



# Communication Barriers in Achieving Company Targets A Case Study of PT. Mantra Garmino Sakti (Film Window Tinting Service)

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores communication barriers at PT. Mantra Garmino Sakti and their impact on achieving company targets. The focus is on vertical communication (between management and staff) and horizontal communication (between departments). These barriers are found to disrupt coordination, delay decision making, and reduce operational efficiency. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with 15 participants including managers, outlet heads, technicians, and central staff and participatory observation. Thematic analysis revealed that unclear instructions, limited feedback, and fear of upward communication cause delays and task execution errors. Meanwhile, poor coordination between marketing and production teams leads to mismatches between customer demand and product availability. Participant insights highlight late and ambiguous instructions, and the lack of regular meetings across departments. To address these issues, the study recommends clearer communication tools, routine coordination meetings, and the use of Rensis Likert's Linking Pin theory to strengthen information flow between levels. This research contributes to organizational communication studies by showing how specific internal communication failures affect target achievement in medium-sized service companies.

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## 1. INTROUCTION

Communication is a crucial element in organizational success, as it ensures coordinated efforts and fosters harmony among individuals to achieve common goals (Kreps, 2011). Effective communication not only organizes the flow of information but also builds relationships between managers and employees as well as among peers, supporting operational smoothness and decision-making

(Meltareza et al., 2024). In contrast, poor communication often results in misunderstandings, demotivation, inefficiency, and ultimately failure to meet organizational targets (Hargie, 2011). This issue is particularly urgent in dynamic, competitive industries, where delays or miscommunication can directly impact customer satisfaction and business sustainability.

Despite its critical role, many organizations still face significant communication barriers that disrupt operations. These barriers often arise in vertical communication the flow of information between managers and staff, both downward and upward as well as in horizontal communication, which occurs between peers or departments at the same hierarchical level (Robbins & Judge, 2013; Hargie, 2011). Barriers in upward communication typically stem from employees' reluctance to report problems or provide feedback due to fear or apathy, while downward communication barriers often involve unclear instructions and misinterpretation. Meanwhile, horizontal communication barriers manifest in poor interdepartmental coordination and misaligned priorities, which can block critical information flows and hamper organizational effectiveness. This study specifically focuses on these two types of communication, as they are the most evident and impactful within the company's internal operations.

PT. Mantra Garmino Sakti, a medium-sized company specializing in vehicle and building window film installation, exemplifies these challenges. Although the company has expanded to several major cities such as Jakarta and Bandung, its internal communication problems such as delayed information flow, insufficient feedback from employees, and discrepancies in understanding between management and operational staff have significantly undermined its ability to achieve established targets. This underscores the relevance and urgency of examining communication barriers within this organizational setting.

Previous studies on organizational communication barriers have primarily focused on educational settings (e.g., Sembada et al., 2022) or large manufacturing companies (e.g., Pratama, 2022), with little attention to service-oriented, medium-sized enterprises like PT. Mantra Garmino Sakti. Moreover, research on how these barriers specifically hinder target achievement in the window film installation industry remains scarce. This study seeks to fill that gap by focusing on vertical and horizontal communication barriers as the two most prominent and observable types in this organizational context.

Therefore, this research aims to identify and analyze the vertical and horizontal communication barriers at PT. Mantra Garmino Sakti and examine their impact on the company's ability to achieve its targets. The scope of this study is limited to these two types of internal communication, without examining external or diagonal communication, to maintain focus on the most critical internal issues. The study also applies Rensis Likert's Linking Pin theory to propose strategies for improving communication flows between management and operational staff. The findings are expected to contribute to the organizational communication literature by providing insights into communication dynamics in medium-sized service companies and offering practical recommendations to enhance internal communication effectiveness.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach to explore and understand the communication barriers within PT. Mantra Garmino Sakti and analyze their impact on the company's ability to achieve its targets. The research design is descriptive and exploratory, focusing on the identification and in-depth examination of communication barriers, particularly vertical and horizontal communication issues within the company. A qualitative approach is ideal for this study as it allows for the exploration of subjective experiences, individual perceptions, and organizational dynamics, which are essential in understanding the complexities of communication within an organization. This method is well-suited for studying the unique challenges faced by PT. Mantra Garmino Sakti, a medium-sized company in the window film installation sector.

Data were collected using a combination of in-depth interviews and participatory observation. These methods were chosen to provide a comprehensive understanding of communication barriers from the perspectives of employees at different levels of the organization. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants, including managers, department heads, outlet administrators, and technicians. The semi-structured format allowed flexibility in exploring the views of the participants while ensuring that the main topics related to communication barriers were addressed. Additionally, participatory observation was employed to gain insights into how communication flows in practice within the company through direct researcher participation in meetings, interdepartmental interactions, and operational tasks.

To enhance transparency and academic rigor, the method section includes quantitative descriptive details such as the total number of participants and the duration of data collection. Specifically, a total of 12 participants were selected purposively, consisting of 3 managers, 2 department heads, 3 outlet administrators, and 4 technicians, all of whom had at least one year of work experience and direct involvement in internal communication processes (R<sub>1</sub>, R<sub>3</sub>). The interviews with each participant lasted approximately 45–90 minutes, providing sufficient depth and allowing flexibility for follow-up questions. The criteria for selecting informants were defined clearly: participants had to (1) be employed for at least one year at PT. Mantra Garmino Sakti, (2) occupy a role that engaged them directly in communication flows (vertical or horizontal), and (3) express willingness to contribute openly to the discussion.

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which is particularly appropriate for identifying patterns and recurring issues within qualitative data. The analysis followed Braun & Clarke's (2006) six-step procedure: familiarization, coding, theme development, theme review, theme definition, and reporting. The coding process was conducted manually and systematically using color-coded matrices to ensure transparency and to structure the data analysis in a way that facilitates replication in future studies.

To ensure the credibility and reliability of the findings, several validation techniques were applied. These included data triangulation, where data from interviews and observations were cross-checked to confirm consistency; member checking, where interview transcripts and summaries of findings were returned to the participants for verification; and peer debriefing, involving two external experts to review and provide feedback on the research process and thematic findings. These measures enhanced the validity of the research outcomes and strengthened confidence in the study's conclusions.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the findings of the study regarding the communication barriers at PT. Mantra Garmino Sakti and their impact on operational efficiency and target achievement. The discussion relates the findings to previous studies and communication theories to position the contribution of this study in the wider literature. The themes emerging from the data focus on vertical and horizontal communication barriers, while also suggesting potential relevance of other communication types for future research.

#### 3.1 Communication Barriers and Their Causes

One of the most significant challenges at PT. Mantra Garmino Sakti is the unclear organizational structure, which leads to confusion among employees about reporting lines and responsibilities. This aligns with Hargie (2011) and Robbins & Judge (2013), who identified unclear hierarchy and ambiguous roles as primary sources of vertical communication failure in organizations. Compared to Pratama (2022), who also observed structural ambiguity in a manufacturing firm, this study adds nuance by showing how such barriers manifest in a medium-sized, service-oriented company where informal processes dominate. Discomfort in giving feedback to supervisors, also reported by participants, reflects the *fear of negative evaluation* noted by Hargie (2011) and supports

Meltareza et al. (2024), who found similar cultural reluctance to upward communication in Indonesian companies. Unlike Meltareza's findings in large corporates, however, this study shows that the effect in a smaller service context can be more immediate in disrupting operations. Horizontal barriers such as inconsistent terminology, poor inter-departmental coordination, and delayed responses were consistent with the phenomenon of *silo mentality* (Meltareza et al., 2024) and support Likert's (1961) Linking Pin theory, which emphasizes the importance of boundary spanning roles in facilitating horizontal communication. These findings, while aligning with previous studies, highlight unique challenges in the window film service industry, an area not yet adequately addressed in prior research. This represents a practical and theoretical contribution by extending the discourse on communication barriers beyond manufacturing and education settings.

### 3.2 Impact of Communication Barriers on Target Achievement

The study shows that unclear instructions and inconsistent feedback loops significantly slow down operational decisions, similar to what Sembada et al. (2022) found in their study on service delivery delays due to communication gaps. However, our findings suggest that in a smaller, decentralized service company, these issues directly lower customer service quality and sales opportunities. This suggests that the magnitude and immediacy of the impact in such contexts may be underestimated in existing literature. The lack of alignment between marketing and logistics reflects poor horizontal information flow, which Robinson & Judge (2013) argue reduces organizational adaptability. This study strengthens that argument by showing concrete effects on sales and inventory matching.

### 3.3 Critical Analysis and Limitations

While the findings resonate with existing theories, they also reveal possible biases, such as employees' reluctance to speak critically during interviews despite assurances of confidentiality a common limitation in qualitative organizational research (Creswell, 2017). The study also focused on vertical and horizontal communication, leaving diagonal and external communication (e.g., between staff at different levels but across units, or with suppliers/customers) underexplored. Future studies could address these aspects to provide a more holistic understanding of organizational communication dynamics.

### 3.4 Theoretical and Practical Contributions

This study contributes theoretically by demonstrating how well-known communication theories (Likert's Linking Pin, silo mentality, and fear of evaluation) manifest in a mid-sized, service-focused organization in Indonesia—contexts that are underrepresented in existing literature. Practically, it provides actionable recommendations for improving organizational communication to enhance operational efficiency and customer satisfaction, directly supporting the company's target achievement.

### 3.5 Strategic Steps to Overcome Communication Barriers

To address the communication barriers between central staff and outlet administrators, PT. Mantra Garmino Sakti needs to implement more structured strategic steps. Mr Anto, the Head of the Tangerang Outlet, mentioned that one of the most common communication barriers is the lack of clarity in the instructions received from central management. "We often experience confusion when receiving instructions from the central office. Sometimes the instructions are unclear or change without consistent notice, which makes the work of the admin ineffective. They often have to reconfirm with the central office, which is time-consuming." To overcome this issue, regular virtual meetings could be a solution. With weekly or bi-weekly meeting schedules, as Mr Anto pointed out, "It will be easier for us to understand the directions from the central office."

In addition, to clarify communication and speed up responses, mr Anto also proposed the use of more efficient communication tools, such as dedicated groups or a ticketing system. This would ensure that communication is more direct and well-organized, helping outlet administrators understand instructions and reducing the time needed for reconfirmation.

Regarding inter-departmental communication, one of the challenges faced is the lack of sufficient coordination between the marketing team and the production department. mr Anto also shared, "Sometimes we are not sure which products the production team is prioritizing. If there were a better coordination system, such as routine updates from the production team on stock and delivery estimates, it would greatly help the outlets in planning their sales strategies." Improving coordination between departments can be achieved through regular meetings or more structured information updates, allowing outlets to plan and adjust their strategies according to market needs and product availability.

From the management side, mr Andre acknowledged that the communication issue arises from the lack of strong and systematic two-way communication channels. "We are aware that there are barriers, particularly in the clarity of instructions and feedback from the field. This issue arises because there is no strong, systematic two-way communication channel. Currently, most of the communication is still one-way." To address this, mr Andre suggested, "We are designing a digital communication system that will allow for direct feedback from the outlets." The implementation of a digital communication system that enables faster and more direct interaction between outlet staff and management will enhance communication effectiveness and speed up decision-making.

Another step that will be applied is the use of Rensis Likert's Linking Pin approach (1961). mr Andre stated, "We are considering implementing the Linking Pin approach, by appointing representatives from each division to act as information connectors." This approach is crucial to ensure that communication between managers, operational staff, and departments runs smoothly. These connectors will ensure that messages from management are understood and effectively translated into operational practices, and vice versa.

Overall, these strategic steps, including regular meetings, the use of more efficient communication systems, and the implementation of the Linking Pin theory, will greatly assist PT. Mantra Garmino Sakti in improving the flow of communication, reducing existing communication barriers, and ultimately supporting the achievement of company targets more effectively.

This section presents the findings of the study regarding the communication barriers at PT. Mantra Garmino Sakti, as well as the analysis of their impact on the company's operational efficiency and target achievement. The results are discussed in relation to the themes that emerged from the data, focusing on both vertical and horizontal communication barriers within the organization.

**Tabel 1.** Results and Discussions

Type of Communication Barrier	Description	Impact on the Company	Proposed Solutions
Vertical Communication Barriers	Unclear organizational structure and communication channels.	Employees are confused about who to report to, causing delays in work.	Improve clarity in communication structure.
Discomfort in Providing Feedback	Employees feel uncomfortable giving direct feedback to supervisors.	Delays in decision-making and task execution, affecting overall performance.	Encourage open communication culture and reduce fear of feedback between managers and staff.
Inconsistent Terminology	Different terms used between outlets.	Causes confusion among employees and disrupts coordination between outlets.	Standardize terminology and provide training on the correct usage of terms.
Horizontal Communication Barriers	Lack of coordination between departments	Discrepancy between customer demand and	Hold regular meetings and provide timely

Slow Response to Feedback	(e.g., marketing and production). Lack of quick responses from management to staff feedback.	product availability, leading to lost sales opportunities. Issues that could have been resolved early escalate, delaying target achievement.	updates between departments. Implement a two-way communication system for faster and more efficient feedback exchange.
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#### 4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, vertical and horizontal communication barriers at PT. Mantra Garmino Sakti have significantly impacted the company's operational efficiency and its ability to achieve targets. The lack of clarity in communication from central management to outlet staff has led to confusion, delays in task execution, and decreased operational performance. Upward communication has also been hindered, as employees are reluctant to provide feedback or report issues due to fear of negative consequences, resulting in unresolved problems that worsen over time. Furthermore, horizontal communication breakdowns, particularly between the marketing and production departments, have led to misalignment between market demand and product availability, affecting customer satisfaction and overall service quality. These findings highlight the relevance of classical communication theories such as Likert's Linking Pin and the concept of silo mentality within the context of a mid-sized, service-oriented organization in Indonesia. However, this study is limited by its reliance on qualitative data from a single company and its focus solely on vertical and horizontal communication, excluding other forms such as diagonal and external communication. Future research should therefore examine communication dynamics across different organizations and industries to validate these findings and explore the role of diagonal and external communication in enhancing organizational performance.

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