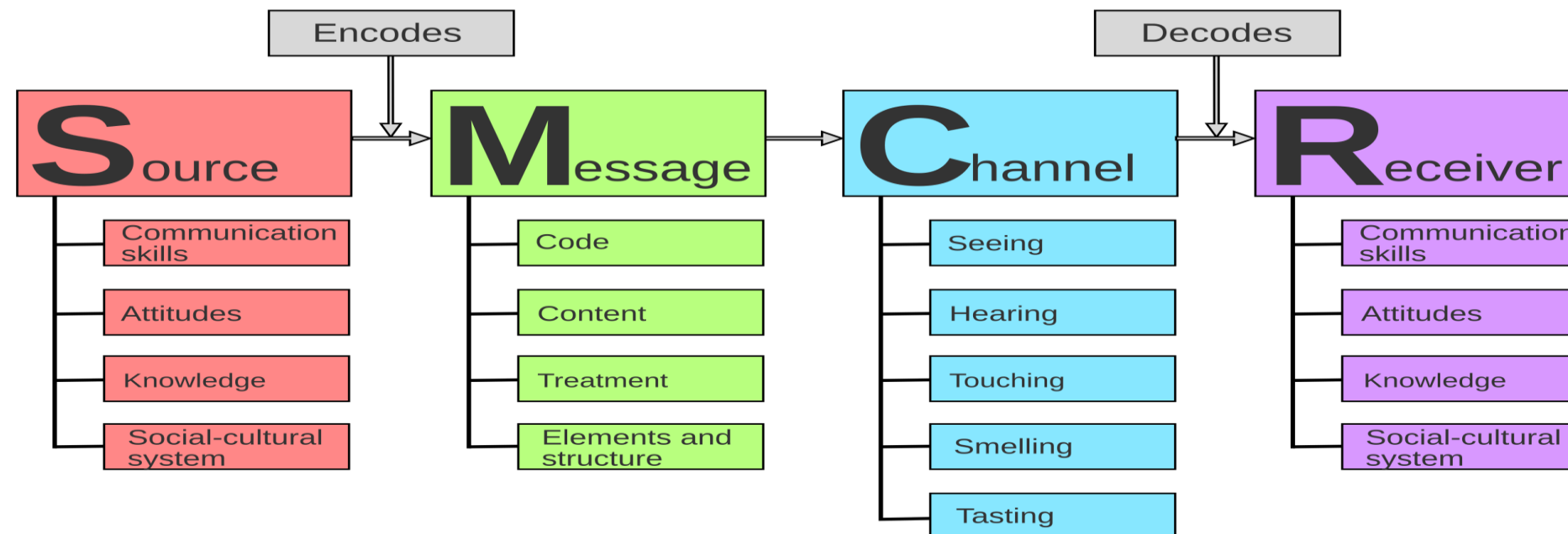
This model highlights how **noise** interferes with message transmission.

Application to Flight Foods:

- **Noise Interference:** Physical machinery noise, strong accents, and cultural misunderstandings actively disrupt Gary's instructions.
- **Encoding Issues:** Gary's English instructions are not effectively encoded for his multilingual workforce, creating a gap from the outset.
- **Decoding Problems:** Workers struggle to decode the message accurately due to language and contextual differences.
- **Communication Breakdown:** This leads to a clear communication breakdown, directly resulting in the critical food safety failures observed.



2. Theoretical Models Explaining Communication Barriers; Berlo's SMCR model of communication



Source: Gary, the floor manager, and the company as a whole

Message: The importance of food hygiene and safety, conveyed through:
Verbal instructions from Gary, written signs on the walls (e.g., "Keep your hairnets on at all times")

Channel: Face-to-face communication between Gary and staff
Written signs and posters

Receiver: The staff, comprising 40 people from diverse cultural backgrounds with varying levels of English language proficiency

Conclusion

In light of these revelations, it's clear that Flight Foods faces significant challenges in ensuring food safety and quality standards.

The company's lack of formal training programs, inadequate communication, and poor management practices have led to a culture of neglect.

To regain the trust of its airline clients and increase market share, Flight Foods must overhaul its operations, prioritizing staff training, overcoming language barriers, language support, and robust quality control measures.

The road to recovery will be very long, but addressing these critical issues is the first step towards serving safe, high-quality meals that meet the expectations of its discerning customers.



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