# COMMUNICATION FOR MANAGEMENT

DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

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# CONTENTS

# SYLLABUS

## MBA-I Semester-I Year

## COMMUNICATION FOR MANAGEMENT

### MBA-107

| Course Code: MBA 103 | | |
|---|---|---|
| Course Credit: 04 | Lecture: 03 | Tutorial: 01 |
| Course Type: | Core Course | |
| Lectures delivered: | 40 | |

**End Semester Examination System**

| Maximum Marks Allotted | Minimum Pass Marks | Time Allowed |
|---|---|---|
| 70 | 28 | 3 Hours |

**Continuous Comprehensive Assessment (CCA) Pattern**

| Tests | Assignment/ Tutorial/ Presentation/class test | Attendance | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 15 | 5 | 10 | 30 |

**Course Objective:** The objective of this course is to equip students with the written and technical communication skills they need to communicate effectively in a complex and ever-changing contemporary work environment.

| UNIT | Course Content | Hours |
|---|---|---|
| I | **INTRODUCTION:** Role of communication, defining and classifying communication, purpose of communication, process of communication, importance of communication in management, communication structure in organization, barriers & gateway in communication, 7 C's of communication. | 6 |
| II | ORAL COMMUNICATION; What is oral Communication, principles of successful oral communication, two sides of effective oral communication, effective listening, non–verbal communication, Body language, Paralanguage. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION: Purpose of writing, clarity in writing, principles of effective writing, writing technique, electronic writing process. | 8 |
| III | **BUSINESS LETTERS AND REPORTS:** Introduction to business letters, Types of business letter, Layout of business letter, writing memos, what is a report purpose, kinds and objectives of reports, writing reports<br>**CASE METHOD OF LEARNING:** Understanding the case method of learning, different types of cases, overcoming the difficulties of the case method, reading a case properly (previewing, skimming, reading, scanning), case analysis approaches (systems, behavioral, decision, strategy), analyzing the case, dos' and don'ts for case preparation | 12 |
| IV | **EMPLOYMENT COMMUNICATION:** Writing CVs, Group discussions, interview, types of interview, candidates preparation, Interviewers preparation; Impact of Technological Advancement on Business Communication; Communication networks, Intranet, Internet, e mails, teleconferencing, videoconferencing. | 8 |

| V | **PRESENTATION SKILLS:** What is a presentation: elements of presentation, designing a presentation, Advanced visual support for business presentation, types of visual aid, Appearance & Posture, Practicing delivery of presentation.<br>**GROUP COMMUNICATION:** Meetings, Notice, Planning meetings, objectives, participants, timing, venue of meetings, leading meetings, Minutes of Meeting, Media management, the press release, press conference, media interviews, Seminars, workshop, conferences, Business etiquettes. | 8 |
|---|---|---|

**Text and Reference Books**

1. Business Communication Today, 9th edition, Bovee, Thill and Chaturvedi; Pearson Publication, New Delhi.
2. Basic Business Communication by Lesikar, Flatley, Rentz and Neerja Pandey; 11th edition; Tata McGraw Hill Education Private Limited, New Delhi
3. Business Communication: Concepts, Cases and Applications, by Chaturvedi; 2$^{nd}$ Edition; Pearson Publication, New Delhi.
4. Business Correspondence and Report Writing: A practical Approach to Business and Technical Communication by Sharma; 4th edition; Tata McGraw Hill Education Private Limited, New Delhi.
5. Effective Business Communication by Murphy, Hildebrandt and Thomas; 7$^{th}$ edition; Tata McGraw Hill Education Private Limited, New Delhi
6. Communication for Business: A practical Approach by Taylor and Chandra; 4th edition; Pearson Publication, New Delhi.

# CHAPTER 1 AN INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION

## ❖ STRUCTURE ❖

## 1.1  OBJECTIVES

*After reading this unit, the students would be able to:*

- understand the role of communication,
- define and classify communication,
- understand the purpose, process and importance of communication in management,
- understand communication structure in organization,
- understand barriers and gateway in communication, and
- understand 7 C's of communication.

## 1.2  ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN MANAGEMENT

Communication plays a very important role in an organization. Departments communicate from time to time in respect to daily activities and the organization's relationship with the external world.

The basic functions of the management cannot be performed without communication. Planning, organizing, coordinating, budgeting, monitoring, controlling, staffing, delegation; and including marketing, production, financing, staffing (human resource managing), research and development, purchasing, selling, and so on could not be well coordinated, harnessed and their goals achieved without communication.

Communication plays a key role in meetings, any kind of senior.

The specific roles that communication plays include:

- Communication develops an understanding among the employees workers of the organization, which enhances the group efforts.
- Communication enhances an attitude which is necessary for motivation, cooperation and job satisfaction.
- Communication discourages the spread of misinformation, ambiguity, rumors, which may be distractive for organizational performance.
- Communication encourages subordinates to provide suggestions for improving work environment.
- Communication helps in improving managements labor relations by keeping the communication channel open and accessible.
- Communication encourages social relations among workers by intercommunication.

## 1.3 DEFINING AND CLASSIFYING COMMUNICATION

The word 'communication' has been derived from the Latin noun 'communis' and which means 'to share commonly'. Communication in its simplest sense involves two or more persons who come together to share, to dialogue or just to be together for a festival or family gathering. Talking with someone, arguing in a discussion, speaking in public, reading a newspaper, watching TV etc. are all different kinds of communication that we are engaged in everyday. Therefore, Communication is a process of sharing or exchange of ideas, information, knowledge, attitude or feeling among two or more persons through certain signs and symbols.

Communication has been defined by different scholars and researchers in deferent point of time in different ways. Some of the definitions include:

- According to Hamilton and Parker (1987), communication is "the process of people sharing thoughts, ideas, and feelings with each other in commonly understandable ways."

- According to I.A. Richards defines "Communication is the exchange of meanings between individuals through a common system of symbols."

- According to Bovee and Thill (2000) communication is "the process of sending and receiving messages". They distinguished communication and effective communication. According to '

- Bovee and Thill, effective communication occurs when individual achieve a shared understanding, stimulate others to take actions, and encourage people to think in new ways.

- According to Wilbur Schramm "communication is the mechanism through which human relations exist and develop."

Communication is of two types: formal and informal communication.

## 1.3.1 FORMAL AND INFORMAL COMMUNICATION

### 1.3.1.1 Formal Communication

The term formal refers to a style or form of writing, speaking or behavior which is very correct and suitable for important occasions or official purposes. Writing to, or meeting the top executive of a company demands that the subordinate should use the correct form of communication to be transmitted through the upper levels of the hierarchy. For instance. he or she cannot meet the boss without a prior appointment or with a total disregard for the appropriate dress code.

### 1.3.1.2 Informal Communication

The term informal refers to a relaxed and friendly attitude which does not require strict rules of how to behave or speak or dress or write. Two friends working at the same level in an organization can be chatty and exchange words of intimacy in their letters or conversation. One can call the other 'Hi Balu' and use the words in a memo in the place of the salutation. There are degrees of formality and informality in different forms of communication depending upon the closeness or distance of relationships between communicators. .

## 1.3.2 FORMAL ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Parts of an organization coordinate with each other internally by transmitting messages to, and receiving feedback from, internal units with the help of appropriate forms of communication. Similarly an organization communicates with the external world of people it serves. This two-way internal-external communication is the life blood of a healthy and successful organization.

Appropriate forms of such communication include letters, reports, formal memos, formal e-mail and fax. These are fixed forms of external communication and they are seriously written in formal style with salutation and subscription. External communication also includes speeches, websites, press release and press conference in addition to all the above. Memos are often preferred for routine internal communication.

### 1.3.2.1 Flow of Formal Communication

The directions in which formal internal communication flows have already been explained in head 1.7 and in the flow chart given on page 21. The downward flow, the upward flow and the horizontal flow strictly follow hierarchical demarcations. The diagonal dimension, however, may cut across hierarchy according to context and need. The transmission of official messages down, up, across and horizontally, confirms the control structure of the organization.

### 1.3.2.2 Advantages of Formal Communication

The advantages of formal communication are as follow:

- The formal flow of communication ensures information flow. Employees down the line receive their daily share of mail and information to get the organization working in order to perform. Similarly those who send information up in the form of reports, proposals and other forms of feedback enable managers at higher levels take informed decisions for the development of the organization. Such information flow is vital to an organization.

- A favorable image of the organization is built up through formal correspondence, when it is prompt and pleasant. This, in turn, increases its credibility and reliability.

- Formal organizational communication promotes teamwork and coordination. This eventually generates a high quality work ethic and this, in turn, can promote efficiency.

- Formal communication, moreover, ensures centralized control down the levels of hierarchy.

- Division of work: Sharing, cooperation and facilitation of the performance of managerial tasks are some of the other advantages. These build the process of democratic functioning into the system.

### 1.3.2.3 Disadvantages of Formal Communication

The disadvantages of formal communication are as follow:

- Formal demarcations limit individual freedom and inhibit lower level workers from freely interacting with higher level supervisory functionaries. Sometimes mutual exclusion of each other, often carried into social relationships, does harm to the organization.

- Formal communication is time consuming and expensive. The curse of the red-tape is often associated with hierarchical formal communication.

- It encourages filtering of information by delaying it for either strategic reasons or for denying privileges or advantages meant for those who deserve them. Often such filtering is resorted to by middle level functionaries.

### 1.3.3 INFORMAL INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Communication is not generally confined to the formal network of hierarchy in an organization. When they are out of their desks and cubicles, employees at lower levels of hierarchy casually talk in the coffee room and at other places of relaxation. They talk of personal matters and problems but it is said that 80 per cent of the time is bestowed upon matters of the organization which may not be strictly official. They may be both official and personal. An unexpected transfer, a decision that has caused discomfiture to some, the clandestine relationship of a boss with women, a threat to the business of the company owing to an unexpected development and many other matters spark off fears, rumours, stories, sarcastic comments and criticism. These are informally communicated to nooks and corners of the institution. This is called informal communication.

#### 1.3.3.1 Grapevine: The Informal Network of Communication

##### 1.3.3.1.1 Meaning

Informal communication is often called grapevine, when it happens behind one's back. The word, 'grapevine' was first used in 1736, during the American Civil War, to refer to a mischievously made false story to blackmail someone. The modern meaning was developed much later in the context of the need for secret communication, especially in the circumstance in which people were not free to communicate with each other. It eventually came to refer to the means of secret communication used by criminals and prisoners of war.

The present meaning of the word does not have either blackmail or deliberate secrecy as its essential feature although they are mildly present. The term means the complex network of communication in an organization which conveys rumours and comments under the pretence of secrecy. The communication is casual and informal. Thus one can say, 'I heard on the grapevine that you are leaving the company.' Grapevine is the process of communication, not its content proper, although the content is a matter of concern.

The metaphor of the grapevine, i.e. the creeper that bears the grapefruit, perhaps gave the name to this informal communication network. The creepers of the vine plant are intricately intertwined and their lines are not easy to trace. Similarly the routes along which rumours travel within an office are not easily traceable. While one cannot plainly see the creepers, one can see the fruit and even enjoy the taste of its juice. In the same way, rumours are enjoyable to hear, or to spread, although one does not know where one gets them from.

##### 1.3.3.1.2 The Grapevine Network

The grapevine network is secret and confidential. However, secrecy and confidentiality are meant to be violated. When someone says, 'I share this information only with you,

.please do not share this with anyone else,' it is an indirect invitation to share this with all others. Whether it is secret or not, the grapevine is anonymous.

Some identify four chains along which grapevine travels.

- The Single Strand Chain: The first is the Single Strand Chain. A tells something in disguised secrecy to B, and B transmits it to C in the same way. 'Hi Chand, I hear from reliable sources that our company is going to crash shortly' and Chand communicates this to Govind in the factory. More often than not, such information is far from the truth but the grapevine has done its job: it has raised an alarm to cause sufficient worry to the managers.

- The Gossip Chain: The second channel is the Gossip Chain. In this, one person transmits a rumour to whoever he or she meets under cover of anonymity. 'Hi, did you hear that our boss is going to divorce his wife?' The gossip spreads like wildfire leading to character assassination in most cases.

The gossip chain does not often carry official matters as much as it carries tales behind backs. Generally gossip generates from disgruntled or dissatisfied workers and from rivals.

- The Cluster Chain: The Cluster Chain grapevine operates among a select group of individuals who, in turn, communicate to another select group, usually called liaison individuals. They informally carry information to spokesmen of departments in order to draw the attention of the management.

A subordinate may tell a few of his friends in higher levels of the hierarchy, 'Sir, some of the employees in the computer section are contemplating the possibility of joining another company where they pay higher salaries.' Members of the cluster who receive this grapevine, in turn, communicate it to others, close friends, who can influence or warn decision makers. The cluster strand is a dominant grapevine in organizations.

Sometimes it is used by the management to leak out information in advance about decisions to come.

(Flow Chart)



| ↓ Downward Flow | ↑ Upward Flow | ◄─► Horizontal Flow | ↘ Diagonal Flow |
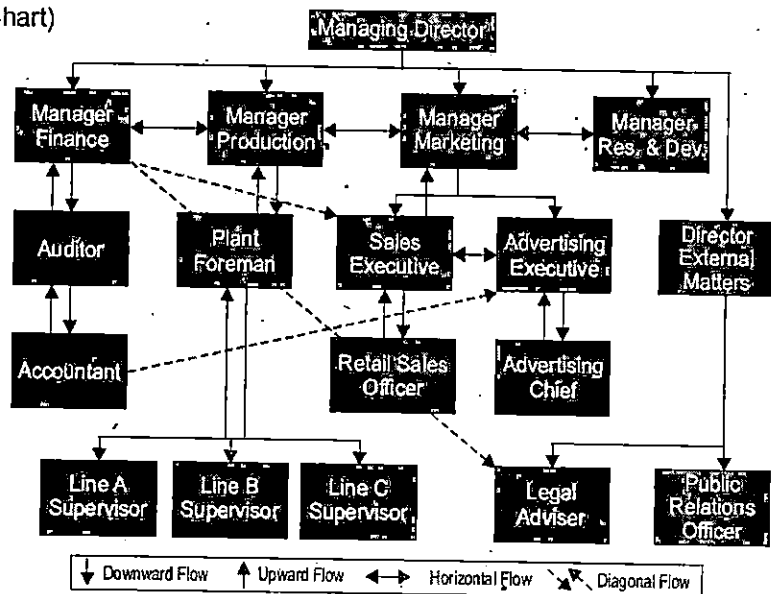
- The Probability Chain: The Probability Chain is used to pass on amusing information which may be interesting but not generally important. One who grapevines through this chain is indifferent to the recipient of the message. One may address a colleague, 'You will be shown the door tomorrow, haven't you offended the boss by commenting on the saree of his wife in his presence?' While the probability of the boss's displeasure cannot be ruled out, the possibility of showing the door is remote. Nevertheless the grapeviner has been indifferent to whatever hurt she may have caused to her colleague.

### 1.3.3.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of Grapevine

(a) The grapevine is a valuable network of informal communication and it has several advantages which are as follow:

- It is the only means by which managers can study the hidden mind of the workforce. This is necessary to frame policies, make decisions and plan development by rectifying shortcomings of the administration, if any. The feedback value is, therefore, immense. Savvy managers do not seek to suppress the grapevine; on the contrary, they tap it in order to handle problems before they reach a crisis.

- The grapevine is the speediest channel of communication. Rumours spread like wildfire. When the management uses it effectively to drop hints by way of countering adverse rumours, the speed with which the hints travel is not matched by that of any formal means of communication and it is beneficial to managers. The ill effects of bad rumours are immediately arrested.

- Grapevine reinforces formal channels of communication. Thus a circular announcing a pay raise is confidence inspiring when the rumour about a pay cut has been widely afloat.

- The grapevine has therapeutic value. While formal communication inhibits free expression of one's mind, informal communication opens the flood gates of free expression. When one lets out his pent up emotions by assassinating the character of the person he hates most, or conveys false rumours to disparage someone, one may become sober to reflect on the damage done.

And that is the right moment for psychological counselling and change of mind. In this way most vehement critics have turned to be staunch supporters of the management.

(b) The grapevine has many drawbacks as well which are as follow:

- The information communicated through grapevine may not be reliable. They cannot be acted upon without discrete corroboration.

- Grapevine often distorts facts and misinforms. This is detrimental to the interests of an organization when rumours spread outside.

- Grapevine may send false alarms and raise unnecessary fears to cause mistrust among colleagues. Interpersonal harmony may run the risk of being superseded by conflict. Sometimes it makes crisis management difficult.

### 1.3.3.3 Effective Management of the Grapevine

Effective managers make the best of the grapevine. The following strategies may

help in an effective handling of this informal channel of communication to the advantage of the organization.

- Transparency in decision-making processes can help avoid adverse grapevine.
- Frequent dialogues with employees at all levels will give them the sense of involvement and belonging to the organization. They will desist from circulating harmful rumours.
- Teamwork and widely shared responsibilities can promote unity and harmony which often work against questionable rumours and reports.
- Effective listening at managerial levels can defuse problems before they go out of hand and this can check rumours.
- Tactful managers often succeed in identifying rumour mongers and character assassins and in dealing with them appropriately in order to win their confidence.
- Good managers are discrete to identify areas of discontent among employees and remove them before they become a problem.
- Good public relations, both internal and external, can generate a favourable public opinion for the organization. It can offset the damages done by bad rumours.
- An efficient network of trusted colleagues can work through the cluster grapevine to drop hints, or even leak out favourable information, as a strategy to counter the harmful grapevine.
- A secret network may help to obtain feedback about an impending problem or crisis and thereby avert it.

### 1.3.4 Informal External Communication

An organization has a formally structured system of networking to communicate with outsiders. Letters, reports, advertisements, etc., facilitate such formal communication. Communication with the external world may also be informal. Any member of an organization has many opportunities to talk about it in informal gatherings. Consciously or unconsciously, he or she may pass on a favourable or unfavorable message about the organization. It may be in the form of a chance remark, or a body gesture or a vocal sound or an expression of positive appreciation. Such informal external communication often creates an image of the organization in the public mind. Top managers use informal external contacts to impress outsiders. The expensive cars they use, the fabulous dresses they wear, the train of followers who are with them and the refinement they profess in the use of language and personal manners create a favourable image of their organizations. Public meetings and socializing occasions provide opportunities to address large gatherings. What they speak there, consciously or unconsciously, creates an impression. This is the reason why companies are liberal in their perks to managers.

## 1.4. THE PURPOSE OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Business communication is important to managers as it helps them carry out their basic functions within the organization. They should have all the information pertaining to the specific tasks as well as the entire organization and must then seek to communicate this information to the employees of the organization. They should seek to communicate their goals to their subordinates in order to make sure every member of the organization is working to achieve the goals of the organization.

A great part of the time spent by a manager in an organization is devoted to communication. Whether that communication is face to face or using some other channel, it takes up a healthy chunk out of the manager's day.

The purpose of business communication can be summarized into a few main functions:

### 1.4.1. Motivation

Managers need to communicate to employees the tasks they need to carry out, the timelines of these tasks, and the manner in which the tasks should be carried out. However, communication isn't just about allowing them to do this. It is also about allowing them to do it in a way that motivates the employees to work harder and better. A good communicator knows how to lace their message with just the right amount of motivation to make the receiver genuinely want to accept the message.

### 1.4.2. The Sharing of Information

Communication represents the cogs in the wheels of an organization that allow information to flow from one place to another. In order for decisions to be made more effectively within the organization, there should first be a smooth flow of information. That way, the major decision-makers know that the decisions they are making have taken all of the facts into consideration and are up to date.

### 1.4.3 Socialization

Business isn't all about work. Sometimes it is also about play and getting people to open up and simmer down. Communication helps with the socialization aspect of business as well. It is a normal part of human nature that we will always want to open up and communicate when we are in the presence of other individuals. Whether it is regular banter between employees or socialization for the purpose of networking at business parties, communication makes it possible for business people to talk to each other casually in social settings and is involved in creating goodwill in business communication.

### 1.4.4 Control

One of the key functions of a manager is control. Typically, a manager will want to control the behaviors and actions of the employees within an organization. However, these employees are not robots, and they cannot be controlled or be coerced to do anything. That is where communication comes in. To get your employees to do anything, you have to communicate what you want to your employees.

### 1.4.5 Communication Brings Business Alive

While you're thinking about the bottom line for your business, think as well about communication. You may find that communication is the crucial factor in deciding the future of your business. As long as it is effective, everything else will work out well.

### 1.5 THE PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is a process that involves certain distinct steps. In its simpler form, it relates to stimulus and response. The stimulus arises from the communicator, and the receiver responds. Communication is not complete till the message conveyed by the

sender is properly understood by the receiver. Communication involves participants (a sender and a receiver), message to be sent, a medium to carry the communication signals and the environments in which the message is sent and received. These elements act and interact in the five-step process. Whether you are speaking or writing, listening or reading, communication is more than a single act. Instead, it is a chain of events

that can be broken into five phases as:

✦ The sender has an idea

✦ The idea becomes a message

✦ The message is transmitted

✦ The receiver gets the message

✦ The receiver reacts and sends feedback to the sender

### 1.5.1 The Sender Has an Idea

The sender is the individual who initiates the communication. This person is sometimes known as the "encoder", two things must happen before the sender wants to send a message, which are as follows.

First, an internal or external stimulus prompts sender to send a message. This prompt may arrive in the form of letters, memorandum, penciled note, electronic mail, fax, telex, or even casual conversation in the hallway. Regardless of the stimulus source; it could be a business transaction, a written question, a meeting, an interview, or unexpected request for a favour. Whatever the case might be, sender will start thinking of ideas for the message.

The second requirement to send message is sufficient motivation. Think of times when a manager asks a question, and some of the people present were fairly sure they knew the answer (were stimulated), but did not respond. Why didn't they respond? Probably, because they were not sufficiently motivated, i.e. they saw no personal benefit in answering. Or they saw greater benefit in not answering.

### 1.5.2 The Idea Becomes a Message

After being stimulated and motivated to communicate, the sender must decide how best to convey a message to the specific receiver. The message is the information or core idea being transmitted. The process of putting a message into the form in which it is to be communicated is called **encoding**. It consists of both verbal (written or spoken) symbols and nonverbal (unspoken) symbols. Verbal information is the part of the message that is read heard. Nonverbal information entails such things as body language and the surrounding environment. Whenever we compose a message, we need to consider what content to include, how the receiver will interpret it, and how it may affect your relationship.

*"A simple 'Thank you' message will be relatively easy. In contrast, to inform 200 employees of bad news about salaries will require much more complicated, carefully planned message."*

To some extent, the choice of words also depends on our cultural background. The nature of our code—our language and vocabulary—imposes its own limits on our message. For example, the language of a lawyer differs from that of an accountant or a doctor, and the difference in their vocabularies affects their ability to recognize and express ideas.

### Challenges of Formulating Messages

Several things can go wrong when we are formulating a message. Typical problems involved are indecision about message content, lack of familiarity with the situation or the receiver, emotional conflicts, or difficulty in expressing ideas.

1. **Indecision about content:** Deciding what to say is the first difficulty in the communication process. Many people make the mistake of trying to convey everything they know about a subject. When a message contains too much information, it is difficult to absorb. If you want to get your point across, therefore, you have to decide what to include and what to leave out, how much detail to provide, and what order to include and what order adequate background. Include only the information that is useful to the receiver, and organize it in a way that encourages its acceptance.

2. **Lack of familiarity with the situation or the receiver:** Can we deliver our message equally well when we are not very familiar with the subject we are talking about: or when we do not know the receiver very well? Creating an effective message is difficult if we don't know how it will be used. Let's say we are writing a report on the market for sports equipment. If we don't know the purpose of the report, it's hard to know what to say. Some of the things you should be clear about before writing the report are:

   ◆ What sort of sports equipment should be covered?

   ◆ Should you include team sports as well as individual sports?

   ◆ Should you sub-divide the market geographically, or according to price ranges?

   ◆ How long should the report be?

   Unless we know why the report is needed, we really cannot answer these questions intelligently. We are forced to create a very general document one that covers a little bit of everything.

   Lack of familiarity with our audience is an equally serious handicap we need to know something about the biases, education, age, status, and style of the receiver in order to create an effective message. If we are writing for a specialist in our field, for example, we can use technical terms that might be unfamiliar to a layperson. If we are addressing a lower-level employee, we might approach a subject differently than if we were talking to our boss. Decisions about the content, organization, style, and tone of your message all depend, at least to some extent, on the relationship between us and our audience. If we don't know the audience, we will be forced to make these decisions in the dark. As a result, at least part of our message may miss the point. Hence, ask why we are preparing the message and for whom we are preparing it.

3. **Emotional conflicts:** Another potential problem in developing the message arises when the sender has conflicting emotions about the subject or the audience. Let's say we've been asked to recommend ways to improve the organization of our department. We conclude that the best approach is to combine two positions. But this solution will mean eliminating the job of one of our close associates. As we prepare our report, we find ourselves apologizing for our recommendation. Even though we believe our position is justified, we cannot make a convincing case. Thus, in business communications try to maintain your objectivity.

4. **Difficulty of expressing ideas:** Most of us might think that to write and to speak are not so difficult. We only learn that they do not come easy when we have to make public speeches or when we are a required to write an influential letter on a particular matter. Lack of experience in writing or speaking can also prevent a person from developing effective messages. Some people have limited education or a lack of aptitude when it comes to expressing ideas. Perhaps they have a limited vocabulary or are uncertain about questions of grammar, punctuation, and style. Or perhaps they are simply frightened by the idea of writing something or appearing before as they lack expertise in using language.

*Problems of this sort can be overcome, but only with some effort. The important thing is to recognize the problem and take action. An inability to put thoughts into words can be overcome through study and practice.*

### 1.5.3 The Message is Transmitted

The third step in the communication process is physical transmission of the message from sender to receiver. How will we send our message? Should one write or speak? What is the appropriate channel for any given message? The channel is the means used to convey the message. The forms of communication may be verbal, or non verbal. Beyond that, we can convey a message by phone, computer, face-to-face exchange, or other medium.

### 1.5.4 The Receiver Gets the Message

The receiver is the individual to whom the message is directed, also known as the decoder. When the encoder's message is picked up, the receiver tries to make sense out of it, i.e. to decode it. Decoding is the process the receiver goes through in trying to interpret the exact meaning of the message. Everyone tries to read between the lines in an effort to interpret what the sender means by the message. If we send a letter, the recipient has to read it before she/he can understand it. If we are giving a speech, the people in the audience have to be able to hear us, and they have to be paying attention.

But physical reception is only the first step. The receiver also has to absorb the message mentally. In other words, the message has to be understood and stored in the receiver's mind. If all goes well, the message is interpreted correctly. The receiver assigns the same basic meaning to the words as the sender intended and responds in the desired way.

Like transmission problems, problems during the reception phase often have a physical cause. Competing sights and sounds, an uncomfortable chair, poor lighting or some other irritating condition may distract the receiver. In some impairment, for example, or even a headache, can interfere with reception of a message. These annoyances do not generally block communication entirely, but they may reduce the receiver's concentration.

Perhaps the most common barrier to reception is simply lack of attention on the receiver's part. We all let our minds wander now and then, regardless of how hard we try to concentrate. People are especially likely to drift off when they are forced to listen to information that is difficult to understand or that has little direct bearing on their own lives. If they are tired or concerned about other matters, they are even more likely to lose interest.
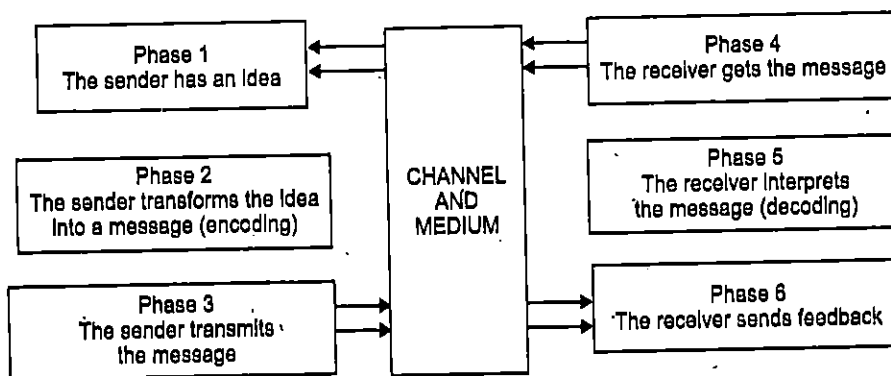
### 1.5.5 The Receiver Reacts and Sends Feedback to the Sender

Feedback is the receiver's response to a message. It is the final link in the communication chain. However, the feedback response involves a reversal of the communication process so that the receiver now becomes the sender and the sender becomes the receiver. After getting the message, the receiver responds in some way and signals as a response to the sender. The signal may take the form of a smile, a long pause, a spoken comment, a written message, or an action. Even a lack of response is, in a sense, a form of response.

Feedback is a key element in the communication process because it enables the sender to evaluate the effectiveness of the message. It provides guidance for the next message that you send to the receiver. If your audience doesn't understand what you mean, you can tell by the response and refine the message. Feedback plays an important role by indicating significant communication barriers: differences in background, different interpretations of words, and differing emotional reactions. So when the receiver of the message has made feedback and the sender is sure that the message has been communicated in the way intended, we say communication has existed.

Therefore, from the above phases, you can think of communication as a process consisting of identifiable links, with ultimate objective of influencing behavior, attitudes, and beliefs. Each element of the communication process is critical: the sender, encoding, channel, the receiver, decoding, and feedback.

*The communication process has been illustrated in the figure given below:*

| Phase 1<br>The sender has an Idea | | CHANNEL<br>AND<br>MEDIUM | | Phase 4<br>The receiver gets the message |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Phase 2<br>The sender transforms the Idea<br>Into a message (encoding) | | | | Phase 5<br>The receiver interprets<br>the message (decoding) |
| Phase 3<br>The sender transmits<br>the message | | | | Phase 6<br>The receiver sends feedback |

## 1.6 IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION IN MANAGEMENT

Communication will keep employees well-informed and give a business a higher productivity rate. Employees tend to have higher levels of job performance when there is a similarity of individual needs and job characteristics that exist and are communicated well. Sequentially, a happy and hard working team of employees helps give a business a corporate image that the public will find remarkable and attractive. Importance of communication can be listed as under:

**An aid to managerial performance.** As management is a task of getting the work accomplished through efforts of other personnel, it is communication that can keep people working in harmony with desires of managers. Management members deal with work personnel in giving orders and instructions, in allocating jobs and duties, in approving work and recognizing performance, in explaining objectives and policies, and in seeking

their effective co-operation. In all positive and negative actions, managers have to move with the help of communication in their dealings with human beings. Accordingly, the efficiency of a manager lies in his ability to communicate with other personnel.

**Achieving coordination through understanding.** Good communication stimulates human beings to put efforts in their work performance.

The importance of the work is required to be mentally accepted before the doing of such work. That is, the will-to-do must precede the actual doing. To provide this will-to-do, communication creates an understanding and acceptance on the part of employees. As there can be no faith in an activity without understanding it clearly, communication results in satisfactory performance through creating this faith. In short, effective communication increases understanding of employees, gains their willing acceptance and leads them to greater efforts.

**Helps in decision-making.** Good communication system provides all necessary information, which enables a manager to take quality decision in the proper time and these decisions are communicated to those who are in need of them.

**Base for leadership action.** Leadership action is impossible without communication between the leader and his followers. The leader can exert his influence only through conveying ideas, feelings, suggestions and decisions to his followers. The followers too can convey their responses, feelings, attitudes and problems to the leader through the medium of communication. The two-way personal communication is essential for maintaining man-to-man relationship in leadership. Accordingly, effectiveness of leadership is greatly determined by the adequacy and clarity of communication.

**Means of coordination.** Communication helps in securing desired coordination of enterprise operations by communication network throughout the organization. As teamwork is essential for the accomplishment of jobs in many cases, coordination appears to be of paramount importance. For the purpose of coordination, managers keep the group fully informed of all facts and situations relating to the work. Secrecy creates suspicion and separates people; common understanding of common problems unites them for showing a better record of their performance.

**Provision of job satisfaction.** Mutual trust and confidence between management and workers can be increased by the communication of what the manager wants and what the employees perform. A clear-cut understanding provides job satisfaction to the employees, creates

their confidence in the ability of managers and promotes their loyalty towards the enterprise. That is to say, effective communication satisfies personal and social needs of human beings and stimulates their job interest and enthusiasm.

## 1.7 COMMUNICATION STRUCTURE IN ORGANIZATION

Most organizations follow the hierarchical structure. The decision-maker at the top is in control of the whole organization. Subordinate levels of workers execute decisions passed down from the top. Thus the Principal of a college, the Managing Director of a company or the President or Chairperson of an association presides over the affairs of the organization and is responsible for decision-making. In most modern organizations, however, such a single authoritarian chain of control is replaced by participatory decision-making which is more democratic. Groups such as committees and boards share the decision-making process with top authorities. Consultations across levels of hierarchy are common. Accordingly, there are many directions of communication within an organization. It flows downward, upward, horizontally or diagonally. All the four directions of communication are used by most organizations.

**Downward, Upward, Horizontal and Diagonal.**
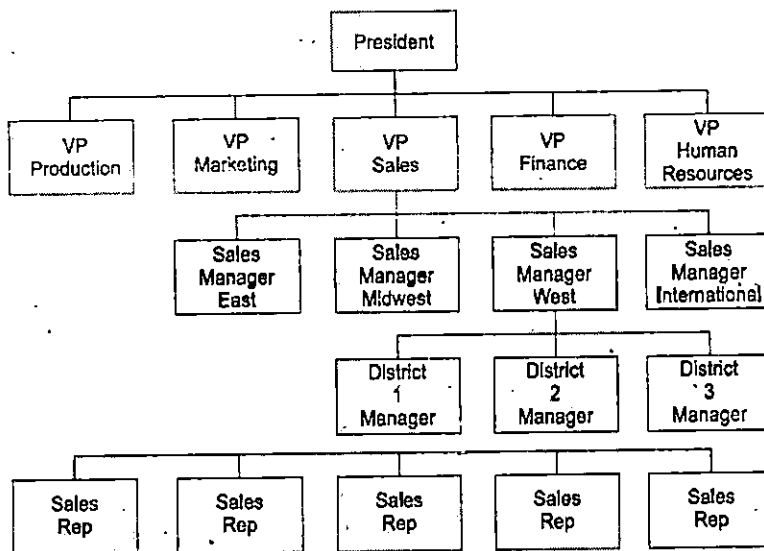


### 1.7.1 Downward Communication

Downward communication is the flow of information from higher officials to lower managerial officials. Communication that involves a message exchange between two or more levels of the organizational hierarchy is called Vertical Communication. It can involve a manager and a subordinate or can involve several layers of the hierarchy. Vertical communication can flow in a downward or an upward direction. Formal messages that flow from managers and supervisors to subordinates are called downward communication. Usually, this type of communication involves job directions, assignment of tasks and responsibilities, performance feedback, certain information concerning the organization's strategies and goals. Speeches, policy and procedure manuals, employee handbooks, company leaflets, briefings on the organization's mission and strategies, staff meetings, and job descriptions are all examples of downward communication.

Top management communicates through means as memorandums, conferences, telephone conversations, company's newsletters, policy manuals, bulletin, board announcements and video tapes.

### 1.7.1.1 Objectives of the downward communication

Downward communications have the following main objectives:

- To give specific directives about responsibility entrusted to a subordinate
- To explain policies and organizational procedures
- To apprise the performance of subordinates
- To give subordinates information about rationale of their job

### 1.7.1.2 Purpose of downward communication

Most downward communication involves information in one of five categories:

- *Job instructions*: Directions about what to do or how to do it. "When you stock the shelves, put the new merchandise behind the old stock."

- *Job rational*: Explanations of how one task relates to other tasks. Explaining the relationship between a task and other organizational tasks. "We rotate the stock like that so the customer won't wind up with state merchandise."

- *Policy and procedures*: Practice of the organization or rules, regulations and benefits of the organization. "Don't try to argue with unhappy customers. If you can't handle them yourself, call the manager".

- *Feedback*: Information about how efficiently a person is performing. "You are really catching on fast. If you keep up the good work, you'll be an assistant manager by the end of the year".

- *Indoctrination*: Information aimed at motivating employees by impressing the organization's mission upon them and specifying how they should relate to it. Efforts to encourage a sense of mission and dedication to the goals of the organization. "If everyone will put in a little extra effort, we can become the number one producer of X components."

### 1.7.1.3 Limitation of downward communication

Downward communication across several levels is prone to considerable distortion. As much as 80% of top management's message may be lost by the time the message reaches five levels below. There are usually three main reasons for the distortion:

- One reason is that faulty message transmission may occur because of sender's carelessness, poor communication skills, and the difficulty of encoding a message that will be clearly understood by individuals at multiple levels.

- Another is that managers tend to overuse one-way communication methods, such as, memos, manuals, and newsletters, leaving little possibility for immediate feedback regarding receiver's understanding.

- Finally, some managers may intentionally or unintentionally filter communications by withholding, screening, or manipulating information.

The major problem with managers and downward communication is their assumption that employees don't need or want to know much about what is going on. Intentional filtering typically occurs when a manager seeks to enhance personal power over subordinates by tightly controlling organizational information.

### 1.7.1.4 Essentials of Effective downward communication

The practice of downward communication should not be an ineffective effort, but it has to be effective so that it can achieve its objectives. The following are the essential points to make our downward communication effective:

1. Managers themselves should be well-informed of the objective and activities of their organization. If the manager has adequate information, they will be able to transmit the information to their subordinates in an effective manner.

2. Managers must work according to the decided communication plan. Managers must decide how much information is to be communicated and at what time. It will insure that there is no communication gap.

3. Information must be passed to the correct person in the hierarchy otherwise there will be problem of a smooth flow of downward communication.

4. The orders and instructions can be originated from various levels instead of concentrating the authority at higher level. It will make line of communication shortened, elimination of delays, loss of information and the possibility of distortion will be reduced.

## 1.7.2 Upward Communication

The flow of information from lower level managerial officers to higher level official is called upward communication. It is the flow of opinions, ideas, complaints, and other kinds of information from subordinates up to managers. It is generated by suggestion systems, grievance procedures, informal and formal meetings, attitude surveys, and exit interviews.

Upward communication is important for several reasons. Managers generally transmit information upwards in the organization relating to job assignment, performance, problems, organizational practices or policies and the methodology for accomplishing tasks. Top level executive depend on lower-level employees to furnish them with accurate, timely reports on problems, emerging trends, opportunities or improvements, and so on.

Usually upward communication is the feedback to downward commemoration. Its major messages include:

- Performance feedback

- Feedback on organizational policies and plans

- Problem solving suggestions

- *The following types of messages are valuable when communicated upwards:*

- What subordinates are doing: highlights of their work, achievements, progress, and future job plan. "We'll have that job done by closing time today".

- Outlines of unsolved work problems on which subordinates now need aid or may require help in the future. "We are still having trouble with the air conditioner in the accounting office".

- Suggestions of ideas for improvements within departments in the organization as a whole. "I think I have figured a way to give people the vacation schedules they want and still keep our staffing up".

- How subordinates think and feel about each other and their jobs, their associates and

their organization. "I am having a hard time working with Mr. "X". He seems to think I am mad at him. Or "I am getting frustrated. I have been in the same job for over a year now, and I am seeking for more responsibility".

### 1.7.2.1 Importance of upward communication

Upward communications have the following importance:

✦ **Providing feedback:** Upward communication provides the management with the necessary feedback. It insures that the directives issued to lower level manager have been understood properly or not. Management also gets the valuable information like what is the thinking of employees about the organization and regarding its policies.

✦ **Outlet for pent up information:** Upward communication gives the opportunity to the employees to express their problems and grievances. In the upward communication employees feel comfortable after addressing their problem with superiors.

✦ **Constructive suggestions:** Employees also provide some constructive suggestions for the betterment of the organization.

These suggestions are sometimes very beneficiary to the organization.

✦ **Greater harmony and cohesion:** Upward communication acts as a kind of lubricant. It creates greater harmony between the management and the employees.

### 1.7.2.2 Methods of upward communication

The business management has become concerned to know about what is going on at several levels below them. They have employed some fairly new techniques like open-door policy, suggestion schemes, etc. and they are still anxious to know any new or advanced method system that can be adopted to get information from the lower ranks.

Forms of upward communication include one – to – one meeting with one's immediate supervisor, staff meetings with supervisors, suggestion systems, grievance procedures, employee attitude survey, progress reports, inquiries, and so on.

### 1.7.2.3 Limitations of upward communication

Upward communication has the following limitations/drawbacks.

1. It is subject to substantial distortions for two major reasons.
   - ✦ Mobility aspiration
   - ✦ Superiors often discourage negative feedback leading to overstated information

2. Bypassing some organizational levels—when employees bypass their immediate supervisor and contact with higher level officials directly, the supervisor will be unfriendly to the employees which leads to poor performance. This may also make top managers lose confidence in the competence of middle level managers. It can lead to information overload to top level managers resulting in filtering and distortion.

3. Upward communication can be unapproachable to many employees.

4. Reluctance or lack of awareness of employees to initiate or respond to upward communication.

5. Some superiors may actively discourage upward communication using their authoritarianism.

### 1.7.3 Horizontal Communication

Horizontal communication involves exchange of information among individuals on the same organizational level, such as across or within departments. Thus, it generally involves colleagues and peers. Horizontal information informs, supports, and coordinates activities both within the department and also and interdepartmentally. Considerable horizontal communication in organizations stems from staff specialists, in areas such as engineering, accounting, and human resources management, who provide advice to managers in various departments.

Horizontal communication is important to help coordinate work assignments, share information on plans and activities, negotiate differences and develop inter personal support, thereby creating a more cohesive work unit. The more that, individuals or departments within an organization must interact, with each other to accomplish their objectives the more frequent and intense will be the horizontal communication.

#### 1.7.3.1 Importance of horizontal communication

The Importance of horizontal communication in an organization is for the following purposes:

- To coordinate task when several employees or departments are each working on part of an important project
- To solve problems such as how to reduce waste or how to increase the number of items assembled each hour.
- To share information such as an easier way to perform a task or the results of a new survey
- To solve conflicts such as jealousy or disagreements between co-workers
- To build rapport: peer support

#### 1.7.3.2 Limitation of Horizontal Communication

Three major factors tend to slow down the necessary and, work-related horizontal communication.

- First, competition among individuals or work units can influence individuals to hide information that is potentially damaging to themselves or that may aid others.
- Second, specialization may cause individuals to be concerned mainly about the work of their own unit and to have little appreciation for the work and communication needs of others. For example, scientists in research and development unit that is focused on long-term projects may find it difficult to interrupt their work to help with current customer problems identified by the sales department.
- Third, motivation may be lacking when subordinate's horizontal communication is not encouraged or rewarded.

### 1.7.4 Diagonal Communication (Cross Channel Communication)

Cross channel communication is the exchange of information among employees in different work units who are neither subordinate nor superior to each other. Staff specialists use cross channel communications frequently because their responsibilities typically involve many departments within the organization. Because they lack line of authority to

direct those to whom they communicate, they must often rely on their persuasive skills, as for instance when the human resource department encourages employees to complete a job satisfaction questionnaire. Some organizational structures employ teams comprised of members from different functional areas, even different levels of the hierarchy. With more and more firms reducing the number of management layers and increasing the use of self managed work teams, many workers are being required to communicate with others in different departments and on different levels to solve problems and coordinate work. For instance, a team might be formed from all functional areas (accounting, marketing, operations, and human resources) to work on a specific product project to ensure that all points of view are considered.

### 1.7.5 Multidimensional Communication

No modern or progressive organization or company can depend solely on any one of the four directions of communication described above. A judicious combination of different dimensions alone can work. For example, a strictly hierarchical downward flow may lead to over-centralization and regimentation of workers. Many ills can possibly result. On the other hand, overdependence on the upward flow and crosswise communication may promote too much informality which may affect the work ethic of the organization. Slackness and indiscipline may result. Horizontal communication alone may not work at other levels. All four are essential to an advantageous networking of formal internal communication. A judicious combination determined by context and use may work to promote functional harmony.

### 1.7.6 Formal Organizational Flowchart

The following organizational flow chart shows the different directions of internal communication:



Grapevine: Single Strand

Grapevine: Cluster Chain

Grapevine: Gossip Chain

Grapevine: Probability Chain
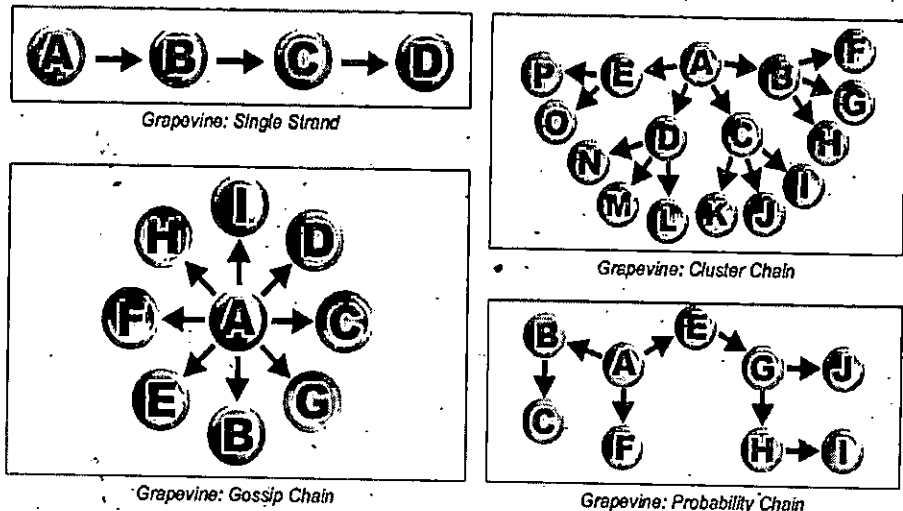
## 1.8 BARRIERS AND GATEWAY IN COMMUNICATION

### 1.8.1. Barriers IN COMMUNICATION

Communication is successful only when the receiver understands the message as

intended by the sender. Organizational communication is the process by which managers develop a system to give information and transmit meaning to large number of people within the organization and to relevant individuals and institutions outside it. Communication is very important because:

- Managers spend most of their time communicating
- Communication is needed for managerial effectiveness
- Communication leads to power
- Communication leads to organizational effectiveness

But many a time managers say something and the subordinates understand it differently. This distortion may be due to some barriers to communication, which are discussed as follows.

### 1.8.1.1 Communication barriers between people

These include barriers such as differences in perception and language, poor listening, emotional interference, cultural differences and physical distractions.

#### 1. Differences in Perception and Language

Perception is people's individual interpretation of the sensory world around them. Even when two people have experienced the same event, their mental images of that event will not be identical. Because perceptions are unique, the ideas one want to express differ from other people.

Language is an arbitrary code that depends on shared definitions. A receiver and a sender may attach different meanings to the words used in a message. The receiver will interpret the message based on his experiences, interests, opinions and emotions. Communicated message must be understandable to the receiver. Words mean different things to different people. Language reflects not only the personality of the individual but also the culture of society in which the individual is living. In organizations, people come from different regions, different backgrounds, speak different languages, have different academic backgrounds, different intellectual facilities, and hence the terminology they use varies. Often, communication gaps arise because the language the sender is using may be incomprehensible, vague and indigestible.

#### 2. Poor Listening

Poor listening is one of the major communication problems. Listening ability decreases when information is difficult to understand and when it has little meaning for the listener. Failure to listen is a common barrier to successful oral communication. Most people speak 100 to 200 words a minute but are capable of listening to material of average difficulty at 500 or more words a minute. This difference allows listener's mind to wander to topics other than the message. Listening is a skill that can and must be learned.

Misunderstanding and conflicts can be reduced if people would listen to the message with enough attention. Most people do not listen very well due to various distractions, emotions, excitement, indifference, aggressiveness and wandering attention. One of the major reasons for poor listening is an individual's continual thinking about his own problems and worries.

#### 3. Emotional Interference

How the receiver feels at the time of receipt of information influences effectively how

he interprets the information. For example, if the receiver feels that the communicator is in a cheerful mood, he interprets that information being sent by the communicator to be good and interesting. Extreme emotions and joyousness or depression are quite likely to hinder the effectiveness of communication. It is difficult to shape a message when one is upset, hostile or fearful. The ideas and feelings often get in the way of being objective.

#### 4. Cultural Differences

Communicating with someone from another country is probably the most extreme example of how different backgrounds and cultures may impede communication. In fact, it may be one of the hardest communication barriers to overcome.

#### 5. Receiver's Capability

If the receiver has a physical or mental disability that causes a communication barrier, the sender should recognize this in choosing message type and channel.

#### 6. Physical Distractions

Communication barriers are often physical: bad connections, poor acoustics, or illegible copy. This can block an effective message. The receiver might be distracted by poor lighting, health problems or some other irritating condition, that may reduce the receiver's concentration.

### *1.8.1.2 Communication Barriers within Organizations*

The number of business messages delivered each day is staggering, and the opportunities for feedback are often limited, making it difficult to correct misunderstandings when they do occur.

1. **Information Overloads and Message Competition:** A recent study by the Gallup organization found that, the average white-collar worker sends and receives as many as 190 messages a day. The problem is that new technology is not replacing more traditional forms; it is just adding to the load.

2. **Environmental Factors:** The environment in which communication occurs can interfere with the success of a message. One such example of a distracting environmental factor is a noisy machine in an area where a supervisor is trying to speak with an employee.

3. **Incorrect Filtering:** Filtering is screening out information before a message is passed on to someone. Information theory tells us "every relay doubles the noise and cuts the message in half". That means the message will be distilled and probably distorted before it is passed on to the intended receiver.

4. **Closed or Inadequate Communication Channel:** A management style that is directive and authoritative blocks the free and open exchange of information that characterizes effective communication. Having too few channels will block communication, whereas having too many channels will distort messages as they move upward, downward or horizontally through the organization.

Communication may be oral, written, visual or audio-visual. The different communication channels can be personal barriers in that some individuals always seem to incline toward a particular channel even though a more effective one exists. All the media have their relative merits and limitations. While a properly chosen medium can add to the effectiveness of a communication, an unsuitable medium may act as a barrier to it.

| Medium | When to use the Message |
|---|---|
| E-Mail | • Consists of short, simple content.<br>• Involves mostly fact-based information where visual and nonverbal cues are not required.<br>• Requires, prompt dissemination or response. |
| Face-to-Face | • Will benefit from visual, verbal, and non-verbal cues.<br>• Requires exploration of complex topics.<br>• Involves sensitive, personal, or bad-news information.<br>• Requires interactive or immediate feedback. |
| Telephone | • Will benefit from set less-formal environment.<br>• Requires an audience of one (usually).<br>• Requires discussion with immediate feedback off common ideas. |
| Written | • Requires at record for documentation ox later reference.<br>• Contains complex, detailed, or lengthy content.<br>• Benefits from, graphics or other visuals. |

## 1.8.1.2.1 Physical Barriers

These include noise, time and distance.

### 1. Noise

Noise is an interruption that can creep in at any point of the communication process and make it ineffective. Environment is one major cause that interferes with message reception like noises from the roadside, by the loud noise of machines in factories, constant gossiping of individuals outside the communication act, blaring loudspeaker, faulty transmission, and so on. Noise can occur in other forms also; poor handwriting, heavy accent or soft speech, communication in a poorly lit room, and so on, in fact, these are barriers to effective communication.

For smooth and effective communication, it is necessary to eliminate or reduce noise as far as possible.

### 2. Time

The frequency of communication encounters affects the human relationships and the intensity of human relations is affected by the amount of time that passes between these encounters. If the employee does not communicate with their superiors for a long time, it may create a communication gap between them, which may affect their relationship.

Time can act as a barrier to communication in some other ways also. A guest who arrives at midnight will not be able to communicate well with the host who might feel embarrassed or disturbed in his sleep. Time will not allow two communicators to talk to each other if they work in different shifts. A phone call at midnight can irritate or embarrass the receiver.

### 3. Distance

The distance between the communicator and the receiver can be a strong barrier to communication, if the technical devices of communication such as telephone, telefax, internet are not available to link them. Even faulty sitting arrangement in the office can create a kind of communication gap, which can be eliminated by adjusting the distance.

### *1.8.1.2.2 Semantics*

This refers to the different uses and meanings of words and symbols. Words and symbols may not have similar uses and meanings for different individuals from different cultural group, language and living style so it may create some barrier in the communication process. It is found by the experts that people attributes 14,000 different meanings to 500 commonly used English words. Therefore, the sender and receiver are many a time likely to attribute different meaning to the same word. Sometimes, they may use different words to communicate the same meaning. There are many words in English such as light, cheap, and so on.

Semantic barriers include:

1. **Interpretations of words:** Receivers decode words and phrases in conformity with their own network, which may be very different from those of senders. Words are capable of communicating a variety of meanings. It is quite possible that the receiver do not assign the same meaning to a word as the sender has intended, that may lead to miscommunication. For some, a successful career means having prestigious job title and making lot of money; for others, it may mean having a job they really enjoy and plenty of personal time to spend with family and friends.

2. **Bypassed instructions:** When the message sender and receiver attribute different meanings to the same words, bypassing often occurs.

   **Example:** An office manager handed to a new assistant a letter, with the instruction: "Take it to our store room and burn it." In the office manager's mind (and in the firm's jargon) the word "burn" meant to make a copy on a photocopier. As the letter was extremely important, she wanted an extra copy. However, the confused employee afraid to ask questions burnt the letter and thus destroyed the original existing copy!

   > *To avoid communication errors of bypassing, when you give instructions or discuss issues; be sure your words and sentences will convey the intended meaning to the recipient. Also, when you are the recipient of unclear instruction, before acting on it, ask questions to determine the sender intended meaning.*

3. **Denotations, Connotations, and Euphoniums**

   **Denotations:** The denotative meaning is the meaning on which most people will probably agree. A denotation is usually the dictionary definition of a word. Denotative meanings name objects, people or events without indicating positive or negative qualities. Such words as car, desk, book, house, and water convey denotative meanings. The receiver has a similar understanding of the thing in which the word is used.

   **Connotations:** In addition to more literal denotative meanings, some words have connotative meanings that arouse qualitative judgments and personal reactions. The term 'meeting room' is denotative. The word man is denotative, father, prophet, brother are connotative. Some words have positive connotations in some contexts

and negative meanings in others. For example, slim girl and slim chances.

**Euphemisms:** Tactful writer and speakers use euphemisms whenever possible to replace words that might have blunt, painful, lowly or distasteful connotations. Euphemisms are mild, innovative expressions with which most people do not have negative associations.

### 1.8.1.2.3 Perception of Reality

Francis Bacon has said, "Man prefers to believe what he prefers to be true." The individual experiences and their interpretations are never identical because their perceptions are different. If two friends see a movie together, their interpretation, of the events and the characters in it will certainly be different.

The reality of an object, an event, or a person is different to different people. Reality is not a fixed concept; it is complex, infinite and continually changing. Besides, each human being has limited sensory perceptions—touch, sight, hearings, smell, and taste and each person's mental filter is unique. People perceive reality in different ways. No two persons perceive reality in identical manners.

### 1.8.1.2.4 Attitudes and Opinions

Communication effectiveness is influenced also by the attitudes and opinions the communicators have in their mental filters. People tend to react favourably when the message they receive agrees with their views towards the information, the set of facts, and the sender. In addition, sometimes unrelated circumstances affect their attitudes, and responses as follows.

- Σ Emotional state
- Σ Favourable or unfavourable information
- Σ Closed mind
- Σ Status consciousness
- Σ Credibility

### 1.8.1.2.5 Information overload

It refers to the condition of having too much information to process. The implication is that individuals can effectively process only certain amount of information. An example would be if your professor gave you too much information, too quickly, concerning a term paper's requirements or if a manager gave an employee too much information at one time about a report's requirements. In either situation, the receiver probably does not receive the entire message. Managers need to be aware of potential for information overload and to make appropriate adjustments.

## 1.8.2 GATEWAY IN COMMUNICATION

To make communication effective, managers must attempt to remove barriers. There are six factors or themes that contribute to effective communication.

1. Fostering an open communication climate
2. Committing to ethical communication

3. Understanding the difficulties involved in intercultural communication

4. Adopting an audience-centered approach to communication

5. Using technology wisely and responsibly to obtain and share information

6. Creating and processing messages effectively and efficiently

1. **Fostering an open communication climate:** An organization's communication climate is a reflection of its corporate culture: the mixture of values, traditions and habits. It affects the quantity and quality of the information that passes through the pipeline.

    (a) *Modify the number of organizational levels:* One way to foster an open communication climate is to reduce the number of levels in the organizations structure. The fewer the links in the communication chain, the less likely the misunderstandings will occur. In other words, a flat structure (having fewer levels) and a wide span of control are likely to introduce distortion than a tall structure and a narrow span of control.

    (b) *Facilitate feedback:* Giving the audience a chance to provide feedback is crucial to maintaining an open communication climate.

2. **Committing to ethical communication:** Ethics are the principles of conduct that govern a person or a group. Ethical people are generally trustworthy, fair and impartial, respecting the rights of others, and concerned about the impact of their actions on society. Ethics plays of a crucial role in communication. Ethical communication includes all relevant information, which is true in every sense and is not deceptive in any way.

    (a) *Recognize ethical choices:* Every company has responsibilities to various groups— customers, shareholders, suppliers, neighbors, the community and the nation. What is right for one group may be wrong for another. Moreover as we attempt to satisfy the needs of one group, we may be presented with an option that seems right on the surface but somehow feels wrong.

    (b) *Make ethical choices:* Laws provide ethical guidelines for certain types of messages. Look at the consequences of the decision and opt for the solution that provides the greatest good to the greatest number of people, and one that we can live with.

    (c) *Motivate ethical choices:* Organizations can foster ethical behavior: $\Sigma$ by helping top managers become more sensitive communicators

      • by using ethics audits

      • by rewarding ethical actions

3. **Understanding the difficulties involved in intercultural communication:** More and more businesses are crossing national boundaries to compete on a global scale and the makeup of the global and domestic work force is changing rapidly. Global companies must understand the laws, customs and business practices of many countries, and they must deal with business associates and employees.

4. **Adopting an audience-centered approach to communication:** Using an audience-centered approach means keeping the audience in mind all times when communicating. Since audience is taken care of, every possible step is taken to get the message across in a way that is meaningful to the audience. Empathizing with and being sensitive

to the audience's feelings is the best way to overcome such communication barriers as differences in perception and emotional interference.

5. **Using technology wisely and responsibly to obtain and share information:** In today's world, information moves through an array of media at the speed of a neural impulse. Technology has such an impact on business communication. When used wisely and responsibly, technology helps to improve the effectiveness of business communication.

6. **Creating and processing messages effectively and efficiently:** The sixth guideline is to plan messages, generate ideas, organize the thoughts, and turn the words into effective business messages.

   (a) *Learn about the audience:* Creating an effective message is difficult if the audience is unfamiliar, or if we don't know how the message will be used. We need to know something about the biases, education, age, status and style of the receiver in order to create an effective message.

   (b) *Adapt the message to the audience:* Decisions about the content, organization, style, and tone of the message depend on the relationship between the sender and the audience.

   (c) *Develop and connect ideas:* Include only the information that is useful to the audience, and organize it in such a way that encourages its acceptance. To make message memorable not the following:

   • Use telling statistics

   • Use words that evoke a physical, sensory impression

   • Tie the message to the audience's frame of reference

   • Keep messages as brief and as clean as possible

   • Highlighting and summarizing key points

   (d) *Reduce the number of messages:* Organizations save time and money by sending only necessary messages. If a written message merely adds to the information overload, it is probably better left unsent or handled some other way—by a quick telephone call or a face to face chat. By holding down the number of messages, organizations will maximize the benefits of their communication activities.

   (e) *Choose the correct channel and medium:* The careful choice of channel and medium helps focus the audience's attention on message. The choice of a communication channel and medium depends on the:

   • Message

   • Audience

   • Need for speed

   • Situation

   (f) *Strengthen the communication skills:* Recognizing the importance of efficient communication, many companies today train employees in communication skills. Companies offer seminars and workshops on handling common oral communication situations (such as dealing with customers, managing subordinates, and getting along with co-workers), as well as training in computers and other electronic means of communication.

## 1.9  7 C'S OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is an important part of our world today. The ability to communicate effectively with others is considered as a prized quality of the successful business people. To communicate and compose effective message, we need to follow certain scientific principles. As a leader or manager to make our letters, memorandums, reports, representations and any other form of communication we need to stick on these communication principles. They are also referred to as the 7 C's because all of them begin with the alphabet "C".

The 7 C's of communication are as follows:

- Completeness
- Conciseness
- Consideration
- Concreteness
- Clarity
- Courtesy
- Correctness

### 1.9.1 Completeness

A business communication has to be complete. In business communication completeness of all necessary fact is absolutely necessary. Message is "complete" when it contains all facts the reader or listener needs for the reaction descried. An incomplete message irritates the receiver. Due to incomplete messages there may be wrong actions, which may prove expensive to an organization. We should prepare our messages in way that the receiver has no doubt about anything contained in it. For instance, you are ordering a shirt through mail, your mail must include all necessary facts such as color, size, quantity, mode of payment, and order date and so on without these details order may not be fulfilled as per your satisfaction.

There are several grounds necessary for the completeness of messages:

- Complete message are more likely to bring the desired results without the extra cost of additional messages.
- Complete messages serve in developing and building goodwill.
- Complete message develops a sense of concern for other party as both the reader and sender may have different background, culture, viewpoint, needs and experience.
- They can help prevent costly lawsuits that may result if important information is missing.
- Papers that seem inconsequential can be surprisingly important if the information they contain is complete and effective.

The following important guidelines to make a particular message complete:

### 1.9.1.1 Answer all Questions Asked

Whenever responding to an inquiry, the inquiry may for the information or for the product we have to clearly answer the entire question asked. It is always better to

make separate paragraph for each query. Try to answer all questions-stated and implied. A prospective customer's reactions to an incomplete reply are likely to be unfavorable. The receiver may think we are trying to hide the weak point of our organization or we are careless in preparing the message. Incomplete message may generate suspicion in the mind of the receiver.

Examine the following pairs of sentences where the second is an improvement over the first one in being complete:

- I did not receive any response for the complaint I lodged.
- I made a complaint to the Branch Manager on March 29, 2014 on the excessive delay at the cash counter. Can I get a response?

### 1.9.1.2 Give Something Extra, when Desirable

In some conditions answering only the questions asked may not make a message complete. We have to provide something additional; it seems desirable to provide the additional information. Sometimes you must do more than answer the customer's reaction to an incomplete reply is likely to be unfavorable.

**Example:** Suppose you are the coordinator of an event, try to cover all the aspects while providing the information such as:

- Direction how to reach the place of event.
- Where is the parking place for the vehicle?
- Date, timing and day of the event.
- Programme schedule of the event.

### 1.9.1.3 Checking for the Five "Wh" Questions

Another way to make your message complete is to answer, whenever desirable, the "five wh-questions", who, what, where, when, why and any other essentials, such as how. The five question method is especially useful when you write requests, announcements or other informative messages.

**Example:** While ordering some material from the supplier we have to make clear the following question:

- What material is needed?
- When the required material is needed?
- To whom and where the materials should be sent?
- How the payments of the material will be made and other necessary details.

### 1.9.2 Conciseness

**Conciseness refers to elimination of unnecessary words and inclusion of interesting topics for the recipients.** Conciseness refers to saying whatever we want in fewest in possible words without sacrificing the other C qualities. A concise message saves time and expense for both sender and receiver.

A message should be as brief as possible to gain the attention of the receiver. A receiver should not feel that he is going through unnecessary lengthy messages and wasting his time. Conciseness contributes to emphasis. By eliminating unnecessary words, you help make important ideas stand out.

To achieve conciseness, the following points should be considered as suggestions:

### 1.9.2.1 Include Only Relevant Facts and Expressions

The effective, concise message should omit not only unnecessarily wordy expression but also irrelevant material. To be sure you include only relevant facts, observe the following suggestions:

- Stick to the purpose or objectives of the message
- Avoid irrelevant words and long-winded sentences
- Omit information obvious to the receiver; do not repeat at length what that person has already known to the receiver.
- Eliminate lengthy introduction, unnecessary explanation, excessive adjectives and prepositions.
- Get the important point tactfully and concisely.
- Avoid unnecessary repetition: Repetition induces monotony but sometimes repetition is necessary for emphasizing an idea but when same thing is repeated two or three times without any reason the message becomes wordy and boring. These can be done by sticking to the following points.

    (i) *Use shorter name:* use short name after mentioning the long name once. For example, if once you have mentioned "Sony Manufacturing Share Private Limited Company" once, you can write "Sony Company" instead of such a long name.

    (ii) *Make use of initials:* Use pronouns or initials rather than repeating long names i.e. for example you should write "AMU" instead of writing "Arba Minch University" again and again.

    (iii) *Avoid repetition of sentences:* Cut out all needless expressions and repetition of phrases of sentences.

- *Eliminate wordy expressions:* Use single word substitute instead of phrases whenever possible without changing meanings. Examples:

| Wordy | Concise |
|-------|---------|
| At this time | Now |
| Due to the fact that | Because |
| In due course | Soon |
| In many cases | Often |
| In most cases | Usually |
| Under the circumstances | Because |

**Examples**

Wordy: We hereby wish to let you know that our company is pleased with the confidence you have reposed in us.

Concise: We appreciate your confidence

Wordy: Please be advised that your admission statement has been received.

Concise: Your admission statement has been received.

Wordy: In most cases the date of the inquiry is indicated in the upper right corner.

Concise: The policy date is in the upper right corner.

Wordy: She bought desks that are of the executive type.

Concise: She bought executive type desks.

Wordy: Please be advised that your admission statement has been received.

Concise: Your admission statement has been received.

## 1.9.3 CONSIDERATION



Consideration means that you prepare every message with the recipient in mind and try to put yourself in his place. The interrelationship between sender and receiver profoundly affects the communication. Try to visualize your readers or listeners with their desire, problems, circumstances, emotions, and probable reactions to your requests. Then

handle the matter from their point of view. In the broad sense, consideration underlies the other six "C's" of good business communication.

The followings are the points to be considered in order to make the message considerate:

### 1.9.3.1 Focus of "You" instead of "I" or "We"

As we know that the primarily our receivers are usually more concerned about themselves than about you or the company you represent. They are more likely to read your message when they see their names and the pronoun "you" rather than "we" or "us". Therefore, in writing letters to others, we have to write from the point of view of the receiver so that our letters will be effective and bring the required outcome immediately.

### 1.9.3.2 Show Reader Benefit or Interest in Reader

Whenever possible and true, show how your readers will benefit from whatever the message asks or announces. They will be more likely to react favorably and do what you suggest if you show that the benefits are worth the effort and cost. In situations where the actual direct reader benefit is impossible or irrelevant to the subject matter, the message should at least show interest in and concern for the reader's needs or viewpoint.

### 1.9.3.3 Emphasize the Pleasant and Positive Facts

In many situations we have to say no, disagree, or to say sorry, a straight forward style may hurt the receiver or the client of the organization.

The receiver accepts calmly all the regrets, sorry if they are expressed in pleasant manner. To show consideration for your reader or listener is to accent the positive. This means:

(i) Stressing what can be done instead of what cannot be done favorably.

(ii) Focusing on words your recipient can consider favorably. In other words, a polite, a positive and pleasant no retains the customer's goodwill.

For example:

**Negative approach:** We are sorry to inform you that we are not able to open your account without photographs.

**Positive approach:** Thank you for the order, we will open your account immediately as soon as the photographs reach to us.

*Applying integrity and Ethics:* To be truly considerate, you need also to apply integrity your written and oral messages. Ethics is concerned with what is right human conduct. Codes of ethics provide standards enabling us to determine the fundamental distinction between the right and the wrong human behavior.

### 1.9.4 Concreteness

Concreteness of message refers to being more specific, definite, and vivid rather than general. The main benefit of being concrete is obvious that the receiver knows exactly what is required or desired. The other benefit of being concrete is that the reply might be in the same way that may be interrupted by you as the receiver.

The following guidelines will help in composing concrete, and convincing messages:

### 1.9.4.1 Using Specific Facts and Figures

Whenever possible use specific, exact, precise statement or figure instead of general words which helps in making your message more concrete.

**Examples:**

| Examples: | Concrete, Precise |
|---|---|
| 1. He is intelligent | His percentage have increased from 84% in SSC to 88% in HSC |
| 2. Eastern Europe is making progress in obtaining investments | In 1990 investments in Eastern Europe were about US $30 million; today that figure has increased by 12% |

But sometimes when you don't know the exact figures and want to be concrete you can write as "half the committee was present".

### 1.9.4.2 Put Action in Your Verb Instead of Infinitives

To help make messages vivid and specific you can use comparisons and concrete language. Verbs can bring your concreteness back to being alive and more dynamic. Use of verbs especially the active verbs makes your sentence more specific, personal and concise. Even the passive verbs are more useful sometimes when you want to avoid any personal or accusing comments.

### 1.9.4.3 Use Vivid Images and Guiding Words

It is better to use comparisons, figurative expression instead of using your opinions and abstract expressions.

## 1.9.5 Clarity



**Clarity means getting your message across so the receiver will understand what you are trying to convey.** This is difficult due to different communication barriers. We want that person to interpret our words with the same meaning we have in mind. The message must be so clear that even the dullest man in the world should readily understand it. The communicator must be very clear about all the aspects of the idea in his mind and about the purpose for which it is to be communicated.

Accomplishing the goal is difficult because as you know, individual experiences are never identical and words may have different meanings to different persons.

Clarity has two versions which are known as Clarity of thoughts and Clarity of expressions.

### 1.9.5.1 Clarity of Thoughts

It is clear that the communication begins with the generation of idea in the mind of the sender. There should be a great deal of clarity at this stage to make communication effective. The sender must be clear about the idea he wants to express. For instance,

- What is the objective of the communication?
- What is to be communicated?
- Which medium will be more effective to communicate the idea?

### 1.9.5.2 Clarity of Expressions

The sender sends the idea through the encoding process. If the encoding is inappropriate the message will be misinterpreted and it will lead to miscommunication. Therefore it becomes very important to be careful while encoding the message. Most of the messages are transmitted with the help of words, sender should be careful of the meanings and in organizing the words.

Here are some specific ways to be considered in the selection of words:

- *Use simple words:* Short and simple words are more effective than difficult and heavy words. Try to avoid difficult words.

| Difficult words (avoid them) | Simple words (use them) |
|---|---|
| Demonstrate | Show |
| Utilize | Use |
| Metropolis | City |
| Terminate | End |

- *Use single words:* Use single words rather than long phrases and trite expressions.

| Long phrases (avoid them) | Single words (use them) |
|---|---|
| At all times | Always |
| As soon as possible | Immediately |
| Subsequent to | After |
| Prior to | Before |

- *Use concrete expression:* Concrete expressions create visual images that are easy to remember. Therefore, instead of using generalized expression, it is better to use concrete and effective expression.

| General expression | Concrete and effective expression |
|---|---|
| Examination is to start soon | Examination will start on 3rd march. |
| The show case is inexpensive | The showcase costs only $ 2000. |

- *Avoid jargon and difficult vocabulary:* Jargons are special language of particular trade or profession. No doubt jargons are more effective if used among the persons of

same trade or profession, but problem starts when used between the people who are unknown to the jargons or belongs from different trade or profession.

- *Avoid ambiguity:* Ambiguity is often caused by careless use of personnel pronouns, punctuation. Some words also have more areas of meaning. Ambiguity is also caused by indecisive placing of adverbs.

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**Example:** *Person to shopkeeper on phone: Send me two copies of Business India and Femina magazine. The receiver may inquire to the person whether he needs two copies of each or two magazines in total.*

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## 1.9.6 COURTESY



To build good friendship with our business partners is being courteous in our communication. Courteous message helps to strengthen present business friendship, as well as making new friends. Courtesy is a quality that enables a request to be refused without killing all hope of future business. Courtesy also means replying promptly to all letters. If you feel your correspondent's comments are unfair, try to answer tactfully. In short, the whole letter should have a courteous tone. It is not what you say; it is how you say it. Courtesy stems from sincere you-attitude.

**To be courteous, the following guidelines are suggested:**

### 1.9.6.1 Answer/Respond Promptly

In business it is a general practice to respond to a letter immediately at the same day, when it is received. In some cases immediate response may not be possible because it may need the approval of higher authorities or subordinates regarding the matter of the message. In this case you should at least acknowledge to the sender and intimate the reasonable time to send back the reply of the message.

### 1.9.6.2 Omit Expressions that Irritate, Hurt or Belittle

Some words and expressions are negative in connotation and irritate the receiver. Particularly when they are used with "you" attitude, they become provocative. Expressions

like "you failed", "your irresponsible approach" are going to hurt the receiver. The thoughtful business communicator should avoid expression that might offend the receiver.

### 1.9.6.3 Be Tactful Instead of Being Blunt

Though few people are intentionally abrupt or blunt, these traits are common cause of discourtesy. Sometimes they stem from mistaken idea of conciseness or from negative person's attitudes. Be tactful instead of being blunt in your correspondence.

### 1.9.6.4 Grant and Apologize Good-Naturedly

Whenever you grant a customer's request, begin your letter with the best news first and inject a courteous ungrudging tone. When someone in your organization makes a mistake, you can apologize and correct the error perhaps even before the customer discovers it.

### 1.9.6.5 Apologize Sincerely for an Omission/Thank for a Favour

If you have overlooked or failed to do something, express your regrets promptly and sincerely and make amendments for the omission immediately. If some has done a favor to you, acknowledge it promptly and thank the person generously for being kind to you.

## 1.9.7 CORRECTNESS

The correctness principle is more than proper grammar, punctuation and spelling. A message may be perfect grammatically mechanically but still lose a customer and fails to achieve a purpose. Though mistakes are never intentional, but even they spoil our image. It is essential that the sender should verify the correctness of the information before transmitting it to the receiver. And before accepting the information for important decision-making, the receiver should clarify his doubts regarding the accuracy and correctness of the message. Errors in the messages fall in the following categories:

- Mistakes in names, figures, facts, and words.
- Mistakes in punctuation and capitalization .
- Mistakes in the level of language

The following points should be considered as suggestions for the correctness:

### 1.9.7.1 Use the Right Level of Language

Communication must be correct in tone and style of expression, spelling, grammar, format, contents, statistical information, stress-unstressed, and so on. there should not be any inaccurate statements in the message. Efforts must be made to avoid errors in spellings, punctuations, and so on. The incorrect written documents lower the receivers' confidence in the sender. In the same way, the incorrect statements and other miscellaneous errors of the speaker lower the listeners' confidence in him and it may blemish his image and reliability too. When communication receiver finds one error he suspects that there can also be other errors in the message. Therefore, he starts searching for other mistakes automatically.

### 1.9.7.2 Check Accuracy of Figures, Facts and Words

The subject matter of communication must be correct or accurate. The manner in which the message is transmitted must be absolutely correct. Accuracy in writing can be

achieved by careful checking and editing. Correctness demands accurate figures, because decisions may go wrong if wrong figures are given. Over writings, erasures, strikeovers, wrong spellings, faulty grammar, poor sentence construction and so an may distract the receiver and lead to misunderstanding.

### 1.9.7.3 Send Messages at the Correct Time

Messages should be transmitted and responded at the appropriate time. The information that is outdated is useless and can amount as a futile effort. Since communication is an expensive process, transmitting outdated information becomes wastage of time, money and human resources.

### 1.9.7.4 Send Messages in the Correct Style

This is also called the principle of adaptability. We have to adapt the message to the needs of the receiver. We have to keep in mind the educational background, the width of vocabulary, specialized knowledge, the depth of the information required.

## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Define communication.
2. Explain business communication.
3. Explain its significance.
4. Discuss the role of communication in management of business.
5. Discuss how communication is important to them mangers of any organization.
6. Discuss internal and external communication in an organization.
7. Discuss the methods of external communication which organizations use and with whom.
8. Explain the objectives of the downward communication.
9. Discuss the limitations of downward communication.
10. Explain the importance of upward communication.
11. Define horizontal communication. Explain its importance.
12. Explain clearly the meaning of the term "Grapevine'
13. Explain how grapevine can serve organization in useful manner.
14. Discuss the elements of a communication process.
15. Define encoding and decoding. Explain.
16. Explain the process of communication.
17. Discuss the barriers to effective communication.
18. Discuss the role of feedback in communication.
19. Write down the communication barriers which lie among the people.
20. Discuss how communication barrier occurs within the organization.
21. 'Channel selection can be a barrier in the communication process.' Explain it.
22. Explain point wise to overcome from the communication barrier.
23. Discuss the points to be considered to be an effective listener.

24. Discuss the scientific principles for making a communication effective.
25. Define completeness of the message.
26. Mention the important guidelines to make our message complete.
27. Define conciseness. Mention the point to avoid unnecessary repetition in the message.
28. Define consideration. Give some suggestion to be considerate in your message.
29. Write how you express the clarity of thought and clarity of expression.
30. Explain what we can do in order to be courteous in our messages.

## SUMMARY

- Communication is the process of people sharing thoughts, ideas, and feelings with each other in commonly understandable ways.
- No human relationship can be maintained in the absence of communication.
- Same in the case of organizations no activity or coordination can be performed without communication.
- Communication is a process of sharing or exchanging of ideas, information, knowledge, attitude or feeling among two or more persons through certain signs and symbols.
- "Business Communication" is communication that takes place in an organizational context in order to exchange information, ideas, plans, and strategies, to offer the best of customer services and to make decisions, rules and regulations, proposals, contracts, and agreements, etc.
- Communication helps managers to enhance their performance, achieving coordinations, in decision making, leadership actions and for job satisfaction.
- The organizational structure is generally hierarchical.
- In organizational context, communication can be broadly classified depending on the framework. It is classified as internal and external communication.
- Internal communication is a communication that takes place among and between individuals in an organization.
- The exchange of information outside the organization is called external communication.
- Internal communication can be further classified into formal and informal communication.
- The formal communication is classified as horizontal, vertical, downward and upward.
- The informal communication is grapevine, which is not structured by the organization.
- Each kind of formal communication has its own advantages and disadvantages. As a result organization uses a combination, in fact all types of communication.
- Communication is a process whereby various elements are participating in its model. The elements of communication includes the sender, (encoding process), the media, the message, the receiver (decoding process), and feedback.
- The sender is the initiator of the communication process, who encodes the message in a way that the receiver can understand it.
- The message is the information that the sender wants to communicate with the receiver of the message.
- The medium is the channel through which information can be directed to the receiver.

- The receiver is the targeted audience, who understands the message through the decoding process.

- Feedback is the necessary loop of the communication. Feedback helps sender to understand that the message is delivered as it is intended.

- Feedback provides an opportunity to evaluate what is right or wrong about a particular communication. It helps to regulate the conversation among two or more individuals and also stimulates and reinforces an idea that is desired to be communicated.

- Communication involves participants (a sender and a receiver), message to be sent through a medium to carry the communication and the environments in which the message is sent and received.

- There are barriers in the communication process from the way information is prepared by the sender to the information is understood by the receiver.

- These barriers may occur between the people, within the organization, channel selection and physical barriers.

- These problems are alleviated through curies preparation of the message by the sender considering the receiver, selecting appropriate media of communication, encouraging feedback and considering the physical appearance of the message.

- The purposes of communication are: motivation, the sharing of information, socialization, and control. One more purpose is that communication brings business alive.

- The major communication principles are Completeness, Conciseness, Consideration, Concreteness, Clarity, Courtesy, and Correctness.

- These communication principles are also known as 7 "C" of communication.

- These principles are necessary to compose the effective message in communication.

- Completeness requires answering all questions asked and implied. It also means giving something extra when desirable and also checking for five "Wh" questions.

- Conciseness requires including only relevant facts and expressions. It also means avoiding unnecessary repetition.

- Consideration requires adopting the "You" attitude, it also emphasizes on positive, and pleasant facts.

- Concreteness requires applying specific facts and figures and using vivid image and guiding words.

- Correctness of message implies giving correct facts and sending the messages at correct time and in the correct style.

- Clarity of thought and expressions is important in communication so as to not cause any ambiguity.

- Courtesy in communication is important since it result in friendliness with business partnersses.

## KEYWORDS

**stimulus:** something that helps somebody/something to develop better or more quickly

**semantics:** the different uses and meanings of words and symbols

## SELF-CHECK QUESTIONS

### Review Questions

1. The Effective communication occurs when:
    (A) Individuals achieve the shared understanding.
    (B) Stimulate others to take action.
    (C) Encourages others to think in a new ways
    (D) A &.B Only
    (E) All of above

2. Identify the wrong statement regarding the specific roles of communication:
    (A) Develops information & understanding.
    (B) Enhances the attitude necessary for job satisfaction.
    (C) Improve & upgrades the management- labor relations.
    (D) Encourages the rumors or misunderstandings.
    (E) None of the above

3. Identify the wrong statement regarding the significance of communication:
    (A) Provides information necessary to make successful decision at work.
    (B) The success of organization depends on the communication skills of its employee.
    (C) Communication skill is rated extremely important relative to other kinds of abilities.
    (D) None of above
    (E) All of the above

4. Horizontal communication is used for
    (A) Coordinating tasks        (B) Sharing information
    (C) Solving problems        (D) Resolving conflict
    (E) All

5. Individuals from different units and different organizational level communicate each other in _____
    (A) Downward communication        (B) Upward communication
    (C) Horizontal communication        (D) Diagonal communication
    (E) All

6. The following messages are valuable when communicated upward, Except
    (A) What subordinates are doing
    (B) Feedback on employee's performance appraisal
    (C) Suggestions for improvements with in departments
    (D) How subordinates think about their job
    (E) None

7. Most downward communication involves the following information. Except:
   (A) Job instructions related to specific tasks
   (B) Rules and regulations of the organizations
   (C) Outlines of unsolved problems on which subordinates need aid
   (D) Explaining the relationship between a task and other organizational tasks
   (E) None

8. Among the following which one is not true abut grapevine?
   (A) Does not flow along the official path
   (B) Communication takes place without task requirement
   (C) It is not deliberately designed
   (D) It is intentionally defined and designed by the organization
   (E) .None

9. An individual who initiates the communication is
   A. Sender                    B. Receiver
   C. Decoder                  ·D. Decoding       E. None of the above

10. The means used to convey the message
    A. Channel                  B. Decoding
    C. Encoding                 D. Message·       E. All

11. The conditions of having too much information to process is called
    A. Over using one channel      B. Perceptions of reality
    ·C. Barriers of channel selection    D. Information overloads
    E. None

12. In order to overcome from the problem of communication barriers, organization can
    A. · Commit to the ethical communication
    B. Adopt an audience centered approach
    . C. Use technology responsibly in obtaining and sharing information
    D. B & C
    E. All of above

13. _____ · ___ means being specific, definite and vivid.
    (A) Consideration            (B) Completeness
    (C) Concreteness             (D) Conciseness       . (E) None

14. All statements are true to make the messages considerate, except:
    (A) Use single words         (B) Avoid gender bias
    (C) Emphasis on positives    (D) Adopt you approach
    (E) None of above

15. Correctness of the message implies:
    (A) Proper grammar and punctuation   (B) Correct facts
    (C) Correct time                     (D) Correct style
    (E) All of above

# CHAPTER 2 ORAL COMMUNICATION

## ❖ STRUCTURE ❖

## 2.1 OBJECTIVES

*After reading this unit, the students will be able to understand:*

- what is oral communication,
- the principles of successful oral communication,
- the two sides of effective oral communication,
- the effective listening,
- the non-verbal communication,
- the body language and the paralanguage,
- what is written communication,
- the purpose of, and clarity in, writing,
- the principles of effective writing,
- the writing technique, and
- electronic writing process.

## 2.2 INTRODUCTION

Media of communication is the channel through which messages are directed towards the receiver. Medium is the method used to deliver a message. As a business communicator, we can often choose whether to put our message in writing as a letter or memo. We can deliver our messages by hand or send it via regular mail or use delivery services like fax or electronic mail. Or we can communicate it orally, either over the phone or in person. We might also opt for non-verbal form of communication.

Whether we are a leader or a participant in a certain discussion or decision, we may use both written and oral means of communication.

Frequently a request for action will be written, and then followed by an oral discussion of the proposal. Persuasion of either the reader or the listener is a central purpose in these media.

Communication with governmental departments and other agencies is mostly conducted through written letters. We can approach general public through advertisement on the radio, television, cinema screen, newspapers and popular journals. For communication to be effective the communicator has to be careful in opting of media, which will depend upon various factors like:

- Urgency of the message
- The time available
- The cost involved
- The intellectual and emotional level of the receiver
- Accessibility of media by the receiver
- Educational background of the receiver, etc.

## 2.3 THE BASIC FORMS (MEDIA) OF COMMUNICATION

Communication occurs in many forms. We can pick up the phone and have a conversation with our supervisor or leave him e-mail message if he is not available. In

turn, he can respond to our message in the form of his choice. The form in which a message is communicated changes constantly. There are various media through which we can send our message. They are generally divided into two:

### Non-Verbal Communication

Nonverbal communication consists of that part of a message that is not encoded in words. The nonverbal part of the message often tends to reveal the sender's feelings and preferences more spontaneously and honestly than the verbal part. (*Sending message through media which does not use words-facial expression, gesture, other body movements*).

### Verbal Communication

Verbal communication is communication through words either written or spoken. In this form, words are arranged according to the proper grammar-rules and put in proper sequence as per the part of the speech.

Examples of the verbal communication are a letter, memo, thank-you note, speech, and casual conversation.

Verbal communication is again divided into two categories:

**Oral Media:** Oral communication occurs in the situations like conversations, telephonic talks, interviews, presentations and meetings.

Conferences, group discussions and speeches also form part of oral communication (communicating a message orally either over the phone or in person).

**Written Media:** Written communication includes letters, circulars, notices, memo, reports, forms, manuals. Everything that is put down on paper by writing comes under the purview of written communication.

(Putting a message in writing as a letter, memo or any report) or using electronic devices such as electronic mail.

## 2.4 ORAL COMMUNICATION MEDIA

Oral communication media include face-to-face conversation (the richest medium), telephone calls, interviews, group discussion, conferences, announcements, speeches, presentations and meetings.

Our choice between a face-to-face conversation and a telephone or video conference call would depend on audience location, message importance, and your need for the sort of nonverbal feedback, the only body language can reveal.

## 2.5 PRINCIPLES OF SUCCESSFUL ORAL COMMUNICATION

Oral communication is natural and spontaneous. In oral communication, the message is transmitted in spoken form. In informal and unofficial situations we speak naturally; but on the formal occasions like interviews, presentations, meetings etc. we need training and practice to speak effectively. It is one of the most common functions in business. Oral communication requires the presence and simultaneous attention of both the persons. Need of personal presence makes certain demands on the skills of both. The sender should be a good speaker and the receiver should be a skillful listener; each must be able to

respond and react immediately.

(i) *Speak slowly and distincily.* Articulate every word carefully. Emphasize consonants for clarity, and pause frequently so that the audience will have time to absorb each key point.

(ii) *Repeat key words and phrases.* When audience are less familiar with your language, they need to hear important information more than once.

(iii) *Aim for clarity.* Keep your message simple. Eliminate complex sentence structure, abbreviations and acronyms. Stay away from cultural idioms, such as once in a blue moon, which may be unfamiliar to an international audience.

(iv) *Communicate with body language.* Establish a relationship with your audience through strong eye contact. Smiles are universally recognised facial expressions. Moreover, multilingual audience pay close attention to a speaker's body language to get clues about the meanings of unfamiliar words. For example, prepositions can often be confusing to multilingual listeners, so use gestures to illustrate the meaning of words such as up, down or under.

(v) *Support your oral message with visual aids.* For most audiences, visual messages support and clarify spoken words. To eliminate problems with rapid speech, unclear pronunciations or strange accents, prepare captions both in English and in your audience's native language. Avoid confusion about quantities by presenting numbers in graphs or pie charts and by converting financial figures into local currency.

## 2.6 TWO SIDES OF EFFECTIVE ORAL COMMUNICATION

The communication are two sides of effective:

### 2.6.1 Sender/Encoder

The sender or the encoder *is the person who transmits, initiates, spreads, or communicates a message* or operates an electronic device with the purpose of informing, persuading, influencing, and changing the attitude, opinion, or behavior of the receiver (audience listener). He/she decides the communication symbols, the channel, and the time for sending the message after carefully considering the total situation in which communication takes place.

### Ideas or Thoughts

Ideas or thoughts are the raw form of telling the ideas that the sender wants to share with a receiver by changing them to messages using symbols.

**Encoding:** *It is the changing of the raw idea from its mental form into symbols, that is, patterns of words, gestures, pictorial forms or signs (physical or sounds) of a specific visual /oral language. The sender must choose certain words or non-verbal methods to send an intentional message. This activity is called encoding.*

### 2.6.2 Receiver/Decoder

*Receiver is the targeted audience of the message.* A receiver is any person who notices and attaches some meaning to a message.

*Decoding*

*Decoding is the act of translating symbols of communication into their ordinary meanings; however, the total meaning would consist of meanings of the words (symbols) together with the tone and the attitude of the sender as treated by the structure of the message and the choice of words used by him (the sender).*

## 2.7 LISTENING

Listening is a process of receiving, interpreting and reacting to the messages received from the communication sender. Effective listening is an art of communication, which is often taken for granted and ignored. Like any other art, listening requires to be cultivated consciously and carefully. Poor listening can be considered, as a mighty barrier to communication as listening is fundamental to all communication. It often results in losing messages due to improper functioning of communication. Listening requires conscious efforts of interpreting the sounds, grasping the meanings of the words and reacting to the message. Interpreting the sound signals is a cognitive act, which depends on the listener's knowledge of the code signals and on its attitude towards the communication sender.

Listening is defined as making an effort to hear somebody/something. Listening is a combination of what we hear, understand and remember. We may physically pick up sound waves through our ears, evaluate the information and finally we may act based on our hearing and evaluation. Listening starts from hearing and it goes beyond hearing, since we evaluate and react based on it.

Active listening process begins when the listener pays attention to some audible sound signals and permits himself to interpret those sounds cognitively. It is a conscious process. Every human being possesses the ability to select from the sounds around him. But the selective listening is not an automatic process like that of hearing. An individual may hear many sounds but he may listen to none of them.

Effective listening is not a passive communication activity. It takes a great deal of effort and motivation to become and remain an effective listener. However, good listening is a prerequisite for success in business and the professions. Effective listening is certainly not the answer to all business problems, but it is one of the first steps leading to solutions. The case cannot be made strongly enough that organizational effectiveness is slowed down by employees and managers who do not listen well. Individual career advancement also can be impeded by poor listening. Unfortunately, poor listening is often more apparent to others than it is to the poor listener.

## 2.8 EFFECTIVE LISTENING

We can improve our listening ability by becoming more aware of the practices that distinguish good listeners from bad listeners:

- Fight distractions by closing doors, turning off radios or televisions, and moving closer to the speaker.

- Depersonalize your listening so that you decrease the emotional impact of what is being said and are better able to hold your rebuttal until you have heard the total message.

- Listen for concepts and key ideas as well as for facts and know the difference between fact and principle, idea and example and evidence and argument.

- Stay a head of the speaker by anticipating what will be said next and by thinking about what has already been said.

- Look for unspoken messages often the speaker's tone of voice or expressions will reveal more than the words themselves.

- Keep an open mind by asking questions that clarify understanding, reserve judgment until the speaker has finished.

- Evaluate and criticize the content, not the speaker.

- Provide feedback, let the speaker know you are with him or her, maintain eye contact, provide appropriate facial expressions.

- Take meaningful notes that are brief and to the point.

One way to assess your listening skills is to pay attention to how you listen when someone else is talking, are you really hearing what is said, or are you mentally rehearsing how you will respond? Above all try to be open to the information that will lead to higher quality decisions, and try to accept the feelings that will build understanding and mutual respect. Becoming a good listener will help you in many business situations especially those that are emotionally laden and difficult.

## TIPS

### Some Do's for the Listeners

- Keep quiet while listening.
- Focus on what the speaker says rather than on his/her looks.
- Control and screen out the distractions.
- Show interest in the speaker.
- Be friendly and patient towards the speaker.
- Listen first and take notes afterwards.
- Look for the main theme and main ideas.
- Let the speaker finish whatever he/she has to say without interrupting him/her.
- Find an area of interest in the speech; look interested in the speech and act interested in listening.
- Try to repeat the key-ideas during the slow and long speeches.
- Avoid pondering on a single point.
- Keep your mind open to every subject and speaker.
- Choose a quiet place to listen, if possible.
- Arrive early at the place of a seminar, lecture and meeting.
- Empathize with the speaker and try to understand his/her opinions, views and values.
- Try to probe the emotions and feelings of the speaker.
- Seek out difficult speech presentations to challenge your listening skills.
- Observe the non-verbal signals, the body movements, facial expressions and gestures.
- Try to look into the eyes of the speaker.

- Try to relate the speaker's message with your personal experience.
- Try to evaluate the speaker's message objectively.
- Try to accept criticism without losing your temper.
- Communicate feedback to the speaker. Ask questions which may encourage the speaker.

## 2.9 NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

If non means 'not' and verbal means 'words' then it seems logical that when we communicate our thoughts without using words, we communicate non-verbally. Thus Non-verbal communication is the way in which we express our feelings, emotions, attitudes, opinions and views through our body movements. Extensive research in the field of NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming) has proved that only 7 percent of our communication takes place through words, about 38 percent of the message is conveyed through tone, voice, inflection and so on and non-verbal physical behaviour accounts for around 55 percent of our communication. It shows that non-verbal communication is the basic form of communication.

Non-verbal communication differs from verbal communication in fundamental ways. For one thing it is less structured, so it is more difficult to study. No one teaches a baby to cry or smile, yet these forms of self-expression are almost universal, other types of non-verbal communication e.g., meaning of colours and certain gestures vary from culture to culture. You plan your verbal communication. But when you communicate non-verbally, you sometimes do unconsciously. You don't means to raise an eyebrow or to blush. Those actions come naturally. Without your consent, your emotions are written all over your face.

The old maxim is true. People's actions often do speak louder than their words. In fact non-verbal communication is sometimes more effective and reliable than verbal communication. Sometimes it conveys the message beyond the words as Peter Drucker said, "The most important thing in communication is to hear what isn't being said."

## 2.10 PARALANGUAGE

We have seen that non-verbal systems of communication that function alongside human language, but do not belong to it proper, are paralinguistic. Stress, rhythm, voice and tone are features of paralinguistics. In this chapter we shall look at other systems of non-verbal communication which do not function alongside human language, but instead of it. A picture or a siren or a shrug of the shoulder or proximity in space, for instance, does not function alongside words in the sense stress or intonation does. They function in their absence. These may be called forms of paralanguage. Some of them are considered here.

### 2.10.1 THE LANGUAGE OF VISUAL SIGNS

#### 2.10.1.1 Visual Signs

These are widely used to communicate with the general public irrespective of levels of mastery of the written language. A sign is a concrete representation of an idea. Visual signs appeal to the eye through pictures, colours, shapes and designs. Road signs, which indicate a cross-road, a railway station, a school, a bend or a U-turn are quite helpful to

pedestrians and motorists. These are in the form of pictorial representations. Traffic lights, parts of the hospital like the operation theatre and ambulance make use of colour signs. Veneration of great personalities is communicated through statues. Political ideologies and personalities are critically projected through cartoons and caricatures. They have a richer communicative potential than that of verbal language. Hence the saying, 'a picture is worth a thousand words,'

### 2.10.1.2 Visual Signs in Business Communication

Visual signs are widely used in business transactions as part of written communication. Tables, line and surface charts, bar charts, pictograms, Gantt charts, pie charts, flow charts, maps, drawings, diagrams and photographs as well as animated visuals are some forms of visual business communication. They are also used by professionals outside business in teaching, engineering and other technologies and in all forms of electronic presentations before audiences. Computer graphics helps to create drawings, manipulate existing images and display numbers in graphic form using such software as CorelDraw, Powerpoint, Photoshop, Painter, Excel, Lotus 1-2-3 and others. The first five charts presented in this chapter are adapted/reproduced from Bovée et al. (2002).

### 2.10.1.2.1 Tables

When detailed and specific information has to be presented, tables may be used. It is a systematic arrangement of data in columns and rows. They are presented in horizontal rows and vertical columns. Useful headings are arranged horizontally at the top of the table and along the sides. Tables electronically projected should be limited to three column heads and six row heads. Numerical tables are commonly used.

### 2.10.1.2.2 Line and Surface Charts

These are used to indicate changes over time, i.e. the appreciation or depreciation of land value over five years, for instance, and to plot the relationship between two variables, i.e. performance of two factors under the same circumstance. For example, the performance of men and women students over the last five years may be represented by a line chart. The lines are marked in graph under split axis. Curves indicate positive and negative values. The lines in a surface chart show cumulative values through discrete strata. All the lines add up to the top line which shows the total. It is useful to project trends of phenomena into the future. It is a good tool for strategic planning in business.
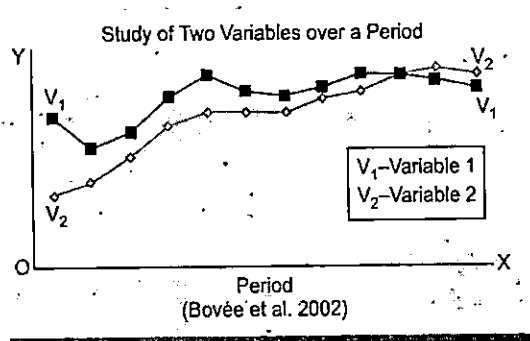


*Line Chart*
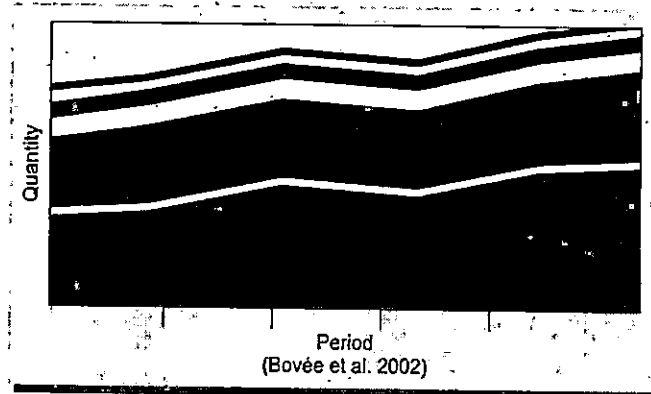
Surface Chart

### 2.10.1.2.3 Pie Charts

They are used to show the relative sizes of the parts or segments of a whole. A pie chart resembles a two dimensional circle of a pie segmented according to the percentages of the parts desired to be projected. Different colours may be used to differentiate segments from one another and the segment under focus may be contrastively presented with different colouring.

(Percentage of Time Spent Online by Age Group)
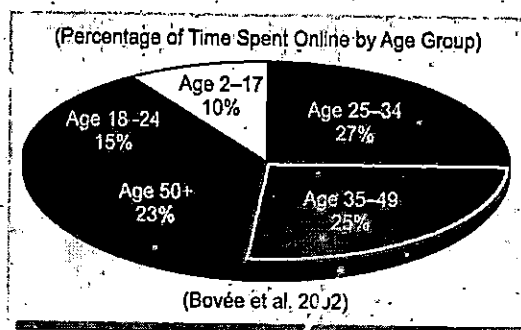
Pie Ch rt

### 2.10.1.2.4 Bar or Pillar Charts

Heights and lengths of rectangular ba  depicted on graphs with split axis are useful to:

* compare the sizes of different fa ors at a given time;
* show changes in one factor o' r a period;
* indicate the composition of several items over time; and to
* show the relative sizes of elements that constitute a whole. Bar charts may be used for showing profit and lo s, attendance by men and women at conferences and trends in business.
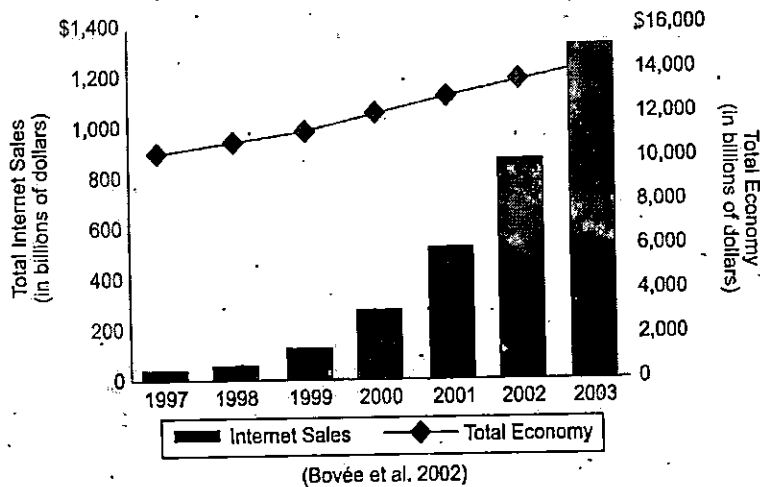
*Bar Chart: Commercial Superhighway*

### 2.10.1.2.5 Flow Charts

They are organization charts to show the hierarchical relationships across the sections and units of an organization at multiple levels. The illustration on page 12 is an example of an organizational flow chart. Flow charts are also used to depict progression of processes (such as production, recruitment, etc.).

### 2.10.1.2.6 The Gantt Chart

This is a timeline chart, named after the management expert, Henry L. Gantt, which shows through coloured bars the completed and incomplete stages of a project over a period of time. A table is used to furnish information about the stages of a chosen product with date schedules under headings such as 'starting date' 'last date', 'duration' and 'per cent completed'.



*Gantt Chart (Bovée et al. 2002)*

### 2.10.1.2.7 Pictograms

Pictograms are symbols or numbers used to show data. A chart which uses them is usually called a pictogram. The heading is in the top centre of the chart which describes the theme. The side subheadings mention components which analyse the theme. In the present example, each row of figures represents the total number of soldiers recruited in a given year. Each figure of a soldier stands for 10 per cent of the total in each row. 6½ figures stand for 65,000 and so on.

Recruitment of Soldiers

| Year | Soldiers | Number |
|------|----------|--------|
| 2005 | 🪖🪖🪖🪖🪖🪖🪖 | 69,000 |
| 2004 | 🪖🪖🪖🪖🪖🪖🪖 | 65,000 |
| 2002 | 🪖🪖🪖🪖🪖🪖 | 62,000 |
| 2000 | 🪖🪖🪖🪖🪖 | 44,000 |
| 1995 | 🪖🪖🪖🪖🪖 | 41,000 |
| 1990 | 🪖🪖🪖🪖 | 36,000 |
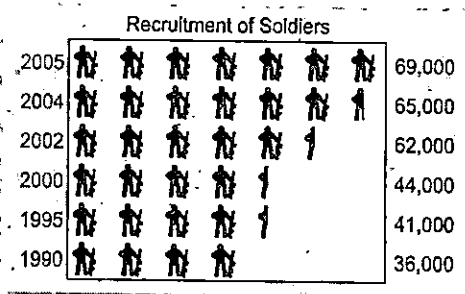
*Pictogram*

### 2.10.1.2.8 Maps

These are used to show the quantum of anything concentrated in a geographic area, tobacco factories (shown by some symbol) for instance, in the map outline of a region. These may form part of reports. Maps are also used to represent regional differences in a company's sales and to show proposed plant sites and their proximity to markets.

### 2.10.1.2.9 Photographs

Modern business communication makes use of photographs in brochures, sales letters, fliers and annual reports. The advancement of photography through the digital camera and through scanning by computers has made it easier to incorporate photographs in any document.

### 2.10.2 Audio Signal

Sounds are used as signals to communicate ideas. These were used as media of communication from ancient times. The horn blown to scare away wild animals, the pipes blown and played to exorcise ghosts and other shouts of alarm and warning are some examples. We use other sound signals today. The school cannot begin or end the day without a bell. The train cannot leave the platform without a whistle from the guard. The ambulance cannot move in crowds without a siren. A business office signifies the status of a caller by the type of the buzzer used; it announces a visitor by the calling bell; warns of a fire breakout by a siren; and regulates time and procedure at meetings with the beat of a hammer on the table. War signals, like the drumbeats of old, communicate different messages through sounds. The alarm is used not only to regulate time but to warn against dangers and burglaries.

### 2.10.3 AUDIO-VISUAL NOISES AND GESTURES

The third category of signs combine features of the visual and the sound media but

they are not like audio-visuals which depend on verbal communication such as the cinema or TV. These are signs which combine human noises with body gestures: the noises are oral or nasal and the visuals are movements of parts of the body. These audio-gestural manifestations of communication are non-verbal.

### 2.10.3.1 *Illustrations*

- The nasal whine of a child accompanying narrowed eyelids expresses discomfort or resentment.

- A snort is a loud sound made by breathing out air noisily through the nose to show that one is happy or annoyed. Accordingly the facial expression also changes. An executive may snort with laughter to share a joke with a subordinate or with disgust or contempt when someone boasts of something that one does not know or have. The latter snort goes with looks directed sideways.

- A sniff is breathing air in through the nose in a way that it resembles crying or breathing in with a bad cold. A worker may sniff when she breaks down under exhaustion or heavy work.

- A puff is blowing out with lips as if one smokes a cigarette. This may convey either exhaustion or self-importance.

- A grunt is a short low sound made by the throat to show that one is in pain or annoyed or not interested. When the boss is hard on the Secretary she might grunt and turn away.

- Repeated grunts become a growl. It is a low sound made by the throat as a sign of anger. Someone might growl at a sarcastic reply.

### 2.10.3.2 *Uses*

These signs of paralanguage are often used in informal communication with equals and inferior colleagues. They are never used in formal communication in the Board Room or at official meetings. They reinforce informal communication by clarifying moods and feelings of the speaker.

## 2.11 BODY LANGUAGE: KINESICS

Body language substantially contributes to non-verbal communication. It is said that there are 700,000 forms of non-verbal communication which belong to categories such as facial expression, gesture and posture, vocal characteristics, personal appearance, physical contact through touch and use of time and space (Bovée et al., 2002, p. 45). Another study attributes 55 per cent of human communication to body language of movements and gestures and 38 per cent to voice tone leaving only 7 per cent to verbal communication. The branch of study that deals with these features is called kinesics. Body language varies from culture to culture. When business goes global, and multinational companies have to deal with multicultural work forces, the study of kinesics becomes all the more important. Companies offer courses in kinesics to their workers.

### 2.11.1 FACIAL EXPRESSION

It is true that 'face is the index of the mind'. The mobile features on the face, the eyes, the lips and the muscles express innumerable feelings. They are used for both transparent expressions of thought and genuine feelings or deliberate suppression of them. Thus while facial expression can move one to sympathy, it can also deceive by manipulation. In such circumstances face cannot be the index of the mind. Therefore, Shakespeare said, 'One can smile and smile, and be a villain.' The language of the face is universal. Pursed lips, fixed gaze and contracted eyebrows often express *anger*. Parted lips, lowered eyeballs and expanded eyebrows express *fear*. Dilated eyes, expanded eyebrows and loosely parted lips express surprise. Contracted eyelids, closed lips and engaging eyeballs suggest sorrow appealing for sympathy. Elevated upper lip, bared teeth, expansive displacement of muscles around the mouth and smiling eyes express joy. A serious face with stiffened muscles and fixed gaze suggest disgust or hatred. More shades of meaning can be communicated by facial features.
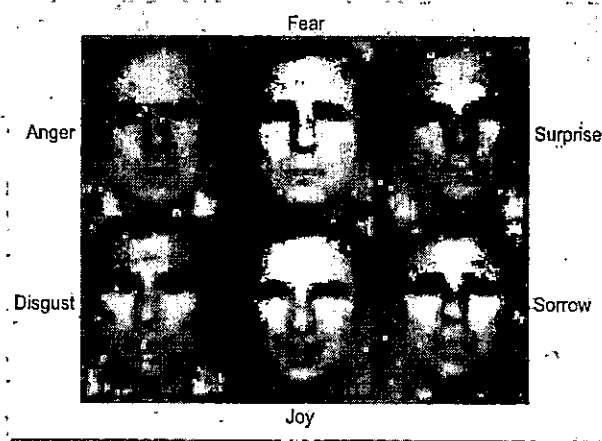


*Facial Expressions Around the World*

### 2.11.2 THE EYE

Eye-contact is important in face-to-face communication. Looks can be firm to control, or manipulate, the feelings of the other in face-to-face communication. They can stare at the other in fixed gaze to suggest *involvement* or *wonder*, or even disapproval. Raised looks show *dominance* and downcast looks suggest *weakness* and *submission*. Direct eye-contact between speaker and listener at formal meetings communicates *honesty, transparency* and *neutral* attitudes. This is often recommended at interviews for placement.



*Language of the Eye*

## 2.11.3 GESTURES AND POSTURES

Movements of limbs and holding of the body in different positions also communicate. When the palm and fingers curve inward and wave in, they beckon someone towards the one who makes the gesture. The reverse gesture in the opposite direction suggests rejection or signalling someone to be out of sight. A wave of the hand, with open palm, from side to side may suggest either a *good-bye* or the act of refusal. A raised index finger upon a closed fist above the head signifies *number one*. When the index finger and the middle finger are cleft to the shape of a 'V' and similarly raised, it signifies *victory*. Making a circle with index finger and the thumb is an expression of *appreciation* of something that pleases the senses by way of look, taste or auditory experience. However, it also suggests something obscene in some cultures. Walking up and down may suggest *anger* or *perplexity*. A tensed body, especially in a military set-up, suggests submission to authority and a relaxed body suggests control *of the other*. Leaning forward, while sitting in a chair at an interview, is not generally recommended as it might invade the private space of the interviewer and send wrong signals causing misunderstanding. On the other hand, sitting too stiff and erect may spoil the spontaneity of the conversation. A casual and relaxed posture is often recommended. Postures of the female body are assumed to communicate shades of *beauty and grace*. Sculptors exploit this language of postures in both living and inanimate objects.

## 2.11.4 KINESICS AND CULTURE

Use of the limbs of the body for communication is universal but the meanings communicated are culture-specific. The following are some examples.



Handshake

Namaste
(A Form of Greeting in India)

*Culture-Specific Kinesics*
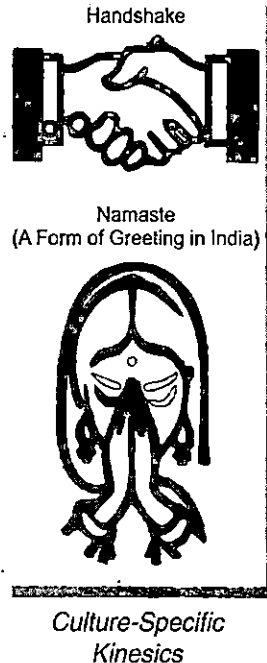
- *A wave of the hand* often conveys the meaning of a formal greeting in the West, which may also be conveyed by such words as 'hello' or 'bye' said while meeting and parting respectively. This gesture is replaced by folded hands and raised palms held together in India to communicate the same meaning. The gesture is often accompanied

by the words namaste or some other regional equivalent like vanakkam in Tamil Nadu. The gesture is dispensed with in favour a smile or the verbal *Hi* in informal communication between equals or friends in the West. A handshake accompanies the gesture sometimes, especially at meeting and parting.

- *Looking straight in the eye* is a mark of refinement in the West and it communicates one's honesty, transparency and neutral attitude. This is often recommended to those who take placement interviews. However, this gesture is not favoured in some Eastern countries especially, the Arab countries. Looking away from the person opposite conveys a woman's modesty and deference in some nations of the East.

- *The handshake* signifies the personality and intention of the one who offers the hand to be shaken by the other. A limp response suggests inferiority and lack of confidence. That which matches the steadiness of the other communicates confidence. This gesture is often responded to by Eastern women by avoiding it in favour of the gesture of respect, namely, raised palms held together as shown in the picture on the left.

- The *moving of the head* from side to side is a gesture expressing disapproval in the East but it is one of approval in some Western countries.

- *Touching* the body above the forearm is often disliked by Europeans but Arab greetings express warmth in their characteristic embrace. Most Eastern cultures associate touch with warmth, comfort and empathy. However, touch is generally associated with intimacy and, therefore, restrictions are imposed by tradition as to who should touch whom, when and in what circumstances. Of course, this does not apply to cladenstine intimacies. The study of touch and its interpretations is called *haptics*.

- *Time and space* are also culture specific. Uncompromising punctuality at meetings and meticulous promptness in correspondence are invariable marks of most Western business transactions. Most Eastern cultures, especially those of some far-eastern countries, prefer relaxed time, not because of tardiness in general-although this cannot be ruled out - but chiefly because the experience of chewing time places greater emphasis on relationships rather than instant transactions. The personal element precedes the official.

## 2.12 WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Written messages also take many forms. They might be informal like the notes you use to exercise your own memories or formal like elaborate reports you submit to your supervisor. Written communication has one advantage. They let us plan and control the message.

A written format is appropriate when the information is complex, when a permanent record is needed for future reference, when the audience is large and geographically dispersed, and when immediate interaction with the audience is either unimportant or undesirable.

This category includes letters, memos, telegrams, and minutes of meetings, proposals, forms, questionnaire and reports. Most letters and memos are relatively brief documents, generally one to two pages. Memos are the work horses of business communication, used for the routine, day–to–day exchange of information within the organization. The use memo is to designate responsibility, communicate the same material to many people, communicate policy and procedure, confirm oral agreements or decisions, and place specific

information on record. In contrast, letters frequently go to outsiders, and they perform an important public relations function in addition to conveying a particular message.

Letters and memos are organized according to their purpose; the relationship between writer and reader dictates their style and tone.

Reports and proposals are factual, objective documents that may be distributed to either insiders or outsiders, depending on their purpose and subject. Reports are generally longer and more formal than letters and memos, and they have more components. Generally, written communication increases the sender's control but eliminates the possibility of immediate feedback.

## 2.13 PURPOSE OF WRITING

We use written communication when:

- The sender wants a record for future references.
- The receiver will be referring to it later.
- The message is complex and requires study by the receiver.
- The message includes a step by step procedure.
- Oral communication is not possible because people are not in the same place at the same time.
- There are many receivers. Caution: the receivers must be interested in the subject and will put forth the time and effort to read and understand.
- A copy of the message should go to another person.
- The receiver prefers written.

## 2.14 CLARITY IN WRITING

Clarity in writing depends on coherene, coherion, and use of words and sentence.

(a) **Coherence:** In the same way coherence ensures clarity of thought, cohesion ensures unity of language. Coherence in writing is achieved by logical reasoning and close organization of ideas.

(b) **Cohesion:** Cohesion in sciences means the force that makes elements of the same substance stick together. In language it means the unity of grammatical elements in a discourse (any piece of writing longer than a sentence). Articles, pronouns, sentence connectors, absolute constructions, tense, person and other grammatical features contribute to cohesion. Note how these work together to improve the cohesion of the following discourse: (taken from Discourse Analysis, Yule)

My father once bought a Lincoln Convertible. He did it by saving every penny he could. That car would be worth a fortune nowadays. However, he sold it to help pay for my college education. Sometimes I think I'd rather have the Convertible.

- In this discourse the use of the pronoun 'he' thrice for 'father', and of 'my' and 'I' for the speaker; and also 'that car' and 'the Convertible' for 'Lincoln Convertible' maintains reference to the same people and thing through the piece of writing.

- More general connections are created by a number of other terms: 'money' is connected with *'bought'*, *'saving'*, *'penny'*, *'worth a fortune'*, *'sold'* and *'pay'*.
- The concept of time is connected by *once, nowadays* and *sometimes*.
- The sentence connector *however* connects what has gone before with what follows.
- The *past tense* is consistently used for past time reference and the present tense for the present time reference.
- The *absolute construction, 'he could'* connects the first two sentences without repeating the same words.

These *cohesive markers* achieve unity of language and greater clarity of the thought they help to convey. Business letters without cohesion are less well organized and they are least effective.

(c) *Use of words and sentences with clarity:*

(i) *Never use an indirect (metaphor) or direct comparison (simile)* when you can convey an idea in simple plain English.

The *telegram* was a bolt from the blue as he least expected it.

*better:* The telegram shocked him.

*The plan was a wash-out.*

*better.* The plan was a complete failure.

(ii) *Avoid the use of long and unfamiliar words:*

| unfamiliar | familiar |
|---|---|
| antagonistic | opposite |
| loquacious | talkative |
| obliterated | destroyed |
| endeavour | attempt |
| ascertain assure, | find out |
| terminate | to end |
| demonstrate | show |

(iii) *Avoid redundancies (repetitions):*

| redundant | precise |
|---|---|
| return back | return |
| repeat again | repeat |
| midway between | between |
| end result | result |
| eye witness (generally used only in legal documents) | witness |
| period of a week | a week |
| fact that | that |
| actual truth | truth |
| on the occasion of | at or when |
| in spite of the fact | although |

(iv) *Avoid camouflaged vocabulary:* 'Comouflage' means 'disguise'. Sometimes words meant to be used as verbs are disguised as nouns. It hinders direct expression.

| *camouflaged* | *plain* |
|---|---|
| *The meeting of the two directors took place at last.* | The two directors met at last. |
| *The liquidation of the company was made.* | The company was liquidated. |

(v) *Avoid jargon and cliché:* 'Jargon' refers to words and expressions found in limited circulation within special groups. For example, within student circles a 'prof' is a professor and 'vac' is vacation. A *cliché* is an overworn expression that has been in use for a long time and has lost its freshness. In the following sentence cliches and jargon are italicized and shown with darker font; they should be replaced by fresh expressions.

*Key labour accords are **hammered out** by weary negotiators in **marathon round the clock bargaining** sessions thus narrowly **averting threatened walkouts.** (Better: Labour accords were reached after long and difficult sessions of negotiation.)*

(vi) *Avoid hype (hyperbole or exaggeration):*

| *hype* | *plainly factual* |
|---|---|
| *absolutely wonderful* | wonderful |
| *extraordinarily brilliant* | quite brilliant |
| *They caught the thief after a marathon hunt through the streets of the city all through the night.* | They caught the thief after much effort through the night. |

(vii) *Avoid abstract ideas in favour of the concrete:*

| *abstract* | *concrete* |
|---|---|
| *The government is increasing the price of petrol by ₹ 2 per litre with effect midnight tonight.* | A litre of petrol will cost ' 2 more from this midnight, says the from government. |
| *His decisions are woolly.* | His decisions are not clear. |

(viii) *Avoid words that are too informal and verge on slang:*

| *slang* | *refined* |
|---|---|
| *The boss has fired me.* | The Chief requires my services no longer. |
| *That chap was put on the carpet.* | That person was called upon to explain. |

(ix) *Avoid ambiguity:*

| *ambiguous* | *disambiguated* |
|---|---|
| *The boxer gave a violent blow to the opponent's teeth. They both fell together (ambiguity of 'they': what, or who fell?)* | Both the boxers fell down. |

Ambiguity in punctuation:

| *ambiguous* | *disambiguated* |
|---|---|
| Kill him not leave him. The Zambian President said South Africa underestimated the incidence of AIDS. | Punctuate according to the meaning intended. |

(x) Avoid using too many *adjectives*:

| *overuse of adjectives* | *plain narration* |
|---|---|
| Rescuers struggled for three long hours to free the mangled body from the shattered cab. | Rescuers took three hours to free the body from the wreckage. |

(xi) Avoid circumlocution (roundabout writing):

| *roundabout* | *direct* |
|---|---|
| We acknowledge receipt of your etter. Enclosed herewith please find the cheque to the value of ₹ 500. | We have received your letter. A cheque for ₹ 500 is enclosed. |

(d) **Use of sentence structures:**

(i) *Keep the length of sentences short.* Modern English favours short sentences. Spoken sentences should generally have no more than 16 to 18 words. Written sentences may have an optimal length of about 20 or 22 words. The words should be short and familiar.

| *too long* | *briefer* |
|---|---|
| The Industries Minister has announced that there is no evidence for the recent alarmist media reports that market would crash because of the adoption of the policy of liberalization of economy by his government. (34 words) | The Industries Minister has denied reports that market would crash because of the current policy of liberalization. (17 words) |

(ii) *Use direct SV/SVO Structures*: English generally uses a few structures of which the Subject-Verb, Subject-Verb-Adjunct and Subject-Verb-Object structures are the commonest. While there should be variety of structures in a composition, a more frequent use of these two structures is recommended. Inversions make sentences weak. Long involved sentence structures are not preferred in business English. The following are some illustrations.

| *subordination* | *shorter, more direct structure* |
|---|---|
| In the interest of promoting his business, which is facing stiff competition, the MD is looking for more partners. (AASVO) Because of fall in mortgage rates, which | The MD is looking for more partners to promote his business in highly competitive circumstances. (SVOA) The sentence may be split |

| has stimulated apartment buying, apartment prices are going up again. *(AASVA)* | into two: Apartment prices are going up again (SVA). Fall in mortgage rates has led to increased apartment buying. (SVO) |
|---|---|

(iii) Avoid passive structures where they are not needed. Instead, use the active voice. However, passive is necessary where the object is more important than ·the subject.

| *wrong position of important nouns* | *right position of important nouns* |
|---|---|
| *I garlanded the Prime-Minister.* | The Prime-Minister was garlanded by me. |
| *Office space was found by them* | They found office space. · |
| *The snake was killed by Rama.* | Rama killed the snake. |

(iv) Avoid using too many subordinating and coordinating connectors in order to keep your sentences short and simple.

| *overuse of subordination and coordination* | *cohesive structure* |
|---|---|
| *The Manager, who was advised by his Marketing Director, chose·a location, which is in the market square and furnished a show room.* | The Manager provided a showroom in the market square on the advice of his Marketing Director. |

## 2.15 PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE BUSINESS WRITING

Just like oral communication we have Three-Step Writing Process for effective business writing.
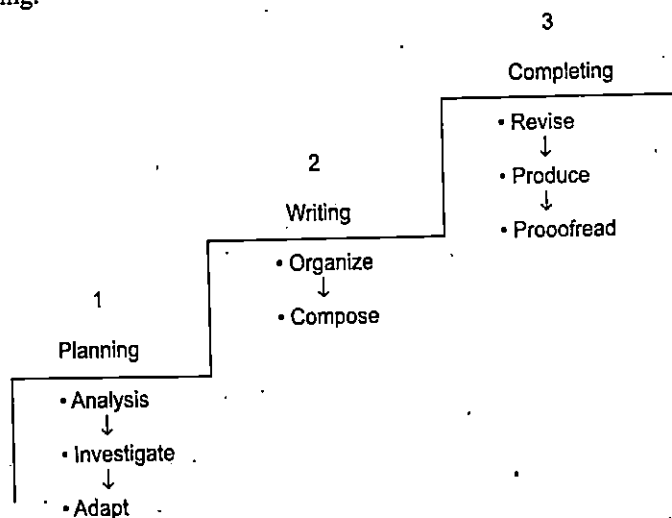


**1. Planning.** For larger and complex messages, we first analyse our purpose to make sure that it is specific and it is worth pursuing at the very particular time. Then investigate the receiver's needs whether we have all the inputs and then adapt all

the inputs, according to reader's needs, requirements and attitude. Select the most appropriate format (memo, letter, e-mail, report etc.).

2. **Writing.** After planning, organise the gathered material and input limiting the scope of the message. Cover only relevant points, grouping them in logical fashion. One should adopt the direct approach, clear statement of the main idea, include all the details in the body and then close cordially.

.3. **Completing.** Make the writing professional by allowing plenty of time to revise, produce and proof read it. First revise for the overall impact, then evaluate and edit the content by keeping it brief, concize and clear, weeding out overly long words and phrases and irrelevant details- Design the documents to suit the reader or receiver and choose appropriate delivery methods. Finally, proofread the final version of your routine message. Look for typos, errors in spelling and mechanics, alignment problems, poor print quality and so on.

These were the verbal methods of communication. Let's now recapitulate what we have learnt in this chapter.

## 2.16 WRITING TECHNIQUE

### Do's and Don'ts of Business Writing

Utility technique depends on Do's and Don'ts of business utility.

Effective writing skills depends upon proper planning and organizing the content matter. Do's and Don'ts of effective writing are as follows:

1. **Informal element.** A business writing should be formal and all the informal or casual elements should be eliminated. It gives the bad or careless attitude on the part of the writer.

2. **Irrelevant.** An effective business writing should remove all the irrelevant and trivial material from the content. It amounts to wastage of time and creates digression from the keypoints of the matter.

3. **Grammatical errors, wrong punctuation marks and prepositions.** Grammatical errors or use of wrong punctuation marks and prepositions project a very bad impression on the reader and creates a bad image of the company one is representing.

So these are certain do's and don'ts of business writing which one should take into consideration for making one's writing more effective and impressive.

## 2.17 ELECTARONIC WRITING PROCESS

The methods of communication used in the past were simple. People spoke or wrote or communicated without much complexity. With the advancement of technology and management science, methods of communication have become varied and complex. These are often broadly classified into two: *channel* and *media*. *Channel* is the 'system' used to communicate whereas *medium* is one of the forms or types used under that system. For example, oral communication is a *channel* and telephone conversation, a form of oral communication, is called a *medium*. There are three broad channels, *oral, audio-visual*

There are several *media* under each:

| Channel | Oral | Audio-Visual | Written |
|---------|------|--------------|---------|
| Media | Face-to-Face Conversation, Telephone Conversation, Audio Tapes, Voice Mail, etc. | Cinema, TV, Video-Tapes, etc. | Letter, Memo, Report, E-mail, Fax, Flier, Print, etc. |

*Channel and Media of Communication*

Here we shall discuss a wise range of electronic media used in written communication. These are:

### 2.17.1 TELEPHONE

It has become a worldwide network enabling callers to communicate quickly at modest costs. With the combination of wireless it has become more sophisticated to provide the cordless; the videophone, which combines the advantages of both seeing and hearing the other, and the cell or mobile phone. Cell phones have considerably excelled face-to-face meetings. Most recent cell phones have additional functions such as e-mail access, instant messaging and web browsing.
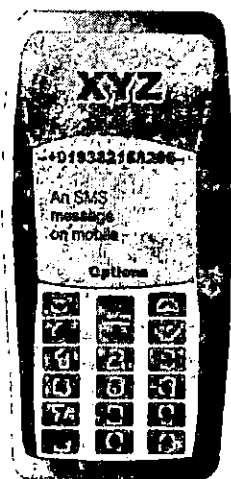


SMS

### 2.17.2 VIDEOGRAPHY

The device of recording television pictures on magnetic tapes is now put to many uses. Video tapes are used for presentation of sorts, making reviews and assessments, teaching, sales promotion and for other purposes. *Video conferencing* is a modern electronic medium which enables people in different parts of the world to have meetings by watching and listening to each other on video screens. It reduces the cost of organizing consultations because people need not be physically present at a venue. This, however, does not have the benefit of live feedback and enrichment of dialogue through secondary conversations.

### 2.17.3 COMPUTER

This electronic device can store, organize and find information. It can also control other machines. It is the basis of most modern systems of communication and it is used

in combination with other devices such as the video, the digital camera and the CD-ROM (compact discs that can store a large amount of information on inexpensive small discs). Computers are indispensable for the use of the Internet.
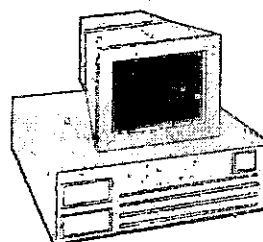
Computer

### 2.17.4 FAX

The fax machine sends and receives documents in an electronic form along telephone wires and then prints them. The device is used when a hard copy is required instantly. However, it lacks privacy and the message is often less professional.

### 2.17.5 E-MAIL

It is a way of sending messages and data to other people by means of computers connected together in a network. It is often used because of its speed, cost-effectiveness, easier access and convenience. It is, however, of little use as legal record because of its informality and conversational tone. With the development of the signature file, however, e-mail has now come to be accepted as legal document by some agencies. E-mail is also used for formal external communication.

### 2.17.6 WEBSITES

The Internet has provided interconnectivity through networking computers around the globe. Websites are locations on the Internet used by agencies to provide information about themselves. Other communication services on the web include surfing, browsing, chat, e-mail and information exchange for placement and business transactions.
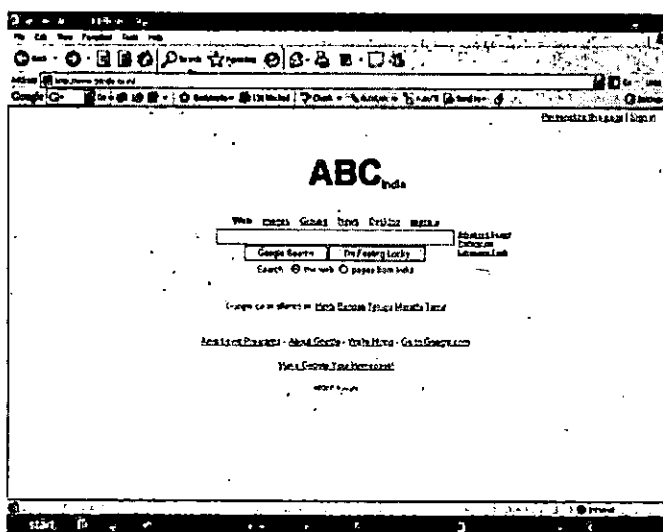


*Net Browsing*

## 2.17.7 ELECTRONIC MEDIA

| Type | Use | Advantage | Shortcoming |
|---|---|---|---|
| e-mail | to transmit short goodwill messages and others which need no response | effective for brief messages, saves time and paperwork—most suited for internal communication | not used as legal or authentic record |
| fax | to mail hard copies quickly | has all benefits of a written message | lacks privacy |
| computer conferencing | to focus ideas in small groups | sharing and collaboration in realtime at less cost | lacks personal focus |
| electronic meeting | participants brainstorm via keyboard on large screen | facilities debate; analyses; rank orders ideas; and makes decisions | anonymity; lacks non-verbal feedback |
| instant messaging | real-time one-to-one or small group inter-action through texts | quicker than e-mail; virtual online meetings made possible | cannot create permanent record |
| teleconferencing | informational meetings can be held | effective alternative to face-to-face meeting | negotiation not possible |

## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Define media of communication.
2. Discuss the types of communication you know about.
3. Explain the basic forms of communication.
4. Define oral communication.
5. Discuss the factors which make oral communication successful.
6. Discuss two sides of effective oral communication.
7. Define listening.
8. Discuss how listening can be effective.
9. Discuss the guidelines of effective listening.
10. Analyse how many types of non-verbal communication are there.
11. Define paralanguage. Explain with examples.
12. Define body language as well as its features.
13. Discuss kinesics.
14. Define written communication.
15. Define the purpose of writing.

16. Write what you mean by clarity in writing.
17. Discuss effective business correspondence.
18. Define electronic writing media.

## SUMMARY

- Media of communication is the channel through which messages are directed towards the receiver.
- Medium is the method used to deliver a message.
- There are various media through which we can send our message. They are generally divided into two: non-verbal communication, and verbal communication.
- Verbal communication is divided into two categories: oral media, and written media.
- Oral communication media include face-to-face conversation (the richest medium), telephone calls, interviews, group discussion, conferences, announcements, speeches, presentations and meetings.
- To make the communication successful:

  Speak slowly and distinctly.

  Repeat keywords and phrases.

  Aim for clarity.

  Communicate with body language.

  Support your oral message with visual aids.
- Two sides of effective oral communication are sender/encoder and receiver/decoder.
- Listening is a process of receiving, interpreting and reacting to the messages received from the communication sender.
- Effective listening is an art of communication, which is often taken for granted and ignored.
- In communication for management, three difference sources of information demand effective listening: customers, employees and supervisors.
- Listening ability can be improved by becoming more aware of the practices that distinguish good listeners from bad ones.
- Paralanguage and body language are those non-verbal communications which are most applicable to business communication.
- Written communication can be of following types:

| Letter | Memo | Notice | Circular | Report | Minutes |
|--------|------|--------|----------|--------|---------|
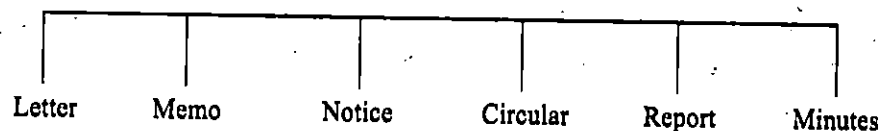
- Business writing can be made effective by following three-step writing process:

| Planning | Writing | Completing |
|----------|---------|------------|

- Do's of business writing are:

  Clarity, completeness, conciseness, consideration, courtesy, correctness, proofreading, use of bullets or number listing, paragraph and adopt to your intended reader.

- Don'ts of business writing are:

  Use of slangs, use of long sentences, confused words, obscurity, personal feelings, negative attitude, informal element, irrelevant materials and grammatical errors.

- Modern communication technology has created a wide range of electronic media.

## KEYWORDS

**paralanguage:** the non-lexical component of communication by speech, for example intonation, pitch and speed of speaking, hesitation noises, gesture, and facial expression

**kinesics:** the study of the way in which certain body movements and gestures serve as a form of non-verbal communication.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain what would happen if one side of effective oral communication is missing.
2. Discuss the pros and cons of the absence of effective listening.
3. Discuss the role of kinesics in business communication with examples.
4. Does writing have any purpose without coherence? Why/Why not?
5. Discuss your favourite electronic writing process and write why it is your favourite.

CHAPTER **3** **BUSINESS LETTERS AND REPORTS, AND CASE METHOD OF LEARNING**

## ❖ STRUCTURE ❖

## 3.1 OBJECTIVES

*After reading this unit, the students would be able to:*

- learn about business letters and their types,
- learn about their layout,
- learn how to write memos,
- learn what is a report purpose,
- learn about kinds and objectives of reports,
- learn how to write reports,
- learn about understanding the case method of learning,
- learn about different types of cases,
- learn how to overcome the difficulties of the case method,
- learn how to read a case properly,
- learn about case analysis approaches,
- learn how to analyze the case, and
- learn about do's and don'ts.

## 3.2 INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS LETTERS

The concern of this unit is the verbal symbols in written communication media that we call as *business letters.* Making choice of symbols and channels helps to ensure effective communication. This is achieved when the intended meaning of the sender and the meaning perceived by the receiver are one and the same.

Despite the recent growth in electronic communications and the convenience of telephone, letters are still a very widely used medium of communication in businesses. They are cheap to produce and postal delivery is quick and generally reliable. They also provide both the receiver and the sender with a permanent record of what has been discussed and agreed for later reference. Letters may lack the personal touch of meetings or the immediacy of a telephone call, but when matters are relatively straight forward and there is no urgency for a decision- as is the case in most routine business—they are an effective and valuable form of communication.

Business letters are written from one business firm to another or from a business firm to an individual customer. They are the most common form of written messages used by the business to communicate with people and organizations outside the firm. Therefore, business letters are often the main. means of establishing business relations with the outside world.

## 3.3 TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

The following are some of the common types of business letters: Enquiry, claim, adjustment, and employment. Each one of the types has been discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

### 3.3.1 Enquiry letters

Business people periodically made routine requests for information. Those routine enquiries are neutral messages that require no persuasion, and therefore, should be written using a direct plan. The enquiries may be about a product, service, or a person. A letter of enquiry must be written so that the writer will obtain all the information necessary to make a decision about the product, service or person. If you receive such letters in the work place, consider what you or your company would want to know and ask specific questions.

An enquiry about products or services should make receiver of your message glad to respond and should end by requesting. The enquiry may include only one sentence such as requesting a catalogue or it may also have several paragraphs in which questions are asked on the following areas:

- Specifications on the size, shape, quality, quantity of product required.
- Terms of payment and the price
- Sample of the product (if necessary)
- Time required for shipment of goods

- Guarantee on the products
- Availability of supply and accessories
- Cost of installation, repair and maintenance

The following two sample letters for an enquiry and a response to the enquiry have been given. It will somehow strengthen your understanding of the above discussion. Look at the following example of an enquiry letter.

**A Sample Enquiry Letter**

<div style="border:1px solid black;">

Department of Hydraulics

Arbaminch University

Arbaminch, Ethiopia

P.O.box 21

March 26, 2021

Mr Gemechu Abraham

Professor

Addis Ababa Science & Technology University

Addis Ababa

Dear Mr Gemechu

I am a professor in Hydraulics department at Arbamich University organizing a seminar on management of water resources in the coming June.

Based on your experience in this area, I was wondering if you would be interested in attending. The deadline for admission is May 23. It would be a great honour to have you in attendance.

Enclosed you may please find an admission form and more information about the seminar.

With regards

Alemayehu Yirga

Professor, AMU

Enclosures (4)

</div>

**A sample of response letter for the previous letter of enquiry**

---

Hydraulics department

Addis Ababa Science and Technology University

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

April 2, 2021

Alemayehu Yirga

Professor, AMU

Arbamich

Dear Mr Alemayehu

Thank you very much for your letter dated 26th March.

I would be honoured to attend your symposium on the management of water resources in June. I strongly agree with the fact that your university is doing so much towards the issue and would like to be part of the effort.

I am enclosing the admission sheet sent to me, and the articles I recently published on the subject. Good luck in organizing the event.

I cannot wait to be there!

Sincerely,

Mr Gemechu Abraham

Professor, AASTU

Enclosures (8)

---

### 3.3.2 Claim letters

A claim letter is written by the buyer to the seller seeking some type of action to correct a problem with the seller's product or service. A claim letter requests some type of adjustment. Many compliant letters would probably be more successful if they carried an implied claim that the writer wanted some adjustments to be made as a result of a poor product, service or unfair treatment, practices and so on.

Claims should be written as soon as a problem is identified because delaying unnecessarily might not only push you past the warranty date but might also raise suspicions about the validity of your claims.

While writing claim letters, you should be courteous and avoid emotional language. Your reader who becomes angry with the strong language you used in your letter will be less likely to do as you ask.

Instead of using an emotional language, begin your claim letter directly telling what the problem is. Once you have identified the problem, give explanations including all possible background information such as the date, the model number, the amount and so on.

---

BHAWAN RETAILER

JODHPUR, RAJASTHAN

P.O.BOX 887

March 8, 2021

Mr Ajay Garg

Marketing manager

TTY food complex

Mumbai

Dear Mr Garg

We have ordered 4000 Kg of rice our order number BR/009/99 dated February 23, 2008. Today when the shipment arrived we checked its contents and found only 3400 Kg of packed rice out of which 65 packs were badly damaged. It seems one of the cases was not packed properly or some heavy load had been placed over it in transit.

There is a great demand for your product in the town at this time of the year and we expected to clear the whole stock during the next two months. But it appears some of our customers will have to be disappointed.

With enormous resources at your command we hope you can save the situation by sending the remaining 600 Kg of packed rice immediately by quick transit service.

Regarding the damaged packs, we want your advice. There are two alternatives: either you will allow us to sell them at reduced price in which case we shall send you the total amount realized after deducting our usual 7% commissions or permit us to return them to you at your cost for replacement.

Sincerely yours,

Yogesh Sinha

Purchasing manager

---

### 3.3.3 Adjustment Letters

An adjustment letter is written to inform the customer, or the supplier, and so on of the actions taken in response to their claim letter. So, the objective of the adjustment letter is customer satisfaction and business reputation. In writing the adjustment letter, you should consider the claims very promptly because any delay will cause further annoyance.

In addition you should offer further cooperation and assurance of satisfaction to prompt goodwill and good relationship with the customer.

If the claim is unclear or unreasonable or unjust, state why you are refusing or partially accepting the claim. The overall tone of your adjustment letter should adopt a gracious and confident approach.

Show confidence in the recipient's honesty and in the essential worth of your own company and its products.

*Guidelines for writing an adjustment letter*

- Respond promptly: your customer is already angry or upset
- Begin the letter directly, telling the reader immediately what adjustment is being made
- Adopt a courteous tone: use neutral or positive language
- If appropriate, somewhere in the letter, thank the reader for writing and apologize if the customer has been severely inconvenienced or embarrassed because of your company's action.
- Provide the information that re-establishes your customer's confidence in the product or your company. Be specific enough to be believable.
- Close on a positive note: include additional re-sales, sales promotions, appreciation for the reader's interest in your products, or some other strategy that implies customer satisfaction and the expectation of a continuing relationship.
- Before we wind up our discussion of adjustment letters, it would be very good for you to look at the following sample of adjustment letter in response to the previous sample claim letter.

**A Sample Adjustment Letter**

TTY FOOD COMPLEX,

MUMBAI

P.O.BOX 990

March 13, 2021

Purchasing section

BHAWAN RETAILER

JODHPUR,

RAJASTHAN

Attention: Mr. Yogesh Sinha, purchasing director

Dear Sir

Thank you for your letter number BR/110/99 dated March 8, 2021. We are very sorry to learn that you have been inconvenienced owing to our mistake.

Your suggestion of quick shipment of 600 Kg of packed rice is fair and we have dispatched them today through quick transit service, as desired by you. We hope they will reach in time for you to keep the dates with your clients. We also agree to bear the transportation cost of the damaged packs. Please send them back soon.

Thank for drawing our attention to this mistake because we have again carefully examined the work of our packaging and dispatch department and introduced further checks to avoid the recurrence of such mistake.

TTY food complex assures that you will not be put in such conveniences again.

Sincerely yours,

Ajay Garg

Marketing Manager

### 3.3.4 Employment letters

The employment letters' objective is to get you into an interview or written test by your prospective employer. Well planned and organized employment letters will attract the employer for more information about you which will result in you being called for an interview. In this section we will see two major parts of an employment letter, i.e. application letters and resume or curriculum vitae or bio-data which are both necessary when you apply for a job/ when you seek employment in a particular organization.

#### *Application Letter*

The purpose of a job application letter is to get an interview. If you get a job through interviews arranged by Arbaminch university placement office or through other contacts, you may not need to write such letters. However, if you wish to work for an organization that is not interviewing in your campus, or when you change jobs, you will be required to write a letter for preparation of a job interview, because the application letter is the first step where you show a specific company

what you can do for it. It is a form of advertising and it should be organized like a persuasive message. In your application letter you need to stimulate your reader's interest, it must be neat, clear, polite, purposeful and accurate and technically correct.

When you write your application letter, it is better if you have some knowledge about the organization you are applying because you should be able to write about how your qualification fits into its needs. The application letter should have several paragraphs such as the opening, middle and closing paragraphs.

There are two types of application letter. These are:

- Unsolicited application letter
- In response application letter

**Unsolicited application letter:** is sent to a company for which you would like to work even though no vacancies are being advertised.

**In response application letter (solicited)** are letters written in response to an advertisement. These are sent to the company or institution only when they have announced a specific job vacancy by advertisements and called for applications.

Both Types of Letters Should Be Accompanied

By A Bio-Data, or A Resume, or Curriculum Vitae.

The opening paragraph indicates the specific position the applicant seeks, where the advertisement was seen or how the applicant came to know of the vacant position and why the application qualifies for the position.

The middle paragraph(s) of the application letter presents selling points unless these are mentioned in the opening. This paragraph should give key qualifications that indicate the applicant can do the job.

#### *Guidelines*

*For writing the opening paragraph*

To open letters by capturing the reader's attention in business follow suggestions given as follows.

- Present your strongest, most relevant qualifications with an explanation of how they benefit the organization.

- Mention the name of a person who is well known to the reader and he/she has suggested that you to apply.

- When responding to a job advertisement, identify the publication in which the advertisement appeared and briefly describe how you meet each requirement stated in the advertisement.

- Cite a publicized organizational achievement, contemplated change or new procedure or product; then link it to your desire to work for the organization.

- State that you are applying for a job, and identify the position or the type of work you seek.

*For writing the middle paragraph*

- Present your key qualifications for the job, highlighting what is on your resume: job-related education and training, relevant work experience and related activities, interests and qualities.

- Adopt a mature and business like tone. Back up your claims of ability by citing specific achievements in educational and work settings (or outside activities).

- Demonstrate the knowledge of the organization and a desire to join it by citing its operations or trends in the organization.

- Link your education, experience and personal qualifications to the job requirements.

*For writing the closing paragraph*

- Request an interview at the reader's convenience.

- Request a screening interview with the nearest regional representative.

- State your phone number with area code and the best time to reach you.

- Express the appreciation for an opportunity to have an interview.

## *The Resume (curriculum vitae/bio-data)*

A resume is a persuasive summary of your qualifications for employment. It is a document which you will use to sell yourself in the job search process. Its purpose is to convince potential employers that they should interview you. A well designed resume will emphasise your skills, abilities, talents and experience for potential employers.

The type of resume format may depend on your preference and the employer's organization you target. It may be chronologically organized around dates of employment and education, starting with the most recent position first. It may also be functional-organized around skills in which employers are interested. The third alternative is the combination of the above two designs which includes a section on employment by dates and a section on skills.

## *Parts of a Resume*

### *1. Opening section*

- Your name, date of birth, address (residential), telephone number

- Job or career objectives

- Summary of basic qualifications

## 2. Education

- List all relevant schooling and training since high school, with most recent first.

- List the name and location of every post-secondary school you have attended with the dates you entered and left and the degrees or certificates you obtained.

- Indicate your major and minor fields in college work.

- State the numerical base for your grade point average, overall or in your major, if your average is impressive enough to the employee.

- List the relevant required or elective courses in descending order or importance.

- List any other relevant educational or training experiences such as job related seminars or workshops attended and certificates obtained.

## *Work experience*

- List all relevant work experience, including paid employment and volunteer work

- List full-time and part time jobs, with the most recent one first--- State the month, year you started and left each job, list the job titles and describe you functions and responsibilities briefly.

  *(N.B. Note all on-the-job accomplishments such as organization recognitions letters or money.)*

## 4. Activities, honours and achievements

- List all relevant unpaid activities, including offices and leadership positions you have held, significant awards or scholarships not listed elsewhere, projects you have undertaken that show an ability to work with others, and publications and role in academic or professional organizations.

  *N.B. Exclude mention of religious or political affiliations.*

## 5. Personal data

- Omit the data that could be regarded negatively or be used to discriminate against you.

- Omit references to age if it could suggest inexperience or approaching retirement.

- List job-related interests and hobbies, especially those indicating strength, sociability, or other qualities that are desirable in the position you seek.

- Relate aspects of your training or work experience to those of the target position

- Outline your educational preparation for the job.

- Provide proof that you learn quickly, are a hard worker, can handle responsibilities and get along well with others.

- Present evidence of personal qualities and work attitudes that are desirable for job performance.

  If asked to state salary requirements, provide current salary or a desired salary range, and link it to the benefits of hiring you.

## 6. Reference

- List three to five references, or offer to supply the names on request.
- Supply names of academic, employment and professional associates—but not relatives
- Provide a name, title, address and telephone number or each reference
- List no names as reference unless you have that person's permission to do so.
- Exclude you present employer if you do not want him or her to know that you are seeking another position, or add "resume submitted in confidence" at the top or bottom of the resume.

**For illustration,** assume that the Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation advertised a vacancy for the post of Junior Human Resource Officer on Ethiopian Herald dated August 10, 2008. The minimum requirement for the position was a B.A degree in Business Management. The interested applicants were requested to submit their application letter within 10 working days after this announcement has been made.

Look at the following application letter and resume shown on the next page as a sample. They have been written by an applicant as a response to the above vacancy announced by Ethiopian Telecommunications Corporation.

### Sample of Application Letter

Mekuria Getachew

P.O.box 3030

Addis Ababa

August 12, 2021

Ato Mesafint Fantahun

Human Resource Manager

Addis Ababa

Dear Sir

This is response to your vacancy announcement on the Ethiopian Herald dated 10th August, 2021 for the post of Junior Human Resource Officer.

I am keenly interested to join your organization because it is such a privilege to work with you and contribute my best to your efforts to connect Ethiopia to the future.

I am qualified enough to take this opportunity because I have requisite educational background and adequate work experience.

I have studied BA in business management in Arbaminch University and graduated with high distinction. During my stay in previous organization, I learned how to organize and prepare various reports using different computer packages, assisting the director of Administration.

I recently completed a three-course sequence at Grace College on Microsoft word and power point. I learned how to apply those programs to speed up letter and report writing tasks.

I would appreciate an interview with you. If you are interested in me, please call me any afternoon between 3 and 5 PM at (0911) 73-86-94 to let me know the day and time most convenient for you.

Sincerely,

Mekuria Getachew

**Sample Curriculum Vitae**

CURRICULUM VITAE (C.V.)

NAME: Mekuria Getachew

| | |
|---|---|
| DATE OF BIRTH | : 20th November, 1998 |
| PLACE OF BIRTH | : Awassa |
| ADDRESS | : Addis Ababa |
| | Tel: 0911-73-86-94 |
| | E-mail: Meduria_1998@yahoo.com |
| OBJECTIVE | : To obtain the post of Junior Human Resource Officer |
| EDUCATION | : BA degree in Business Management, with High Distinction, 2020, |
| | Senior secondary school- Awassa Tabor Secondary School, 2016 |
| | Junior Secondary School- Awassa Tabor Junior Secondary School, 2012 |
| | Primary School-Awassa Hayk Primary School, 2008 |
| EXPERIENCE | : Assistant Administrator, EELCO since October 10, 2020 up to present. |
| ACHIEVEMENTS | : Have been selected the "best researcher" in management and awarded, Arbaminch University. |
| SKILLS | : Computer skills (Word, Excel, Power point, Access), Excellent in interpersonal communications |
| LANGUAGE | : Fluent in Amharic and English |
| HOBBIES | : Reading, Writing, literature and playing guitar. |
| REFERENCE | : Ato Megabi Mengistu, Dean of Faculty of Business and Economics, Arbaminch University. (Tel) 046-881-49-72 |
| | Dr Abebe Darza, Head Of Management Department, Arbaminch University. E-mail-darza2013@gmail.com |

I certify that the above mentioned information is true to the best of my knowledge.

Date

Place                                                                                          **Signature**

## 3.4 LAYOUT OF BUSINESS LETTERS

A letter is a written message in a particular format. Properly planned, well designed and neatly typed letters contribute towards the reputation and goodwill of a business organization. The business letter mostly has eight standard parts.

They have been arranged and discussed here in their top to bottom order:

- The heading
- The date
- Inside address
- Attention line (optional)
- Salutation
- Body
- Complementary close
- Signature block

### 3.4.1 The heading

The heading shows where the letter comes from. It includes the organization's name, full address and almost always a telephone number.

### 3.4.2 The Date

The date establishes correspondence as a matter of record and provides a reference point for future correspondence. It is typed two spaces below the last line of the letter head. It is indicated in either in the upper right-hand corner or upper left-hand corner.

Example: 2 may 2021 or May 2, 2021

Both methods are acceptable, however, the first method proceeds in the logical order of day, month and year and hence it is conventional.

Reference is a code given to the letter.

### 3.4.3 Inside address

It is the name and address of the person or organization to which you are sending the letter. The full address should be written two spaces below the date and two spaces above the salutation. The name •

of the addressee should be correctly spelled. If the addressee has no professional title such as doctor, or professor, the traditional courtesy titles are used—Mr, Ms, Mrs.

Order of arrangement of the inside address:

1st – Person and business

2nd – Committee, group or section or other small group

3rd – Company

4th – Building

5th – P.O.Box, street address

6th – City state

7th – Country

### 3.4.4 The attention line (optional)

To ensure prompt action, sometimes a letter which is addressed to a company is marked to a particular office with in the organization. The attention line is written two spaces below the inside address and two spaces above the salutation. The attention line is usually underlined.

Example:Attention: Mr. Mulugeta Abebe

Attention: General Manager

### 3.4.5 Salutation

Salutation is similar to greeting. It is placed two spaces below the attention line (if there is any). In most cases, it should match the first line of the inside address. When addressing an individual, use the word dear, followed by a polite title and the name of the person and a colon. When a letter is addressed to an officer by name "Dear sir" is used. If a person has a specific title, it is written before his/her name instead of the usual sir.

**Subject:** *the subject of a letter gives a brief title of the message. Thus, the purpose of the subject line is to let the reader know immediately what the message is about.*

### 3.4.6 Body

This is the main part of the letter that contains the main message of the letter and the idea of the writer. In the first paragraph, reference to any correspondence which has already taken place, should be given.

In the second, the main message should be stated. The paragraphs that follow should contain further details if necessary.

In the closing paragraph, the writer must clearly state what action he/she expects the reader to take or he/she may end the letter indicating his/her expectations, wishes or intentions. The paragraphs are not given any heading unless the letter is very long and deals with several important points.

### 3.4.7 Complementary Close

This is the polite way of ending a letter. It is typed two spaces below the last line of the letter (body).

*Example:* sincerely, cordially, faithfully, best regards....

### 3.4.8 Signature Area

Signature is the signed name of the writer. It is placed below the complementary close. The name of the writer is usually typed four spaces below the close line providing enough space for signature.

In the left margin the following should be included

**Identification mark:** identification mark is put in the left margin to identify the typist of the letter two spaces below the signature

**Enclosure:** If anything is attached to the letter, it must be indicated against the enclosure line typed two spaces below the identification mark. The enclosure notation reminds the reader that material is enclosed with the letter.

**Example:** Enc _____

Enclosure(s) _____

**Copy to:** *copy is used when there are other organizations or individuals are required to receive and know the message.*

. The following pages will show two letter structures having two different formats which are both aimed at increasing your understanding of the discussion you have read on the conventional parts of business letters.

There are two basic and most widely used letter formats which are worth a discussion:

(a) **The full block format:** is becoming very popular format. It can be typed rapidly because none of the parts of the letter are indented as is the case in the modified block format.

**Model of the Full Block Format**

| | |
|---|---|
| ARVIND TEXTILE COMPANY, | |
| MOTI PRAYAG, | |
| P.O.box 211 | Heading |
| DEHRADUN. | |
| | |
| 21/07/2021 | Date |
| | |
| Mr, Ms, Dr | |
| (Manager, Director, etc) | Inside address |
| | |
| Dear Sir, Mr___, Ms_____ | Salutation |
| | |
| Reference part | |
| Information | |
| Purpose | Body of the letter |
| Conclusion | |
| | |
| Sincerely, cordially, faithfully, | Complementary close |
| | |
| Name of company, | |
| Signature | Signature area |
| Business title | |

(b) **Modified block format:** the date, the complementary close and the signature block begins at the horizontal centre of the page.

**Model of the Modified Block Format**

ARVIND TEXTILE COMPANY,

MOTI PRAYAG

P.O.box 211

DEHRADUN.

July 28, 2021

Mr, Ms, Dr

(Manager, director, etc)

Dear Sir, Mr___, Ms_____

Reference part

Information

Purpose

Conclusion

ARVIND TEXTILE COMPANY,

Sincerely, cordially, faithfully,

Name of company,

Signature

## 3.5 WRITING MEMOS

### 3.5.1 Contents

A memorandum (memo) is the most frequently used form of communication within an organisation That is why it is also called inter-office memorandum. It is frequently used between persons who work together closely or are acquainted with one another and rarely used for communication with the members of other organisations. A memo is generally brief and to the point, and so the professionals find it, a convenient means of communication in all directions: upward, downward and horizontal. It also serves as a record of routine events, requests and points arising mid of day-to-day business transactions. Sometimes one may find it easier to communicate with an officer with whom personal contact is to be avoided. Many organisations have printed memo forms on which one can quickly word process or write and transmit a message.

The various types of messages, generally of a routing nature, which are exchanged through this form are: the confirmation of important points discussed on telephone, request for purchase of stationery, furniture, equipment, participation in seminars/conferences,

announcement of policy decisions, appointment of officers to key positions, communication of matters relating to staff discipline and office routine, writing short reports, etc.

### 3.5.2 Types

There are some organisations in which terms such *as confirmation memorandum, request memorandum, purchase memorandum, procedural memorandum,* etc., are used to label different types of memorandums on the basis of their contents and purposes. We would however, prefer to classify them only in two distinct categories, namely, (i) those which are written for transacting the daily business in an organisation and (ii) those which contain short reports. Though the structure of both these categories is the same, in their style there is a difference. The style of the former is informal and direct and is based on the principles of I-you communication. The latter is written in a formal tone and is characterised by objectivity in which accuracy is essential. It contains authentic data, often technical information, conclusions, and recommendations, if required.

### 3.5.3 Structure

The following elements usually constitute the structure of a memo:

 (i) Name of the organisation

 (ii) Name/designation of the receiver

 (iii) Name/designation of the sender

 (iv) Reference

 (v) Date

 (vi) Subject

 (vii) Body

 (viii) The signature of the sender.

If the copies of the memo are to be sent to the other officers/departments, their names/designations are also indicated at the bottom-left. In the examples that follow we have shown one way of arranging these elements. However, there could be other methods of sequencing them. You should follow the practice prevalent in your organisation. If you find that the approved format misses any essential element. You should get the format amended in the light of information given in this Chapter. A specimen memo report is given in Chapter 13. A sample each of other types is given below.

---

**Apex Electronics Corporation**

Interoffice Memorandum

To: All Office Employees

From: Office Manager

Ref: FDs/P19

Date: 7 Oct. 2021

Subject: Dispatch of outgoing mail

Three years ago we had announced a policy that the outgoing mail received after 4.00 pm would be dispatched the same day by the Receipt and Dispatch Section. This

---

was done because the staff had to leave the office at 5.00 pm and they needed one hour to, get everything processed and sent to the Post Office.

Since the office now closes at 5.30 pm. You may send the outgoing mail to this Section upto 4.30 pm. As usual urgent letters will be accepted till 5.30 pm. and dispatched the same day.

All employees are requested to note this change and cooperate with us in dispatching the outgoing mail promptly.

V. Ram Prasad

---

**Mopatalal Cotton Mills Limited**

Interoffice Memorandum

To: Public Relations Manager

From: Labour Welfare Officer Ref : SLR/TS911

Date: 15 Oct. 2021

Subject: Staff Welfare Fund

When I talked to you on the telephone yesterday, you agreed with my suggestion to create a Staff Welfare Fund to extend financial help to the employees and their families in times of prolonged illness or premature death. I have discussed this matter with the Financial Manager and he has endorsed the idea in principle but has suggested that the detailed guidelines should be prepared for the operation of this Fund. If you agree to work out the details we may constitute a three member committee, consisting of the following officers:

Personnel Manager (Convener)

Labour Welfare Officer, and

Budget Officer

D.D. Gupta

---

**Manoharsing Sagar University**

Interoffice Memorandum

To: The Registrar

Form: Manager, Printing Press

Ref: COD/1O1F

Date: 30 Oct., 2021

Subject: Purchase of Three Photocopiers

The Sodhi Photocopiers that we have is no longer adequate to a

The Sodhi Photocopiers that we have is no longer adequate to meet all our needs. It is about seven years old and lacks versatility. Moreover, it breaks down frequently and needs major repairs. This year alone we had to spend ₹ 15,000 to keep it in working order. With the addition of four teaching departments and consequent increase in the

number of both faculty and students, the volume of work has gone up considerably. Our estimates show that we now require at least three more photocopiers to cope with the present day demands. We have also studied the features· of various types of photocopiers currently available in the market. We recommend the purchase of Copra Xerox, each costing ₹ 1,50,000 manufactured by Jackson and Smiths Ltd., Mumbai.

I request you to accord your administrative approval for the purchase of photocopiers.

Iqbal Ahamad

---

**Sitaram Maxwell Ltd.**

Interoffice Memorandum

To: Managing Director.

From: Sales Manager

Ref: DIT/179

Date: 5 August, 2007

Subject: National Conference on Sales Promotion

As directed, I attended the National Conference held in Chennai on 6 and July 2007 and presented a paper on the strategies for the promotion of sales of washing machines.

There was in-depth discussion on different methods of capturing .the market through advertisements on electronics and print media. It was realised that these media did promote the sales. However to have á competitive edge it is essential to devise and other ways of reaching the consumer across the country of the were as follows: door to door contact with housewives and demonstration at strategic points at different parts of the town, distribution of handbills in regional languages, and hoardings in big towns.

I am enclosing for your perusal the literature containing the details of the suggestions made at the Conference. I, however, believe it would be better to conduct a market devising new methods of promoting the sale of our machines.

T.D. Kashiwal

---

## 3.6 WHAT IS A REPORT PURPOSE

*"A Business Report is an impartial, objective, planned presentation of facts to one or more persons for specific, significant business purpose"*. This means, to be classified as a business report, a report must serve some business purpose. This purpose may be to solve a problem. A business report must be specific enough to be meaningful, broad enough to take in variations found in reports.

"A Business Report can be also defined as any factual, objective document that serves a business purpose."

"A Business Report is an orderly and objective communication of factual information that serves some business purpose."

Business reports are a managerial tool intended to inform or to contribute to the decision making and problem-solving process, they must be accurate, complete and unbiased.

The report facts may pertain to events, conditions, qualities, progress, results, products, problems, or suggested solutions. They may help the receivers understand a complex business situation; carry out operational or technical assignments; or plan procedures, solve problems and make policy decisions about strategic planning.

The goal in developing a report is to make the information as clear and convenient to use as possible. Because time is precious, you tell your readers what they need to know—no more, no less—and you present the information in a way that is geared to their needs.

## 3.7 OBJECTIVES OF BUSINESS REPORTS

Organizations use reports to provide a formal, verifiable, link among people, places and times. Some reports are used for internal communication; others are vehicles for corresponding with outsiders. Some serve as a permanent record; others solve an immediate problem or answer a passing question.

Although Business Reports Serve Hundreds of Purposes, Most Reports are Used for One of the Following General Purposes

- To present the facts in an unbiased manner
- To monitor and control operations
- To help implement policies and procedures
- To comply with legal or regulatory requirements e.g. annual report
- To document work performed for a client e.g. interim progress reports, final report
- To guide decisions on particular issues e.g. research reports, justification reports
- To obtain new business or funding, e.g. sales proposals

Each of these purposes imposes its own requirements on the report writer. If your readers need information to oversee an operation, you would present your message differently than if you were contributing a decision on a complex issue. In other words, the purpose of a report affects its form.

## 3.8 KINDS OF BUSINESS REPORTS

Reports are commonly classified by who initiated the report, why it is being prepared, when it is prepared, and where it is being sent. Here are some common report classifications:

### Voluntary Reports Versus Authorized Reports

Voluntary reports are prepared on your own initiative. Thus, they usually require more detail and support than authorized reports, which are prepared at the request of someone else. When writing a voluntary report, you give more background on the subject, and you explain your purpose more carefully. An authorized report, on the other hand, is organized to respond to the reader's request.

### Routine reports versus special reports

Routine or periodic reports are submitted on recurring basis (daily, weekly, quarterly, annually). They require less introductory and transitional material than special reports, nonrecurring reports that deal with unique situations or one-time events.

### *Internal Reports Versus External Report*

**Internal reports** (used within the organization) are generally less formal than **external reports** (sent to people outside the organization).

In addition to these categories, a report can be short or long, formal or informal. Formal reports are generally long-more than ten pages-and encompass complex problems. Informal reports are generally short. However, meanings of the terms "long" and "short" vary depending upon circumstances. Short, informal reports require fewer elements in their introductions, fewer transitional devices for continuity, fewer headings and usually a more personal writing style than long, formal reports. Keep in mind that a single report may have several classifications. For instance, a monthly sales report is generally an authorized, internal, routine, informal report. Nevertheless, most reports can be placed in two broad categories:

1. Informational reports and

2. Analytical reports.

**Informational reports** present facts on a subject, whereas, **Analytical reports** present facts with analyses, interpretations, conclusions, and perhaps recommendations. The purpose of informational reports is to explain, whereas, analytical reports are meant to convince the audience that the conclusions and recommendations developed in the text are valid.

## 3.9 WRITING REPORTS

Before writing a report, you need to consider the planning steps. For all reports adequate preparation before writing involves the following six important planning steps regarding purpose, reader, ideas to include, facts to collect, interpretation and organization.

### 3.9.1 Define the Problem, Purpose, and Scope

The first planning step is to analyze the problem involved and know the purpose of your report. Ask questions like "What is wanted?" "How much?", "Why?", "When?" Answers to those questions will help you determine your problem, purpose, scope, limitations (in time and perhaps in fund), and title of the report. Then try to write your purpose in one concise, clear sentence.

### 3.9.2 Consider Who Will Receive the Report

Visualizing your reader or listener and his or her needs is an extremely important step in business report preparation. Who wants (or needs) this report? Who will read it? How much detail do they prefer? What is the reader's point of view? Experience? Knowledge? Prejudice? Responsibility? Will the report be sent to several—or perhaps hundreds of—persons at the same time?

### 3.9.3 Determine Ideas to Include

In short reports, this third step usually involves writing down—in no particular order—any general idea you will need to develop in order to meet the report's purpose. If the report is long, a detailed working plan follows. For some reports, formulating

hypotheses (Hypotheses are possible explanations or solutions for analyzing a problem) is desirable (even essential) as a basis for determining what information you will need and then you will jot down the tentative topic headings in a preliminary, tentative outline.

### 3.9.4 Collect Needed Material

The fourth step in report preparation is to gather needed facts thoughtfully from reliable sources. They might include primary sources (collecting data from people who are actually closer to the problem) and secondary sources (published materials).

### 3.9.5 Sort, Analyze and Interpret Data

In this fifth step the amount of brain work depends of course on the complexity of your research as determined by purpose and reader needs. In a short, informational report this step may take only a few minutes. In a long, analytical report based on masses of detailed data from many sources, this step may require weeks of study, arranging and analysis between the first sorting and the final interpretation of data. Your analysis and interpretations should of course be objective, free from your own personal bias (if you have any). To be honest, never omit or manipulate relevant facts, though they may contrary to your own preferences or may require a decision different from what you had expected.

Now is also the time reconsider the logic of your hypotheses and whether any main ideas in your original, tentative outline should be revised. Occasionally, after investigating your primary and secondary sources, you may find that some points in your tentative outline are not logical or possible to complete. Conversely, some areas that should have been included in the outline may have been omitted. And so you now revise, add, and delete topics where necessary.

### 3.9.6 Organize Data and Prepare Final Outline

After careful analysis and interpretation, you will organize the findings and make the final outline. But before preparing such an outline, you need to know what constitutes a report body and to consider various methods of organizing and outlining.

### 3.9.7 Main Parts of The Report

After you have completed the six preparation steps, you turn to the main parts of the report. These usually contain three sections: prefatory parts, text (body) and supplementary parts.

#### 3.9.7.1 Prefatory Parts

Although the prefatory parts are placed before the text of the report, you may not want to write them until after you have written the text. Many of these parts- such as the table of contents, list of illustrations and executive summary-are easier to prepare after the text has been completed because they directly reflect the contents. Other parts can be prepared at almost any time.

#### Cover

Many companies have standard covers for reports, made of heavy paper and imprinted with the company's name and logo. If your company has no standard covers, you can usually

find something suitable in a good stationery store. Look for a cover that is appropriate to the subject matter, attractive, and convenient. Also, make sure it can be labeled with the report title, the writer's name (optional), and the submission date (also optional).

Think carefully about the title you put on the cover. Give your readers all the information they need: the who, what, when, where, why and how of the subject. Put a title on the cover that is informative but not too long.

### The Fly and Title Page

The title fly is a plain sheet of paper with only the title of the report on it. It adds formality to a report.

The title page includes four blocks of information:

- The title of the report;
- The name, title, and address of the person, group or organization that authorized the report (usually the intended audience);
- The name, title, and address of the person, group, or organization that prepared the report;
- The date on which the report was submitted.

### Letter of Authorization and Letter of Acceptance

If you were authorized in writing to prepare the report, you may want to include in your report the letter of memo of authorization (and sometimes even the letter or memo of acceptance). *The letter of authorization* (or memo of authorization) is a document requesting that a report be prepared.

The letter of acceptance (or memo of acceptance) acknowledges the assignment to conduct the study and to prepare the report. This document is rarely included in reports.

### Letter of Transmittal

The letter of transmittal (or memo of transmittal) conveys your report to your audience. The letter of transmittal says what you would say if you were handing the report directly to the person who authorized it, so the style is less formal than the rest of the report. For example, the letter would use personal pronouns (you, I, and we) and conversational language. The transmittal letter usually appears right before the table of contents.

### Table of Contents

The table of contents outlines the text and prefatory and supplementary parts. Be sure the headings in the table of contents match up perfectly with the headings in the text.

### List of Illustrations

For simplicity's sake, some reports refer to all visual aids as illustrations or exhibits. If you have enough space on a single page, include the list of illustrations directly beneath the table of contents. Otherwise, put the list on the page after the contents page. When tables and figures are numbered separately, they should also be listed separately.

*Synopsis or Executive Summary*

A synopsis is a brief overview (one page or less) of a report's most important points, designed to give readers a quick preview of the contents. It is often included in long informational reports dealing with technical, professional or academic subjects and can also be called an *abstract*.

### 3.9.8 Text of The Report

Apart from deciding on the fundamental issues of content and organization, you must also make decisions about the design and layout of the report. The following are parts you include in your text section:

*Introduction*

- The introduction of a report serves a number of important functions:
- Puts the report in broader context by trying it to a problem or an assignment
- Tells readers the purpose of the report
- - Previews the contents and organization of the report
- Establishes the tone of the report and the writer's relationship with the audience
- Here is list of topics to consider covering in an introduction, depending on your material and your audience:

**Authorization:** when, how, and by whom the report was authorized; who wrote it, and when it was submitted.

**Problem/purpose:** The reason for the report' existence and what is to be accomplished as a result of the report's being written.

**Background:** The historical conditions or factors that led up to the report.

**Sources and methods:** The secondary sources of information that were used and the surveys, experiments, and observations that were carried out.

**Definitions:** A brief introductory statement leading into a list of terms used in the report and their definitions.

**Limitations:** Factors affecting the quality of the report, such as a budget too small to do all the work that should have been done, an inadequate amount of time to do all the necessary research, unreliability or unavailability of data, or other conditions beyond your control.

**Report organization:** The organization of the report (what topics are covered and in what order), along with a rationale for following this plan.

*Body*

The body of the report follows the introduction. It consists of the major sections or chapters (with various levels of headings) that present, analyze, and interpret the findings gathered as part of your investigation. Restrict the body to those details necessary to prove your conclusions and recommendations.

### Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

The final section of the text of a report tells readers "what you told them." A long report generally has separate sections labelled "Summary", "Conclusions," and "Recommendations". Here is how the three differ:

**Summary:** The key findings of your report, paraphrased from the body and stated or listed in the order in which they appear in the body.

**Conclusions:** An analysis of what the findings mean. These are the answers to the questions that led to the report.

**Recommendations:** Opinions, based on reason and logic, about the course of action that should be taken.

### 3.9.9 Supplementary Parts

Supplementary parts follow the text of the report and include the appendixes, bibliography, and index.

An appendix contains materials related to the report but not included in the text because they are too lengthy or bulky or because they lack direct relevance.

A bibliography is a list of secondary sources consulted when preparing the report. List all the secondary sources you used in the bibliography.

An index is an alphabetical list of names, places, and subjects mentioned in the report and the pages on which they occur. An index is rarely included in unpublished reports.

### 3.9.10 Organization and Outline of Report Body

How a report is organized increases the readability of the report. The report's reader, purpose, and subject matter must be considered when you choose the organizational plan for the entire report body and the text section. Then you will need to outline the topics correctly. The two usual ways to organize a report body are by the deductive (direct) and inductive (indirect) plans. Most business reports are organized deductively because readers wish to know early the recommendation or conclusions.

### Deductive Arrangement

The word "deductive", or direct, means describing up front and explananing in your report the main ideas or main recommendations before presenting detailed evidence and explanation.

In a lengthy report, readers usually prefer the deductive arrangement because it gives them an immediate picture before they delve into the mass of supporting details.

### Inductive Arrangement

Here you present the explanation before the main ideas or recommendation. You present much evidence and supporting materials before arriving at the main recommendation or conclusion.

### 3.9.11 Ways to Organize Report Text Section

One of the most challenging tasks in report writing is to decide on the best way to organize the mass of details in the text section. You must make this decision before you

prepare the final outline and, of course, before you begin writing the report. You can develop the text in one (or more) of the following ways:

### 1. By Criteria or Topics

This is the most common. Your main headings may be the standards, factors, solution options, benefits, or characteristics-criteria-on which a decision rests.

### 2. By Order of Occurrence

Agendas, minutes of meetings, convention programs, progress reports, and write-ups of events or procedures may follow this chronological arrangement.

### 3. By Order of Location or Space

This organization is useful for any orderly description focusing on space location of units. For example, to illustrate the political implications of a policy change, you can write about its influence in Europe, the Middle East, and the western hemisphere.

### 4. By Procedure or Process

While close to the chronological pattern, this method traces the steps of, say, a policy or the operations of a machine or the step- by-step procedure a bank teller might use in handling a deposit or withdrawal.

### 5. By Order of Importance or by Alphabetization

First present the most important ideas, events, or topics and proceed to the less important points.

### 6. By Order of Familiarity

Always proceed from the simple or familiar to the complex or unfamiliar, because the reader can comprehend better what is known than what is not known.

### 7. By Sources

This method is less desirable unless you are sure your reader is most interested in what each source revealed rather than in the criteria or other important ideas.

### 8. By Problem Solution

This way of organization is structured in such a manner that an initial discussion of the problem followed by a solution.

## 3.9.12 Methods of Outlining

After you have decided how to organize the body and the text, you will arrange the headings and subheadings in an outline. A good outline, especially for reports two or more pages long, is an essential tool and a real time -saver. It will become your guide for writing the report. In a long, formal report, it also becomes your table of contents. The outline helps you- before you write the report- to see the relationship between topics, compare proportions and headings, check for loopholes in logical order, and eliminate overlapping.

<div style="border:1px solid black">

**Samples of Business Report**

**General Report**

September 16, 2022

Managing Director

**XYZ Manufacturing Share Co.**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

Dear Sir,

Subject: Report on impatience among factory Workers

This has reference to your letter no. 234/11 of September 3, 2021 in which I was asked to compile a report on the impatience now prevalent among our factory workers. I have completed my investigations, and my findings with recommendations are given in a detailed report which is enclosed.

I would be obliged if I could have your comments after you have gone through the report. If, in the course of your reading, you would like to discuss some points with me, I shall be happy to do so at any time convenient to you.

Respectfully submitted

**Yours truly**

**Mulualem Mekonen**

**Manager Production**

</div>

**Progress report**

To: Mr. Gaurav Mishra, Vice-President

From; Pritpal Singh Bhatia, Assistant Vice-President.

Date: July 17, 2021

**Subject:** Status report on the development of a Training Program

The following outlines the status of the development of the training program I have been working on for several months.

## Introduction

The purpose of this research project is to determine the need for a training program in Roshan Corporation. The project, which is being undertaken by Mr. Saurabh Arora and me, is to be completed by Jan. 1, 2022.

## Summary of progress already completed

The progress that has been reported up to this point includes the following:

1. Determination of objectives of the project.

2. Definition of parameters of the project.

3. Development of an appropriate research instrument (questionnaires and interviews)

## Detailed summary of progress

Since the last progress report was prepared, the following have been completed:

1. Obtained approval of the questionnaire and interview record.
2. Pilot tested the questionnaire and interview record.
3. Determined method for selecting the respondents.
4. Selected the respondents.

## Nature of exceptional Progress

The project is six days behind schedule because of a strike at Prime Printing, the company we have contracted with to print the questionnaires. The strike ended Oct. 15, and we expect printed questionnaires this week.

## Summary of work yet to be completed

The following work remains to be done: distribution of questionnaires, completion of interviews, analysis of data, and preparation of the final report.

### Periodic Reports

To: Manish Verma, Executive Vice-President

From: Gopal Nandan, Manager, Credit Department

Date: August 10, 2022

Subject: Expenditure for the Credit Dept. for July, 2021

The expenditures you asked me to calculate for the Credit Dept. for Sept., 2012 follow:

|  | Beginning Balance | Ending Balance | Expense |
|---|---|---|---|
| Salaries ₹ | 50,000 | 20,000 | 30,000 |
| Supplies ₹ | 9,000 | 7,000 | 2,000 |
| Telephone ₹ | 500 | 200 | 300 |
| Printing ₹ | 500 | 300 | 200 |

## The 10 Commandments of Report Writing

1. The Reader is the most important person.
2. Keep the Report as short as possible.
3. Organize for the convenience of the Report user.
4. All references should be correct in all details.
5. The writing should be accurate, concise and unobtrusive.
6. The right diagrams with the right labels should be in the right place for the reader.
7. Summaries give the whole picture in miniature.
8. Reports should be checked for technical errors, typing errors and inconsistency.
9. The report should look as good as it is.
10. The Reader really is the most important person.

## 3.10 UNDERSTANDING THE CASE METHOD OF LEARNING

The case method is a teaching approach that uses decision-forcing cases to put students in the role of people who were faced with difficult decisions at some point in the past. It developed during the course of the twentieth-century from its origins in the casebook method of teaching law pioneered by Harvard legal scholar Christopher C. Langdell. In sharp contrast to many other teaching methods, the case method requires that instructors refrain from providing their own opinions about the decisions in question. Rather, the chief task of instructors who use the case method, is asking students to devise, describe, and defend solutions to the problems presented by each case.

The case method has long been accepted as an important method for training managers and administrators. It is a method of learning based on active participation and cooperative or democratic discussion of a situation faced by a group of managers. The method of discussion also replicates the manner in which most decisions are taken in practice. It also involves replicating discussions with supervisors, peers or subordinates. If properly used, it has the power to improve the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

The case method gives students the ability to quickly make sense of a complex problem, rapidly arrive at a reasonable solution, and communicate that solution to others in a succinct and effective manner. In the course of doing this, the case method also accomplishes a number of other things, each of which is valuable in its own right. By exciting the interest of students, the case method fosters interest in professional matters. By placing such things in a lively context, the case method facilitates the learning of facts, nomenclature, conventions, techniques, and procedures. By providing both a forum for discussion and concrete topics to discuss, the case method encourages professional dialogue. By providing challenging practice in the art of decision-making, the case method refines professional judgment. By asking difficult questions, the case method empowers students to reflect upon the peculiar demands of their profession.

## 3.11 DIFFERENT TYPES OF CASES

Under the more generalized category of case study, exist several subdivisions, each of which is custom selected for use depending upon the goals and/or objectives of the investigator. These types of case study include the following:

**Illustrative Case Studies.** These are primarily descriptive studies. They typically utilize one or two instances of an event to show what a situation is like. Illustrative case studies serve primarily to make the unfamiliar familiar and to give readers a common language about the topic in question.

**Exploratory (or pilot) Case Studies.** These are condensed case studies performed before implementing a large scale investigation. Their basic function is to help identify questions and select types of measurement prior to the main investigation. The primary pitfall of this type of study is that initial findings may seem convincing enough to be released prematurely as conclusions.

**Cumulative Case Studies.** These serve to aggregate information from several sites collected at different times. The idea behind these studies is that the collection of past studies will allow for greater generalization without additional cost or time being expended on new, possibly repetitive, studies.

**Critical Instance Case Studies.** These examine one or more sites for either the purpose of examining a situation of unique interest with little to no interest in generalizability, or to call into question or challenge a highly generalized or universal assertion. This method is useful for answering cause and effect questions.

## 3.12 OVERCOMING THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE CASE METHOD

One has to face a lot of difficulties but they can be overcome:

- **Poor visibility.** A searchable index of all available case materials is a fundamental resource, but surprisingly challenging to achieve when instructors write case studies for their own courses. This index must be featured prominently in faculty on boarding or resource pages; ideally, faculty would receive formal pedagogical training or advising on available curricular resources. According to Wood, the Kennedy School of Government circulates an e-update three times per year to 80+ HKS faculty to highlight new cases and share high-level statistics and FAQs on case teaching and case usage. HKS also reaches out to instructors directly, suggesting a few new case studies specifically tailored to their course(s).

- **Few role models and mentors.** The prevalence of poorly-facilitated case discussions can undermine support for case method teaching, but a skilled, energizing case teacher can transform student learning and inspire fellow faculty. Case study programs need respected opinion leaders on the faculty to act as champions; if such role models also direct or supervise case programs, the programs themselves can develop from this galvanizing leadership.

- **Incentive structure.** Faculty members are typically promoted based primarily on research and scholarship, while teaching is thought to be weighted less. We need career incentives for faculty to stay on the cutting edge of pedagogy. In the interim, we can make the case development effort worthwhile for faculty by dovetailing case topics with faculty research interests, so that there is a greater return on investment for case research.

- **Lack of testing environments.** Instructors need spaces to test new teaching styles outside of the classroom. Workshops where instructors test-teach short cases and see peer approaches would increase success, confidence, and ease for new case teachers.

- **The challenge of case teaching.** Case teaching has been the dominant means of instruction in business schools across the globe for decades. It can seem intimidating for instructors in fields outside of business to adopt case method teaching when they lack a stock of tested cases in their field, robust training, and the pervasive culture of case teaching that is so prevalent in business schools. Public policy faculty often practice case teaching in a more heterogeneous manner than their business school colleagues. Wood muses, "Even the most skilled case teachers at HKS are often reluctant to call themselves case teachers, perhaps because they're uncertain they meet the HBS definition of a true 'case teacher.' But in our context, there's room for variation in how case method teaching is practiced so long as it's done in a manner that advances active learning. It's all about using authentic problems to push students to practice higher-order thinking skills (analysis, decision-making, advocacy) in a group context in class." Susan Madden notes that Emory University addresses this barrier by hosting a global health case study competition, encouraging multidisciplinary teams.

## 3.13 READING A CASE PROPERLY (PREVIEWING, SKIMMING, READING, SCANNING)

Reading should be as efficiently as possible, to cover the material thoroughly. There are 4 basic steps to properly reading a case. 1. Previewing. 2. Skimming. 3. Reading 4. Scanning.

### *Previewing*

Previewing is preparing to get and sort information from both the text and the visuals. Collect the new information while reading. Glance over the introductory material. A proper analysis can be conducted only after a careful reading. Proper analysis generally requires at least 2 readings of each case, to cover the material thoroughly and glean the most significant points.

Case questions give clues about the main issues. They exhibit quantitative information through visuals such as charts, diagrams, graphs, tables, photographs and pictures. Heads/subheads indicate aspects described in depth.

### *Skimming*

Read the title. Read the introduction. Read the first para completely. Read subheadings completely. Read the first sentence of each paragraphs. Dip into the text. Read the final paragraph completely.

### *Reading*

Look for the words that are bold faced, italics, or in a different style or color.

### *Scanning*

· Search specific information.

## 3.14 CASE ANALYSIS APPROACHES

### 3.14.1 Systems Approach

**Systems approach** is based on the generalization that everything is inter-related and interdependent. A system is composed of related and dependent element which when in interaction, forms a unitary whole. A **system** is simply an assemblage or combination of things or parts forming a complex whole.

*Examples:*

A basketball team

Neighbourhood

Cities

Regions

Nation

Human. bodies

The tree itself is a part of a larger system like a forest or the ecosystem. A tree is a system of leaves, branches, trunk, fruits that together interact through photosynthesis and other processes to create outcomes far larger than what any single part could create.

## 3.14.2 Behavioral Approach

The behavioral approach emphasizes the scientific study of observable behavioral responses and their environmental determinants. In other words its the study of the connection between our minds and behavioral.

*Example*:

Case Study: William

Ms. Tooley contacts you, an ABA analyst, to assist her with a <u>child</u> in her classroom named William. William is a healthy 6-year-old boy who has been terrorizing his classmates. The problem has been occurring since the beginning of the school year. William pushes, kicks, hits or bites other <u>children</u> in the class. This has often happened during recess time. Ms. Tooley first addressed the issue by scolding William. That did not appear to reduce the <u>behavior</u>, so she then required him to visit the principal's office whenever an episode of hitting/biting occurred. These visits also had little effect in reducing the negative behaviors.

## 3.14.3 Decisional Approach

*Decision* theory is an interdisciplinary *approach* to arrive at the decisions that are the most advantageous given an uncertain environment.

*Example*:

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### Case: Moral Dilemma of Lakshmana

In the epic Ramayana, Rama is the eldest and the favourite son of the King of Ayodhya, Dasharatha. He is portrayed as the epitome of virtue, Dasharatha is forced by Kaikeyi, one of his wives, to command Rama to relinguish his rights to the throne for fourteen years and go into exile.

Sita is the beloved wife of Rama and the daughter of king Janaka. Sita is portrayed as the epitome, female purity and virtue. She follows her husband into exile. Lakshmana is the younger brother of Rama, who chose to go into exile with him. He spends his time protecting and serving Sita and Rama in the exile.

After Sita, Rama and Lakshmana are sent into exile and Soorpanaka, the sister of Lankan King Ravana has been humiliated—Ravana declares revenge. He not only wants to see Rama and Lakshmana destroyed, he desires Sita to be his consort. He decides to consult with Mareecha, his uncle, who now lives as an ascetic in the woods. Mareecha had previously tried to kill Rama to avenge his mother's death; therefore Ravana thinks him to be knowledgeable on this subject. After some provoking, Mareecha agrees to assume the figure of a golden deer and to try to lure Sita away from Rama and Lakshmana. Once Sita spots the golden deer, her heart is set on it. She begs Rama to bring it to her, and is terribly unhappy until he agrees to try.

Lakshmana warns Rama not to fetch the golden deer that Sita desires. Rama ignores his brother's plea and goes any way, asking Lakshmana to protect Sita till he returns. Mareecha, after being mortally wounded by Rama's arrow, calls for help in a voice disguised as Rama's. Upon hearing this voice calling for help, Sita pleads with her brother-in-law to save him. When Lakshmana explains that this is a trick, Sita tells him that she will throw herself into a fire and die if he does not help Rama.

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'*Lakshmana responds to Sitas plight by stating, "No need for you to harm yourself. Only I shudder at the import of your words, lit obey you now. Do not be anxious. This very second I'll leave. I only hesitated because your order goes against the. command of my brother. I'll go, and may the gods protect you from harm. If don't go, she will kill herself. ..if I go, she will be in danger. I'd rather be dead than facing such a dilemma...I'll go and what is destined will happen. Dharma alone should protect her.'" (From Valmiki's Ramayana translated by P. K. Narayan).*

Lakshmana is in a dilemma. He has sworn to protect his sister-in-law, yet he must help his brother as well. If Lakshmana goes to the aid of his brother, he is forsaking his duty to guard Sita, Yet, Sita swears that she will kill herself if he does not go.

Lakshmana's dharma as a younger brother is to follow what his elder brother orders him to do his elder brother into exile. Lakshmana's dharma as a brother-in-law is to follow the wishes of his sister-in-law (who becomes a mother figure to him after the marriage ceremony) and to protect her from harm.

When Lakshmana decides to leave Sita to try to help his brother, Sita is captured by Ravana.

### 3.14.4 Strategic Approach

A strategy should help you establish a clear sense of direction and purpose towards a specific outcome (or set of outcomes) within a particular context. It guides your decision making in terms of what and how, and when used in an organisation, strategic thinking helps everyone to pull in the same direction towards a common set of goals.

*Example*:

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**Case : A Story from Hitopdesha**

Once upon a time, there lived four friends in a forest. They were very different from each other; yet, they were the best of friends and always came to each other's aid when required. The friends were a mouse, a crow, a deer, and a tortoise. This is a story of how these friends, who ordinarily would have been natural enemies, helped each other against their biggest enemy–man, who was a hunter.

One-day, the mouse, the crow, and the deer were gossiping under a tree. They suddenly heard a scream. It was their friend, the tortoise! He was trapped in a hunter's net.

'Uh oh!' exclaimed the deer fearfully, 'what do we do now?'

'Do not despair,' said the mouse, 'I have a plan,' and the tree friends huddled together and decided on their plan of action.

The deer ran towards the hunter who was close to the tortoise caught in the net. He reached there without the knowledge of the hunter, and lay down in his path as though dead. The crow flew towards the deer and acted as though he was pecking at the deer. The hunter picked up the net and started walking home, when he suddenly saw the wondrous sight of a dead deer. 'Hey, here is a deer, all ready for me.' He thought and put down his net and walked towards the deer. The crow continued circling the deer, and flapping his wings furiously whenever the hunter tried to push

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him away. In the meantime, the mouse hopped to the tortoise and started chewing the threads of the net. As the crow kept the hunter at bay, the mouse freed the tortoise. As soon as the crow saw that the tortoise was free, he let out a loud caw and flew away. The deer suddenly got up and ran! The hunter stood stunned and decided to go back to the tortoise, only to see that his net was torn, and the tortoise had escaped 'If only I hadn't been so greedy,' he thought.

The four friends met again under the tree. and could not stop ʊ̣ ⸱⸱⸱⸱ ⸱ᷓ the trick that they had played on the hunter. Oh! What good friends they were, aıways there for each other!

Source: *http://www.balagokutam.org/kids/stories/afriend.php. Retrieved on 22 February 2013.*

## 3.15 ANALYZING THE CASE

Instead of summarizing the case, a case study analysis should identify key issues and problems, outline and assess alternative courses of action, and draw suitable conclusions. The case study analysis involves following steps:

1. Identify the most significant facts
2. Identify the main issue(s)
3. Specify alternative courses of action
4. Evaluate each course of action
5. Recommend the best course of action

1. **Identify the most significant facts.** Read the case many a time to become familiar with the information of the case. Pay attention to the information in any accompanying exhibits, tables, or figures. Many case scenarios, as in real life, present a great deal of detailed information. Some of these facts are more relevant than others for problem identification. One can assume the facts and figures in the case are true, but statements, judgments, or decisions made by individuals should be questioned. Underline and then list the most important facts and figures that would help you define the central problem or issue. If key facts and numbers are not available, you can make assumptions, but these assumptions should be reasonable given the situation. The "correctness" of your conclusions may depend on the assumptions you make.

2. **Identify the key issue or issues.** Use the facts provided by the case to identify the key issue or issues facing the company you are studying. Many cases present multiple issues or problems. Identify the most important and separate them from more trivial issues. State the major problem or challenge facing the company. You should be able to describe the problem or challenge in one or two sentences. You should be able to explain how this problem affects the strategy or performance of the organization.

You will need to explain why the problem occurred. Does the problem or challenge facing the company comes from a changing environment, new opportunities, a declining market share, or inefficient internal or external business processes? In the case of information systems-related problems, you need to pay special attention to the role of technology as well as the behavior of the organization and its management.

Information system problems in the business world typically present a combination of management, technology, and organizational issues. When identifying the key issue or problem, ask what kind of problem it is: Is it a management problem, a technology problem, an organizational problem, or a combination of these? What management, organizational, and technology factors contributed to the problem?

- To determine if a problem stems from management factors, consider whether managers are exerting appropriate leadership over the organization and monitoring organizational performance. Consider also the nature of management decision-making: Do managers have sufficient information for performing this role, or do they fail to take advantage of the information that is available?

- To determine if a problem stems from technology factors, examine any issues arising from the organization's information technology infrastructure: its hardware, software, networks and telecommunications infrastructure, and the management of data in databases or traditional files. Consider also whether the appropriate management and organizational assets are in place to use this technology effectively.

- To determine the role of organizational factors, examine any issues arising from the organization's structure, culture, business processes, work groups, divisions among interest groups, relationships with other organizations, as well as the impact of changes in the organization's external environment-changes in government regulations, economic conditions, or the actions of competitors, customers, and suppliers.

You will have to decide which of these factors—or combination of factors—is most important in explaining why the problem occurred.

3. **Specify alternative courses of action.** List the courses of action the company can take to solve its problem or meet the challenge it faces. For information system-related problems, do these alternatives require a new information system or the modification of an existing system? Are new technologies, business processes, organizational structures, or management behavior required? What changes to organizational processes would be required by each alternative? What management policy would be required to implement each alternative?

Remember, there is a difference between what an organization "should do" and what that organization actually "can do". Some solutions are too expensive or operationally difficult to implement, and you should avoid solutions that are beyond the organization's resources. Identify the constraints that will limit the solutions available. Is each alternative executable given these constraints?

4. **Evaluate each course of action.** Evaluate each alternative using the facts and issues you identified earlier, given the conditions and information available. Identify the costs and benefits of each alternative. Ask yourself "what would be the likely outcome of this course of action? State the risks as well as the rewards associated with each course of action. Is your recommendation feasible from a technical, operational, and financial standpoint? Be sure to state any assumptions on which you have based your decision.

5 **Recommend the best course of action.** State your choice for the best course of action and provide a detailed explanation of why you made this selection. You may also

want to provide an explanation of why other alternatives were not selected. Your final recommendation should flow logically from the rest of your case analysis and should clearly specify what assumptions were used to shape your conclusion. There is often no single "right" answer, and each option is likely to have risks as well as rewards.

## 3.16 DO'S AND DON'TS FOR CASE PREPARATION

Let us now take a close look at some of the do's and don'ts relating to case study preparation:

### 1. Keep in view the target group:

It is very essential that the person preparing the case keeps in view that target groups that will be using the case study. The level of presentation should be user friendly. The case study will be somewhat simpler and at a basic level when it is meant for students, beginners and junior-level persons.

On the other hand, any case study meant for the use of senior management, experts or chief executives should be pitched at a higher level to bring out the intricacies of business situations. For the latter group, the case study should have complexities that challenge their thinking.

### 2. Be clear about the focus of the study:

The focus of the study should be relevant to the target group. Any case study can cover varied dimensions of business, such as personnel management and conflict resolution, systems approach, marketing decisions, strategy formulation, behavioural aspects and so on. The approach followed and the technical words used, if any, should be relevant to the user group.

### 3. Use real-life events:

Case studies add value to the process of learning because they cover the practical aspects of business. They help understand everyday business-related challenges. Good case studies are those that bring real-life happenings into the classrooms for discussion and learning.

### 4. Substitute names and places wherever required:

Sometimes it may be necessary to substitute real name and places with imaginary ones to protect the interests of the people and organizations concerned and ensure confidentiality. What is important in a case study is the learning that it provides, not the people involved.

Even while avoiding the real names, the case writer should refer to the nature of the organization, functional roles and responsibilities, etc., so that essential details are not left out.

### 5. Include all relevant facts and figures:

For the case study to be meaningful, all relevant facts and figures relevant for analysis and discussion should be necessarily covered. If any details are left out, those using the case study may be forced to make their own assumptions.

# SUMMARY

- Business letters are purposeful internal and external medium of communication designed to communicate business messages or information between the letter producer and the reader who could be a supplier, a potential customer or another business firm.

- There are different types of business letters, namely, Enquiry letters, Claim letters, Adjustment letters, and Employment letters (including the application letter and the resume) which all have different purposes and recipients.

- To communicate effectively, you should go through the following five basic steps before writing your message.

  - Know the purpose of the message

  - Analyse your audience( reader)

  - Choose the ideas to include ·

  - Collect all the facts to back up (support) you idea

  - Outline and organize your message

- .The conventional parts of business letter are: the heading ,the date, Inside address Attention line (optional), Salutation, Body, Complementary close and the·Signature block.

- A report is an orderly and objective communication of factual information that serves some business purpose.

- The functions of Business Report include: a presentation of facts on a subject, a presentation of facts with analyses and interpretations, a presentation of facts with analyses, interpretations, conclusions, and recommendations.

- There are various types of business reports: Voluntary reports, authorized reports, Routine reports, special reports, internal reports, external report.

- Before writing a report, plan your report. For all reports·adequate preparation before writing involves the following six important planning steps: purpose, reader, ideas to include, facts to collect, interpretation and organization.

- The main parts of a report are: Prefatory part, Text part and Supplementary Parts.

- The two usual ways to organize a report body are by the deductive (direct) and inductive (indirect) plans. Most business reports are organized deductively because readers wish to know early the recommendation or conclusions.

- The text of a report can be organized by using one (or more) of the following ways: By criteria or topics, By order of occurrence,·By order of location or space, By procedure or process, By order of importance or by alphabetization, By order. of familiarity, By sources, By problem solution.

- The case method is a teaching_approach that uses decision-forcing cases to pu.. students in the role of people who were faced with difficult decisions at some point in the past.

- Under the more generalized category of case study, exist several subdivisions; each of which is custom selected for use depending upon the goals and/or objectives of the investigator.

- One has to face a lot of difficulties but they can be overcome.

- There are 4 basic steps to properly reading a case. 1. Previewing. 2. Skimming. 3.

Reading 4. Scanning.

- A case can be analyzed with systems, behavioral, decisional or strategic approach.

- Instead of summarizing the case, a case study analysis should identify key issues and problems, outline and assess alternative courses of action, and draw suitable conclusions.

- While preparing a case, you should take care of do's and don'ts.

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## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Fill in the blank space with appropriate terms

   (a) _____ is one of the characteristics of a good business letter represented by the timeliness or urgency of the response.

   (b) The letter format in which none of the parts are indented is _____.

   (c) The part of the business letter which shows to whom the letter is written is

   _____

   (d) The letter which is written in response to a claim letter is _____.

   (e) An application letter should be accompanied by _____.

2. Look at the following business letter format.

```
------------------
--------A--------
------------------
------------------
-------B-------
------------------


-------C--------


-----------------------------------------------------------------
-----------------D-----------------------------------------------
-----------------------------------------------------------------
                                              ------------E-------
                                              ----------F---------
```

Question: Now indicate the part of Business Letter corresponding to each letter.

   (i) A refers to_____

   (ii) B refers to_____

   (iii) C refers to_____

   (iv) D refers to_____

   (v) E refers to_____

   (vi) F refers to_____

3. As Public Relations Officer of Dynamic Tools Manufacturing Co. Ltd., Mumbai you have been deputed to investigate the causes of frequent strikes in the Company's factory at Nasik and to suggest preventive. measures. Write a memo report to the Chairman incorporating 'your findings and recommendations.

4. Assume that as Assistant Personnel Manager you were deputed by your Company to. attend a 3-day Business Communication Workshop organised by the Indian Institute of Management, Sambhapur. You have now been asked to write a memo to the Personnel Manager, reporting on the various activities of the workshop in which you participated and indicating the benefits you derived from it. Write this memo, inventing the necessary details.

5. A large number of junior officers of a company have sought permission to improve their educational qualifications through distance learning programs offered by different universities in India. As the Managing Director of this company write a memo to be sent to all employees, spelling out the company's policy in this regard. Also state that the applications already submitted would be examined in the light of this policy and the decision would be communicated to the individuals soon.

6. It has been noticed that a sizeable number of employees take, leave on certain occasions such as test cricket, national sports events, etc. This hampers the smooth working of the office and tells upon the efficiency of the organization. Assuming yourself to be }fie Personnel Manager, write. a memo to the Sectional Heads of the company asking them to/take suitable action to prevent mass absenteeism.

7. The General Manager of Jalan Home Appliances Ltd., Kolkata is worried about the non-availability of employees at their desks during duty hours. Draft a memo to be signed by him and circulated to all employees, asking them to follow the office hours strictly and not to spend more that the allotted time on tea and lunch.

8. As Office Manager of Lalit Industries Ltd, Nagpur, write a memo to the Purchase Officer to procure the following items of furniture for the additional staff recently appointed by the company: 8 office tables, 6 chairs, 3 steel almirahs and 3 file racks. Your memo should refer to the fact that administrative approval for these items have already been obtained. Assume also that a copy of this memo is to be sent to the Finance Manager.

9. The President of Srinivas Textile Mills Ltd., Ahmedabad deputed its Labour Officer to investigate the causes of fire which broke out on 6 December, 2007, in the company's factory located at Navarangpura and to report to him the extent of damage and to suggest preventive measures. Assuming yourself to be the Labour officer, write this report in the form of a memo.

10. Assuming yourself to be the Manager of Sunrise Software Systems, Hyderabad write a memo for circulation to all employees, announcing a change in the working hours and explaining the reasons for doing so.

11. The Ramani Food Products Ltd., Shimla has decided to computerize its accounting procedure. As Finance Manager of this Company write a memo to all the employees of the accounting and audit sections to familiarize themselves with the operation of computers within three months. Tell them that the facilities for training would be available to them from 5 pm to 7 pm on weekdays on the office premises. Also,

assure them that because of modernization there would be no retrenchment and the surplus staff, if any, would be transferred to other sections or departments.

12. As the Branch Manager of Heavy Electronics Ltd., Ranchi, write a memo to the Purchase Manager informing him that you have bought 3 word-processors, 2, photo copiers and their accessories, costing a total sum of Rs. 6,50,000 and requesting him to arrange for the payment of the }?ills you are enclosing.

    What do you mean by business report? Define it.

13. Mention the objectives of business reports.

14. Describe the classification of business reports.

15. What are the main parts of report? Explain

16. Explain the followings:

    (i) Letter of transmittal

    (ii) Deductive arrangements

    (iii) Inductive arrangements

17. Discuss understanding the case method of learning

18. List different types of cases with an example for each.

19 How will you analyze a case?

## KEY WORDS

case study: a detailed study of a specific subject, such as a person, group, place, event, organization, or phenomenon

case method: a teaching approach that uses decision-forcing cases to put students in the role of people who were faced with difficult decisions at some point in the past

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Write True or False for the following statements:

   (a) A business report is an orderly communication of factual and opinion information that serves some business purpose.

   (b) Authorized reports require more detail and support than voluntary reports.

   (c) All business reports are formal.

   (d) A monthly sales report produced by a sales representative is generally an authorized, internal, routine, and informal report.

   (e) The first planning step for preparing your business report is to write down the main ideas without worrying about their orders.

   (f) Introduction is one of the prefatory parts in Business Report.

   (g) An appendix which is supplementary part, contains materials related to the report but not included in the text such as questionnaires and detailed statistical calculations.

(h) The order in which you first present various evidences and supporting materials, before arriving at the main conclusion is said to be inductive arrangement.

(i) In your reporting, always go from unknown to known so that you would draw attention of the reader.

(j) In your reporting, first present the most important topics.

2. **In 4.5.3., the case of Moral Dilemma of Lakshmana is given. Reread the case and answer the following situations:**

(a) In a situation like this one, which decision seems to be the best one?

(b) According to lakshmana's dharma, which choice would have made the most sense? Is Lakshmana's decision correct according to his dharma?

(c) Does this remind you of a situation you have been in, read about or seen? If this were to be viewed as a contemporary dilimma, what factors or variables would contribute to the outcome?

# CHAPTER 4 EMPLOYMENT COMMUNICATION

## ❖ STRUCTURE ❖

## 4.1 OBJECTIVES

*After reading this unit, the students would be able to:*

- learn about employment communication such as writing CVS, group discussions, types of interview, candidate's preparation and interviewer's preparation,

- learn about what impact technological advancement has on business communication,

- learn communication networks,

- intranet and internet, emails, teleconferencing and videoconferencing.

## 4.2 INTRODUCTION TO EMPLOYMENT COMMUNICATION

Employment communication revolves around written communication and conversation between the employer and the job-seekers.

The employer communicates with the job-seeker or prospective talents about the vacancies, company culture, perks and benefits and security, etc. Employers use creative means to attract and retain the best talents.

- The prospective candidates communicate with the employer about their interest and willingness to work with through different mediums.

- Employment communication is the viable way or ways through which the job-seeker persuades the employer to hire him/her by demonstrating that his/her knowledge, expertise and skills satisfy the job requirements in the best possible manner.

- Looking for a job is not a single event; it is a process. The job seeker has to invest time and energy in the job process.

- It is not as difficult as it appears to land on a good job even in the midst of tough competitions.

- Another fact that needs attention here is that it is not necessarily the 'most +talented' who bags the prize (here, 'job'), rather someone who has excellent job search skills and of course, he who performs adequately.

An aspirant for a job has to pass through various stages to get the job. The stages are as follows.

### 4.2.1 Writing CVs

Is the CV important? Yes! It is the vital first step of your marketing program. The CV is often your first contact with an employer. As an applicant you may have excellent qualifications; however if you cannot communicate your qualifications clearly in a CV, you may never reach the interview stage. Afterall the goal of a CV is to get an interview. The goal of an interview is to get a job offer. So if you can determine what information you'd need to communicate in an interview to get a job offer, why not communicate it on the CV?

$$CV \longrightarrow \text{Interview} \longrightarrow \text{Job offer}$$

Ultimately the mission is to develop CVs that will secure job interviews that lead to job offers.

CV comes from the French verb meaning 'to summarize'; a CV is a summary of pertinent facts about the candidate. Thus a **CV is a structured written summary of a person's education, employment background and job qualifications.** Although many people have misconceptions about CVs, the fact is that a CV is a form of advertising. It is intended to stimulate an employer's interest in you—in meeting you and learning more about you. A successful CV inspires a prospective employer to invite you to interview

with the company. Your purpose in writing your CV is to create interest—not to tell readers everything about you.

The CV must cry out to prospective employers and declare how you can contribute to them, how you can solve their problems and how you can meet their organizational needs. In short, the CV is your first marketing tool because it packages your skills, abilities and experience and sells them to prospective employers.

Today's employers are interested in and pay only for value. You don't get paid for the hours you work. You get paid for bringing your value to the market place and for the value that you add to the company during the hours you spend there.

## Kinds of CV

(A) **The chronological CV or a traditional CV:** A CV lists your educational background and your work experience in reverse chronological order. It highlights job title, company and school names, dates of enrollment and employment career growth. In such types of CVs, the work experience section dominates and is placed in the most prominent slot, immediately after the name and address and the objective. You develop this section by listing your jobs sequentially in reverse order, beginning with the most recent position. If you are just graduating from college, you can vary this chronological approach by putting your educational qualifications before your experience, thereby focusing attention on your academic details.

(B) **The functional CV:** A functional resume emphasizes a list of skills and accomplishments, identifying employers and academic experience in subordinate sections. This type of CV allows your experiences to be described by function instead of by just employment history, job titles, company names and dates of employment. You can describe what functions you have done, what research you have done and how you have handled problems. Through this CV you can show to your employers that what you can do for the organization. However many employment professionals are suspicious of this CV style. But do not discard the functional CV just because it is not as commonly used as the traditional. You have to choose what puts you in the best light.

(C) **The combination CV or skill emphasis CV:** A combination CV includes the best features of the chronological and functional CVs. It includes the same identification section, followed by an objective or desired position. The objective should highlight some of the skills that the applicant describes in the CV.

In order to save the reader's time and to state your information as forcefully as possible write your CV using a simple and direct style. Use short phrases instead of whole sentences. Try to avoid weak statements. The opening section of a combination CV shows at a glance that who are you and how to reach you.

### Chronologial CV

RAUNAQ KUMAR

98 Rani Bagh, New Delhi

Home (011) 233750 Office (011) 245698

#### Objective

### ADMINISTRATIVE/EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

**"Enhancing Efficiency and Productivity via operations & Sales Support"**

**Experience**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| July 1984 to present | : | **OFFICE ASSISTANT** |

JAGSONPAL Pvt. Ltd. ADMINISRATION, BOMBAY

- Provided high level of administrative support for agency.
- Organised all travel arrangements for team members for national and international travel.

July 2018 to 2020 **Group Secretary**

- Provided Secretarial and administrative support for upto twenty agents.
- Prepared investigative reports, maintained important records.

**Education**

2001-2003 : Master of Business Administration

JNU New Delhi

1998-2001 : Bachelor of Business Administration

JNU New Delhi

**Skills**

- Fluent in English, French and German
- Leadership Quality
- Excel   • HTML   • CC++

## Functional CV

### ABHISHEK MEHTA

| | |
|---|---|
| Home : 98 Model Town | Office : 123 Diamond Street |
| Amritsar | Bombay |
| Ph.: 9415432945 | 9255563493 |

**OBJECTIVE**

Top-Producing Senior-Level Operations Manager

Relevant Skills

- Strategic Planning-Rapid Expansion Management
- Team Leadership and Staff development
- Computer skills, including programming
- Presentation and public speaking skills
- Project Management
- Customer Service & Retention Management

**EDUCATION**

2013-2015 : Master of Business Administration, Punjab University, Chandigarh

2013-2013 : Bachelor of Business Administration, Punjab University, Chandigarh

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

**General Sales and Operations Manager in BAYER Pvt Pltd. Bombay (2016 to present)**

- Created a new market segment-wholesale-not previously available.
- Personally direct both sales and operations activities to ensure, "we deliver what we sell and sell what we can deliver."

**Combination CV**

or

**A Skill Emphasis CV**

TOM VALLEY
493, Chursh Street
Bangalore
9475523456

**OBJECTIVE**

Seeking a position in New Business Development/Sales &
Marketing

**SKILLS OR STRENGTHS**

- Organizational skills, deadline management
- Sales, Marketing and Lead generation
- Training and customer/Client education
- Networking and Strategic-contant development
- Computer skills: Power point, Lode Applications, Auto CAD

**SPECIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Improved customer retention from 78% to 87.4% in highly
  volatile and competitive industry
- Increased Profit margin from 3.9% to 7.4%

**EDUCATION**

- Master of Arts, Psychology from J.N. University, New Delhi

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

AT & T, Miramar Florids

*Project Co-ordinator*

- Utilized Lode Applications technology to control and reduce
  project costs on all 12 projects
- Managed and directed construction of college building

**KONARK CONSTRUCTIONS GURGAON OPERATIONS MANAGER**

- Supervised upto 40 employees
- Managed residential properties
- Formulated marketing Program elements for commercial
  properties
- Assisted with Interior decorating

## CVs on the basis of objective

Whether a person has a clear objective or not on this basis CVs can be divided into two types:

(1) **Targeted CV** is used when a person can identify a job title or industry where he wants to work. It is a CV aimed towards a particular atmosphere or activity. After identifying a job title a person can prepare a CV emphasizing his skills, abilities, qualifications that suit the industry where he wants to join.

(2) **Inventory CV** is used when a person is not able to identify a particular job or industry or when he is open to options. It is a CV which is used by those persons who don't want to narrow the scope of the resume to a particular job. Always try to make a CV which is generalized not specific.

## How to Create a Value-based CV

There are no hard and fast rules in writing value based CVs, but we can follow some guidelines:

(1) The first principle in creating a value based CV is to clear your purpose. You should know that what do you want in your life. Because if you don't know what to do, how do you know what to put on the resume?

(2) Good positioning of information means organizing your CV so that the format and the flow is 'reader friendly' and emphasizes your value.

(3) Your CV should have a personality of its own, mirroring yours.

(4) To save the reader's time and to state your information use a simple and direct style. Instead of using long sentences, use short phrases.

(5) Try to avoid weak statements. Always use the active statements which show results.

(6) If education is your strongest selling point, discuss, it thoroughly and highlight it visually.

(7) Try to separate the responsibilities from the achievements in the employment section. List projects you have undertaken. Show your abilities such as writing or speaking and list publications and community service.

(8) Try to put yourself in the shoes of the person who is hiring you. Show your those skills and achievements what they want to see. List skills you have and how these skills are related to the job you are applying for.

(9) Always tell the truth. If you lie, you may get caught and the damage to your career could be significant.

(10) Do not include salary or other information not relevant to your career objective and is best left for face to face discussion.

(11) Do not be afraid to blow your own horn.

(12) Identify and clearly document your talents such as saving money, adding to sales, improving productivity or enhancing efficiency, all relevant work experience.

(13) Omit personal details that might be seen as negative or used to discriminate against you.

(14) Update your CV every six months. This will make you more eligible for available promotions.

### 4.2.2 GROUP DISCUSSION

#### 4.2.2.1 Setting Up Groups

The composition of a group is determined by the purpose for which it is set. Some may be set to *gather information:* the members will then prove to be sources of useful information. Others may be set to *consult:* the members will be experts in chosen areas which require in-depth study. Still others may be constituted for *negotiation or problem-solving:* the members will then have interpersonal skills and also skills of communication. In all these cases decisions are not made by groups; they lie outside, with top decision makers. Groups are also set for *decision-making:* the members are responsible executives on whose decisions depends the success of the company or organization.

#### 4.2.2.2 Discussion and Group Dynamics

The word 'discuss' was derived from the Latin root, *discuss* which was used in several meanings such as 'drive away', 'disperse' and 'declare': they have nothing to do with the current meaning of the word. The current meaning is one of the meanings used in 1450, 'to investigate or examine by argument; to sift; to debate' *(SOED).* Hence the Latin *discussionem,* 'discussion' meant 'examination' by arguments for and against before a decision was made by a legal authority. This is closer to the modern meaning of the term, 'the process of talking about something with other people in order to decide something' *(OALD).*

#### 4.2.2.3 Strategies of Group Dynamics

*Group dynamics* refers to the interactions and other processes of sharing information in a group. It is most productive when the conversation among the members of the group flows without interruption; when it brings out the best of available ideas within the group; and when interpersonal adjustments facilitate both. Conversational skills underlie all of them. Some strategies of group dynamics are:

- *Coordinating and Facilitative Role of the Team Leader: Protecting* the right of everyone to share; *moderating* the talkative, and *drawing out* the silent, with courtesy and encouragement; *maintaining focus* by keeping discussion relevant; making members *listen* effectively; and formulating the outcome by means of an effective *report* are part of the leadership role.

- *Group Communication:* Observing the conversational maxims of *quantity* (talking only that which is necessary, nothing less or more), *quality* (talking sincerely and seriously, without filling gaps of silence with verbal emptiness) and *felicity condition* (rightly motivated interaction) greatly contributes to group dynamics. The language used should be courteous, you-oriented, polite and positive. The decorum of interaction may be maintained by observing cues of entry, and coming out of one's turn in a round of interactions. Such verbal *group dynamics* is indispensable to effective *group* functioning.

- *Unwritten Conventions:* They contribute to effective group dynamics as norms. The tacit understanding among members that any of them may be occasionally late by ten minutes, but not fifteen; that they will not have heavy refreshments during discussion; that none will leave before minutes are written and signed are some norms that most groups regularly observe.

### 4.2.2.4 Team Roles

As an essential part of group dynamics modern managers emphasize *team roles*. Each member of a team can optimize contribution to team output and efficiency by playing appropriate team roles. These are:

#### 4.2.2.4.1 Team-Maintenance Role

One who plays this role effectively helps to enrich interactions of the team by:

- *encouraging* the shy, hesitant and withdrawn members to participate in the interaction by praise, acknowledgement and other forms of verbal and nonverbal support;
- *seeking to reconcile differences* among team members by genial mediation often using pleasantries, humour and other winsome gestures;
- *advocating compromise* in the interest of group consensus; and by
- *overcoming negative voices* with persuasion to accept that which is already agreed upon by appeal to unity of group function as well as its advantages.

#### 4.2.2.4.2 Task-Facilitating Role

A task facilitator diligentaly promotes the work the team has to do by:

- *outlining a clear line of investigation* that the team can profitably follow to accomplish the task;
- *volunteering information* and sources relevant to the discussion;
- *coordinating the discussion* with helpful clarifications in order to reach decisions with clarity and confidence; and by
- *devising other strategies* for creative thinking and effective management.

#### 4.2.2.4.3 Self-Oriented Role

This is often the enemy of teamwork. Those who play this role often dominate group discussions; withdraw when things do not go to their liking; divert interaction to serve individual interests and conveniences; and seek attention and praise to oneself.

A team leader should know how to promote positive roles and check the negative.

### 4.2.3. Interview

The word 'interview' is derived from *intrevue* meaning 'sight between'. It is a meeting between two persons with a specific purpose. It may be defined as any purposeful inter-personal communication between two individuals or parties. In terms of structure and" format interviewing is therefore a more formal form of dyadic communication. However, an interview situation may consist of one interviewee and several interviewers and vice versa. Here we shall discuss dyadic interviews but many of the points will be applicable to all interview situations.

An interview demands direct and dynamic interaction. By its very nature the process involves an assessment of one participant by another. Sometimes one of the participants represents an organisation or a group whereas the other participates in his individual capacity. One of the purposes of an interview is to elicit information which is not otherwise available from the written records or other sources.

### 4.2.3.1 Types of Interview

There are various types of interviews ranging from the one conducted by a journalist for newspaper reporting to that by a psychiatrist with a patient. The purpose defines the type of interviews. The interview broadcast and telecast on the radio and television is generally to seek an expert's opinion on issues of current interest to people or to educate the public on a matter of general importance. Such interviews have the semblance of privacy but we all know that they are meant for public consumption. Similar is the case with a journalistic interview, except that it is made public after a time-lag. Then there are situations where interview takes the form of a series of probing questions with a view to discovering the truth, for example, the kind of interrogation that is done by the police. Another type of interview termed counselling interview is conducted to provide guidance and psychological support to the interviewee. This may be done by an educational psychologist or a trained counsellor, the purpose being to bring the mind of the interviewee back to a state of normalcy or to help him steer through a period of emotional crisis. In large professional organisations and educational institutions provision may exist for the conduct of such interviews.

Here we are interested in the following two types of interview: (i) *employment interview* and (ii) *data collection interview.* These are the types of interview in which you will have to participate in your professional life. Closely related with the first type of interview are promotion interview and annual interview. The term 'employment interview' refers to the interview of a candidate for a job in a particular organisation. Promotion interview and annual interview are conducted in respect of the employees who are already in service. The former is arranged when a proposal for promotion of an employee is under consideration. The latter is a routine annual feature; its purpose is to assess, through personal interaction, the contribution and progress made by an employee during the year under review. But in India, these types interviews are not common. We shall therefore discuss only the employment interview in some detail. It is clear that several fundamental points in this discussion are relevant for not only promotion and annual interviews but also for data collection interview. Obviously the discussion of any employment interview is from the viewpoint of the interviewee, whereas that of data collection interview is from the viewpoint of the interviewer. Nonetheless, in both cases the other participants 'would find sufficient valuable information.

### 4.2.3.1.1 Employment Interview

The main purpose of the prospective employer is to judge the suitability of the applicant to the job and that of the applicant, to find out whether the needs and requirements of the job would suit him and also whether the environment in the organisation would be conducive to his professional growth. Clearly, this form of dyadic communication provides an opportunity to both the participants for intense interaction and close observation of each other's personality traits, as reflected in their verbal behaviour and body language. As we are aware, the employment interview takes place when on the face of it there is a case for the acceptance of the applicant's services. The employer knows fully well the basic details about the career of the applicant - his educational background, his other interests, his experience, social status, etc. In the case of experienced employees he also knows the assessment of the applicant's earlier employer(s). What then is the interview for?

A prospective employer's main aim is to judge your sense of values, and your attitude towards work. He wants to get a feel of your respect for fair play and sense of justice

and honesty in the discharge of duties. In fact, while conducting the interview, he looks for signs of these traits in your personality. Every employer, no wonder, wants people around who possess positive personal qualities and are dependable. The qualifications and the kind of educational background the interviewee has do not give an adequate idea of these important requirements.

Planning the interview, whatever be its type, demands, adequate and careful prior preparation. How should one plan to appear in an interview of this sort? Surely each applicant wants to be successful, to be offered the job, even if he may ultimately decide not to accept it. Failure in an interview certainly injures the ego of a person temporarily. You should therefore pay close attention to the if you wish to achieve success.

It has been rightly said that the apparel oft proclaims the man; certainly so in the case of an interview. Physical appearance creates the first impression and tells something about the personality of the individual. Cleanliness and neatness are the first requirements for a smart turn out. While going for an interview spend a few minutes and take a critical look at your appearance: the clothes that you wear, the hairstyle and the footwear. Harmony and sobriety should mark your attire. You should never put on something in which you feel uncomfortable because it may lead to inconvenience and oddities in your behaviour while you are being assessed for the job. Loud colours, and other such ornamentations are likely to distract the attention of the interviewer from your countenance, which plays a definite role in an interaction of this kind. Your aim should be to use your physical appearance to create the first right impression on the interviewer.

A pleasing physical appearance should be accompanied by proper deportment and the right poise. How you carry yourself, how you walk and sit, how you make an exit - all these are important. Good deportment and good manners together generate a proper atmosphere and puts you at ease. Be observant and try to imbibe these qualities from the people who possess a high degree of social charm and poise. Nothing should appear to be artificial, imitative and odd in your demeanour. You should appear to be your natural self. These qualities will help you in making a mark not only at the employment interview but also throughout your career.

Take care that you do not indulge in certain mannerisms in your speech or behaviour. Expressions like 'err', 'you know', 'Oh my God', 'Well', etc., should be avoided. Similarly, do not use slang and, highly colloquial language or uncommon abbreviations. The tone should be friendly but not intimate. Make sure that you are not in the habit of making odd gestures while talking. Playing with the hair or with the buttons of your bushshirt, or the keys in your hand creates a bad impression. Similarly, fixing your gaze on the interviewer or a painting or other objects in the room is also considered as bad manners.

Listening is an art that helps as much at the interview as in social situations. If you maintain a stony silence when the interviewer is speaking, he may feel uneasy. It is therefore necessary to give signals that you are listening to him. Your response may take the form of a nod or a smile or even sometimes whispering approvals, such as 'mm', 'yes', etc. You should not interrupt the interviewer. Wait till he has finished, howsoever impatient you may be to react to what he is saying. Detailed guidelines for improving the power of listening are given in Chapter 6.

Cultivate your speech. The best way to do so is to tape-record it and listen to it critically. Analyse your speech to find out whether you speak clearly, or you eat your syllables and slur your words. Does your speech sound dull and monotonous or lively

and animated? Is the pitch of your voice too high or too low? Do you stress the right syllable and use the appropriate intonation? Satisfy yourself that your speech is clear, has proper rhythm and sounds pleasant. Practicing daily can certainly enhance the quality of your speech. Shakespeare's remark, 'Mend your speech a little, lest it should mar your fortune' holds good even today. Proper speech will help you not merely in getting the job but also in moving up on the ladder of your career.

More important than all these is what you say. Are you clear in your thoughts? Can you express them in simple language? Do you understand your own point of view on current issues in unmistakable terms? Do you have a philosophy of your own (a set of opinions) which you can put before others with conviction supported by valid arguments? Have you acquired the habit of coolly arguing your case? Do you feel crestfallen when your point of view is not accepted? These are some of the questions whose answers are obvious and you must have been made aware of them in the course of your education. What is required is that at the time of interview you refresh your memory.

Always avoid giving uncomplimentary references to your former employers or other associates and making uncharitable remarks about them.

## Types of Interview Questions

There is a great diversity in the types of questions that may be asked at an interview. You should try to anticipate the type of questions likely to be asked. Partly, this will be determined by the situation and the specific purpose that the interviewer has in mind. In general, the questions will be based on what you have stated in your biodata and your reaction to the organisation's visualisation of your role in it. We may classify the questions into the following categories: direct questions, open-ended questions, closed questions, bipolar questions and loaded questions.

Direct questions, generally used at the initial stage, are explicit, demanding specific information: What's your How old are you? In which company did you work last? etc.

Open-ended questions are not so straight, only the topic on which information is required is specified and the interviewee is asked to elaborate: What is your educational background? How did you find your experience of working on this plant in ABC company? etc.

Closed questions demand responses from a limited and narrow area. Often these questions provide alternatives from which the response is selected. An extreme form of the closed question is the one which demands only a 'Yes' or 'No' response. This is also called a bipolar question. A few examples are as follows: If selected, would you be able to join next month? Would you like to be posted in Mumbai or Kolkata? We are prepared to offer this job to you on a contract of three years; is it acceptable to you?

Loaded questions generally demand a response which the interviewer expects. They are suggestive in nature and encourage the interviewee to agree with the interviewer. Sometimes these may be used as a trap to discover whether the interviewee is clear in his mind about what he is in for. Ideally, as a general rule, loaded questions should not be used by the interviewer. However, as an interviewee, you should be prepared to face any type of questions.

The core of the body of the interview is the set of various types of questions discussed above. In a structured interview, apart from these, there are preliminary questions

which set the tone for the interview and establish rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee. Similarly, at the end there are a few questions to signal the end of the interview. The interviewer aims at helping the interviewee to complete the expression of his thoughts and to clarify his stand before the interview ends.

It is difficult to visualise the questions that may be asked at an interview. However, we give below a sample of questions that could be asked at an employment interview.

A. Educational Background

   (i) Give a brief resume of your educational career.

   (ii) Why you decide to offer Economics in your MA?

   (iii) Have you studied some books in this field other than those prescribed?

   (iv) Could you name a few such books and describe their themes?

   (v) Apart from Economics which field of knowledge interests you?

   (vi) Could you name some of the books you have read in this area of your interest?

B. Co-curricular Activities

   (i) You have produced a number of plays during your educational career. Tell us how you got interested in drama.

   (ii) Do you think your interest in drama affected your studies?

   (iii) What work did you do as a member of the editorial board of your college newsletter?

   (iv) Do you think this kind of work has added something to your academic experience?

   (v) What difficulties, in your opinion, does an editor face in producing a newsletter of this type?

C. Extra-curricular Activities

   (i) How is it that, although you played badminton throughout your college career, you never participated in any worthwhile tournament?

   (ii) Apart from physical exercise, doe,s this game impart any other qualities to the player?

   (iii) What is the size of the badminton court?

   (iv) Do you play any other games?

D. Experience

   (i) Describe the specific work that you were doing in the production department.

   (ii) What new things have you learnt?

   (iii) What are the ways of maximising production?

   (iv) Do you introduce any new technique or procedure to increase production?

   (v) In what way will your experience help our organisation?

E. General Knowledge

   (i) What is your opinion about the new industrial policy announced by the Government of India?

(ii) What are the main causes of inflation in India?

(iii) Do you think deficit financing should be stopped? Why?

(iv) Give your comments on the Seventh Five-Year Plan.

(v) Do you think the Government of India's 20-point programme will usher in a new era? How?

(vi) What further steps should be taken to attract investment from Indians living abroad?

(vii) How should the pace of technology transfer be accelerated?

(viii) Comment on the current economic climate in the country.

F. Miscellaneous

(i) What do you understand by team-spirit?

(ii) Do you think it can be cultivated? If yes, how?

(iii) What are the qualities of an efficient manager?

(iv) Do you think you possess these qualities?

(v) How can the conflicts between the management and labour be resolved?

## *Employer's Expectations*

We may classify the information which an employer seeks while considering a person for a job, into the following sub-headings:

(i) State of health: Every organisation desires its employees to be in a healthy state. Apart from judging at the interview, the organisation requires a new entrant to undergo a medical examination, the standards of which differ from profession to profession.

(ii) Attainments: A probe is made through searching questions to verify what is written by the candidate in the biodata and to assess the nature and quality of his achievements.

(iii) Intelligence: A close observation is made of the reflexes and responses of the interviewee to discover the extent of his grasp and confidence.

(iv) Aptitude: Certain questions are directed merely to find out the candidate's aptitude for the job he has applied for.

(v) Interests: An attempt is made to understand the other dimensions of the personality of the candidate by encouraging him to speak about his intellectual or social pursuits.

(vi) Disposition: A vital piece of information that all employers would like to have is whether the candidate has the ability to work with other.

(vii) Circumstances: A peep into the interviewee's previous environment and family circumstances may give some clue to the candidate's capacity to work.

Some employers use an assessment record sheet to judge the suitability of interviewees. An example is given as follows.

**ASSESSMENT RECORD SHEET**

| Assessment→<br><br>Items<br><br>↓ | A<br>(Excellent) | B<br>(Good) | C<br>(Average) | D<br>(Below Average) | E<br>(Poor) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I. Physical Make-Up<br>and Manners:<br>Appearance<br>Poise<br>Speech | | | | | |
| II. Qualifications:<br>Education<br>Training<br>Experience | | | | | |
| III. Personality:<br>Self-reliance<br>Initiative<br>Team-spirit<br>Leadership | | | | | |
| IV. Intellectual<br>Ability:<br>Intelligence<br>Memory<br>Potential for<br>Development | | | | | |
| V. Motivation: Objective<br>Interests I<br>Consistency<br>Aptitude | | | | | |

### 4.3.3.1.2 Data Collection Interview

Very often you would be called upon to collect data for a specific purpose and present it in the form of a letter, memo, report, etc. This information may either be available with the officers in your own organisation or other organisations. Many of the points we have \already discussed are also relevant for conducting this type of interview. However, since the nature of this interview differs both in respect of interviewer-interviewee relationship and in the purpose for which it is conducted, certain additional points need to be borne in mind in the conduct of data collection interview. One, be clear in your own mind about the type and tlie amount of information you are seeking. Two, frame the questions which will elicit the required information. Three, be ready with a strategy of bringing

the interviewee back to the point, if he goes off the track. Four, be as unobtrusive as possible in note-taking. Accuracy in recording data is essential and so you may decide to use certain abbreviations to be translated later. Five, do not enter into a discussion or argument with the interviewee. Six, always assume a subordinate position, leaving the dominant role to the interviewee. Seven, occasionally you may seek clarification, but too many interruptions can prove annoying. Eight, be an attentive listener, giving clues to your interest in whatever is being conveyed. Nine, if your questions embarrass the interviewee and he hesitates to answer them, do not insist on a response.

### Planning for Data Collection Interview

Professionals are busy persons and, you must therefore seek an appointment for the interview. Also indicate the amount of time it is likely to take. Go prepared with a notebook to record the points. Carefully visualise how you are going to open the dialogue and how you propose to end the interview. You may, in fact, write a few questions that you would use to begin the interview and also the remarks that you would make to conclude the interview.

Whatever be the type of interview, be courteous and tactful. Take maximum advantage of the immediate feedback that is available to you. Maintain a pleasant atmosphere throughout, controlling the environment by selecting appropriate verbal and non-verbal symbols. As far as possible introduce diversity in interaction. For example, if a number of questions have elicited 'no' response, manipulate your enquiry in such a way that it elicits an affirmative answer. A climate of mutual trust can result in a successful interview.

You may sometimes decide to write all the main questions that you wish to ask for eliciting the relevant information. To record, the answers you should carry a handy notebook with you. You can also use the answer sheet itself for writing the answers. But then you should ensure that enough space is available on the sheet for responses both to the main and to the supplementary questions.

A specimen copy of the interview sheet used to collect data for this book is given below:

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**UGC Book Writing-Project on Professional Communication.**

[Authors: Prof Krishna Mohan & Dr (Mrs) Meera Banerji]

INTERVIEW SHEET

(i)   Name:

(ii)  Designation:

(iii) Organisation:

(iv)  Total experience:

(v)   Main function:

(vi)  (a)  How important are written and oral communications to your particular job?

(b)  Which one do you think is more important from the point of view of the main function that you perform?

(c)  Name some of the written communications that you send or receive.

(i) You write (ii) You receive

---

(d) Specify the modes of oral communication (telephone, interview, face-to-face discussion etc.),

(vii) (a) Do communication misunderstandings sometimes interfere with the efficiency of your Department?

(b) If yes, kindly explain briefly how this happens.

(c) How can barriers to communication be removed?

(viii) What kind of problems, if any, do you face while communicating

(a) with superiors?

(b) with peers?

(c) with subordinates?

(ix) (a) Do you feel that there is a need for training the employees of your organisation in English communication skills?

(b) If yes, what kind of training should they be imparted?

(c) Can you give us some idea about the kind of materials to be used and techniques to be employed for their training?

(x) What kind of reference material (mechanics of writing, words often confused, words often misspelt, pronunciation of words generally used in your profession, etc.) do you think can prove useful to a professional in doing his job?

(xi) Any other remarks that you would like to make in this context.

## 4.2.4 Candidates Preparation

The following are ways to make you an active participant in your employment interviews and be successful in getting the job you want to hold: ·

**(i) Plan the initial communication with your interviewer carefully:** The initial contact may take a form of a letter, resume, or a phone conversation. However, before contacting the potential interviewer by way of these methods, find out as much as you can about the organization to which you are applying. Try to talk with someone who has been working with the organization, ask for literature such as annual reports that explain the firm (organization) and its policies.

**(ii) Be prepared for any type of question and interviewer:** As an interviewee, you cannot always predict what type of interviewer you will face. Normally, you can expect one or combination of some types of interviewers like the unstructured interviewer and the structured interviewer.

**The unstructured interviewer:** Expects you to take the initiative during the interview by looking for detailed responses. He/she might ask you an open ended question like "Tell me about yourself". ·

**The structured interviewer:** Usually expects you to do the opposite of the above situation. He/she plans everything in advance and gives you little chance to be creative in your responses. This type of interviewer usually asks direct and closed ended questions and wants specific to the point answers.

**(iii) Exercise your responsibility during the interview:** Appearance is only a part of the first impression the interviewer forms of you. It is your responsibility to add to those impressions with your smile, a firm but gentle handshake and a good and direct eye contact.

**(iv) Be prepared with the questions you want to ask the interviewer:** Most interviewers will invite you to ask questions. Therefore you should be able to ask a few questions like: 'Would the company support me if I pursue my education?', 'What is the typical career path of an individual entering your organization at this level?', 'Would this position require travels?'

**(v) Be prepared to follow up the interview if necessary:** Most interviews end with a plan for the future action on the part of one or both of the participants. When the decision will be reached and how it will be communicated is usually specified by the interviewer.

### 4.2.5 Interviewer's Preparation

The basic organization of interviews is the same for all types. All types will have *an opening phase*, *the question-response phase* (body of interview) and *the closing phase*. At these various phases, the interviewer should follow the guidelines here under to make the interview as much effective as possible.

*Plan the Opening Phase*

Give the interviewee a brief orientation to the interview. Conclude the opening phase by motivating the applicant to give an honest and carefully thought out answers.

*Plan the Question-Response Phase (Body of Interview)*

Asking whatever question comes to mind is an extremely ineffective way to learn and remember information about the applicant. Areas that should be covered include the following:

- Past work experience
- Leadership ability
- Personality characteristics and the like.

Based on these, specific questions for each area can be framed as follows:

- At what age did you commence work?
- How many jobs have you held since you left school?

*Plan the Closing Phase*

The closing of an employment interview is as equally important as the opening. This is to make sure that the interviewee leaves with a positive feeling and an accurate understanding of what will happen next. Give the interviewee a chance to ask questions and thank the interviewer for his/her time and cooperation.

**The Interviewer will Have more Responsibility for the Manner in which the Interview is Conducted:**

(i) **Determine the time and place:** Prior to the interview, communicate with the interviewee regarding the time and place of interview.

(ii) **Determine the environment:** The nature of interview usually determines the kind of environment that the interviewer should establish. Example: select an area that is free from phone calls and other interruptions

(iii) **Organize the interview carefully:** An interviewer who conducts a poorly planned interview learns very little information about the candidate during the interview. Consequently, his/her decision will be made based on "gut" reactions which often results in hiring ineffective people. Therefore, interviewer must plan and organize each phase of the interview carefully.

(iv) **Ask only lawful questions:** There are certain questions that interviewers cannot ask of applicants during a pre-employment interview. This is based on the belief that all persons regardless of their race, sex, national origin, religion, age and so on should be able to equally compete for a job and advance in the job market based on their educational qualifications, experience, and specific skills.

To assure this, the interview questions should be framed like in the following manner:

- All questions should be job related

- The interviewer must be able to prove that the questions asked are related to the specific job.

- The same basic questions must be asked of all applicants for the same job position.

(v) **Listen carefully to the interviewee:** Sometimes, an employment interviewer becomes so preoccupied with the tasks of the interview to the extent that he/she forgets to listen. But listening to the interviewee is very essential as we use the information we get through listening and this information is the basis upon which the selection decisions will be made.

(vi) **Clarify and verify the interviewee's responses:** even though interviewers listen carefully, they can make mistakes if they assume that they understand exactly what the interviewee means. Since the interviewer and interviewee have different frames of reference or personal differences, it is easy for each to misinterpret the other's meanings. So, when a statement is unclear, the interviewer should clarify with the interviewee's response by asking further questions. The interviewer should ask questions if he/she does not understand what the interviewee is talking about.

## 4.3 IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

One of the greatest concerns of an organisation is how to deal with the accumulation of information and at the same time keep its communication patterns strong and healthy enough to bear the burden of handling enormous data. Here technology has come in a big way to help organisations to keep their communication pattern vibrant and meaningful to meet the increasing demands. Now technological aids are available to store, process and disseminate information, so much so that professionals have started talking in terms of

a paperless office, discarding the traditional ways of maintaining hundreds of paper files for the purpose of communication. The emphasis is on speed, efficiency and facility to recall the required information at a short notice.

If you go to a well-equipped office, you may find a number of technological aids such as Fax machine, photocopier, teleprinter, etc., buzzing with activity. Until recently the emphasis was on using electronic equipment for recording and preserving oral communication. Now there is an equal stress on using technology for what traditionally used to be recorded and transmitted on paper. Now we shall turn our attention to a few commonly used devices which have quickened the pace of communication and made it more convenient and efficient, especially if they are based on a computer system. To be specific, we shall deal with the following: Word Processor, Desk Top Publisher, Power Point Presentation, Electronic Mail, and the Voice Mail.

### 4.3.1 Word Processor

In a modern office computers have slowly replaced the secretarial staff and as an executive or a professional, you may have to prepare documents like reports, financial estimates, proposals, etc., yourself. You would therefore have to develop new skills for reading print materials and writing with the help of word processors. Computers are not just typewriters with enhanced capabilities but they are much more powerful tools. It is the software which allows one to write the text and then customise and manipulate it according to the requirements, with the help of its in-built It enables one not only to create a document but also to store it electronically on a disk, display it on the screen, modify it by entering commands and characters from the keyboard and print it on a printer. One of the greatest advantages of word processing is that it allows you to revise and refine your text as much as you wish. You can also change the appearance of your document, its size, shape, colour and position on the page and adjust the space between individual letters, words, lines and paragraphs.

During the span of the last 400 years or so text processing has progressed from Gutenberg's press to Desktop Publishing with the help of electronic means of handling text. It was in the 1970s that word processing developed as specialised programs on mainframe computers as online computing with the use of personal terminal devices with keyboards and display screens. It is believed that such programs evolved from text-based editors, commonly used by programmers and computer professionals. Later, the advent of microprocessors and the placing of intelligent devices on the desks of professionals at a reasonable price, helped to make machines devoted entirely to word processing. With the passage of time cheaper and smaller printers followed to facilitate further the task of creating written texts.

Today offices are almost fully computerised. Most of the personal computers now come with a varied package of programs already installed in them. These are sometimes called 'bundled software' or 'software suites'. Two of the most popular packages are Microsoft Office and Microsoft Works. Microsoft Office is a package of mini-programs put together. It has an extremely powerful tool called Word Processor to help produce all kinds of written documents like letters, memos, reports and newsletters. It has Excel, a spreadsheet program that organises and calculates numerical data. It can also make a wide variety of charts and graphs for presenting a mass of data in a clear, alternative and comprehensive way. There is an information management program called Outlook to help you record contact details in the address book. Outlook also helps in sending and

receiving e-mails through internet company network. Microsoft Office also has Power Point, most commonly used in business presentations, company meetings and conferences. Microsoft Works also has a Word Processor to help you create a vast range of word-based documents. It is not as sophisticated as Microsoft Word. Works also has an advanced feature called Communications to communicate with other computers through network. Then it has Spreadsheet, a program which allows the monitoring and analysis of numerical data and Database for recording details and performing calculations. Both Office and Works have Task Wizards or pre-set documents which will help you with step-by-step guidance to customise documents according to your needs. Newer software packages with more advanced capabilities are being developed to perform more sophisticated and a variety of tasks. It is for these reasons that you have to develop proficiency in using styles and templates already present in many computer softwares. A style is any kind of formatting used in a document again and again and a template is a collection of styles that is applied to the same kind of document. These would enable you to produce written documents with ease and efficiency. You would also be able to create presentations for company meetings, seminars and projects. Further, these would help you structure information more efficiently and put your ideas across more effectively.

One of the greatest advantages of word processing is that you can introduce changes in the document without retyping the document all over again. All forms of corrections like adding or deleting words, rewriting sentences, making a different arrangement of paragraphs, etc., can be easily made. You can move parts of your text matter from one part of the document to another. Though there are a variety of word processing packages with different capabilities, most 'of them perform the following functions of a text editor in the production of a document:

- Adjust the structure of your document to make them easy to read.
- Move the text, insert the text from different files.
- Delete text or characters, words, lines or pages.
- Replace a word or a phrase anywhere in the text without disturbing the rest of the matter.
- Hyphenate long words occurring at the end of the line.
- Make duplicates of a section of a text or a whole document.
- Define page sizes and margins.
- Indent paragraphs to highlight them.
- Align paragraphs.
- Move automatically to the next line after you have finished typing a line.
- Add numbers and bullet points to highlight headings and sub-headings.
- Adjust spacing between words and sentences.
- Check spelling and grammatical mistakes.
- Mail merge (merging of routine form letter and the addresses)
- Sort information in alphabetical order.
- Store the text on magnetic tapes or on magnetic disks and get various combinations output of the texts so stored.

- Retrieve the text as and when required.
- Get some special formatting effects such as setting of margins, automatic indentation, etc.
- Display on the screen whatever is being typed, even the line breakups, paragraph setting, page breakups, margins, etc.

Some of the more advanced word processing packages now' have additional features that help you prepare your documents in a more sophisticated way. Some of these features are:

- Create, delete, move and search for files or folders.
- Change fonts according to your specifications.
- Insert graphs and illustrations in your text.
- Keep track of page numbers and put them correctly on every page.
- Enable you to customise headers and footers on the top and bottom of every page.
- Help you to have a proper layout of the document.
- Allow the merging of text from one file into another file so that you can generate many files with the same format but different matter.
- Make a table of contents and indices.
- Add and place footnotes and cross-references.
- Display on the screen the document exactly as it would look when printed.

Thus we see that word processing allows you to not only create a wide range of word-based documents but also have them in the desired format and style. There would be consistency in the styles you have chosen, thereby making your documents more presentable, readable and professional. Besides you can use Power Point to create presentations for your projects, company meetings and conferences. This program would help you to structure information efficiently in the slides and incorporate illustrations and graphics to optimise the impact of your presentation.

### 4.3.2 Desk Top Publisher (DTP)

DTP is another device, which can free you from tedious tasks like cutting, pasting, designing, and redesigning the presentation of material when you are assigned a printing job. It had made publishing easier and it is being increasingly used for bringing out reports, manuals, brochures, bulletins, etc. A unique feature of the device is its ability to combine the texts and graphics and to produce finished typeset quality printed material. Its production process is integrated and it enables the user to move directly from the author's design to camera-ready artwork. Thus when you use a DTP, you will have a greater control over the information structure. Briefly stated, the main functions of a DTP are as follows:

- Creating text and visuals on the PC with word processing and graphic software.
- Integrating text and visuals into a page using layout software.
- Printing with a laser printer, documents with typeset quality appearance.

- Designing, editing and producing high quality communication documents at a fraction of the time and expense required by conventional production techniques.

Usually a DTP has a laser printer which ensures quick and effective printouts. It is run by a computer system and uses software such as word processor, business graphics, picture designer, font designer, etc.

### 4.3.3 PowerPoint Presentation

As mentioned earlier, most personal come with different software packages already installed in them. One of the most widely used packages is Power Point.

PowerPoint presentation enables you to create documents called presentations, commonly used for communicating ideas, messages and other information to a group. It is used in business, industry and academic world for making presentations for different such as marketing projects, selling products to prospective buyer firms, interim and final reporting of research work undertaken for academic purposes. PawerPoint gives you the means to structure information efficiently, along with charts and graph, in your text. It also offers animation effects to maximise the impact of your presentation. PowerPoint can also help you to make notes for you own use in the presentation in addition to the handouts you may give to the audience. Besides, it provides ready-to-use sample presentations for consultations.

On the basis of Microsoft PowerPoint, you can use a feature called Autocontent Wizard, a tool within a program that would guide you through the process of customising a pre-designed document and help you with the arrangement of the content of presentation with an automated utility. Presentation graphics software provides formats with complementary colours for backgrounds and other items along with a variety of layouts for each individual slide. You could also make use of the Presentations property page of the New Presentation Dialog box. It is a suite of dialog boxes that enables you to choose or specify essential features of a basic presentation. As these presentations are already formatted, you have to decide on the type of presentation you want, and what information you wish to display on each slide. You can also take the help of the Office Assistant, if necessary.

Though you have readymade slides, you can create your own presentations using blank slides. Prepare an outline of the subject matter you wish to present. Usually, the new matter that would form your text would have the title of the presentation, your name as presenter, the sub-titles of the main text or subject matter. Certain titles like Introduction and Conclusion form an essential part of all presentations and sepatate slides are used for them. Below each title of the slide, there is a list of bulleted items or sub items. This is formatted. Let us take the example of the presentation slides of 'Elements of an Effective Oral Presentation.'

The slides that would follow may look like the following:

Slide: 1

**Title:** Elements of an Effective Oral Presentation

**Presenter:** Tarun Kumar Bose

Slide: 2

**Introduction**
- Oral Presentation
- Its Importance
- Its Effectiveness

Slide: 3

**Organisation of Matter**
- Introduction
- Ordering of Ideas (Body)
- Conclusion

Slide: 4

**Delivery (Use of Voice)**
- Proper Volume
- Rate
- Animation
- Vibrancy

Slide: 5

**Use of Body Language**
- Personal Appearance
- Posture
- Gestures
- Facial Expression
- Eye Contact
- Space Distancing

Slide: 6

**Use of Audio-Visual Aids**
- Blackboard
- Overhead Projector
- Power Point
- Tape Recorder

Slide: 7

**Quality of Interaction**
- Cool and Mature
- Brief, to the Point

Slide: 8

**Conclusion**

A presentation of a research paper on Women's Literacy Rate may have the following slides:

Slide: 1

Title: Female Literacy Rate in India

Presenter: Nirmala Arun

Slide: 2

**Introduction**

Literacy Rates

| Census Years | Male (%) | Female (%) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1951 | 26.16 | 08.86 |
| 1961 | 40.40 | 15.35 |
| 1971 | 45.96 | 21.97 |
| 1981 | 56.38 | 29.76 |
| 1991 | 64.13 | 39.29 |
| 2001 | 75.85 | 54.16 |

Slide: 3

**Factors Responsible**
- Gender-based Inequality
- Social Discrimination
- Role Definition

Slide: 4

**Factors Responsible (Continued.)**
- Occupation of Girl-Child in Domestic Chores
- Low Enrolment of Girls in Schools
- High Dropout Rate of Girls

Slide: 5

**Benefits of Increased Female Literacy**
- Women's Empowerment
- Better Status for Women
- More Economic Independence
- Women Entrepreneur

Slide: 6

**Other Benefits**
- Better Education and Health
- Gender Equality
- Progress and Development of Women

Slide: 7

**Conclusion**

A campaign against smoking and use of tobacco organised in colleges and universities could have a presentation with the following slides:

Slide: 1

Title: How Tobacco Hits You

Presenter: Nitin Kumar

Slide: 2

**Brain**
- Strokes
- Altered Chemistry

**Mouth and Throat**
- Cancer of Lips, Mouth, Throat and Larynx

**Heart**
- Weakness of Arteries
- Increased Risk of Heart Attack

Slide: 3

**Chest**
- Cancer of Oesophagus

**Lungs**
- Cancer
- Emphysema
- Asthma
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

**Liver**
- Cancer

Slide: 4

**Abdomen**
- Stomach Ulcers
- Cancer of Stomach, Pancreas and Colon
- Aortic Swelling

**Kidney and Bladder**
- Cancer

Slide: 5

**Male Reproduction**
- Sperm Deformities
- Impotence

**Female Reproduction**
- Cancer of Cervix
- Infertility

Slide: 6

| Legs and Feet |
| :--- |
| • Gangrene Caused by Blood Clots |

Slide: 7

| Conclusion |
| :--- |

Some of the biggest advantages of a Power Point presentation are that you can view the slides after you have made them, change the contents of the slides, edit the matter, introduce different sizes of fonts, use different backgrounds for different slides or make any other changes you like, without retyping or making new slides all over again. You can take off a few slides and add new ones in their place. The matter given in the slides should also be in the form of Note Cards, so that while speaking there would be no need for you to look at the screen for dealing with the points under discussion. Take care that the numbering of the Note Cards corresponds to the numbering of the slides.

### 4.3.4 Electronic Mail

Before the advent of the internet, professionals felt a strong need to share information among IBM users spread far apart and a unique way developed for multiple users of time-sharing mainframe computer for the purpose of communication. Now the Internet, which is made up of a network of millions of computers throughout the world, allows people to access a wide range of information and services. Apart from helping users find information on almost all subjects, the Internet allows them to send messages in the form of electronic mail (e-mail). The e-mail is one of the most useful features of the Internet. e-mail functions at a staggering speed. Messages are typed into the computer and then sent to other e-mail users thousands of miles away, all at the cost of a local phone call. Besides being cheap, it is very convenient in comparison to transmission by post. e-mail has now emerged as the most acceptable form of written communication, replacing typed memos and letters in business and industry. In some cases, e-mails replace telephonic conversations, saving time of the users.

#### 4.3.4.1 Advantages

There are many advantages of sending messages through e-mail. It is an efficient and quick means of communication. It is easy to understand and it overcomes the problems of inconvenience in face-to-face meetings and expenses of travelling from one place to another. Its speed, almost instantaneous, is a boon in this fast modern age.

• Graphics and text can be easily sent with mail as an attachment.

Send 'New Version of HTML Breeze' Form Letter To Robert Carr    _ □ ☒

Send    Stop    Add Files    Delete Files    Setup

**Recipients**

| Name | Status |
|------|--------|
| ✓ Orson Card | Mail Sent |
| Robert Carr | |
| Andy Hertzfeld | |
| Bobbi Low | |
| John Page | |
| Pamela Roper | |
| John Warnock | |

To: robertcarr@address.com

Cc:

Bcc:

Subject: New Version of HTML Breeze

Dear Mr. Carr,

We are pleased to announce the release of HTML
Breeze 3.0, the world's breeziest HTML editor.
You can download a trial version of the new
release from our web site.

As a valued customer, the upgrade fee for HTML
Breeze 3.0 is just $39.95 until March 1. And,
if you order now, we'll throw in a free set of
steak knives.

Thank you for your continued support.

--
My Name

2/7    Connection closed

### 4.3.4.2 Disadvantages

However, e-mails have their drawbacks too. There is no privacy as e-mails can be easily intercepted and read by others. Like letters written on emotionally-charged issues, e-mails can cause harm besides communicating message or information. They also cause loss of context as information is often communicated in fragments. Then there are junk e-mails or spams which lead to an information overload. Sometimes such spams come with attached files containing viruses.

Whatever be the drawbacks of e-mail, there is no denying the fact that it continues to be the favourite communicating medium in business and industry both within the organisation and outside the organisation.

### Structure and Form of e-mails

e-mail messages consist of two major sections: Header and Body. A Header includes names of the receiver to whom the message is directed and that of the sender who sends the message, e-mail address, subject, giving the contents of the message to provide context and date. Sometimes the local time of writing the message is also written. The e-mail address of both the sender and receiver are also a part of the Header. If needed, a carbon copy (CC) can also be added. Body has the actual content of the message. An e-mail may or may not have a complimentary clost;of a formal letter. As e-mails contain informal messages they are commonly used for conveying information, placing orders or asking questions to ascertain the status of an on-going project or investigation. The tone depends upon the terms and relationship between the receiver and the sender of the mail.

Official e-mails àre informative, wellorganised, short and their tone is formal.

*Keep the following guidelines and principles in mind .when you want to send e-mails:*

- Decide whether an e-mail would be a better medium than a letter, a telephone call or a face-to-face meeting.

- Keep your sentences short, avoiding too many adjective clauses, noun clauses and adverb clauses, to enhance readability.

- Organise the message by stating the main points first and details in the middle.

- Give sufficient reference for the receiver to respond to your e-mail.

- Keep paragraphs short to provide eye-relief.

- Don't convey information which is confidential and personal.

- Avoid sending e-mails when you are angry or emotionally upset.

- Be friendly and courteous. Poorly written e-mail would do more harm than good.

- Write grammatically correct sentences and avoid making spelling mistakes.

- Be brief. Let your e-mail not be longer then 200 words. If it is more than screen long, use headings to break up the text of your message.

- Ascertain that your e-mail is addressed to the correct receiver.

- Note that the e-mail header comprises 'To: the e-mail address(es) and name(s) of the receiver(s) of the message; From: the e-mail address and name of the sender of the message; Subject: a brief summary of the contents of the message to provide the context and date: the local time when the message was written.' The Header may also include 'CC' (Carbon Copy).

- Send attachments, if necessary, separately but remember to mention this below the subject so that the receiver is aware that the attachment sent to him is genuine and not a junk-mail.

- Safeguard your e-mail address. Give your e-mail address only to individuals of your choice. Omit writing your e-mail address in forms to avoid getting junk e-mail.

- Beware of computer viruses. The best way to avoid getting a virus from the internet or any other source is to use an anti-virus utility software.

- For added security when downloading files, ensure that the 'Always ask before opening' box is ticked on your virus scanner.

- Remember, there is a risk of infection from 'macro viruses' that enter your PC via e-mail attachments.

- Do not use only uppercase letters. These are hard to read and amount to shouting. Similarly, avoid using only lowercase letters.

- Be wary of opening a file attached to an e-mail as the file itself may carry a virus. As a general rule, do not open files attached to unsolicited e-mails.

A few examples of e-mails follow:

(i) **Date** : Monday 10 September, 2007

   **To** : Deven Prasad Varma dpv@rediffimail. com

   **From** : Hiren Singh cblcomputers@mega.com

   **Subject** : Installation of Personal Computers in Girls'PG Hostel

Dear Mr. Varma

We had assured Prof Anita Mehra that all the fifteen XYZ personal computers would be installed in the postgraduate students' rooms by 12 September 2007.

I didn't get your report on this. Do keep me posted on the progress.

Regards

Hiren Singh

(ii) **Date** : Tuesday, 11 September, 07

   **To** : Hiren Singh cblcomputers@mega.com

   **From** : Deven Prasad Varma dpv@rediffmail.com

   **Subject** : Report on Installation of Computers in PG Girls Hostel.

Dear Mr. Singh,

Sorry for not sending a report earlier. All the fifteen XYZ personal computers have now been installed. One of the computers/had to be replaced as it had a manufacturing defect. Our technician was down with viral/fever, and was on leave for two days. But now the work is complete and in time too. Sorry once again.

Regards

Deven Varma

Note that this is an e-mail within the firm. The language is informal and the enquiry about installation of personal computers was made by the Manager of the CBL Computers. The reply too is informal in tone and gives the report on installation without any additional information of designations, complementary close of a formal letter. Such a mode of communication is very common in business and industry. Another example follows:

(iii) **Date** : 15 October, 2021

   **To** : Amit Kumar ak@ swedn.com

   **From** : Om Pratap Gupta opg@swedn.com

   **CC** : xyz@ swedn.com

   **Subject** : Regarding Ph.D. Research in Progress

Dear Mr. Kumar

I find that there are many students registered for Ph.D. programme for more than five years and they have still not made sufficient Progress yet. Some of the registered students have gone and left their programmes incomplete. Further, the bulk of the Ph.D. students are still from Humanities and Science streams.

Please let me know what the Research Advisory Committee has done in this respect.

Om Pratap Gupta

(iv)  **Date**    : 18 October, 2021

**To**      : Om Pratap Gupta opg@ swedn.com

**From**   : Amit Kumar ak@ swedn.com

**CC**     : xyz@swedn.com

**Subject** : Ph.D. Research in Progress

The Research Advisory Committee (RAC) carried out a survey and noted that there is a drop in the number of Ph.D. students who registered in Engineering, Humanities and Sciences in the years 2019-20 and not completed their thesis requirements. RAC met several times and brought in several flexibilities in the interpretation of 'pure' and 'applied' research and enabled students to have a wider choice of themes and areas of research. RAC has put stress on research being relevant to social and environmental needs in the wider national context. Some success has already been achieved in research areas like solar energy, renewable energy, planning and management of water resources and interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches to research in Engineering, Sciences and Humanities. The increase in the number of Ph.D. students in all three major disciplines is an indication that this trend is popular among students. Regarding Ph.D. students leaving their research work, RAC strongly feels that it is the outstanding and evolutionary progress made by the IT sector that attracts students. They do not hesitate to give up academic work and join IT sectors for high salaries and perks offered to them. Even fresh graduates do not opt for higher studies but to go to different IT firms.

We would carry out another survey next year to ascertain the trends in research and make appropriate changes in our policy accordingly.

Regards

Amit Kumar

You would have noticed that both the above e-mails have 'CC' and this indicates that the copies of the e-mail from Om Pratap Gupta are to be sent to all the members of the Research Advisory Committee.

The recipients is the Secretary, Amit Kumar, who is responsible for monitoring and guiding research work.

Sometimes, a reply thanking the person who has conducted the survey and sent the report is also sent. It is believed that politeness pays dividends and paves the way for smooth, hassle-free business relations.

## 4.3.5 Voice Mail

There arose a need for an alternative mode of communication in the early nineteen seventies and eighties. Secretaries were scarce and labour costs had shot up. Telephone costs had come down so the telephone lines were busier. Still the bulk of the official communication was carried out by telephones. Unfortunately telephone calls were hampered

as many officials were not present in their offices because they were busy attending meetings elsewhere or were out on business trips. As a consequence, prime time was wasted, business activity suffered and important issues could not be sorted out. It was then that many organisations set up Private Branch Exchanges (PBXs) in their office telephone systems. Later, answering machines with message centres were added to the offices to record telephone messages. These were operated manually and manned by a few employees in the office. As the volume of official work increased, the number of calls increased too, making it difficult for the operators to take messages accurately or direct them to the concerned official's extension number. A lot of delay was inevitable in delivering these messages, which were noted down on slips of paper and distributed through the internal transit system. This process was time-consuming but the correct interpretation of the messages was also difficult. Usually incorrect names and contact numbers were noted and sent to the extension numbers. Even the tape-based answering machines did not bring in a visible improvement in this mode of communication.

With the enhanced capabilities of the computers, Voice Mail, abbreviated as vmail or VMS, became a popular mode of communication. A vmail resembles an answering machine but it is much more sophisticated. vmail uses a standard telephone handset for a user interface along with a centralised computer system instead of separate telephones. This system had successfully overcome the shortcomings of the older technology of answering machines. Some of the unique features of vmail include its ability to answer many phones simultaneously and store voice messages received in the user's mailbox associated with his phone number. A user can forward messages received to other voice mail boxes. A few more advanced vmail systems offer an automated attendant facility which help callers in accessing directory service through a main business number. Thus the earlier problem of retrieval of messages and recording them correctly was successfully overcome.

You would notice that this ushered in a new and more effective way of professional communication. vmail made it possible for a user to leave lengthy and detailed messages working in perfect harmony with telephone systems. A user needs to become a subscriber and have a mailbox number to send voice messages to other subscribers. If an organization has an vmail system, the PBX there is programmed lo forward messages to the vmail system and subscriber.

Voice messages in vmail are sent in the user's natural voice. Its use has increased the flow of communication, saving time and money. The twin modes of vmail operation, namely, telephone answering and voice messaging use natural voice. Therefore, clarity in speech is of utmost importance. In order to derive maximum advantage from vmail, you have to train yourself in the art of clear speaking. Your voice in the vmail is often the first impression a person receives of you and the organisation you belong to.

The following tips would help you convey your message effectively.

*   Get to the point quickly.
*   Make your message more effective by speaking small sentences, with only one or two clauses.
*   Pause at the end of each sentence.
*   Be brief and to the point.
*   Give your own subscriber number at the end of the message.
*   End your mail with a courteous phrase such as 'good bye' or 'thank you.'

There are many more devices other than those we have mentioned above. With the computer as the hub, communication technology has made spectacular advancements. As you are aware, the International Network (Internet) of computers is being widely used for a number of activities requiring contact between individual and organisations. In addition to what we have discussed earlier, some such activities are video conferencing, distance education, accounting, ticketing, transacting business, consulting experts for various purposes, etc. Further, Internet itself acts as a consultant, providing as it does, a staggering amount of information on a large variety of subjects through thousands of websites. No wonder, for advanced study and research, the use of internet has become almost inevitable. We may also, in this context, mention two more storage devices, namely, micro computers and microfilms. The former is used for storing documents of all kinds in large databases. The information contained in these documents can be recalled quickly, modified or revised or completely erased. The latter can also store a mass of written or printed material which can be magnified and read, whenever required. But do remember that, whatever methods and devices you use, the human factor is the most important. The proper exchange and transmission of information depends upon you and us. The sophisticated technology available for the purpose is of no consequence if the communication is distorted or misunderstood.

## 4.4 COMMUNICATION NETWORKS

When we communicate with those above us, below us, or around us, we are establishing *Communication Networks*. These may be *formal* channels or *informal* channels.

*Within the organization, there are usually four types of networks:*

1. **Wheel:** A wheel network exists when there is a supervisor with a number of subordinates reporting directly without consultation or links with each other.

2. **Chain:** In a chain communication network information is passed sequentially to the next employee above or below in the line of authority.

3. **Circle:** The circle is a three level hierarchy with the lowest level of employees communicating with each other and directly with the person on the next level. That level then reports directly to the higher level. Communication also occurs downwards between the levels.

4. **Star or the all channel network:** It is more an ideal than a real: Every member of the organization is able to communicate directly as an equal with every other member. Some committees are examples of all channel (star) networks.

The most structured is the wheel; the least structured is the star, where opportunities for feedback are greatest and morale is usually the highest.

## 4.5 INTRANET

Intranetware is an evolving concept which allows multi-users can have access to the same information. Intranetware provides a mechanism that helps users coordinate and keep track of on-going projects together. Intranet is also called *Collaborative software.*

A fundamental component of Intranetware is e-mail, because e-mail is used to notify team members, obtain responses and send alerts. Intranetware is comprehensive. Intranetware also includes document sharing and document management, group calendaring

and scheduling, group contact and task management, threaded discussions, text chat, data conferencing and audio and videoconferencing.

Source: www.digitalpodcast.com

## 4.5.1 Usages of Intranet for Communication

Modern companies use intranets to communicate a wide range of information among their employees. For example Cisco Systems uses its intranet to provide new employees to have quick access to all necessary information about the company structure, their company policies, and about their current future and past operation.

Intranets can also be used to provide access to all employees to get a copy of minutes of meeting, important presentations that might be reprocessed by different sales people, and information on the current status of manufacturing operations and so on. In a nutshell, any business document carrying information that might be useful can be easily shared between organizational employees.

*Intranets are particularly useful to organizations because they allow:*

- Sharing of programs
- Rapid access to data and information kept at a central place
- Central updating of information to ensure that it is of high quality
- Passage of memos via e-mail
- Sharing of common resources such as printers
- Documents to be easily transferred from user to user

## 4.6 INTERNET

The most popular for information superhighway is internet. The internet allows the individuals, businesses, universities and governments to interact with one another. The Internet enables communication between billions of connected computers across the

world. Information is transmitted from client PCs whose users request services to server computers that hold information and host business applications deliver the services in response to requests.

Internet services are constantly emerging. For example, a vast amount of information is available over the internet from libraries. The internet can provide critical information during times of disaster. The internet can also be used to translate words, sentences, or complete documents from one language into another.

*The Internet has many advantages to organizations, which are as follows:*

- Receives rapid access to information
- Can search for exactly the information needed
- Purchases can be made over the internet
- Easy to download material including software
- Rapid communication between a company and its customers.
- Huge savings on overheads, no warehouse space, etc.
- Good market research tool

## 4.7 E-MAILS

Refer to 4.34, 4.3.4.1 and 4.3.4.2 above

## 4.8 TELECONFERENCING

Communicating over telephones can be a cost effective substitute instead of face to face. It eliminates costly transit time and transportation expenses. It is estimated that teleconferencing are 75% less expensive than meeting in person. In teleconferencing all parties are connected via the telephone or audio conferencing. It is most productive and quite inexpensive. It is also called the "phone meeting". Conversation is possible with more than one person at the same time. Even teleconferencing connects people who are far apart and may be in different cities.

Basically three types of teleconferencing are found:

1. Audio teleconferencing
2. Audio graphic teleconferencing
3. Audio–videoconferencing.

Greater access, improved technology and reduced costs are making audio videoconferencing as their choice of medium, which is termed as videoconferencing.

**How Teleconferencing Works**

Conference Bridge Attached To PBX
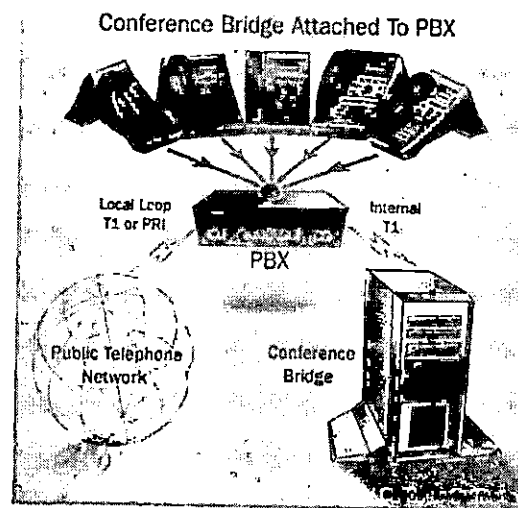


Source: howstuffworks.com

## 4.9 VIDEOCONFERENCING

Videoconferencing allows people to hear and see each other at the same time in different locations. People can also speak to each other like having face-to-face discussions. With new technology, it is possible to connect more than two locations. It leads to more affordable conferencing if the members are scattered over the globe. In videoconferencing the discussions become more meaningful than interaction over the phone. Videoconferencing includes monitors, special cameras (web camera), speakers, codec, and equipment control pad at each location, digital microphones and network services to connect the locations.



*Using Videoconferencing*

The computer having a device called a codèc converts all the analogue sound and pictures into digital signals. They are transmitted over digital telephone lines called ISDN (Integrated Services Digital Network) which need to have the necessary bandwidth to allow the transmission of digital signals.

*Advantages of Videoconferencing are:*

- Affordable conferencing, if team members are scattered
- Utmost like communicating face-to-face
- Employees or individuals remain available in the office
- Retention is better and more long lasting
- Enriches communication in many ways
- No need to travel to different location to conduct the meeting, so it avoids the stress
- Helps in reducing business related expenses like hotel bills or paying for the hire of conference conveniences.
- Can seé the speaker, which is not possible with a telephone conference
- Documents can be shared and stored.

## CASE STUDY: HOW A BLOG AIDED A NATION

The Rotary Club of Colombo Regency in Sri Lanka invited a speaker to their club's meeting to teach members how to create a blog, not realizing how valuable this new technology would prove to be. Just one day after the world's deadliest tsunami destroyed parts of their country, the club members set up their first blog. It allowed people from all over the world to provide immediate assistance by donating money and providing food and medicine, and daily updates kept contributors informed about the club's relief efforts.

Club members e-mailed friends and family members to alert them to the blog and the account they had set up for donations. The club also made an arrangement with Lankafood.com—which did not benefit from the agreement—to take orders for food and medicine and send them directly to the Rotary Club of Colombo. Club members then purchased items from the local wholesale market and distributed them. Within a week, the club had raised nearly US$50,000 and an additional $35,000 had been pledged.

"Our club has been successful because we have been able to reach out the international community through this site," said club secretary Chamila Vickramasinghe.

### Critical Thinking

*Discuss the impact of technology based communication by considering the case study and how technological tools can be used for social purposes?*

### SUMMARY

- CV is a structured, written summary of a person's education, employment background and job qualification.
- CV $\xrightarrow[\text{appear in an}]{\text{leads to}}$ Interview $\xrightarrow[\text{get a}]{\text{leads to}}$ Job offer.

- CV can be of three types:
  (i) The chronological CV or the traditional CV
  (ii) The Functional CV
  (iii) The Combination or Skill Emphasis CV.
- CV on the basis of their objective can be of two types
  (i) Targeted CV (Specified)
  (ii) Inventory CV (Non-specific)
- Words should be used as tools of communication and not as a substitute for action.
- Take advantage of every opportunity to practice your communication skills so that when important occasions arise, you will have the gift, the style, the sharpness, the clarity and the emotions to affect other people.
- The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.
- What is the shortest word in English language that contains the letters: a b c d e f?
  **Answer:** Feedback, Do not forget that feedback is one of the essential elements of good communication.
- Skill in the art of communication is crucial to a leader's success. He can accomplish nothing unless he can communicate effectively.
- Interviewing is a face-to-face conversation in which at least one party has a specific and serious purpose. As such it is perhaps the most common form of planned communication. Interviewing differs from other types of conversations in its purposeful nature and its degree of structure.
- Although there are many types of interviews, the same basic approach can be used in all interviews. Therefore, you should find that the information covered in this chapter can be applied to almost any other interview situations. All effective interviews are organized into basically the same three phases: opening phase, question-response phase and the closing phase which all require prior preparations.
- Interviewers are responsible for carefully planning and organizing the interview ahead of time; asking necessary but lawful questions; and listening carefully and respectfully to the interviewees' responses. The interviewer perhaps has the greatest responsibility for the success of the interview. Interviews that are poorly planned, poorly organized and poorly executed result in neither participants learning anything valuable about the other.
- Interviewees are also responsible for contacting their interviewer prior to the interview sessions, planning answers for possible questions, communicating effectively during the interview and following up the interview when necessary.
- The term group discussion is used to refer to a situation in which a small number of persons meet face-to-face and, through free oral interaction among themselves, exchange information or attempt to reach a decision on shared problems.
- Some technological devices like Used Processor, Desk Top Publisher, PowerPoint Presentation, Electronic Mail and voice Mail, have quickened the pace of communication, and made it more convenient and efficient.
- When we communicate with those above us, below us, or around us, we are establishing

"Communication Networks". These may be formal channels or informal channels.

- Within the organization, there are four types of networks which are Wheel Chain, Circle and Star network

- Technological advances not only being new and better tools to the workplace but also increase the speed, frequency, and reach of communication. Advances in technology make it possible for more and more people to work away from the office-in cars, airports, hotels and even at home.

- Intranetware is an evolving concept which allows multi-users can have access to the same information and also called "Collaborative software".

- Intranetware includes document sharing and document management, group calendaring and scheduling, group contact and task management, threaded discussions, text chat, data conferencing and audio and videoconferencing.

- Intranets can also be used to provide access to all employees to get a copy of minutes of meeting, important presentations that might be reprocessed by different sales people, and information on the current status of manufacturing operations and so on.

- The internet allows the individuals, businesses, universities and governments to interact with one another. The internet enables communication between billions of connected computers across the world.

- The Internet can also be used to translate words, sentences, or complete documents from one language into another.

- Electronic mail (e-mail) is the communication that takes place between computers and also defined as "a paperless written communication transmitted and received by computers".

- In teleconferencing all parties are connected via the telephone or audio conferencing. It is most productive and quite inexpensive. It is also called the "phone meeting".

- Three types of teleconferencing are found: Audio teleconferencing, Audio graphic teleconferencing and Audio- video conferencing.

- Video-conferencing allows people to hear and see each other at the same time in different locations. People can also speak to each other like having face-to-face discussions.

- In video-conferencing, it is possible to connect more than two locations. It leads to more affordable conferencing if the members are scattered over the globe.

## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Define CV.
2. Discuss kinds of CV you know about.
3. Differentiate various kinds of CV.
4. Invent necessary details and write every kind of CV you have read about.
5. Can you create a value-based CV? Prove by an example.
6. Define interview.

7. Discuss the major types of interview in detail.

8. Discuss the points to be kept in mind while planning and conducting an interview.

9. Suggest the guidelines for the interviewer and the interviewee.

10. Define communication network and discuss the types of communication network found in the organizations.

11. Discuss the impact of technological advancement in organizational communication.

12. Define intranet and its advantages to the organizational communication.

13. Discuss the advantages of internet to the organizations.

14. Describe e-mail and its advantages.

15. Define teleconferencing. Also mention the types of teleconferencing.

16. Define video-conferencing technology and related advantages.

## KEY WORDS

**intranet:** a computer network that is private to a company, university, etc. often using the same software as the World Wide Web

**computer network:** a number of computers and other devices that are connected together so that equipment and information can be shared

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. As a special correspondent of the *Bharat Times,* you have been deputed to interview the survivors of an air crash. A report based on this interview is slated for publication in your newspaper. Draft the list of questions that you would use for interviewing the passengers.

2. As a special correspondent of the *Employment News,* you have been asked to interview the Bank Managers of the nationalised banks in your town. The purpose is to elicit the latest information on the facilities available to the educated unemployed youth and the procedures for availing of them. Prepare a list of questions for interviewing the Bank Managers.

3. As Personnel Manager of a Public Limited Company, you have to interview fresh graduates for recruitment to the junior management cadre. Prepare a list of questions which you are likely to use for interviewing the candidates.

# CHAPTER 5 PRESENTATION SKILLS AND GROUP COMMUNICATION

## ✦ STRUCTURE ✦

## 5.1 OBJECTIVES

*After reading this unit, the students would be able to learn:*

- what is a presentation and its elements,
- how to design a presentation,
- about advanced visual support for a business presentation,
- about types of visual aid,
- about appearance and postures while making a presentation,
- about practicing delivery of presentation,
- about meetings and notice,
- how to plan meetings,
- about objectives and participants of meeting,
- about timing and venue of meeting,
- about leading meetings,
- about minutes of meetings,
- about media management,
- about the press release, press conference, media interviews, seminars, workshop and conference, and
- about business etiquettes.

## 5.2 PRESENTATION SKILLS

*"Think like a wise man but communicate in the language of the people."*

—**W.B. Yeats**

### 5.2.1 What is a Presentation?

Presentation is, the process of presenting information to an audience, possibly enhanced with visual or audio material. As students, it is very important to present your thoughts and ideas effectively, using a variety of tools and mediums. You need this skill in your academic career, when you attend job interviews and especially when you start working. Presentation is the first managerial skill which a working executive must acquire.

Management is the art of getting things done. A presentation is a quick and productive method of getting things done. Presentation is used as a formal method for bringing people together to plan, monitor and review the work progress. Any successful presentation needs impressive material and attractive process. While hard work and good ideas are essential for your success, your ability to express those ideas effectively is equally important.

In today's competitive and rapidly changing world, the organization looks for the employees who can think creatively and act ethically and responsibly. Presentation skill has become away to develop competence to communicate ideas with diversity and to create impact, To keep your audience with you. You will have to plan a strategy for your presentation. You will have to develop verbal as well as non-verbal skills to make your presentation effective,

### 5.2.2 Elements of Presentation

1. Introduce the topic in clear words. Use your introduction to motivate the audience besides presenting the problem. Be strategic. Avoid technical details.

2. Do not give too much information. Give only important points. Too much details would create confusion and they would not be remembered.

3. If you are using slides, use only one idea per slide.

4. Be selective in the use of aids. Use minimum slides for maximum impact.

5. Visualize your key points. Once you are clear about your key points, the presentation will develop easily. Write your summary slide of the key points.

6. Be authentic and add authority to your tone. Let your audience know that you know well.

7. Be sure to label and number each overhead transparency, chart, or flip charts used. Make them large enough so that you can read them clearly even in imperfect light conditions.

8. Preview the main supporting points so that your presentation will be easy to understand.

9. Emphasize the main point by using different tones or pitches of your voice. Change the rate of your speech, Listing and numbering points would help.

10. Use descriptive language to support your points with examples. This builds interest and makes the presentation more interesting for you and the audience.

11. Make smooth transition to next section. Let everyone know you are about to go to a new topic. This makes your audience mentally prepared to understand the new idea you are going to explain.

12. Summarize the main points while concluding your presentation. Wrap up by restating the whole idea, emphasizing the main points. Conclude with a positive note and an open, plateform for the feedback session.

### 5.2.3 Designing a Presentation

Presentation is a skill which is developed through experience and training. But we cannot take this skill of presentation for granted because like all other skills the presentation skill can be improved and adapted according to the context within which it is used. A presentation in your organisation may require a different approach than one you had at college level. The following points would help you to plan your presentation effectively. Keep these points in mind while preparing your presentation to get the desired results.

1. **Determine the Main Purpose.** Identity the purpose of your presentation and state it in a single sentence. When you know the objective of the presentation, all your efforts, the materials which you use, illustrations, aids will be focused on the desired result.

2. **Assess your Audience.** "Success depends on your ability to reach to your audience". Assess the knowledge level of the audience. How large is the audience? Know about their educational background, their age group, their interests and their expectations. This will help you to motivate them. The more you know about your audience, the better you will be able to plan your presentation.

3. **Evaluate the Environment/Space.** Familialize yourself with the presentation environment before you start preparing your presentation. Keep in mind the seating capacity of the room, seating arrangement, distracters. How is the room organised? Have you checked the Audio/Visual equipment? Will you be able to operate them confidently? Prior planning will let you know of the shortcomings which can be rectified in time. Besides boosting your level of confidence, this saves you from the last minute embarrassment.

4. **Preparing Visual Aids.** The Visual Aids act as a trigger for the speaker and keep the presentation focused. They make presentation interesting and provide an additional way of receiving the message.

5. **Planning the Content.** Determine main points. Do not gather too many points which will create confusion. Find supporting evidence to prove your points. Examples create interest, you can use quotations, interesting facts, relevant statistics, bold statements, current events, stories and anecdotes to make your presentation interesting. Always draft a rough outline. Start by identifying your most important argument which supports the goal of your presentation.

6. **Research the Information.** Use key words from the topic. Begin your research with the prescribed texts. Scan recommended material, conduct a library search, consult journals, articles, newspaper; do net surfing. As you research, take notes, add reviews, make a rough draft.

7. **Structuring the Content.** Presentations are structured with Introduction, Body and Conclusion. First introduce yourself to build rapport with the audience. Then introduce the topic. Define any ambiguous terms. Outline the scope of the presentation. Give a plan of the main points to be addressed. Expand main points in a logical sequence. Provide supporting evidence from your research with references. Use humour, examples, statistic to get the response of the audience. Invite participation through questioning or short activities Inform audience that you are about, to conclude. Summarize main points. Evaluate the importance of the information before concluding the presentation,

8. **Final Preparation.** Practise in front of a friend or mirror. Record your voice. Ask for a feedback. Review and make corrections. Keep in mind the time element. Ensure that the presentation is within the time allowed. Organize your notes, slides, transparencies in the order the information will be presented. Number the pages. Have confidence and positive attitude. Think of the positive response you will get from the audience.

If you are well prepared and know your topic, confidence will came automatically. Present the right information in the right format in the right amount of time. Prior planning and preparation will give you success.

### 5.2.4 Advanced Visual Support for Business Presentation

A visual aid is something the audience can see that helps speaker send his message across to the audience. The use of visual aids helps in communicating the message effectively to the audience. Their attention can be focused. The receiver retains the message for a longer period since the message is presented visually. Visual aids are used to support your presentation. They are not a substitute for your presentation but an aid

to communicate your message effectively to your audience. The purpose is to facilitate understanding. All visual aids require a little imagination to make them truly effective. They should be arranged in such a manner that they make presentation interesting and not distracting. There are a variety of visual aids that can be used to make a presentation more productive. They can help you with your presentation.

The visual aids make you more persuasive by adding variety and emphasis to your presentation. For the speaker, they act as a 'trigger' for memory and keep the presentation focused. For me audience, they add interest arid provide an additional way of receiving the message. There are many types of audiovisual aids that can be used. But you should not be carried away with technology and use them just because they exist. Use them sparingly, and intelligently and carefully so that your presentation gets an enhanced effect.

### 5.2.5 Types of Visual Aids

Following visual aids are available for a business presentation.

#### *Handouts*

Handouts should be used to cover fine details. Be careful not to disturb your audience with reading material. They should be listening to you. Handouts are not meant to be read while you are speaking—they are meant to be taken away. So, Handouts should be given either after the show or much before it has started. Make sure to have the extra copies for unexpected guests.

Handouts are simple and easy to use. There is no visibility problem in their use. They can depict lots of information. They are inexpensive to use and can last for long. But handouts can create distraction and render no help in enhancing the quality of actual presentation.

#### *Flashcards*

They have limited use. They may not be of much help when addressing large audience because they are not big enough to be clearly visible from a distance. Make them bright enough to catch attention.

#### *Flipcharts/Posters*

They are very effective for summarizing information. Make them simple and large. They are also a good medium for providing responses to the questions. But flipchart is effective with small group as it is relatively small in size. Title each page with a short topic or heading. Do not fill the page to the bottom. People in the back will be unable to see. Highlight key points. Allow time for reading, retention and note-taking.

#### *Chalkboard*

The chalkboard is a popular, accessible and simple aid. It is available almost everywhere. It is a flexible aid and modification can be done immediately. The speaker should not address the audience while writing on the board. Write neatly and large enough to be read by the entire audience. The main drawback of using a chalkboard is the lack of any permanent record of what has been written, unless an electronic chalkboard is used.

## *Overhead Projector*

The overhead-projector is used to deliver images to audience. It is a simple and all round device that does not require high-tech skills. It provides variety, transparencies can be made by writing, drawing, painting, photocopying and printing. Number your transparencies. Keep the screen in full view of the audience. Do not block the view when presenting. Darken the room appropriately by blocking out sunshine.

Overhead projector is a common equipment which can be prepared quickly. It enables effective interaction with the audience. It can be used both in large and small gathering as well as formal and informal presentation.

## *Slide Shows*

Slides represent an easily manageable visual format. They bring realism into your presentation. You can make excellent slides using a computer graphic program.

They are good at getting attention, help in maintaining interest and can have high impact. Sometimes technical failures may bring disastrous effects.

## 5.2.6 Appearance and Posture

### *5.2.6.1 Appearance*

Appearance is the chief component of your presentation. Your facial expression add meaning to your words, express your attitude, feelings, emotions, your likes and dislikes. Your facial expressions may present you as a confident speaker or a nervous speaker before your audience.

1. Keep your facial expressions relaxed and flexible.

2. Do not lick, bite or click the lips or tighten the jaws. Do not frown. These expressions indicate nervousness and lack of confidence.

3. Your face will reflect good thoughts and emotions if you are confident about the subject you are dealing with. Believe your message and practice thoroughly. This will relax your facial expressions.

4. Keep a smile on your face. Smile will bring warmth hut it should be appropriate and according to the situation,

5. Change your facial repressions according to the message. Flat expressions distract the audience and create monotonous atmosphere.

### 5.2.6.2 Postures.

Your posture and the way you present yourself on the platform is as important as your gestures. To have a right posture, keep in mind the following points.

1. Stand up straight and face the audience head on. Keep your posture open with arms relaxed and hands hanging down at your sides.

2. Spread your feet six to seven inches apart. They should be parallel to each other and your toes should be pointed straight ahead. This way you will have a comfortable speaking position.

3. Stand erect but not stiff. Standing erect will stop any swaying motion. Put your weight on the soles of your feet. An erect posture shows high spirit and confidence.

4. Hold your head with your chin up. Raised chin shows confidence.

5. While communicating, lean forward. It implies that you are open and interested.

6. Do not speak with your back turned or looking at the floor or at the ceiling.

7. If your hands are clasped firmly in front of you, your feet are crossed and your body is tight, you present a picture of the one who lacks confidence.

8. Your hands on hips present a picture of dominating character, crossed arms will not invite others to talk. Your hands crossed in front of you would make you look timid and weak.

9. Do not fold your arms while speaking. Folded arms show that you are bored, tired or not interested in your presentation.

10. Maintaining a rigid posture implies that you are defensive while a relaxed posture presents openness,

11. Crossed arms and legs indicate a defensive position, while uncrossed arms and legs present your willingness to listen.

Posture has been considered as an expressive medium for presentation. Your posture reflects your self-confidence and your enthusiasm for the subject you are dealing with. Postures can convey your feelings and emotion, your interest in the subject. Postures can even be used to establish the relationship with your audience.

Look at yourself in the mirror and see how it feels to stand with the varied postures. You may feel awkward looking at yourself in the mirror but it helps. Look at the various postures that look appropriate and natural. Make appropriate postures a part of your personality.

### 5.2.7 Practicing Delivery of Presentation

Cultivate your speech. The best way to do so is to tape-record it and listen to it critically. Analyse your speech to find out whether you speak clearly, or you eat your syllables and slur your words. Does your speech sound dull and monotonous or lively and animated? Is the pitch of your voice too high or too low? Do you stress the right syllable and use the appropriate intonation? Satisfy yourself that your speech is clear, has proper rhythm and sounds pleasant. Practicing daily can certainly enhance the quality of your speech. Shakespeare's remark, 'Mend your speech a little, lest it should mar your fortune' holds good even today. Proper speech will help you not merely in getting the job but also in moving up on the ladder of your career.

More important than all these is what you say. Are you clear in your thoughts? Can you express them in simple language? Do you understand your own point of view on current issues in unmistakable terms? Do you have a philosophy of your own (a set of opinions) which you can put before others with conviction supported by valid arguments? Have you acquired the habit of coolly arguing your case? Do you feel crestfallen when your point of view is not accepted? These are some of the questions whose answers are obvious and you must have been made, aware of them in the course of your education. What is required is that at the time of interview you refresh your memory.

## 5.3 GROUP COMMUNICATION

The meeting with the employees is found to be very useful in building formal communication the higher-ups are to encourage the employees to talk about their constructive suggestions, job problems and needs. They are also to be encouraged to express their views on whether the management practices help the job performance or interfere with it.

Well planned and productive group communications are essential for conducting modern business, to achieve objectives and results that cannot be accomplished effectively in another way. Meetings have always taken a large part of the average manager's time. In addition the increased use of teams also means that meetings are even more frequent. Just because meetings are common doesn't mean that they are always productive. A survey by one marketing research company showed that gatherings meetings executives consider one third of the they attend to be unnecessary. So, to be productive, any type of meeting will require a good preparation from all participants in general and the chairperson in particular. The chairperson is the one who takes the responsibility for planning and conducting or leading the meeting.

The activities and discussions in the meeting can be well directed if the purpose of meeting is specific and the agenda is strictly followed. The meetings help to heighten the team spirit and assure the necessary information flow by encouraging two-way communication. The useful knowledge and experience of the employees is mutually shared during the meetings.

### 5.3.1 Meetings

Very often you will be required to participate in group discussions which may be small, consisting of three or four persons, or large, consisting of several hundred members. A group may be assigned a specific time-bound task or meet at periodic intervals when there is a need, or may share common experience, concerns or interests. This coming together of persons is labelled by different names on the basis of one or more of the following criteria; the purpose for which the group meets, the types of participants, and communicative pattern. The following are some of the more common labels used to name different types of discussion groups: meeting, seminar, conference, symposium, panel discussion, and convention. In this chapter we shall have a closer look at the meeting.

The word *meeting* is used in two senses: one, to refer to a small group meeting, committee meeting, meeting of Board of Directors, cabinet meeting, meeting of sectional heads, etc., and two, to refer to any coming together of two or more persons, whatever be the label applicable to such a group.

Meeting is perhaps the most commonly used form of discussion in a professional organisation. The person who chairs the meeting acts as the leader of the group and usually has a higher status or enjoys authority over the other members. Every meeting is result-oriented and therefore the discussion is directed towards a specific end. Let us now turn our attention to certain important aspects of conducting and participating in meetings,

### 5.3.2 Notice

For every meeting you are asked to hold you will have to issue a notice, draft the agenda, and after the meeting is over, write its minutes. Here we shall briefly discuss how notices, agenda and minutes are written in the professional world.

Usually every organisation devises rules of procedure for the conduct of meetings. These rules indicate the frequency of meetings of different units and prescribe the notice period for calling a meeting besides indicating the person who has a right to call it and the persons who have a right to attend it. When you are required to call a meeting, send a written notice within the specified time to every member of the group. The notice should mention the name and address of the organisation, and the date on which it is Issued apart from mentioning or indicating the day, date, time and venue of the meeting. The business to be transacted should be mentioned in the notice if the number of items is small; otherwise it should be indicated in a separate sheet and enclosed with the notice as annexure.

## Examples

Two examples follow. They show different styles of writing agenda and minutes. The second example which is more formal is used by public limited companies.

### Example I

<div align="center">

Indian Oil Industries Ltd.
Singhal House
12 Ashok Road
New Delhi 110001 –

</div>

14 February 2006

Staff Welfare Association Executive Committee Meeting

<div align="center">

**NOTICE**

</div>

The second meeting of the Executive Committee will be held at 5 p.m., on Wednesday, 28 February, 2006 in Room No. 16, Singhal House. The agenda is given below:

### Example II

<div align="center">

A.K. Dasgupta
Chairman
Piramal Steel Corporation Ltd
14 Garden Avenue
Subhash Chandra Marg

Kolkatta 700019

</div>

1 March, 2006

<div align="center">

**NOTICE**

</div>

· Notice is hereby given for the Fifteenth Annual General Body Meeting of the Company to be held at 11 am, on Thursday 15 March, 2006 at Garden Avenue. The agenda is attached.

End: One

R. Chauhan
Secretary

To: All shareholders

<div align="center">

Piramal Steel Corporation Ltd.

Kolkata

</div>

### 5.3.3 Planning Meeting

Successful meetings are just like interviews, presentations, or letters; they must be well planned.

#### 5.3.3.1 Planning before calling for a meeting

It is incorrect to assume that one person will always call a group together. Sometimes a committee is authorized by another group which could be as high as the board of directors. Initial planning involves five factors:

1. Deciding on the purpose of the meeting

2. Decide who the participants should be

3. Planning the date, time and place

4. Planning on the announcement of agenda

5. Plan the physical arrangements

#### Deciding on the purpose of the meeting

First, you should decide whether the meeting should even be called at all. In one sentence you should write the problem and specific purposes. If the purpose can be better attained by telephone, letter, memo, etc, the participants should not be called together for a meeting. A good meeting topic must be timely, genuine, really important and meaningful. It must present a difficulty that is within the experience of the attendants. Also the problem should be limited adequately so that the attendants are able to solve it-at least partially-within the given time. It should be about a matter that can immediately be decided by the group or about which recommendations can be made to a higher administrative body.

#### Decide who should participate

Many business committees have a consistent group of attendants. For instance, executive committees may comprise vice president, other committees may be made up of persons working on a given account or a finance committee may consist of members from purchasing to disbursements. Additional members are also invited to supplement the regular members' contributions or to appear to make a specific report.

Regardless of whether or not the meeting is to solve a difficult, top-level problem, the attendants should be those who can make special contribution. Usually the more difficult the problem, the smaller the group-some times five or even fewer. But in some informational meetings, hundreds may be interested and gain useful explanations.

#### Arrange for the meeting date, time and place

The choice of date, time and place greatly depend on the audience size and make-up and the purpose of the meeting.

#### Announce the agenda

An agenda is nothing but a list of topics that are to be discussed in a meeting. Most often it is the meeting leader (may be you) whom we call the chairperson, who prepares the agenda so the participants know in advance the direction of the meeting.

*The announcement should be made or sent early enough to give the participants adequate time to prepare their thoughts on the matter.*

### *Decide on the physical arrangements*

As the last step before any meeting, you as the leader of a meeting should consider such physical arrangements as: seating, material, equipment and atmosphere.

### *Seating*

Most likely you, as the chairperson of a meeting will arrange seating, perhaps in a circle or around a conference table or in a diamond or U-shape so that all attendants will easily be able to see each other and the chairperson.

### *Material, equipment and atmosphere*

Items to consider can be chalkboards, flip sheets; microphones, projector, visual aids, drinking water, glasses, etc.

## 5.3.4 Objectives of Meetings

Meetings are an important setting for oral communication and used for a variety of purposes:

- To provide information to a group of people
- To report on some activity or experience
- To coordinate and arrange activities
- To obtain assistance
- To put forward ideas or grievances for decision
- To create involvement and interest

Meetings can be held for two basic purposes:

- To present information
- To help solve problems

Most of the time both purposes may occur in one meet; a part of the meeting devoted to giving information and the other devoted to problem solving.

## 5.3.5 Participants

The role of a participant is an equally important aspect of a meeting, which very much depends upon the kind and quality of contributions made by the participants. When you are asked to attend a meeting, acquaint yourself with the problems and topics to be discussed by going through the agenda carefully. Collect any information which may prove useful in the discussion. Though you should develop a tentative point of view on each issue, keep an open mind. Remember others' points of view are as important as yours and therefore deserve your consideration and respect.

Be a good listener and try to read the thoughts behind the expressions. Do not miss anything that is being said; it may be a significant link in the chain of ideas. Even if you do not like the person who is speaking or feel that what the person is saying is irrelevant,

listen to him attentively. Examine every opinion or suggestion on merits, irrespective of the source. Do not hesitate to volunteer any relevant information you may have on the topic under discussion and do speak up when you have something to say on it. Sometimes what you consider of little importance may be found by the group as significant.

Help the chairman maintain order. Do not engage in side conversation or shuffle papers in too obtrusive a manner so as to distract others' attention. Raise your hand to draw the attention of the chairman when you want to speak. When your turn comes express your views clearly and with confidence. Do not take any direct issue with any speaker by making personal references or belittling or ridiculing his ideas. Nothing is gained through a controversy of this type. You may well find that your views are criticised or your suggestions rejected. This should not dismay you. Wisdom often emerges when there is a clash of opinions. Sincere participation should be your main goal.

Do jot down important points at the meeting. Date and file them for future reference. Note-taking serves two purposes; it helps you keep your attention focussed throughout the meeting and fix the important points in your mind. Before you file the notes do mention the name of the chairman and the subject of the meeting. Keep the following points in mind while taking notes:

• Write rapidly and legibly. Write in block letters if you can.

• Let the entries be like the newspaper headlines - just adequate to trigger off the thought later.

• Do not falter over terms. Using your judgement make changes when necessary.

• Do not record any irrelevant information. However, rather than miss any important point, record more than what ultimately may be found essential. It is easier to eliminate than to recall.

• Be tactful in selecting pertinent material, exercising your editorial judgement.

### 5.3.6 Timing

Timing known as a agenda is an official list of items of business to ,he transacted at a specific meeting. It helps in conducting the meeting in proper order, minimises irrelevant discussion and preserves continuity in the proceedings.

Since it is circulated along with the notice, every member knows beforehand the items of discussion and can make up his mind what he wishes to say on a particular issue. The agenda also helps the Chairman to control the members from going off the track and to organise the time to be devoted to individual items.

**Examples:**

Two examples follow. They show different styles of writing agenda and minutes. The second example which is more formal is used by public limited companies.

*Example I*

Indian Oil Industries Ltd.
Singhal House
12 Ashok Road
New Delhi 110001

14 February 2006

Staff Welfare Association Executive Committee Meeting

## AGENDA

2.01 Minutes of the previous meeting.

2.02 Cafeteria report.

2.03 Celebration of Holi.

2.04 Raise in subscription.

2.05 Request for donation.

2.06 Grant of study leave.

2.07 Any other matter with the permission of the Chairman.

cc: All Members

Gokul Shilpe

Secretary

*Example II*

Piramal Steel Corporation Ltd

14 Garden Avenue

Subhash Chandra Marg

Kolkatta 700019

1 March, 2006

## AGENDA

15.01 Confirmation of the minutes of the last meeting:

15.02 Directors' Report and Annual Accounts

15.03 Auditors' Report

15.04 Appointment of Auditors

15.05 Declaration of Dividend

15.06 Election of the Directors

15.07 Any other matter with the permission of the Chair.

R. Chauhan

Secretary

The items of the agenda are arranged in increasing order of importance and each item bears a number. However, almost every agenda has *confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting* as the first item and *any other matter with the permission of the Chairman* as the last item. If there is any matter left over from the preceding meeting for enquiry and report, it usually appears as the second item of the agenda. If the meeting is one of a series, each item indicates the number of the meeting as follows:

4:01

4:02

4:03

4:04 and so on.

When the agenda is an annexure to the notice, the following information is repeated:

- Name of the organisation/unit
- Date of circulation
- Day, date, time and venue of meeting
- Signature of the secretary

The following sources might be used for agenda items:

- Minutes of the previous meeting
- Suggestions received from members
- Actions and events since the previous meeting
- Correspondence on the subject

Before finalising the items, get the Chairman's approval.

### Standard Items

Certain items appear in almost every annual general meeting of a company and also voluntary organisations, such as a club or association. These are given below:

| *Public Limited Company* | *Club or Association* |
|---|---|
| Director's Report | Chairman's · or Secretary's Report |
| Annual Accounts | Annual Accounts |
| Auditor's Report | · Auditor's Report |
| Appointment of Auditors | Appointment of Auditors |
| Declaration of Dividend · | Subscriptions |
| Election of Directors | Election of Office Bearers |

However, the sequence of items differs from organisation to organisation. In some the routine matter is placed in the beginning and in some at the end.

### 5.3.7 Venue of Meetings

Finding the right meeting venue for your meeting or event can be time consuming and potentially daunting with so many venues to choose from. To help focus your decision making, here are our top six tips for areas to consider when choosing a venue.

### Location

Location is one of the most important factors when choosing a meeting venue. Choose somewhere that's convenient for all your attendees, with easy transport links or free parking. Dedicated meeting venues specialise in running meetings day in and day out and are more likely to be focussed on delivering to your needs. Don't underestimate the importance of outdoor space as well.

### Budget

Before you start your search, agree a budget and stick to it to avoid being tempted by more expensive venues that are out of your remit. On the same note, take care about opting for cheaper venues as you may compromise on service or be stung with hidden

costs after the meeting has taken place. Choose a venue that is good value, with great facilities, food and service and take time to read customer testimonials and check their credentials. A good indication of quality is if the venue has recently won industry awards.

## Facilities and Services

Good venues offer great facilities and services as standard. Benefits you can expect as part of your package include: your main meeting room, syndicate rooms, meeting equipment, technological support, stationary, refreshments and creative meeting toolkits. If your delegates are travelling some distance, you may need accommodation too. Can the venue provide-it?

## Space

Ensure the venue you choose is appropriate for your needs. For smaller meetings, a more intimate venue may be best suited for your needs. For larger events, a venue that can offer ample meeting space with breakout rooms, restaurants, accommodation, outside space and leisure facilities, will be better suited.

## Response Times

When you've found a conference centre you like, pay attention to how quickly the venue's sales team responds to your enquiry. This may well be indicative of what the venue's service will be like throughout your booking. You may also want to consider carrying out a site visit before you book the venue to see it in person and judge whether it will fit your requirements.

## Site visits

If you decide to do a site visit, here are a few things to look out for:

- The welcome you receive from reception and your sales representative (it's likely all your delegates will be greeted in the same way)

- Is the venue clean, tidy and well-kept?

- Is there a car park? If so, how full is it? Is it free?

- Can you eat there? If possible, meet the chef, sample the food and discuss possible menu choices before you book

- How do the staff behave? Are they warm, friendly and welcoming?

- Do the training and conference facilities meet your needs?

- Is there outside space that can be utilised for break-out sessions?

## 5.3.8 Leading Meetings

The chairperson's attitude and efficiency-from the beginning statement through the entire discussion-are critically important for the success of the meeting. The chairperson should be well prepared, able to think and act quickly, get along with others, respect their opinion, know objectives of discussion and the reasoning process, be patient and have a sincere interest in the values of cooperative group action.

### 5.3.8.1 Begin with appropriate opening statement

The chairperson should prepare his/her introducing statement before the meeting. Then, present it to the attendants beginning by stating the problem, indicating the importance of the problem, suggest issues and may use a quotation.

### 5.3.8.2 Stimulate discussion for solution discovery

In general, the chairperson is expected to encourage participation from all attendants and keep the discussion moving forward. To help spark discussion on each topic, write on the board or on the overhead projector the criterions a solution should meet. List on another board the possible solutions of the problem as the participants suggest them. Ask questions and keep the participants from wandering into irrelevant paths.

Maintain an atmosphere of goodwill and cooperation throughout the meeting. If a situation becomes tense or if some members are reluctant to speak or become aggressive, apply your communication skills to bring about a common understanding and smooth discussions among the participants.

### 5.3.8.3 Understand the roles of participants

Attendants or participants could have various roles such as initiator, contributor, opinion seeker, information giver, contributor, recorder, energizer and the like. These can be termed as group task roles.

There are also group maintaining and building roles like encourager, harmonizer, group observer, compromiser, and follower. Knowing these various roles being played by attendants of a meeting assists the chairperson in knowing how to react, how to handle role statements made during the meeting.

### 5.3.8.4 Sort, select, and interpret data for solution evaluation

After the chairperson lists suggested solutions on the board he/she should encourage participants and the advantage and disadvantages of each suggested course of action. Here they should be listed separately and care should be taken not to impose the chairperson's own opinions on the group if he/she wishes to participate. Encourage each group member to feel a sense of responsibility for the success of the analysis. Good listening by everyone to what others offer is extremely important. Dear learner, can you remember the importance of active listening?

### 5.3.8.5 State the conclusion and plan of action

Before dismissing the meeting, you as a chairperson should review what the group has accomplished by summarizing what parts of the problem members have solved or partially solved. State the decision (conclusion) clearly and definitely. If the group arrived at various conclusions, they should be listed, preferably in order of importance. Statements should also be made on how the solution the group decided will be carried out. Appointments may be made then announced later in a memo regarding the action.

### 5.3.8.6 Follow up on the meeting

A thorough follow-up involves the following three steps:

## 1. Build an agenda for the next meeting

Most groups meet frequently and they rarely conclude their business in one sitting. A smart chair person plans the next meeting by noting which items need to be carried over from the preceding one, what unfinished business must be addressed?, what progress reports must be shared?, what new information should members hear?

## 2. Follow up on other members

As a chairperson, you can be sure that the promised outcomes of a meeting usually occur if you check up on other members. If the meeting provided instructions, see whether the people who attended the meeting are actually following the steps that were outlined, check on whether they are being performed. A friendly phone call and personal remark can be used for such follow up purposes.

## 3. Take care of your own assignments

Most homeworks that arise out of meetings need continued attention. Don't wait until the last minute because the results will be sloppy and embarrassing.

### 5.3.9 Minutes of a Meeting

After the meeting, the secretary of the meeting, who attended prepares a set of minutes for distribution to all attendants and any other interested party.

**Definition:** *"Minutes are official records of the proceedings of a meeting which summarize what was discussed and what decisions were made".*

Generally speaking, minutes should emphasize what was done at the meeting rather than what was said by the participants.

Minutes should include the following major items:

1. Name of the organization, department or group
2. Date, time, and place of the meeting
3. Name of the members present
4. Name of any other person present as invited guest
5. Name of chairperson and (at the end) recording secretary
6. Brief summary of reports
7. Highlights of solutions presented and decisions made
8. Time of adjournment and, if announced, the date for the next meeting

The minutes should objectively summarize discussions and decisions or conclusions reached. The emotions and feelings of any member expressed during the course of discussion are not recorded. However, the names of those who contributed major points and ideas should be recorded. The minute becomes final only when it is read at the end of the meeting or in the next meeting, approved and signed by the members and chairperson. Often it is circulated beforehand and then it is conformed at the second meeting including amendments and suggestion of members, if any.

### 5.3.9.1 Producing Minutes

There are three main ways of producing minutes of a meeting:

1. Verbative minutes
2. Minutes of resolution
3. Minutes of narration

### 1. Verbative Minutes

These minutes are used primarily in court reporting where every thing is recorded word for word. The secretary in the courtroom types every thing said in the court by the judge, the jury, and the attorneys of both parties and witnesses. The recording is made without omitting a single word and this is what we call as a verbative minute.

### 2. Minutes of resolution

In this type of minutes recording what we find is the main conclusions. Here, one does not find the discussions which took place in each topic, rather the main decisions or conclusions made based on the discussions. The exact wording of every resolution passed should be recorded.

### 3. Minutes of narration

These types of minutes will be a concise summary of all discussions which took place and the conclusions that were reached.

. Now we know what minutes are, the points that they should include and the different ways of recording them. Now is time to see the wording of minutes.

### 5.3.9.2 Wording of Minutes

Minutes should be written in a past tense form using a third person reported speech. (Examples the chairman asked...., the reports were presented and ....) Go through the following examples of minutes and study the wordings and the format carefully.

**Format of writing the minutes**

Name of the company or Department, group or committee conducting the meeting:.

Place of the meeting

Date and time of the meeting

*A list of members present should be recorded in the following manner*

**Present:** _____ *(first should be name of the*
*chairperson)*

_____

_____ *(List of the names of other*

_____ *members in their alphabetical*

_____ *order. )*

### Body of the minute

Following the headings and noting the time the meeting started and ended, the body presents all major decisions reached at the meeting. All assignments of tasks to meeting members should also be included in the body part. Any additional documentation such as tables and charts submitted by the participants should not be overlooked.

### The end of the minute

Here there should be a couple of blank lines for the signature of the chairperson and the secretary who prepares the minute. Before it is being distributed the minute should be read and approved by the chairperson.

In order to give you a full picture the following is a sample of minute, where you can have a closer look at the format, the wordings including the tenses used.

Minutes of ET (executive team) meeting

September 16, 2021

Executive conference room

Present: Mr. Anubhav Bhatt (Chairperson), Mr. A. P. Bansal, Miss

Pratibha Singh,

Mr. Gopal Krishnan, Mr. Rajneesh Tyagi, Also present:

Mrs Sonica Goel and

Mr. Ratan Singh

Review of actions taken at September 4 meeting

1. Miss Pratibha Singh to prepare a job flow chart of a work order

    from clients and report to the ET group.

    Due: September 29

2. Mr. Rajneesh Tyagi to present a report on salary compensation currently offered by the company.

    Due: September 29

### Minutes of September 16 meeting

1. The minutes of September 4 meeting were approved as presented.

2. Job costing and time reporting

    Mr. A. P. Bansal presented a brief report on how the new Adware system for agency-client profitability will work. An internal methods team by Mr. Ratan Singh has been established with the intent of standardizing communication with clients.

3. Training progress—tuition reimbursements Mr.Gopal Krishnan outlined a prolapsed tuition-reimbursements program to be offered to all full-time employees after six months of employment. He proposed that a limit of rupees 20 lac be instituted Action to be taken: the ET group suggested that the proposal wait until the question of agency compensation was solved.

    The chairperson suggested that a detailed report of all salary compensation be

presented before a final decision was made, that the report should be completed by October 20.

The chairperson adjourned the meeting 9 pm and reminded the group that the next meeting would be held on September 29.

Respectfully submitted

Mrs Sonica Goel

Recording secretary

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### Reflective Activity

Read the following memo carefully. Then rewrite it, in line with the guidelines outlined above. You should craft your own memo.

---

To: All employees of Royal manufacturing PLC

From: Managing Director

Date: 28th June, 2021

I am happy to advise you that representatives of the Board will be available next Friday 5th July to acquaint you with information about additional voluntary contributions to our existing occupational pension scheme. This will help all of you to plan for a comfortable retirement, and should take no more than a few minutes of your time. Feel free to contact my office for further details. The meeting with the Board representatives will be at 11.30 a.m. in the Boardroom. In addition, experts from our finance department will be on hand to deal with any detailed queries you may have on this issue. I hope to see you there.

---

## 5.4 MEDIA MANAGEMENT

Media management is a term used for several related tasks throughout post-production. "In general, any task that relates to processing of media is considered to be media management, such as capturing, compressing, copying, moving, or deleting media files. However, media management also refers to keeping track of media files via clip properties such as log notes, comments, scene number, shot/take number etc."

Thus, media management deals with process, procedures, mechanism of reporting in an effective and viable way.

### Need for Media Management

We need media management on the following grounds:

1. To report the policy and programmes of the government in the interest of society.

2. To ensure and inculcate ethical values in media system.

3. To broad base the coverage of different types of media.

4. To professionalize the media system in proper perspective.

**ADVERTISEMENTS:**

5. To serve the public interest by focusing on the issues affecting the society at large.

**Scope of Media Management:**

Media management covers the following:

(i) Regulatory framework of the media.

(ii) Compliance of ethical values in reporting.

**ADVERTISEMENTS:**

(iii) Reporting of issues affecting society at large.

(iv) Developing base for professionalisation of print and electronic media

(v) Maintaining high standards of objectivity in criticism of government and other authorities.

(vi) Developing process and procedures for reporting.

(vii) Developing and implementing control mechanism for media operations.

**Media Structure:**

Media structure includes newspapers, news-agencies, magazines, journals, radio, television/channels etc. The Indian media sector is quite diverse, unlike that in most other developing or emerging economies. It has 398 daily newspapers, 98 more that appear at fixed intervals, 562 TV stations, 312 radio stations and 39.2 million cable TV subscribers.

## 5.5 THE PRESS RELEASE

A **press release** is an official statement delivered to members of the news media for the purpose of providing information, an official statement, or making an announcement. A press release is traditionally composed of nine structural elements, including a headline, introduction, body, and other information. Press releases can be delivered to members of the media physically on paper and electronically.

Using press release material can benefit media corporations because they help decrease costs and improve the amount of material a media firm can output in a certain amount of time. Due to the material being pre-packaged, press releases save journalists time, not only in writing a story, but also the time and money it would have taken to capture the news firsthand.

Although using a press release can save a company time and money, it constrains the format and style of distributed media. As well, press releases are biased towards the organization which ordered them. In the digital age, consumers want to get their information instantly which puts pressure on the news media to output as much material as possible. This may cause news media companies to heavily rely on press releases to create stories.

## 5.6 THE PRESS CONFERENCE

A **press conference** or **news conference** is a media event in which newsmakers invite journalists to hear them speak and, most often, ask questions. A **joint press conference** instead is held between two or more talking sides.

In a press conference, one or more speakers may make a statement, which may be followed by questions from reporters. Sometimes only questioning occurs; sometimes there is a statement with no questions permitted.

A <u>media event</u> at which no statements are made, and no questions allowed, is called a <u>photo op</u>. A government may wish to open their proceedings for the media to witness events, such as the passing of a piece of legislation from the government in parliament to the senate, via a media availability.

<u>Television</u> stations and networks especially value press conferences: because today's TV news programs air for hours at a time, or even continuously, assignment editors have a steady appetite for ever-larger quantities of footage.

News conferences are often held by <u>politicians</u>; by sports teams; by celebrities or film studios; by commercial organizations to promote products; by <u>attorneys</u> to promote <u>lawsuits</u>; and by almost anyone who finds benefit in the free publicity afforded by media coverage. Some people, including many police chiefs, hold press conferences reluctantly in order to avoid dealing with reporters individually.

A press conference is often announced by sending an advisory or <u>news release</u> to <u>assignment editors</u>, preferably well in advance. Sometimes they are held spontaneously when several reporters gather around a newsmaker.

News conferences can be held just about anywhere, in settings as formal as the <u>White House</u> room set aside for the purpose of as informal as the street in front of a crime scene. Hotel conference rooms and courthouses are often used for press conferences. Sometimes such gatherings are recorded for press use and later released on an <u>interview disc</u>.

## 5.7 MEDIA INTERVIEWS

A media interview is what it sounds: an interview with a journalist or other member of the media, for publicity purposes. In <u>public relations</u>, these interviews are meant to provide information and detail, create interest and build awareness. There are many kinds of media interviews, from television to radio and print.

### How a Media interview works

### 1. *It is informative*

The most basic goal of a media interview is to provide information to a member of the media, who will then circulate it through some sort of <u>news outlet</u>. There are many types of media interviews. Interviews can be done a number of ways, as journalists are at work on more platforms than ever before. No matter if it's by phone, TV or radio -- the goal of a media interview is to get positive information out about a client and build interest in the client's work or goals.

### 2. *It spreads your brand*

Media interviews are a major tool in getting your brand out there. Gaining coverage from a media entity directly impacts the number of people who see or know about your product. The amount of coverage you get and the media type will dictate just how many consumers you reach. If you want to build interest and awareness, use media interviews to spread your brand.

### 3. *It's unpredictable to some degree*

You. Must. Prepare. No matter how light the topic, or how well you know the

journalist, a media interview is always somewhat unpredictable. Anyone heading into a media interview should have a list of topics, a general outline of their answers, a list of overall goals for the interview, and a plan to handle sensitive questions. It's a journalist's job is to ask questions, regardless of how they make you or your client feel. The key to handling this well is preparation.

## 5.8 SEMINARS CONFERENCES

The academic world has a long tradition of organising seminars and conferences but now these have also become common in the professional world. The ever-increasing need for optimum utilisation of men and material demands deep thinking and the realisation that this can be best done by a group and not by an individual.

The terms seminar and conference are sometimes confused with other discussion groups. We shall therefore first try to describe what we mean by seminar, symposium, panel discussion, conference and convention. Most of the characteristic features of seminar and conference are applicable to others also and hence they have not been taken up for detailed treatment.

A seminar refers to the discussion in a small group in which the result of original research or advanced study is presented through oral or written reports. It may also be organised for cross-fertilisation of ideas. Generally one person presents a lead paper, incorporating his findings and then there is an in-depth discussion on the material presented.

The other members are knowledgeable and take active part in the discussion. They closely interact with the lead speaker by expressing their views as seen from their individual angles. The doubts, if any, are sought to be clarified by putting specific questions. The main purpose of a seminar is to share knowledge and to get the viewpoints of equally well-informed persons.

In the university context the seminar refers to the discussion by a group of advanced level students under the supervision of a tutor.

As the seminar coordinator it would be your duty to send the above mentioned information to all participants well in time either through a circular letter, an e-mail or through a brochure with a covering note. This communication should be properly structured and should clearly state the objective of the seminar and the arrangements that have been made for conducting it and also those for board and lodging if you are inviting participants from other towns and cities.

For example, if you are organising a seminar on vocational education, you may send a circular such as the following:

### NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
#### Vivekanad Marg, New Delhi 110011

12 May, 2021

Dear------------

You will be pleased to know that we are organising a one-day seminar on Vocational Education on Saturday, 7 July 2021.

The objective of the seminar is to discuss the necessity of more effective linkage between vocational education and employment, the identification of strategies for

**NOTES**

implementation, and determination of the directions for the future. Dr. S.K. Das, Professor and Head, Department of Education, Jamia Islamia, New Delhi has kindly agreed to be the lead speaker. Other details of the Seminar are given below:

| | |
|---|---|
| VENUE | : National Institute of Vocational Education, Vivekanand Marg, New Delhi 110011 |
| TELEGRAM | : Education, New Delhi |
| PHONES | : 426378, 429652 |
| 0900-1030 | |
| SESSION I | : Necessity of More Effective Linkage between Vocational Education and Employment |
| CHAIRMAN | : Mr. Ramgopal Sharma |
| | Secretary |
| | Ministry of Human Resource Development Government of India |
| 1100-1230 | |
| SESSION II | : Identification of Strategies for Implementation |
| CHAIRMAN | : Dr. Abdul Hussain |
| | Director |
| | National Institute for Educational Planning Kasturba Gandhi Marg |
| 1530-1700 | |
| SESSION III | : Directions for the Future |
| CHAIRMAN | : Mr. R.S. Krishnan |
| | Personnel Manager |
| | Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. |
| | Bhopal |

I hope you would be able to attend the seminar. Your participation, I am sure, would make the discussion meaningful and fruitful. For your perusal, I am enclosing a background paper incorporating the results of a study on vocational education carried out by the Department of Education, Jamia Millia Islamia.

Please return the enclosed form giving the required information, so as to reach us latest by 16 June 2021, to enable us to make suitable arrangements for transport, board and lodging.

We look forward to your participating in the seminar.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely

(S. Bhagat)

Seminar Coordinator

Enclosures: Two

## REPLY FORM

Seminar on Vocational Education to be held at the National Institute of Vocational Education, New-Delhi, on 7 July, 2021

(a) I am glad to inform you that I would be able to attend the Seminar. I would be arriving by bus/train/air at _____, on _____. Please arrange transport, board and lodging for me and inform me of the same.

(b) I am sorry I would not be able to attend the seminar. t would however be grateful to receive a copy of the Proceedings of the Seminar.

Name:

Address:

Date: _____

You should expect the replies from the intending participants to arrive around the last date given by you. When a sizeable number of replies have been received, you should get the information, tabulated for further action. You would need to make arrangements for the following:

(i) Transport

(ii) Allotment of rooms in the booked guest houses, hotels, etc.

(iii) Menu, timing and place for different meals, snacks, tea and coffee, cold drinks, etc.

(iv) Seating; audio-visual aids; photocopying/cyclostyling facilities; stationery, OHP, whiteboard and markers or blackboard, chalk both white and coloured, and pointer; public address system; facilities for recording and note-taking.

(v) Rapporteuring.

(vi) Deployment of manpower for the various tasks/allocation of duties.

Before the first session begins, as the coordinator you should welcome the participants, introduce the topic of the seminar, the lead speaker and the chairmen of the sessions. Also briefly mention the arrangements that have been made for the conduct of the discussion. You may then hand over the floor to the Chairman of the first session. He would be expected to make introductory remarks, delineating the scope of the topic of the session and then invite the lead speaker to begin his presentation.

The lead speaker generally gives the background of the study he has made, the methods or procedures of investigation he has followed and the results or conclusions he has reached. The emphasis is obviously on the conclusions. After his presentation is over, the chairmen invites discussion. It should become clear from the discussion, in what way the study has furthered the advancement of knowledge and added, howsoever humbly, to the body of knowledge in the particular field. We are often stimulated in our thinking in the presence of others. The discussion should take advantage of this aspect of human nature and exploit it for shedding new light on the topic under examination. In this the role of the lead speaker is crucial. The Chairman, however, has to ensure that each member plays his expected role and this he can do only if he is clear about his own role.

In the last session the coordinator sums up the conclusions reached in individual sessions and states their significance. He also proposes a *vote of thinks*. The least you can do is to acknowledge publicly your gratitude to people who have helped to make

the seminar a success. You may, in your appreciation, very briefly emphasise the facts of the presentation and contributions rather than embarrass the speakers by eulogising them. The overriding consideration is courtesy. Whenever possible you may introduce a light touch without resorting to flippancy.

It is also a good idea to construct, beforehand, at least the opening and the closing sentences to avoid any embarrassing situation. You may begin and. close as follows:

### Opening Sentence

*Mr.* Chairman, I have great pleasure in proposing a vote of thanks ...

### Closing Sentence

In the end I would like to thank you all for having accepted our invitation and for making the discussion lively and purposeful.

The order in which you would like to refer to persons should be clear in your mind. If you do not feel confident you may write all you wish, to say and memorise it. A vote of thanks should never be read out as it is the last face-to-face contact between you and the members of the seminar group. If you read it, the impact of oral interaction, which a seminar essentially is, would be lost.

After the seminar is over you may have to get the proceedings/ conclusions printed for circulation to participants. For doing this task with speed you should plan well in advance so that the impact of the discussion is not lost.

You may send this document along with a thank you letter, such as the following:

Dear _____

I am enclosing a copy of the Proceedings of the Seminar on Vocational Education held on 7 July 2007. If you have any comments or suggestions to make, please let us know.

It was a real pleasure to have you with us on this occasion. Your presence enhanced the value of the seminar and we are really grateful to you for having made significant contributions in the discussion.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

Enclosure: One

What we have discussed above is applicable to the seminar that would be attended by a large number of participants from other organisations and towns. In actual practice you may often be required to organise seminars on a much smaller scale – one session seminars with participants drawn from your own organisation. And then obviously all the elaborate arrangements discussed above may not have to be made. What is intended here is a broad guideline; you will have to formulate in each case your own strategy in implementation, keeping in view the specific requirements of the situation.

### 5.8.2 Organising Conferences

Most of the steps that have to be taken for preparation, presentation and conclusion of the seminar are broadly relevant for the organisation of a conference also. As we have

stated earlier, a conference is usually a large gathering of persons who meet to confer on a particular theme or to exchange experience or information.

Since the information to be sent to the potential delegates is substantial, it is better to prepare a brochure containing ail the details. It should be mailed to the expected participants well in advance. You may structure your brochure as follows:

Page 1 : Theme of the conference, name of the sponsors, dates, name of the organisers.

Page 2 : A short note on the theme of the conference.

Page 3 : Names of the Conference President and Secretary; names of rapporteurs; venue; time, date and place of plenary and valedictory sessions and also those of small group discussions.

Page 4 : Details of invited lectures name of the speaker, topic, time, date and plase; exhibitions nature, timings and venue; audio-visual aids available for use during the Conference.

Page 5 : Reception, transport, board and lodging· arrangements.; postal and telegraphic address of the conference Secretary and his phone number, P:elegate fee.

Usually the size of the brochure is 12 em by 21·em and it is sent along with a covering letter and proforma for·reply from the intending participants. The samples of letter and proforma, given earlier can be amended and used by you for the conference and other discussion groups also. A **sample brochure** a announcing a national conventign is given at the end of this chapter.

After the replies are received, prepare a list of delegates and go ahead with the arrangements for 'their reception, transport, board and lodging. At the same time send a short note acknowledging the receipt of the acceptance form and informing them of the arrangements you have made. An example is given as follows:

---

Dear _____

We are glad to know that you would be attending the Conference.

We note that you would be airiving at _____, on _____, by bus/train/air. We have set up Reception Desks near the main exits at the bus stand, the railway station and the airport. The reception desks would work round the clock from 4 am (date) to 10 pm _____ (date).

You have been allotted a room in Atithi Bhavan, Mahatma Gandhi Road (Telephone. Number 629274).

Further details will be given to you at the .Reception Desk. Just in case you are not able to contact the Reception for some reason, please report directly to the Bhavan at the counter marked 'arrivals.'

A receipt for ₹. _____, the delegate fee sent by you, is enclosed.

.We look forward to meeting you soon.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

Name

Conference Secretary

Enclosure: One.

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At the plenary session there is usually a Welcome Address by the Secretary, Keynote Address by the Conference President and a Vote of Thanks. Sometimes a conference is inaugurated by a dignitary and in this case the inaugural address is scheduled between the Welcome Address and the Keynote Address. Often the important addresses are printed and distributed to the audience before they are read out. The practice of doing so takes away the impact of the face-to-face oral communication as most of the people keep their eyes glued on the distributed written material and miss the nuances of oral delivery and body language. We would therefore advise you to distribute the text of the speeches after they have been delivered.

Some organisations wish to find out the extent to which the conference objectives were achieved. Such an evaluation is helpful in determining more effective follow-up action and suggesting how future programmes can be made more successful. The most convenient way to do so is through a conference questionnaire which should be filled in by the participants. The basic principles of preparing a questionnaire have been discussed in Chapter 9. Following are some questions, which you may find useful when you are asked to draft a questionnaire.

---

(i) To guide us in interpreting your reactions please give the name of your organisation _____ production or services of your organisation, your department, your position , and description of your work

(ii) Have the conference topics been fairly pertinent to your field of interest? Yes _____ No _____.

(iii) Was the general level of information exchanged at formal sessions too elementary? Yes _____ No _____ Too theoretical? Yes No _____.

Just about right? Yes _____ No _____

(iv) What topics would you like to be included in a future conference? _____

(v) What benefits did you hope to derive from attending this conference? _____

(vi) In view of the benefits derived from this conference, do you, recommend that we organise another such conference? Yes No _____.

(vii) Were you satisfied with the board and lodging arrangements? Yes _____ No _____.

(viii) Would you like any exhibitions to be held in conjunction with a future conference? Yes _____ No _____. Give specific suggestions.

(ix) Please write further criticisms, observations, or suggestions on the blank sheets attached:

Thanks for your help.

Name (optional): _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

---

## 5.9 WORKSHOP

A workshop is an interactive session, often taking a full day or more, in which clients,

researchers and/or other participants such as customers work intensively on an issue or question. The process often combines elements of qualitative research, brainstorming and problem solving. They may involve larger numbers of people than conventional group discussions, and often involve more than one moderator or facilitator. Companies offer seminars and workshops on handling common oral communication situations (such as dealing with customers, managing subordinates, and getting along with co-workers), as well as training in computers and other electronic means of communication.

Beginning with the Industrial Revolution era, a workshop may be a room, rooms or building which provides both the area and tools (or machinery) that may be required for the manufacture or repair of manufactured goods. Workshops were the only places of production until the advent of industrialization and the development of larger factories. In the 20th and 21st century, many Western homes contain a workshop in the garage, basement, or an external shed. Home workshops typically contain a workbench, hand tools, power tools and other hardware. Along with their practical applications for repair goods or do small manufacturing runs, workshops are used to tinker and make prototypes.[1][2][3]

Workshops may vary in industrial focus. For instance, some workshops may focus on automotive repair or restoration. Woodworking is one of the most common focuses, but metalworking, electronics work, and many types of electronic prototyping may be done.

## SUMMARY

- Presentation is the process of presenting information to an audience, possibly enhanced with visual or audio material.

- The elements of a presentation are: introduction of the topic in clear words, giving of relevant points, use of only one idea per slide if slides are being used, use of minimum slides, visualization of your key points, authentic and authoritative tone, label and number of each overhead transparency, chart, or flip charts used, preview of the main supporting points, emphasis on the main point, use of descriptive language, smooth transition to next section and summarization of the main points.

- The visual aids in a presentation make you more persuasive by adding variety and emphasis to your presentation.

- Handouts, flashcards, flipcharts/posters, chalkboard, overhead projector, slide shows are the visual aids that can be used in a presentation.

- Appearance is the chief component of your presentation.

- Your posture and the way you present yourself on the platform is as important as your gesture.

- Before your presentation, you should practice delivery of presentation.

- Meetings are a gathering where purposive discourse occurs among three or more people who exchange information on a common topic or problem, for better understanding or for solving a problem.

- The meeting with the employees is found to be very useful in building formal communication the higher-ups are to encourage the employees to talk about their constructive suggestions, job problems and needs.

- The meetings help to heighten the team spirit and assure the necessary information flow by encouraging two-way communication.

- Two basic purposes of business meetings are: to present information and to solve problems.

- Effective leadership of a meeting requires careful planning before the meeting on the date, time, place, agenda, physical arrangements and participants, and a good way of proceeding through the meeting.

- During the meeting the leader has responsibilities of beginning with an appropriate opening statement and stimulating discussion for solution discovery, evaluation and choice of action. The chairperson should also encourage opinions, clarify vague statement and maintain an atmosphere of goodwill and cooperation. The leader should also be aware of the various roles of participants and respond quickly and wisely to role statements.

- After the meeting, the chairperson's responsibilities include distributing the minutes and seeing that responsible appointments are made and that a date is set to carry out the necessary action.

- Minutes are official records of the proceedings of a meeting which summarize what was discussed and what decisions were made.

- There are three main ways of producing minutes of a meeting: Verbative minutes, Minutes of resolution, and Minutes of narration. Media management is a term used for several related tasks throughout post-production.

- A press release is an official statement delivered to members of the news media for the purpose of providing information, an official statement, or making an announcement.

- A press conference or news conference is a media event in which newsmakers invite journalists to hear them speak and, most often, ask questions.

- The most basic goal of a media interview is to provide information to a member of the media, who will then circulate it through some sort of news outlet.

- A seminar refers to the discussion in a small group in which the result of original research or advanced study is presented through oral or written reports.

- The conference is a closed group discussion. The participants have to register for attending it. Any other person present at the conference is either permitted observer or an invited guest.

- A workshop is an interactive session, often taking a full day or more, in which clients, researchers and/or other participants such as customers work intensively on an issue or question.

## CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Define presentation. How can a well planned and prepared presentation help you in your presentation?

2. Discuss the importance of appearance and postures in a presentation.

3. If you are to design a presentation, how will you do it?

4. Name the visual aids you would use in your presentation.

5. How will you plan a meeting?

6. Differentiate among agenda, notice and minutes of a meeting.

7. Discuss media management.

8. Define press release as well as press conference.

9. Differentiate seminars vs conferences.

10. Define workshop.

## KEY WORDS

**presentation:** a meeting at which something, especially a new product or idea, or piece of work, is shown to a group of people

**the minutes:** a summary or record of what is said or decided at a formal meeting

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Plan and prepare a presentation on the topic 'Regulation of Traffic in Metros in India'.

2. Assume that you have been appointed Secretary of a Committee comprising management, staff and workers' representatives, to advise the company to produce a handbook containing information about conditions of service, rules and regulations, fringe benefits and other related matters. The Committee held its first meeting on 16 April, 2021 and discussed the procedures for the collection of information and its organisation for the handbook. Invent the necessary details and draft the agenda and minutes of this meeting.

3. The Executive Committee of Bhiwani Industrial Corporation, Bhiwani, held its fifth meeting on 10 December, 2021 at BIC Headquarters, Bhiwani. The agenda was as follows:

   5:01 Minutes of the last meeting

   5:02 Addition of two rooms to the building – one for general stores and the other for office workers

   5:03 Opening a tea stall

   5:04 Appointment of two peons and one treasurer

   5:05 Setting up a paper mill at Bhiwani

   5:06 D.A. to the employees

   5:07 Any other matter with the permission of the Chair

   As Secretary of the Executive Committee, write the minutes of the meeting.

7. Imagine that you are the Secretary in attendance at the seventh annual meeting of the Executive Committee of the Ramgarh Club held at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, 6 March, 2021. Write the minutes of meeting, assuming the agenda to be as follows:

   7:01 Minutes of the previous meeting

   7:02 Chairman's report

   7:03 Appointment of an auditor for the next year

   7:04 Purchase of furniture for the common room

   7:05 Creation of one post of a full-time clerk for the club

7:06 Increase the subscription rate

7:07 Any other matter with the permission of the Chairman

4. At a meeting of the Executive Committee. of the Staff Association of Government Engineering College, Devigarh held at 4 pm, on Friday 23 March, 2021 in Room NumberJI-39, the following business was transacted: appointment of auditors for the annual accounts, construction of a swimming pool for staff, minutes of the last meeting, establishment of departmental libraries, extra classes for students who failed in the mid-semester examination, any other matter with the permission of the Chairman.

Assuming you were the Secretary in attendance, (i) draft a notice to be sent to each member, arranging the agenda items properly, and (ii) write the minutes.

5. At the tenth meeting of the Board of Directors of Precision Machine Tools Co. Ltd., Jamshedpur the following business was transacted:

10.01 Minutes of the previous meeting

· 10.02 Tenders for the new premises

10.03 Creation of five posts of travelling salesmen

10.04 Resignation of the Chief Accountant .

10.05 Opening branch offices in Nagpur, Hyderabad and Cochin

10.06 Any other matter with the permission of the Chairman

Assuming you were the Secretary in attendance, draft the minutes of the meeting.

6. In a TV manufacturing organisation, a meeting has been called to take a decision about an advertising campaign to be launched by the company. A proposal prepared by the Advertising Manager is to be presented for discussion and approval. Assuming you have been named the Secretary of this meeting, draft a notice and agenda for it. Invent the necessary details.

7. Assume that you have recently taken over as the Secretary of a Public Limited Company. Informal discussion with the senior officers reveals, among other things, that the growth of the organization has been hampered because of frequent strikes by labourers. After going through your preliminary report, the Chairman has called a meeting of the Board of Directors to discuss the issue in depth and to find a lasting solution to the problem.

Draft the agenda for this meeting, inventing the necessary details.

8. (a) Assume that you acted as the Chairman of the first session of the Seminar on Vocational Education. Inventing the necessary details, write the concluding remarks, summarising the main points and highlighting the significant aspects of the discussion.

(b) As a participant at the third session of the above Seminar, you spoke immediately after the lead speaker. Write your observations (i) expressing your disagreement with his approach, and

(ii) supporting his point of view.

9. A national conference on Technology Forecasting Techniques is being organised in Delhi under the auspices of Department of Science and Technology, Government

of India. About 200 scientists, engineers, technocrats from academic, research and industrial organisations, both government and private are expected to attend. The topics such as frontiers in biotechnology, energy prospects, telecommunication, appropriate technology, education for 21st century, etc., are likely to come up for discussion.
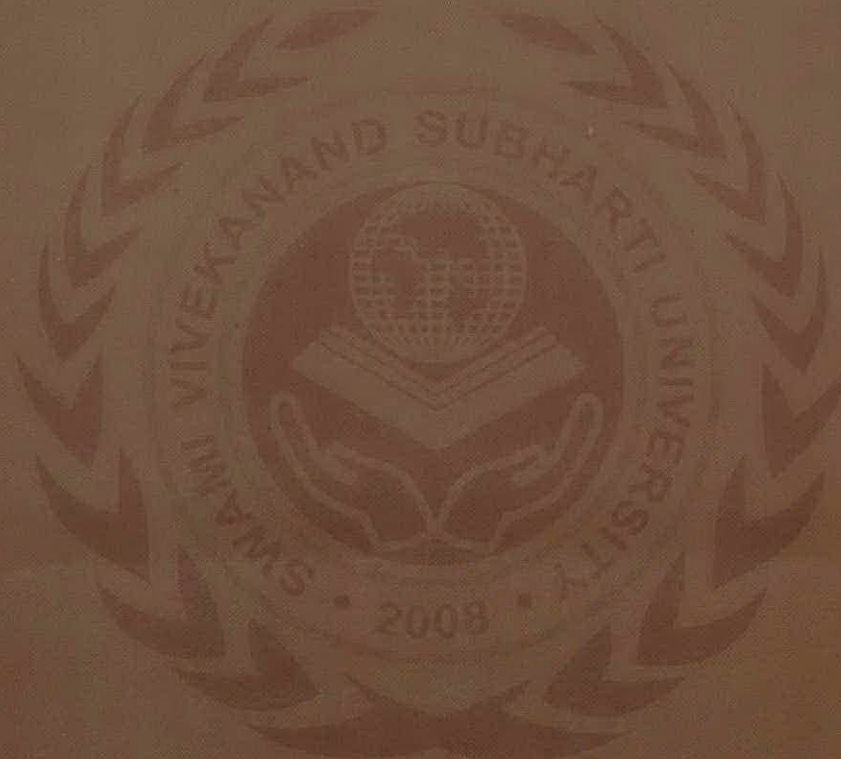
(i) Write welcome remarks that you would make as the Conference Secretary at the inaugural session and also the vote of thanks that you would propose at the concluding session.

(ii) Write the address that you would deliver as the Chairman of the first session.

सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः !
सर्वे भद्राणिः पश्यन्तु माकश्चिद् दुःख भाग्भवेत् !!