



Communication Barriers at Flight Foods Ltd

Module: LCLM4003 Effective Teamworking and Communication

Student Number :2521337 Larisa-Estera Lupu

Overview

01	02	03
Case Background	Communication Barriers	Relevant Theories
Understanding the context at Flight Foods Ltd	Five key barriers affecting operations	Shannon & Weaver, Berlo's SMCR, and more
04	05	
Practical Solutions	Conclusion	
Actionable recommendations for improvement	Linking communication to food safety outcomes	



Case Background

- Flight Foods Ltd manufactures ready meals for airlines. The company is **losing business** due to poor food standards, including undercooked food, poor packaging, and meat found in vegetarian meals.

- **Diverse Workforce**

- Multilingual staff from five distinct cultural groups

- **Noisy Environment**

- Factory setting with old, loud machinery

- **Quality Failures**

- Undercooked food, poor packaging, dietary mix-ups

Barrier 1 Environmental Noise

- **The Problem**

- Old, noisy machines create physical noise on the factory floor. Gary's instructions may not be heard clearly, causing miscommunication at critical moments.

- **Theory: Shannon & Weaver (1949)**

- Noise disrupts the message between sender and receiver, degrading the quality of communication.

- **Recommended Solutions**

- Designate a quiet briefing area away from machinery
- Use visual demonstrations alongside verbal instructions
- Install machine-zone safety signs with clear visuals

Barrier 2 Language & Communication

The Problem

- Workers speak different first languages, meaning written English signs may not be fully understood by all staff.

Theory: Berlo's SMCR Model (1960)

- Effective communication depends on the sender's and receiver's skills, knowledge, attitude, and cultural background.

Recommended Solutions

- Multilingual training materials
- Pictorial safety and hygiene signs
- Interpreters during key briefings
- Buddy system pairing fluent with non-fluent speakers



Barrier 3 Cultural Differences

- Five distinct cultural groups may hold different expectations around food standards, hygiene habits, and workplace behaviour. Cultural diversity can improve teamwork but may also create misunderstanding if not actively managed (*Stahl et al., 2021*).



Cross-Cultural Induction

- Onboarding that acknowledges and bridges cultural differences from day one



Shared Food-Safety Standards

- Universal, clearly communicated hygiene expectations for all staff



Inclusive Team Meetings

- Regular forums where all cultural groups can contribute and raise concerns

Barrier 4 Age & Generational Differences



The Problem

- The workforce ranges from **16 to 60 years old**. Gary believes younger workers "do something else," indicating possible generational misunderstanding that can undermine instruction and trust.

Recommended Solutions

- Mixed-age mentoring pairs
- Practical, hands-on demonstrations
- Short training videos for varied learning styles
- Regular feedback checks to confirm understanding

Barrier 5 — Emotional Barrier

- Gary is tired, stressed, and shouts "Idiots!" reducing trust and psychological safety on the factory floor.

Theory: Psychological Safety

- Psychological safety enables workers to speak up about problems and mistakes without fear of humiliation (*Edmondson, 2018*).
Shouting and blame actively destroy this environment.

Recommended Solutions

- Respectful, calm leadership communication
- Constructive feedback replacing blame
- Daily team huddles to build rapport and openness

Food Safety & Training

- Staff at Flight Foods Ltd begin work **without formal hygiene training**, significantly increasing the risk of unsafe food handling. Food safety culture depends on leadership, training, communication, and employee behaviour (*Pai et al., 2024*).

Compulsory Induction

- Mandatory hygiene training before any staff member begins work

Refresher Training

- Regular updates to reinforce standards and address new risks

Hygiene Checklist

- Visual, easy-to-follow checklists at every workstation



Recommendations

- 1** • **Mandatory Food Hygiene Induction**
 - No staff member works without completing formal hygiene training first
- 2** • **Multilingual & Pictorial Communication**
 - Signs, instructions, and training materials accessible to all language groups
- 3** • **Reduce Noise During Instructions**
 - Designate quiet briefing zones away from loud machinery
- 4** • **Cultural Group Team Leaders**
 - Appoint team leaders from each cultural group to bridge communication gaps
- 5** • **Daily Briefings & Leadership Training**
 - Structured feedback loops and improved communication skills for Gary

Conclusion

- Flight Foods Ltd's quality problems are strongly linked to **poor communication, weak training, cultural and language barriers, environmental noise, and emotional leadership issues.**
- Applying established communication models Shannon & Weaver, Berlo's SMCR — alongside practical training systems can meaningfully improve food safety, teamwork, and business performance.

- Effective communication is not a soft skill at Flight Foods Ltd, it is a food safety imperative.



Reference List

- Berlo, D.K. (1960) *The Process of Communication: An Introduction to Theory and Practice*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Edmondson, A.C. (2018) *The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth*. Hoboken: Wiley.
- Pai, A.S. et al. (2024) 'A comprehensive review of food safety culture in the food industry', *Foods*, 13(24), 4078.
- Shannon, C.E. and Weaver, W. (1949) *The Mathematical Theory of Communication*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Stahl, G.K. et al. (2021) 'Unraveling the effects of cultural diversity in teams', *Journal of International Business Studies*, 52, pp. 4–22.