BUSINESS COMMUNICATION AND ETIQUETTES
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER NO.</th>
<th>CHAPTER NAME</th>
<th>PAGE NO.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Communication in Workplace</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Communication Skills: Verbal and Non-verbal</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Organisational Communication</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Business Writing</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Indirectness in Persuasion and Sales Messages</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Public Speaking</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Technology-enabled Communication</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Personal Etiquette and Grooming</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Aspects of Communication</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Case Studies</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CURRICULUM

Communication in workplace: Role of communication in business, Why business needs to communicate, Importance of communication skill for you, Forms of communication, Formation and sending of response, 7 C’s of good communication skills, Barriers to communication, Communication skills – verbal and Non-verbal, Organizational communication – internal and external including PR

Fundamentals of business writing: Adaptation and selection of words, Use of familiar words, Adapting to multiple readers

Indirectness in persuasion and sales messages: Determining the persuasion, Gaining attention in the opening, Making the request clear and positive

Public speaking and oral reporting: Making formal speeches, Defining oral report, Differences between oral and written reports, Planning the oral report, Telephone communication

Technology-enabled communication: Using technology in communication tasks, E mails, Tools for constructing messages, Computer tools for gathering and collecting information

Personal etiquettes and grooming for corporate: Eye contact, Body language, Handshake, Business card etiquette, Work habits – punctuality, prioritizes your work, stay positive, Bring solution, etc.

Aspects of communication: Cultural aspects of communication – intercultural and multicultural, Ethical and Legal aspects
# COMMUNICATION IN WORKPLACE

## CONTENTS

1.1 Introduction – What is Communication?

1.2 Role of Communication in Business
   - 1.2.1 Communication with Your Directs
   - 1.2.2 Communication with Your Peers
   - 1.2.3 Communication with Your Boss
   - 1.2.4 Success of Communication is the Success of Business

1.3 Importance of Communication Skills
   - 1.3.1 Listening in Communication

1.4 Forms of Communication
   - 1.4.1 Internal-operational Communication
   - 1.4.2 External-operational Communication
   - 1.4.3 Personal Communication
   - 1.4.4 Detailed Study of the Forms of Communication
   - 1.4.5 Communication Network in Organization

1.5 Formation and Sending of Response

1.6 7 Cs of Good Communication

1.7 Barriers to Communication
   - 1.7.1 Why Communication Barriers?
   - 1.7.2 Causes for Miscommunication
   - 1.7.3 Overcoming Barriers in Communication
   - 1.7.4 Measures to Overcome Barriers in Communication

1.8 Summary

1.9 Descriptive Questions

1.10 Answers and Hints

1.11 Suggested Reading for Reference
ORGANIZATIONAL GRAPEVINE IS INEVITABLE

The Extreme Ltd. Company is manufacturer of a line of quality whatsits. The Extreme Ltd. Company is moderately large, with scores of departments and hundreds of workers doing a thousand and one tasks. It employs crews of salespeople who sell the manufactured whatsits to wholesalers all over the country. Like most companies in its field, Extreme Ltd. works to move its products from wholesaler to retailer and from retailer to the final consumer. And it works to keep the consumer happy with the purchase. The Extreme Ltd. Company is indeed a typical company.

Mr. Mahesh is a clerk in Extreme Ltd. order department. Mahesh’s daily communication activities begin the moment he awakens. But for our purposes, we shall pick up Mahesh’s activities as he rides to work in a car pool with three co-workers. Of course, Mahesh and his car-pool companions communicate as they travel. Obviously, communication has a social use, and riding to work is a form of social occasion for Mahesh and his friends. Most of their talk is about trivial matters. They talk primarily to entertain themselves and to while away the time. There is a joke or two, some comments about politics, a few words about an upcoming football game, and some talk about plans for a getaway weekend fishing trip. Such talk, of course, is of little direct concern to Extreme Ltd. except perhaps as it affects the general happiness and welfare of the company’s workers.

In time, the conversation drifts to subjects more pertinent to Extreme Ltd. and its operations. Someone mentions a rumour about a proposed change in promotion policy. Then Mahesh and the others bring up their own collection of rumours, facts, and opinions on the subject. And in the process, they giving, receiving, or handling information.

Nothing that Mahesh did directly involve making whatsits, which, of course, is the Extreme Ltd. Company’s main reason for being. Yet the importance of his activities to Extreme’s operations is unquestionable. Obviously, Mahesh’s work assignment more directly involves communication than do many others at Extreme Ltd. But there are many other communication-oriented assignments in the company, and every Extreme’s employee workday is peppered with communication in one form or another. If we were to trace the workday of each Extreme’s employee and combine our findings, we would come up with an infinitely complex picture of the communication that goes on at Extreme Ltd. We would see that communication indeed, plays a major role in Extreme’s operations.
After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- Understand the role of communication in business as explained by Peter Drucker
- Know the needs of businesses to communicate
- Understand the importance of communication skills
- Describe various forms of communication

1.1 INTRODUCTION – WHAT IS COMMUNICATION?

The term communication has been derived from the Latin word ‘communis’ that means ‘common’ and thus, if a person effects communication, he establishes a common ground of understanding. Literally, communication means to inform, to tell, to show, or to spread information. Thus, it may be interpreted as an interchange of thought or information to bring about understanding and confidence for good industrial relations. It brings about unity of purpose, interest, and efforts in an organisation.

Communication has been defined as “the transfer of information from one person to another, irrespective of whether or not it elicits confidence.” Koontz and O’Donell

Carrying on business in today’s scenario of highly competitive and globalized environment sets a great challenge. Conducting business is not merely sale and purchase of goods and services. It is, in point of fact, forecasting, planning, organizing, instructing, coordinating and controlling. For the triumph on these business parameters, communication plays a critical role.

1.2 ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN BUSINESS

Peter Ferdinand Drucker (November 19, 1909–November 11, 2005) was an Austrian-born American management consultant, educator, and author, whose writings added to the philosophical and practical foundations of the advanced business corporation. He was also a
leader in the development of management education, and he devised
the concept known as Management by Objectives (MBO).

Communication is not just significant for business. It is essential
for the very existence and operation of any business or any other
coordinated effort.

Business managers spend much of their time communicating,
that is talking, listening, writing and reading. Higher the degree of
management, greater the time spent on communicating. The ability
to communicate well is required for their success. Peter Drucker, one
of the greatest management thinkers of our time quotes:

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DEFINITION

“For managers in the organization, the ability to express oneself is
perhaps the most important of all the skills a person can possess.”
```

Communication is necessary to people who work cooperatively
and need to coordinate their activities. It is essential for sharing of
knowledge from one person to another.

Communication is used to substitute understanding and knowledge on
several issues like jobs to be performed, work status, responsibilities,
suggestions, methods to be used, arrangements and situational
factors.

While communication has invariably been very significant in business,
it becoming increasingly important because of various trends like,

- extending interaction among people including globalization,
- use of more and more changed assets and processes in industry
  and business,
- increasing pressure on efficient utilization of resource because of
  higher consumption levels induced by growing population and
  rising aspirations of consumers,
- use of more complicated decision making processes, and
- accelerated pace of change in business that demands always
  increasing need for motivating people to get their cooperation.

Communication is always required in order to get things done. The
importance of effective communication is for the receiver to decode
the message appropriately and not just to ensure that the message is
simply communicated. Interpersonal communication is the way we all
interact in the workplace, but in the management or executive role, it
is not only critical to make sure your information is passed “down”, but
to assert communication “sideways” and most importantly “above”.

First time managers and even veteran managers can fall into the
habit of just communicating downwards to their team. As this is what
the “boss” does above you, it makes sense to mimic the behaviour
of “water falling” the information to your directs. What you may not
comprehend is your boss communicating upwards to his boss.
According to Drucker, there are three dimensions to being an effective communicator in all spheres of management. They are as follows:

1.2.1 COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR DIRECTS

A manager's success is decided by the level of output from his/her directs. The first rule of understanding is do they understand their JD (job description) and the value they provide to the organization? For if this is not determined, any communication will be hard to process and applied to work more slowly. In a worst case scenario a manager can misdirect, rather than direct if the employee does not realize their contribution.

Are there any obstructions or news they need to be aware about that impact their work? Are there upcoming changes to events that your directs will need to adapt to? What is some news that can improve their performance? Keeping your directs “in the loop” instead of expecting from them to find out news by themselves builds a level of trust and increases their skills and work production.

What is needed out of you? Listen to your team and ask questions of what is holding them back and what processes can be added or eliminated in order for them to perform. Their perception of their work environment equated to yours can be entirely different, it is your duty to catch as much as you can and optimize the environment.

1.2.2 COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR PEERS

Communicate what you are working on and what is going well and not as well. Your peers may not report to you, but they can render valued assistance and expertise.

Inquire if there is anything you or your team is doing to keep them back. If one department is doing well at the expense of others, the organization cannot improve and loses traction. With this question about feedback, your peers may also ask you what they are doing to hold you back. This criss-cross communication will assure you both have the information needed to improve yourselves and your teams.

1.2.3 COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR BOSS

Determine what communication techniques your boss finds effective. Are they a reader or a listener? Do they value verbal communication or hardcopy communication? Sending weekly reports to a boss that understands more verbally will be ineffective for the both of you, as you'll keep writing and he'll keep on deleting not knowing what to look for.

About any disruptions or possible complexities in a project keep your boss in the loop and communicate instantly. Without this upwards communication, your boss may assume that everything is running smoothly. Embarrassment is not making a mistake; embarrassment comes when your boss says “You knew we were at a disadvantage in this field for weeks, why did you not inform me?”
Invite feedbacks: Discover what you or your team could work on, what the priorities are and if there is any news that can affect you or your team. For without direction, you will be mistaken. Your boss will most likely ask the same question with feedback, part your insights and ask for possible answers for the future. Once there is understanding of what you and your manager need or do not require to perform on key targets, the question that follows is always: “Why didn’t we share each other’s feedback before?”

Success in an organization depends on all three spheres of communication: your directs, your peers and your boss. Drawing these spheres closer to the centre so they overlap more and more with uninterrupted communication and improvement will result not only in you being successful, but everybody around you as well.

1.2.4 SUCCESS OF COMMUNICATION IS THE SUCCESS OF BUSINESS

Business communication may make relations or may break relations. Business communication asserts, sustains and animates business relations. It can figure out the problems of the organization and it can produce problems if the executives are not perfect in communication with employees, suppliers and customers.

Business communication can contribute to industrial turbulence and at the same time can bring industrial peace. Following summarized points further rationalize the need or implication of communication.

Communication is:
- Basis of planning
- Basis of decision making
- Creating coordination and cooperation
- Establishment of effective leadership
- Development of human relations
- Helpful in building image
- Helpful in achieving peace and effective control
- Leading to high morale and motivation
- Unseen infrastructure of an organization
- Helpful in delegation of authority.

**DEFINITION**

“The most important thing about communication is to hear what isn’t being said.”

– Peter Drucker
Improving management communication is an uninterrupted and on-going process throughout the organization. The addition of the technology such as the BlackBerry, internet, video-conferencing, software that use “cloud” computing, etc.; all these tools increase efficiency but may have little or no impact on organizational effectiveness.

The assured consequence of communicating the wrong information faster is getting the wrong tasks done quicker.

*Example:* Consider the two scenarios depicted below:

**Company XYZ in the Food and Services Industry**

**Goal:** Not communicated down properly. “Inertia” goal is to “work hard and be productive”.

**Management Communication:** Manager: “All right Reeta, what I need you to do today is just keep busy, keep cooking food so we can fill orders. Go, go, go and if someone else wants help, go help them as well.”

**End Result:** Reeta: “What a crude day today, I forced myself to the limit, cooking all this food for four hours straight and by the end of the day, we had tons of leftovers! My manager told me to just throw it out and to get ready for another day tomorrow. I also fell behind cooking as I was told to help everybody around me; I can’t stand it when my tasks fall through owing to others!”

**Company ABC in the Hotel and Resort Industry**

**Goal:** Make a memorable experience for each and every guest.

**Management Communication:** Manager: “All right Harry, let’s do what we always do best and be original with our guests. Yesterday, you had a customer compliment about the time you took during your break to deliver a magazine to her door. She was ecstatic and when she checked out of her suite, she brought it to my attention! Re-create that experience today, and let me know how it goes.”

**End Result:** Harry: “Had an awesome day today, getting a customer compliment always brightens up my day. Work is a breeze, I love being original and coming up with new things I can do to make our guests remember me positively always. Our hotel does well too, I have been seeing more clients come in and we can hardly keep our rooms vacant! That’s why I work here, to use my talents.”

It is clear from these two examples which company performs well and makes effective use of their time. From a management and direct engagement view, it is straight-forward on which company has firmer engagement leading to stronger performance.

The aim needs to be a concrete goal that one can gain experience from, build on novel skills, find new and better ways to perform and develop decision-making processes within the employees. This indirect learning of skills comes from the human intuition to
invariably find engaging ways to complete what they are responsible and accountable for.

Management communicating effectively by objectives is the core set up that defines whether an organization will succeed or finally fail. The separation of what one likes to do and what the situation demands of you is one that depends on what your core objectives are, and how you pass them on.

**SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

Fill in the blanks:

4. Management by Objective was developed by ..............

5. Improving management communication is an uninterrupted and .............. process throughout the organization.

6. Success in an organization depends on all three spheres of communication: your .............., your .............. and your ..............

**ACTIVITY**

Conduct a role play with your peers, one being the boss, the other the subordinate. Jot down points of difference related to how you two interact in reality & while role playing.

**NOTE**

Success in an organization depends on all three spheres of communication: your directs, your peers and your boss.

1.3 IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Communication skills are indispensable for the successful future and career of a student. In today’s competitive world, communication skills in business are the most coveted quality of an educated person. Reading, writing and listening cautiously are the three most important communication skills for students. These skills like most of the communication skills sounds too familiar as a result of which we take them for granted.

As regards reading and writing, the only thing that we require to tackle is to adjust with our growing age and concentration. With these two qualities, it is possible to develop reading, oral communication skills and writing skills.

Apart from reading and writing presentations, reports and speeches are a part of school curriculum. This has been introduced in schools and colleges for the all-round development of students. This makes expressive skills and managing skills also significant for a student.
It is also important to develop communication skills in relationships. What grabs attention is that most of the students do not feel confident to make presentations and speeches. But recognizing the importance of these skills in modern day life, most good schools have made it a regular part of their curriculum. Here comes the role of expressive skills and managing skills.

Expressive skills are those which are used to express our feelings, thoughts and expressions and hence get our point across successfully to the listener. To gain expressive skills, students need to learn how to communicate effectively and get the full attention of the listeners.

Following this, management is an important part of a student life so development of management skills is also crucial to the success of the student.

Listening skills are also an important skill that should be taught to a student. Listening skills should not only be fixed to the classroom but also in a normal conversation. Students should be taught as how to give undivided attention to a person with whom a conversation is going on.

Also, students should be taught as to how to show the other person respect when the other person is speaking. Such etiquette is a part of conversation in every sphere of life, be it professional or personal.

Now that we have learned as to what specific communication skill a student must have, it is significant to learn how to develop communication skills in a student.

The first activity to develop communication skill in students is group activities. Instructors should conduct group activities not only in the classroom but also ask students to complete assignments in equally divided groups. Also the teacher should regularly change the groups so that there is more interaction among the students. This process helps a lot in the long run.

The following activity is to enhance communication skills for students. This is to put in the habit of active listening. For this, the teacher should incessantly read out something from newspapers magazines and other sources in order to ask questions from that. Also the teachers should make it a point to encourage active participation of the students.

By inculcating healthy feeling of competition and curiosity in students, it would become possible to develop communication skills for students. Following these tips, go ahead with confidence and put them into practice.

Here are enlisted some reasons why communication skills are so important:

- Good communication passes information along. If you can effectively communicate, then people realize you much better,
and whatever information you are trying to tell them will get across without being misunderstood. In business, this can prevent mistakes from being made by people who thought you said something else. In personal life, it can help you to let others know what you want.

- Good communication makes good relationships. If you can effectively communicate, then other people know what you need and want, and you can let them know your feelings without being misunderstood. This prevents controversies, especially between couples, because it avoids all that “you should have known how I felt” sort of mind-reading arguments. If you can explain your thoughts and feelings, then you won’t misunderstand each other.

- Good communication helps you get what you need. If you can effectively communicate what you need or want, you are more likely to be successful in getting it. Effective communication also helps you to win over others to agree with you in a persuasive setting.

- Good communication gives you self-esteem. People with effective communication skills are more confident, as they know that they can tell other people exactly what they need to, and they know that they understand those people better.

- Good communication helps you to think better. In order to communicate effectively, you have to think ahead and organize your thoughts. This assists you learn how to organize, and how to plan ahead.

- Good communication makes peaceful communities. If you can effectively communicate, then you can get along better with your neighbours – in your town or city, in your country, and in the world. Most wars are caused by people not communicating effectively and not being able to manage each other.

Things to remember about good communication:

- Communication is a two-way street. Good listening skills are piece of good communication; you need to realize what the other person is saying to you as well as to say what you want.

- Communication frequently includes non-verbal clues such as tone of voice, facial expression, gestures, and body posture. Good communication includes being observant and focusing on the other person.

- Communication is cooperation. Everybody has a right to have their own belief; just because you don’t agree with them is no reason not to listen.

- Communication skills are very significant as every day in our life we need to communicate with different kinds of people around us. And having good communication skills can improve our relationship with them.
Also in every field, communication skill is very necessary to succeed. Good communicator always has the high paying position.

If you can communicate well, you can determine whether or not you have understood what the teacher just said, and can then let the teacher know whether or not you need additional help. Communication is also vital to interactions between you and your peers; if you can convey well, you are less likely to use violence and get into difficulty.

Recognition is one of the key elements of effective communication. Listeners can identify with what you are saying and with the way you are saying it. The power to communicate is the principal factor that distinguishes human beings from animals. And it is the ability to communicate well that differentiates one individual from another.

Communication skills are unbelievably important, not only to students, but to everybody. CEOs of top companies have stated that the main things they look for when hiring new employees is how well they are able to communicate, according to several communications textbooks. Verbal communication is a large part of how you present yourself, and so having the appropriate skill set is beneficial in both your private and public lives.

If someone is unable to communicate well, it does not matter how brilliant or talented they are. They will not be able to live up to their full potential if they cannot present themselves well and adequately express their ideas.

Communication skill is essential because it usually makes or breaks your career.

In work, communication skill is very important since you need to communicate with others and you need to deliver and get the right message.

If you can’t communicate effectively, people won’t listen to what you have to say and you will have very limited career options.

1.3.1 LISTENING IN COMMUNICATION

A part of the reason why we do not listen to people at a high level of effectiveness is that we take listening for granted. Most people assume that they already understand what listening is all about, and therefore, there is no need to learn anything more. We also assume it is easy to be a good listener. In fact, many of us probably assume that we already have effective listening skills. Both of these assumptions are unwarranted. We cannot assume that our listening skills are already at a maximum, we certainly cannot assume that effective listening is simple or easy.

If research studies are anything to go by, the average listening efficiency rate in the business world is only 25 per cent. Immediately
after a ten-minute presentation, a normal listener can recall only 50 per cent of the information conveyed.

After 24 hours the recall level is only 25 per cent. Does this bode well for organizations? No. Why? Let us see why listening is so very important in a modern organization.

**Importance of Listening**

One primary reason why listening is so important is the amount of time people spend doing just that – listening. Listening is the most frequent, perhaps the most important type of on-the-job communication. Studies indicate that adults spend about 29.5 per cent of their waking hours listening. Recent studies that focus on the workplace show that, on an average, personnel at all levels spend about 32.7 per cent of their time listening while speaking takes up 25.8 per cent of their time and writing 22.6 per cent. Top executives spend even more time listening than other employees.

Listening on the job is not only frequent, it is very important as well. In fact, most managers agree that ‘active listening’ is the most crucial skill for becoming a successful manager. Stephen Covey identifies listening as one of the ‘seven habits of highly effective people’. Listening can improve work quality and boost productivity. Poor listening skills lead to innumerable mistakes because of which letters have to be re-typed, meetings rescheduled, shipments re-routed. All this affects productivity and profits. Apart from the obvious benefits, good listening helps employees to update and revise their collection of facts, skills and attitudes. Good listening also helps them to improve their speaking abilities.

Despite all these benefits, good listening skills are quite rare in the business world today. As pointed out earlier, a number of studies have revealed that people listen poorly despite the advantages of doing just the opposite.

However, there is hope. Listening is a skill that is a result of learning – it is not “inborn.” We learn to attend to, analyse, and comprehend messages directed towards us, just as we learn other skills. What this means is that anyone can become an effective listener. Further, if the foundations of listening skills are understood, anyone can improve their ability to sort out more fully the meanings of what people are saying to them.

**Listening versus the Sense of Hearing**

When we hear, we only perceive sounds, but when we listen, this hearing is accompanied by a deliberate and purposeful act of the mind. To listen means to get meaning from what is heard. One may hear the words uttered by another person without really understanding them.

**Listening as Behaviour**

Listening can be viewed as a form of behaviour that is a part of the communication process – an active effort of attention and perception.
on the part of the person towards whom the message has been
directed. In other words, it is part of the transaction that takes place
between people as they communicate.

More formally, listening is an active form of behaviour in which
individuals attempt to maximize their attention to, and comprehension
of, what is being communicated to them through use of words, actions,
and things by one or more people in their immediate environment.

Most people think of listening mainly in terms of using the ears,
attending closely to verbal messages. Listening also refers to
monitoring the non-verbal and contextual aspects of messages. Thus,
in the simultaneous transactions view of communication, listening
includes attending to and interpreting all of the ways in which people
use words, actions, and things intended to arouse meanings in their
receivers. Thus, it is more than just hearing spoken words.

Note also that included in the definition is the concept of “immediate
environment.” This refers to the meanings that are included in the
source’s message due to the context in which the transmission takes
place. Effective listening requires attention to those aspects of a
message as well, because they can be both complex and diverse as
influences on interpretation.

Example: What we interpret can be very different as we listen to
people in familiar and unfamiliar places, to people we know very
well versus people we have just met, in-group situations versus one-
on-one. Another kind of context is provided by different media that
may be part of the communication process – telephone, radio, TV and
so on. Each of this set of conditions constitutes a different context,
a different environment, that has its own influence on the listening
experience.

What something means to us is based on the accumulation of both
direct and indirect experiences we have had during our lifetime. This
provides for a set of personal internal meaning responses for each of the
huge number of symbols, gestures, rules, and so on that make up our
language and non-verbal signs. Only when the sender’s and receiver’s
bases of experience are sufficiently similar can meanings of the
parties involved be parallel, permitting individuals to share the same
interpretations. Comprehension, therefore, depends immediately and
directly on the existence of parallel meaning experiences, which can
accurately be produced only by effective listening.

The preceding discussion implies that effective listening is no
accident – that is not an ‘automatic’ form of behaviour. While it is
true that some aspects of listening are habitual or reflexive, others
are certainly not. Therefore, we cannot simply stand around talking
to people and expect that high quality listening is just going to
“happen.” To provide the accurate communication, both parties in the
transaction need to be actively and consciously involved in attending
to and comprehending what is being transmitted by the other by all of
the means we have discussed.
To be done well, listening is something that we must deliberately and consciously manage. In other words, successfully attending to and comprehending what is communicated to us will be achieved only if it is deliberately set as a key objective – an objective we can achieve if we work hard and systematically. Furthermore, it is not a part-time pursuit. We must set this objective whenever we communicate with other people.

At the same time, it is possible to listen too intently. It would be impulsive, unreasonable, and even impossible to give our total attention to what is being communicated to us at all times, in all situations, and via all media. That would be a tidal wave of information with which no normal person could cope. Furthermore much of it would be either a ghastly bore or a total waste of time. We can all think of any number of circumstances where we wouldn't want to involve ourselves intensely in the task of attending to and comprehending whatever information was sent our way. Stated more simply, an important prerequisite to effective listening is the acquisition of skills in discriminating between what we should pay attention to and what we can safely ignore. The importance of being able to listen selectively but well is closely linked to the essential objectives or goals of the process.

How to be a Good Listener?

Regardless of whether the situation calls for appreciative, active listening, listening skills can be improved with critical discrimination or conscious effort. Table 1.1 shows the differences between good listeners and bad listeners and some of the specific steps you can take to become a good listener.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1.1: DISTINGUISHING GOOD LISTENERS FROM BAD LISTENERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To Listen Effectively</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Find area of interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Judge contents, not delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Hold your fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Listen for ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Be flexible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Contd...*
6. **Work at listening**  
   | Shows no energy output; fakes attention | Works hard; exhibits active body state |

7. **Resist distractions**  
   | Is distracted easily | Fights or avoids distractions; tolerates bad habits; knows how to concentrate |

8. **Exercise your mind**  
   | Resists difficult expository material, seeks light, recreational material | Uses heavier material as exercise for the mind |

9. **Keep your mind open**  
   | Reacts to emotional words | Interprets emotional words, does not get hung up on them |


- **Be Motivated to Listen**: When you resolve that you will listen, an improvement in your listening skills will become immediately noticeable. Researchers have concluded that the more motivated a listener is, the more active and alert he becomes as a receiver. Though motivation alone cannot solve all problems in listening, it is the first pre-requisite to becoming a good listener.

- **Be Prepared to Listen**: Sometimes you need to make some preparation beforehand in order to listen effectively to a particular piece of communication. It is helpful to gather as much relevant information as you can about the subject, the speaker, and the situation. This will help you to better understand and appraise what the speaker is saying. Preparations could also include attempts to minimize physical barriers between yourself and the speaker and to eliminate all distractions in the environment.

- **Be Objective**: From your own experiences, you would have noticed that you are more receptive to a message when you approach it with an open mind. To be objective, one must avoid jumping to conclusions. Keep your critical faculties on the alert but do not make a judgment until all points are fully developed. If you make a judgment too fast, there is always the danger that you may fail to register things the speaker says that may not exactly tie in with your judgment. Objective listening entails a conscious effort to keep our emotions and prejudices at bay.

- **Be Alert to All Cues**: Look for the speaker’s main ideas. The speaker’s voice quality, inflection, emphasis and body movement can all offer vital clues to what the speaker feels is most important. Besides, these cues also give you insights into the emotional content of the speaker’s message, which must be taken into consideration if the message is to be fully understood.
NOTES

- **Make Good Use of the Thinking-Speaking Time Difference:** As mentioned earlier, we normally think much faster than we speak. If you are a listener you can use this gap to your advantage by mentally summarizing and reviewing what the speaker has said. Focus on what the speaker is saying, rather than on what would be appropriate response to the message.

- **Use Feedback:** Using feedback is one way we can get more from our communication encounters. Sometimes this feedback may be as simple as telling the speaker that you don't understand. This lets you hear the message again. While using feedback, make sure the speaker receives the message, that there’s no ambiguity about your feedback and that your feedback is related to what is going on.

- **Practice Listening:** Proficiency in listening, like in any other skill, is the result of conscious effort. Many of the barriers to effective listening can be successfully overcome through practice. Force yourself to listen to speeches and lectures that seem to hold no obvious interest value. Doing this will help you overcome the temptation to “switch off” when the messages seem dull or difficult.

- **Use Verbal and Non-verbal Cues to Encourage the Speaker:** The listener can use a number of verbal and nonverbal cues to aid the speaker in communicating. Establishing eye contact with the speaker can go a long way in reassuring him or her. Looking out of window while somebody is speaking does little for the morale of the speaker. Sometimes nodding the head slightly or casual remarks like ‘I see’ can tell the speaker that you’re actively involved in the communication process. Even an act as simple as smiling can offer warmth and support to the speaker and help him to get over his nervousness.

**What Speakers can do to Ensure Better Listening?**

So far, we have studied ‘listening’ entirely from the listener's perspective. But the speaker too, to a certain extent, influences the way in which others listen to the message. Of course, this is not to suggest the entire onus of communicating a message is on the speaker – a notion that is alarmingly popular among most poor listeners. But the speaker can use certain techniques to encourage more effective learning.

- **Try to Empathise:** Speak to your listeners. To do this you must understand them – understand how they will respond to your ideas. The best way to do this is to imagine yourself in their position. This will help you to weed out uninteresting and difficult parts that may be irrelevant or could be made more easily understandable by being put in a different way.

- **Adjust Your Delivery:** Make sure the listeners have no difficulty hearing you. You can retain listeners’ interest by modulating
your voice and making your speech as lively as you can without sounding ridiculous. A dull monotone often induces mental lethargy and turns listeners off.

- **Utilize Feedback**: As the listener can use feedback to improve the communication, so can the speaker. Be sensitive to listener responses. Ask yourself: Are they paying attention? Do they look interested? Do they look confused? Are they bored? Answering these questions will help you to make the necessary adjustments and tailor your message to the needs of the audience.

- **Be Clear**: Know your purpose. What is the main point that you are trying to make? If you are not clear about what you want to say and why you want to say it, you’re likely to ramble aimlessly and it’s very difficult to pay attention to disconnected and disjointed wanderings.

- **Be Interesting**: To be interesting you must first of all be interested in what you have to say. Lack of interest on the speaker’s part communicates itself immediately to the listeners and dulls their own response. Lively, stimulating and relevant speech always has a better chance of capturing the audience’s attention.

### Self Assessment Questions

State whether the following statements are true/false:

7. In today’s competitive world, communication skills in business are the most coveted quality of an educated person.

8. Good communication makes good relationships.

9. Listening is a skill that is not a result of learning – it is not “inborn.”

### Activity

- Listen to a news channel like you do every day while carrying out your daily tasks.
- Now sit & listen to the news channel carefully.
- In both situations recall what best you can. Compare.

### Note

Communication is a two-way street. Good listening skills are piece of good communication; you need to realize what the other person is saying to you as well as to say what you want.

### 1.4 Forms of Communication

In broad sense, communication in business is of three forms – internal–operational, external–operational and personal. The significance
of communication in business becomes more apparent with the discussion of focus of communication.

1.4.1 INTERNAL–OPERATIONAL COMMUNICATION

All the communication that occurs in conducting work within a business is assorted as internal operational. This is the communication among the business’s workers that is done to enforce the business’s operating plan. By operating plan we mean the procedure that the business has developed to do whatever it was formed to do.

Example: To manufacture products, provide a service, or sell goods.

Internal-operational communication takes many forms. It includes the orders and instructions that supervisors give to the workers, as well as oral exchanges among workers about work matters. It includes reports that workers prepare concerning sales, production, inventories, finance, maintenance, and so on. It includes the email messages that workers write in carrying out their assignments.

In large businesses, much of the work done requires internal operational communication. Much of this internal-operational communication is executed on computer networks. Workers send electronic mail and post information on company intranets or portals for others during the business, whether located down the hall, across the street, or around the world.

Example: In a typical company, most of the internal-operational information is entered into the company’s computer from executive workstations to become part of typical database. From the database, programmed reports are formulated to give each department the information it requires. Then the reports are communicated back to specific workstations; for example, sales reports and inventory records aggregate to communicate production needs to the production planning department. Eventually, the production planning department communicates these needs to the various production departments through a strategically planned work schedule.

Within each production unit and among production units, naturally, additional communication must go on. Managers make decisions and impart them to subordinates. Departments exchange information, and workers communicate working information with one another. Memorandums are written, reports are prepared, and conversations are held, all in the process of coordinating attempts and supplying the information needed for achieving the organization’s goals. In every company division and in all activity, similar internal–operational communication occurs.

1.4.2 EXTERNAL–OPERATIONAL COMMUNICATION

External–operational communication is that part of an organization’s structured communication which is concerned with attaining the organization’s work goals that is carried on with people and groups
outside the organization. It is the organization's communication with its public-suppliers, service companies, customers, and the general public.

This category includes all of the organization's efforts at direct selling, sales representative's sales plays, descriptive brochures, telephone call-backs, follow-up service calls, and the like. Also included are all of the organization's advertising efforts for what is advertising but a deliberate, integrated communication with an organization's publics? Radio and television messages, newspapers and magazines space advertising, and point-of-purchase exhibit material evidently play a role in the organization's plan for achieving its work objective. Also in this category is everything the organization does to increase its public relations. These activities include the organization's planned publicity, and the condition of its physical plant. All these and many more communication efforts aggregate to make up the organization's external-operational communication.

The utmost importance of an organization's external communication hardly needs supporting comment. Surely it is evident that any business organization depends on outside people and groups for its success. It is an elementary principle of business that because a business organization's success depends on its ability to satisfy customers' needs, the organization must communicate effectively with these customers. It is equally elementary that in today's complex business society, organizations depend on one another in manufacturing, distribution and services. This interdependency inevitably creates needs for communication. Similarly internal communication, these outside communications are vital to an organization's operation. Both internal and external communications are vital to business success. In today’s composite business society, business depends on each other in the production and distribution of goods and services. This interdependence demands communication.

1.4.3 PERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Not all the communication that goes in an organization is operational. As a matter of fact, much of it is without purpose as far as the organization is concerned. Such communication may be called as personal.

Personal communication is all the incidental substitution of information and feelings in which human beings engage whenever they come together. Human beings are social animals. They have a requirement to communicate, and they would communicate even when they have little or nothing to say. In fact, they communicate even when they do not communicate anything.

A lot of the time friends spend with one another is dedicated to communication, for it is merely the thing to do when people get together. Even total strangers are likely to communicate when they are placed together, such as on a plane trip, in a waiting room, or
at a ball game. Such personal communication also takes place in the work situation, and it is a part of the communication activity of any business organization. Although not a constituent of an organization’s plan of operations, personal communication can have a substantial effect on its success. This effect stems from the influence personal communication can have on the points of view (opinion, attitude and beliefs) of the organization’s members.

Organization members’ work viewpoint also affects the extent of personal communication permitted to them. Direct denial of the communication privilege can lead to emotional upset, for people hold their right to communicate. On the other hand, exuberant personal communication can intervene directly with their work effort. Probably somewhere in the middle ground lies the optimum policy towards personal communication.

Personal communication can also help from viewpoints (opinions, attitudes, beliefs). The personal communication, its effect on attitude and performance of the employee and organization and the sensible degree of permissible personal communication.

![Figure 1.1: Personal Communication](image)

### 1.4.4 DETAILED STUDY OF THE FORMS OF COMMUNICATION

- One-way Communication and Two-way Communication
- Verbal Communication and Non-verbal Communication.
- Formal Communication and Informal Communication.
- Interpersonal Communication and Intrapersonal Communication
- Group Communication
- Public Communication
- Mass Communication
One-way Communication and Two-ways Communication

One way communication is characterized by absence of feedback from the receiver to the sender. Here role of the sender and the receiver are insulated not interdependent. The sender conveys the message and the receiver has to make out meaning of his own and there is no scope for check back.

Two ways communication requires active feedback from the receiver to the sender to assure that the receiver has understood the same message which the sender meant to convey, this form of communication being more interactive and interpersonal, allows better mutual understanding.

Verbal Communication and Non-verbal Communication

Verbal communication needs the use of words, vocabulary, numbers and symbols and is prepared in sentences using language. Dominating linguistic skill is a skill that each and every one should develop to improve relationships and interactions.

Everyone’s brain is constantly having thoughts and they are mainly with words. Words spoken, heard to or written affect your life as well as others. They have the ability to create emotions and move people to take action. When verbal communication is delivered accurately and clearly, you activate the mind and encourage creativity.

You create your reality with your senses, the eyes, ears and feelings and words and symbols are used to produce the meanings. That is why, you are recommended to read and watch informative materials, listen to motivational audio programs and attend classes or seminars that relate to your line of work or objectives. Positive and uplifting spoken or written messages motivate and inspire.

You can do the same to motivate others. Motivation comes from inside each individual but you can become the origin and when you are able to affect their thinking, you can help them improve their lives.

Verbal communication is phrasing your words clearly and positively. Your words and the explanations you give affect thoughts and determine emotions.

Verbal communication that includes questions helps you challenge beliefs. According to Michael Hall, a belief is a thought to which you have said “yes”, and you have affirmed by saying, “I believe this”. It takes questions worded specifically before you can fully agree.

Telling or Reading a Story: One of the ways to let others realize your message is by telling a story, reading a quote or telling a joke. Verbal communication through stories carries power to make the person relate to what you are saying or proposing. A joke normally helps people relax and is open to listen to you.

The way you deliver the story can affect the thinking, emotions and behaviour of the listeners. He is able to conceive of the experience.
and will reproduce a response. A story narrated with eloquence can give hope to people who are in dire need for encouragement.

**Asking the Right Questions:** Questioning yourself or others with exact words makes room for answers. It will make a difference if you were to ask a “why” or a “how” question. The former gives you a lot of reasons, understandings and explanations while the latter set your brain thinking for a solution, useful information and a strategy.

By asking questions and wording them specifically, you will invite a positive debate and interaction that will benefit all involved. You become a better listener and entice others to do the same. Unnecessary arguments are reduced when you are able to express yourself with great control of your language skills.

**Think and Prepare Before You Speak:** Whether you are going to speak in public, talk to your boss, spouse or children, you have to think before you utter those words. Verbal abuse occurs when you express yourself without thinking and or else allow your emotions to take over.

You have to project your ideas first in your mind or in writing before speaking them out. Doing this will enable you to prepare yourself with any objection that may arise. Thinking, preparing and visualizing the most desirable outcome in your mind permit you to practice your presentation and getting them corrected.

**Reduce Your Usage of Verbal Pauses:** Have you ever listened to how you speak and furnish your conversations? If you haven't and are unaware, request for someone to do so. How many times did you stop your sentences and added an “ah”, “um” or “well”? You can also record your verbal communication and listen back to your style of speaking.

Too many pauses will bother your listeners or is comprehended as uneasiness or uncertainty in what you are saying. In order to cut down the unnecessary verbal cues, listen to yourself and become aware of it. Then when you recognize it coming, condition yourself to just a silent pause.

**Avoid Careless Language:** Use your phrases with care. Talk and write in ways that allow for exact description of your experience, thoughts or ideas. Don't anticipate people to presume and guess what you are trying to say.

Speak with particularity by avoiding words like always, never, ever, or all. When you say to your spouse that he is always late when as a matter of fact he was late only twice, you are pulling an argument.

**Non-verbal Communication**

Communication need not to be verbal all the time. It can also be non-verbal. In other words, man does not communicate through words only or only through writing, speaking and listening. Most of the time, communication is non-verbal, i.e. through a gesture, a
smile, a frown, or through eye contact, body position. Compared to
verbal communication, it is more subtle and instructive. On scientific
analysis, it has been proved that verbal communication accounts
only for 7 per cent whereas non-verbal communication accounts for
over 50 per cent and hence non-verbal communication needs serious
consideration. Non-verbal communication is ancient and universal.

**Meaning of Non-verbal Communication**

Non-verbal communication is communication without using words
or speech. Non-verbal communication is thus the wordless message
received through the medium of gestures, signs, body movements,
facial expressions, tone of voice, colour, time, space, style of writing,
etc. Non-verbal communication is also called silent language or
the language of signs and gestures. We can define non-verbal
communication in the following ways:

- Non-verbal communication is communication through any
  means other than words.
- It is the transmission of message by some medium other than
  speech or writing.
- It refers to all external stimuli other than the spoken or written
  words and that includes body motion, characteristics of voice,
appearance, and space distancing.
- It is the communication that uses non-linguistic means to convey
  the message.
- It refers to the transfer of meaning by body-language, space, time
  and paralanguage.

Imagine the following situations which demonstrate non-verbal form
of communication:

- The darkness and the silence in picture hall communicate that
  the picture is going to start.
- During conversation, when you raise your eye brows on a
  statement, convey your disbelief in the statement.
- Receiving applause by large audience at the end of inaugural
  address delivered by you shows your good performance.
- Patting by your boss shows confidence in you and you are being
  appreciated.

All the situations mentioned above convey a significant effect to
communicate through means other than words. Thus, words are not
the only means we use to communicate. We also use silence, signs,
symbols, body movements, etc.

**Characteristics of Non-verbal Communication in Organization**

- Non-verbal communication indicates the attitude and feeling in
  addition to what is being expressed through words.
Non-verbal communication relies on observation and interpretation.

Non-verbal message may compliment or contradict.

All body movements with exception of instrument movements are meaningful.

Dress or language used will reveal the communicator states or education.

Body movement and facial expressions often occurs spontaneously and can support or contradict the verbal message.

It has been found that non-verbal communication forms the larger part of the overall communication activity.

**TABLE 1.2: EXTENT OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management Impact</th>
<th>Types of Communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55 percent</td>
<td>Facial expression, body posture, gestures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 percent</td>
<td>Words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38 percent</td>
<td>Tone of voice and inflection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Non-verbal communication speaks much louder than words.

“A Cry of Agony is more Powerful than a Tale of Woe”.

**Nature of Non-verbal Communication**

Non-verbal communication means all communication without words. It is broad and imprecise. And because it is broad, non-verbal communication is quite vague. For instance, a frown on someone’s forehead is sometimes interpreted to mean worry. But could it be that the person has a headache? Or is the person in deep thought? No doubt, there could be numerous meanings ascribed to the facial expression.

Cross-cultural aspects give many meanings to non-verbal communication. Culture teaches us about body positions, movements, and various factors that affect human relationships like intimacy, space, time, and such. Thus, the meanings we give to non-verbal symbols will vary depending on how our culture has conditioned us.

As a listener, you need to go beyond the obvious to determine what non-word symbols mean. As we have said about word symbols, you need to see what people intend with their non-verbal symbols as well. Perhaps one good way to grasp the intent of this suggestion is to look at the intended meanings you have for the non-verbal symbols you use. Realize that non-verbal symbols can have many meanings.

**Types of Non-verbal Communication**

There are many ways to classify non-verbal communication. According to Lesikar & Flatley, four of the more common types are...
body language, space, time and paralanguage. However, over the years, researchers have studied the impact of many other modes of non-verbal communication such as language.

**Relationship between Verbal and Non-verbal Communication**

Relationship between verbal and non-verbal communication centers on substitution, complementing, conflict, and accenting which are explained as under:

- **The substitution relationship:** When we nod our head up and down in approval of an action, we mean “yes” without using the word. Here we have substituted nonverbal sign for verbal sign.

- **The complementing relationship:** When we say ‘no’ and at the same time shake our head from side-to-side to reinforce the negative verbalization, we are complementing the verbal message.

- **The conflict relationship:** When action conflicts with verbal message, we tend to rely more on the nonverbal communication. Since much nonverbal communication is below our level of awareness, non-verbal clues are often harder to fade than verbal ones. The noted psychologist Sigmund Freud once said, “A person who has eyes to see and ears to hear may convince himself that no mortal can keep a secret. If his lips are silent, he chats with his fingertips; betrayal oozes out of him at every pore”.

- **The accenting relationship:** Just as highlighted words emphasize written ideas, non-verbal behaviour may accent parts of a verbal message. “Look at me”, when we say jabbing someone’s shoulder with a pointing finger, we are accenting or modulating our verbal message with a non-verbal sign.

**Formal Communication and Informal Communication**

Formal communication can be defined as,

“A presentation or written part that strictly binds to rules, patterns, and ceremony, and is free of conversational expressions.”

It implies the flow of the data by the lines of assurance formally acknowledged in the enterprise and its members are probably to communicate with one another purely as per channels constituted in the structure. Hence, it is a meaningful effort to influence the flow of communication so as to guarantee that information flows effortlessly, precisely and timely.

It stresses the essence of formal channel of communication. The different forms of formal communication include; departmental meetings, conferences, telephone calls, company news bulletins, special interviews and special design publications.

The main reward of formal communication is that the official channels facilitate the habitual and identical information to communicate without exacting much managerial attention. Basically, executives
and managers may devote most of their precious time on matters of utmost significance.

But at the same time, the weakness of formal communication should not go unaccounted. It is, generally, time consuming, clumsy and leads to a good deal of distortion of colour and symbols. Lesikar’s approach is better as it includes all modes of non-verbal communication. Nonverbal communication can be classified into the following categories:

**Body Language**

Our bodies send non-word messages through arms, fingers, expressions, posture, and so on. For example, happiness, surprise, fear, anger and sadness usually are accompanied by definite facial expressions and eye patterns. In particular, the face and eyes are the most important. The face and eyes, gestures, posture, and physical appearance reflect the inner workings of emotions in our bodies. Moreover, speaking and gestures appear to be linked. In general, the louder someone speaks, the more emphatic the gestures used, and vice-versa. One should always remember that appearance is an important part of the body messages that are sent and received in oral communication.

**Space Language**

The space around its contents and us, convey a definite meaning. Of course, it requires some effort on our part to arrange them meaningfully, and on the part of others to understand or interpret their meaning. In other words, it tells us as to how people communicate with space. How close or far they stand in relation to another person, where they sit in a room, or how they arrange the office furniture, all of which has a real impact on communication. One of the major writers on this type of communication is anthropologist Edward T. Hall. He has identified three major types of space: feature – fixed space, semi-fixed feature space, and personal space.

**Time Language**

Time is a third type of non-verbal communication. Just as there are body language and space language, there is also a time language, i.e., how we give meaning to time communicates to others. In terms of non-verbal communication, you should recognize that time orientations are not always the same – especially in the cross-culture arena – but they do communicate. For Americans, Canadians, and many other from English-speaking countries, time values are monochronic. Monochronic people tend to view time as linear and always moving ahead. They expect events to happen at scheduled times. Polychronic people – such as those from Asian, Arabic, and Spanish speaking countries have a more indefinite view of time. Unlike the monochronic person who expects a meeting to start precisely at 9.00 a.m., the polychronic person sees a 9.00 a.m. meeting
as an objective to be accomplished if possible. Nevertheless, time orientations become parts of the messages we send to and receive from one another.

**Paralanguage**

Paralanguage meaning ‘like language’ is a fourth type of non-verbal communication. Of all the types, it is the closest to communication with word symbols. It has to do with the sound of a speaker’s voice; the ‘how’ of it – those hints and signals in the way words are delivered. Paralanguage creates meanings because of speed, pitch, volume, and connection of words. The symbols become a part of the meaning that is filtered from a spoken message. Degrees of consistency between what and how someone says something convey meaning. Expectancies about background, appearance, and personality are part of paralanguage.

**Sign Language**

Communication is a process involving the use of mutually understood signs/symbols between the sender and receiver of a message or piece of information. From time immemorial, man has been using signs and symbols mutually understood between at least two persons, and more usually among people belonging to a group, tribe, or trade. These signs, symbols, signals and indicators have generally been of two types – visual and audio or sound signals. Smell, touch and taste also communicate because sensory perception and impressions are a necessary part of human existence. But the most powerful or effective of them is the visual element. That is why we have a Chinese proverb, “a picture is worth a thousand words”. The reason is that we imbibe more than 50 per cent of our information through the gateway of our eyes.

Besides, two other non-verbal types exist, but they are minor. One is colour, i.e. what meaning you draw from colours like red, blue, black, etc., because it is proven that colours produce meanings in our minds. Another is the physical context – office, carpeting, decorations, and such. One should consider them as part of the message one sends and receives.

Colour and sign language are also important modes of non-verbal communication.

**Interpersonal Communication and Intrapersonal Communication**

**Interpersonal Communication**

Interpersonal communication disagrees from other forms of communication in that there are few participants involved, the interactants are in close physical proximity to each other and feedback is immediate. A significant point to note about the contextual definition is that it does not take into account the relationship among the interactants.
We have many different relationships with people. Some researchers say that our definition of interpersonal communication must account for these differences. These researchers say that acting with a sales clerk in a store is different than the relationship we have with our friends and family members. Thus, some researchers have suggested an alternative way of defining interpersonal communication. This is called the developmental view. From this view, interpersonal communication is defined as communication that occurs between people who have known each other for some time. Significantly, these people view each other as unique individuals, not as people who are simply acting out social situations.

**Four Principles of Interpersonal Communication**

These principles underlie the workings in real life of interpersonal communication. They are basic to communication. We can't dismiss them.

- **Interpersonal communication is inescapable:** The very effort not to convey communicates something. Through not only words, but through tone of voice and through gesture, posture, facial expression, etc., we invariably communicate to those around us. By these channels, we constantly receive communication from others. Even when you sleep, you communicate. Recall a basic principle of communication in general: people are not mind readers. Another way to put this is: people estimate you by your behaviour, not your intent.

- **Interpersonal communication is irreversible:** You can't really take back something once it has been said. The effect must necessarily remain. Despite the instructions from a judge to a jury to “disregard that last statement the witness made,” the lawyer knows that it can't help but make an impression on the jury. A Russian proverb reads, “Once a word goes out of your mouth, you can never swallow it again.”

- **Interpersonal communication is complicated:** No form of communication is simple. Owing to the number of variables involved, even simple requests are majorly complex. Theorists note that whenever we communicate there are really at least six “people” involved:
  - who you think you are;
  - who you think the other person is;
  - who you think the other person thinks you are;
  - who the other person thinks/she is;
  - who the other person thinks you are; and
  - who the other person thinks you think s/he is.

We don't really exchange ideas; we swap symbols that stand for ideas. This also perplexes communication. Words (symbols) do not have inherent meaning; we simply use them in certain ways, and no two people use the same word precisely alike.
If communication can fail, it will.
If a message can be understood in different ways, it will be realized in just that way which does the most harm.
There is always somebody who knows better than you what you meant by your message.
The more communication there is, the more difficult it is for communication to succeed.

- **Interpersonal communication is contextual:** In other words, communication does not happen in isolation. There is:

  Psychological context as, who the participant is and what he/she brings to the interaction. The needs, desires, values, personality, etc., all form the psychological context. Relational context concerns your reactions to the other person, the “mix.”

  Situational context deals with the psycho-social “where” you are communicating. An interaction that takes place in a classroom will be very different from one that takes place in a bar.

  Environmental context deals with the physical “where” you are communicating. Furniture, location, noise level, temperature, season, time of day, all are cases of factors in the environmental context.

  Cultural context includes all the learned behaviours and rules that involve the interaction. If you come from a culture (foreign or within your own country) where it is believed rude to make long, direct eye contact, you will out of politeness avoid eye contact. If the other person comes from a culture where long, direct eye contact signals trustworthiness, then we have in the cultural context a ground for misunderstanding.

**Intrapersonal Communication**

Intrapersonal communication is language use or thought internal to the communicator. Intrapersonal communication is the active internal participation of the individual in symbolic processing of messages. The individual becomes his or her own sender and receiver, providing feedback to him or herself in an on-going internal process. It can be useful to envision intrapersonal communication taking place in the mind of the individual in a model which contains a sender, receiver, and feedback circuit.

Although successful communication is in general defined as being between two or more individuals, issues concerning the useful nature of communicating with oneself and problems referring communication with non-sentient entities such as computers have made some argue that this definition is too narrow.

**Group Communication**

The first important research study of small group communication was performed by social psychologist Robert Bales in the early and
mid-1950s. This research meant the content analysis of discussions within groups making decisions about “human relations” problems (i.e., vignettes about relationship difficulties within families or organizations). Bales made a series of important discoveries. Firstly, group discussion inclines to shift back and forth comparatively quickly between the discussion of the group task and discussion relevant to the relationship among the members. He conceived that this shifting was the product of an implicit attempt to balance the demands of task completion and group cohesion, under the assumption that conflict generated during task discussion causes stress among members, which must be released through positive relational talk. Secondly, task group discussion shifts from an emphasis on belief exchange, through an attentiveness to values underlying the decision, to making the decision. This implication that group discussion goes through the same series of levels in the same order for any decision-making group is known as the linear phase model. Thirdly, the most loquacious member of a group tends to make between 40 and 50 per cent of the comments and the second most talkative member between 25 and 30, no matter the size of the group. As a result, large groups tend to be dominated by one or two members.

The most powerful of these discoveries has been the latter; the linear phase model. Communication researcher B. Aubrey Fisher (1970) demonstrated groups going consecutively through an orientation stage, a conflict stage, a stage in which a decision emerges and a stage in which that decision is reinforced. A lot of this research (although not necessarily Fisher’s) had two key flaws. Firstly, all group data was aggregated before analysis, making it impossible to find whether there were differences among groups in their succession of discussion. Secondly, group discussion content was compared across the same number of stages as the researcher supposed, such that if the researcher conceived there were four stages to discussion, there was no way to find out if there actually were five or more. In the 1980s, communication researcher Marshall Scott Poole (Poole & Roth, 1989) analysed a sample of groups without making these errors and noted significant differences among them in the number and order of stages. He hypothesized that groups finding themselves in some difficulty due to task complexity, an unclear leadership structure or poor coherence act as if they feel the need to carry on a “complete” discussion and thus are more probable to pass through all stages as the linear phase model implies, whereas groups feeling confident due to task ease, a clear leadership structure and cohesion are more likely to hop stages evidently deemed unnecessary.

Public Communication

Public communication calls for speech by one person to a large group at a time. This is one way communication as the speaker gives speech and the audience only listens.
Mass Communication

“Mass communication” is the term used to depict the academic study of various means by which individuals and entities relay information to large segments of the population all at once through mass media. It is generally understood to relate to newspaper and magazine publishing, radio, television, and film, as they are used both for disseminating news and for advertising.

The term ‘mass’ announces great volume, range or extent (of people or production) and reception of messages. The significant point about ‘mass’ is not that a given number of individuals receives the products, but rather that the products are available in principle to a plurality of recipients. This is an image linked with some earlier critiques of ‘mass culture’ and mass society which generally assumed that the development of mass communication has had a largely negative impact on modern social life, creating a kind of bland and homogeneous culture which entertains individuals without challenging them. The expression of ‘communication’ refers to the giving and taking of meaning, the transmission and reception of messages.

The word ‘communication’ is actually equated with ‘transmission’, as viewed by the sender, rather than in the fuller meaning, which includes the notions of response, sharing and interaction. Messages are produced by one set of individuals and transmitted to others who are typically situated in settings that are spatially and temporally remote from the original context of production. Thus, the term ‘communication’ in this context masks the social and industrial nature of the media, promoting a trend to think of them as interpersonal communication.

1.4.5 COMMUNICATION NETWORK IN ORGANIZATION

Formal and Informal Communication Network: This decision comprises in selecting formal communications between actors. Formal communications are easier to impose, to monitor and to improve.

The institutionalization of communications, by the execution of formal lines, may lead to assign a positive value to the communications within the enterprise culture, thereby advocating people to communicate.

Formal communications are better fitted to formal and stable business processes. Formal communications per se generally increase reliability and traceability. They may also better justify investments which contribute to the advancement of communications in terms of efficiency, reliability, and security.

A strong vertical division of work requires formal communications up and down hierarchical levels of management.

Risks: In informal or fluid processes, formal communications may introduce a lack of flexibility in the processes and prevent the organization from adjusting them or treating special cases.
Formal communications may hit some psychological barriers, and may be not used. Actor capabilities to use formal communications must then be evaluated and possibly improved.

Formal communications may put restraints on actors which diminish their efficiency; therefore the actors would have a negative attitude towards using them.

**Self Assessment Questions**

Fill in the blanks:

10. ................. is the communication among the business’s workers that is done to enforce the business’s operating plan.

11. ................. communication is that part of an organization’s structured communication which is concerned with attaining the organization’s work goals that is carried on with people and groups outside the organization.

12. ................. communications are easier to impose, to monitor and to improve.

**Activity**

Classify the following situations into one-way and two-way communication processes:

- Talking to a friend over phone
- Interview
- Attending a lecture
- Watching a cricket match
- Conference
- Listening music
- Writing personal diary

Find more examples like these and classify them.

**1.5 Formation and Sending of Response**

Communication is a process, generally a two-way process. The process is a concept that is dynamic and ever-changing. The process in fact, is both time dimensional as well as space dimensional in which action unfolds in a continual manner towards some goal. In other words, communication being a process attempts to provide information to the receiver and also to persuade the concerned person according to the sender of the message.

Communication process is not logical in case of one-way communication as in this case feedback is absent. Here, the sender communication is without expecting or getting feedback from the
receiver. For example, a policy statement from the chief executive is an example of one-way communication. It is only in certain situations that one-way communication is more effective to get the work done from the subordinates.

The two-way communication process is superior to one-way communication in the following respects:

- Two-way communication is more effective than one-way communication. The feedback allows the sender to refine his communication so that it becomes more precise and accurate.
- Receivers’ self-confidence is higher in case of two-way communication as they are permitted to ask questions and seek clarification from the senders.

However, in case of two-way communication, the sender may feel embarrassed when the receiver draws his attention to sender’s mistakes and ambiguities. It is therefore, essential to discuss the communication process in comprehensive manner.

### Sequencing of Communication Process

The sender or source conceives the idea, gives it a shape, decides the mode of communication which may be used to convey the idea, and conveys it. The receiver receives it, tries to understand it, and finally takes an action which may be either to store the information or to send the message to the original source or take any other line of action as required by the source. The sequencing of communication process, thus, may be depicted as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Idiation</th>
<th>Encoding</th>
<th>Transmission</th>
<th>Receiving</th>
<th>Decoding</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conceiving of the idea by the sender or source</td>
<td>Encoding the message</td>
<td>Transmission of the message</td>
<td>Receiving of the message by the receiver</td>
<td>Decoding the message</td>
<td>Behaviour or action on the message</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the communication is undertaken by a business firm to buyer or to employees or shareholders, it is known as business communication. In business, a company (sender) communicates to its employees, customers, to shareholders, to the intermediaries, to public, media or to government regulators.

Basic forms of business communication are as follows:

- Face-to-face meeting with clients
- Large formal business meetings
- Production of clear message through letters, faxes, e-mail, etc.

Business communication thus, is defined as the process of transmitting of information or idea and understanding between different parts and
people of a business organization. The process of communication is further refined as is evident from Figure 1.2.

Figure 1.2: The Communication Process

Figure 1.2 shows that there are six phases in the entire communication process. At phase I, the sender has an idea or information. At phase II, the sender encodes the idea for transmission and at phase III, the encoded idea is transmitted by the sender through the strategically selected channel or medium of transmission.

At phase IV, the receiver gets the message, at phase V, the receiver decodes the message and finally at phase VI, the feedback is sent by the receiver.

Mary Ellen Guffey says that, “we cannot just glance at another person and transfer meaning directly from mind to mind, we engage in a sensitive process of communication that involves five steps”. These steps are depicted in Figure 1.3.

Figure 1.3: The Steps of Communication Process
Elements/Concepts or Components of the Process of Communication

The main elements that are also human as the concepts or the components of the process of communication are discussed to draw the basic understanding of communication process.

These components are as under:

- **Message**: It is information, written or spoken, which is to be sent from one person to another. Here, the word person stands for the two ends of a system, and may represent an individual, or a group of individuals, or even electronic machines.

  The most important characteristic of a message as an element of communication is that it is organized, structured, shaped and selective. It exists in the mind of the sender (communicator).

- **Sender**: The person who transmits, spreads, or communicates a message or operates an electronic device is the sender i.e., one who conceives and initiates the message. The sender transmits the message with the purpose of informing/persuading/influencing/changing the attitude, opinion, or behaviour of the receiver (audience/listener). He decides the communication symbols, the channel, and the time for sending the message after carefully considering the total situation in which communication takes place. The sender may be individual, a group or an organization.

- **Encoding**: The method by which a message is expressed is called encoding. Message arises in the mind in the form of Idea. That idea is transmitted by the sender to receiver in the form of words, symbols, pictures, day-to-day language, etc. Otherwise, it may not be possible for the receiver to understand it. Thus, transmission of message in words or in any other way is called encoding. Keeping in view, the purpose of communication, selection of words or symbols for encoding should be such as make the receiver understand the communication correctly.

- **Medium and Channel**: The method or channel means by which a message is transmitted by a sender to a receiver called medium or channel. For instance, letter is a medium and postal or couriers service a channel. If a message is communicated by telephone, then an oral message is a medium and the telephone a channel. Thus, there is a difference between medium and channel.

  The medium of communication can be written, oral, audio-visual or live projection. The medium can be in the form of letters, memos, reports, notices, circulars, minutes etc. The oral communication may be through the channel of telephone, video conferencing, etc.

- **Receiver**: The receiver of a communication is a person or a group or an organization that receives the message. He is the destination of the message. In its absence, the process of
communication is incomplete. He not only receives the messages but also understands what is implied in it. He is a decoder of the message responds to it or gives necessary feedback.

- **Decoding**: Decoding is a mental process by which the receiver draws meanings, from the words, symbols or pictures of the message. Receiver does decoding or understands it. That is the reason he is also called a decoder. If the receiver understands the meanings of the words or the symbols correctly, then his decoding is perfect.

- **Feedback**: Feedback is receiver’s response of the message. Feedback is the final link in the communication process. On its receipt, the receiver expresses his response by way of acknowledgement to the sender. They may take the response in the form of a smile, a long pause, a spoken comment, a written message or an action of some sort. Even a lack of response is, in a sense, a form of feedback. Feedback is the key element in the communication process because it enables the sender to evaluate the effectiveness of the message.

### SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

State whether the following statements are true/false:

13. Environment is not a cause that interferes with message reception.
14. Noise is an interruption that can creep in at any point of the communication process and make it ineffective.
15. Internal stimuli has a complex influence on how you translate ideas into a message.

### ACTIVITY

- A group of 15 to 20 students can sit in a circle. One student should think of a confusing sentence, which he/she will speak in the ear of the student sitting on his/her right side. Similarly this student will pass the message to the next student on the right side and the process should continue till the last student in the circle gets the message. This student should speak the message loudly. Find out the difference in the message from the original one and search the culprit who distorted the message. Punish the culprit with some simple exercise. The game can be continued by some other student taking the lead.

- In the end, find out some measures by which this distortion can be minimized in the chain and discuss the ramification arising out of misrepresentation of facts and miscommunication of information.
1.6 7 Cs OF GOOD COMMUNICATION

There are 7 Cs of effective communication which are relevant to both written as well as oral communication. These are as follows:

Completeness

The communication must be complete. It should convey all facts required by the audience. The sender of the message must take into consideration the receiver’s mind set and convey the message accordingly. Complete communication has following features:

- Complete communication develops and enhances reputation of an organization.
- Moreover, they are cost saving as no crucial information is missing and no additional cost is incurred in conveying extra message if the communication is complete.
- Complete communication always gives additional information wherever required. It leaves no questions in the mind of receiver.
- Complete communication helps in better decision-making by the audience/readers/receivers of message as they get all desired and crucial information.
- It persuades the audience.

Conciseness

Conciseness means communicating what you want to express in least possible words without forgoing the other C’s of communication. Conciseness is a requirement for effective communication. Concise communication has following features:

- It is both time-saving as well as cost-saving.
- It underlines and highlights the main message as it avoids using excessive and needless words.
- Concise communication provides short and necessary message in limited words to the audience.
- Concise message is more likeable and comprehensible to the audience.
- Concise message is non-repetitive in nature.

Consideration

Consideration implies “stepping into the shoes of others”. Effective communication must take the audience into consideration, i.e., the audience’s view points, background, mind-set, education level, etc. Make an effort to imagine your audience, their requirements, emotions as well as problems. Ensure that the self-respect of the audience is maintained and their emotions are not harmed. Alter your words in message to suit the audience’s needs while making your message complete.
Features of kind communication are as follows:

- Emphasize on “you” approach.
- Empathize with the audience and display interest in the audience. This will stimulate a positive reaction from the audience.
- Show optimism towards your audience. Stress on “what is possible” rather than “what is impossible”. Lay stress on positive words such as jovial, committed, thanks, warm, healthy, help, etc.

Clarity

Clarity implies stressing on a particular message or goal at a time, rather than trying to achieve too much at once. Clarity in communication has following features:

- It makes understanding easier.
- Complete clarity of thoughts and ideas heightens the meaning of message.
- Clear message makes use of exact, reserve and concrete words.

Concreteness

Concrete communication means being particular and clear rather than fuzzy and general. Concreteness strengthens the confidence. Concrete message has following features:

- It is backed with specific facts and figures.
- It makes use of words that are clear and that build the reputation.
- Concrete messages are not misunderstood.

Courtesy

Courtesy in message entails the message should show the sender’s expression as well as should respect the receiver. The sender of the message should be sincerely polite, judicious, reflective and keen. Courteous message has following features:

- Courtesy means taking into consideration both viewpoints as well as feelings of the receiver of the message.
- Courteous message is positive and focused at the audience.
- It makes use of terms expressing respect for the receiver of message.
- It is not at all biased.

Correctness

Correctness in communication means that there are no grammatical errors in communication. Correct communication has following features:

- The message is exact, correct and well-timed.
- If the communication is correct, it boosts up the confidence level.
Correct message has greater effect on the audience/readers.

- It checks for the preciseness and accuracy of facts and figures used in the message.

- It makes use of appropriate and correct language in the message.

### SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

State whether the following statements are true/false:
16. The 7 Cs of effective communication are not relevant to both written as well as oral communication.
17. Conciseness does not underline and highlight the main message as it uses excessive and needless words.
18. Courtesy in message entails the message should not show the sender’s expression as well as should respect the receiver.

### ACTIVITY

Write about any topic that interests you.

Assess checklist for Concreteness:
- Were you precise in using facts and figures wherever possible?
- Did you use the active voice more than the passive?
- Is there action in verbs rather than nouns or infinitives?
- Did you try to occasionally use vivid, image-building words?

### 1.7 BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

The roadblocks to communication are anything that interferes in the communication process as a consequence of which the message may not be received by the receiver as was intended by the sender. The barriers may also be defined as obstructions or blockades or hurdles, stoppages and bottlenecks in effective system of communication. The figure below shows the concept of obstacle to communication.

![Figure 1.4: Concepts of Barrier](image-url)
**Noise as a Barrier**

“Noise” is the disruption or hindrance in communication process anywhere along the way as shown in figure 1.5. It can occur at any point in the communication process. Noise can be the sound of someone coughing, a truck driving by, or two people talking close at hand. It can also include disruptions such as a letter being lost in the mail (either traditional or electronic), a telephone line going dead, or one of the participants in a conversation being called away before the communication process is completed.

![Figure 1.5: Noise as Barrier](image)

Noise may spring up because a manager is not able to express himself well; attention of listener is not on the message; memos are poorly reproduced or written and thus are hard to read. Still, if communication is two-way, the communicator may determine if the message has been obtained and if it has produced intended response.

**Perceptual and Language Differences**

Perception is in general how each individual interprets the world around him. People generally want to receive messages which are significant to them. But any message which is against their values is not accepted. A same event may be taken differently by different individuals.

*Example:* A person is on leave for a month due to personal reasons (family member being critical). The HR Manager may be in confusion whether to retain that employee or not, the immediate manager might think of substitute because his team’s productivity is being hampered, the family members might take him as an emotional hold.

**Information Overload**

Managers are bordered with a pool of information. It is necessary to control this information flow else the information is likely to be misinterpreted or forgotten or overlooked. As a consequence, communication is less effective.
Inattention

At times we just not listen, but only hear.

*Example:* A traveller may pay attention to one “NO PARKING” sign, but if such sign is put all over the city, he no longer listens to it. Therefore, repetitive messages should be dismissed for effective communication. Similarly, if a superior is engrossed in his paper work and his subordinate explains him his problem, the superior may not get what he is saying and it contributes to disappointment of subordinate.

Time Pressures

Frequently in organization the targets have to be achieved within a specified time period, the failure of which has adverse consequences. In a haste to meet deadlines, the formal channels of communication are shortened, or messages are partially given, i.e., not completely channelled. Thus ample time should be given for effective communication.

Emotions

Emotional state at a peculiar point of time also affects communication. If the receiver feels that communicator is angry he understands that the information being sent is very bad. He takes it differently if the communicator is happy and jovial (in that case the message is interpreted to be good and interesting).

Complexity in Organizational Structure

Greater the power structure in an organization (i.e. more the number of managerial levels), more are the chances of communication getting lost. Only the people at the top level can see the overall picture while the people at low level just have knowledge about their own area and a little knowledge about other areas.

Poor Retention

Human memory cannot function outside a limit. One can't always retain what is being told especially if he is not interested or not attentive. This leads to communication collapse.

1.7.1 WHY COMMUNICATION BARRIERS?

The barriers to communication develop on account of the following reasons:

Reasons on Account of the Sender

- When the sender is unreactive to receiver’s needs, status and knowledge.
- When the sender lacks basic communication.
- When the sender lacks knowledge of the subject.
1.7.2 CAUSES FOR MISCOMMUNICATION

Miscommunication occurs when the message received is not the same as the message sent. The causes for miscommunication are many. Some important causes for miscommunication are as under:

**Organizational Structure**

Large organizations in general have too many vertical communication links; as a result, message becomes distorted as they move through the various organizational levels. Regardless of the size, all organizations have communication policies that depict the protocol to be followed. It is the structure and complexity of this protocol that usually gives rise to communication barriers.

To eliminate this, the receiver should be contacted directly rather than through numerous transfer stations. Also, the message should be demonstrated orally as this reduces the dependence on transfer stations. To further overcome structural barriers, opportunities should exist for communicating upward, downward, and horizontally using techniques like employee surveys, open-door policies, newsletters, memos, and task groups. An effort should be made to cut down hierarchical levels, increase communication-coordination between departments, and encourage two-way communication.

**Difference in Status**

When people belonging to different hierarchical positions communicate with each other, there is a possibility of miscommunication. In general, employees at lower levels of the hierarchy are over cautious while sending messages to managers and talk about subjects they think the
managers are interested in. Similarly, people of higher status may distort the message by rejecting to discuss anything that would tend to weaken their authority in the organization. In other words, they may want to retain the importance of their status. This tendency is beneficial neither for the employees nor for the organization.

Miscommunication growing due to differences in status can be overcome by keeping the managers and the lower-level employees well-informed. Employees should be urged to keep their managers informed by being fair-minded and respectful of their notions. They should be brave and convey even such information that the boss might not like.

**Lack of Trust**

Establishing credibility or building trust among subordinates or with colleagues is a difficult task. Subordinates may not know whether their manager will respond in a supportive or responsible way, and therefore, it is necessary for the manager to ensure that they have faith in him. Without trust, free and open communication is effectively blocked, thereby threatening the organization’s stability. You may be very clear in your communication, but that is not enough. People should trust you to accept or to freely discuss with you on what you communicate.

Barriers to trust can be overcome by being visible and accessible. Hiding or insulating behind assistants or secretaries will not help. Share key information with colleagues and employees, communicate honestly, and include employees in decision-making. Creating an open communication environment in the organization, helping employees in times of distress, and assuring them of your suggestion or cooperation may help you to build trust in their minds.

**Incorrect Choice of Medium**

Choosing an incompatible communication medium can distort the message and block the intended meaning. One should select a medium that suits the nature of the message and the intended recipients. Face-to-face communication is the most fertile medium because it is personal, it provides immediate feedback, transmits information from both verbal and non-verbal cues, and conveys the emotion behind the message. Telephones and other interactive electronic media are not as effective. Written media can be personalized through memos, letters, and reports, but immediate feedback is missing along with the visual and vocal non-verbal cues that contribute to the meaning of the message. The weakest media are in general impersonal written messages, such as bulletins, fliers, and standard reports. They lack the ability to carry non-verbal cues and to give feedback and also eliminate any personal focus.

The barriers that arise out of an incompatible choice of media can be overcome by choosing the richest media for non-routine, complex
messages; using rich media to extend and to humanize your presence to promote the employees commitment to organizational goals, and using leaner media to communicate simple, routine messages.

Closed Communication Climate

An organization’s communication climate is determined by its management style. A direct, authoritarian style blocks free and open exchange of information that characterizes closed communication.

To overcome barriers related to organizational environment, one should spend more time listening than issuing orders. Make sure you react constructively to employees, and, of course, encourage employees and colleagues to offer suggestions, help set goals, participate in solving problems, and help make decisions. See to it that employees are willing to communicate both their problems and views to you openly.

Information Overload

Occasionally, people load their messages with too much information. Remember that too much information is as bad as too little because it dilutes the audience’s ability to concentrate on the most important part of the message. The recipients facing information overload sometimes tend to ignore some of the message, delay responses to messages they deem unimportant, answer only parts of some message, or react only superficially to all messages. All these failures lead to miscommunication.

To overcome information overload, as a sender, be focused, realize that some information is not necessary, and include only the pertinent information. Give some meaning to the information rather than just passing it on. As a receiver, set priorities for dealing with the information flow and do not get trapped in the sea of information.

Message Complexity

There are two main reasons for any message to become complex in a business setting – one, the dry and hard nature of the message itself and the other, the difficulty in understanding it. When formulating business messages, you communicate both as an individual and as a representative of an organization. Thus, you must adapt your own ideas and style so that they are acceptable to your employer. In fact, at times you may be asked to write or say something that you disagree with personally.

Defeating this barrier can be possible by keeping the message clear and easy to understand, organizing them suitably, leading readers by telling them what to expect, using concrete and specific language, and by being focused. Never forget to ask for feedback, which is essential for clarifying and amending a message.
Message Competition

Constantly, most business messages compete for the full and undivided attention of their receivers. This may occur at two levels—intra-personal and inter-personal. If you are talking on the phone while scanning a report, both messages are likely to get lost. It may occur so that when you are the sender of a message, it may have to compete with a variety of interruptions—phone rings every five minutes, people intrude, meetings are called, and crises arise. In short, your message seldom has the benefit of the receiver’s undivided attention. Such roadblocks are true for both oral and written messages.

Overcoming this barrier can be achieved by making written messages visually attractive and easy to understand, and delivering them when your receiver has time to read them. Oral messages are most effective when you take recourse to the face-to-face mode of communication rather than resorting to intermediaries or answering machines. Invariably set aside plenty time for important messages that you receive, as you know that the sender and receiver keep changing their role in the communication process.

Unethical Communication

Relationship within and outside the organization depend on trust and fairness. It does not mean that organizations should not be tactful. By all means, it is possible for organizations to avoid illegal or unethical messages and still be believable or successful in the long run. Barriers arising out of unethical conduct may affect communication both within and outside the organization. Suppose a situation in which your colleague goes to your boss and takes credit for the success of a project, which actually you have accomplished. This example reveals that resorting to unethical means in communication may not drive you to success but to trouble.

Defeating this barrier can be possible by making sure that your messages include all the factual information that ought to be there. Ensure that your information is adequate and relevant to the situation. Above all, make sure that your message is entirely truthful, not deceptive in any way, and does not mislead the audience.

Physical Distraction

Communication barriers are time and again physical: bad connections, poor acoustics, illegible copy, etc. While noise of this sort seems trivial, it can completely block an otherwise effective message. An uneasy chair, poor lighting, or some other irritating condition might also distract your receiver. In some cases, the barriers may be related to the receiver’s health. Hearing or visual impairment or even a headache can interfere the reception of a message. These irritations do not usually block communication entirely, but they do reduce the receivers’ concentration by distracting their attention.
To overcome physical barriers, exercise as much control as possible over the physical transmission link. If you are delivering an oral presentation, choose a setting that permits the audience to see and hear you without straining. When you are the audience, try to concentrate on the message rather than the distractions. On the other hand, if you are preparing a written document, make sure its appearance or layout suits the message contained in it. To diminish the possibility of miscommunication, follow these four simple steps:

- Regard seriously the recipients of your message. Make sure that the key people who have to receive the written or oral message are included.
- Think about how to send the message, i.e., should the mode be verbal or written.
- Follow up your verbal message with a written statement.
- At last, decide who can communicate with whom.

### 1.7.3 OVERCOMING BARRIERS IN COMMUNICATION

Constant work is required to overcome barriers which unconsciously sneak up in the process of communication. Barriers can be overcome if sufficient effort is put into the communication process and it is wanted that communication be effective and efficient.

One way of reducing the effects of these barriers is to check incessantly during the communication process what the message really is. The points to be taken by the sender, receiver and together the two of them, to achieve this are listed below:

**Sender:** The sender should be clear about the following Ws and H:

- **Who**: To whom should the message go?
- **Why**: Why should I communicate? What are the reasons?
- **What**: Decide what to communicate and be clear about what one needs to communicate.
- **When**: The best time for optimum reception is chosen.
- **Where**: Choose a location that will not interfere with the reception, understanding and acceptance of the message — Privately? Home or away? In a group? At work or outside?
- **How**: Use a language, which the receiver will understand and which is unambiguous.

**Receiver:** The receiver can be aware about the following, to overcome the different barriers:

- Be fully attentive to sender.
- Listen actively to the message being sent.
- Ask for clarification and repetition wherever necessary.
- Keep checking the receipt of information with sender.
Together: Both, the receiver and sender can make the communication flawless if they:

- Realize that misunderstandings are bound to occur, and be alert for all cues to this effect.
- Listen, listen, listen, and listen again.
- Share opinions, feelings and perceptions generated by the message.

Thus, both parties individually as well as unitedly have to work to remove the barriers and achieve the communication effectiveness.

Example: If manager tries to get things done through other people he or she must unitedly work with them since all of us have our own favoured leadership (the management of people can be called leadership) and styles, which affect the ways in which we communicate with others, particularly with staff. And so barriers can be created if work is not done collaboratively.

1.7.4 MEASURES TO OVERCOME BARRIERS IN COMMUNICATION

Following are some of the extra measures to overcome the barriers to communication:

- **Fostering good relationships:** Strong relationships must be forged between the employer and employee in order to avoid misunderstandings and accept each other’s view in order to remove the barriers and to help proper communication in the organization.

- **Purposeful and well-focused communication:** Communication should be purposeful and aimed at an individual. At the end of the communication, the receiver should not be left to feel that communication had been meaningless or useless.

- **Coordination between superior and subordinates:** In case, the superior thinks at a level, which is different from that of the subordinate and vice-versa, it will impact the effectiveness of communication. Thus, there should be good and proper coordination and co-operation between the superior and subordinate for effective communication.

- **Avoid technical language:** Specialized language should be avoided. Efforts should be made to use language commonly understood by the receiver and sender of the message. There should be least use of technical jargon in the communication process.

- **Accuracy:** There should be accuracy in the message to be carried between both parties for the communication to improve its effectiveness.
Feedback: The selective percept of receiver should be minimized through proper feedback. The drawback of the selective perception should be explained to minimize the barriers.

Clarity in message: The message to be transferred should be clear, practical accurate and without any equivocalness.

Communication of organizational philosophy: Efforts have to be made in a planned way to sensitize people with the organizational philosophy. It should be properly communicated to its employees so that it allows proper attention in their day-to-day communication.

Flat organizational structure: The organization should have a clear-cut and simple organizational structure. Tall hierarchical structures should be removed, and changed to flat structures to avert excessive control of information. Wrong information transferred to anyone in the organization can prove detrimental. Proper restyle of organizational structure will trim down the status gap.

Division of labour: There should be proper division of labour between people in order to reduce information overload and keep delay in information transfer.

Minimize semantic problems: People use either the same word in different ways or different words in the same way. One will be surprised to know that there are 15 different meanings of the word ‘charge’ in the English language. They also occur when people use jargons or professional shorthand which they expect others to understand, or use language that is outside the other’s vocabulary.

Organization policies: The organization should devise its policies in such a way that it will give full advantage to all members of the organization. It should be flexible and easy to implement. While the organization’s goal must be clear, everyone must know about his position in the organizational communication process. The network has to be fully developed so that no such type of barriers exists. Furthermore, there should be consistency when messages are passed from a sender to a receiver: One should not introduce a personal view in the message. It must be clear and understood by everyone easily. Timeline in the message should be cited for if it is not passed in time, it will be of no use.

Proper communication channels: If one wants immediate action from the receiver, there is no need to send a lengthy discussion report. One can pick up the telephone or go to his office to tell him what to do. Also remember that a picture is worth a thousand words, and in this age of computer graphics, information can be produced more rapidly in this way too.

Right feedback: Although one-way communication is quicker, two-way communication is more exact. In complex situations, it
helps both sender and receiver to measure their understanding and improves their joint commitment towards the task. It alters both parties to describe and clear misunderstandings leading to a higher quality of reception and acceptance.

Thus, in order to communicate effectively, there is need to overcome all barriers and also develop skills to improve existing communication abilities.

**SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

Fill in the blanks:

19. ...................... is the disruption or hindrance in communication process anywhere along the way.

20. ...................... messages should be dismissed for effective communication.

21. Communication should be ...................... and aimed at an individual.

**ACTIVITY**

Write 5 sentences each, on any topic of your choice, one described in a vague manner and the other in a purposeful manner. Compare the effect.

**NOTE**

The roadblocks to communication are anything that interferes in the communication process as a consequence of which the message may not be received by the receiver as was intended by the sender.

**1.8 SUMMARY**

- Good communication is the basis of successful relationships, both personal and professional.
- In this chapter, we have understood business communication and its importance as per the view of Peter Ferdinand Drucker who was a management consultant, educator, and author.
- In today’s competitive world, communication skills in business are the most desired quality of an educated person.
- Here, we also get to know the role of communication skills in students’ career. Forms of communication skills have also been elucidated in this chapter.
- There are 7 C’s of effective communication which are relevant to both written as well as oral communication. These are: Completeness, Conciseness, Consideration, Clarity, Concreteness, Courtesy and Correctness.
The roadblocks to communication denote anything that interferes in the communication process as a consequence of which the message may not be received by the receiver as was intended by the sender. The barriers may also be defined as obstructions or blockades or hurdles, stoppages and bottlenecks in effective system of communication.

**KEY WORDS**

- **Communication**: Communication is the process by which information is exchanged between individuals.
- **Communication Skills**: The ability to convey information to another effectively and efficiently.
- **Personal Communication**: It is the incidental exchange of information and feelings in which human beings engage whenever they come together.
- **Verbal Communication**: Communication that requires the use of words, vocabulary, numbers and symbols and is organized in sentences using language.
- **Non-verbal Communication**: It is the act of imparting or interchanging thoughts, posture, opinions or information without the use of words, using gestures, sign language, facial expressions and body language.

**1.9 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS**

1. What is communication? In business organizations, communication performs several roles. Discuss.

2. Does communication make a business successful? Give your view and support with an example.

3. Is listening important in communication? Explain the importance of listening while discussing about listening as behaviour.

4. List down points of how to be a good listener. Also distinguish between a good and a bad listener.

5. Discuss about the significance of communication keeping in view the broad forms that it takes in an organization.

6. What are the principles of interpersonal communication?

7. Explain how one-way and two-way communication falls within the spectrum of verbal and non-verbal communication.

8. What do you understand by communication network in an organization? Is grapevine important for an organization to exist?

9. What are the 7 Cs of effective communication?
## 1.10 ANSWERS AND HINTS

### ANSWERS FOR SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Q. No.</th>
<th>Answers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction – What is Communication?</td>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>communication</td>
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<td>Role of Communication in Business</td>
<td>4.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>directs, peers, boos</td>
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<td>Importance of Communication Skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>9.</td>
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<td>Forms of Communication</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Formal</td>
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<td>Formation and Sending of Response</td>
<td>13.</td>
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<td>14.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>15.</td>
<td>True</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Cs of Good Communication</td>
<td>16.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>18.</td>
<td>False</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barriers to Communication</td>
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<td></td>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Repetitive</td>
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<td></td>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Purposeful</td>
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</table>

### HINTS FOR DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Refer 1.2

Communication means to inform, to tell, to show, or to spread information i.e., it may be interpreted as an interchange of thought or information to bring about understanding and confidence for good industrial relations in various roles, namely, communication with directs, peers or bosses.
NOTES

2. Refer 1.2.4
   Business communication asserts, sustains and animates business relations and therefore has the capability of making relations or breaking relations.

3. Refer 1.3.1
   Listening can be viewed as a form of behaviour that is an integral part of the on-the-job communication process due to the time spent doing the same- listening. Managers agree that ‘active listening’ is the most crucial skill for becoming a successful manager.

4. Refer 1.3.1
   Listening skills can be improved with critical discrimination or conscious effort and there are plethora of points that can distinguish a good listener from a bad listener.

5. Refer 1.4.1, 1.4.2, 1.4.3
   The significance of communication in business is indisputable and becomes more so with the three forms it takes in an organization – internal-operational, external-operational and personal.

6. Refer 1.4.4
   The principles that underlie the workings in real life of interpersonal communication are that it is: inescapable, irreversible, complicated and contextual.

7. Refer 1.4.4
   One-way communication is characterized by absence of feedback from the receiver to the sender and if non-verbal communication is written takes the form of one-way communication.
   Two-ways communication requires active feedback from the receiver to the sender to assure that the receiver has understood the same message which the sender meant to convey and since verbal communication implies face-to-face interaction it clearly takes form of two-way communication.

8. Refer 1.5.5
   The institutionalization of communications, by the execution of formal or informal lines, may lead to assign a positive or negative value, respectively to the communications within the enterprise culture, thereby advocating people to communicate.

9. Refer 1.6
   There are 7 Cs of effective communication which are: Completeness, Conciseness, Consideration, Clarity, Concreteness, Courtesy, and Correctness.
1.11 SUGGESTED READING FOR REFERENCE

SUGGESTED READINGS


E-REFERENCES

- http://money.howstuffworks.com/business/starting-a-job/10-tips-for-effective-workplace-communication.htm#page=0
## CONTENTS

2.1 Introduction
2.2 Verbal Communication
2.3 Oral Communication
  2.3.1 Advantages of Oral Communication
  2.3.2 Disadvantages of Oral Communication
2.4 Written Communication
2.5 Verbal Communication Skills Worth Mastering
  2.5.1 Assertive Communication
2.6 Non-verbal Communication
  2.6.1 Elements of Non-verbal Communication
  2.6.2 Significance of Non-verbal Communication
  2.6.3 Types of Non-verbal Communication
2.7 Summary
2.8 Descriptive Questions
2.9 Answers and Hints
2.10 Suggested Reading for Reference
You are a manager of an accounting department in a medium sized company. One of the accountants has been on leave for two weeks in two months and his work is not done in a timely fashion. Would you like to speak to him or write to him or attempt both? If both, then what would you like to do first?
After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- Discuss the concept of verbal communication
- Explain the concept of oral communication
- Describe the concept of written communication
- Understand the concept of non-verbal communication

# 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Verbal communication is simply the communication that is expressed through words. What you say is verbal communication. What you don’t say is non-verbal communication. Verbal communication is vital to healthy relationships, businesses and groups. Although only 10 per cent of what is said actually makes its way into a person’s long-term memory bank, verbal communication plays an essential role in daily life. It’s seen when the President makes a speech, a teacher lectures or a husband and wife work through an issue.

Non-verbal communication is more important than you might think. Also called body language, non-verbal communication takes place frequently and sends strong messages to the people you come into contact with. Your non-verbal communication style either attracts people to you or develops trust, interest and more communication, or it turns people away from you and develops disinterest, confusion or distrust. Learn to use effective non-verbal communication techniques to your advantage.

# 2.2 VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Verbal communication relates to the form of communication in which message is transmitted verbally; communication is done by word of mouth or a piece of writing. Objective of every communication is to have people understand what we are trying to express. In verbal communication remember the acronym KISS (Keep It Short and Simple).

When we talk to others, we presume that others understand what we are saying because we know what we are saying. But this is not the case, usually people bring their own attitude, perception, emotions and thoughts about the topic and therefore creates barrier in delivering the right meaning.

So in order to deliver the right message, you must put yourself on the other side of the table and think from your receiver’s point of view. Would he understand the message? How it would sound on the other side of the table?

Verbal communication is further divided into:

- Oral Communication
- Written Communication
2.3 ORAL COMMUNICATION

In oral communication, spoken words are used. It includes face-to-face conversations, speech, telephonic conversation, video, radio, television, voice over internet. In oral communication, communication is influenced by pitch, volume, speed and clarity of speaking. Oral communication means spoken communication or communication through speech. A person learns to speak much before writing. It is difficult to decide which one is a more important form of communication: written or oral. But it is perfectly safe to assume that oral communication is the most popular. While everyone speaks before learning to write, it is perfectly possible to think of someone who can use language to speak but not to write.

In fact, oral communication is not only the most popular but also the most powerful and effective form of communication that occurs between human beings. Compared to it, the volume of written communication is small and confined to formal and official contexts.

In offices and business organizations too, people speak much before and much more when compared to, writing. Oral communication takes place through face-to-face talks (both formal and informal), telephone, loudspeaker, etc.

2.3.1 ADVANTAGES OF ORAL COMMUNICATION

Oral communication offers the following advantages:

- **Immediate Feedback:** The biggest advantage of oral communication is that it provides immediate feedback to
both the sender and the receiver. Each can therefore ask for clarification and elaboration on the spot. The speaker can immediately understand the reaction of the audience or group, s/he is addressing while the hearers get a number of clues about how their behaviour is being perceived by the speaker.

- **Time Saving:** Oral communication is very fast. It saves the time involved in writing the message and delivering it through a channel like the postal or courier services.

- **Economical:** Oral communication saves the money spent on stationery and the channel of communication.

- **Personal Touch:** Oral communication builds up a healthy climate in the organization by bringing superiors and subordinates closer. It is also an effective tool for persuasion.

- **Flexibility:** Oral communication provides an opportunity to the speaker to correct himself and make himself clear by changing his voice, pitch, tone, etc. A number of other factors like context, body language, etc. can be used to reinforce and modify what is spoken through the words.

- **Secrecy:** Oral messages can be more easily kept confidential than written messages. All one has to do is to ensure that there is no one within the hearing or recording distance.

- **Group Communication:** Oral communication is extremely useful for communicating with groups in meetings, conferences, etc. No classroom teaching would be possible without oral communication.

- **Effectiveness:** Because oral communication involves the real or virtual presence of both the parties therefore the message transfer is more effective and that helps in achieving the goal of the communication more efficiently.

### 2.3.2 DISADVANTAGES OF ORAL COMMUNICATION

Oral communication suffers from the following limitations:

- **Poor Retention:** The listener cannot retain oral messages in his memory for a long time. The speaker himself may not recall what he actually said.

- **No Record:** Oral communication does not provide any record for future reference. In the absence of record, oral messages have no legal validity.

- **Time Consuming:** Oral communication may not always be time saving. Precisely because there is no binding medium like a page or a book, this form of communication is virtually endless. Sometimes meetings continue for a long time without arriving at any satisfactory conclusion.
Misunderstanding: Oral communications are likely to be misunderstood due to poor expression and noise. The speaker may not be able to make himself quite clear or the listener may be inattentive. This is likely to be truer when the two individuals are not on good terms with each other.

Lengthy Messages: Oral communication is not suitable for transmitting lengthy messages. Some parts of vital importance may not receive adequate attention.

Lack of Responsibility: Oral messages are not recorded. Therefore, it becomes difficult to hold persons responsible for mistakes, inaccuracy or falsity in oral communication.

Imprecise: People usually take less care when speaking than when writing. Therefore, spoken words tend to be less precise than the written words. Often the exact point the speaker is trying to make is lost in a mass of words.

How to Make Oral Communication Effective?
The following steps should be taken to make oral communication effective:

Clarity: The speaker should pronounce his words “clearly” and “correctly”. He must talk distinctly and slowly. When a person speaks fast or munches words the oral message is likely to be misunderstood. The way a person speaks his dialogue exercises much influence on the audience. Clarity of expression is the aim at all times.

Brevity: Oral communications often suffer from too much of talking. When a speaker keeps on talking for long, his message is lost in a sea of words and his listeners tend to become inattentive. Therefore, the message must be kept as short as possible. However, the speaker should not appear unclear, abrupt or discourteous.

Precision: An oral message becomes more effective when it is precise and concise.

Example: It is better to say ‘cut down costs by ₹ 100 instead of saying ‘reduce costs’. The message should not be vague or incomplete. Words ought to mean clearly what they are intended to say.

Right words: The first caution is to ensure that you know the meaning of the words that you use. Some words have more than one meaning while some others carry different meanings for different persons. Be sure about what your words will convey to a trained reader.

Example: City, town and metropolis are three different words and care should be exercised before using them. You will find that
the word ‘metro’ has at least three different meanings in day-to-day usage. Find them out for yourself. Therefore, words should be chosen carefully and their meaning clarified in the context of usage. The speaker should not presume that the listener would mean the same thing from a word, which s/he means.

- **Avoid Hackneyed Phrases and Clichés**: Speakers often use hackneyed phrases and clichés like ‘you know’, ‘I see’, ‘you see’, ‘what I mean’, ‘isn’t,’ etc. Such phrases interrupt the flow of speech and obstruct the quick grasp of meaning besides causing boredom. Speakers should ensure that they do not use these phrases unconsciously or consciously and a good way of overcoming these phrases is to be conscious about not using them when speaking. Most of us use them as connectives, filling up a gap when we do not have the correct word/phrase. Keeping them consciously out of your usage would mean that you will have to remain silent for those gaps. But don’t worry. Once you stop using fillers like those, appropriate words will come to you with a little effort at articulation.

- **Understand the Listener**: A good speaker must understand the listener before talking. People vary in terms of their education, culture, intelligence level, maturity, etc. The speaker should put himself in place of the listener and adjust his speech according to the needs and abilities of the listener.

- **Natural Voice**: The speaker should use his natural way of speaking. In order to look sophisticated some speakers use a foreign accent. This reduces the effectiveness of communication. Remember the most efficient speakers across the world are those that speak with a neutral accent. So, a speaker should cultivate a pleasing voice and natural style.

- **Logical Sequence**: Before speaking, different ideas to be conveyed should be arranged in a logical order. It helps to make the speech forceful.

- **Conviction**: A speaker must have conviction in what he says. Careful understanding, sincerity of speech, and intelligent planning are required to develop conviction in speech.

### Self Assessment Questions

State whether the following statements are true/false:

3. A good speaker must not understand the listener before talking.
4. Clarity of expression is the aim of oral communication at all times.
5. Words should be chosen carefully and their meaning clarified in the context of usage.
Devote one complete day to oral communication. On this day, do not use pen and paper for any purpose, even while sitting in the classroom. Observe the next day as the day for written communication. Even communicate to your friends by writing on a piece of paper. This will help you to realize the relative importance of both these forms of verbal communication and how best to utilize them for maximum impact.

2.4 WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

In written communication, written signs or symbols are used to communicate. A written message may be published or handwritten. In written communication, message can be transmitted via email, letter, report, memo, etc. Message, in written communication, is influenced by the vocabulary and grammar used, writing style, precision and clarity of the language used.

Written communication is the most common form of communication being used in business. So, it is believed core among business skills.

Memos, reports, bulletins, job descriptions, employee manuals, and electronic mail are the types of written communication used for internal communication. For communicating with external environment in writing, electronic mail, Internet Websites, letters, proposals, telegrams, faxes, postcards, contracts, advertisements, brochures, and news releases are used.

Advantages of Written Communication

- Messages can be edited and revised many time before it is actually sent.
- Written communication provides record for every message sent and can be saved for later study.
- A written message enables receiver to fully understand it and send suitable feedback.

Disadvantages of Written Communication

- Unlike oral communication, written communication doesn’t bring instant feedback.
- It takes more time in writing a message as compared to word-of-mouth and number of people struggles with their writing ability.

State whether the following statements are true/false:

6. In written communication, message cannot be transmitted via email, letter, report, memo, etc. They should only be handwritten.
7. Written communication provides record for every message sent.
8. Written communication does bring instant feedback.

**ACTIVITY**

Devote a week to getting used to email interactions with your friends. Analyse how different it is from telephonic interactions.

## 2.5 VERBAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS WORTH MASTERING

Below are ten verbal communication tips one should master. Each of these is just as crucial in our personal lives as in our professional lives. By improving verbal communication skills one can quickly connect and build rapport, earn respect, gain influence, and become more likable and accepted.

- **Be friendly:** People who communicate with a friendly tone and warm smile nearly always have the edge. The reason is simple: we are subconsciously drawn to people who are friendly because they make us feel good and bring more enjoyment to our lives.

- **Think before you speak:** An English Proverbs is “Better to remain silent and be thought a fool, than to open your mouth and remove all doubt.” Whatever goes through the minds without putting any thought into what the person is saying. As a consequence the person says things that end up reflecting poorly on themselves.

- **Be clear:** Most of us don’t have the time nor do we want to spend our emotional energy to figure out what someone else is trying to say. People who are indirect in their verbal communication and who incline to hint at things without saying what’s really on their mind are rarely respected. When there is something you want to say, ask yourself, “What is the clearest way I can communicate this point?”

- **Don’t talk too much:** Very few people like to be around someone who talks too much and dominates the conversation.

- **Be your authentic self:** Today, people are turned off by those people who feel the need to put on a show to make their point. Instead, people are attracted to someone who speaks from the heart and is genuine, transparent, and real.

- **Practice humility:** Humility is having a modest view of one’s own importance. It is one of the most attractive personality traits one can possess and is one of the most significant predictors of someone who is respected. People who speak with humility and genuine respect for others are almost always held in high regard.
*NOTES*

- **Speak with confidence:** You don’t have to sacrifice self-confidence to practice humility. Confidence is a self-assurance arising from an appreciation of one’s true abilities, whereas humility is having a modest opinion of one’s own importance. Speaking with confidence includes the words you choose, the tone of your voice, your eye contact, and body language.

- **Focus on your body language:** When you are engaged in face-to-face verbal communication, your body language can play as substantial a role in the message you communicate as the words you speak. Your body language communicates respect and interest. It puts real meaning behind your words.

- **Be concise:** Very few things are more irritating to me than when someone can’t get to the point of what he or she is trying to say. Plan ahead. Invariably ask yourself, “How can I say what needs to be said using the fewest number of words possible while still being courteous and respectful?”

- **Learn the art of listening:** Being an attentive listener is more important in verbal communication than any words that can come out of your mouth. You must show a sincere interest in what is being said, ask good questions, listen for the message within the message, and avoid interrupting.

### 2.5.1 ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

Being assertive is a core communication skill. Being assertive means that you express yourself effectively and stand up for your point of view, while also respecting the rights and beliefs of others.

For success in any group talk, it is important to be assertive without being aggressive. One must put forth his/her point to the group in a very emphatic, positive and confident manner. Participants often confuse assertiveness with aggressiveness. Aggressiveness is all about forcing your point on the other person, and can be a threat to the group. An aggressive person can also demonstrate negative body language, whereas an assertive person displays positive body language.

Because assertiveness is based on mutual respect, it’s an effective and diplomatic communication style. Being assertive shows that you respect yourself because you’re willing to stand up for your interests and express your thoughts and feelings. It also demonstrates that you’re aware of the rights of others and are willing to work on resolving conflicts.

Of course, it’s not just what you say, your message, but also how you say it that’s important. Assertive communication is direct and respectful. Being assertive gives you the best chance of successfully delivering your message. If you communicate in a way that’s too passive or too aggressive, your message may get lost because people are too busy reacting to your delivery.
Being assertive can also help boost your self-esteem and earn others’ respect. This can help with stress management, especially if you tend to take on too many responsibilities because you have a hard time saying no.

**SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

State whether the following statements are true/ false:

9. Aggressiveness is all about forcing your point on the other person, and can be a show of confidence to the group.

10. People who communicate with a friendly tone and warm smile nearly always have the edge.

11. Whatever goes through the minds without putting any thought into what the person is saying is how one can master verbal interaction.

**ACTIVITY**

Debate on the election of the new Prime Minister of India. Be assertive in putting across your point if you support or vice versa. See the nature of the response.

**NOTE**

Speaking with confidence includes the words you choose, the tone of your voice, your eye contact, and body language.

### 2.6 NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Non-verbal communication is the sending or receiving of wordless messages. We can say that communication other than oral and written, as gesture, body language, posture, tone of voice or facial expressions, is called non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication is all about the body language of speaker.

Non-verbal communication helps receiver in interpreting the message received. Frequently, non-verbal signals reflect the situation more accurately than verbal messages. Sometimes non-verbal response contradicts verbal communication and thus affects the effectiveness of message.

#### 2.6.1 ELEMENTS OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Non-verbal communication has the following three elements:

- **Appearance:** Speaker: clothing, hairstyle, neatness, use of cosmetics. Surrounding: room size, lighting, decorations, furnishings
Non-verbal communication, or body language, is a critical form of communication – a natural, unconscious language that broadcasts our true feelings and purposes in any given moment, and clues us in to the feelings and intentions of those around us.

When we act with others, we ceaselessly give and receive wordless signals. All of our non-verbal behaviours – the gestures we make, the way we sit, how fast or how loud we talk, how close we stand, how much eye contact we make – send strong messages. These messages don’t stop when you stop speaking either. Even when you’re silent, you’re still communicating non-verbally.

Frequently, what we say and what we communicate through body language are two totally different things. When faced with these mixed signals, the listener has to choose whether to believe your verbal or non-verbal message, and, in most cases, they’re going to choose non-verbal.

2.6.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

The way you listen, look, move, and react tells the other person whether or not you care, if you’re being truthful, and how well you’re listening. When your non-verbal signals match up with the words you’re saying, they increase trust, clarity, and rapport. When they don’t, they generate tension, mistrust, and confusion.

If you want to communicate better in all fields of your life, it’s significant to become more sensitive to body language and other non-verbal cues, so you can be more in tune with the thoughts and feelings of others. You also need to be aware of the signals you’re sending off, so you can be sure that the messages you’re sending are what you actually want to communicate.

Non-verbal communication cues can play five roles:

- **Repetition:** They can repeat the message the person is making verbally.
- **Contradiction:** They can contradict a message the individual is trying to convey.
- **Substitution:** They can substitute for a verbal message.
  
  *Example:* A person’s eyes can often express a far more vivid message than words and often do.
- **Complementing:** They may add to or complement a verbal message. A boss who pats a person on the back in addition to giving praise can gain the impact of the message.
- **Accenting:** They may accent or underline a verbal message.
  
  *Example:* Pounding the table, can underline a message.
2.6.3 TYPES OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

There are many different types of non-verbal communication. Unitedly, the following non-verbal signals and cues convey your interest and investment in others.

- **Facial expressions**: The human face is extremely expressive, able to express countless emotions without saying a word. And unlike some forms of non-verbal communication, facial expressions are universal. The facial expressions for happiness, sadness, anger, surprise, fear, and disgust are the same across cultures.

- **Body movements and posture**: Believe how your perceptions of people are affected by the way they sit, walk, stand up, or hold their head. The way you move and carry yourself communicates a wealth of information to the world. This type of non-verbal communication includes your posture, bearing, stance, and elusive movements.

- **Gestures**: Gestures are woven into the fabric of our daily lives. We wave, point, beckon, and use our hands when we’re arguing or speaking animatedly – expressing ourselves with gestures often without thinking. Nevertheless, the meaning of gestures can be very different across cultures and regions, so it’s important to be careful to avoid misinterpretation.

- **Eye contact**: Because the visual sense is dominant for most people, eye contact is a particularly important type of non-verbal communication. The way you look at someone can communicate many things, including interest, affection, hostility, or attraction. Eye contact is also crucial in maintaining the flow of conversation and for gauging the other person’s response.

- **Touch**: We communicate a great deal through touch. Think about the messages given by the following: a firm handshake, a timid tap on the shoulder, a warm bear hug, an assuring pat on the back, a patronizing pat on the head, or a controlling grip on your arm.

- **Space**: Have you ever felt uneasy during a conversation because the other person was standing too close and invading your space? We all have a need for physical space, although that need differs depending upon the culture, the situation, and the closeness of the relationship. You can use physical space to communicate many different non-verbal messages, including signals of intimacy, aggression, dominance, or affection.

- **Voice**: It’s not just what you say, it’s how you say it. When we speak, other people “read” our voices in addition to heeding to our words. Things they pay attention to include your timing and pace, how loud you speak, your tone and inflection, and sounds that convey understanding, such as “ahh” and “uh-huh.”
Example: Think about how tone of voice, can show sarcasm, anger, affection, or confidence.

**How Non-verbal Communication can go Wrong?**

It takes more than words to make satisfying, strong relationships. Non-verbal communication has a huge impact on the quality of your personal and professional relationships. What you communicate through your body language and non-verbal signals affects how others see you, how well they like and respect you, and whether or not they trust you.

Unluckily, many people send confusing or negative non-verbal signals without even knowing it. When this happens, both connection and trust are damaged.

**Tips for Reading Body Language and Non-verbal Communication**

Once you’ve developed your powers to manage stress and recognize emotions, you’ll naturally become better at reading the non-verbal signals sent by others.

- **Pay attention to inconsistencies:** Non-verbal communication should reinforce what is being said. Is the person is saying one thing, and their body language something else?

  *Example:* Are they telling you “yes” while shaking their head no?

- **Look at non-verbal communication signals as a group:** Don’t read too much into a single motion or non-verbal cue. Believe all of the non-verbal signals you are receiving, from eye contact to tone of voice and body language. Taken together, are their non-verbal cues consistent – or inconsistent – with what their words are saying?

- **Trust your instincts:** Don’t ignore your gut feelings. If you get the sense that someone isn’t being honest or that something isn’t adding up, you may be picking up on a mismatch between verbal and non-verbal cues.

### [SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS](#)

Fill in the blanks:

12. …………………. is crucial in maintaining the flow of conversation and for gauging the other person’s response.

13. …………………. signals reflect the situation more accurately than verbal messages.

14. The meaning of …………………. can be very different across cultures and regions, so it’s important to be careful to avoid misinterpretation.
**ACTIVITY**

- Make two or more than two teams. One team can decide the name of one management fundamental and call one person from the other team. This person will be told to express this to his/her own team without using words, which is through expressions and signals and the team has to guess the right answer within 2-3 minutes. Likewise the other team also takes its turn.
- The game can also be played with the names of movies, actors or names of famous personalities.

**2.7 SUMMARY**

- Verbal communication relates to the form of communication in which message is transmitted verbally; communication is done by word of mouth and a piece of writing.
- Oral communication means spoken communication or communication through speech. A person learns to speak much before writing.
- It is difficult to decide which one is a more important form of communication: written or oral.
- A written message may be published or hand written.
- In written communication, message can be transmitted via email, letter, report, memo, etc.
- Non-verbal communication aids receiver in interpreting the message received.

**KEY WORDS**

- **Verbal Communication**: Verbal communication relates to the form of communication in which message is transmitted verbally; communication is done by word of mouth and a piece of writing.
- **Oral Communication**: Oral communication means spoken communication or communication through speech.
- **Written Communication**: A medium for communication that entails the written word.
- **Group Communication**: In written communication, written signs or symbols are used to communicate.
- **Non-verbal Communication**: Non-verbal communication is the sending or receiving of wordless messages.
- **Gestures**: A gesture is a form of non-verbal communication in which visible bodily actions communicate particular messages, either in place of speech or together and in parallel with words.
2.8 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Define verbal communication. What are the advantages of oral communication?

2. What is oral communication? How to make oral communication effective?

3. What is written communication? List its advantages and disadvantages.

4. For one to master verbal communication, what are the skills required?

5. What is non-verbal communication? Highlight its elements with examples.

6. Describe the different types of non-verbal communication.

2.9 ANSWERS AND HINTS

ANSWERS FOR SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Q. No.</th>
<th>Answers</th>
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<td>Verbal Communication Skills Worth Mastering</td>
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HINTS FOR DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Refer 2.2 & 2.3.1

Verbal communication relates to the form of communication in which message is transmitted verbally, communication is done by word of mouth or a piece of writing and therefore it has number of advantages.
2. Refer 2.3 & 2.3.2

Oral communication means spoken communication or communication through speech. For oral communication to be effective the following points must be adhered to: Clarity, Brevity, Precision, Right words, Avoid Hackneyed Phrases and Clichés, Understand the Listener, Natural Voice, Logical Sequence, Conviction

3. Refer 2.4

Written communication is the most common form of communication being used in business and it may be may be published or hand written. In the light of this statement it has a number of advantages and disadvantages.

4. Refer 2.5

Verbal communication is just as crucial in our personal lives as in our professional lives and to master it we must follow the following: Be friendly, Think before you speak, Be clear, Don't talk too much, Be your authentic self, Practice humility, Speak with confidence, Focus on your body language, Be concise, Learn the art of listening.

5. Refer 2.6

Non-verbal communication is the sending or receiving of wordless messages and its elements are: Appearance, Body Language, Sounds.

6. Refer 2.6.2

There are many different types of non-verbal communication, namely: Facial expressions, Body movements and posture, Gestures, Eye contact, Touch, Space, Voice.

2.10 SUGGESTED READING FOR REFERENCE

SUGGESTED READINGS

NOTES

E-REFERENCES

- http://www.reliableplant.com/Read/29184/better-workplace-communication
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
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GRAPEVINE IS NOT ALWAYS POSITIVE

The City Main Hospital, Cochin, was incurring losses, in spite of its rising popularity and increasing number of outdoor patients. The management has been thinking of doing something to solve the problem. As the major burden of the heavy cost was due to the surplus manpower, the simplest solution, according to the Hospital’s Executive Director, was to reduce staff, especially, from the nursing department.

The hospital had five floors. The fifth floor was meant for keeping chronic and old age patients’ under ‘observation’. Like all other floors, this unit had 80 beds with all the excellent facilities and round-the-clock services of 50 nurses reporting to Lily Joe, the Senior Nurse Manager.

The Executive Director knew that over the years, the fifth floor as “observation” unit had been only partially utilized. For the last 20 months, the floor had never served more than 6 patients at any given time. Naturally, the floor with its huge staff was considered under-utilized and to a large extent, a unit that could be dispensed with. The Executive Director, Dr. Pandey discussed the matter with the hospital management and suggested that the patients of the fifth floor could be kept in other wards and closing the fifth floor could avoid recurring losses.

The management agreed to close the fifth floor and decided to terminate the services of its senior manager Lily Joe as her services would be no more required. The management asked Dr. Pandey to remove also those nurses, who were specially appointed for the ‘observation’ unit because of their experience and training in looking after the chronic and elderly patients.

A number of meetings with the senior executives were held to plan the closing of the fifth floor. However, discussions brought out a few complicating factors in this regard.

Firstly, it was pointed out that no permanent employee of the hospital could, as per the hospital’s practice and service rules, be laid off. The hospital followed the policy of ‘reassignment’ and not ‘removal’. The management could close the fifth floor, but it could not remove the long-standing employees working in the observation unit on fifth floor. Hence, the management was committed to shift the fifth floor staff to other units having positions for them, according to their suitability across the hospital; it was believed that most of the affected staff could be suitably absorbed.

But, the senior managers from other units expressed reservations about the possibility of moving the fifth floor employees to other units. According to them, the fifth floor staff over the years had developed their own set and habitual ways different from the ways of employees of other units. The fifth floor nurses, for example,
refused to accept to do anything more than what was assigned to them. The staff had been idling since long. Therefore, they lacked participative and cooperative attitude. Their senior manager Lily Joe was generally considered least effective as a manager.

Because of all these reasons, the senior managers of all other units were most unwilling to accept the proposal of reassigning the fifth floor workers to other units. Both these complicating factors were conveyed to the management. To resolve the problem, management decided to discuss the matter with all nurse managers of the hospital administration. A series of meetings was conducted by the Vice-President of nursing, and attended by all ten of the nurse managers, including Lily Joe as well as General Manager of Public Relations, Director of Personnel and a Labour Relations Officer. Initially, the management did not want Lily Joe to be included in these meetings as she was personally concerned with the matter. However, the management considered it would look proper if Lily was involved in the planning process of the lay-off. In every meeting, Lily created a scene by crying and making all other members present feel extremely embarrassed.

It was resolved that nothing discussed in the meetings would be revealed to anyone until the final decision with regard to the closing of the fifth floor was made. Every member of the meeting was placed under the oath of secrecy. But soon, the entire hospital was full of rumours that the management had decided to throw out long-standing workers and that the fifth floor was its special target.

Anxiety, nervousness, whisperings spread across all the floors of the City Main Hospital. Hysteria gripped the fifth floor.

Finally, to meet the situation a plan was developed. On the following Friday morning, the Vice-President of nursing and the Director Personnel would go to the fifth floor and meet the entire staff of the observation unit to inform them about the plan of either shifting them to other units if so desired, for whom positions in other units had been worked out, or the scheme of Golden Handshake of parting with generous provisions of retirement benefits specially created for the fifth floor employees who would be laid-off. Immediately after this meeting, the same information would be announced at a general meeting of all the hospital workers; simultaneously, the hospital’s Chief Medical Officer (CMO) would hold a meeting of medical staff and brief them about the plan of closing the fifth floor. On Wednesday, individual letters signed by the Director General would be sent to all employees so that most would reach by Thursday morning and departmental meeting, “would be held on Thursday afternoon. On Friday, the whole staff, in a general meeting, would be informed about the scheme. On Thursday morning, a press release on the generous golden handshake scheme of the City Main Hospital would be organised with the media. Thus, by Friday,
news about the hospital’s generous action regarding the fifth floor employees would appear in the newspapers and be known to all.

Two days before the action on the fifth floor was to take place, the Vice-President of nursing met the Hospital’s CMO, Dr. Manoj Mehta and the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), General Khurana to review the plan formulated in the meetings. The Vice-President nursing was astonished to find both Dr. Mehta and General Khurana react to the plan negatively. Both insisted on knowing exactly how many persons would be removed and who all would be reassigned to different positions. But the Vice-President could not know beforehand of the exact number of reassignments, as the nursing positions always kept fluctuating every day, depending on the number of resignations and new appointments. Dr. Mehta shouted, “Nursing never gets its numbers right”. Besides, General Khurana violently reacted to getting the letters to individual employees signed by the Director General. “We should stop putting blame on the higher-ups”, he exclaimed. In fact, both made it clear that they would not allow the things to move forward until the specific numbers were worked out and the letter to the employees was redrafted.

Meanwhile, the hospital’s grapevine was spreading like wildfire. Everyone was talking about the fifth floor going to be closed in two days. Perhaps, the fifth floor employees themselves had come to know about the closing of the fifth floor. One of the fifth floor employees put an announcement on the hospital’s computer network saying, “Through a most reliable source, it is learnt that we the loyal and longest serving staff of the fifth floor are soon going to be thrown out onto the street by the hospital. If you wish to help support hurt persons, you could contribute to the charity fund, we are raising for this purpose. Please send your donations to any fifth floor employee’s home address.”

On Thursday, the fifth floor employees wore black armbands. They hung black curtains in the patients’ rooms. The patients too were distressed to know that they were going to be removed from the observation. Next morning, confusion and tension overtook the fifth floor. While the management and senior executives kept debating the number of workers to be retained and the fine details of the effective communication plan, the fifth floor employees were restlessly awaiting the orders of their termination. Every moment they felt that they were going to be asked by someone to go home for good. Gradually, the tension mounted and the situation became unbearable. One nurse grew hysterical and started crying loudly. Some other nurses began sobbing and clinging to one another.

The news of the fifth floor’s complete breakdown spread across the hospital. The Director Personnel came up. She saw what was happening. With the help of G.M. Public Relations, she made the
fifth floor employees go home, and organised the shifting of fifth floor patients to other wards on other floors.

The following day (Saturday), the Executive Director announced that the City Main Hospital had closed The Fifth Floor.

(Based on John E. Baird, Jr's Employee Layoffs in Organisational Communication, U.S.A., Houghton Mifflin Company 1997.)
After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- Discuss the meaning and importance of organisational communication
- Explain the communication flows that are both Internal and External
- Describe the concept of PR (Public Relations)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Organisational communication is difficult to define. Richmond and McCroskey (2009) described it as ‘the process by which individuals induce meaning in the minds of other individuals, by means of verbal and nonverbal messages in the circumstance of a formal organisation’. An organisation is constituted of communication units in hierarchical relations to each other and functioning in an environment.

Most students would agree that an organisation calls for a social collectivity (or a group of people) in which activities are coordinated in order to achieve both single and collective goals. By coordinating activities, some degree of organisational structure is created to assist individuals in dealing with each other and with others in the larger organisational environment. With regard to communication, most scholars agree that communication is a process that is transactional (i.e., it involves two or more people working within an environment) and symbolic (i.e., communication transactions ‘stand for’ other things, at various levels of abstraction).

3.2 MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION

3.2.1 MEANING OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Organisation communication is defined as “a program that focuses on general communication processes and dynamics within organisations. Includes instruction in the development and maintenance of interpersonal group relations within organisations; decision-making and conflict management; the use of symbols to create and maintain organisational images, missions, and values; power and politics within organisations; human interaction with computer technology; and how communications socializes and supports employees and team members.”

We define organisational communication as the sending and receiving of messages among interrelated individuals within a particular environment or setting to achieve individual and common goals. Organisational communication is highly contextual and
culturally dependent, and is not an isolated phenomenon. Individuals in organisations transmit messages through face-to-face, written, and mediated channels.

Organisational communication refers to the forms and channels of communication among members of organisations such as corporations, non-profits or small businesses. Studies have found a strong relationship between the levels of communication in an organisation and job performance and satisfaction. Organisational communication can be formal or informal, flow in various directions and make use of various media.

Organisational communication largely focuses on building relationships, or repeated interpersonal interactions, with internal organisational members and interested external publics. Goldhaber (1990) identified a number of common characteristics in the variety of definitions of organisational communication as:

- occurs within a complex open system which is influenced by, and influences its internal and external environments;
- involves messages and their flow, purpose, direction, and media;
- involves people and their attitudes, feelings, relationships, and skills.

Organisational communication helps us to:

- accomplish tasks relating to specific roles and responsibilities of sales, services, and production;
- acclimatise to changes through individual and organisational creativity and adaptation;
- complete tasks through the maintenance of policy, procedures, or regulations that support daily and continuous operations;
- develop relationships where “human messages are directed at people within the organisation-their attitudes, morale, satisfaction, and fulfilment”; and
- coordinate, plan, and control the operations of the organisation through management.

Organisational communication is how organisations represent, present, and constitute their organisational climate and culture – the attitudes, values and goals that characterize the organisation and its members. For organisations to be successful, they must have competent communicators. Organisational communication study shows that organisations rely on effective communication and efficient communication skills from their members. A number of surveys identify effective oral and written communication as the most sought after skills by those who run organisations. The U.S. Department of Labour reported communication competency as the most vital skill necessary for the 21st century workforce to achieve organisational
success. The Public Forum Institute maintained that employees need to be skilled in public presentation, listening, and interpersonal communication to flourish in an organisation.

Organisations seek people like you who can follow and give instructions, accurately listen, provide useful feedback, get along with co-workers and customers, network, provide serviceable information, work well in teams, and creatively and critically solve problems and present ideas in an understandable manner. Developing organisational communication awareness and effectiveness is more than just having know-how or knowledge. Efficient organisational communication involves knowing how to create and exchange information, work with diverse groups or individuals, communicate in complicated and changing circumstances, as well as having the aptitude or motivation to communicate in appropriate manners.

3.2.2 IMPORTANCE OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Every effective organisation has a central process through which employees and members share information, create relationships, make sense of their organisation and “construct” culture and values. This process combines people, messages, communication channels, diverse meanings, practices and purposes. Internal communication is the foundation of modern organisations.

Communication is one of the most dominant and important activities in organisations because relationships grow out of communication, and organisations function and survive based on effective relationships among individuals and groups. Communication helps individuals and groups coordinate activities to achieve goals, make decisions, solve problems, share knowledge and manage change processes.

Internal communication also provides employees with important information about their jobs, organisation, environment and each other. Effective communication can help motivate, build trust, create shared identity and spur engagement; it provides a way for individuals to express emotions, share hopes and ambitions and celebrate and remember accomplishments.

Following are the reasons for the importance of organisational communication:

Directions of Communication

Organisational communication takes place upward, downward and horizontally. Downward communication flows from the managerial and executive levels to the staff through formal channels such as policy manuals, rules and regulations and organisational charts. Upward communication is initiated by staff and directed at executives; it frequently takes the form of a complaint or a request. Horizontal
communication occurs when colleagues meet to discuss issues of common interest, resolve problems and share information.

**Leading**

In the book “Organisational Communication: Challenges of Change, Diversity, and Continuity,” William Neher identifies the five primary functions of business communication as leading, rationalizing, problem-solving, conflict management and compliance gaining. The function of leading is important to enable management to issue instructions in a clear, specific manner so that workers are able to follow them without difficulty. This is generally downward communication.

**Rationalizing**

This function enables management to explain the reasons for instructions in a way that workers can understand. In this context, it is downward communication; however, rationalizing is also important for enabling workers to bring issues to the attention of management, using upward communication to do so. If a worker identifies a motivation problem, for example, he may communicate this upward formally to management and use rationalization to highlight the potential impact of the problem on profitability.

**Problem-solving**

Most companies hold regular meetings to discuss issues such as production cycles, delivery times, price margins and other areas where unusual situations could arise that may affect the performance of a business. In these meetings, organisational communication plays an important role in tabling problems, brainstorming potential responses and finalizing solutions. In this way, a company obtains maximum benefit from the abilities of those involved in the communication, which flows horizontally and often informally.

**Conflict Management**

Conflict in the workplace can lead to the loss of talented employees, the lodging of grievances and possibly lawsuits. Managing conflict by bringing all parties together to discuss their differences in a safe, moderated environment is an important function of organisational communications. This type of communication usually involves all three directions of communication, and, although discussions may be informal, the final decisions are usually communicated formally.

**Gaining Compliance**

Gaining the compliance of employees is necessary for them to adhere fully to instructions. To do this, management needs to listen to feedback from the staff and to take account of their ideas and comments. Feedback or two-way communication can be both upward
and downward or horizontal and may be formal or informal, but it is important for a company to enable open communication channels to motivate and achieve the best performance from employees.

**SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

Fill in the blanks:
1. ...................... is defined as receiving of messages among interrelated individuals within a particular environment or setting to achieve individual and common goals.
2. Organisational communication takes place ......................, ...................... & ......................
3. Efficient organisational communication involves knowing how to create and ...................... information.

**ACTIVITY**

Have you ever observed amongst your peers, having a conflict of interest disrupts the peace in the relationship? When a third friend jumps in to sort out the same between the two of you, it gets a lot better? If not, try doing it once.

**NOTE**

Organisational communication is highly contextual and culturally dependent, and is not an isolated phenomenon.

### 3.3 COMMUNICATION FLOWS: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL

The structure of an organisation should provide for communication in three distinct directions: downward, upward, and horizontal. These three directions establish the framework within which communication in an organisation takes place. Examining each one briefly will enable us to better appreciate the barriers to effective organisational communication and the means to overcome them.

#### 3.3.1 ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION: INTERNAL

In understanding the forms of communication within organisations, one of the critical conceptions is directionality. Internal communication in an organisation comprises the following:

**Downward Communication**

Communication which flows from a top level to a low level in an organisation is known as downward communication. In other words, communication that takes place from superiors to subordinates in a chain of command is a downward communication. This flow
of communication is used by the managers to convey work-related information to the employees at lower levels. Employees require this information for carrying out their jobs and for meeting their manager’s expectations. It may include efficiently managing the tone of the message, and also showing skill in delegation to make sure the job is done efficiently by the right person.

Managers use this type of communication for the following purposes:

- **To give idea:** With the help of downward communication objectives, policies, rules are explained to the subordinates by superior to give complete understanding.

- **To encourage:** Employees are required to be motivated to work more to achieve organisational objectives. Management has to resort to downward communication to encourage the lower level employees.

- **To maintain discipline:** Such communication follows the organisational hierarchy, so every section unit or department must follow the set rules or procedure. As a result discipline is ensured.

- **To inform job rationale:** An important objective of this type of communication is to give information regarding the rationale of the task assigned and its relation to other organisational task.

- **To explain about change:** Changes are dependent to circumstances. When there is any change in respect of plans, policies, procedures or rules etc. such are communication with explanation through downward communication.

- **To give direction:** To direct any assignment, job or task to the subordinates, superior makes downward communication.

- **Assignment of job:** To assign job according to efficiency of the workers, superior makes justification through downward communication.

- **To control:** Since necessary instructions are forwarded through downward communication, employees are very much aware about their task and activities. Therefore such communication can act as a control tool.

- **To evaluate:** Supervisors evaluate works performed by the employees. Downward communication is used to inform the employees of their evaluations.

You can see this type of communication particularly in a company where there is an authoritarian atmosphere. The forms of media used for downward oral communication comprise instructions, the telephone, speeches, loudspeakers, meetings, and even the grapevine.

*Example:* Written downward communication: pamphlets, memoranda, handbooks, letters, policy statements, procedures, and electronic news displays. It is done to pass on the decisions and policies of
the organisation to the cadres. This performance assessment is the difficult part of downward communication.

In order to have an error-free along with the effective downward communication, managers must:

- Ensure that the message is accurate, specific and unambiguous.
- Utilize the best communication technique to convey the message to the receiver in right form.
- Specify communication objective.

The advantages of downward communication are as follows:

- **Efficiency**: Downward communication offers efficiencies because instructions and information come from the sources in power that are able to coordinate activities from the top of the organisation. Employees receive feedback from the superiors who manage them.

- **Ease of delegation**: Delegation is much easier if the delegation comes directly from the vertical communication structure representing the chain of command.

- **Organisational discipline**: Downward communication follows the organisation’s hierarchy, meaning that organisational discipline and member compliance is much easier to maintain.

- **Effective communication of goals**: Upper management can easily communicate goals and assign responsibilities regarding achieving those goals.

The disadvantages of downward communication are as follows:

- **Interpretative problems**: Downward communication presents interpretation problems because of the distortion effect and the slow feedback for message clarification.

- **Distortion**: Ever played the grapevine game? Downward communications can become distorted as it proceeds through multiple levels of the organisation.

- **Not motivating**: Given slow feedback and the dependence on formal channels of communication, this method of communication doesn’t really help with motivation.

- **Slow feedback**: It takes time for messages to go down the organisation and then up the organisation and then back down again. This means that feedback can be slow, resulting in problems, especially in a dynamic environment.

- **Lowers morale**: Given the time communication takes and the problem with distorted messages, downward communications can have a negative impact on organisational morale.
Upward Communication

Communication which flows to a higher level in a company is known as upward communication. It gives feedback on how well the company is working. The subordinates use upward communication to express their performances and problems to their superiors. The subordinates also use upward communication to tell how well they have understood the downward communication. It can also be used by the employees to share their ideas and opinions and also to take part in the process of decision-making.

This kind of communication comprises information which is about subordinates’ job performance, performance appraisal, new ideas and suggestions, feedback of understanding of orders and instructions, and personal problems. This flow of information from bottom to top facilitates the top to know the opinions, attitudes and feelings of the workers. Two-way communication that is upward and downward is important for an organisation so as to function easily. Whenever upward communication is choked, it gets conveyed through unions.

Upward communication plays a significant role for achieving the objectives of the organisation. The advantages of such communication are as follows:

- **Good Relations**: Subordinates express their opinions in terms of upward communication. As a result harmonious relationship prevails between the superiors and subordinates.

- **Providing Counsel**: Subordinates can provide their constructive opinions to the superiors through upward communication. These opinions may be useful to the achievement of organisational goals.

- **Favourable Organisational Environment**: Upward communication enriches the relationship between subordinates and superiors. As a result organisation attains continuous development.

- **Knowing Employee Attitude**: Every organisation starts some welfare measures for the employees. If upward communication is active then management can know that how far employees are satisfied with the welfare activities.

- **Feedback**: Through such communication, the subordinates send back their reactions to the decision sent by the superiors. Thus upper level management can ensure whether the lower level employees have accepted the message sent by the superiors.

- **Prompt Appreciation**: Because of upward communication, subordinates get the opportunity to praise their boss for any positive or effective movement. This ultimately results in cordial relationship between superiors and subordinates.
NOTES

- **Decision Making**: Upper management wants to know specific information regarding production, procurement, marketing, financial matters and so on before making any decision. Subordinates supply the related information through upward communication and thus decision making is made easier and quick.

- **Development of Creativity**: Upward communication calls for a creative environment to grow where employees show their initiatives for development.

- **Motivation**: Upward communication allows the lower level staff to express their attitude or opinion to upper level staff. As a result, subordinates are influenced to work more towards fulfilling their targets.

- **Development of Plan**: Upper level management can collect information from the lower level management through upward communication. Information obtained from such communication can be used to develop and implement any plan.

  Job Satisfaction surveys, Complaint and Suggestion Box, Grievance Redressal System, etc. all assist in improving upward communication.

  *Example*: Performance reports prepared by low level management for reviewing by higher level management, letters from employees, employee attitude surveys, employee-manager discussions and so on.

  There are many problems that you can see in upward communication. Unlike downward communication, upward communication is devoid of any support of managerial hierarchy. It has to flow in a direction which is just opposite to the flow of official authority from the dependent subordinates to the superiors on whom they are reliant or the satisfaction of their requirements. Consequently, there is a strong probability of upward information being distorted.

**Lateral or Horizontal Communication**

In an organisation, the communication which occurs at same levels of hierarchy is known as lateral communication, that is, communication between managers, between peers at same levels or between any horizontally equivalent organisational members. In other words, it relates to messages communicated among people on the similar level of hierarchy. For instance, in terms of the workplace, if two board members raise an issue or if two supervisors have a discussion then this is termed as lateral communication. Horizontal communication generally involves coordinating information and permits people with the same rank in an organisation to collaborate or cooperate.

The graphical presentation of horizontal communication is shown in Figure 3.1.
Figure 3.1: Flow of Horizontal Communication

Figure 3.1 shows the flow of communication where messages or information flows among the similar or same level positions of people in the organisational structure.

Following are the essentials of effective horizontal communication:

- **Direct supervision**: To make the communication system more effective a manager should persuade the employees by supervising.

- **Act as Lubricant**: To ensure effective communication, departments must be developed in a way that they act as lubricants in the process of effective horizontal communication.

- **Recognition**: To make horizontal communication effective top executives must recognise it is a useful and realistic means to exchange a message.

- **Clear understandability**: Care should be taken that managers have clear understanding that horizontal communication is a functional part of the total process of communication.

- **Emergency communication**: To make it effective this communication system should be considered a form of emergency communication to affect a quick resolution to a particular problem.

- **Interdepartmental communication increase**: To make it effective, organisational structure should be made in such a manner that opportunity for inter-departmental communication can be confirmed.

- **Discipline**: Discipline should be maintained strictly at each level so as to maintain effective communication, otherwise management experience gaps in working atmosphere.
It has been examined that lateral communication at the worker level is less problematic, at least within a functional area. Therefore, with the greater significance of teams, more attention is now being directed at communication among team members. Lateral communications among workers in diverse functional areas is also becoming a larger concern as greater attention is being directed at rising the productions speed through simultaneous, as opposed to sequential, work procedures. And there is more emphasis on communication across distributed workforces and geographically separated work groups doing same types of work in an attempt to encourage learning and the sharing of knowledge, lessons learned and best practices.

The benefits of horizontal communication are as follows:

- It provides emotional and social assistance to the organisational members.
- It helps in solving various organisational problems.
- It is time saving.
- It can also be used for resolving conflicts of a department with other department or conflicts within a department.
- It facilitates co-operation among team members.
- It is a means of information sharing.
- It facilitates coordination of the task.

The major disadvantage of horizontal communication is that as the responsibility is spread out over team members and project leaders, there is very little real authority. This can result in a loss of control, which can slow productivity when things go wrong. It can be very problematic to change from a vertical to a horizontal structure.

Diagonal/Multi-directional Communication

Diagonal communication concerns to communication between managers and employees situated at diverse functional divisions. In other words, it takes place when communication occurs among employees in a diverse unit of the organisation and where one of the employees involved is on a higher level in the organisation. For instance, in a bank diagonal communication will take place when a department manager in head office interacts with a cashier in a branch of the bank based on the high street. Diagonal communication is used to accelerate the flow of communication. It makes effective efforts for attaining organisational objectives.

Hence, diagonal communication signifies the use of upward, downward and horizontal communication. It is a healthy practice not to rely on any one method. Diagonal communication leads to better response at all levels. It gives a sense of belonging, motivates employees and promotes understanding and involvement to all people at all levels. But such communication should not be permitted to degenerate to a
meaningless criss-cross communication which will lead to confusion and chaos. All modes have to be sustained at the suitable and optimal level. The concept of diagonal communication was introduced to capture the new communication challenges related with new forms of organisation, for example project-based and matrix organisations.

**Grapevine Communication**

Grapevine communication is a form of informal communications in business that develops within an organisation. Large organisations, where there are many people who are working closely, create certain unofficial or informal communication channels. These channels exist with or without authorised patronage. Even though they are secretly and officially patronised, they are not reliable. This kind of communication is usually known as “Grapevine” communication.

Following figure depicts the various types of grapevine communication.

![Grapevine Communication](http://communicationtheory.org/kinds-types-of-communication-employed-by-business-organisations/)

**Figure 3.2: Types of Grapevine Communication**

There are four different kinds of grapevine communication which are explained below:

- **Single Strand Chain:** It can seep from person to person in a strictly linear fashion. Information takes time to spread in this fashion.

- **Gossip Chain:** In some circumstances, a person goes around communicating the information or message he or she thinks which he or she has obtained.

- **Probability Chain:** The listeners are a selected few only. In some other condition, a person communicates an information without any constraint to all those with whom he comes into contact. This is termed as Probability Chain and the message or information passed on may be interesting but not essential.

- **Cluster Chain:** In yet another condition, one individual communicates to a few selected associates who in turn communicate the same to yet another group.

The benefits of grapevine communication are as follows:

- It gives mental satisfaction to the participants and gradually reduces emotional outbursts and reactions.
NOTES

- It provides informal feedback on the changes contemplated by the management.
- Grapevine communication brings about a strong bond among peer groups.
- It keeps the employees anticipating and acts as a buffer against Shockwaves.
- It develops because of the involvement of the persons connected with an organisation.
- It is fast and can supplement formal channels.

Drawbacks of grapevine communication are as follows:

- It may provoke sudden unexpected and unwanted reactions from emotionally unstable persons.
- Grapevine, is definitely dangerous to the organisation health if permissible to grow without monitoring.
- Industries and Business houses adopt one or several of these strategies to keep grapevine under reasonable control so that it does not degenerate into a rumour mill and promote unwanted gossip sessions among the staffs.
- It has the potential to spread irrelevant gossip.
- A transparent administration policy, interaction sessions, employee-friendly attitude, parties, fruitful meetings of peer group, and outings where all those linked with the organisation participate are few strategies to monitor grapevine and use it to the benefit for the organisation.
- It may result in personal vilification and character assassination of persons.
- Grapevine channels can be moderated but not eradicated.
- Grapevine channel exaggerates or distorts the message content.

3.3.2 ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION: EXTERNAL

External communication takes place between a manager and external groups such as suppliers, vendors, banks, financial institutes, etc. For instance, to raise capital the Managing director would interact with the Bank Manager. External communication in an organisation can be further of two types:

External/Public Communication (Official)

- Press releases, conferences
- Speeches
- Advertising, marketing
- Letters, email
Meetings with community and other stakeholders, boundary spanning
Blogs

**External/Public Communication (Unofficial)**
- Whistle-blowers, media leaks
- External grapevine
- Insider trading
- Industrial espionage/intellectual property theft
- Blogs, complaints/’flaming’ websites

### 3.3.3 PATTERNS OF FLOW OF COMMUNICATION OR NETWORKS

It is of paramount importance that an organisation develops a pattern of communication, so as to improve its effectiveness. Developing such a pattern cannot compensate for poor management ideas. But it must be noted, and indeed all managers must realize, that poor communication, or inability to develop an effective and fruitful system of communication, may lead to a dismal failure of management. The only way to make sure that the management succeeds in implementing its ideas and in achieving its goals, is to carefully consider the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of communication and evolve a system of carrying this out. This is primarily a question of human relationship, as they develop and are encouraged to develop in an organisation. Modern communication experts and management specialists have been seriously studying these relationships and communication patterns in different types of organisations.

**Patterns of Communication**

In an organisation with several sources and targets (people at various levels), the message transmitted and received may adopt a consistent pattern. Such patterns are very useful and may be good indicators of organisational culture and ethos.

A network is a system of several points of communication for the purpose of decision-making. In most network research, a small group (usually of five people) is given a task to perform and the group functions under controlled conditions of communication. The direction of communication is variously controlled in different networks. The effect of each network on performance and satisfaction is then studied.

Keeping in mind the varying ways in which organisations communicate within their hierarchical systems, researchers like Leavitt and Shaw have undertaken interesting experimental studies and examined isolated patterns of communication. Given below are the most important patterns of communication or ‘communication nets’.
NOTES

- Wheel/Y
  - Three-person wheel communication pattern.
  - Four-person wheel communication pattern.
  - Five-person wheel communication pattern.
  - Five-person ‘Y’ wheel communication pattern.

These are somewhat centralized patterns, which are suitable for simple tasks as they promote faster problem solution with fewer errors. They ensure the best job performance but, at the same time, they also show lowest job satisfaction and flexibility to change. There is a sort of inbuilt rigidity in this type of communication pattern which hinders the communication process.

- Circle
  - Four-person circle communication pattern.
  - Five-person circle communication pattern.

- All channel
  - Four-person all channel communication pattern.
  - Five-person all channel communication pattern.

When the task is complex, decentralized patterns-circle and all channel, have been found to be more efficient. They are more satisfying to group members in both simple and complicated tasks as in these communication ‘nets’ or patterns they enjoy more freedom, acquire different angles of vision and are enthused to put in their best.

Certain other patterns have also been observed, formulated and experimented with, namely:

- Kite
- Chain
- Slash
It would be worthwhile to examine as to what lies at the back of all these patterns. It has been observed that in an organisation which has both simple and complex tasks to be performed, results are infinitely improved by using varying patterns and media of communication, rather than by depending on patterns and mediums. A successful organisation will, therefore, endeavour to incorporate all or most of these patterns of communication, as and when needed, or as the situation demands.

*Example:* The head of the institution/organisation will find it more appropriate to adhere to a centralized pattern like a wheel while dealing with non-teaching/administrative staff. But, while dealing with professional/teaching staff, he will have to adopt a decentralized communication pattern, like a circle or all channels. The simple reason is that different types of activities or tasks, levels of motivation, accountability, commitment and willingness to assume responsibility, warrant different communication patterns.

### Self Assessment Questions

State whether the following statements are true/false:

4. The structure of an organisation should provide for communication in two distinct directions: downward & upward.

5. Communication that takes place from superiors to subordinates in a chain of command to express subordination is called downward communication.

6. The communication which occurs at higher levels of hierarchy is known as lateral communication.

7. Grapevine is definitely beneficial to the organisation health if permissible to grow without monitoring.

### Activity

Recall the times in college when you used to look up to the Student In charge, it inspired you to assume the role, did it not?! Try doing it yet again, by assuming that role & inspiring discipline in people.

### 3.4 Communications Audit

Communications audit is a snapshot of an organisation’s communication strategies, activities and programs.

It’s an assessment of the effectiveness and credibility of current communication vehicles and media, including publications, website, intranet, blogs, town meetings, face-to-face communication, and other communication media.

It uses processes such as observations, analyses and evaluations, focus groups, interviews and surveys of employees and other key audiences.
whose support is needed to improve communication, understanding and collaboration in the organisation.

### 3.4.1 RESULTS OF COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT

- Review of existing communication policies, publications, and vehicles, indicating strengths and weaknesses of each.
- Summary of comments of focus groups and interviews.
- Report of the employee survey results.
- Recommendations for strengthening your communication strategies and programs.

### 3.4.2 COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT STEPS

**Step 1: Determine key areas to be audited.**

Look at both internal and external communications. Include everything from your standard identity pieces (business cards, letterhead, logo and signage) to promotional materials to news coverage received. Don’t forget to analyse your Web site and other online marketing materials.

**Step 2: Choose your research methods.**

To conduct your audit, select among numerous research methods such as one-on-one interviews, focus groups, online or telephone surveys and media analysis.

**Step 3: Collect and evaluate your past communications.**

Spread all of last year’s communications pieces—internal and external—on a conference room table. Ask:

- How did we inform the public about our business? What worked? What didn’t?
- Were our graphics coordinated and messages consistent?
- Who were our key audiences?
- What were our key messages?
- Did we reach our audiences with the right messages?
- What media coverage did we receive? Was it effective? What media opportunities did we miss?
- Did we successfully tell our story in our communications?

**Step 4: Look outward: Query your customers.**

Choose neutral researchers to query your customers. Electronic surveys, one-on-one interviews, telephone interviews or focus groups are a few techniques. Select a limited number of questions to analyse your communications from your customer’s point of view. Ask: What are your impressions of our communications? What do you think of our graphics, identity pieces, Web site and other marketing materials?
How could we improve our communications? Remember the saying, “a complaint is a gift.”

**Step 5: Look outward: Query your community.**

What does the community know and perceive about your organisation? Take a broader look at the impact of your communications. Again, ask questions to reveal public perceptions. This can be achieved by hiring a research firm or an objective person to conduct a formal community survey or by informally interviewing community members.

**Step 6: Look inward: Query your staff and volunteers.**

Don’t forget your internal audiences. Collect their opinions about your communications. Ask: What are your reactions to communications during the past year? What was effective? What wasn’t? What could be improved? Did internal documents serve your needs? What future communications could help you function as part of the organisation? You will need to determine if all communications were understood by all internal audiences. And examine how your internal audiences present your organisation to the public. Do all employees have an accurate, consistent “elevator speech” about your organisation? Do you speak as one voice?

**Step 7: Analyse your media coverage.**

Keep all your press coverage in a media binder. This can include television and radio tapes and/or transcripts and Web coverage. As in Step 3, spread your media coverage around a table. Include articles and paid ads. Look at the frequency and reach of your coverage. What is the tone and impact? Are your key messages being promoted? Are your audiences being reached? What media opportunities have you missed? To oversee coverage, contract with a news monitoring service or use Google’s free Media Alerts to track your coverage in the press, blogs and Web sites.

**Step 8: Conduct a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis.**

Pull your data together from the previous steps. Do a SWOT analysis of your communications using a simple chart.

Analyse how you can capitalize on strengths, stop weaknesses, maximize opportunities and defend against threats.

**Step 9: Think like a communications consultant.**

Based on your findings, what would you recommend to yourself for future communications? Select a team to help you analyse your audit results and strategize about future actions.

**Step 10: Put together a plan for future communications.**

Use your research as the starting point for creating a Communications Plan for your organisation. Either create the plan internally, or hire a professional to design and implement your plan.
3.4.3 BENEFITS OF COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT

- It helps build support for your communication/HR/or organisation change Initiative.
- It demonstrates your commitment to improving communication throughout the organisation.
- It demonstrates your willingness to listen and to respond to employees and other stake-holders’ views – a key step in building positive relationship, creating credibility and fostering mutual trust.
- An audit will find out what major segments of employees / stake-holders think about the organisation’s communication and initiatives.
- An audit will deliver practical recommendations for improving communication in the organisation.
- An audit can save money and effort as you will be able to minimize, or eliminate, the programs that do not yield benefits and strengthen, or add, those that do.
- An audit can become the basis for creating an effective strategic communication plan for your organisation, ensuring that you gain maximum benefits from your communication investment.
- An effectively designed and implemented communication audit can be a driver for culture change where you engage everyone in building a new work culture of open communication, credibility, and collaboration.

SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

State whether the following statements are true/false:

8. Communications audit shows your willingness to listen and to respond to employees and other stake-holders’ views.
9. Communications audit is an assessment of the effectiveness and credibility of current communication vehicles and media.
10. Communications audit helps in review of existing communication policies but does not indicate on the strengths and weaknesses of each.
11. SWOT stands for Summer Weather of Transition.

ACTIVITY

Take the time to analyse an advertisement. Create a written list of what worked, and what didn't. Survey a few people. What did they appreciate and why? What didn't work for them?
3.5 **PR (PUBLIC RELATIONS)**

Public relations involve the cultivation of favourable relations for organisations and products with its key publics through the use of a variety of communications channels and tools. Traditionally, public relations professionals would work with members of the news media to build a favourable image by advertising the organisation or product through stories in print and broadcast media. But today the role of public relations is much broader and includes:

- constructing awareness and a favourable image for a company or client within stories and articles found in relevant media outlets.
- closely supervising numerous media channels for public comment about a company and its products.
- managing crises that threaten company or product image.
- building goodwill among an organisation’s target market through community; benevolent and special programs and events.

Public relations refers to the practice of enhancing an organisation’s reputation in the eyes of public, stakeholders, employees, investors and all others associated with it. Public relations experts are specially hired by organisations who work hard towards maintaining brand image of organisation.

**Communication plays an essential role in effective public relations.**

Two way communication between both the parties is essential and information must flow in its desired form between the organisation and public. The receiver must understand what the sender intends to communicate for an effective public relation. The receivers (public, target audience, stakeholders, employees, investors) must clearly understand the sender’s message.

**The message/information needs to create an impact in the minds of customers for an effective brand positioning.** Communication needs to have a strong influence on the target audience for them to remain loyal towards the organisation.

In public relations, the receivers play a crucial role than the sender. The sender (organisation) must ensure that the receivers interpret the information correctly and also give necessary feedbacks and reviews. It is really essential for the sender to understand its target audience. Public relations experts must do extensive research and gather as much information as they can before planning any public relation activity. Public relation activities would go unnoticed if receivers to not understand it well. Public relation activities must be designed keeping in mind the benefits of the target audience for a better brand positioning.

**Example:** In cases of hospitals, public relation activities would ensure a smooth flow of information between the hospital authorities or management and the patients and their immediate family members.
or relatives. Public relations experts from a hospital in a rural area must plan and design their activities in the local language for receivers to interpret and respond well. If the hospital authorities interact in a language not understood by the patients, no real communication takes place and eventually the effect of public relation activities get nullified.

Further the needs of the target audience must be understood well. Remember public relation activities are designed to position an organisation in the best light. This happens only when the target audiences are fully satisfied with its services/products. Understand what your target audiences expect from you to design public relations activities for the maximum and desired impact. Make sure your target audiences understand what you intend to communicate.

Example: Peter planned for a vacation with his family to an unexplored destination. He made sure he had a map of the particular place which would help him with the directions and roads of the place.

What is the map doing in the above example?
It is just guiding Peter about this new place. In other words, the map is communicating in an effective manner so that Peter does not get lost.

What if Peter does not understand the map?
Communication is incomplete.

What if Peter understands the map?
This is a case of two way communication where Peter is able to interpret what the map intends to communicate. A simple example of two way communication.

Public relation experts must ensure:

- Message reaches the receiver (public) in its correct form.
- Audiences agree to the message
- They respond accordingly and give necessary feedbacks.

Self Assessment Questions

Fill in the blanks:

12. .................... professionals would work with members of the news media to build a favourable image by advertising the organisation or product through stories in print and broadcast media.

13. In public relations, .................... way communication between both the parties is essential and information must flow in its desired form between the organisation and public.

14. The marketing message needs to create an impact in the minds of customers for an effective ....................
Pick up any movie actor and try to analyse, which actor’s PR has been able to promote the actor best despite the actor not delivering so well in his/her work. PR is an art.

### 3.6 SUMMARY

- Organisational structure influences communication patterns within an organisation.
- Communications flow in three directions – downward, upward, and horizontally.
- Downward communication consists of policies, rules, and procedures that flow from top administration to lower levels.
- Upward communication consists of the flow of performance reports, grievances, and other information from lower to higher levels.
- Horizontal communication is essentially coordinative and occurs between departments or divisions on the same level.
- External communication flows between employees inside the organisation and a variety of stakeholders outside the organisation.

### KEY WORDS

- **Organisational Communication**: Organisational communication refers to the forms and channels of communication among members of organisations such as corporations, non-profits or small businesses.
- **Conflict Management**: The practice of recognizing and dealing with disputes in a rational, balanced and effective way.
- **Downward Communication**: Downward communication, used mainly to communicate messages from the more powerful to the less powerful, is perhaps the most common form of communication in organisations.
- **Horizontal Communication**: Information exchange between departments or functional units as means of coordinating their activities.
- **Diagonal Communication**: Diagonal communication cuts across vertical and horizontal dimensions.
- **Upward Communication**: Upward communication is the process of information flowing from the lower levels of a hierarchy to the upper levels.
3.7 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. What do you understand by organisational communication?

2. What are the reasons for importance of organisational communication?

3. What do you understand by internal communication? What do managers use downward communication for?

4. How important is horizontal communication to an organisation? Explain the flow of horizontal communication with the help of a diagram.

5. What is grapevine communication? What are its types and disadvantages?

6. What is communications audit? What are its steps?

3.8 ANSWERS AND HINTS

ANSWERS FOR SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Q. No.</th>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meaning and Importance of Organisational Communication</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Organisational communication,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>upward, downward &amp; horizontally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Flows: Internal and External</td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.</td>
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</tr>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>7.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications Audit</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>True</td>
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<td>False</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR (Public Relations)</td>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Public relations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>14.</td>
<td>brand positioning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HINTS FOR DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Refer 3.2.1

Organisational communication refers to the forms and channels of communication among members of organisations such as corporations, non-profits or small businesses.
2. Refer 3.2.2
   Following are the reasons for the importance of organisational communication: Directions of Communication, Leading, Rationalizing, Problem-solving, Conflict, Management, Gaining Compliance.

3. Refer 3.3.1
   Within forms of communication within organisations, one of the most critical concepts is directionality and internal communication forms a part of it. Within the same downward communication is used by the managers to convey work-related information to the employees at lower levels.

4. Refer 3.3.1 & Figure 3.1
   The communication which occurs at same levels of hierarchy is known as lateral or horizontal communication, that is, communication between managers, between peers at same levels or between any horizontally equivalent organisational members is horizontal communication. It generally involves coordinating information and permits people with the same rank in an organisation to collaborate or cooperate and so is crucial in its existence.

5. Refer 3.3.1 & Figure 3.2
   Grapevine communication is a form of informal communications in business that develops within an organization. There are four different kinds of grapevine communication, which are: Single Strand Chain, Gossip Chain, Probability Chain, Cluster Chain.

6. Refer 3.4 & 3.4.2
   Communications audit is an assessment of the effectiveness and credibility of current communication vehicles and media, including publications, web site, intranet, blogs, town meetings, face-to-face communication, and other communication media which comprises of 10 steps.

### 3.9 SUGGESTED READING FOR REFERENCE

#### SUGGESTED READINGS

NOTES


E-REFERENCES

- http://www.managementstudyguide.com/communication-flows.htm
## FUNDAMENTALS OF BUSINESS WRITING

### CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Business Writing Basics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.1</td>
<td>Adaptation of Words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.2</td>
<td>Selection of Words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.3</td>
<td>Developing Effective Sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.4</td>
<td>Effective Paragraph Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Adapting to Multiple Readers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.1</td>
<td>Audience Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.2</td>
<td>Audience and the Communication Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.3</td>
<td>Audience and Business Messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.4</td>
<td>Audience Analysis to reach Audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.5</td>
<td>Positive Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.6</td>
<td>Negative Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.7</td>
<td>Persuasive Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.8</td>
<td>Adapting to Legal Responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Steps of the Business Writing Process (BWP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Strategies for Achieving an Effective Business Writing Style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.1</td>
<td>Layout and Formatting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.2</td>
<td>Streamline the Writing Style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.3</td>
<td>Types of Business Documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>Descriptive Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>Answers and Hints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>Suggested Reading for Reference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTORY CASELET

EFFECTIVE BUSINESS WRITING

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 23rd, with a cheque for ₹25,000 on account, is to hand.

We note what you say as to the difficulty you experience in collecting your outstanding accounts but we are compelled to remark that we do not think you are treating us with the consideration we have a right to expect.

It is true that small remittances have been forwarded from time to time, but the debit balance against you has been steadily increasing during the past twelve months until it now stands at the considerable total of ₹85,000.

Having regarded to the many years during which you have been a customer of this house and the, generally speaking, satisfactory character of your account, we are reluctant to resort to harsh measures.

We must, however, insist that the existing balance should be cleared off by regular instalment of say ₹10,000 per month, the first instalment to reach us by the 7th. In the meantime, you shall pay cash for all further goods; we are allowing you an extra 3% discount in lieu of credit.

We shall be glad to hear from you about this arrangement, as otherwise we shall have no alternative but definitely to close your account and place the matter in other hands.

Yours truly,
After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- Discuss the business writing basics
- Describe the adapting to multiple readers
- Explain the steps of the Business Writing Process (BWP)
- Highlight the strategies for achieving an effective business writing style

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Writing is a mode of communicating a message for an intended outcome. Writing shows one’s ability to think clearly and to use language effectively.

In a business organization, the manager is involved in a variety of written communication such as replies to clients, recording agreements, enquires, memos, preparing reports to initiate action, proposals for contracts, etc. The manager needs to communicate information, ideas instructions, decisions and welfare proposals in written form, in keeping with the level of the people who receive and read them. This entails that business writing should be effective. Business writing, in fact, should be correct, clear and simple. Written communication involves a lot of effort. Business writing differs from other writings as it has different goals. Business writing need to be:

- **Purposeful**: You use writing to solve problems and communicate information. You will have an explicit purpose to fulfil in each message.
- **Economical**: You will try to present ideas clearly but precisely. Length is not rewarded.
- **Reader-oriented**: You will focus on looking at a problem from the reader’s point of view instead of seeing it from your own.

4.2 BUSINESS WRITING BASICS

Writing does not always convey your meaning. The reader makes the meaning. Writing has no facial expressions. It has neither tone of voice nor body language. Writing has only words. Business writing is one of the simplest forms of writing.

Business writing has several uses, comprising giving directions or outlining procedures; confirming decisions and informing employees, co-workers, or colleagues; supplying responses and requesting data. Basically, there are three basic objectives to business communications to:

- provide a report or response (here’s what was done, or here’s what we found out);
issue a directive (do this); and
persuade to action (we should do this).

Begin any writing project with a clear purpose.

**Format (Should you communicate in a letter, memo, email or report?):** Each format has its own conventions and requirements as to structure and length, but whatever its format, business writing usually depicts some basic qualities:

- it employs short sentences and brief, to-the-point paragraphs
- it focuses on communicating about one problem or issue
- it uses graphic devices for highlighting (bullets, headings)
- it is concise—it gets to the point quickly and without excess words or inessential ideas
- it uses plain, direct language (no fancy words)

**Audience (To whom are you writing?):** Always write for your audience and offer them what they want: What is their background, education, status of the company? What do they need to know, act upon and to understand your communication?

**Tone:** Use a positive or neutral tone wherever appropriate. Try to emphasise the positive over the negative, even when writing a ‘bad news’ letter or memo. Avoid emotionally-charged words. Strive for a professional, ‘business-like’ voice, and never talk down to your audience.

**Style and language:** Favour short but clear sentences, not complicated structures. Be concise. Avoid wordy filler phrases (e.g., due to the fact that). Use accessible language, favouring direct, clear, simple words over the fancy and showy. Be concrete, not abstract and specific, not general.

**4.2.1 ADAPTATION OF WORDS**

The capability to writing clearly relies not on our audience itself, but on how much we know about our audience. For writing to be clear, it must adapt to the reader. By adaptation, we imply fitting the message to the particular reader. Readers even in the similar nation do not all have the same knowledge of the subject, the same vocabulary, or the same mentality due to differences in culture this problem becomes severer in cross-cultural communications. Therefore, in order to communicate clearly you should first know the person with whom you are communicating. You should be aware of his or her cultural background and take care to form your message to fit that reader’s mind.
In adapting your message, you should:

**Identify the Audience**

When various people will be getting your message, try to recognize those who are most significant to your purpose. Generally, those with the highest organisational status are the main people, but sometimes a person in a relatively low position may have influence in one or two particular areas.

**Determine the Size and Composition of the Audience**

Large audiences behave in a different way from small ones and involve different techniques of communication. If you were writing a report for extensive distribution, you might select a more formal style, organisation, and format than you would if the report were directed to only 3 or 4 people in your department. The bigger the audience, the more different their interests and backgrounds are expected to be. People with diverse education, attitudes and status are likely to respond in a different manner to the same message, so you look for the common denominators that tie the members of the audience together. At the same time, you wish to reply to the specific concerns of individuals.

**Analyse the Audience’s Reaction**

Your approach to organising your message relies on your audience’s probable reaction. If you expect a favourable respond with less debate or criticism, you can be straightforward about expressing your recommendations and conclusions. On the other hand, when you face a sceptical audience, then you may have to introduce your recommendations and conclusions progressively and provide more evidence.

**Determine the Audience’s Level of Understanding**

If you and your audience share the same general background, you can presume that they will understand your material without any trouble. If not, you will have to decide how much you need to educate them. Generally, you are better off clarifying too much instead of too little, mainly if you are subtle about it. If your audience is from different culture, then your efforts will be more involved.

**Analyse the Audience’s Needs**

If you are unfamiliar to your audience, you will have to earn their confidence before you can win them to your viewpoint. The first part of your message will be dedicated to attaining reliability. Your position relative to your audience also influences the tone and the style of your presentation. In one hand, you address your peers and on other your boss. You use still another tone when conveying with workers of lower
status and your style with co-workers varies significantly from your style with suppliers and customers.

Satisfy Your Audience’s Information Need
The key to effective communication is finding out the needs of your readers and then answering to them. Ask yourself the following five questions to assist you to satisfy the audience’s information needs and wants:

- Have I provided all desired and necessary information?
- What does the audience want to know?
- Have I emphasized the information of greatest interest to the audience?
- What does the audience need to know?
- Is the information accurate?

Be Sure about the Reader’s Need
In many instances, the audience’s information needs are readily apparent. When dealing with an unclear request, pin it down. One good method is to reaffirm the request in more precise terms to facilitate the requester to describe his or her wants more specifically. Once you have determined your audience’s information needs, be certain to satisfy those wants wholly. Use the journalistic approach to assure whether your message responds who, what, when, where, why, and how to test the thoroughness of your message.

Be Accurate in Your Message
There is no point in responding all the queries of your audiences even if the responses are incorrect. In business, you have a special duty to check things before making a written commitment, particularly if you are writing to someone who is outside the organisation. Your organisation is lawfully bound by any commitment you make, so ensure that your organisation is able to follow through. Ensure that the information you give is correct and the promises you make can be preserved.

Make Important Points Stand Out
When determining how to answer to your audience’s information needs, remember that some points will be of greater interest and importance than others. Pick out the points that will have the most influence on your audience and emphasise them. Remember that your foremost objective as a business communicator is to tell your audience what they want to know.

Satisfy Your Audience’s Motivational Needs
Some forms of messages, mainly bad news and persuasive messages, are meant to encourage audience members to change
their behaviour or beliefs. The problem is that people resist thoughts that conflict with their present practices and beliefs. To overcome resistance, arrange your message so that the information will be as acceptable as possible. One approach is to use rational arguments presented in an objective tone. Another approach is to support your position with statistics or information.

**Be Brief**

If your written messages are lengthy, then try to make it simple for readers to follow so that they can pick it up and put it down many times without losing the thread of what you are stating.

4.2.2 **SELECTION OF WORDS**

A major portion of adaptation is choosing the right words. These are the words which communicate best that have clear and correct meanings in reader’s mind. Choosing the right words relies on your knowledge of the reader, your capability to use language, and your good judgment. Here are some suggestions which assist you to select such words.

**Use Short and Familiar Words**

Short words incline to be familiar words. These words are everyday words with clear and sharp meanings in mind. Using familiar words signifies using the language that most of the native speakers use in everyday conversation. You should avoid the rigid, more difficult words which do not converse so quickly and so precisely. The suggestion to use familiar and short words does not rule out some use of more problematic words. You should use them when their meanings fit your purpose best as well as your readers understand them. A good suggestion is to use the simplest words which carry the meaning without offending the intelligence of the reader. The best suggestion is to write the words you would use in face-to-face communication with your readers.

**Use Concrete Language**

Good business communication is noted by words which form clear and sharp meanings in the mind. These words are concrete words. Concrete is the contrary to abstract. Abstract words are unclear and imprecise. In contrast, concrete words stand for things which the reader can smell, taste, feel, see, or smell. On the other hand, Abstract nouns cover comprehensive meanings, ideas, concepts, and the like. Their meanings are general. Specific or exact wordings are concrete; general and vague wordings are abstract.

**Use Active Voice**

Active voice gives rise to livelier and stronger writing. It emphasises the action, and it generally saves words. The suggestion that active
voice be preferred does not signify that passive voice is always inappropriate or that you should never use it. Passive voice can be correct, and it has a place. The problem is that various writers incline to overuse it, specifically in report writing. Your decision whether to use active or passive voice is not only a matter of personal choice. Sometimes passive voice is desirable. Passive is better when the doer of the action is irrelevant, when the performer is unknown or when the writer have a preference of not to name the performer.

Example:

- These reports are prepared by the accountants every month. (Passive, poor)
- It is believed by the writer that this company policy is wrong. (Passive, poor)
- You will be directed by your supervisor to complete this task by tomorrow. (Passive, poor)
- The colour desired was not specified in your order. (Passive, good)
- During the past year the shipments have been delayed seven times. (Passive, good)
- The interviews will be conducted on Friday between 8 AM and 5 PM. (Passive, good)

Select Words for Precise Meanings

Obviously, writing necessitates some knowledge of language. Indeed, the greater your knowledge of the English language, the better you are expected to write in English. If you want to be a good writer in English, then you will need to study English words carefully. You must learn their particular meanings, particularly the shades of difference in the meanings of similar words.

4.2.3 DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE SENTENCES

Words are regarded as the building blocks of communication and sentences are considered as the rows of blocks, which must be properly planned and well laid out. Words do not make much sense until they are combined in a sentence to convey a complete thought. Selecting the right words is basic to clear communication. Similarly, basic is the task of organising those words into clear sentences. Just as with constructing clear sentences and selecting words includes adaptation to the minds of the intended readers. Readability research proposes that writing communicates best when it does not tax the mind. Therefore, it is desirable to use simpler structures of sentence to reach people with lower communication skills and people not knowledgeable about the subject. Use more difficult sentence structures only when they are suitable, generally when interacting with knowledgeable people. Usually, some simplification is best for all readers.
Emphasis on Short Sentences

You can write simple and short sentences in two basic ways:

- **Limiting Sentence Content**: Limiting content is one way to make short sentences. It is mainly a matter of choosing thought units and creating distinct sentences of most of them. Smaller sentences give more stress to content as well as to organisation of the subject matter than lengthier sentences. Therefore, they converse well. Hence, you should avoid overdoing this suggestion. Too many small sentences give a choppy effect. You should evade these effects by changing the length and order of your sentences.

- **Economizing on Words**: Economising on words usually signifies seeking shorter means of saying things. Once you attempt to economise, you will likely find that your existing writing is extravagant and that you use wasteful wordings. Some words as well as combinations of words have more efficient, one-word equivalents.

  - Avoid unnecessary repetition of words or ideas: Repeating words apparently adds sentence length. Obviously, such repetition sometimes serves a purpose as when it is used for emphasis or special effect. It is surprising how several overstuffed phrases you will find in business correspondence, once you begin to look for them.

  - Eliminate surplus words: As with cluttering phrases, we often use meaningless extra words either due to our ignorance or as a matter of habit. Excluding these surplus words at times requires recasting a sentence, but sometimes they can just be left out.

  - Avoid cluttering phrases: Rather than saying in invent that payment is not affected by March, the operations will cease, we can use if to substitute for in the event that. If payment is not affected by March, the operations will cease. Therefore, the sentence becomes smaller without loss of meaning.

Determine Emphasis in Sentence Design

The sentences which you write should give the right emphasis to content. Any written business communication comprises a number of items of information, not all of which are equally significant. Your job as a writer is to form your sentence to communicate the significance of every item. Sentence length affects emphasis. Simple and short sentences carry more emphasis than long sentences. They give the reader a single message without the interference of supporting or correlated information. Lengthier sentences give less emphasis to their contents. When a sentence comprises two or more thoughts, the ideas share emphasis.
NOTES

Example:

- The company earned profit. The profit occurred in spite of the price rise in raw materials.
- Although there was price rise in raw materials last year, the company earned profit.
- The company suffered from price rise in materials last year although it earned profit.

Give the Sentence Unity

Good sentences have unity. All parts of a sentence should concern one thought in order to have unity. Therefore, all the things put in a sentence should have a good reason for being together. Violations of unity in sentence construction fall into three categories:

- Avoid the error of putting unrelated ideas in a sentence: There are three means to give unity to sentences which include dissimilar ideas.
  - You can put the ideas in separate sentences.
  - You can make one of the ideas subordinate to the other.
  - You can add words that show the ideas are related.

Example:

- Mr. Ram has been appointed our director, and he has a Master degree in Economics.
- Mr. Ram has been appointed our director. He has a Master degree in Economic.
- Mr. Ram, our director, has a Master degree in Economics?

- Avoid illogical constructions: Illogical construction can deprive the unity of a sentence. The following instances will depict how illogical constructions destroy unity.

Example:

- Because our salespeople are inexperienced caused us to miss our quota.
- The inexperience of our salespeople caused us to miss our quota.
- My education was completed in 1995, and then I began my work as an engineer in Philadelphia.

- Avoid Sentence Faults: Fragments, comma splices, as well as run-on sentences are the main three types of typical sentence faults.
  - Fragments: A sentence fragment lacks either a subject (Actor) or verb (Action).
Example: My research report in business communication took a long time to prepare. And turned out badly.

♦ Comma Splices: A comma splice results when two sentences are spliced together or wrongly joined with a comma. Like sentence fragments, comma splices should not appear in your business writing.

Example: Profits were down in 1993, the Board blamed the recession.

♦ Run-on sentences: These sentences are equally not acceptable in business writings. It joins two complete ideas and thoughts without correct punctuation.

Example: Employees want to keep their jobs they will work hard for promotions.

4.2.4 EFFECTIVE PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT

A paragraph is a group of sentences all associated to the same general topic. Basically, it is a unit of idea and thought. A sequence of paragraphs makes up the whole composition. Every paragraph is a significant part of the whole, a key link in the train of thought. Designing paragraphs requires the skill to organise and relate information.

Elements of a Paragraph

Paragraphs differ broadly in form and length. You can converse effectively in pages of lengthy paragraphs or in one short paragraph, relying on your message, your purpose and your audience. The typical paragraph includes three basic components: a topic sentence, related sentences that develop the topic, and transitional words and phrases.

- Topic sentence: Each properly constructed paragraph is unified; it deals with a single topic. The sentence which introduces that topic is known as the topic sentence. In business writing, generally the topic sentence is explicit and comes either at the starting or end of the paragraph. When the first sentence is a topic sentence which gives readers a summary of the general idea, the paragraph is deductive; i.e., the topic sentence precedes details.

Example:

- To get a reimbursement, you must supply us with some more information.
- The food division has been distressed for several years by the problems relating to public relations.

When the topic sentence is placed at the end of a paragraph, the paragraph is known as inductive; i.e., topic sentence follows details.
Example:

- Thus, inventories have not been the reason for a down swing in the economy.
- Therefore, there is no reason to say that the activity of the business will fall during the first half of next year.

- **Related sentences:** The sentences which describe the topic sentence round out the paragraph. These correlated sentences must all have a bearing on the general subject, and they must give enough precise details so as to make the topic clear. The developmental sentences are each more specific than the topic sentence. Each one gives another piece of evidence to show the general truth of the main thought. Similarly, every sentence is clearly associated to the general idea being developed, which gives the paragraph its unity. A well-developed paragraph should comprise sufficient information to make the topic sentence interesting and convincing. The following is an illustration of how each interrelated sentence develops the general topic.

### Ways to Develop a Paragraph

Paragraphs can be developed in number of ways. The common methods comprise cause and effect, illustration, classification, comparison or contrast, and problem and solution. Your selection of method relies on your intended readers, your subject, and your purpose. You can combine two or more techniques of development in a single paragraph.

- **Cause-and-Effect:** When you develop a paragraph using the cause-and-effect technique, you focus on the reasons for something.
- **Illustration:** When you develop a paragraph by illustration, you give examples that demonstrate the general idea.
- **Classification:** Paragraphs developed by classification show how a general idea is broken into specific categories.
- **Comparison or Contrast:** Similarities or differences among thoughts often provide a strong basis for paragraph development.
- **Problem and Solution:** Another way to develop a paragraph is to present a problem and then discuss the solution.

### Self Assessment Questions

Fill in the blanks:

1. For writing to be clear, it must .................. to the reader.
2. Your organisation is .................. bound by any commitment you make in your written message, so ensure that your organisation is able to follow through.

Contd...
3. Good business communication is noted by words which are clear & ………………
4. Simple and short sentences carry more ……………….. than long sentences.

**ACTIVITY**

Write three paragraphs on any topic. Proof read the same on the basis of the above mentioned points of business writing.

**NOTE**

Every paragraph is a significant part of the whole, a key link in the train of thought. Designing paragraphs requires the skill to organise and relate information.

### 4.3 ADAPTING TO MULTIPLE READERS

Before discussing in detail let us first understand in points the important things before writing for multiple readers.

- **Identify the message purpose:** Ask yourself the reason of communicating and what aim to achieve. Look for primary and secondary purposes.

- **Select the most appropriate form:** Determine whether you need a permanent record or whether the message is too personal to be put in writing.

- **Profile the audience:** Identify your relationship with the reader and your knowledge about that individual or group. Evaluate how much the receiver knows about the subject.

- **Focus on reader benefits:** Phrase your statements from the reader’s viewpoint, not your own. Focus on the ‘you’ view (your order will arrive, you can enjoy, your ideas count).

- **Avoid gender and racial bias:** Use bias-free words (businessperson instead of businessman; working hours instead of man-hours). Exclude ethnic identification unless the context demands it.

- **Express ideas positively rather than negatively:** Instead of your order can’t be shipped before June 1, “say” your order can be shipped after June 1.

- **Use short, familiar words:** Use technical terms and big words only if they are suitable for the audience (end not terminate, required not mandatory).

- **Search for precise, vigorous words:** Use a Thesaurus, if necessary, to find strong verbs and concrete nouns.
4.3.1 AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

Audience analysis is central to the success of any message: to capture and hold an audience’s attention and to motivate readers and listeners, you must shape your message to fulfil the audience’s goals, interests, and needs.

In an organizational setting, a message may have five audiences.

- The initial audience receives the message first and sends it to other audiences. At certain times, the initial audience also tells you to write the message.
- The primary audience will make the decision to act on your message.
- The secondary audience may be asked to comment on your message or to implement your ideas after they’ve been approved. Secondary audiences can also include lawyers who may use your message—perhaps years later—as proof of your organization’s culture and practices.
- A gatekeeper has the power to stop your message before it gets to the primary audience. The executive assistant who decides which personnel get to speak to the boss is a gatekeeper. Sometimes the supervisor who assigns the message is also the gatekeeper; however, sometimes the gatekeeper is higher in the organization. Occasionally, gatekeepers exist outside the organization.
  
  Example: Regulatory boards are gatekeepers.

- A watchdog audience, though it does not have the power to stop the message and will not act directly on it, has political, social, or economic power. The watchdog pays close care to the transaction between you and the primary audience and may base future actions on its valuation of your message. The media, boards of directors, and members of program advisory committees can all be watchdogs.

4.3.2 AUDIENCE AND THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Understanding what your audience wants and expects, and adapting your messages accordingly, greatly raises your chances of communicating successfully. The communication process is the most complex of human activities, and the audience is central to that process. We communicate continuously. Our audiences understand our communication symbols unceasingly. Our words, tonal quality, volume and rate of speech, our posture, stance and gait, our height and weight, our hair style and hair colour, our choice of clothing styles and colours—all the thousands of symbols that we use, deliberately and accidentally—are perceived and translated according to our audience’s perceptions, shaped by age, gender, culture, intelligence, and the experiences distinctive to every individual.
Successful communication depends on distinguishing and building common ground between you and your audience. Choose information that your audience needs and will find interesting. Encode your message in words and other symbols the audience will understand. Transmit the message along channels that your audience pays attention to.

Correctly identifying your audience and then choosing audience-appropriate symbols (words, gestures, illustrations) ensures a more accurate meaning transfer.

4.3.3 AUDIENCE AND BUSINESS MESSAGES

Purpose
What are your purposes in communicating?
Your purposes come from you and your organization. Your audience defines how you achieve those purposes.

Audience
Who is your audience? What audience characteristics are applicable to this particular message?
These questions ask directly about your audience.

Information
What information must your message include?
The information you need to give depends on your audience. You need to add relevant information when the topic is new to your audience. If your audience has heard something but may have forgotten it, protect readers’ egos by saying “As you know,” or putting the information in a dependent clause: “Because we had delivery problems last quarter.” If your audience is familiar with specific facts, centralize more on elucidating new information.

Benefits
What reasons or reader benefits can you use to support your position? Regardless of your own needs, a good reason or gain depends on your audience’s understanding. For some audiences, personal experience counts as a good reason. Other audiences are more persuaded by scientific studies or by experts. For some people, saving money is a good benefit of growing vegetables. Other people may care more about avoiding chemicals, growing varieties that aren’t available in grocery stores, or working outside in the fresh air than about costs or convenience.

Objections
What objections can you expect your readers to have? What elements of your message will your audience perceive as negative? How can you
arrange the message to overcome audience objections or underline negative elements? Different audiences have different attitudes. One audience may object to a price increase. Another audience may see price changes as routine but be annoyed by time constraints.

**Context**

How will the context affect reader response? Consider your relationship to the reader, the reader’s values and expectations, recent organizational history and current morale, the economy, the time of the year, the place and time of the day, and any special settings surrounding the message exchange. People, information, and organizations exist in a context. How well your audience knows you, how they feel about you and your organization, how well the economy is doing, even what’s been in the news recently: all influence their response to your message.

You need to know everything that’s relevant to what you’re writing or talking about.

Almost everything about your audience is relevant to some message, but for any particular message, only a few facts about your audience will be relevant. These facts will vary depending on each communication situation. In general, you need to use empathy and critical-thinking tools. Empathy is the power to put yourself in someone else’s shoes, to feel with that person. Empathy requires being audience-centred because the audience is not just like you. Critical thinking needs gathering as much information as you can about someone or something and then making decisions based on that information. You need to use your research and your knowledge about people and about organizations to anticipate likely responses. Since audience analysis is central to the success of your message, you’ll need to consider the following pertinent information about your audience:

- Their knowledge about your topic
- Their demographic factors, such as age, income, class, gender, education, marital status, home ownership, number of children, location.
- Their values, attitudes, and beliefs
- Their personality
- Their past behaviour

**4.3.4 AUDIENCE ANALYSIS TO REACH AUDIENCE**

Take the time to analyse your audience; then adapt your strategy, style, and organizational pattern to your audience’s needs. For paper or electronic documents, you can also adapt the document’s design and the photos or illustrations you choose. For the best results, revise your message with your audience in mind.
Strategy

- Choose what attracts and benefits the reader and work for the specific audience.
- Use details and language that reflect your knowledge of, and respect for, the specific audience, the organizational culture, and the discourse community.
- Make it easy for the audience to respond positively.
- Include only necessary information.
- Anticipate and overcome objections

Organization

- It’s usually better to get to the point right away. The major exceptions are:
  - When you must persuade a reluctant reader
  - When your audience would see the message as bad news and you want to break the news gradually
- Anticipate and meet the audience’s expectations of format: make the organizational pattern clear to the audience.

Style

- **Strive for clarity and accessibility:** Use simple words, a mixture of sentence lengths, and short paragraphs with topic sentences.
- **Use natural, conversational, attractive, tactful language:** Avoid negative, defending, arrogant, and “red-flag” words—unluckily, fundamentalist, liberal, crazy, incompetent, dishonest—that may generate a negative reaction.
- **Use the language that attracts to your audience.**
  
  *Example:* In parts of Canada, including Québec and some areas of Manitoba and New Brunswick, bilingual messages in English and in French, with French first, are the norm.
- **Use conversational language.**

Document Design

- **Use telegraphing:** Bulleted lists, headings, and a mix of paragraph lengths create white space.
- Choose the format, footnotes, and visuals expected by the organizational culture or the discourse community.

Photographs and Visuals

- Photos and visuals can make a document look more informal or more formal.
NOTES

- Carefully consider the difference between cartoons and photos of “high art”.
- Use bias-free photographs. Unintentional cultural, gender, religious, and economic assumptions can offend readers and lose business.
- Choose photographs and illustrations that project positive cultural meanings for your audience.
  
  Example: Middle-Eastern readers, find pictures of barelegged and bare-armed women offensive and may also object to pictures of clean-shaven men.

- Do your research and audience analysis: some cultures (e.g., France and Japan) use evocative photographs that bear little direct relationship to the text. North American audiences expect photos to relate to the text.

When Audience has Different Needs

Focus on gatekeepers and decision makers.

When the members of your audience share the same interests and the same level of knowledge, you can use these principles for individual readers or for members of homogenous groups. But sometimes, different members of the audience have different needs. When you are writing or speaking to pluralistic audiences, meet the needs of gatekeepers and primary audiences first.

Content and Choice of Details

- Always provide an overview—the basic or topic sentence—for reader orientation.
- In the body of the document, provide sufficient evidence to prove your point.

Organization

- Organize your message based on the primary audience’s attitudes towards it: Give good news up front; provide the explanation before you communicate the bad news.
- Organize documents to make reading easy: Provide a table of contents for documents more than five pages long so that your readers can jump to the parts that interest them.
- Use headings as signposts: Use headings to tell readers what they’re about to read and to connect ideas throughout your document. This method rewards your credibility through unity and cohesiveness. If the primary audience doesn't need particulars that other audiences will want, provide those details in attachments or appendices.
Level of Language

- Present-day business communication uses conversational, semi-formal language. Use “I” and “you,” and address your reader by name. Do research, however, to find out your reader’s title preference (for example, Mr., Ms.).
- When both internal and external audiences will read the document, use a bit more formal style and the third person; avoid “I.”
- Use a more formal style when you write to international audiences.

Technical Terms and Theory

- Know what your reader knows; then provide only the essential information. Use technical terms only if these will increase reader understanding.
- Put background information and theory under separate headings. Readers can use the headings to read or jump these sections, as their knowledge prescribes.
- If primary audiences will have more knowledge than other audiences, provide a glossary of terms. Early in the document, let readers know that the glossary exists.

To reach Multiple Readers

Effective messages make use of multiple channels to reach multiple readers.

Communication channels that may vary in their:

- Transmission speed
- Transmission accuracy
- Cost
- Efficiency
- Audience impact

The purpose, the audience, and the situation; known as the communication setting, will all find out which and how many channels you need to select.

A written message makes it easier to do several things:

- Present many specific details of a law, policy, or process
- Present broad or complex financial data
- Minimize undesirable emotions

Writing, however, often needs more time than talking face-to-face. Moreover, once you mail the letter, or hit ‘Send’, writing is “for the record.” Your documents, including your e-mail messages, are permanent and potentially available to everyone. When you do decide
to write, use the channel that best meets the expectations of your audience. Email messages are suitable for routine messages to people you already know. Paper is usually better for someone to whom you’re writing for the first time. Speaking is easier and more efficient when you need to do any of the following:

- Answer questions, resolve conflicts, and build consensus
- Use emotion to help persuade the audience
- Provoke an immediate action or response
- Focus the audience’s attention on specific points
- Modify a proposal that may not be acceptable in its original form

Scheduled meetings and oral presentations are more formal than phone calls or blockading someone in the hall. Important messages should use more formal channels, whether they’re oral or written.

Oral and written messages have many similarities. In both, you should do six things:

- Adapt the message to the specific audience.
- Show the audience members how they benefit from the idea, policy, service, or product.
- Overcome any objections the audience may have.
- Use a good attitude and positive emphasis.
- Use visuals to clarify or emphasize material.
- Specify exactly what the audience should do.

Even when everyone in an organization has approached the same channels, different discourse communities often prefer different channels. When a university updated its employee benefits manual, the computer scientists and librarians wanted the information online. Faculty wanted to be able to read the information on paper. Maintenance workers and electricians wanted to get answers on voicemail.

The bigger your audience, the more complex channel choice becomes, because few channels reach everyone. When possible, use multiple channels. Also use multiple channels for very important messages.

Example: Talk to key players about a written document before the meeting where the document will be talked about.

**Considering the Message in Business Communications**

Unlike academic papers, which are almost always persuasive pieces of writing, the purpose of much business communication is to deliver a message, whether good or bad. As a result, you may find yourself writing positive messages, negative messages, or persuasive messages. Each of these needs a slightly different method, all of which are detailed below.
4.3.5 POSITIVE WRITING

Positive messages are often the easiest to write because the audience is required to be fairly receptive of the presented information, thus they tend to follow the direct pattern by stating the idea at the very beginning following with the explanation. In the explanation, writers will once again want to consider using various spotlighting tools to improve legibility. Writers will conclude the message courteously and with a request for action by a given date, if necessary.

While all positive writing messages follow a similar format, there are different types of positive messages:

Requests for Information/Action

Requests for information or action do just that. Because they are a routine part of business practices, Guffey offers a few helpful words of advice that summarize the most important features of request letters: “Maintain a courteous tone, spell out what needs to be done, suggest reader benefits, and make it easy for the reader to respond”. If there is a deadline, involve the date in the closing to ensure that it sticks in the reader’s mind.

Claims

Claims are letters sent with the purpose of correcting something that went wrong (a common occurrence in the business world).

The format of claim letters comply with the protocol of other positive messages, but because they are intended to correct mistakes, it is important to maintain a calm tone and refrain from making accusations or placing blame, and to avoid harsh language that will only impede the effectiveness of the letter and may be repented later on.

Replies

Begin by telling the reader what they want to hear and avoid long, drawn out openings. If there is both good and bad news in a reply letter, always begin with the good, but refrain from deceiving the reader if you’re intentions don’t altogether meet their expectations.

Example: Don’t respond by saying “We think your request for donations is a great idea!” if you have no aim of actually donating.

Writers should organize the information they are allowing in a clear, coherent manner followed by a nice closing that refers back to the enclosed information.

4.3.6 NEGATIVE WRITING

Negative messages are generally difficult to write because the audience is being told exactly what they don’t want to hear. Negative messages most often include denying requests and delivering bad news to a customer or to those within an organization. Certain techniques that help soften the blow of bad news are applicable to all negative
messages. Remember, when writing a negative message, the audience is likely to be unreceptive so be sure to use the indirect approach.

Buffer the Opening

Buffers are the first tool business writers use to soften the blow of the message by doing things such as introducing the best news first or complimenting the reader.

Example: Your company has my sincere admiration for the charitable effort you’ve put forth this holiday season.

- **Cushion the Bad News**: Place the bad news tactfully after the buffer and before a positive closing to lessen the affect. If the bad news is sandwiched between two positives, the reader is less likely to dwell on the negative.

- **Be Empathetic**: Understand where the reader is coming from and do so sincerely. This concept is also included in the audience analysis stage of the 3×3 Writing Process, but it cannot be emphasized enough.

- **Provide Reasons**: When people are getting bad news, they want to know why. By offering logical, clear reasons for the negative news, readers are more likely to be agreeable and understanding of the situation.

- **Avoid Negative Words**: Choose words cautiously to avoid losing the reader’s attention and receptivity. Negative words only add to overall negativity of the message, so use positive language that focuses on reader benefits.
  
  Words to avoid include cannot, regret, reject, fail, mistake, impossible, and the like.

- **Close Pleasantly**: The closing serves as the writer’s last chance to leave the reader with a positive thought. It’s suitable to promote goodwill by looking ahead toward a brighter future, to offer an alternative option if one exists, to provide the reader with promotional information, or merely to close by wishing the reader well.

4.3.7 PERSUASIVE WRITING

Persuasion is a vital tool one should master to attain professional success in the business world, but it is also one of the more challenging. Whether writers are aiming to persuade customers, potential donors, or those working within the same corporation, they will want to concentrate their attention on four main things:

Grabbing the Reader’s Attention

Engage the reader quickly and at the beginning so they are instantly interested. A few ways of doing this are to use a startling statistic, an
intriguing story, or by telling the reader how they will benefit and what they can gain.

**Building and Maintaining Reader Interest**

Readers can well disregard letters when they are being asked to do something, so it is essential that writers know how to not only grab the reader’s care, but how to maintain their interest. Keep the reader invested in what they are reading by providing examples that make any petitions sound reasonable, appeal to reader emotions, or emphasize indirect benefits the reader may receive such as feeling good about themselves. Writers at last want to provide the reader with incentives to do as they ask.

**Reducing Reader Resistance**

Be prepared for readers to be reluctant and to ask questions. Predict this reaction by presenting counter-arguments to whatever objections the reader might raise and as always, stress the gains and focus on the positive.

**Motivating the Reader to Act**

Motivate the reader to respond or act by a certain time. Writers will want to sound confident that they have accomplished their goals without sounding arrogant.

**4.3.8 ADAPTING TO LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

One of the primary responsibilities of writing for an organization is to avoid language that may land you in the court. In the current business environment, law suits in majority are on the use and abuse of language. If you want to protect yourself and avoid litigation you must know what is effectual by adapting your language accordingly. In this setting, one has to be careful while communicating in following four areas: investment, safety, marketing and human resources.

- **Investment information:** Writers depicting the sale of stocks or financial services must follow particular laws written to protect investors. Any messages—including letters, newsletters, and pamphlets—must be free of misleading information, exaggerations, or half-truths. Experienced financial writers know that poor timing or language may provoke litigation.

- **Safety information:** Writers describing potentially dangerous products worry not only about saving people from physical harm but also being sued. Manufacturers are to warn consumers for risk in their products. Warnings on dangerous products must be written particularly clearly. Clearly written messages use easy-to-understand words, such as doctor instead of physician, clean instead of sanitary, and burn instead of incinerate. Technical terms are determined.
NOTES

- **Marketing information:** Sales and marketing messages are illegal if they incorrectly advertise prices, quality, performance capabilities, or other product characteristics. Marketing messages must not deceive the buyer in any way. Letters, reports and proposals that describe services to be performed are understood as contracts in court. Therefore, language must not promise more than intended. Here are some dangerous words (and recommended alternatives) that have created misapprehension leading to lawsuits given in Table 4.1.

- **Human resources information:** The vast number of lawsuits relating to employment makes this an unreliable area of business communicators. In assessing employees in the workplace, avoid making unsupported negative comments. Defamation lawsuits have become so common that some companies no longer provide letters of recommendation for former employees. To be safe, give recommendations only when the former employee authorizes the recommendation. Statements in employees’ handbooks require careful wording, because a court might rule that such statements are “implied contracts”. In adapting messages to meet today’s litigious business environments, be sensitive to the rights of others and to your own rights. The key components in this adaptation process are awareness of laws, sensitivity to interpretations, and careful use of language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4.1: DANGEROUS WORD THAT CREATE MISUNDERSTANDING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dangerous Word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

State whether the following statements are true/false:

5. A gatekeeper does not have the power to stop your message before it gets to the primary audience.

6. Understanding what your audience wants and expects, and adapting your messages accordingly, greatly raises your chances of communicating successfully.

Contd...
7. Positive messages are often the most complicated to write because the audience is required to be fairly receptive of the presented information.
8. Place the bad news abruptly before the buffer and before a positive closing to lessen the affect.

Assume that you are the Marketing Manager for a sports shoe brand. Write a promotional message for your audience focusing on what you have read above.

4.4 STEPS OF THE BUSINESS WRITING PROCESS (BWP)

Online and offline, effective business writing is an important aspect of any workplace, for business owners and employees. As a frequently used form of business communication, writing can provide information, offer detailed instructions and can even relay ideas and suggestions. Create a checklist that includes essential steps necessary to effectively write business communications so that your next business writing piece is engaging and error-free.

Step 1: Identify Audience

Before you sit down to write, identify your reader. Get a clear idea of the person or persons who will read the communication you’re writing. Determine what questions they expect you to answer, what tone is appropriate, whether they are a busy executive or a loyal customer. Knowing the audience can help you select the format of your business communication.

Step 2: Determine Purpose for Writing

Whether you’re writing to share an idea with a fellow business owner or trying to persuade a customer to try a product or service you offer, it’s important to determine the purpose of your communication before you start writing. Knowing the purpose can help keep you on topic and reduce tangents in your writing.

Step 3: Choose Ideal Format

Business writing isn’t limited to letters and emails. Newsletters, memos, postcards and even advertisements are written business communications businesses create. Postcards and sales letters are ideal for communicating with potential clients, while newsletters and memos can be used for internal use.
**Notes**

**Step 4: Research Background Information**
Thoroughly research the topic you’re writing on to ensure that you include all necessary details, facts and figures. For a business report, graphs, charts and images can help to illustrate points. Customer testimonials might be ideal in a business communication targeted to customers.

**Step 5: Capture Audience**
Business writing has to be clear, concise and creative. Entrepreneur Magazine suggests provoking a reaction from the reader by starting with a question. Start with a joke, story, unusual fact or a piece of information that will shock the reader.

**Step 6: Stick to One Topic**
Mixing an array of ideas in business writing reduces the effectiveness of the main message. Stay focused on one topic, per written communication to avoid confusing the reader.

**Step 7: Proofread for Grammar and Clarity**
Proofread your document before sending it your reader. Grammar issues and wordiness can distract readers, so it’s important to review all business documents carefully.

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**Self Assessment Questions**

State whether the following statements are true/false:

9. Online and offline, effective business writing is an important aspect of any workplace, for business owners and employees.

10. Whether you’re writing to share an idea with a fellow business owner or trying to persuade a customer to try a product or service you offer, it’s important to determine the purpose of your communication before you start writing.

11. Proofread your document before sending it to your reader.

---

**Activity**

Write an essay about which region you hail from taking your friend to be the audience, following the steps mentioned above. Presume that your friend does not know anything about your state.

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**4.5 Strategies for Achieving an Effective Business Writing Style**
The style of your writing refers to how you express yourself rather than what you say. Style affects the tone of your communication and thus gives the reader an indication of what you are feeling or thinking.
Following are the strategies for achieving an effective Business Writing Style:

- **Use Positive Language:** As much as possible, communicate messages in a courteous manner with positive language. Even when you have to communicate bad news, it is possible to word your message positively. The key to wording messages positively is to say what you can do, not what you can’t do. This approach to writing can have a powerful impact on the way the message is received.

  *Example:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Wording</th>
<th>Positive Wording</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We will not be able to approve the budget until the analysis is complete.</td>
<td>We will be able to approve the new budget once the analysis is complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We cannot issue you a refund without a receipt; you can only receive store credit.</td>
<td>We will be happy to issue you store credit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We cannot approve your travel request until your supervisor signs this form.</td>
<td>We will be happy to approve your travel request once your supervisor signs this form.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Use the “You” View:** The “you” view refers to a style of writing where the reader’s needs are emphasized, rather than the writer’s. Considering the reader’s needs and point of view is a smart business strategy, and a great way to provide excellent customer service. Notice how the writer-focused messages below sound self-centred, while the reader-focused messages (written with the “you” view) sound concerned and professional.

  *Example:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writer-focused Message</th>
<th>Reader-focused Message (&quot;You&quot; View)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To prevent us from losing money, our bank now requires identification when cashing large checks.</td>
<td>To protect your account, we ask for identification when cashing large checks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So that we may bring our customer records up-to-date and eliminate the expense of duplicate mailings, please update your address information with us.</td>
<td>So that we may keep your records up-to-date and not bother you with duplicate mailings, please update your address information with us.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Use a Conversational Style of Writing:** Business writers should strive to use conversational, everyday language, rather than overly formal language. Overly formal writing can convey a pompous image; it can also interfere with the clear communication of your
message. Look at how much simpler and clearer the following messages become when more conversational language is used:

*Example:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Too Formal</th>
<th>Conversational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It will behove us to henceforth complete all documentation within two business days.</td>
<td>Please complete all forms within two business days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The board has initiated discussions pertaining to the new policy.</td>
<td>The board began talking about the new policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pertaining to the contracts, all employees are herewith instructed to return the contracts to the undersigned.</td>
<td>Please return the contracts to me.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Use Inclusive Language:** As a courtesy to readers, business writers should strive to use language that does not exclude people.

  *Example:* Instead of saying, The attorneys brought their wives to the dinner, you could say instead, The attorneys brought their spouses to the dinner. The second sentence conveys the same meaning but does not exclude the female attorneys and their husbands. One could also substitute the word significant other for spouses so as not to exclude unmarried people.

  Similarly, try to avoid using non-inclusive job titles that imply that only a man or woman could hold a particular position. The following are some non-inclusive job titles and their gender-neutral substitutes:

  *Example:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-inclusive Job Titles</th>
<th>Gender-neutral Substitutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mailman</td>
<td>Mail carrier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workman</td>
<td>Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waitress</td>
<td>Server</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policeman</td>
<td>Police officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fireman</td>
<td>Fire fighter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Use Predominantly Active Voice:** Business writers should strive to use mostly active voice in their writing because it is clearer, more vigorous, and less wordy. In active voice sentences, the subject is the doer of the action, while in passive voice sentences, the subject is acted upon. Notice the difference in style between these active and passive voice sentences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Voice</th>
<th>Passive Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The board voted on the proposal.</td>
<td>The proposal was voted upon by the board.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The president notified Human Resources of the change in personnel.

Human Resources were notified of the change in personnel.

Susan scheduled the meeting for July 21.

The meeting was scheduled for July 21.

Note that in the second and third sentences above, we needed to add subjects (the president and Susan) in order to change the sentences to active voice.

Sometimes it is more appropriate to use passive voice, especially when you don’t want to draw attention to the doer of the action.

*Example:*

Consider these two sentences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Voice</th>
<th>Passive Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Susan knocked over the coffee pot in the conference room, ruining the table.</td>
<td>The coffee pot was knocked over in the conference room, ruining the table.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If we need to communicate the fact that the table was ruined, but we don’t want to embarrass Susan, then passive voice would be the best choice in this situation.

Writers should also use passive voice to place emphasis on the most important information in the sentence.

*Example:*

Consider the following two sentences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Voice</th>
<th>Passive Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Betty scheduled the meeting for 4:00 Tuesday.</td>
<td>The meeting was scheduled for 4:00 Tuesday.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If it is not important to know who scheduled the meeting (Betty), then we should use passive voice to make the meeting the subject of the sentence, rather than Betty. This places emphasis on the most important information in the sentence.

### 4.5.1 LAYOUT AND FORMATTING

Formatting refers to the way you enter paragraph and line breaks, indents, spaces, typefaces and punctuation marks. By observing a few basic text-formatting rules, you can help us transform the pages of your manuscript into a final book that looks attractive and professional.

- **Paragraph Breaks and Indents:** To view all of the spaces, hard returns and tabbed areas in your manuscript as symbols, select the Show All character (¶) in your Microsoft Word toolbar. If you can’t find this character in your toolbar, hold down the Ctrl and Shift keys and press the 8/* for the same results.
NOTES

- **Paragraphs**: Paragraphs are separated with one paragraph mark (¶). This is also referred to as a hard return, usually accessed by pressing Enter on your keyboard. Lines within a paragraph must continue (or wrap) at the margin; lines should not be broken with paragraph marks or manual line breaks.

- **First-line Indents**: The first paragraph in each chapter or part should not be indented. However, the first line of all other paragraphs should be indented with one tab.

- **Indents**: To indent a block of text, such as a passage from a referenced source, highlight the section of text you want indented, select “Format” in the toolbar and choose the “Paragraph” option in most word processors. Indent the paragraph on the left and right each by one-half of an inch (0.5”).

- **Single-line Indents**: To indent individual lines, such as in a poem or a recipe, use two tabs.

- **Dashes, Hyphens, and Ellipses**: Dashes, ellipses, and other special characters are found under the “Insert” menu of your word-processing program, under “Symbol/Special Characters.” (See the punctuation section of Part III to learn more about when to use these marks.)

- **Do Not Use Double Dashes (--)**: To express a pause in a thought or duration of time. Instead, use the longest dash, called an em dash (—) or an ellipsis (…) to separate thoughts or clauses within a sentence. To type an em dash, hold the Ctrl and the Alt key and type a hyphen, or hold down the Alt key while typing 0151. See instructions below for typing an ellipsis.

- **Use En Dashes (–)** (the longer dash): To separate periods of time or numbers. To type an en dash, hold the Ctrl key and type a hyphen, or hold down the Alt key while typing 0150.

- **Use Hyphens (-)** (on your keyboard): To separate two words that are usually linked with a hyphen.

- **Ellipses**: Hold Ctrl + Alt + the period key.

- **Italics**: By going to the font settings in your word-processing software (under “Format” in the toolbar), or by holding down Ctrl + i, you may apply italic type for the following reasons:
  - Titles of books, magazine articles, movies, plays, television shows, and other titles of major works
  - Words with emphasis (use sparingly)
  - Foreign words and phrases

**Formatting to Avoid**

- **ALL CAPS**: Do not use all caps for emphasis, for titles or for contents pages. WORDS TYPED IN ALL CAPS ARE DIFFICULT TO READ. Use italics instead.
Underlining: Underlined text usually looks old-fashioned. Use italics to express emphasis or to indicate key terms instead, but even then, use sparingly.

Centred Text: Limit the use of centred text. It looks overly formal and can be hard to read.

Manual Hyphenation: Do not manually hyphenate words that break at the end of a line. Both your word-processing software and our book-design software will automatically hyphenate words when necessary.

Quotation Marks: Straight quotation marks (“”) are not acceptable substitutions for traditional quotation marks (”). When straight quotes appear, please exchange them with “curly” quotes (called smart quotes). Microsoft Word may be set to display smart quotes by default through the AutoCorrect menu. Please consult the Help menu of your word-processing software for more information. Or correct individual straight quotation marks as follows: for a smart open quote, press Alt + 0147. For a smart closed quote, press Alt + 0148.

4.5.2 STREAMLINE THE WRITING STYLE

The ability to organize your thoughts quickly and write them down in essay format is a useful skill. Even beyond writing an essay, you’ll use basically the same skills whether you need to summarize a report or complete an essay exam. Like any skill, it improves with practice.

Remember that an essay is a logical presentation of facts that begins with a preparation period (during which you brainstorm potential ideas and gather your evidence), followed by the actual writing of the essay.

Here are some helpful tips:

- Underline keywords: This works to emphasize key thoughts within your brainstorming notes and your research.

- Think of yourself as a reporter: As you peruse your research, write down probing questions that come to mind as you discover gaps in what you read. (This will help you know what additional research materials you need to gather and can also provide you with questions to ask experts when you interview them.)

- Keep things colourful: Use different collared highlighters to mark up your notes, distinguishing different types of facts (e.g., yellow for quotes, blue for expert names, etc.) and to mark off material once you’ve used it.

- Ask yourself a question: If you find yourself stuck at some point in the essay-writing process, ask yourself: What is the most important thing I have learned/discovered while doing research for this project?
Summarize your main points: Write your opening and closing paragraphs in advance and then complete the writing about those points necessary to support your summary.

Simplify your transitions: If you’re having difficulty knowing how to make the transition from one point to the next, start out using “the first point I’d like to make” and “the next point I’d like to make” and so on; you can then revise those when you edit your draft.

Keeping these tips in mind throughout your essay project will ease whatever burden you may feel about the task at hand. Because they help keep you on track by focusing on the essential elements of your essay, the tips can help ease any initial intimidation you may feel.

4.5.3 TYPES OF BUSINESS DOCUMENTS

Following are the types of business documents:

Letters

Letter writing is a prized skill in the world of work. The higher you advance in your career, the more you will need to write letters. Letters are more formal and official than other types of business communication. They offer personal, verifiable authorization. Unlike e-mail, letters often must be routed through channels before they are sent out. Letters are the expected medium through which important documents such as contracts and proposals are sent to readers.

There are four basic types of business letters: inquiry letters, special request letters, sales letters, and customer relations letters. Business letters can be further classified as positive, neutral, or negative. Inquiry and special request letters are neutral, sales letters are positive, and customer relations letters can be positive or negative.

Inquiry Letters: An inquiry letter asks for information about a product, service, or procedure. Businesses frequently exchange inquiry letters, and customers frequently send them to businesses. Three basic rules for an effective inquiry letter are to state exactly what information you want, indicate clearly why you must have this information, and specify exactly when you must have it.

Application Letters and Cover Letters: Many people believe that application letters and cover letters are essentially the same. For purposes of this hand-out, though, these kinds of letters are different. The letter of application is a sales letter in which you market your skills, abilities, and knowledge. A cover letter, on the other hand, is primarily a document of transmittal. It identifies an item being sent, the person to whom it is being sent, and the reason for its being sent, and provides a permanent record of the transmittal for both the writer and the reader.

Special Request Letters: Special request letters make a special demand, not a routine inquiry. The way you present your request
is crucial, since your reader is not obliged to give you anything. When asking for information in a special request letter, state that you are, why you are writing, precisely what information you need, and exactly when you need the information (allow sufficient time). If you are asking for information to include in a report or other document, offer to forward a copy of the finished document as a courtesy. State that you will keep the information confidential, if that is appropriate. Finally, thank the recipient for helping you.

- **Sales Letters:** A sales letter is written to persuade the reader to buy a product, try a service, support a cause, or participate in an activity. No matter what profession you are in, writing sales letters is a valuable skill. To write an effective sales letter, follow these guidelines: (1) Identify and limit your audience. (2) Use reader psychology. Appeal to readers’ emotions, pocketbook, comfort, and so on by focusing on the right issues. (3) Don’t boast or be a bore. Don’t gush about your company or make elaborate explanations about a product. (4) Use words that appeal to readers’ senses. (5) Be ethical.

The “four A’s” of sales letters are attention, appeal, application, and action. Firstly, get the reader’s attention. Next, highlight your product’s appeal. Then, show the reader the product’s application. Finally, end with a specific request for action.

In the first part of your sales letter, get the reader’s attention by asking a question, using a “how to” statement, complimenting the reader, offering a free gift, introducing a comparison, or announcing a change. In the second part, highlight your product’s allure by appealing to the reader’s intellect, emotions, or both. Don’t lose the momentum you have gained with your introduction by boring the reader with petty details, flat descriptions, elaborate inventories, or trivial boasts. In the third part of your sales letter, supply evidence of the value of what you are selling. Focus on the prospective customer, not on your company. Mention the cost of your product or service, if necessary, by relating it to the benefits to the customer. In the final section, tell readers exactly what you want them to do, and by what time. “Respond and be rewarded” is the basic message of the last section of a sales letter.

- **Customer Relations Letters:** These deals with establishing and maintaining good working relationships. They deliver good news or bad news, acceptances or refusals. If you are writing an acceptance letter, use the direct approach—tell readers the good news up front. If you are writing a refusal letter, do not open the letter with your bad news; be indirect.

- **Follow-up Letters:** A follow-up letter is sent to thank a customer for buying a product or service and to encourage the customer to buy more in the future. As such, it is a combination thank-you note and sales letter. Begin with a brief expression of gratitude. Next, discuss the benefits
already known to the customer, and stress the company’s dedication to its customers. Then extend this discussion into a new or continuing sales area, and end with a specific request for future business.

♦ **Complaint Letters:** These require delicacy. The right tone will increase your chances of getting what you want. Adopt the “you” attitude. Begin with a detailed description of the product or service you are complaining about. Include the model and serial numbers, size, quantity, and colour. Next, state exactly what is wrong with the product or service. Briefly describe the inconvenience you have experienced. Indicate precisely what you want done (you want your money back, you want a new model, you want an apology, and so on). Finally, ask for prompt handling of your claim.

♦ **Adjustment Letters:** Adjustment letters respond to complaint letters. For an adjustment letter that tells the customer “Yes,” start with your good news. Admit immediately that the complaint was justified. State precisely what you are going to do to correct the problem. Offer an explanation for the inconvenience the customer suffered. End on a friendly, positive note. For adjustment letters that deny a claim, avoid blaming or scolding the customer. Thank the customer for writing. Stress that you understand the complaint. Provide a factual explanation to show customers they’re being treated fairly. Give your decision without hedging or apologizing. (Indecision will infuriate customers who believe they have presented a convincing case.) Leave the door open for better and continued business in the future.

♦ **Refusal of Credit Letters:** Begin on a positive note. Express gratitude for the applicant for wanting to do business with you. Cite appropriate reasons for refusing to grant the customer credit: lack of business experience or prior credit, current unfavourable or unstable financial conditions, and so on. End on a positive note. Encourage the reader to reapply later when his or her circumstances have changed.

**Memos**

The chief function of a memo is to record information of immediate importance and interest: announcing a company policy, alerting readers to a problem or deadline, reminding readers about a meeting, and so on. Memos are important tools for companies and reflect company politics, policies, and organization. They are sent down the administrative ladder from executives to middle managers to employees and up the ladder from employees to supervisors. Learn your company’s protocols regarding memos.

Memos look different from letters, with a more streamlined, less formal format. Basically, a memo consists of two parts: the identifying
information at the top, and the message itself. At the top, identify for whom the memo has been written, who is sending it, the subject, and the date. The subject line serves as the memo’s title.

The style and tone you use in a memo will be determined by your audience: you can use a casual tone in a memo to a co-worker you know well, but you should use a more formal tone in a memo to your boss. It’s important to organize your memos well. Longer memos consist of an introduction, a discussion, and a conclusion. In the introduction, tell readers what prompted you to write (such as a problem or question about a specific procedure or policy), and provide any necessary background information. In the discussion section, or body, indicate what changes are necessary to address that problem or question. In the conclusion, state specifically how you want the reader to respond.

Reports
There are two kinds of reports in business writing: Long Report and Short Report.

Writing Effective Short Reports
Business cannot function without short reports. They tell whether work is being completed, schedules are being met, costs are being contained, sales projections are being met, clients are being served, and unexpected problems are being solved. You may write a short report in response to a specific question or regularly to report on routine activities. The six most common types of short reports are periodic reports, sales reports, progress reports, trip/travel reports, test reports, and incident reports.

Guidelines for Writing Short Reports
To write any short report successfully, follow these guidelines:

- **Do necessary research:** This may be as simple as telephoning or e-mailing a colleague or inspecting a piece of equipment. The Web is also a valuable source of information for short reports.

- **Anticipate how your audience will use your report:** Make sure your report will meet your audience’s needs.

- **Be objective and ethical:** Avoid guesswork, impressions, unsupported personal opinions, and biased, skewed, or incomplete data.

- **Choose a reader-centred format and design:** Include a clear, precise subject line, and use headings, lists, underlining, and visuals to clarify your message.

- **Write concisely and clearly:** Don’t waste readers’ time. Allow time when you write for careful revising and editing.

- **Organize carefully:** Include the right amount of information in the most appropriate places for your audience. Usually you
will begin with your purpose, report your findings, provide a conclusion, and, finally, present your recommendations.

**Periodic Reports**

Periodic reports provide readers with information at regular intervals—daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly. Managers rely on them when making schedules, ordering materials, assigning personnel, budgeting funds, and determining general corporate needs.

**Sales Reports**

Sales reports provide businesses with records of accounts, purchases, losses, and profits over specified periods. They help managers assess past performance and plan for the future.

**Progress Reports**

Progress reports inform readers about the status of on-going projects. They detail whether you are maintaining your schedule, staying within budget, using the proper equipment, making the right assignments, and completing the job properly. They are intended primarily for people who need a record of your activities to coordinate them with others. Progress reports should include information on the work you have done, the work you are currently doing, and the work you will do.

**Trip/Travel Reports**

Trip reports keep managers apprised of how a trip affected on-going or future business. In a trip report, document where you went, when you went there, why you went there, whom you saw, what they told you, and what you did about it. Common types of trip/travel reports include field trip reports, site inspection reports, and reports on home health or social work visits. Always write a trip report promptly upon returning from your travels, while the necessary details are fresh in your mind.

**Test Report**

These report on physical research—experiments and tests conducted in the field or a lab. Objectivity is essential in this type of report. Readers want to know the facts, not your feelings. A test report needs to explain why you performed the test and describe how you performed it, what the outcomes were, and what implications or recommendations follow from it.

**Incident Reports**

Incident reports describe events such as accidents, breakdowns, delays, and cost overruns. They can be used as evidence in a court of law, so it is important to write them properly. Be accurate, objective, and complete. Give facts, not opinions. Do not misrepresent yourself; answer only those question you is qualified to answer. Identify yourself and the people involved in the incident, identify what type of incident it was, record the time and location of the incident, and describe what happened, what caused the incident, and what was done after
it occurred. Be specific about all of these points. Finally, give your recommendations for preventing such incidents in the future.

Writing Careful Long Reports

A long report is the culmination of many weeks of hard work. It differs from a short report in purpose, scope, format, and, many times, audience. A long report provides an in-depth view of an issue and may discuss not just one or two current events but a long history. It requires much more research than a short report does (although information gathered for a series of short reports may be used to prepare a long report). A long report is too detailed and complex to be adequately organized in a memo or letter format. It may take weeks or even months to write. The audience for a long report is generally broader and higher up in an organization's hierarchy than the audience for a short report. Finally, long reports are written collaboratively more often than short reports are.

The Process of Writing a Long Report

View writing a long report not as a series of isolated tasks but as an evolving project. Identify a broad yet significant topic for your report. Expect to confer regularly with your supervisor and to revise your work often. Your revisions may be extensive, depending on what your superior recommends; be sure to share all major changes with your supervisor. Keep the order flexible at first; a long report is not written in the order in which it will finally appear. Use both a calendar and a checklist to track your progress, checking off major parts of the report as you finish them.

Parts of a Long Report

A long report consists of front matter, the report text, and back matter. The front matter may include a letter of transmittal, a title page, a table of contents, a list of illustrations, and an abstract. The report text consists of an introduction, the body, a conclusion, and recommendations. The introduction includes background information, defines the problem the report addresses, and describes the report's purpose and scope. The body, or discussion, is the longest part, making up as much as 70 per cent of the report. It should be carefully organized around a coherent, well-defined plan. The conclusion ties everything together by presenting your findings. The recommendations tell readers what should be done about the findings described in the conclusion. The back matter may include a glossary, a list of references, and one or more appendixes.

Proposals

A proposal is a detailed plan submitted for approval to a person or group in a position of authority. Proposals are among the most important kinds of occupational writing. They are written for many purposes and audiences and vary greatly in size and scope. Whether large or small, a proposal must be highly persuasive to succeed.
Types of Proposals

Proposals may be solicited or unsolicited, internal or external. When a company has a job to be done, it may issue a request for proposals, or RFP, to solicit proposals from bidders. RFPs are often full of legal requirements and extensive details on how the job is to be performed. Unlike a solicited proposal, an unsolicited proposal has to convince the recipient that there is a problem that needs to be solved. An internal proposal is written to a decision maker in your own organization; an external proposal is sent to a decision maker outside your company.

Internal Proposals

Internal proposals cover almost every activity and policy of a business. You must be aware of office politics when planning an internal proposal. Don’t assume your reader will agree that there is a problem or that your plan is the best way to solve it. Your reader may even feel threatened by your plans. Always consider the implications of your plan for others in the organization, and never submit a proposal that leaves it to someone else to work out the details to make your plan work.

Internal proposals usually contain four parts:

- **Purpose:** Begin with a brief statement of why you are writing the proposal.
- **Problem:** Prove that a problem exists by documenting its importance for your boss and the company. Avoid vague generalizations: provide quantifiable details about the implications or consequences of the problem, indicate how many employees or customers are affected by it, and describe how widespread it is.
- **Solution:** Describe the change you want approved. Tie your solution directly to the problem you just described. Supply details to show that the plan is workable and cost-effective, and demonstrate that the costs of implementing the plan are less than the costs of not solving the problem. Also, raise alternatives to your plan and discuss their disadvantages.
- **Conclusion:** Make this section short—no more than two paragraphs. Remind the reader that the problem is serious, the reason for change is justified, and action needs to be taken. Reemphasize the most important benefits of your proposed solution.

Sales Proposals

Sales proposals are the most common type of external proposal. Most sales proposals include the following elements:

- **Introduction:** This section may include a statement of purpose and background information on the problem you propose to solve.
Description of the product or service: This section is the heart of your proposal. It needs to provide hard evidence that what you propose can and should be done. Here you should show potential customers that your product or service is right for them, describe your work in suitable detail, and stress any special features, advantages, or benefits of your product or service.

Timetable: A carefully planned timetable shows readers you know your job and can accomplish it in the right amount of time.

Costs: Make your budget complete, accurate, and convincing. Don't underestimate or overestimate costs. A proposal, once accepted by both parties, is a binding legal agreement.

Qualifications of your company: Emphasize your company’s accomplishments and expertise. Never misrepresent your company or co-workers.

Conclusion: This section contains your “call to action,” where you encourage your reader to approve your plan.

Proposals for Research Papers and Reports
As with internal and sales proposals, you will be writing to convince your reader to approve a major piece of work. A proposal for a school research project can be a memo or e-mail, divided into five sections: introduction, scope of the problem or topic, methods or procedures, timetable, and request for approval.

Writing a Successful Proposal
The following guidelines will help you write successful proposals of any type:

Approach your proposal as a problem-solving activity. Make readers feel that your goal is to solve a problem for them and that you have the ability to do so.

Regard your audience as sceptical. Don't think readers will automatically accept your plan as the best way to solve their problem. Expect them to question everything you say.

Research your proposal thoroughly. You need facts, not generalizations, to persuade your readers.

Scout out your competitors. Check your competitors’ Web sites for information on their products or services and to get an idea of their costs.

Prove that your proposal is workable. The bottom-line question from your readers will be whether your plan will work.

Be sure your proposal is financially realistic. Another basic question readers will ask is if your plan is worth the money. Do not submit a proposal that requires excessive funds to implement.
Package your proposal attractively. Readers will see your proposal as evidence of the kind of work you do, so make it look good.

**SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

Fill in the blanks:
12. When you have to communicate bad news, it is possible to word your message ..................
13. As a courtesy to readers, business writers should strive to use language that does not ................... people.
14. A sales letter is written to ..................... the reader to buy a product, try a service, support a cause, or participate in an activity.

**NOTE**

Do not use all caps for emphasis, for titles or for contents pages. WORDS TYPED IN ALL CAPS ARE DIFFICULT TO READ. Use italics instead.

### 4.6 SUMMARY

- In a business organization, the manager is involved in a variety of written communication such as replies to clients, recording agreements, enquiries, memos, preparing reports to initiate action, proposals for contracts, etc.
- Business writing is one of the simplest forms of writing. It’s a system that combines clear and direct language with practical, no-frills conventions for formatting and organization.
- Audience analysis is central to the success of any message: to capture and hold an attention and to motivate readers and listeners, you must shape your message to fulfil the audience’s goals, interests, and needs.
- Positive messages are often the easiest to write because the audience is required to be fairly receptive of the presented information, thus they tend to follow the direct pattern by stating the idea at the very beginning following with the explanation.
- Negative messages are generally difficult to write because the audience is being told exactly what they don’t want to hear.
- One of the primary responsibilities of writing for an organization is to avoid language that may land you in the court.
- Online and offline, effective business writing is an important aspect of any workplace, for business owners and employees.
- The style of your writing refers to how you express yourself rather than what you say. Formatting refers to the way you
enter paragraph and line breaks, indents, spaces, typefaces and punctuation marks.

KEY WORDS

- **Initial audience**: Initial audience is first to receive the message; may assign message.
- **Gatekeeper audience**: It has the power to stop the message before it gets to primary audience.
- **Primary audience**: It decides whether to accept recommendations or acts on message.
- **Secondary audience**: Secondary audience comments on message or implements recommendations.
- **Watchdog audience**: The audience that has political, social, or economic power; may base future actions on evaluation of message.
- **Business writing**: The business writing is a conventional communication from an administration to its clients, the common public for their selective information, a different company or the agencies.
- **Readers**: A person who reads or who is fond of reading.
- **Audience analysis**: Audience analysis is the process of examining information about your listeners.
- **Gatekeeper**: A gatekeeper is the person responsible for keeping a decision maker from being bothered by irrelevant callers.
- **Claims**: Claims are letters sent with the purpose of correcting something that went wrong (a common occurrence in the business world).
- **Formatting**: It refers to the way you enter paragraph and line breaks, indents, spaces, typefaces and punctuation marks.
- **Layout**: Master plan or blueprint of a printed or published work (such as an advertisement, book, magazine, newspaper, or website) that lays out the arrangement of its different graphic elements (such as body copy, colours, headlines, illustrations, scale).
- **Inquiry Letters**: An inquiry letter asks for information about a product, service, or procedure.
- **Sales Letters**: A sales letter is written to persuade the reader to buy a product, try a service, support a cause, or participate in an activity.
- **Customer Relations Letters**: These deals with establishing and maintaining good working relationships.
- **Memos**: A short message sent from one person to another in the same organization.
NOTES

4.7 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. “Business writing is one of the simplest forms of writing.” Comment.

2. Discuss how adaptation and selection of words is crucial to business writing.

3. What is the way to develop effective sentences in business writing?

4. What is paragraph development? What should be its elements?

5. Which points should be ensured while writing for multiple readers? Also, what is audience analysis?

6. What is persuasive writing? What are its focus points?

4.8 ANSWERS AND HINTS

ANSWERS FOR SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

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<th>Q. No.</th>
<th>Answers</th>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>False</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steps of the Business Writing Process (BWP)</td>
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<td>9.</td>
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<td>11.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategies for Achieving an Effective Business Writing Style</td>
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HINTS FOR DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Refer 4.2

Business writing is one of the simplest forms of writing since it is supposed to convey a message in the most simplest way and being specific.
2. Refer 4.2.1 & 4.2.2
The capability to writing clearly relies not on our audience itself, but on how much we know about our audience. For writing to be clear, it must adapt to the reader. A major portion of adaptation is choosing the right words i.e., selection.

3. Refer 4.2.3
Words are regarded as the building blocks of communication and sentences are considered as the rows of blocks, which must be properly planned and well laid out to make effective sentences while writing.

4. Refer 4.2.4
Every paragraph is a significant part of the whole, a key link in the train of thought and so it should be well developed and to ensure that one must focus on: Topic of sentence, Related sentences and transitional words and phrases.

5. Refer 4.3 & 4.3.1
When writing for multiple readers one must ensure certain important points. Audience analysis is central to the success of any message: to capture and hold an audience’s attention and to motivate readers and listeners, you must shape your message to fulfill the audience’s goals, interests, and needs.

6. Refer 4.3.7
Persuasion is a vital tool one should master to attain professional success in the business world keeping the few points in mind: Grabbing the Reader’s Attention, Building and Maintaining Reader Interest, Reducing Reader Resistance, Motivating the Reader to Act.

### 4.9 SUGGESTED READING FOR REFERENCE

**SUGGESTED READINGS**

NOTES


E-REFERENCES

CHAPTER 5

INDIRECTNESS IN PERSUASION AND SALES MESSAGES

CONTENTS

5.1 Introduction

5.2 Meaning of Persuasion
   5.2.1 Process of Persuasion
   5.2.2 Strategy of Persuasive Messages
   5.2.3 AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action)
   5.2.4 Motivating the Reader to Act
   5.2.5 Persuasive Request
   5.2.6 Making the Request Clear and Positive

5.3 Writing Persuasive Messages
   5.3.1 Elements in a Persuasive Message
   5.3.2 Gaining Attention in the Opening
   5.3.3 Three-Step Writing Process for Persuasive Messages

5.4 Sales Letters/Messages
   5.4.1 Unsolicited Sales Letters
   5.4.2 Solicited Sales Letters
   5.4.3 Soft-sell Letters
   5.4.4 Letters That Sell Ideas
   5.4.5 Collection Letters
   5.4.6 Reminders
   5.4.7 Inquiries
   5.4.8 Appeals

5.5 Summary

5.6 Descriptive Questions

5.7 Answers and Hints

5.8 Suggested Reading for Reference
**INTRODUCTORY CASELET**

**PERSUASION IS PREVALENT EVERYWHERE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ravi</th>
<th>Raj</th>
<th>Ravi</th>
<th>Raj</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I was just wondering if you were using your car this afternoon.</td>
<td>Why?</td>
<td>I promised Vijay I’d pop over and see him before he went to Mumbai.</td>
<td>How about going by bus?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s more expensive than using a car and it takes longer.</td>
<td></td>
<td>It’s more expensive than using my car, my petrol, my insurance, my road tax—much more expensive. Why not go by train? Oh yes! Too expensive!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you’re not using it, you could lend it to me. Why not let me? I’ll put some petrol in for you.</td>
<td>I can’t see any reason, why not. Don’t forget the petrol.</td>
<td>Thanks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Basic Business Communication by Raj Kumar*
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- Understand about the process of persuasion
- Learn how to gain attention in the opening message
- Prepare the sales message or letter

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus of this chapter is on well-thought-out persuasive writing. Many times you want your readers to do something: You wish them to act, to accept a point of view, to follow your wishes, to respond, to change, or to not change. In short, you desire a response from your message receiver. The chapter concludes with various measures for making clear requests in importance of assertion in communication.

5.2 MEANING OF PERSUASION

Persuasion is vital to inspire people, motivate them to change, getting them to consider new opportunities or new ideas. There are different ways of persuading:

- Telling stories,
- Using logical discussion,
- Presenting data and facts.

According to Perloff (2003), persuasion can be defined as

"...a symbolic process in which communicators tries to convince other people to change their attitudes or behaviours regarding an issue through the transmission of a message in an atmosphere of free choice."

The major components of this definition of persuasion are as follows:

- Self-persuasion is important. People are not forced; they are instead free to select.
- It involves a deliberate attempt to influence others.
- Techniques of conveying persuasive messages can take place in a variety of ways, comprising verbally and nonverbally through television, Internet radio, or face-to-face communication.
- Persuasion is sounds, symbolic, images, utilizing words, etc.

Persuasion is the process of changing or reinforcing attitudes, beliefs or behaviour of a person. People respond to persuasive messages in two ways: thoughtfully and mindlessly. When we are in thoughtful mode, the persuasiveness of the message is determined by merits of the message.
When we respond to messages mindlessly, our brains are locked on automatic. We do not have the time, motivation or ability to listen intently. Typically, persuasion is largely dependent upon the attractiveness of the speakers and reaction of the listeners. Persuasion is solely related with communication, learning, awareness and thought.

Bettinghaus defines persuasion as “a conscious attempt by one individual to change the attitudes, beliefs or the behaviour of another individual or group of individuals through the transmission of some message”. This definition indicates that persuasion is assumed to involve conscious intent on the part of the persuader to affect the receiver of a persuasive message. It involves a selection of a strategy perceived to be most effective and the control of message and environmental variable so as to maximise the likelihood that the strategy will be effective. Much persuasive discourse is indirectly coercive, that is, the persuasive effectiveness of messages often heavily depends on the credibility of threats and the promises preferred by the communicator.

5.2.1 PROCESS OF PERSUASION

Effective persuasion becomes learning and a negotiating procedure through which a persuader leads colleagues to a problem's shared solution. In the process of persuasion both the persuader and the receiver of the persuasive message are consciously active.

There are four necessary and distinct steps in effective persuasion:

Step 1: Establish Your Credibility

In the workplace, reliability comes from relationships and expertise. People are regarded to have high levels of expertise if they have proven themselves as well informed and knowledgeable along with having a history of sound judgment or about their proposals. They have demonstrated over time that they can be reliable to work and to listen in the best interests of others.

Step 2: Frame Your Goals in a way that Identifies Common Ground with those You Intend to Persuade

It is a procedure of recognizing shared benefits in which it is vital to identify your goal's tangible advantages to the people you are trying to convince. If no shared advantages are readily apparent, it is better to adjust your position until you find a shared advantage.

The best persuaders thoroughly study the issues that matter to their colleagues. They use meetings, conversations and other forms kinds of dialogue to accumulate necessary information. They are good at listening. They test their thoughts with relied contacts and question the people they will later be persuading. Often this procedure causes them to compromise or change their own plans before they even initiate persuading. Through this inquisitive and thoughtful approach they develop frames that appeal to their audience.
Step 3: Reinforce Your Positions Using Vivid Language and Compelling Evidence

Persuasive people supplement data with illustrations, stories, analogies and metaphors so as to make their positions come alive. Vivid word pictures lend a compelling as well as tangible quality to the viewpoints of the persuader.

Step 4: Connect Emotionally with Your Audience

Good persuaders are aware of the importance of emotions and are responsive to them in two significant manners. Firstly, they show their own emotional commitment to the position they are advocating without overdoing it, which would be counter-productive. Secondly, they have an accurate and a strong sense of their audience’s emotional state, and they adjust their intensity of their arguments and tone accordingly.

5.2.2 STRATEGY OF PERSUASIVE MESSAGES

Business professionals believe that powerful marketing campaigns and messages can influence decisions. Still effective communicators understand the real persuasion occurs through a complex combination of speaking, listening and tweaking a message over the course of repeated communications. By learning how to converse effectively, professionals can develop the skill to build powerful partnerships within their own organisations while earning their customers’ trust.

Before you begin writing any kind of a message, ensure that you have analysed the condition carefully and defined your target audience. Then, you should consider a few factors, for example, the message objective, the motivation and the demographics of the audience.

For messages to actually become persuasive, professionals must learn to listen to their audiences, confirm that they heard response correctly and reflect that feedback in the next wave of communication. If the stakes are quite low, such as sustaining a brand image for present customers, marketers may not have to communicate very much. But to get a customer to change brands or to try a new solution to a problem, professionals must take a longer view to the challenge of persuasion. Mixing the message across multiple media has become usual, with mass advertising campaigns supported by personal interactions and online messages with organisation representatives.

Persuasive messages generally are written in the indirect order. While they do not necessarily involve bad news, their goals often run contrary to the reader’s current wishes. The mind-set of the resistant reader must be changed before they can be successful. Achieving this change requires indirectness. It makes little difference how persuasive messages are classified. For ease of discussion, here we briefly review two common strategies of organization for persuasive requests. Thus, purpose of persuasive messages is to:

- Make receiver accept a point of view
Organization of Persuasive Messages

The two types of request organisations of persuasive messages are as follows:

**Direct Request Organization**

For the routine, more personal request, use the direct-request format. There is no need to keep the reader in suspense; this direct-request (deductive) approach has three parts:

- **Main idea**—Your request or question, statement, and reason
- **Explanation**—Proof and details needed in order that your reader can respond precisely
- **Courteous close**—Politely asking for what action is desired

Of the two methods of organization—direct and indirect—the direct approach is easier: You state your petition upfront, explain why you need a favourable response, and end with a courteous close.

**Indirect Request Organization**

Situations that are more complicated, more difficult, a bit out of the average are not routine; they take more effort. In fact, the favour you ask may precipitate some objection; you will have to supply evidence and data to support your request. Hence, non-routine persuasive requests—like the bad-news letter—most often use the indirect approach.

- **Explanation**—Buffer opening
- **Main idea**—The core of your request, your concern
- **Courtesy close**—Polite ending with last request for action

Your assumption in using the indirect approach is that if your request were stated directly at the beginning, it would be unwanted or undesirable news to your reader, who then might react unfavourably. Rather, prepare the reader and offer facts suggesting that your proposal is beneficial or useful. Remember that your reader often is not expending your message.

### 5.2.3 AIDA (ATTENTION, INTEREST, DESIRE, ACTION)

The capability to convince is a very useful skill in business. The ability to write effective persuasive messages will assist you significantly in your career. You might want to convince your supervisor you are experienced enough for argue or promotion for a certain point in your team. The following AIDA principle will facilitate you to understand the nature of persuasion.
Persuasive letters or memorandums usually have four parts, often cited to as the AIDA formula for sales presentations:

- **A** – Attention
- **I** – Interest
- **D** – Desire
- **A** – Action

Though attention, interest, desire, and action are listed here as distinct steps, they are generally combined or blended smoothly into your persuasive message.

**Attention/Attract**

As the name suggests, you have to catch the attention of your audience. If you have to convince your customer to buy your product, then you must grab his/her attention. The best of advertisements are ineffective if nobody notices them. There are two general forms of attention-getting devices. One consists of external factors over which the copywriter has little or no control and the other one includes internal factors which are to a large degree directly under his control.

With a million sales people online, and a zillion same kinds of sites, how do you stand apart? How do you seem different? The key to attain that is to command the visitor’s attention. Fascinate them by your most powerful and attention grabbing tool – the headline. An influential image is helpful of course. But as a copywriter, your first concern is the headline.

The headline is something which must directly get the visitors hooked. Following approaches can be used to make a headline:

- Straight benefits – such as Get a DVD Free with Every LED TV.
- Urgency – such as Last Two Days Left for the Yard Sale.
- Questions – such as Do You Want to Own a Car?

You can also include jokes, humour, double meanings or other wordplay in your headlines. Be sound convincing, precise and clear, and so that you have your reader’s attention and draw him into reading more.

**Interest**

There is no best means of motivating interest than by appealing to the self-interest of the readers. All too often, the copywriter writes in terms of the advertiser rather than the customer. The approach required is what is referred to as the “you” attitude. The customer is not interested in how wonderful the organisation is; he wishes to know what the product will do for him.

Gaining the interest of the reader is a deeper procedure than catching their attention. They will give you a little more time to do it, but you must stay focused on their requirements. This means helping them
Desire/Decision

In this, you have to persuade your customers to make a decision in your favour. For this, you have to strengthen the benefits you stated in the interest section. You have to explain why your service or product is the best and only solution to their problem. You have to build desire and break down their resistance. This is how you can do this – Explain the advantages you offer. You must inform them how your product has helped others. You have to build on their desire using facts and logic to support your claims. For instance, moving ahead with the pest control example, you can say something like “you have always wanted to be 100% rid of pests, but they keep coming back. We promise a pest control solution that will rid them for good. What’s more, we offer a one year follow-up program where we keep checking back on you time and again, so that in case of any problems, we can control it first-hand.” A tremendous way to persuade confidence in the reader is to provide them with testimonials, reviews, etc.

Action

When you have generated the desire of purchase in the minds of your customers, then the last stage is to persuade the prospects to take quick action. The final outcome relies on this step. All your convincing and sales pitch comes to this – will they buy? Or subscribe? Or register? So for them to do that, you need to tell them clearly. You must be precise about your call to action. Place the buttons very clearly, and highlight them. Make the desired action easy and clear. Also link the concluding statement to the headline. But be very clear – whether you want your visitor to:

“Sign Up! or Buy Now! Or Leave An Email Address!”

5.2.4 MOTIVATING THE READER TO ACT

The readers are urged to respond or act by a certain time. Writers will wish to sound confident that they have attained their objectives without sounding self-important or pushy. A good closing might sound something like this: “You will see decided improvement in the communication skills of your employees. Please call me at 555-555-5555 by May 1 to give your approval so that training sessions may start in June, as we discussed.”

Some additional helpful advice that briefly sums up the aforementioned points:

- Institute rapport.
- Appeal to the reader directly by explaining why it is in his or her interests to keep reading.
Explicate explain how you are both working towards the same goal.

Assure the reader of your good will.

Also, note that the conventions of persuasive business writing are more flexible than the others.

Don’t be scared to be creative.

5.2.5 PERSUASIVE REQUEST

A request mainly by the intention of influencing somebody’s attitude and change his thinking about a particular project, product or service according to our liking.

- Requests about products or services.
- Requests for claims and adjustments.
- Requests for change in policy.
- Requests for change in performance.
- Requests for employer to a reference.
- Requests from employee to a reference.

Requests about Products or Services

As senders (encoders) of the message we find occasions where we have to seek a response from the receivers. As a customer or as a business or professional person, we will have occasions to seek a response from our reader. Products or services are among the most common forms of persuasive requests.

- Requesting Purchase of a Product: Notes (commonly known as miss-you messages) to old customers attempting to win back their trust.

- Requesting Information from seller: A request sent to seller by the aim of collecting information about some particular item we are interested in.

- Requesting Internal Employee Action: Message whose primary purpose is to build effective relationship with employees by getting their feedback.

Requests for Claims and Adjustments

These requests are written by those, who dissatisfied with a product, services, or policy.

- Requesting an adjustment: Request for a refund or an exchange

- Requesting credit:
  - Credit applications are handled at times.
  - Sometime we may seek special privileges from lending institutions.
Requests for Change in Policy
We often need to sway a company to change its usual policy; we may also wish to persuade individuals to change their actions, hoping to improve their future performance.

- It takes significant time to effect a change in the policy.
- Logical and coordinated evidence is required to bring about such a change.

Requests for Change in Performance
- A good thorough convincing is needed to persuade someone to bring about a change in their performance.
- It’s positive to give an oral briefing along with the written message.

Requested changes may include:
- Individual personal appearance.
- Habits that are bothering other people.
- Or even business practices.

Requests for Employer to a Reference
Employer often wants a feedback about an employee from someone who is a good critique of employee’s work (or) from an individual having an understanding of a prospective employee.

- Be particular.
- Word your question in a neutral way.
- Number your questions.
- Use separate paragraph for each question.

Requests from Employee to a Reference
A message written to persuade someone to write reference letter:

- That person may or may not be interested.
- If that person is not interested, persuade him with the help of following steps:
  - State why we are communicating.
  - What the recommendation is for.
  - Send a summary of one’s CV, for instance, course studied, grades in major and minor area, positions held and companies worked for, activities outside the workplace, goals and adjectives for your future.

5.2.6 MAKING THE REQUEST CLEAR AND POSITIVE
Clear business writing demands good grammar, spelling, and vocabulary and remorseless self-editing. You also need to make your
business writing courteous, get your point across clearly with civility. These measurements can help you give a good impression with your business writing:

- **Read:** You gain a good vocabulary in only one way: by reading. To paraphrase, “You are what you read.” The purpose is to be as clear as you can be and to avoid any ambiguity. Writing requires an attention to detail that you don’t need in conversation.

- **Edit:** Editing is possibly the hardest thing to do with your own writing. After all, you wrote it, so you don’t want to change it. But you should; even trained writers can always find changes to make.

- **Be graceful:** Business writing, like all professional writing, is bound by the code that performance, not the person is the subject of critique. Focus on the topic at hand, rather than on the person who is talking about it, even if the person is a rude so-and-so. Here are the mistakes to avoid:
  - Never swear in business correspondence.
  - Never call people names in business agreement.
  - Never make off-colour remarks in business correspondence.

- **Avoid spelling errors:** Believe it or not, spelling errors can spell doom for business relations. Clients and business associates notice when your letters aren’t proofread.

  Many spelling errors are easily rectified by running your document through your computer’s spell-check program. A trained eye is still better than a spell-check program.

- **Remove grammatical errors:** Grammar is a required skill for composing effective business letters, e-mails, and memoranda. Repeatedly making grammatical errors instantly brands you as being poorly educated and careless. Bad grammar leaves a bad picture. Here are some of the most common grammatical errors:

  - **Subject/verb agreement:** If the subject of the sentence is singular, so is the verb; if the subject is plural, so is the verb. This rule enforces even if other words intervene between the subject and the verb.

  - **Sentence fragments:** A sentence is a complete thought that must have a subject and a predicate phrase, including a verb. Sentences that lack subjects or predicates are sentence fragments.

  - **Run-on sentences:** Run-on sentences include too much for a single sentence. Breaking one long sentence into various shorter sentences is a quick and easy fix.

  - **Dangling modifiers:** Modifiers are sentence clauses that modify or affect the subject of the sentence. Modifiers dangle when what they modify is unreadable, as in this sentence:
“After being accidentally dropped, John had to replace the microwave.”

- **Punctuation errors**: Punctuation errors are among the most common writing errors. They make your correspondence look unprofessional.

- **Excess verbiage**: Bad writers use more words than are needed. Good writers don’t; they know what words will express their message efficiently. You improve your writing immediately by eliminating unnecessary verbiage.

### Fill in the blanks

1. …………………… is vital to inspire people, motivate them to change, getting them to consider new opportunities or new ideas.

2. Effective persuasion becomes …………………… & a …………………… procedure through which a persuader leads colleagues to a problem’s shared solution.

3. Persuasive letters or memorandums usually have four parts, often cited to as the ……………………

4. Gaining the …………………… of the reader is a deeper procedure than catching their attention.

5. …………………… is a required skill in writing for composing effective business letters, e-mails, and memoranda.

### Analyse two advertisements which have made use of the AIDA principle, which have led you from attention to action level.

### Persuasion is largely dependent upon the attractiveness of the speakers and reaction of the listeners. Persuasion is solely related with communication, learning, awareness and thought.

### WRITING PERSUASIVE MESSAGES

Successful businesses rely on persuasive messages in both internal and external communication. Whether you’re convincing your boss to open a new office in Europe or encouraging potential customers to try your products, you’ll use many of the same techniques of persuasion—the attempt to change an audience’s attitudes, beliefs, or actions. Persuasive techniques are a cornerstone of marketing and selling, but even if you never work in those fields, you’ll still need good
persuasion skills to advance in your career. Successful professionals understand that persuasion is not about trickery or getting people to make choices that aren't in their best interest; rather, it lets your audience know they have a choice and helps them choose to agree with you.

There are some circumstances when you need to write letters or other messages to convince someone to do something, whether it is to buy a product or to give you a refund for a defective product. There are a number of ways to make your persuasive messages more effective.

5.3.1 ELEMENTS IN A PERSUASIVE MESSAGE

There are several things that you need to consider if you are planning an effective persuasive message. Among these are who your audience is, what appeals are best, how emotion and logic are balanced, what is involved with your credibility as a writer or speaker, and what channel you use.

**Audience Analysis**

As you are writing a persuasive letter, you need to consider the person or people who will be reading it, that is, the audience. What do they already know about the situation? Does the situation need to be explained, or are they already familiar with it? What is their attitude? Do they already agree with you, or do they need to be persuaded? If they do need to be persuaded, what kinds of arguments will be most effective?

If the person is already familiar with the situation, you should not explain it in great detail. You should explain the situation in a sentence or two, but not give more detail than necessary. If you give too much detail, your main point can be lost. The reader may be annoyed by having to read information that he/she already knows. On the other hand, if the readers are not familiar with the situation, you need to give enough detail so that they can understand it.

Similarly, if you think that the readers are likely to agree with you easily, you should not spend too much effort to persuade them, but if they are likely to be resistant, you should make a greater effort to convince them. Also, you should consider which appeal would be most likely to work with the readers. If you are trying to sell the readers something, you should think about what is important to them and use an appeal that is most likely to convince them.

**Appeals**

When you try to convince someone to do something, you use an appeal. There are many different types of appeals. The following is a partial list of appeals:

- Ambition
- Approval of others
When you use an appeal, you try to show readers how doing what you are suggesting will help them achieve something they want or avoid something they do not want. In a sense, appeals can be seen as rewards for doing something.

*Example:* If you use an appeal to fear, you show them how doing what you want will help them avoid something they fear, and the reward is being free from fear. If you are trying to convince someone to buy a security system, “Murders are up 10% in the past year in our city” is an appeal to fear, the fear of being murdered. If you use health as an appeal, you show them how doing what you want will help them be healthier. “These vitamins can help you feel healthier” is an appeal to health, and the reward is better health. You need to choose the appeals that you use carefully, based on what you know about your audience. What does your audience want? What do they want to avoid? What do they fear? This will help you choose appeals that are most convincing to your audience.

**Balancing Emotion and Logic**

Some appeals that you might use for persuasion involve emotion, and others involve logic.

*Example:* An appeal to guilt would be an appeal to emotion, but an appeal to economy would be an appeal to logic. Whether you choose emotional or logical appeals depends on what you think would be most convincing to your audience. However, in most cases it is best to
use both some of both, because most people make decisions based on a combination of reason and emotion.

**Credibility**

Whether the audience is persuaded by your message depends in part on how believable he/she finds you yourself as well as how persuasive the message is. As a writer or speaker, you will be more persuasive if you have credibility, that is, if you give your audience reasons to believe you as a person. There are a number of factors that influence how believable you as a writer or speaker are. They include:

- **Enthusiasm**: how excited you are about the topic
- **Sincerity/trustworthiness**: the appearance that you are not deceiving and would not deceive the audience
- **Expertise**: being knowledgeable about the topic
- **Good intentions**: showing that you are concerned about the best interests of the audience
- **Similarity**: beliefs, attitudes, and background like those of the audience

If you are writing a letter, how your letter looks is also going to affect how credible you will seem. It will hurt your credibility if there are spelling, typographical, or grammatical errors, or if you use paper that looks or feels cheap. These may seem to be minor, but they can affect the image that the reader has of you.

The more of these characteristics you seem to have, the more credible you will seem. And the more credible you seem, the more likely you will be persuasive.

### 5.3.2 GAINING ATTENTION IN THE OPENING

- Open with Agreeable Comment or Assertion
- Open with a Question
- Open with Direct Request for a Favour
- Open with Sincere Compliment

**Writing a Strong Opening to your Business Letter**

Your first job in writing any letter is to gain your reader’s attention. It’s an important principle of effective writing to put the most important information first. Your commencing paragraph is both the headline and the lead for the message that follows in the rest of the letter.

Don't weigh down the front of your letter with boring repetition of information that your reader already knows. Many letters fail to start well because they follow the standard paragraph of every business letter.
NOTES

Example: Openings in business letters:

- Thank you for your letter of 8th March 1998, which has been passed to me for my attention.
- I refer to previous correspondence in respect of the above and note that to date we have not received your cheque for the outstanding arrears.
- I write with reference to our telephone conversation yesterday regarding the above matter.

Beginning with a reference to the incoming letter is weak and wastes your reader’s time. Most readers skip it, looking to the second and third paragraphs to get the answer to their questions. If you step right into your subject in the first paragraph, you’ll show your reader you do not intend to waste valuable time. So get rid of any opening reference to the reader’s letter and answer the most important question or give the most applicable information in your first sentence.

Make your first paragraph do something other than just referring to known information, so plunge straight into your message and don’t waste your reader’s time.

For instance, you could:

- answer a question
- ask a question
- explain an action taken
- express pleasure or regret
- give information

As the opening paragraph sets the tone for your letter, try to avoid using tired phrases that are wordy, give little data and create a formal and impersonal tone. Employing the classic business-speak opening of further to almost guarantees the rest of the letter will be a distinctive, long-winded, standard piece of business writing. These opening phrases are so popular because we don’t have to think of what to write.

Watch out for standard phrases in opening paragraphs.

Example:

- Further to my recent
- I am writing
- I refer to my letter dated
- I refer to previous correspondence
- I write in reference to
- In respect of the above
- Recent correspondence
Regarding

With reference to

With regards to

So be certain your opening paragraph sets the right tone for your letter. Be direct and use your words positively so your reader has a good impression from the beginning of your letter. Determine what the most significant information is, and put it in your first paragraph. Don’t be afraid to start your letter strongly.

5.3.3 THREE-STEP WRITING PROCESS FOR PERSUASIVE MESSAGES

Persuasion is an attempt to change someone’s attitudes, beliefs, or actions. A persuasive message takes the form of an argument which the writer hopes the audience will agree with and in some instances act upon. The process of writing such an argument occurs in three steps.

Plan Your Message

The first step is to plan the message, which is often more difficult than planning a routine positive message because the audience is more likely to be resistant. The important considerations in planning persuasive messages are analysing the situation and the audience, gathering information, selecting the right medium, and organizing your information.

- **Analysing Your Situation:** A clear purpose is important in all persuasive messages because you are asking the audience to do something. In addition to having a clear purpose, the most effective persuasive messages appeal to existing needs. Several factors come into play in assessing an audience’s needs. **Demographics** include factors such as age, gender, occupation, income, education and other measurable entities. **Psychographics** includes less quantifiable characteristics such as personality, attitudes, lifestyle, and other psychological factors. Another important consideration is cultural differences; some persuasive approaches might have undesirable effects on members of various cultural groups.

To change someone’s attitudes, beliefs, or actions, it is vital to understanding your audience’s motivation—the combination of forces that drive people to satisfy their needs. Some psychological theories suggest a process in which people take action to fulfil perceived needs: awareness of a need, an action that the person believes will satisfy the need, an evaluation of the outcome (or reward) to determine whether the effort was worthwhile.

- **Gathering Information:** Gathering the information that you believe necessary to create a compelling message.
Selecting the Right Medium: Selecting the right medium for your message is very important in the planning process.

Organizing Your Information: Organizing your information is also a matter of choosing among many options. Most persuasive messages use an indirect approach; but there are situations where the direct approach will work, for example, when you have a good working relationship with the audience.

Write Your Message

The second step after planning is to write the persuasive message. Using the “you” attitude and a positive tone is especially important when writing persuasive messages. Be certain to accommodate cultural differences. Organizational cultures and subcultures also affect the way a message is received. Each organization has its own cultural traditions, and appealing to them will give you an advantage, while rejecting them might undermine your credibility.

Indeed, establishing credibility is especially important in persuading a sceptical audience. You can gain the audience’s trust and acceptance by:

- Using simple language
- Supporting your message with facts
- Identifying your sources
- Establishing common interests, beliefs, attitudes, and background
- Being objective and considering all sides of the issue
- Displaying your good intentions
- Avoiding the “hard sell”

Complete Your Message

The final step is to complete the message. It’s a good idea to have many different people review your persuasive message before sending it. You evaluate the content, judge your argument objectively and don’t overestimate your credibility. Consider the design elements; proofread the message carefully. The final step is to choose a delivery method that fits your audience’s expectations as well as your purpose.

State whether the following statements are true/false:

6. Successful businesses rely on persuasive messages in both internal and external communication.

7. As you are writing a persuasive letter, you need to consider the person or people who will be reading it, that is, the audience.

Contd...
8. Some appeals that you might use for persuasion involve emotion, and others involve logic.

9. Your first job in writing any letter is to gain your reader’s attention.

**ACTIVITY**

Write an email to your principal, wherein you follow the rules of writing a persuasive message, and persuade him/her politely to grant you leave for a week.

### 5.4 SALES LETTERS/MESSAGES

From one point of view, every letter you write will be selling something. For example, requests sell your responsibility and credibility. Even letters conveying information may be said to “sell” a business relationship based on trust and fair play. When you are deliberately using a letter to sell a product or a service, or when the sole purpose of the letter is to promote future business, your message requires a special strategy.

In addition to analysing your audience, you must know your product or service thoroughly before you can write an effective sales letter. What will your product or service do for your reader? How will it satisfy your reader’s need for **health, wealth, pleasure, or curiosity**?

Sales letters fall into three general, overlapping categories: unsolicited, solicited, and soft-sell. Unsolicited sales letters are also known as direct-mail advertising; they are a form of advertising sent by mail directly to the prospective buyer. Because such advertising is not requested and often not desired, the paper-based version is often called “junk mail”, while the electronic form is called “spam.” Solicited sales letters are replies to inquiries about products or services. Soft-sell letters, also called **cordial contact** letters, are special goodwill letters designed to maintain cordial relations with important customers. Cordial contact is increasingly maintained by email messages sent on a regular basis.

#### 5.4.1 UNSOLICITED SALES LETTERS

Direct-mail advertising is big business. The average person receives more than 500 pieces of direct-mail a year. In spite of the fact that most of it goes directly into the trash, in the United States alone, consumers spend about $250 billion in response to unsolicited sales letters and catalogue offerings. Each dollar spent on direct-mail advertising returns about $10 in sales, which is almost twice the effectiveness of a television commercial. Because current data collection and processing enable direct sales companies to develop extremely accurate **psychographics** on consumers, direct-mail advertising has become increasingly effective in recent years.
Organizations using direct-mail advertising purchase or otherwise obtain mailing lists designed to target those who match a particular psychograph. If you own a home, buy a car, subscribe to a magazine, or use a credit card, you are on somebody’s list. As the cost of paper and postage has increased, buying and selling of mailing lists based on ethnic background, occupation, and a variety of personal and professional interests have become big business in their own right. Your name and psychograph could be worth as much as 20 cents each time they are sold.

Because many who receive unsolicited sales letters consider them junk mail, your first objective must be to convince the reader that opening the envelope and reading the letter would be worthwhile. Consider using an envelope teaser—a few words on the envelope to suggest a reader benefit—to encourage the reader to continue. Other “envelope tricks” include the following:

- **Urgent Labels**: Envelopes marked Urgent, Express, Hand Deliver, Official, or Date Material will help catch attention.
- **Real Stamps**: Envelopes with real stamps on them catch more attention than those that have been run through a postage meter.
- **Return Address**: A personal return address of a political figure or a well-known celebrity will increase the attention an envelope receives. Paradoxically, the absence of a return address also increases curiosity.
- **Official Envelopes**: Envelopes that look as though they have been sent by a governmental agency receive increased attention. These envelopes are often brown and use a typeface similar to that used by governmental agencies.

Remember that your main concern is with those people in your audience who are truly prospects, people who both want your product or service and can afford to buy it. Write your letter or email message to persuade those with a real interest in your product or service rather than writing it to entertain everyone who may receive it.

If you are in the business of direct mail advertising, you will doubtless need to purchase lists from time to time. The best mailing list you can possibly have, however, consists of the names of those who have already purchased your product and liked it. However many “tricks of the trade” you use to catch attention and to persuade people who respond, you will do better in the long-run if your product or service fulfills the explicit and implied promises of your letter.

Successful sales letters display the following characteristics:

- They emphasize benefits rather than the features of the product or service. The word free, in spite of being extremely overworked, is still a powerful motivator. Buy one and get one free typically works better than either half-price sale or 50 per cent off.
They use active voice and personalize the letter by making the reader the subject or object of many sentences. They use word pictures to create a mental image of the reader enjoying the use of the product or service. When the mailing list is good and fairly exclusive, they address each letter individually. When the list is large and less exclusive, they use a simulated inside address to pace the reader while avoiding trolling salutations, such as “Dear Friend” or “Dear Homeowner.”

The best simulated inside addresses are questions that cannot be answered yes or no. Questions that can be answered yes or no are next in effectiveness, and statements about a reader benefit are a third choice. They focus on one main appeal.

They subordinate the price, unless it is an obvious bargain, by mentioning it after most of the benefits have been listed and described. They state the price in terms of small units ($5 a box rather than $50 a carton), compare the price with the cost of something else with which the reader is more familiar, or, when the price is high, offer the option of extended payments.

They use enclosed brochures to illustrate the product or service and to supplement the details presented in the letter.

They are specific in their request for action, specifying exactly what the reader should do (complete the order blank, send a check, call a toll-free number, or visit a dealer), making the action easy by providing order blanks and return envelopes, and encouraging the reader to act promptly.

They use a variety of formatting techniques to create visual interest in the letter. Such techniques include varying paragraph widths, adding “personal” notes with fake handwriting, using different colours for different paragraphs or key phrases, including photographs or other illustrations, and adding a postscript to restate an important benefit and suggest urgency.

5.4.2 SOLICITED SALES LETTERS

It is often easier to write a solicited sales letter than an unsolicited sales letter because the reader has invited you to send information and is expecting your letter. Consequently, you do not have to worry that your letter will be ignored completely.

Whenever someone has written requesting information about your products or services (or called requesting information or completed and returned a product-inquiry card), you have a good opportunity to encourage that person to buy from you. Your message should display all the characteristics of an unsolicited sales letter, but it should be prepared individually rather than as a form. Use the following structure:

**Pace:** Your reader is already interested in your product or service, so begin by answering one of his or her main questions. Find the
most important question in your reader’s letter of inquiry that you can answer in a positive way. If you have been asked to make a recommendation, do it first.

- **Lead**: Answer all your reader’s questions as clearly and as specifically as you can. Subordinate negative answers. Adapt your letter to meet the needs expressed in the reader’s inquiry.

- **Blend Outcomes**: Supply the details and evidence that seem most appropriate for your individual reader. Use an enclosed brochure for additional information to keep the letter from becoming too cluttered.

- **Motivate**: Just as in an unsolicited sales letter, you need to tell the reader exactly what to do, make the required action seem easy (“visit your local dealer”), and encourage the reader to act quickly. However, never use a postscript in a solicited sales letter because doing so would indicate a lack of planning.

### 5.4.3 SOFT-SELL LETTERS

Soft-sell or cordial-contact letters are special goodwill letters intended to remind the reader that your organization provides a particular product or service. Because of the cost involved, paper-based soft-sell letters are used primarily at the industrial level to keep a company’s name familiar to important clients and customers. Some organizations use newsletters as soft-sell correspondence with a specific audience. Also, in the past few years, organizations have been using regular telephone contact, email lists, and web sites to perform similar functions. Cordial contact by email offers many of the same advantages as soft-sell letters but at much lower cost.

To be successful, soft-sell letters must be welcomed and appreciated by the reader, that is they must provide something of intrinsic value to the reader, who must look forward to receiving them month after month. The bulk of the letter needs to provide useful information or material of entertainment value and work the name of the writer’s organization, product, or service in naturally.

### 5.4.4 LETTERS THAT SELL IDEAS

Nearly everything said so far about selling products and services applies equally well to selling ideas. When you need to persuade higher management to allocate more resources for your department or adopt a new procedure or persuade your staff to conserve supplies, follow the same basic procedure you would use to sell a product or service: analyse your audience and select appeals based on their needs.

Selling ideas by letter, memo, or email requires the same kind of structural planning as that used for selling a product or service. To sell an idea, however, you need to take a few additional precautions:

- **Pace**: You need to begin not only with a problem of interest to your reader, but also with a premise your reader readily accepts.
If the reader disagrees with your opening, he or she will be all the more inclined to resist the rest of your message.

- **Lead:** How quickly you can develop your argument depends on your reader’s likely degree of resistance. People usually have a vested interest in maintaining their current beliefs, and before they will adopt new ideas, they must be fully convinced that it is in their self-interest to do so. Corporations, for example, are notorious for accepting reports that agree with current policy and rejecting those that disagree.

- **Blend Outcomes:** Rely on truth and logic. When there are two sides to an issue, present both sides. You can emphasize your own side of the argument, but your reader will resent your message if you fail to mention other obvious possibilities. Always give your reader all the facts that might influence his or her decision. Long-range results are usually more important than short-range success.

- **Motivate:** Let your reader know exactly what you expect. When your reader’s resistance is high, it is better to persuade by degrees (many messages over time) than to make your message an all-or-nothing proposition. Remind the reader of the benefits to be gained (or lost) by adopting (or not adopting) your idea.

### 5.4.5 COLLECTION LETTERS

Because doing business by credit always involves a certain degree of risk, it is sometimes necessary to persuade people who owe money to pay. In recent years, collection has become an increasingly specialized business, primarily as a result of credit card purchases, which transfers many of the concerns of collection away from retailers to organizations that specialize in credit transactions.

Consultants and those who own small retail establishments are the most likely to have sold goods or services on unsecured credit, but everyone in business should have a basic understanding of collection procedures: A sale is not complete until the seller has been paid.

The materials presented here are designed to provide an overview of the process so that if you are faced with a collection problem, you will be able to decide what actions to take for yourself before turning the problem over to a collection specialist. Note that how far you go in the process depends on the amount owed and the nature of your business. You need to know how much time, energy, and money you can afford to put into collecting the amount owed.

The collection procedure is one of gradual escalation in forcefulness. When a bill becomes overdue, the writer should first assume that the reader intends to pay but has forgotten. If the reader does not respond to a reminder (or reminders) to pay, the writer should assume that the reader is not paying because of financial, personal, or medical problems. At this point, the writer can help the reader solve his or her problems by making new financial arrangements that will ease
the reader’s burden. Most people who are slow to pay do so after a reminder or two. Only after these efforts have been made should the writer assume that the reader will have to be persuaded to pay.

5.4.6 REMINDERS
Reminders of overdue bills usually consist of:

- A duplicate copy of the original bill.
- Duplicate copies of the original bill stamped Reminder or Past Due, often specifying how much past due the bill is.
- A short note (usually a form) specifying the amount due, the due date, late charges, and the account number.

A company usually sends one or more reminders to a customer because most people who are going to pay will do so when they are reminded gently. Sometimes companies choose to combine a final reminder with an inquiry about the reasons for not paying. Reminders of overdue bills are negative messages.

5.4.7 INQUIRIES
Before the writer decides that the customer needs to be persuaded to pay, the writer should try to discover whether special circumstances are preventing payment. Many people are embarrassed when they cannot pay their bills, and instead of taking positive action to solve their financial problems, they hope that if they ignore their problems long enough, they will solve themselves. When the writer demonstrates a genuine willingness to help such readers solve their financial difficulties, most will respond by agreeing to new terms that will allow the company to collect its money and the customer to remain solvent. Inquiries are written with the assumption that it is better to collect your money a little late than not collect it at all.

Inquiries are divided into two categories. A second inquiry may contain an appeal for a prompt partial payment and some suggestion for taking care of the obligation in ways other than those specified in the original agreement. Keep inquiries positive, and avoid suggesting that reader dissatisfaction with your goods or services might be responsible for late payment.

5.4.8 APPEALS
When the reader has failed to respond to one or more reminders and one or more inquiries, the writer must assume that the reader will not pay unless he or she is persuaded—perhaps even forced legally—to do so. Because you would not be writing an appeal unless you had gone through the reminder and inquiry stages, you should assume that the reader is going to be well-prepared to resist your message. For this reason, many organizations turn the debt over to a collection professional.
Should you choose to continue the collection process yourself, you might begin with one positive appeal, such as an appeal to cooperation, fair play, or pride. Because the reader has failed to respond to your earlier messages, however, the chances are that unless you can give him or her very good reason for paying, he or she will continue to ignore your efforts to collect. For this reason, negative appeals to the reader’s self-interest are usually appropriate at this stage. The reader should be told that by not paying, he or she is likely to lose the following:

- Credit privileges.
- The goods or services not paid for.
- Additional money or property.
- Good reputation and self-respect.

If your reader fails to respond to your appeal (or appeals, if you choose to send more than one), give him or her one last opportunity to pay along with notification of the action you will take if payment does not arrive. This final letter is known as the **ultimatum**. Your assumption in writing is that the reader will have to be forced to pay.

In this last effort to collect, you should review the facts (what the reader purchased and when and your efforts to collect over time), set an end date, and tell the reader that on that date you will turn the debt over to a collection agency or to a lawyer. Avoid threatening the reader (which is illegal), and avoid accusing the reader of personal shortcomings or engaging in name-calling (*deadbeat, crook, loser*, etc.).

Even at this point, you may be able to retain your reader’s goodwill and cash business, so remain fair, reasonable, and logical throughout. And then be sure to follow through—if the reader still doesn’t pay, hire a collection professional or turn the matter over to your attorney.

### Self Assessment Questions

State whether the following statements are true/false:

10. Sales letters fall into three general, overlapping categories: random, solicited, and hard-sell.
11. Envelope teaser encourages a reader to continue.
12. A sales letter should be written to entertain everyone who may receive it.
13. Selling ideas is nothing like selling products or services.
14. Reminders of overdue bills are negative messages.

### Activity

Prepare an envelope teaser of a new summer clothing line that is introduced, focusing on the envelope tricks.
5.5 SUMMARY

- The objective of business writing is to convey information to someone else or to request information from them.
- To be effective writing for business, you must be complete, concise, and accurate. Your text should be written in such a way that the reader will be able to easily understand what you are telling or asking them.
- A lot of writing for business is sloppy, poorly written, disorganized, littered with jargon, and incomplete.
- In this chapter, we have learnt about persuasive business messages and writings, how to grab attention in the openings and about clarity and affirmation in the business communication.
- Persuasion is the process of changing or reinforcing attitudes, beliefs or behaviour of a person. People respond to persuasive messages in two ways: thoughtfully and mindlessly.
- Successful businesses rely on persuasive messages in both internal and external communication. Whether you’re convincing your boss to open a new office in Europe or encouraging potential customers to try your products, you’ll use many of the same techniques of persuasion—the attempt to change an audience’s attitudes, beliefs, or actions.
- From one point of view, every letter you write will be selling something. For example, requests sell your responsibility and credibility. Even letters conveying information may be said to “sell” a business relationship based on trust and fair play.
- When you are deliberately using a letter to sell a product or a service, or when the sole purpose of the letter is to promote future business, your message requires a special strategy.

5.6 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. What is persuasion? How can one be effectively persuaded?
2. What is the strategy of persuasive messages?
3. In reference to AIDA formula, explain how would you motivate your reader to act?

KEY WORDS

- **Persuasion**: The act of moulding the mind by arguments or reasons offered, or by anything that moves the mind or passions, or tends the will to a decision.
- **Request**: Request is the response to an explicit desire.
- **Desire**: To long for or to wish for something.
- **Feedback**: A response generated after evaluation of output, performance etc.
4. How important is it to make clear and positive request? Explain how would you do it?

5. Describe the three-step process for writing persuasive messages.

6. What are sales letters? What are their types?

**5.7 ANSWERS AND HINTS**

**ANSWERS FOR SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

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<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Q. No.</th>
<th>Answers</th>
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<td>Persuasion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>learning, negotiating</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>AIDA (Attention Interest Desire Action)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4.</td>
<td>interest</td>
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<td></td>
<td>11.</td>
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<td>12.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>14.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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**HINTS FOR DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS**

1. Refer 5.2 & 5.2.1

According to Perloff, persuasion can be defined as “a symbolic process in which communicators tries to convince other people to change their attitudes or behaviours regarding an issue through the transmission of a message in an atmosphere of free choice.” One must follow a 4 step practice to persuade a person effectively.

2. Refer 5.2.2

Effective communicators understand the real persuasion occurs through a complex combination of speaking, listening and tweaking a message over the course of repeated communications.

3. Refer 5.2.3 & 5.2.4

When you have generated the desire of purchase in the minds of your customers, then the last stage is to persuade the prospects.
to take quick action which can be done by building rapport and such ways.

4. Refer 5.2.6

Clear business writing demands good grammar, spelling, and vocabulary and remorseless self-editing to make clear and positive request.

5. Refer 5.3.3

The important considerations in planning persuasive messages are analysing the situation and the audience, gathering information, selecting the right medium, and organizing your information.

6. Refer 5.4

When you are deliberately using a letter to sell a product or a service, or when the sole purpose of the letter is to promote future business, your message requires a special strategy i.e., a good sales letter which are of various types according to various situations.

5.8 SUGGESTED READING FOR REFERENCE

SUGGESTED READINGS

- Raman, Meenakshi and Singh, Prakash (2008), Business Communication, Oxford University Press, 7th Impression, p. 22.

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CHAPTER 6

PUBLIC SPEAKING

CONTENTS

6.1 Introduction

6.2 Meaning of Public Speaking

6.2.1 Characteristics of Good Public Speaking or Good Speech

6.2.2 Techniques of Good Public Speaking

6.2.3 Importance of Public Speaking

6.2.4 Need of Public Speaking

6.2.5 Modes of Delivery in Public Speaking

6.2.6 Checklist for Effective Public Speaking

6.3 Making a Formal Speech

6.4 Summary

6.5 Descriptive Questions

6.6 Answers and Hints

6.7 Suggested Reading for Reference
OVERCOMING PUBLIC SPEAKING ANXIETY & FEAR

James often felt sick with anxiety whenever he had to speak in public. It didn't matter whether it was a small business meeting or a large audience at a seminar.

He started to train with me. We worked on his body language – arms, hands and feet movements, making sure they no longer distracted from his message. He used more eye contact and became more connected with his audience. He ensured his presentation slides showed real, vivid images with few, if any, words. He engaged his audiences’ attention by telling real stories and using examples and statistics that make his core message both relevant and memorable. And he rehearsed out loud – a lot.

James started to enjoy speaking in public and found he was getting great feedback from both clients and colleagues. He then did something unusual – he quantified the difference the training had made. His work diary showed he had gone from 25% follow-ups before training with me, to 85% after.

James told me over a coffee recently that he now actively seeks opportunities to speak – and this year he has brought in more business for his company than ever before. It is his best year yet in business.

Best of all, not only is he now thoroughly enjoying public speaking, he’s attracting more business. He knows he’s not wasting his time – or his breath!

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- Understand about public speaking
- Analyse the importance of effective public speaking
- Prepare a formal speech

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In business organizations, presentations and public speaking by the executives and other personals are steady features. No matter what the field of responsibility is or what type of organization is for which you are working, you have to give a presentation or speech sooner or later. You may be asked to talk to colleagues, clients, suppliers for the general public. You may be asked to speak for fifteen minutes or one hour. Therefore, public speaking and presentation skills are very much essential for professional excellence. Technical skills account for twenty five per cent of professional excellence and rest depends upon soft skills that include public speaking and presentation skills. Speaking effectively and making an effective presentation is a skill that can be learnt, studied and brushed up. In this chapter, guidelines are discussed in learning the techniques/skills of making presentations and public speaking.

6.2 MEANING OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

Public speaking is a talk given to a large gathering. It is given on various occasions. Its aim is usually to encourage, appreciate, congratulate or entertain; it is usually followed by applause from the audience.

Persons in responsible positions must be good speakers as there are many occasions when they are called for addressing audience. Being able to speak well is an asset in any profession. Speaking skill can be cultivated and developed with approximate knowledge of the formal aspects of public speaking, and with practice.

The most significant requirement for public speaking is its preparation. Even persons who have natural skill in speaking need preparation to convey a good speech.

6.2.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD PUBLIC SPEAKING OR GOOD SPEECH

Some of the characteristics of good public speaking or good speech are mentioned below:

- **Clarity:** Clarity is the first main feature of a good speech. Your speech should be successful in conveying to the audience the ideas, emotions, facts or arguments, you want to express.
IN the manner of an informal talk: A good speech is closer to a personal and informal chat between two close friends. When delivering speech, there should be an impeccable rapport between you and the audience.

Speech should be vivid and concrete: The speech should be vivid including in it concrete facts easy to perceive and visualize.

Makes the speech brief: The concentration of an average audience does not last more than twenty or 25 minutes. Hence, an ideal speech should not exceed that time, unless the audience is motivated by certain interesting facts during the speech.

Speech should be interesting: Quotations, anecdotes and humorous touches often make a speech very interesting. The quotations should be familiar and accepted by experts. Anecdotes should be novel, brief and in good taste. Humour should be typical, spontaneous and gentle.

Audience-oriented: A good speech is always audience-oriented. For delivering audience oriented speech, one should study:

- Whether the audience is general public or specialized?
- How large is the audience?
- What is the age group of listeners?
- What are their social, religious, political and economic views as well as prejudices of the listeners?
- What would be the response of the expected audience?

Preparation work has to be done in four stages, viz:

- Finding out the environment in which the talk is to be delivered.
- Preparing the text and the required visuals.
- Taking care of speaker’s physical appearance and personality.
- Practicing delivery of the talk.

6.2.2 TECHNIQUES OF GOOD PUBLIC SPEAKING

Speeches are hard for most of us. The techniques can be adopted to improve the public speaking.

Selection of the topic for speech: Your first step in formal speechmaking is to decide the topic of your presentation. In some cases, you will be allotted a topic, normally one within your area of specialization. In fact, when you are asked to make a speech on a specified topic, it is probably to be because of your knowledge of the topic. In some cases, your choice of topic will be influenced by the purpose of your assignment, as when you are asked to welcome a group or bring in a speaker. In your search for a suitable topic, you should be guided by three basic factors. The first is your background and knowledge. The second basic
factor is the interests of your audience. The third basic factor is the occasion of the speech. Your selection should be justified by all three factors.

- **Preparation of the speech:** After you have decided what to talk about, you collect the information you need for your speech. This step may require searching through your mind for experiences or ideas, final research in a library or in company files, collecting information online, or consulting people in your own company or other companies. In short, you do whatsoever is required to get the information you need. When you have that information, you are ready to begin organizing your speech. Although variations are sometimes appropriate, you should commonly follow the time-honoured order of a speech: introduction, body and conclusion.

- **Guidelines for the introduction of the speech:** The introduction of a speech has much the same goal as the introduction of a written report, to gear up the listeners (or readers) to pick up the message. But it usually has the additional goal of arousing interest. Unless you can arouse interest at the beginning, your presentation is probable to fail. The techniques of arousing interest are limited only by the imagination. One possibility is a human-interest story, for storytelling has strong appeal. Humour, another possibility, is probably the most widely used technique. Other good ways for gaining attention at the opening are by using quotations and questions. In addition to arousing interest, your opening should lead into the theme of your speech.

- **Guidelines for organizing the body of the speech:** Organizing the body of your speech is much like organizing the body of a report. You take all and divide it into comparable parts. Then you take those parts and divide them. You continue to divide as far as it is practical to do so. In speeches, nevertheless, you are more likely to use factors rather than time, place, or quantity as the basis of division as in most speeches; your presentation is likely to build around issues and questions that are subtopics of the subject. Even so, time, place, and quantity subdivisions are possibilities. You need to stress the transitions between the divisions because, unlike the reader who can see them, the listeners may miss them if they are not emphasized adequately. Without clear transitions, you may be talking about one point and your listener may be relating those ideas to your former point.

- **Conclusion remarks of the speech:** Like most reports, the speech normally ends by drawing a conclusion. Here you bring all that you have presented to a head and accomplish whatever goal the speech has. You should consider together with these three elements in your close:
  - a restatement of the subject,
  - a summary of the key points developed in the presentation,
a statement of the conclusion. Adding the speech to a climatic close—that is, making the conclusion the high point of the speech—is usually effective. Present the concluding message in strong language—in words that gain attention and will be remembered. In addition to concluding with a summary, you can give a suitable quote, use humour, and call for action.

6.2.3 IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

In an organization, there is always a dearth of effective speakers who can positively speak about business. Lack of this ability makes public to see business in a negative light. Poor presentation of business managers to the outsiders can be a cause of business failure. Therefore, it is through external communications that business presents its message to the public. There is a need in business for persons who can effectively present organizational point of view to the outsiders.

Public speaking is significant in many different ways, as it encompasses so many aspects of our lives, we will consider public speaking from the stance of the individual, the organization, and society in which, we live.

Individual

When you apply for a job, the employer evaluates you on the basis of certain characteristics. Your capability to communicate is one such characteristic, and it comes across clearly in an interview. Your ability to communicate not only influences whether you are employed but it determines your progress in the job. Employers realize that it is the ability to communicate that often separates an exceptional employee from the ordinary ones. Being able to organize your thoughts and give a public speech is another substantial determinant of your personal and professional success. When you speak and others listen and respond to your comments, it affects the way you see yourself and how others see you. Being able to give an efficacious public speech enhances your self-esteem; you feel good about yourself.

Organization

It has been said that an organization is only as good as the individuals who constitute make it. It could also be said that an organization communicates only as effectively as do its individual members. Business has been blamed for many of the problems faced in the society. The energy crisis, product liability, and the use of nuclear energy represent other significant problem areas. Much anti-business sentiment is due to lack of public knowledge of the business position on such matters. There is a need in business for people who can effectively present the organizational viewpoint to the public. The average business organization does a poor job of acquainting the public with its contributions to society. From a communication viewpoint, it does not matter how clean the motives of the organization
are. What matters are, what the public knows about such things and how the public responds to this knowledge of a company’s activities. Unless the public is made aware of what the business is doing and why, the purposes on the part of business will be of no use. Only through effective external communications can business present the information that is most likely to result in a desirable image. One of the most crucial and effective formats in which to present that information is public speech.

Society

We live in a society in which the free expression of ideas is not merely tolerated, but encouraged. Issues are analysed and viewpoints are presented in many different formats. Newspaper editorials, town hall meetings, and discussions (or arguments) are a few settings in which opinions are aired on those subjects about which the participants feel strongly. Our society flourishes on this free expression of ideas, for it is by such interchange that a balanced view is maintained. When a certain point of view ceases to be expressed, however, perhaps for the lack of someone willing and able to speak out, that viewpoint no longer influences society. It is often through public speaking that ideas are presented for public evaluation. This was as true in the prelude to the Declaration of Independence as it is today in election campaigns at all levels. It is as evident at an annual meeting of stockholders’ as at a monthly union local meeting. For lack of an effective speaker, a good idea may fail to get consideration. A lack of articulate opponents may allow the passage of legislation of little merit. Free society requires willing and articulate people of different viewpoints.

6.2.4 NEED OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

Whether we are presenting in front of an audience or talking in a team meeting, we all have to speak in public from time to time. Every day, you are on the receiving end of public speaking. For the utmost part, you might not even be aware that someone is “doing” public speaking. The best presenters and speakers speak in a usual way that invites you to make some modifications in your life, no matter how small. Thus, there are three vital purposes of public speaking which are explained below:

Informative Speaking

Informative speaking is regarded as one of the most common types of public speaking. The main purpose of informative presentations is to share one’s knowledge of a subject with an audience. Reasons for making an informative speech differ broadly. Let’s say, you might be asked to teach a group of co-workers on how to use new computer software or to report to a group of managers how your latest project is coming along. It is incorporated into various different works. Teachers find themselves presenting to parents as well as to their students. Physicians often lecture about their areas of expertise to
medical students, other physicians, and patients. Firefighters give demos about how to efficiently control a fire in the house. Informative speaking is thus a common part of several jobs and other everyday activities. Therefore, learning how to speak efficiently has become an important skill in today’s scenario.

**Persuasive Speaking**

Another reason for speaking to an audience is to persuade others. In our everyday lives, we are often called on to motivate, convince, or otherwise persuade others to take an action, change their beliefs, or reconsider a decision. Persuading customers to purchase your firm's products, advocating for music education in your local school district, or inspiring high school students to attend college all involve affecting other people through public speaking. Whether public speaking is something you do every day or just a few times a year, convincing others is a challenging job. If you develop the skill to convince successfully, it can be professionally as well as personally rewarding.

**Entertaining Speaking**

Entertaining speaking includes an array of speaking occasions ranging from introductions to presenting and accepting awards, wedding toasts, to delivering eulogies at funerals and memorial services in addition to motivational speeches and after-dinner speeches. It has been significant since the time of the ancient Greeks, when Aristotle recognized epideictic speaking (speaking in a ceremonial perspective) as an essential form of address. As with informative and persuasive speaking, there are professionals, from religious leaders to comedians, who make a living simply from delivering entertaining speeches. As anyone who has watched an awards show on television or has seen an incoherent best man deliver a wedding toast can attest, entertaining speaking is a task which involves effective practice and preparation.

**6.2.5 MODES OF DELIVERY IN PUBLIC SPEAKING**

There are four main modes of delivery used in public speaking:

1. Impromptu
2. Extemporaneous
3. Memorized
4. Manuscript

The impromptu speech is delivered with little opportunity to prepare. Its main virtue is that it is spontaneous; its main shortcoming is that it is usually not well planned. When you are urged “say a few words” without any advance warning, what leads is an impromptu speech.

Extemporaneous speaking is somewhat more formal than impromptu speaking. You have an opportunity to plan, and the resulting speech is better organized than an impromptu speech. You will normally rely
somewhat on notes, but you will not read to the listeners. Most public speeches are delivered extemporaneously.

A memorized speech allows for a well-planned expression of ideas. When presenting a speech from memory, how, speakers have tendency to lose a certain amount of naturalness and sometimes sound and look quite wooden. The possibility of forgetting the speech is another negative aspect of the memorized speech.

Manuscript speaking is relied on for more formal occasions. Speaking from a manuscript, you are able to be very precise, and you can carefully control the exact message the listeners receive. Naturally, it in general takes longer to develop a manuscript speech, and often the manuscript becomes a barrier between you and the listeners.

6.2.6 CHECKLIST FOR EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SPEAKING

The ability to speak effectively depends on some trades and qualities. It is also dependent upon communication situation. The following is a checklist of features that are often associated with effective speaking skills.

- Self-confidence
- Knowledge of the topic
- Understanding of the audience
- Proper articulation
- Pleasing voice quality
- Sincerity
- Emotional control
- Fluency
- Friendliness
- Reasoning
- Sympathy
- Open-mindedness
- Humility
- Responsiveness
- Awareness
- Humour
- Forcefulness
- Spontaneity
- Tactfulness
- Intelligence
State whether the following statements are true/false:
1. Persons in responsible positions must not be good speakers even though there are occasions when they are called for addressing audience.
2. A good speech is always audience-oriented.
3. Organizing the body of your speech is much like organizing the body of a report. You take all and divide it into comparable parts.
4. An organization communicates only as effectively as do its individual members.

Prepare a power point presentation on any topic and present it in front of the mirror.

Being able to speak well is an asset in any profession. Speaking skill can be cultivated and developed with approximate knowledge of the formal aspects of public speaking, and with practice.

Delivering a formal speech is generally a high-stakes proposition. Just remembering what you’re going to say involves a choice. Do you write out your remarks and read them word for word, use notes or memorize what you’d like to say?

One of the most prominent mistakes speakers make is reading from a page written for the eye instead of the ear. We’ve all heard these presentations. They almost incessantly lack enthusiasm in delivery and tend to be boring. That’s when the snoring begins.

A good script is extremely difficult to produce if you’re not a pro. Even someone who is a great writer may be deficient in the ability to write a compelling speech. Speech writing is an art that few people do well. I hate to say it, but many people who call themselves speech writers are not very good. As not only does the speech have to be written for the ear, but also for the speaker. A speech must reflect the personality and beliefs of the speaker and we all have different styles of communicating. Eventually, as in any presentation, a speech must address the needs of the audience.

Suppose you have a great speech writer, who has written a fantastic speech that is on-target with your intended audience. How do you log a great performance?
Reading: Type your speech in at least 18-point size, triple-spaced. This makes it easier to see from a distance of about two feet, which is typical of the distance from your eyes to the top of a podium.

Phrasing: For good phrasing end a typewritten line at the end of a phrase or sentence. Decide phrases by reading the speech aloud and noting where there is a comma or semi-colon, or where you logically pause. This gives you some time to scan down to the next line. A third process is to mark your script for emphasis and pausing. Underline, use bold and italic or slash marks. Use what works for you to signal yourself where to pause or place emphasis.

Practice: There is no substitute for saying your speech out loud many times. This is your opportunity to try novel things and perhaps most importantly, become familiar with the direction. This familiarity and comfort will allow you to look up often, making eye contact with your audience.

Timing: Part of practicing your speech out loud, whether with notes or a written draft, is to time yourself so that you know your speech takes its allotted time, and no more.

Podium: The podium puts a barrier between you and your audience so you'll have to work even harder at your nonverbal communication; particularly your eye contact, hands and (upper) body language. Don’t get caught grabbing onto the podium for dear life. Keep in mind that podiums and lecterns are designed to fit people who are up to 6 feet tall. If you must use one and you are shorter in stature, ask for a platform that will raise you up several inches. Many of the modern podiums come with one that can be pulled out.

Whatever your choice, take over opportunities whenever you can. Speaking is on-the-job training. Becoming a powerful speaker, holding the attention of a rapt audience, is within your grip.

Self Assessment Questions

Fill in the blanks:

5. Decide ....................... by reading the speech aloud and noting where there is a comma or semi-colon, or where you logically pause.

6. Part of practicing your speech out loud, whether with notes or a written draft, is to ...................... yourself so that you know your speech takes its allotted time, and no more.

7. Speaking is ...................... training.
NOTES

ACTIVITY

For one hour every day, stand in front of the mirror and read from the newspaper, assuming that you are addressing an audience.

6.4 SUMMARY

- In this chapter, we have studied about speaking in public, oral communication and telephone communication.
- Voice quality, style, word choice and adaptation are four basic elements of good oral communication.
- There is great need for learning oral communication skills because as a manager, one has to be engaged in various tasks like meetings, discussions, negotiations, seminars, presentations, interviews, peer conversation, telephonic conversation.
- Moreover, oral communication is important for scholars, professional, etc., and it is a marketing tool too.

KEY WORDS

- Public speaking: Speaking to a group of people in a structured, deliberate manner intended to inform, influence, or entertain the listeners.
- Persuasion: The act of influencing the mind by arguments or reasons offered, or by anything that moves the mind or passions, or inclines the will to a determination.
- Oral report: An oral report is a spoken report. A document containing information organized in a narrative, graphic, or tabular form.
- Telephone etiquette: Telephone etiquette refers to the way an individual should speak on the phone.

6.5 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. What is public speaking? List the points for effective public speaking.
2. What are the modes of delivery in public speaking?
3. What do you understand by formal speech? How do you log a great performance?
6.6 ANSWERS AND HINTS

ANSWERS FOR SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

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<th>Topic</th>
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HINTS FOR DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Refer 6.2 & 6.2.6
   Public speaking is a talk given to a large gathering and one must follow the following points for effective public speaking: Self-confidence, Knowledge of the topic, Understanding of the audience, Proper articulation, Pleasing voice quality, Sincerity, Emotional control, Fluency, Friendliness, Reasoning, Sympathy, Open-mindedness, Humility, Responsiveness, Awareness, Humour, Forcefulness, Spontaneity, Tactfulness, Intelligence.

2. Refer 6.2.5
   There are four main modes of delivery used in public speaking: Impromptu, Extemporaneous, Memorized, Manuscript.

3. Refer 6.3
   Delivering a formal speech is generally a high-stakes proposition and therefore one must incorporate the following to make a great speech: Reading, Phrasing, Practice, Timing, Podium.

6.7 SUGGESTED READING FOR REFERENCE

SUGGESTED READINGS

NOTES

E-REFERENCES

- http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/72358
CHAPTER 7

ORAL COMMUNICATION

CONTENTS

7.1 Introduction
7.2 Oral Communication
   7.2.1 Defining Oral Report
   7.2.2 Characteristics of Effective Oral Communication/Report
   7.2.3 Need or Importance of Learning Oral Communication Skills
   7.2.4 Three Parts of Oral Communication/Presentation
   7.2.5 To Prepare for a Successful Oral Presentation
7.3 Differences between Oral and Written Communication
7.4 Planning an Oral Report
   7.4.1 Tools for Oral Communication
7.5 Telephone Communication
7.6 Summary
7.7 Descriptive Questions
7.8 Answers and Hints
7.9 Suggested Reading for Reference
NOTES

INTRODUCTORY CASELET

ORAL COMMUNICATION A BETTER PERFORMANCE TOOL TO INSPIRE WORKING

Reducing mistakes, improving safety and creating a sense of empowerment are all vital goals for a company with a large industrial workforce. Communication skills are the key, and our task was to design and deliver the tools that would significantly improve them.

40% of the workforce had a literacy level, based on the International Adult Literacy Survey, of below level 3 (the level that means you can read the basics on a telephone bill or prescription bottle). 20% had a literacy level below level 2. These lower literacy levels were seriously affecting workers’ ability to critically assess, analyse or communicate in a work situation.

We needed to create a solution that worked for all literacy levels. This entailed a pragmatic, visual learning style for participants with little ability to read or write.

So we designed a communication tool that relied on visual cueing, using an analogy that connected to their everyday jobs and incorporated all the complexity of critical analysis and consequential thinking in an easy-to-apply way. We also used associates who had experience working with those with literacy challenges.

The participants ‘just loved’ the programme and said how useful and practical the communication tool was. Supervisors told us their frontline workers were now sharing opinions in meetings, contributing ideas, highlighting potential risks, asking for assistance with paperwork, and checking if they had understood correctly before beginning a piece of work.

For many participants with low literacy levels, the NZQA unit standards earned were a significant bonus, boosting their self-esteem and making them feel that the company really cared for them as individuals.

Participants said they found they were able to practise the skills and learn because of the way our Learning Wave associates worked with them. A common piece of feedback was that the sessions ‘made sense to me and my job’.

Source: http://www.thelearningwave.com/case-studies/communication-skills
After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- Understand the concept of oral communication
- Learn about oral report
- Explain the planning of oral report
- Differentiate between oral and written communication

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In business organisations, presentations and public speaking by the executives and other personals are steady features. Generally, you spend more time in talking than writing in business. Most of the oral communication remains informal although, it is formal in case of meetings, telephone calls, dictations, speeches and oral reports.

Oral communication or verbal communication is defined as the exchange of verbal message between the sender and the receiver. It is more immediate than written communication. It is also more natural and informal.

7.2 ORAL COMMUNICATION

As equated to written communication, oral or verbal communication implies the ability to communicate through speech and this ability is developed in us naturally. In human interaction, oral communication is used more often than written communication. Generally, you spend more time in talking than writing in business. Most of the oral communication remains informal although, it is formal in case of meetings, telephone calls, dictations, speeches and oral reports.

The study of human behaviour shows that seventy per cent of our waking life is spent communicating. Out of the total time spent in communicating, normally, forty five per cent relates to listening, thirty per cent to speaking, sixteen per cent to reading, and nine per cent to writing. Thus, we spend one third of our time in listening and speaking. It is, therefore, necessary that people in business learn to use this time to their most beneficial advantage for creating and sustaining good relationships through their ability to listen and speak effectively.

7.2.1 DEFINING ORAL REPORT

An oral report is a spoken report. A document comprising of information organised in a narrative, graphic or tabular form, prepared on ad hoc, periodic, recurring, regular or as required basis. Reports might refer to specific periods, events, occurrences or subjects, and may be communicated or presented in oral or written form.
7.2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE ORAL COMMUNICATION/REPORT

Oral communication should furnish a platform for a fair and candid exchange of ideas. Hence, the communicator should ensure the following:

- Regard the objective.
- Think about the interest level of the receiver.
- Be sincere.
- Use simple language, familiar words.
- Be brief and precise.
- Avoid vagueness and generalities.
- Give full facts
- Assume nothing.
- Use polite words and tone.
- Cut out insulting messages.
- Say something interesting and pleasing to the recipient.
- Allow time to respond.

According to Lesikar & Flatley, there are four basic elements of good oral communication or reporting:

- **Voice quality**: Good voice quality which involves speech delivery, speed and volume is requirement for good quality communication.
- **Style**: It is the blending of pitch, speed and volume to form a unique talking personality. In other words, style refers to a set of voice behaviour that gives uniqueness to a person.
- **Choice of words**: It is the third quality of good talking. Select those words that appropriately convey the message with morality and courtesy.
- **Adaptation**: It is the fourth quality of good talking. It is an extension of voice quality, style and word choice. It means corresponding to the messages to intend listeners, i.e. the words selected must be used with good voice quality and style. For instance, the voice, style and words might vary in an oral message given to the children and to the adults.

Besides, oral presentation also has the following characteristics:

- Oral presentation is a process of communication, that is, face-to-face interaction with the sender and the receiver.
- Sender gets quick feedback from the receiver and can adjust the speech as per the feedback.
- Oral presentation is an art and a science as it involves measured planning, needs of the audience and certain scientific principles.
Oral presentations make use of both verbal and non-verbal communication (power point presentations).

Oral presentations are used for several functions such as teaching and evaluating.

7.2.3 NEED OR IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

It is said that it does not matter what you say, it matters how you say it. Your way of saying includes your choice of words, confidence and sincerity. In business transactions, learning oral communication skills is required. As a manager one has to be efficient in problem-solving, resolving conflict, and motivating people to work unitedly, assertive without being aggressive, persuasive, a good listener and effective negotiator.

It is known that a manager’s maximum time is devoted to oral communication. He is engaged in one of the following tasks: meetings, discussions, negotiations, seminars, presentations, interviews, peer conversation, subordinate instructions and telephonic conversation. All these business activities, excluding telephoning, involve face-to-face verbal communication. A telephone conversation is one-to-one oral communication that requires skilful control of tone, voice, pitch and precise use of words. The importance of oral communication/presentation can be discussed in the following points:

- **Importance for a scholar**: The art of oral presentation is of immense significance for an academician or a student who is needed to defend his/her thesis in a seminar or a conference.

- **Importance for a professional**: At times, managers or executives in a company are required to prepare a report and then give an oral presentation on that report. Their performance can make or mar their career.

- **Importance for business**: Oral presentations are of huge significance in today’s business environment. It’s simply because nothing has more impact, or is quite as impressive, as a well-delivered oral presentation. Properly executed and in the right context, they can inform, motivate and convince more effectively than any other single form of communication. As a result, employers place great value on presentation skills.

- **As a marketing tool**: Ability to deliver oral presentation is one of the most effective tools of marketing. For instance, consider these two typical situations where oral presentation skill will be needed as a marketing strategy:
  - You are speaking with a potential client, who tells you that your company is on a short list of possible vendors. She suggests that you come to their office to brief various key people on the advantages of your company’s products.
NOTES

♦ You are told to attend an out-of-town industry conference in order to launch and explain your company’s revolutionary new electric pet-grooming product.

7.2.4 THREE PARTS OF ORAL COMMUNICATION/PRESENTATION

For effective oral presentation, it should be divided into three parts: (1) introduction, (2) main body and (3) conclusion.

Introduction

The introduction portion of the presentation is most significant and can be used to serve many purposes such as:

- **Motivating the audience to listen:** An introduction must attract the attention of the audience in your topic and motivate them to listen. This can be done by introducing the topic with an attention-getting device: a startling fact, a relevant anecdote, a rhetorical question or a statement designed to arouse your audience’s interest. Choice of the device nevertheless, will depend on the audience, the occasion and the purpose of the presentation.

- **Familiarising the audience with the topic:** If your audience is not readily familiar with the subject, you may want to include background material to help them grasp and process your main points. Tell your audience what points or topics you plan to cover so that your audience can sense and then follow the direction of your statements.

- **To build credibility:** Introduction can also be used to launch credibility with your audience. For this, you should first acknowledge that you perceive the problem that your audience has with the given topic. In short state that you are aware of all the arguments in favour of or against the topic and how your opinion is going to be different.

Main Body

In the introduction, you state the chief issues or topics you plan to present. Thus, in designing the body of the presentation, you develop what you want to say about each of these main points or ideas. Ideas should be presented in a proper sequence. This will help your audience follow your ideas whether you are giving an informative speech, an analytical speech or a persuasive speech. The significant point, nevertheless, is that you need to demarcate and announce each point in the body as you come to it so that your audience knows when you have completed one point and begun another.

Conclusion

The closing reinforces the main ideas you wish your audience to retain. Remember: in the introduction, you “tell them what you will tell them”; in the body, you “tell them”; and in the conclusion, you
“tell them what you told them.” In a presentation which has covered numerous points, you should be sure to stress the main points. But the conclusion also allows you to emphasise the grandness of specific ideas. In short, how you design the conclusion will depend on your initial purpose. A strong conclusion is nearly as important as a strong introduction, as both the commencing and the end will be the parts most likely remembered.

7.2.5 **TO PREPARE FOR A SUCCESSFUL ORAL PRESENTATION**

Almost everyone feels nervous when giving a presentation or speaking in public so if you feel nervous, it is perfectly natural and understandable. If you prepare and rehearse well, you will reduce a great deal of nervousness. Following is the step by step process for preparing for a successful oral presentation:

- **Know the expectations (type and purpose of presentation):** It is significant to find out the kind of talk you are going to present. It could be an informal chat, a seminar discussion or a more formal presentation. Different talks have different purposes. You must be clear what is expected from you. Find out the specific purpose of your talk. Elucidate the expectations beforehand and plan to address them during the presentation. Therefore, ask yourself, ‘Why are you giving a presentation? To explain, to convince, to entertain or to justify? The purpose of your presentation will determine how you structure it, what information you will include, what format you will adopt, the type and form of your visual aids, etc.’

- **Know the environment and audience:** Knowing the environment, let in several points; for instance:
  - In what surroundings will you be making the presentation?
  - Are you the only speaker or you are one of several speakers? What kinds of presentations will the other speakers be making?
  - Likewise, have a clear idea of your audience. Who are they? Will you be speaking to a general audience or specialists?
  - How many people are expected to attend?
  - What background information do you need to provide?
  - What technical terms or complicated matters will you need to explain and what can you assume they already know?
  - How can you keep them interested?

- **Know the time allotted for talk:** The longer the talk, the more freedom you will have to look at the topic. A short talk needs to be very clear and to address the topic directly. It takes more expertise to prepare for a short presentation. As Woodrow Wilson is known to have pointed out, “If I am to speak for ten minutes, I
need a week for preparation; if fifteen minutes, three days; if half an hour, two days; if an hour, I am ready now”.

- **Collect material:** Preparing the oral presentation often requires the same kind of research required for the written report. Start preparing far in advance by thinking through what needs to be said. Collect material which may relate to the topic from unusual sources, and sleep on these ideas. In choosing content, consider a variety of information types: statistics, testimony, cases, illustrations, history, and especially narratives that help convey the goal you have for your presentation.

- **Develop a theme:** Formulate one jargon-free sentence that will catch the attention of the audience. Selecting an interesting title is important. The effective presentation requires you to focus your audience’s attention on what you are saying. A good way to grab your audience’s attention is to develop a title that, at the very least, reflects the content of your presentation but does so in an interesting way. Like the title of a formal report or the subject line in a letter, memo, or informal report, the title of an oral presentation should prepare your audience for the content you will present.

- **Identify and arrange issues (prepare introduction, body and conclusion):** Identify the issues you plan to address (brainstorm, then trim back). Arrange these issues in a logical sequence. Produce your presentation around the three main divisions.
  
  1. **Introduction:** In planning your introduction, be sure that you state your goal near the beginning. The primary ideas you have developed during the research and content planning stage (should be declared here). Introduction should include an abbreviated overview of the points you will cover, locating the topic in its wider context and clearly stating your argument or thesis.

  2. **Body:** Decide the main ideas you want to get across and group them into logical and coherent ‘chunks’ of information. Keep focused on what’s important. Assure key ideas stand out. Keep it relevant and to the point. Omit trivial details and waffle. Provide believable evidence to support your conclusions. Use clear examples to illustrate your points. Use ‘connective devices’ and transitions to help your audience to follow the link from one issue to the next. These should be logical, and may be presented in a variety of ways. For example, ‘From this we can see that ...’ ‘As an effect ...’ ‘Despite this, the results showed that ...’ on the other hand, it is also true that, etc.

  3. **Conclusion:** The end to the presentation should help the audience understand the significance of your talk and remember main points. The conclusion should not be long, but it should leave the audience with a positive feeling about
you and your ideas. Plan an effective, short and memorable conclusion.

- **Preparing visual aids**: Keep visual aids clear, simple and uncluttered. With overhead transparencies and slides, avoid too many words and use key words only, not full sentences. Break statistics down into easily readable pie charts or graphs. If you have quantities of statistics you wish to convey to your audience, do so on a hand-out.

- **Rehearse your presentation**: Rephrase ideas that are difficult for you to say—these will likely be hard for your audience to follow. Be certain to time your presentation so that it does not exceed the time limit. Keep your presentation as short as possible. Thus, avoid adding information to your presentation (and your outline) as you rehearse. Practice will increase your confidence and allow you to feel more relaxed and sure that everything will work on the day. You will know that your visual aids will fit in with your text, that you won't be shuffling around in a heap of notes, and that you will not ‘dry up’. Also, most crucial, you’ll get the timing right.

- **Preparing for questions**: Your presentation doesn’t end once you’ve completed what you have to say. The question period often is the part of the presentation which influences the audience the most. After all, you’ve had time to practice the rest of the talk. This is the part of the presentation where your ability to interact with the audience will be assessed. Since you can’t always predict what you’ll be asked, how can you prepare for the questioning?

Preparing for questions involves two things:

- Expect all possible questions that can possibly emerge and then prepare for them.

- Keep in mind the rules for tackling this session.

Some significant rules are summarised below:

Always know clearly what you’ve been asked. Before you answer, take a moment to reflect on the question. If you are unsure, restate the question or ask for a clarification. Most importantly, wait for the questioner to finish asking the question before you begin your answer. If a question is asked during the talk, and it will clarify an ambiguity, answer it directly. Postpone questions aimed at resolving specific problems (or arcane knowledge) until the end of the talk. This is particularly important if the answer will distract either you or the audience away from the flow of your presentation. Avoid prolonged discussions with one person, extended answers, and particularly arguments. If you can’t answer a question, just say so. Don’t apologize. You then may
NOTES

✓ Offer to research an answer, and then get back to the questioner later.
✓ Suggest resources that would help the questioner to address the question themselves.
✓ Ask for suggestions from the audience/readers.

SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Fill in the blanks:
1. Oral communication should furnish a platform for a ………………….. and candid exchange of ideas.
2. Keep visual aids ………………….., ………………….. and uncluttered.

ACTIVITY

Speak on a topic and audio record it. Listen to it and analyse, where do you falter keeping in view the elements of good oral communication?

NOTE

The study of human behaviour shows that seventy per cent of our waking life is spent communicating.

7.3 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Oral reports are when you are allotted to do a report by speaking. On the other hand, written reports are presented in writing.

Oral presentations, like written presentations, can enhance an employee’s reputation within an organisation. This is the only resemblance between the two. Differences however are many. An oral presentation differs from written communication in that it involves talking rather than writing. If you think about it for a moment, nevertheless, you’ll realise that there are certain critical points that flow from this which have a tremendous influence on how you prepare and deliver your presentations.

Difference in content and structure: The content and structure of an oral presentation is adjusted to the medium of speech. It is designed keeping in view the limitations of listening. It cannot be as detailed as a written presentation. Content has to be organised more carefully in such a way that the audience does not lose interest. Thus, content should be made interesting with examples and illustrations. The structure shall be simple, logical...
and easy to follow for ‘listening purposes’. It is to be kept in mind that audience cannot ‘rehear’ what you have said.

- **Difference in style:** Option of an effective, delivery style is important for oral communication. It cannot be (and should not be) spoken in a ‘written’ style. While written presentation can afford to adopt a scholarly style, an oral presentation has to be simple and lively in its style. The reason is that while listening, we cannot go back over a difficult point to understand it or easily absorb long arguments.

  A presentation can well be ruined if a difficult and complicated language is adopted. Thus, in effective oral presentations, the difficult points are made easier to understand. A conversational style should be adopted that suggests to your audience that you are really talking to them. There is a place for humour too in an oral presentation, when it is not required in a written report.

- **Difference in coverage and exposure:** As a general rule in an oral presentation, much less content can be covered and exposed to the audience than can be covered in a written report. In fact, it is a requirement that not much is covered in an oral presentation. It should be kept short for the simple reason that the audiences generally do not enjoy long presentations. Listening is difficult, and audiences will tire even when a presentation is absolutely smashing. For that reason, only selective content can be transmitted during oral presentation. One must be careful not to omit any useful information.

- **Difference in scope for interaction and feedback:** An oral presentation leaves a better scope both for the presenter and the audience to interact and dispel any doubts instantly. The question answer session after a presentation is of immense significance from this point of view. This is not possible in case of a written presentation. The feedback in latter case is much delayed. Sometimes, the receiver withholds his opinion (as in general happens) and provides no feedback.

- **Grandness of non-verbal language in oral presentation:** Non-verbal communication has no role to play in written communication. An oral presentation on the other hand is delivered in person, and in front of other people. This means that the message will not merely be what a person is saying, but how you he/she is saying it. In other words, in oral presentation, non-verbal factors like voice, posture, hand gestures, use of eye contact, and overall appearance send their own messages, and these have to match with what is being said. Non-verbal communications (body language) is critically important; in fact, many studies have shown that people pay more attention to how you present than what you present.
Fill in the blanks:

3. An oral presentation leaves a better scope both for the ………………… and the ………………… to interact and dispel any doubts instantly.

4. An oral presentation on the hand is delivered in …………………, and in front of other people.

List down five such things that you can easily and better express through oral communication and not written communication.

7.4 PLANNING AN ORAL REPORT

In many ways, planning an oral report is similar to planning a written report.

Choose a subject that is interesting to you. What do you care about? What would you like to learn more about? Follow your interests, and you'll find your topic.

Be apparent about your purpose. Do you want to persuade your audience? Inform them about a topic? Or just tell an entertaining story?

An oral report also has the same three basic parts as a written report.

The introduction should bind your audience. Catch their interest with a question, a dramatic tale or a personal experience that relates to your topic.

The body is the main part of your report, and will use most of your time. Make an outline of the body so that you can share information in an organised way.

The close is the time to summarise and get across your most important point. What do you want the audience to remember?

Research

It's crucial to know your subject and be well organised. If you know your material well, you will be confident and able to answer questions. If your report is well organised, the audience will find it informative and easy to follow.

Think of your audience. If you were listening to a report on your subject, what would you want to know? Too much information can seem overwhelming, and too little can be confusing. Coordinate your outline around your key points, and focus on getting them across.
Enthusiasm is contagious, if you’re interested in your subject, the audience will be interested, too.

Rehearse

Practicing your report is a key to success. At first, some people find it helpful to go through the report alone. You may practice in front of a mirror or in front of your stuffed animals. Then, try out your report in front of a practice audience-friends or family. Ask your practice audience:

- Could you follow my presentation?
- Did I seem knowledgeable about my subject?
- Was I speaking clearly? Could you hear me? Did I speak too fast or too slow?

If you are using visual aids, such as posters or overhead transparencies, practice using them while you rehearse. Also, you might want to time yourself to see how long it actually takes. The time will plausibly go by faster than you expect.

Report

- **Stand up straight:** Hold your upper body straight, but not stiff, and keep your chin up. Try not to distract your audience by shifting around or fidgeting.
- **Make eye contact:** You will seem surer of yourself, and the audience will listen better, if you make eye contact during your report.
- **Use gestures:** Your body language can help you make your points and keep the audience interested. Incline forward at key moments, and use your hands and arms for emphasis.
- **Use your voice effectively:** Change your tone and speak clearly. If you're nervous, you might speak too fast. If you find yourself hurrying, take a breath and try to slow it down.

Be Confident

Nearly everybody is nervous when speaking before a group. Many people say public speaking is their greatest fear. Being well prepared is the best way to prevent nerves from getting the better of you. Also, try breathing deeply before you begin your report, and remember to breathe during the report. Being nervous isn't all bad—it can help to keep you on your toes.

One Last Thing

Have you prepared and practiced your report? Always keep in mind that your stuff and your report are interesting and important.
### TABLE 7.1: PREPARATION CHECKLIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions to ask</th>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>myself</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| What is the aim? | - to sell my product  
|                  | - to adopt my recommendations  
|                  | - to explain and inform  
|                  | - to get me a job |
| What is my title?| - The new Nokia 9123  
|                  | - How to reduce production costs  
|                  | - Studying abroad |
| Who am I speaking to? | - What are the benefits to the audience of my product/report/speech?  
|                  | - Are these people the decision makers?  
|                  | - What do they know of the subject?  
|                  | - How does this change my approach?  
|                  | - What sort of questions will they ask me?  
|                  | - What are the answers?  
|                  | - What aspects will they be interested in? |
| What are the main points I want to make? | 1, 2, 3 (Not too many!) |
| What do I want the audience to do after listening to my presentation? | - We must invite them to buy my product  
|                  | - to accept my findings  
|                  | - to reconsider their career plan  
|                  | - to give me a job |

### 7.4.1 TOOLS FOR ORAL COMMUNICATION

A verbal tool, in the parlance of business communication, is a manner of message exchange that would lead to interaction of the sender and the receiver through gestures, eyes, voice or video images. Thus, verbal communication would essentially include tools such as:

- Meetings
- Seminars
- Product and service demonstrations
- Trade fairs
- Interviews for jobs
- Video phones
- Video conference
- Body language
Oral communication tools are added on by written tools in order to succeed during the modern-day business transactions. Verbal tools could be used before or after the written tools. The Internet prevails the initial and also the final stages of business transactions in the West. Nevertheless, written communication modes, aggregated with verbal tools, are preferred by many a firm. The exact mix for success in a business deal would vary depending upon:

- The nature of the product or service;
- The resources of the firms involved;
- The technologies available for communication (they must be common in the firms); and
- The importunity of the business transaction.

### Self Assessment Questions

State whether the following statements are true/false:

5. It's redundant to know your subject and be well organised.
6. Being spontaneous is the best way to prevent nerves from getting the better of you.

### Activity

- Conduct a research, rehearse and report the weather conditions of the current day.
- Compare the same when you talk about in general with friends and family.

### 7.5 Telephone Communication

This form of electronic communication has been around for nearly a century. It is the most useful and universal medium of oral communication with a person who is not present at the same place as the sender. The telephone instrument has evolved, over the years, into very sophisticated forms with many new facilities.

The intercom is an internal telephone system which allows communication between persons in different parts of a building. It eliminates the need for visiting another part of the office and the need for a peon to carry written notes and messages. Information can be passed quickly from one person to another in the office. Some intercom instruments have facility to broadcast messages to the entire office over all the internal lines or a particular location on one line.

STD (Subscriber Trunk Dialling) allows a user to make call to a number in another city directly, without having to call the operator at the telephone exchange. This service is available to almost all cities in the country. Every city has code number which you dial before dialling the personal telephone number. The code number for Mumbai is 022.
ISD (International Subscriber Dialling) allows the user to call a number to any of the major cities of the world, without calling the operator at the telephone exchange. Every country has an international code number which you dial before dialling the required city code and personal telephone number. The code for India is 091.

STD and ISD facilities can be locked with a number code on telephones attached to electronic exchanges. On other telephones, you may have to pay a fee and/or deposit to get the facilities activated. These facilities have made the telephone an instrument for instant communication to any part of the world.

Technological advance has made the telephone instrument so sophisticated that it is able to provide a number of services. An answering machine can take a message if you cannot answer it. Caller identity device attached to the telephone can show the number from which the incoming call is being made.

**Cellular Phone**

The cellular phone is based on a combination of the old radio technology and emerging telecommunication technology. Cellular or mobile phones have some of the characteristics of the home phones but there are several differences. There are some boundaries to cellular coverage outside metropolitan areas and away from major highways.

Air times is charged by the minute on calls made from and received by the cellular phone; a fraction of a minute is rounded off to the next higher minute. Calls made are charged from the time the “send” button is pressed.

When a cellular call is placed, a radio signal travels from the phone to a receiver/transmitter within a cell. A cell is a geographic area ranging from less than a quarter mile to 20 miles in diameter, and contains a fixed radio signal receiver/transmitter. The size of a cell depends on the population and the terrain. As a person making or receiving a cell with a cellular phone move from one cell to another, the call is automatically passed from one cell to the other. A receiver/transmitter within the cell relays the call to a Mobile Transmitter Switching Office (MTSO) using the home telephone lines. The MTSO is connected to the local telephone company which routes the call to the destination. The call process takes less than half a second.

Cellular phone instruments have facilities for storage of numbers, record of missed calls (calls which were not answered), for receiving text messages, and for receiving information given by the network about the weather, about conditions on the road, and other vital news needed while traveling.

The mobile has freed many managers from the confines of their offices as they can be in touch with the office from wherever they are. It has become possible to contact persons who are traveling or are out in the open. A manager talking business on his mobile while relaxing on
a beach may be a depressing sight, but then, he might not have been relaxing on the beach at all but for the mobile, which allows him to stay in touch.

**Tips for Effective Telephonic Conversation**

Telephone is the most convenient and quick means of communication of present times. The revolution brought about by mobile phones has even made it more useful and profitable for one and all. There are some guidelines to make telephonic conversation more effective:

- Telephone talk is dependent on the voice, in the absence of close physical presence. Clarity of speech and skilful use of voice are important in this as sounds may be quite similar and confusing over the phone. It is difficult to make out the difference between similar sounding words like “kite” and “night”, “life” and “wife”.
- Make the calls short and precise, to save time as well as money.
- Make limited use of mobiles and keep them at a distance from the body to get freed from the bad effects of strong vibrations.
- Keep your pitch low, as it is very harsh for the ears to listen loud voices on the telephone.
- Repeat spellings on the telephone, if needed, as there is a possibility of wrong interpretation of words on the phone.
- The quality of voice has to be very smooth, to make telephonic conversation effective. This is what the Call Centres look for and make use of.
- Make use of courteous language.
- Discourage others to talk too much or gossip over the phone.
- Keep the speed of your speech in control over the phone. Don’t be too fast for the listener at the other end.
- Choose simple words
- When calling, immediately introduce yourself and your organisation and ask for the person you want to talk to.
- When receiving a call, identify your company or office; then offer your assistance.
- Don’t put the callers on hold, if they don’t choose for the same. They may wish to call back later.
- Be considerate, listen and do not dominate over the phone.

**SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

Fill in the blanks:

7. .................. and skilful use of voice are important in this as sounds may be quite similar and confusing over the phone.
Prepare a list of advantages of telephonic interaction over a face to face interaction, especially with a person with whom you are talking to for the first time.

7.6 SUMMARY

- In this chapter, we have studied about oral communication.
- In business transactions, learning oral communication skills is required.
- For effective oral presentation, it should be divided into three parts: (1) introduction, (2) main body, (3) conclusion.
- Ideas should be presented in a proper sequence. This will help your audience follow your ideas whether you are giving an informative speech, an analytical speech or a persuasive speech.
- The step by step process for preparing for a successful oral presentation:
  - Know the expectations (type and purpose of presentation)
  - Know the environment and audience
  - Know the time allotted for talk
  - Collect material
  - Develop a theme
  - Identify and arrange issues (prepare introduction, body and conclusion)
  - Preparing visual aids
  - Rehearse your presentation
  - Preparing for questions

KEY WORDS

- **Public speaking**: Speaking to a group of people in a structured, deliberate manner intended to inform, influence, or entertain the listeners.
- **Persuasion**: The act of influencing the mind by arguments or reasons offered, or by anything that moves the mind or passions, or inclines the will to a determination.
- **Oral report**: An oral report is a spoken report. A document containing information organised in a narrative, graphic, or tabular form.
- **Telephone etiquette**: Telephone etiquette refers to the way an individual should speak on the phone.
### 7.7 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Define oral communication. What are the characteristics of effective oral communication?

2. Distinguish between oral and written communication.

3. How does one plan an oral report? Is telephonic communication planned?

### 7.8 ANSWERS AND HINTS

#### ANSWERS FOR SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Q. No.</th>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>clear, simple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences between Oral and Written Communication</td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>presenter, audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning an oral report</td>
<td>5.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone Communication</td>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Clarity of speech</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### HINTS FOR DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Refer 7.2 & 7.2.2

   Oral or verbal communication implies the ability to communicate through speech and this ability is developed in us naturally. Characteristics of effective oral communication are: Regard the objective, Think about the interest level of the receiver, Be sincere, Use simple language, familiar words, Be brief and precise, Avoid vagueness and generalities, Give full facts, Assume nothing, Use polite words and tone, Cut out insulting messages, Say something interesting and pleasing to the recipient and Allow time to respond.

2. Refer 7.3

   Oral reports are when you are allotted to do a report by speaking. On the other hand, written reports are presented in writing.

3. Refer 7.4, 7.5

   In many ways, planning an oral report is similar to planning a written report as it requires choosing a subject, being apparent with a purpose and so on.
7.9 SUGGESTED READING FOR REFERENCE

SUGGESTED READINGS


E-REFERENCES

- [http://www.slideshare.net/coolsimo/business-telephone-conversation](http://www.slideshare.net/coolsimo/business-telephone-conversation)
TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED COMMUNICATION

CHAPTER 8

CONTENTS

8.1 Introduction

8.2 Using Technology in Communication Tasks
   8.2.1 Effects of Technology on Business Communications

8.3 E-mails in Business Communication
   8.3.1 Advantages of E-mail in Business Communication

8.4 Tools for Constructing Messages
   8.4.1 Business E-mail Writing – Conventions
   8.4.2 E-mail Etiquette at Work

8.5 Computer Tools for Collecting Information
   8.5.1 Surveys
   8.5.2 Interviews
   8.5.3 Focus Groups

8.6 Summary

8.7 Descriptive Questions

8.8 Answers and Hints

8.9 Suggested Reading for Reference
INTRODUCTORY CASELET

**BOON TO BUSINESS WORLD**

Dear Mrs. Sachdeva,

We are writing an email to ask you about your experience with our Acme Washing Machine you bought last month.

We want you to feel assured that in case you have any difficulty with any of the operations, we shall be glad to send our expert to help you. The booklet of instructions, supplied with the machine will, of course, be helpful in handling the machine.

But please do not hesitate to call us if you need further help at any time. Once you buy one of our machines, you are our customer forever, and may claim our help and services at any time.

Yours sincerely,

*Source: Business Communication by M. K. Sehgal and Vandana Khetarpal*
After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- Describe the use of technology in communication tasks
- Learn about e-mail and its role in business communication
- Get to know about the tools for constructing messages
- Know the different kinds of tools for collecting information

## 8.1 INTRODUCTION

Technology-enabled communication, often known as computer mediated communication or simply mediated communication, places technology between the sender and receiver of a message. Although this technological process carries a number of benefits, users must also keep some important considerations in mind when communicating through technology.

## 8.2 USING TECHNOLOGY IN COMMUNICATION TASKS

Constant, dynamic innovation in both telecommunications and information technology present numerous complexities that defy uniform public policy prescriptions. Economic assumptions about abundances and scarcities that once guided policymakers in the past are not wholly applicable in this evolving economy. Past political assumptions about regulative knowledge and incentives are often at odds with actual experience and modern reality.

### Businesses Use Communication Technology to Improve Their Performance

Whether you are running a small start-up business or a worldwide enterprise, fostering effective communication is critical to success. No company can succeed long-term if its workers do not communicate with one another, and this lack of communication will quickly become evident in the form of missed appointments, disjointed meetings and wasted time. Fortunately, companies have a number of technological tools at their disposal to create an arena where open and honest communication is valued and respected.

### SharePoint and Intranet Sites

Setting up an intranet site is one of the best ways for small businesses to keep all their workers in the loop and communicate new information. Setting up a “what’s new” section on the website is the perfect way to brag about new business wins, post job opportunities and gather the input of employees through periodic surveys. Companies can also use Microsoft SharePoint services to set up internal websites designed for specific projects. Project managers can use these specialised websites...
to share documents and information, and this can help the project run more smoothly and effectively.

**Instant Messaging**

Instant messaging can be a valuable tool for business use, and in many ways it is far superior to e-mail. With an instant messaging program, supervisors and managers can see which workers are signed in and at their desks, which ones are in meetings and which ones are out of the office. Employees can often get much-needed answers more quickly using an IM system than by phone or e-mail. Just knowing who is available can save valuable time and help small business owners find the right resources when they need them. Microsoft Office Communicator is one of the most widely used instant messaging programs, but many small businesses use Web-based instant messaging programs from Yahoo, Google and other sources.

**Today’s Technology is Used in Business to Communicate**

Communication is essential to successful business operations, and the technology of the 21st century has become completely integrated in business interaction. Company networks are faster, the Internet has become a powerful force, and wireless communications have transformed the way business is performed. Even the latest technologies, such as cloud computing, are being used to allow businesses to operate globally without sacrificing security or limiting user access.

**Networking**

Networking allows users to communicate through traditional voice and video in a secure system. Networking also allows collaboration on reports, programming and other document production, taking communications beyond conversational interaction and into virtual partnerships. Networking is the backbone of modern technology, and forms the core of how most business communication is performed today. The concept of nodes linked together is essential, whether it means connecting to a Web page, cell tower or using cloud-based applications.

**Internet**

The Internet allows communication in two ways: static communication through Web pages and dynamic communication through information being exchanged. Data posted to a Web page, such as product specifications, allow instant access to the same data from anywhere in the world, a static form of communication that frees up company resources which would otherwise be engaged in constantly repeating the same information. Online product orders are a type of dynamic communication, and can be as complex as keeping a real-time inventory, alerting employees of changes in costs or real-time chat between a customer service agent and a customer or field representative.
Wireless Communications

Wireless devices are now capable of doing everything from making a phone or talking over a “walkie-talkie” to using the Internet or company network to run applications and send memos. Wireless technology is quickly evolving, with products like the iPad and Blackberry taking the place of paper and writing utensils, distributing information immediately from any location where a signal is available.

Cloud Computing

Cloud computing takes networking to a whole new level. Documents and programs can be stored in “virtual” drives or computers, and can be accessed by any authorised user through ordinary Internet connections. Cloud computing allows real-time communication and interaction exactly the way a network does, with access extended to global level. Cloud computing eliminates data lost through system crashes, avoids problems with network downtime as well as providing the ability for software upgrades to be performed network-wide by upgrading a single instance of an application.

Example: Google Docs is an example of cloud computing where multiple users can interact on document production in real-time.

Mobile Phone

One of the biggest advancements in communication has been the development of the cellular phone. In the past, your only chance of reaching employees was when they were at their desks, prompting endless games of “phone tag” as people tried to connect during busy workdays. Now, workers are reachable no matter where they are, and even during non-work hours. The development of smartphones has also greatly expanded the types of business activities you can transact when out of the office, increasing productivity and extending the workday.

Teleconferencing

High-speed data connections allow for the use of teleconferencing, virtual meetings held over audio and video links. Teleconferencing can save substantial amounts of money otherwise spent on travel by connecting important employees in far-flung branches together to share ideas and information. The uses of virtual whiteboards, communal data-sharing platforms where remote users can interact as if around the same table, further increase the possibilities of the virtual workplace.

Image Scanning

Document and image scanners allow workers to convert paperwork, plans, diagrams and photos into electronic files quickly for storage and transmission. Instead of relying on hand delivery of important documents across town or across the country, employees can scan
and send these files in a matter of seconds across the Internet. An architectural firm could, for instance, scan updates to a plan, transmit it to the client, receive changes and make alterations all before a messenger would have been able to make the first run across town.

**RFID (Radio Frequency Identification)**

The development of radio frequency identification has substantially changed the field of business logistics and, paired with other business communication advancements, has the potential to increase a company’s efficiency significantly. RFID tags are small chips that respond to radio waves with encoded information, allowing companies to tag and track items and materials. When an employee activates a scanning device, all RFID tags within range will respond with their coded information, allowing for quick updates of warehouse inventories and real-time tracking of shipments as they pass through the supply chain. Being able to access inventory on demand allows companies to take advantage of “just-in-time” shipping, providing products and material only when needed to reduce warehousing requirements and reduce the amount of excess stock stored at retail or office facilities.

**Social Media**

Since the industrial revolution, Social Media is the biggest shift. The revolution known as social media has in fact taken the world by storm and its development has been exponential where TV took 14 years to attain the same objective, Radio took 38 years to reach 50 million users, and the internet got there in 4 years, iPod took 3 years for the same while Facebook added 100 million users in less than 9 months. Social networking has become almost the top most activity on the web. Social media comprises mobile based as well as web-based technologies that are used to turn communication into interactive dialogue between individuals, communities and organisations. Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein describe social media as “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content.” Thus, Social media is universally available, and enabled by scalable communication techniques.

As the communications landscape gets more participatory, more complex, and more denser, the networked population is gaining greater access to information, more opportunities to engage in public speech, and an enhanced ability to undertake collective action. Social media have become a fact of life for civil society global, consisting of various factors, such as governments, regular citizens, telecommunications firms, activists, non-governmental organisations and software providers. As social media becomes part of everyday life, more organisations are carving out a social media presence online. YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter not surprisingly, are perhaps the most common outlets for company’s social media efforts.
8.2.1 EFFECTS OF TECHNOLOGY ON BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

Technology has changed business in many ways, but its effect on communication is arguably the most significant. Indeed, according to Walden University College of Management and Technology, communication through e-mail, text messaging, instant messaging and even budding tools like social networking have been “among the most profound effects of technology on every area of business.” However, while technology did make business communications faster and easier, it has also made, at times, communication more distracting and less clear.

Communication is Faster

Whether you need to speak with an employee who is traveling in another state or country or you need to communicate with your supplier halfway around the world, technology allows you to do so instantaneously. In fact, thanks to e-mail and text messages, you can now send messages to people in other time zones before you forget without worrying that you will wake them up. In fact, according to Walden University, the Internet has allowed business people to communicate easily regardless of time zone and language issues.

Expanded Communication Opportunities

Technology allows individuals to communicate and carry on a business relationship without ever meeting face to face, so people in all parts of the world now have the chance to interact with a company in a rural part of the United States. For example, technology allowed for the emergence of the virtual assistant, a worker who completes tasks for her client online without having ever met him, in the 20th century.

Communication must be More Deliberate

Although technology has made communication instantaneous, so you don’t have to spend hours planning and composing before you communicate and wait for a long period for the reply, it has also made planning deliberate communication periods more important. Firstly, companies that do take advantage of telecommuting and virtual offices need to deliberately plan to communicate with individuals in teams to avoid employees losing touch and to make sure all are working toward the same goals. Secondly, even if you work in a physical office, instantaneous communication regarding quick decisions and memos cannot replace specific communication times where big decisions are discussed and progress reports given. However, when employees are communicating in multiple ways every day, it can be easy to forget to schedule these types of meetings.

Efficiency

When communicating with technology, you can find and deliver data to your employee or customer anywhere. When you need to contact your
employee on the field, you can text message or e-mail his smartphone or tablet both simple and complex information rather than he being forced to wait until he arrives back at your facility to receive it. With the high-quality digital still and video cameras available, you can provide pictures or video quickly and in very high resolution to help your employee complete a task. A customer can get real-time information as to the status of an appointment and can communicate needs in a prompt manner. She can also provide helpful feedback quickly so you are able to fill her need quickly and efficiently.

Documentation

Technology has made documentation and archiving of communication quick and easy. With the use of databases and inexpensive storage, you can save e-mails and other communications and can query them as needed for future use. Compare that with filing paper copies in an immense array of expensive file cabinets to attempt to archive later and it is easy to see a cost and efficiency savings in documentation. The required space to store cabinets and the employees to find the data, not to mention the gradual degradation of ink on paper, makes traditional means of documenting communication quite challenging and inefficient.

Communication is More Distracting

From constantly overhearing cell phone conversations, to the worker who is constantly e-mailing or texting you to the incessant “ding” of your office’s instant messenger, communication tools that were designed to make you more productive can actually do the opposite. Instant communication can make it harder for workers to deal with one task at a time when their work is constantly being interrupted by comments and questions that relate to other projects or even personal issues. In fact, some employees must make an effort to turn off communication devices while they work to meet deadlines.

State whether the following statements are true/false:

1. Setting up an intranet site is one of the worst ways for small businesses to keep all their workers in the loop and communicate new information.

2. With an instant messaging program, supervisors and managers can see which workers are signed in and at their desks, which ones are in meetings and which ones are out of the office.

3. Networking is the backbone of modern technology, and forms the core of how most business communication is performed today.

4. In cloud computing, documents and programs can be stored in “physical” drives or computers, and can be accessed by any authorised user through ordinary Internet connections, globally.
Prepare a report on cloud computing and its additional advantages over the internet.

Instant messaging can be a valuable tool for business use, and in many ways it is far superior to e-mail.

**8.3 E-MAILS IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION**

E-mail is widely used as a form of business communication and overall it is a highly effective communication tool. E-mail is inexpensive, only requiring an Internet connection that is generally already present in the business. Although a printout of e-mails is possible, e-mails often stay as soft copies because archiving and retrieving e-mail communications is easy to do. From the CEO to the janitorial staff and even temporary employees of the business can send and receive e-mail communications.

**Function**

Although it cannot and should not replace all face-to-face communication and others forms of communication, internal e-mail usage can cover many areas within the business. Internal e-mails can function as an effective communication for sharing basic information, such as new cafeteria prices, paper use guidelines or security precautions.

*Example:* Sending simple messages to an entire workforce with just the click of a mouse is fast, easy, convenient and can save the company money. If saved, the e-mail can function as proof of a message sent or received, and is easily accessible to remind the recipient of pertinent information. Many businesses use e-mail as part of its marketing efforts to share information with prospects, customers and vendors.

**Format**

Business e-mails should be concise and to the point. Use plain text and common fonts with a simple signature line. Fancy graphics, fonts, and backgrounds can take up unnecessary storage space in the recipient's inbox and may load slowly, or not at all. Stick to one topic in a business e-mail and write only the things that are appropriate for anyone to read, as e-mail forwarding makes it possible for originally unintended parties to receive the e-mail. Proper grammar and spelling is very important in business e-mails because it reflects on you and your abilities. Attachments should be prepared in a format that any recipient can easily access/download.
Etiquette

Whether sending an internal or external e-mail, the subject line should accurately represent the content of the e-mail. Use proper punctuation and capitalisation, and use bold, italics and white space to make important information stand out from the rest of the content. Use a salutation to begin the e-mail and only send to individuals that readily need or request to receive information from your business. Business e-mails should be brief, positive and professional.

Considerations

Using e-mail in business communication is certainly less personal than face-to-face communication. It can hinder social interaction and lead to less relationship building in the workplace. Misunderstandings are commonplace in written communication simply because the recipient cannot read the writer’s tone and expression, and therefore is left to interpretation. Consider that even though e-mail can be quite informal, it is also a permanent record and should be treated carefully.

Effects

E-mail has been revolutionary in the world of business communication because information is quickly passed along with instantaneous efficiency and effectiveness. Employees are able to access information from a computer, phone or PDA (Personal Digital Assistant is a term for any small mobile hand-held device that provides computing and information storage and retrieval capabilities for personal or business use, often for keeping schedule calendars and address book information handy. The term handheld is a synonym for PDA) nearly anywhere, and so are the company’s current and potential customers. The use of e-mail within a business can greatly increase productivity for employees and can be a quick way to increase sales as well. More companies are using e-mail communications as part of the marketing mix to communicate and interact with its target markets.

8.3.1 ADVANTAGES OF E-MAIL IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

E-mail in business can be used for intra-company communications, marketing purposes and coordinating with business partners, suppliers and customers. Some common advantages of business e-mail over traditional mail or telephone communications are cost reductions, lower overhead and speed. E-mail software is available for every size business, allowing for customised business and employee interactions.

Speed

Communicating by e-mail is almost instantaneous, which can enhance communications by allowing for quick dissemination of information and fast response to customer inquiries. It may also allow for quicker
problem-solving and more streamlined business processes. As a result, small business owners can accomplish more in less time.

**Geographic Barrier Reduction**

E-mail reduces geographic and time zone barriers for businesses. Employees or contractors from around the world can communicate, regardless of their location. Likewise, customers can send sales questions and support requests by e-mail based on their own time zone schedules.

**Targeted Marketing**

E-mail lets businesses market to targeted audiences. Customers can opt in to receive e-mail communications about products they own, sales or new items. Customers who receive targeted e-mails based on their preferences are likely to be more receptive. E-mail marketing can also target customers based on their status with a business.

*Example:* A business can tailor messaging to new customers, existing customers and repeat customers.

**Efficiency**

E-mail can help increase productivity. Business owners can communicate with established distribution lists, automatically forward information based on a topic, or send information to specific individuals as needed. Most e-mail software provides customisation features you can tailor to the type of work performed, volume of daily e-mail messages and the needs of the worker. Effective e-mail use can reduce reliance on face-to-face consultations and meetings.

**Lower Costs**

Moving communications from physical mail to e-mail can result in significant savings in postage costs, shipping supplies and employee resources. Businesses can also decrease customer service support costs by focusing on e-mail customer support options rather than phone-based services.

**SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

State whether the following statements are true/false:

5. E-mail should replace all face-to-face communication.
6. Business e-mails should be elaborate and explanatory.
7. Whether sending an internal or external e-mail, the subject line should vaguely represent the content of the e-mail.

**ACTIVITY**

Focusing on e-mail etiquette and format, write two e-mails to a distant person you do not interact with every day.
8.4 TOOLS FOR CONSTRUCTING MESSAGES

Clear cut messages, brief content and purposeful subject matter are some of the important business e-mail etiquettes that should be followed unfailingly. As business communication is aimed at busy individuals, one should deliver information using minimum possible words without skipping out on any vital points. All prime details should be included in the main body of the letter just after the introduction. If the e-mail is urgent, indicate it in the subject line and mention the time period within which a reply is desired. In fact, quick response is critical in business e-mail etiquette and one should try to respond to all business e-mails within 24 hours. In case of inability to respond to the mail, reply with a message highlighting that the issue will be addressed at the earliest.

8.4.1 BUSINESS E-MAIL WRITING – CONVENTIONS

The subject line is very important in business e-mail writing as it conveys the intention of the e-mail and prevents it from getting mixed up with spam, junk and other trifling mails. Subject should be written concisely and the attention grabbing ones are apt for mass advertising and promotion mailers. Written text should be formatted with care avoiding large fonts. Use of features like bold, italics, highlighting, underline, and colours should be minimum. Writing the whole text in capital letters is considered rude and should be avoided. Write in an active voice and proofread to avoid grammar and punctuation mistakes. Business e-mail writing should include checks at the end to ensure that the e-mail address and attachments are correct, also avoid lengthy attachments.

8.4.2 E-MAIL ETIQUETTE AT WORK

Always open the letter with a cordial greeting like hi, hello, or dear along with recipient’s full or last name. One can use the first name also in case the recipient is well known. Appropriate salutation is Mr, Mrs, or Miss and generally a salutation like Miss is perfect for a female recipient whose marital status is not known. E-mail etiquette at work entails using ‘dear sir or madam’ or ‘To Whom It May Concern’ when gender of the recipient is not known. Signature at the end should comprise of name, company details, contact number with a business disclaimer to avoid any legal trouble. Close the letter with a warm greeting like sincerely, faithfully, truly, regards, cordially, etc.

8. SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Fill in the blanks:

8. Clear cut messages, ................... content, and ................... subject matter are some of the important business e-mail etiquettes that should be followed unfailingly.

9. Subject should be written concisely and the ................... ones are apt for mass advertising and promotion mailers.
Think about how you write instant messages to your friends these days. Similarly, write brief and to the point email to the head of an imaginary organisation to understand the art of writing business emails.

8.5 COMPUTER TOOLS FOR COLLECTING INFORMATION

There are a number of different kinds of tools for collecting information about the thoughts and beliefs that different groups have about your organisation. Let us focus on three: surveys, interviews and focus groups. You can use one or more, or a combination, of the following tools for different groups. Review the descriptions of the following tools, and keep them in mind as you work through this section.

Example: You may decide to use a survey to obtain staff’s perceptions of your organisation, a survey for a majority of your clients and individual interviews with randomly selected clients, and focus groups with your board. Computer tools for gathering and collecting information are discussed in detail below:

8.5.1 SURVEYS

Surveys can be widely disseminated and are the most time-efficient method of collecting information from respondents. People generally respond to surveys anonymously.

Most surveys include some yes/no questions, some questions on a Likert Scale (a commonly used numerical rating scale) (e.g., rate on a scale of 1 to 5), and a few open-ended questions.

The disadvantage of surveys is that you may need someone with fairly sophisticated computer skills to compile the information. If you have the resources, you may wish to use consultants to administer and analyse surveys.

Online resources can help you to survey your staff, volunteers, clients, or board members. We do not specifically endorse any particular product.

Using Surveys to Gather Information

- Surveys are highly structured questionnaires that are typically designed to gather quantitative information.
- Close-ended vs. open-ended
- Likert vs. yes/no
- They can be administered through the mail, in-person, or by phone.
Benefits and Limitations of Surveys

Benefits

- Helpful in collecting standardised data from a large group of people
- Can be fairly easily summarised with frequencies and means; data can be visually displayed
- Facilitates comparisons between subgroups and, if a good sample, can be generalised to a larger population

Limitations

- Most of the work occurs before you administer to ensure validity and reliability
- Obtaining a high response rate can be very challenging; skipped questions; non-respondents
- There is often limited opportunity to find out about why

Survey Analysis

Averages (or Means): Sum of responses for the question/# of responses for the question

Percentages (or Frequencies): Number of X responses/total # of responses for the question (Multiply by 100)

8.5.2 INTERVIEWS

Interviews are useful tools for gathering in-depth information from your stakeholders. Interviews are particularly valuable because they allow you to ask follow-up questions of interviewees when you need clarification about a particular response.

However, it is easy to ask leading questions in an interview format. Therefore, it is important that the interviewers be careful to ask value-neutral questions.

Example: An example of a leading question is, “Do you think people of colour are disproportionately discriminated against?” Another way to ask that question is, “Are people of colour and white people treated equally?”

It is also important that interviewers record the answers to questions carefully and that the full meaning of a response is recorded.

A third party with experience conducting interviews is helpful for designing and leading interviews.

Using Interviews to Gather Information

Key informant interviews are generally semi-structured one-on-one conversations with individuals who have a strong understanding and knowledge in the topic area of interest (community leaders, professionals in the field, etc.)
They can be conducted over the telephone or in-person (also called face-to-face).

**Benefits and Limitations of Interviews**

**Benefits**

- Interviews are designed to collect information that reflects deep knowledge and insight. They can provide rich information on the topic of interest.
- Interviewer and participant rapport can be developed so opinions and experiences can be shared openly in a one on one conversation; provides the opportunity to clarify responses as needed.
- Allows the interviewer to explore nuances of participants’ thoughts and experiences, as well as conflicting ideas. Typically unique to interview methods.

**Limitations**

- Can be a time consuming method for gathering and analysing information.
- Results in a large quantity of data that is difficult to organise for analysis.
- The point is to learn unique insights; you cannot assess how representative or generalisable the findings are with this method alone.

**8.5.3 FOCUS GROUPS**

Focus groups are useful if you want to gather a lot of information from a group of stakeholders during a short period of time. A typical focus group has 8 to 15 people in it and lasts for approximately 90 minutes.

Focus groups are generally conducted by a third party. The sponsoring agency is usually not present for the focus group so that respondents will be more frank with their responses.

If you have a large budget, firms that specialise in doing market research can help you organise a focus group. If you have a small budget, someone in your organisation may be able to manage the logistics of organising a focus group. Then you can hire an experienced consultant to facilitate or get a professional to donate his or her services. Because of the importance of having an unbiased facilitator, avoid doing a focus group if you do not have money to hire an outside consultant to conduct the focus group – or the ability to work with a pro bono professional facilitator.

**Using Focus Groups to Gather Information**

- Focus groups are planned small group discussions of about 8–12 people.
- They are highly participatory and can be used to obtain diverse ideas and perceptions about a topic of interest.
- Different experiences, ideas and points of views often emerge.
Notes

Benefits and Limitations of Focus Groups

Benefits

- Group dialogue can generate rich information as participants engage one another in different ways of thinking about or experiencing an issue.
- Provides a representation of diverse opinions and ideas; gathers information from those who are most involved in an issue or have expert knowledge about the topic.
- Relatively low cost and efficient way to generate a great deal of information.

Limitations

- Discussions can be side-tracked or dominated by more vocal participants.
- Focus groups are susceptible to facilitator bias which can impact the validity of findings.
- Cannot assess how generalisable individual themes or viewpoints are within a like population.

Conducting a focus group occurs in three phases (Krueger, 1988):

- Conceptualisation
- Interview
- Analysis and reporting

Conceptualisation Phase

- **Determining the Purpose**: Consider why focus groups should be conducted. What types of information are of particular importance? Who wants the information? Consider information needs: who will use it? What information is needed? Why is it needed?

- **Determining Whom to Study**: Who can provide the needed information? Consider special groups (e.g., advisory board, employees, and clients). Demographic characteristics such as age, gender, occupation, education, sex, etc. become key in determining who should be invited.

- **Developing a Plan and Estimating Needed Resources**: Specify procedure, time line, and proposed budget. Allow others (e.g., colleagues, focus group experts, etc.) to review the plan.

Interview Phase

*Developing the Questions*

Questions should be carefully planned but appear spontaneous during the interview. For best results, a focus group session should include...
around five or six questions. It should always include less than ten questions. Other suggestions in developing questions for focus group sessions include:

- Use open-ended questions and avoid “yes” or “no” questions.

  **Appropriate question:** What did you think of the program?

  **Inappropriate question:** Did you like the program?

- “Why” questions are rarely asked in a focus group. Why questions tend to imply a rational answer.

- Questions should be systematically prepared but has a natural flow to them. You should get feedback on the set of questions from others.

- Arrange questions in logical sequence.

- Allow for unanticipated questions.

- Pilot test focus group interview.

**Moderating Skills**

Moderators (interviewers) play a key role in the success of focus groups. Moderators should have characteristics that are similar to participants and be skilled in group processes. Their role is to keep discussions flowing and on track, guide discussions back from irrelevant topics, make transitions into another question, and be sensitive to mood of the group. Know when to move onto another question. Moderators should also have some background knowledge about the topic being discussed. Other suggestions for the moderator role include:

- **Use of a Moderator Team:** One should consider using a moderator team with divided tasks. The main moderator should direct the discussion and take minimal notes. The assistant can take comprehensive notes, operate tape the recorder, handle environmental conditions, and respond to unexpected interruptions (e.g., late comers, children someone brought, etc.).

- **Be Mentally Prepared:** Moderators should be mentally alert, listen well, and think quickly on their feet. Questions should be memorized.

- **Have a Pre-session Strategy:** Small talk is essential just prior to group discussion. The moderator should greet the participants and begin small talk while avoiding issues to be discussed during the focus group session. This time will allow a moderator to observe the interaction. Name tents can be strategically placed around the table after observing participants.

  *Example:* You may want to strategically place those who are extremely shy or those who may dominate the discussion.

- **Record the Discussion:** Discussions should be recorded via tape recording and note taking. Notes are essential. Notes should
be so complete that it can be used even if the tape recorder did not work. One should never rely completely on a tape recorder. Someone, other than the moderator should take detailed notes.

- **Begin the Discussion:** The recommended pattern of discussion is welcome, overview and topic, ground rules, first question. The overview should provide an honest discussion of the about the purpose of the study and the importance of the topic of group discussion. Ground rules are suggestions that will help guide the discussion and include rules such as: minimize or eliminate side conversations, one person will speak at a time, don’t criticise what others have to say, and treat everyone’s ideas with respect. The first question should be one that “breaks the ice” and encourages everyone to talk.

- **Pause and Probe:** As a general rule, a moderator should pause for five seconds after a participant talks before beginning to talk. This five second pause gives other participants a chance to jump in. Probes, such as “would you explain that further?” or “Would you give me an example?” should be used to request additional information.

- **Responding to Participant Comments:** Moderators should avoid head nodding, and short verbal responses such as “ok”, “yes”, “uh huh”, “correct”, “that’s good” etc.

- **Be Aware of Group Dynamics:** Moderators should watch for the expert, the dominant talker, the shy participant, the rambler, etc.

- **Selecting the Focus Group Location:** Locations should be easy to get to. Participants should sit facing each other. A table should be available for participants to sit around. The room should also be accessible for setting up tape recorders.

- **Being Prepared for the Unexpected:** Moderators should be prepared for unexpected events such as no one showing up (make sure you bring list and phone numbers), only a few showing up (hold group anyway), meeting place inadequate, group does not want to talk (ask individuals questions, go around the room and everyone answers specific question, the group gets involved and don’t want to leave (have formal ending), hazardous weather (call everyone and cancel), early questions take up too much time (make sure important questions at the end of question rout get answered).

- **Concluding the Focus Group:** Thank the group for participating. The moderator may choose to summarise what was said and ask if anything was missed.

**Participants**

Focus group participants should be systematically and purposefully selected.
The following provides some guidelines in selecting potential participants:

- Purpose of study should guide who to invite.
- Focus group participants should be characterised by homogeneity, but with sufficient variation to allow for contrasting opinions. Homogeneity is most often sought in terms of occupation, social class, educational level, age, education, or family characteristics, and gender (unless interaction across these groups is what is driving the study).
- Participants should not be familiar with each other (those who know each other tend to form small group discussions).
- Size of the group is typically around 7–10. Groups of over twelve have often proven to be too big, while under four have shown that not enough total experiences exist.
- Focus groups require a flexible research design and not randomisation. In selecting participants, it is critical to remember that intent of focus groups is not to infer but to understand, not to generalise but to determine the range, not to make statements about population but to provide insights about how people perceive a situation.
- A helpful rule of thumb in determining the number of groups needed is to continue conducting interviews until little new information is provided. Typically, the first two groups provide a considerable amount of new information but by the third or fourth session, a fair amount may have already been covered. If this occurs stop.
- To get people to attend, one should personalise invitations, establish meeting times that don’t conflict with existing community activities or functions, contact potential participants via phone 10–14 days prior to, send personalised invitations one week before session, phone each person the day before to remind them. If feasible, incentives are also helpful in getting people to attend.

**Analysing and Reporting Phase**

**Analysis**

Analysis should begin by going back to intent of the study. For example, if purpose of the study is narrow, elaborate analysis may be unneeded and inappropriate. The process of data analysis must be systematic (follow a prescribed, sequential flow) and verifiable (another person would come to a similar conclusion using the available documents and the raw data). Ideally, the moderator or assistant should also do the analysis. A sequence of analysis may follow the following format:

- Process begins during pre-session small talk by observing levels of familiarity between participants.
NOTES

- Immediately after the session, moderator and assistant spot checks the tape recorder to make sure it recorded. If tape cannot be salvaged, moderating team should reconstruct the discussion immediately. It may be helpful to tape-record this debriefing.

- The moderator and assistant write down summary comments and listen to the complete tape to write a more complete summary of the discussion. This written summary should be prepared within hours after the session and before the next focus group. Moderator and assistant compare notes, share observations, talk about participant responses to key questions.

- The moderator and assistant should arrive at a short summary that is mutually agreeable. Field notes should capture information on:
  - Any changes in the list of questions
  - Participant characteristics
  - Descriptive phrases or words used by participants as they discussed the key question
  - Themes in the responses to the key questions
  - Subthemes indicating a point of view held by participants with common characteristics
  - Description of participant enthusiasm
  - Consistency between participant comments and their reported behaviours
  - Body language
  - New avenues of questioning that should be considered in future: should questions be revised, eliminated, added, etc.
  - Overall mood of discussion.

- The process then continues by gathering together brief summary reports, tape recordings, list of questions, demographic information, and if available, transcripts of the discussion.

- All summaries should be read at one sitting. Notes should be made of potential trends and patterns.

- Each transcript should be read (if no transcripts, then one should listen to the tapes of the discussions).

- During the second reading though the transcripts, mark sections related to each question on question list.

- When conducting analysis consideration should be given to five factors:
  - Words: Actual words and meanings of the words should be determined. One might make frequency counts of commonly used words. Cluster similar concepts together.
♦ Context: Examine the context of words by finding the triggering stimulus and then interpret the comment in light of that context.

♦ Internal consistency: Trace a flow of conversation and note changes or even reverses of position after interaction with others.

♦ Specificity of responses: Responses that are specific and based on experiences should be given more weight than responses that are vague and impersonal. Greater weight should be given to responses in first person rather than third person hypothetical answers.

♦ Find the big ideas: Look for rends or ideas that cut across the entire discussion.

**Reporting**

Once again, the objectives of the study should determine how and for whom the information needs to be reported. As a general rule, numbers and percentages are not appropriate for focus group research and should not be included in report. Reporting should be descriptive and present the meaning of the data as opposed to a summary of data.

Data can be examined and reported at three levels, including (1) the raw data, (2) descriptive statements and (3) interpretation (Kreuger, 1988).

**Raw data** present statements as they were said by respondents. The data might be ordered or categorised by natural levels or themes in the topic.

**Descriptive statements** summarise respondents’ comments and provide illustrative examples using the raw data. Decisions must be made as to which quotes to include.

**Interpretation** is most complex. Interpretation builds on the descriptive process by providing or presenting meaning of the data rather than simply summarising the data. In giving meaning to the descriptions, one should be reflective about own biases in interpretation.

**For Effective Focus Group Guide Development:**
- Decide on what information is most important
- 90-minute focus group generally consists of 5–6 questions
- Develop questions that will facilitate the sharing of ideas and experiences
- Apply guiding principles interview questions
- Ask questions that encourage the exchange of ideas and stories v. individual turn-taking in answering

**For Effective Focus Group Analysis:**
- Compile Responses
NOTES

- Repeated, virtually verbatim responses
- Insightful comments
- Unique opinions and valuable insights
- Overall themes and summary
- Analyse Information
- Creating a descriptive narrative
- Clustering and grouping information
- Summarising recurring themes and “types” of comments for individual questions
- Capture outliers

Other resources to aid you in data collection include local universities, through which you may be able to connect with graduate students who are interested in working with you for credit or for a lower cost.

The exercises will take you through the process of identifying which groups’ perspectives you want to collect, the topics and questions you would like their opinions about, and the mechanisms you will use to collect their perceptions.

SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Fill in the blanks:

10. ................. can be widely disseminated and are the most time-efficient method of collecting information from respondents.

11. ................. are useful tools for gathering in-depth information from your stakeholders.

12. ................. are useful if you want to gather a lot of information from a group of stakeholders during a short period of time.

13. Interpretation builds on the ................. process by providing or presenting meaning of the data rather than simply summarising the data.

14. ................. present statements as they were said by respondents.

ACTIVITY

Conduct an interview of a famous personality of your area. If possible, you may record the interview and assess your skills later.

8.6 SUMMARY

- The modern tools of communication need to be effective, keeping in view the needs, educational level, technologies level and financial levels of the targeted receiver.
Whether it is a small start-up business or a worldwide enterprise, fostering effective communication is critical to success. E-mail is widely used as a form of business communication and overall it is a highly effective communication tool.

E-mail is inexpensive, only requiring an Internet connection that is generally already present in the business. Technology has altered modern life in many ways, especially in the workplace. The invention of computers, the miniaturisation of electronics and the development of wireless communication have all altered the business world. Business communication, in particular, has seen some of the greatest advancements due to technological developments.

Surveys are one of the most time-efficient methods of collecting information from respondents. People generally respond to surveys.

Interviews are particularly valuable because they allow you to ask follow-up questions of interviewees when you need clarification about a particular response.

Lastly discussed are focus groups, useful if you want to gather a lot of information from a group of stakeholders during a short period of time.

**KEY WORDS**

- **Information Technology (IT):** It refers to anything related to computing technology, such as networking, hardware, software, the Internet or the people that work with these technologies.
- **Internet:** The Internet is a global system of interconnected computer networks.
- **Cloud Computing:** Cloud computing is the use of computing resources (hardware and software) that are delivered as a service over a network (typically the Internet). It entrusts remote services with a user’s data, software and computation.
- **Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID):** RFID is the use of a wireless non-contact system that uses radio-frequency electromagnetic fields to transfer data from a tag attached to an object, for the purposes of automatic identification and tracking.
- **Surveys:** A detailed study of a market or geographical area to gather data on attitudes, impressions, opinions, satisfaction level, etc., by polling a section of the population.
- **Interview:** An interview is a conversation between two or more people where questions are asked by the interviewer to elicit facts or statements from the interviewee.
Focus Group: A group of interacting individuals having some common interest or characteristics, brought together by a moderator, who uses the group and its interaction as a way to gain information about a specific or focused issue.

Moderator: Moderator in a focus group is one who manages on-going focus group interview process.

8.7 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. What is the role of technology in business today? How does communication technology help businesses improve their performance?
2. What are the effects of technology on business communication?
3. How pivotal are internet and emails to business communication? Illustrate on its advantages.
4. What are the tools for constructing messages?
5. How does technology act like a tool for collecting information?
6. How is interview a mode of collecting information? Discuss its benefits and limitations.

8.8 ANSWERS AND HINTS

ANSWERS FOR SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Q. No.</th>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using Technology in</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Tasks</td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mails in Business</td>
<td>5.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>6.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools for Constructing</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>brief, purposeful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messages</td>
<td>9.</td>
<td>attention grabbing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Tools for</td>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Surveys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collecting Information</td>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
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<td>descriptive</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Raw data</td>
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</table>
HINTS FOR DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Refer 8.2

Whether you are running a small start-up business or a worldwide enterprise, fostering effective communication is critical to success and with the advent of technology, fortunately, companies have a number of tools at their disposal to create an arena where open and honest communication is valued and respected.

2. Refer 8.2.1

Effects of technology on business communication are: Communication is Faster, Expanded Communication, opportunities, Communication must be More Deliberate Efficiency, Documentation and Communication is More Distracting

3. Refer 8.3 & 8.3.1

E-mail is widely used as a form of business communication and overall it is a highly effective communication tool and emailing has got many advantages as a business communication medium.

4. Refer 8.4

Clear cut messages, brief content and purposeful subject matter are some of the important business e-mail etiquettes that should be followed unfailingly.

5. Refer 8.5

There are a number of different kinds of tools for collecting information about the thoughts and beliefs that different groups have about your organisation and technology has provided with great ways of collecting and storing information.

6. Refer 8.5.2

Interviews are useful tools for gathering in-depth information from your stakeholders. However, it has its own benefits and limitations.

8.9 SUGGESTED READING FOR REFERENCE

SUGGESTED READINGS

NOTES


E-REFERENCES

- http://sbinformation.about.com/od/ecommerce/a/emailtips.htm
CONTENTS

9.1 Introduction
9.2 Meaning of Etiquette and Grooming
  9.2.1 Corporate Etiquettes
  9.2.2 Personal Grooming
9.3 Eye Contact
  9.3.1 Making the Right Eye Contact
  9.3.2 Making Eye Contact in the United States
  9.3.3 Making Eye Contact in European Countries
  9.3.4 Eye Contact in Most Asian, African and Latin American Cultures
  9.3.5 Eye Contact Etiquette in Middle Eastern Cultures
9.4 Body Language
  9.4.1 Standing
  9.4.2 Sitting
  9.4.3 Hands
  9.4.4 Head Movements
  9.4.5 Facial Expressions
9.5 Handshakes
  9.5.1 Function
  9.5.2 Misconceptions
  9.5.3 Giving a Good Handshake
  9.5.4 Benefits
  9.5.5 Tip
9.6 Business Cards
  9.6.1 Presenting Your Business Card
  9.6.2 Receiving a Business Card
  9.6.3 Basics of Card Layout

Contd...
9.7 Exchanging Business Card
  9.7.1 Translating Business Cards for International Use
  9.7.2 Exchanging Business Cards Internationally
9.8 Workplace Habits
  9.8.1 Punctuality
  9.8.2 Prioritizing Work
  9.8.3 Staying Positive
9.9 Summary
9.10 Descriptive Questions
9.11 Answers and Hints
9.12 Suggested Reading for Reference
TIME MANAGEMENT – PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDE

Mr. Raja Raman was supposed to give a presentation on “Time Management” at 10.30 am. He reached the venue at 11.15 a.m. and after that he took half an hour to fix his LCD and set his presentation. Then he gave his presentation, which was well designed with many visual aids, examples and good language. In between, he kept looking at the screen to read out the main points. During his speech, he kept repeating the words, “isn't it?” At the end of the presentation, which finished one hour later than its scheduled time, the manager of the company took the feedback of the presentation, and to the surprise of Mr. Raja Raman, received a completely negative feedback. He was unable to understand that even after preparing such a good presentation, why was the feedback negative.

Source: Business Communication By Sehgal
9.1 INTRODUCTION

In today’s highly globalized and competitive environment, executives are expected to know the essential business etiquettes. It means for successful and rewarding business transactions, they must know how to conduct themselves at company meetings, parties and dinners. They must be aware of their company’s culture and etiquettes. The company’s culture and etiquettes refer to conventional rules of social behaviour and the rules of business transactions.

9.2 MEANING OF ETIQUETTE AND GROOMING

9.2.1 CORPORATE ETIQUETTES

The word “etiquette” means conventional rules of social behaviour or professional conduct. These rules are unwritten rules, which act as norms to be observed by all professionals who work as a team in a particular company or department. They help you realize when your behaviour is appropriate or inappropriate. In business, as in life, etiquette is a self-rewarding trait of appropriate conduct. Further, the rules of business etiquette mean more than the rules of just being nice.

This means self-discipline and respect for the conventional norms of conduct. Members belonging to a profession (e.g., medicine, law, chartered accountancy, etc.) are required to observe the rules of their professional conduct. Similarly, people working in business organizations are supposed to behave as per accepted norms. They should be aware of the culture and behavioural standards of their organizations. They should know how to conduct themselves in formal and informal gatherings, such as company meetings, office parties, and ceremonial dinners and so on. These fundamental rules of business behaviour are known as business etiquette.

If you ignore these norms of group attitude and behaviour, you run the risk of being singled out as ‘loners’ or ‘headstrong’ persons. Your behaviour may disrupt the smooth working of the team by causing misunderstanding and tension among fellow workers.

Suppose, you choose to turn up late for meetings habitually or ignore deadlines or indulge in character assassination at coffee-breaks or
demand (as a right), not request (as a favour), help in a situation, you are ignoring, knowingly or unknowingly, the rules of good professional conduct, behaviour and etiquette.

9.2.2 PERSONAL GROOMING

Outward appearance is the window of your personality to the world. You not only dress for others but for yourself too. External appearance is important because that gives the first impression to others about your personality.

Two Major Reasons

- Outward appearance is easier to examine and easier to improve.
- Outward appearance has a more direct and immediate effect on one’s interactions with others.

If we look good we will feel good.

Personal Grooming and Clothing – Women

Makeup should be subtle—down to a minimum. Preferably use lipsticks in matt shades. Use a lip liner to outline lips before you fill in your lips with lipstick. When outlining your lips, stick to the natural curves of your lips. The lip liner should be a shade darker or the same shade as the lipstick. Lipsticks shades to be worn at work should be light in colour and not dark shades. The shades should be natural in colour rather than bright and dark. Light pinks, light browns and skin tones are appropriate.

Accessories

- Pearls, white gold, silver and precious stones look very elegant in office than chunky gold jewellery.
- Bangles which do not jingle with Indian dresses and a fine bracelet with western dress can be worn to work.
- Earrings should not dangle below the ear lobe. No more than an inch in length is acceptable.
- Nose pins and studs are acceptable. Nose rings are unprofessional.
- All tattoos must be covered while at work.
- Always wear sheer socks/stockings with shoes under skirts. No bare skin should show.
- Match the colour of your purse and shoes.
- Have good quality accessories like a folder, briefcase, handbag, watch, mobile, mobile cover, key chain, etc.

Personal Grooming and Clothing – Men

- Shaving daily is a must. If you want to keep a moustache or beard, it should be neat and well-trimmed.
Trim hair which may frequently peep out from your nose and ears.

Keep your hair way above your collar and keep side burns trimmed and short.

Your hairstyle should reflect your personality and should be kept groomed and, of course, clean at all times.

Keep nails short and clean, as your hands are seen while communicating.

When it comes to wearing a fragrance, always remember, a little dab is just enough.

Use deodorant/Anti per spirant

Opt for one that smells fresh and tingly, nothing to heavy in aroma. Steer clear from strong fruity or spicy smells for work.

Darker suits carry more authority; the most powerful colours are dark blue, grey and black.

Solid colours and pinstripes are best, as long as pinstripes are muted and narrow.

Safari suits are not formal.

The shirt should be light collared, either plain or with horizontal or vertical stripes in light shades

Loud and big checks and prints of any kind are to be avoided.

A long-sleeved shirt should always be buttoned at the cuffs and never rolled up.

White, off white, blue, cream, beige, baby pink, pale n light yellow are the best office colours.

Always wear an ironed shirt, even if the shirt claims to be “wash and wear.”

When wearing long-sleeved shirts, cuffs should extend a quarter inch below suit sleeve.

Cotton/polyester blends are acceptable. The higher the cotton content, the better you’ll look.

The legs of the trousers must not be so long as to fall in folds over the shoe.

Trousers should be short enough to look neat and long enough to cover the bare skin above the socks when they are hitched up in a sitting posture.

A printed, striped or checked shirt ought to be worn with plain trouser
If the trousers are striped or checked, the shirt should be plain.

If the trousers are of dark colour then the shirt should be of complimentary light colour. For example, a light blue shirt with dark blue trousers.

When wearing a shirt without a tie, only the two collar buttons may be left undone.

Your tie should complement and add colour to your suit.

Width should be approximately the same as lapels, generally 2¾–3 ½ inches wide.

Linen wrinkles too easily. Satin ties are too flashy, but 100 per cent silk ties make the most powerful and professional impact and are also the easiest to tie.

Front end of the tie should touch the tip of the belt and back end tucked in well.

Avoid ties with cartoons, huge flowers etc.

Black and brown leather are the best colours.

Black/brown lace up shoes, cap toe, and wingtips are the most conservative.

Shoes should be well polished and in good condition.

Socks should complement the suit.

They should not bunch around your ankles.

They should be long enough that skin is not seen when legs are crossed.

It is always better, that your socks are of same colour as the trousers as it gives a polished look as there is no break in vision.

White socks and sports socks are a big no-no.

**Accessories**

Jewellery should be very simple and conservative. Nothing more than a wedding band and a single, very fine gold chain is acceptable.

Briefcases should be leather; brown and black are the best colours.

Watches should be simple and plain. Avoid leather, metal straps are the best.

Belts should be leather and should match or complement shoes (blue/black/grey suit = black belt and shoes; brown/tan/beige suit = brown belt and shoes). The buckle should be simple and sober.

Tie pins and cuff links add to your professional demeanour, so use them.
State whether the following statements are true/false:

1. The word “etiquette” means forced rules of social behaviour or professional conduct.
2. External appearance or grooming is unimportant because that gives the only the outer appearance of you, to others about your personality.
3. All tattoos must be covered while at work.

Dress business-like one day. Notice the observatory compliments you get that day.

Corporate etiquettes are unwritten rules, which act as norms to be observed by all professionals who work as a team in a particular company or department.

**9.3 EYE CONTACT**

How and when to make eye contact depends entirely on the customs of where you are, who you are with, and the social setting.

*Example:* Some cultures consider making direct eye contact aggressive, rude or a show of disrespect. Other cultures, and some religious groups, consider eye contact between men and women inappropriate and either as threatening or flirtatious. In many Asian cultures, avoiding eye contact with a member of the opposite sex or a superior is seen as a show of respect.

However, in the United States and most of Europe, making eye contact is not only seen as appropriate, but is necessary in establishing yourself as a powerful business professional.

Eye contact is a method of communication. A quick glance sends a different message than a cold stare – but both are forms of making eye contact. Depending upon the culture, setting and person, the message you think you are sending may not be the one that is received.

**9.3.1 MAKING THE RIGHT EYE CONTACT**

In business, and social settings making the “right” eye contact never involves staring at someone or having a fixed gaze. To make eye contact, look directly into the other persons’ eyes for 4–5 seconds. Be sure to blink normally, and nod or shift your head from time to time during a conversation. Mimicking the facial expressions of the person talking (i.e., showing concern or smiling) also helps to support
appropriate eye contact. A frozen stance and tense face seems more like staring than contact.

Almost universally, looking into someone else’s eyes for more than a few seconds before smiling or otherwise changing your facial expression is discourteous. Blinking fast and frequently can be associated with feeling nervous or uncomfortable; be sure to gauge your own blink rate and watch how the person you are looking at is responding.

### 9.3.2 MAKING EYE CONTACT IN THE UNITED STATES

In the United States, making eye contact is interpreted as showing interest, paying attention, and a sign of self-confidence. Unless the situation itself is confrontational in nature, it is generally acceptable for children, adults and people of both sexes to make eye contact with other people.

In business, it is particularly important that you make eye contact when you are introduced to someone and when they are speaking to you. You do not have to stare someone down, but frequently glancing away or refusing to make eye contact may be interpreted as weakness, disinterest or as being disrespectful.

### 9.3.3 MAKING EYE CONTACT IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Most European eye contact customs are similar to those in the United States, especially in such countries as Spain, France and Germany. In France, making eye contact with a stranger may be interpreted as showing interest.

### 9.3.4 EYE CONTACT IN MOST ASIAN, AFRICAN AND LATIN AMERICAN CULTURES

Extended eye contact can be taken as an affront or a challenge of authority.

Generally, only sporadic or brief eye contact is considered acceptable. This is particularly true in Asian cultures where people are from different professions or social levels.

*Example:* In China and Japan, children show respect to elders by not making intense eye contact; employees would not make eye contact with employers; students would not force eye contact with teachers, etc.

These cultures do not view avoiding looking someone in the eyes as rude or disinterested or even as necessarily being submissive. Instead, avoiding eye contact is usually interpreted as being simply being polite or reverent.

The rule of thumb in Asia, Africa and Latin American cultures is to be careful about the eye contact you make with anyone that could be seen as a social (or workplace) superior. Staring at a superior will be seen as a challenge or as a sign of disrespect.
9.3.5 EYE CONTACT ETIQUETTE IN MIDDLE EASTERN CULTURES

In general, Middle Eastern cultures, particularly among Muslims, do not see as direct eye contact between the sexes as being appropriate. Business women traveling to the Middle East may draw attention simply for being different and some men may try to make eye contact. However, be advised that making or holding eye contact can communicate the message that your interest is less than casual or curious.

If you are doing business with another woman, intense eye contact within your own gender is often used to stress the truthfulness of a point and is considered acceptable.

Self Assessment Questions

State whether the following questions are true/false:

4. In general, Middle Eastern cultures, particularly among Muslims, do not see as direct eye contact between the sexes as being appropriate.
5. How and when to make eye contact does not depend on the customs of where you are, who you are with, and the social setting.
6. In business, and social settings making the “right” eye contact involves staring at someone or having a fixed gaze.

Activity

Consciously make an effort to always look at the person you are talking to, in the eye, for an entire week, and reflect on the improvements it brings in the way you talk to people and they talk to you.

Note

Eye contact is a method of communication. A quick glance sends a different message than a cold stare – but both are forms of making eye contact.

9.4 BODY LANGUAGE

Body language can make or break a deal. How you carry yourself when engaged in conversation is often as important as what you say. Body language is nonverbal, but it communicates volumes about you nonetheless.

With almost infinite symbolic interpretations for body language, no wonder people are nervous about it! Your best bet is to know about some of the body-language pits you can fall into and how to avoid them.
9.4.1 STANDING
When you stand, keep your back straight, middle section in alignment with your back, shoulders back and head up. This posture connotes comfort with yourself and ease in the situation.

Slouching, sticking your belly out, stuffing your hands in your pockets, and folding your arms defensively all suggest aggressive unease.

9.4.2 SITTING
Take care in the way you sit, for no other position connotes so much on its own. Think of the diversity of sitting positions that you’ve seen in business meetings, from practically horizontal to alert and upright. Sit with a straight back and with your legs together in front of you or crossed, either at the knee or at the ankle. Normally, women don’t cross their legs, but men are allowed. Avoid jiggling your knee, which is a sign of nervousness (and can be pretty annoying to people sitting near you).

9.4.3 HANDS
Some people talk with their hands; others stand with their hands glued to their sides. Most people haven’t the foggiest notion what their hands are doing when they talk.

Using your hands can be effective sometimes, aggressive sometimes, and irrelevant most of the time. Controlling your hands takes effort and willpower. Monitor your hand movements. Avoid making sweeping, cappuccino-clearing gestures during meetings. If you have to, sit on your hands.

9.4.4 HEAD MOVEMENTS
Head movements communicate important information. Nodding in agreement can be immensely helpful to others, but too much nodding makes you look like a bobble-head doll. Shaking your head can signal disagreement or disapproval, but avoid shaking your head too much.

9.4.5 FACIAL EXPRESSIONS
Facial expressions are crucial in your repertoire of body language. No other part of your body can convey the immense richness of nonverbal communication that your face does.

Example: Smiles are important signals of generosity and nonaggression. But forced smiles signal that you can barely tolerate the other person.
Likewise, frowns signal disagreement, disapproval, and sometimes anger. But they can also suggest hard thinking and focused concentration.

These facial expressions are the most obvious ones, but hundreds of others exist: an arched eyebrow, flared nostrils, a bitten lip, a grimace and so on. Every one of them has a culturally agreed-on set of meanings.
7. Body language is ................., but it communicates volumes about you nonetheless.

8. Facial expressions are ................. in your repertoire of body language.

9. .................. smiles signal that you can barely tolerate the other person.

Notice the facial expression of your favourite movie star in an entire movie. You would realize the actor never spoke a word in few scenes and still communicated what he/she wanted to. Similarly, understand that everybody posture sends across an interpretation to the other. Focus and mend ways to portray better.

Body language can make or break a deal.

9.5 HANDSHAKES

A proper handshake is required to show courtesy to other businessmen. A good handshake not only makes you look more professional, but it could influence a significant business decision, such as whether you strike a big deal or get a new job. The proper grip and hand position are necessary to good handshake etiquette, but so is the rest of the body. Do not forget global etiquette – other cultures may add something like a kiss on the cheek or have a different way of shaking.

9.5.1 FUNCTION

Business etiquette concerns to the practice of observing social norms designed to show courtesy to other people in a professional setting. Handshakes are a standard greeting, and create one of the first impressions you make on a stranger. Beyond the physical greeting, handshakes commences a relationship with another person and subletly give off a signal that you are pleased to meet him, according to expert team organizer Kevin Eikenberry of the Kevin Eikenberry Group.

9.5.2 MISCONCEPTIONS

Proper handshake etiquette includes not just hands, but also positioning the body properly and giving off good nonverbal communication. As you approach somebody, make eye contact without staring, and offer
a quick smile. Face the other party directly to express openness and honesty, and do not put any hands in your pocket. Only use your right to give a handshake. You can use the left hand if you are an amputee or have an injury to the right hand.

9.5.3 GIVING A GOOD HANDSHAKE

Whenever shaking the hands, make sure your right hand is open so the lower joint of the thumb of both parties touch. The grip should be firm – not limp or so strong that it hurts the other person. You may have to adjust your grip to that of the other party’s. A good handshake has a smooth up-and-down motion. You will have to estimate when the person wants to end the shake and then do so right away.

9.5.4 BENEFITS

A business handshake can help or hurt, when you negotiate a business deal. A poor handshake, such as one that lasts too long, can make the other party uneasy. A proper handshake, on the other hand, gives off good body language, starts a meeting off with energy and shows your exuberance.

9.5.5 TIP

Most business cultures use the handshake as a greeting, but not all do so in the same way. Research the proper business greeting etiquette of other cultures.

Example: In Japan, people greet each other with a bow, but have become accustomed to handshakes because so many foreigners do business there. People in other countries use variations of a handshake. The French, use a light grip and a single pump.

**SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

State whether the following statements are true/false:

10. A handshake not only makes you look unprofessional, but it could influence a significant business decision, such as whether you strike a big deal or get a new job.

11. You must estimate when the person wants to end the handshake and must do so then.

12. Never research the proper business greeting etiquette of other cultures.

**ACTIVITY**

Make it a habit to handshake with your acquaintances to adopt the professional approach. It will automatically teach you the different responses you get.
9.6 BUSINESS CARDS

When you give someone your business card, you’re introducing yourself on paper. A business card is a representation of who you are so be sure that the card is in pristine condition before you hand it over. You wouldn’t wear a wrinkled suit to an interview, would you?

9.6.1 PRESENTING YOUR BUSINESS CARD

Always present your business card in your right hand, or in both hands. Never pass out your business cards as though you were dealing a poker hand. If you travel for business, you’ll save yourself embarrassment by following this rule. In some countries, presenting your business card in your left hand is a serious insult. Look the individual in the eye and smile when presenting the card. Not only is it good etiquette, it shows them you’re engaged with them.

9.6.2 RECEIVING A BUSINESS CARD

When being given a business card, accept the card in the same way it was presented—either in your right hand or both hands. Take a few moments to study the business card, commenting on it and clarifying information before putting it away.

Don’t ever slide a business card into your back pocket and sit on it. Always keep your business cards in a distinguished case. When you are back in your office, add the information from the card into your database as soon as possible. You never want to be in a position where you have to ask that person for another card. That’s a big etiquette faux pas.

Business cards are an internationally recognized means of presenting personal contact information—so be sure you have a good supply on hand.

If you travel abroad for business, do a little research on business etiquette for your destination before you go.

Example: The etiquette “rules” in the UK, far more relaxed than in Japan. Understanding business etiquette allows you to feel comfortable and will help build trust when building business relationships.

A business card is an inexpensive, internationally recognized means of representing yourself to business associates and of carrying contact information to them. The card serves as a method of introduction and often includes a simple statement or selling point about your business or service.

9.6.3 BASICS OF CARD LAYOUT

Generally a business card includes the name of the person, the company name, a company logo if applicable and the relevant contact information (street address, postal coding, country, telephone and fax numbers and email addresses.)
Traditionally black ink is used on white card stock. The fount should be legible and professional. The international standard for card size is $85.60 \times 53.98$ mm ($3.370 \times 2.125$ inches).

**SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

Fill in the blanks:

13. When you give someone your ................., you’re introducing yourself on paper.

14. Take a few moments to study the business card, commenting on it and ......................... information before putting it away.

15. Traditionally ....................... ink is used on white business card stock.

**ACTIVITY**

Never miss an opportunity to notice when two working people exchange their business cards. Pick up the right traits.

### 9.7 EXCHANGING BUSINESS CARD

Business cards are internationally distinguished as a means of introduction and information exchange but in many cultures they are also seen as a representation of the individual. The basic etiquette rule is to present your card in the best manner in which you would present yourself.

Always have a good supply of cards. You will be expected to present them to business contacts, sometimes more than once in the interest of good manners. Do not carry your cards loose in your pockets or allow them to become soiled. Never write on your card or on any card you receive unless directed to do so. Invest in a small, discreet card case.

#### 9.7.1 TRANSLATING BUSINESS CARDS FOR INTERNATIONAL USE

It is regarded courteous to provide a translation of the card information on the reverse side. Employ a professional translator or agency. Do not allow any embellishment of the basic information. Card recipients need to know who you are, what your title is, for what company you work and how to contact you. Make sure your title is accurately conveyed. Transliteration of titles has become increasingly acceptable in recent years but it is more important that the rendering of the title indicate your position in the company hierarchy.

Do not translate the address and make sure that numbers are arranged in the order appropriate for the country in which you will be traveling. Also make sure the correct dialect is used and that any cultural nuances are observed. For instance, foreign translations of
business cards for use in China are often printed with gold ink, which is considered auspicious.

9.7.2 EXCHANGING BUSINESS CARDS INTERNATIONALLY

Understanding the norms and values of the local culture while traveling internationally helps to avoid giving offense. Observing the appropriate etiquette communicates respect and facilitates communication. In many parts of the globe, a business card carries much greater significance than a handy means to trade contact information. For the most part, the exchange of cards occurs at the beginning or end of the initial meeting although this detail should be clarified for any given nation before traveling there. Consider the following examples of foreign business card etiquette.

Japan

In Japan, the business card is treated with respect and honour as an extension of the person. Consequently, exchanging cards in Japan involves the greatest degree of ceremony and etiquette of any nation. When a card is presented to you, receive it with both hands, bow, and express gratitude to the person for the opportunity to meet with them. Do not put the card away immediately as that would be regarded as rude. You are expected to carefully examine and to memorize the card. It is polite to comment on the card even if you only clarify the address. Under no circumstances should you put the card in your pocket. It should always be placed in a holder. Never make notes on the card's blank areas.

In preparing your own cards select a quality card stock – usually a grade higher than what you might otherwise select. Make sure that your card carries as accurate a representation of your title as possible. The Japanese place considerable cultural emphasis on status and hierarchy. For the translation, the Katakana phonetic writing system has become standard. The horizontal layout is appropriate but the order of the address elements should be: country, state, postal code, city and street. There is no need to wait to be asked to present your card. You can feel free to do so at any time but never during a meal. Hold the card in both hands by the corners with the Japanese side facing up and with the type toward the recipient so the card can be read. If you are presenting cards to more than one person start with the highest ranking individual and move down according to the protocol of rank.

During a meeting, it is customary to arrange the cards you have received on the table in front of you in the order in which the participants are seated. When the meeting ends the cards should be transferred to a card case.
China

In China, it is preferable to present your card before you ask for that of the other person. It is not impolite to present your card before you are asked to do so. Make sure that the translation of your card in simplified Chinese characters is in the appropriate dialect (Mandarin or Cantonese.)

If your business is distinguished by being the oldest or the largest (or some similar superlative) the card should convey that fact. As in Japan, the card should be presented with both hands, Chinese translation facing up, with the type toward the recipient so the card can be read. Bow and thank the person for the opportunity to meet with them. Examine the card and perhaps ask for a clarification of some point to convey interest. Never put a card away immediately and never write on a card you receive.

Korea

When you receive a business card in Korea, nod your head as a gesture of respect and thank the person for the opportunity to meet with them. Unlike other Asian countries, it is appropriate to put the card away immediately. Looking at the card too long is regarded as ignorant and impolite.

It is preferred that you present your card to a person before asking for their card. Present your card with both hands, Korean side up, text facing toward the recipient and give a gentle nod of the head. The nodding of the head is especially important when meeting with individuals senior to yourself.

India

In India, business cards are exchanged even in non-business situations, generally after the initial handshake and greeting. Always present the card so the recipient may read the text as the card is being handed to them. It is advisable to add any university degrees or honours to your card information. Present and receive cards with your right hand. (This practice should be followed in any Islamic country and in many parts of Africa.) There is no need to have your card translated into Hindi as English is widely spoken in the Indian business community.

Other Nations

Never make the mistake of believing that you understand the card etiquette in one country based on your experience in another.

Example: In Iran, only senior-level individuals exchange business cards. In other Arabic nations, like Kuwait or Saudi Arabia, cards are given to everyone you meet. In Hungary, on the translated side, your surname should precede your given name. In Spain and Turkey, the business card should be presented to the receptionist upon arrival.
State whether the following statements are true/false:

16. Business cards are internationally distinguished as a means of interview but in many cultures they are also seen as a representation of the individual.

17. One must put the business card away immediately or else that would be regarded as rude.

18. In India, present and receive business cards with your left hand. Setting up an intranet site is one of the worst ways for small businesses to keep all their workers in the loop and communicate.

Read about other countries online as to how professionals respond to business card exchanging in different regions.

9.8 WORKPLACE HABITS

Some essential skills enable people to perform tasks required by their occupation and other activities of daily life. These skills provide people with a foundation for learning other skills, and enhance their ability to adapt to change.

9.8.1 PUNCTUALITY

In 2011, a survey reported that fifteen per cent of workers were late once per week. When lateness does occur, its effects spread throughout the workplace. Though its importance may seem obvious, the impact of punctuality actually has quite a few subtle layers, it involves the individual just as much as it affects the workplace as a whole.

What it Communicates?

Punctuality communicates a plethora of positives to your employer and your peers. It shows that you’re dedicated to the job, interested in the work and capable of handling responsibility. When you arrive on time for work or work-related activities, it shows that you are capable of honouring your word. Being punctual helps employees project a sense of professionalism and commitment.

What it Achieves?

When employees are punctual, the workplace operates more smoothly as a whole. For instance, when everyone is on time for a meeting, the meeting is able to start in full stride. Punctuality may help you achieve advancement. Research conducted by Diana DeLonzor, author of “Never Be Late Again: 7 Cures for the Punctually Challenged,” shows that managers are less likely to promote late employees.
Workplace Effects

Lack of punctuality not only affects the “machine” of the workplace – it affects the people in it. It may lead to resentment, as co-workers who are on time compare themselves to late-comers. Being late throws you out of the loop, as you may miss important information. This causes a harmful division among employees. Leaders affect the entire workplace. When leaders are late, it sends an irresponsible message to employees, which may lower morale; when leaders are punctual, it exhibits a work ethic to aspire to.

Personal Effects

Lateness leads to stress, and stress leads to poor workplace performance. Being consistently late may cause you to start rationalizing your lateness. When this happens, you begin to blame outside circumstances and lose focus on potential solutions. Constant lateness can lock you into a pattern. When tardiness becomes the norm, your job might be in jeopardy. Your finances suffer as well – Diana DeLonzer reports that 10 minutes of tardiness over the course of one year will cost you the equivalent of one week’s paid vacation.

9.8.2 PRIORITIZING WORK

Precision planning is the key to any successful business, no matter its size. Planning can help alleviate workplace stress and increase productivity. Rather than plan work for your small business too far in advance, do it daily, modifying your agenda for the next day according to new priorities and unfinished business from the day before. This can help you accomplish goals more efficiently.

Step 1

Make a list of all of the tasks that you need to complete, and break everything down into single days. You don’t have to make your list in any order, just write down the necessary tasks as they come to you. This free-flow form of organization will help you remember tasks you might otherwise forget.

Step 2

Prioritize your list. Now that you know all that needs to be done in the course of the day, start prioritizing your tasks. If necessary, break large tasks down into small ones. Figure out what needs to be done now, what needs to be done before the end of the day and what can be completed another day.

Step 3

Schedule your day according to your priorities. If you need to finish a project as soon as possible, set aside enough time at the beginning of your day to complete this task. Schedule lesser priorities after lunch or at the close of your business day.
Step 4
Take your work habits into account. Prioritizing and scheduling is one thing, but making that work within your own schedule is an entirely different matter. If you tend to focus better on tasks before lunch, make sure that all of your complicated tasks are completed before this time. If you are more productive an hour before the close of your business day, use this time to get your important tasks done. Understanding how you work can help you be more efficient and increase your productivity.

Step 5
Write down anything that did not get accomplished during your day, and make it a priority for your next day’s list of tasks. While we would all love to finish our to-do lists at the day’s end, it is not always possible. Prioritizing the previous day’s unfinished tasks will prevent them from getting forgotten as the new day brings new challenges.

9.8.3 STAYING POSITIVE
With the current world economy in a recession, it can be difficult to maintain a positive attitude in the workplace. In fact, sometimes it can seem like Mission Impossible. Instead of falling victim to the negative work attitudes that surround you, make an effort to buck the trend. Look for the good in your co-workers and your workplace. By learning how to communicate with co-workers effectively, you will gain recognition as a force of positive attitude in the workplace.

Here are some simple steps for how to communicate with co-workers effectively:

- Be appreciative
- Recharge yourself
- Volunteer your time
- Avoid negative work attitudes

By following the specific strategies below, you’ll learn how to communicate with co-workers effectively, and lend to a positive attitude in the workplace.

Be Appreciative
It is always nicer to get a pat on the back rather than to get stabbed in the back. If you’re wondering “how do I change my negative attitude,” start by observing how you communicate with co-workers. If you practice asking useful questions, giving accolades and being gracious at work for two weeks, you’ll notice a difference in the people you work with and in your own feelings about work.

Stay Positive Check-up Questions:

- How often do you show appreciation at work?
- Are there opportunities to energize your co-workers?
What is the key to increasing a positive attitude in the workplace?

It’s easier than you think to create a positive attitude in the workplace – simply, show appreciation for your co-workers.

How to Communicate with Co-workers Effectively?

- **Give thanks:** Thank co-workers for the work they do that makes your job easier – including the peers, managers and office assistants. Even thank the security guard for making you feel safe at work. Cultivate a thankful, positive attitude in the workplace, and in return you’ll notice a change in how co-workers treat you.

- **Acknowledge a Job Well Done:** One of our favourite ways to create positive energy at work is to give a “Most Valuable Player” award. Once a month, stage a vote for the office MVP – asking each voter to include why their nominee should get the award. You can even have employees vote on what the award will be, from premium parking to a tiara or crown.

- **Celebrate:** Take the time to celebrate birthdays, holidays, life changes and achievements. Not sure how to celebrate? Bring in a Nerf football; bake cookies and bring them to work; or put up a graffiti poster where people can leave positive comments.

Recharge Yourself

A favourite quote of ours is “A dead battery can’t charge a dead battery.” Stop complaining about negative work attitudes and lend your own energy to creating a more positive attitude in the workplace. Be the office live wire!

Stay Positive Check-up Questions:

- How can one person increase the positive attitude in the workplace?
- What specific things can someone do to tap into the energy of others?
- How can you maintain a more energetic and positive attitude in the workplace?

Bringing more energy to work can seem draining. But everyone we’ve talked to who tries it finds that they get more energy in return.

How to Communicate with Co-workers in Effectively?

- **Be Enthusiastic:** Enthusiasm is infectious. If you’re going to spend eight hours a day at work, why not make it more than just tolerable. Make an effort to smile, laugh and enjoy your job. If you work to create a more positive attitude in the workplace, others will follow.

- **Practice Random Acts of Kindness:** Each day try to do something kind and helpful. Offer to cover for a co-worker so they can attend their kid’s soccer game, bring a busy colleague a
cup of coffee, or volunteer for a project. You don’t have to create elaborate situations, just keep your eyes out for opportunities to do a good deed.

- **Look for Opportunities to have Fun:** We all know someone who can make anything fun—and make time fly. Be that person. It’s amazing how a joke here and a silly celebration there can breathe life into a stale office. Before you know it, other people will start coming to work with more bounce in their step.

**Volunteer Your Time**

Now is the perfect time to find a way to contribute to the greater good in your workplace. No matter how busy you are, look for five minutes that you can give every day. Others are sure to appreciate your efforts and you might even enjoy it.

**Stay Positive Check-up Questions**

- How do you find opportunities to volunteer?
- What are the best places to volunteer?
- Isn’t it best to volunteer outside of your organization?

Try these strategies for effective volunteering:

**How to Communicate with Co-workers Effectively?**

- **Pitch in:** If your office coffee pot or refrigerator seem to become a science project, break the cycle by pitching in to clean it out once a week. Then encourage others to help out. Even relatively small things (like a clean place to store your lunch) can dramatically improve the positive attitude in the workplace.

- **Contribute to the Community:** Instead of getting sucked into office drama, create positive energy by volunteering outside of the office. Explore topics that are interesting to you such as homelessness, drama or adult literacy then find an existing program that needs volunteers. We’ve done all of the above and we were paid back a hundredfold.

- **Don’t Overlook the Need within:** Recently we were in a grocery store that was holding a fundraiser for another employee who had medical problems. They talked at length about how this brought everyone closer. When looking for a project, don’t overlook the needs and concerns of your co-workers.

**Avoid Negative Work Attitudes**

Negative work attitudes create a vicious cycle that can rob energy from an organization. If you’re famous for your awful moods and stinging commentary, try something new.

**Stay Positive Check-up Questions**

- Can you resist sarcasm?
Do you look for the good in people?

Do you avoid stabbing people in the back?

Avoiding negative work attitudes is easier than it might seem.

### SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Fill in the blanks:

19. When you are ................., it shows that you are capable of honouring your word.

20. Instead of falling victim to the ................. work attitudes that surround you, make an effort to stay .................

21. To communicate with co-workers effectively, one must .................. a job well done.

### ACTIVITY

Wake up on a Sunday and plan your day according to priorities and let it not be another lazy Sunday. Experience the joy of prioritizing what holds more importance the next day.

### NOTE

Punctuality communicates a plethora of positives to your employer and your peers.

#### 9.9 SUMMARY

- In business, as in life, etiquette is a self-rewarding trait of appropriate conduct. The first impression of any individual is created by external appearance. Even products are thoughtfully packed for instant appeal. It is imperative that we take utmost care of our appearance; of which our clothes and grooming are an integral part.

- The word “etiquette” means conventional rules of social behaviour or professional conduct.

- Outward appearance is the window of your personality to the world.

- In business, and social settings making the “right” eye contact is utmost essential and never involves staring at someone or having a fixed gaze.

- Equally crucial is body language, which can make or break a deal. How you carry yourself when engaged in conversation is often as important as what you say. Body language is nonverbal, but it communicates volumes about you nonetheless.

- Facial expressions are crucial in your repertoire of body language.
Also, a proper handshake is required to show courtesy to other businessmen. A good handshake not only makes you look more professional, but it could influence a significant business decision, such as whether you strike a big deal or get a new job.

When you give someone your business card, you’re introducing yourself on paper. A business card is a representation of who you are so be sure that the card is in pristine condition before you hand it over.

The basic etiquette rule is to present your business card in the best manner in which you would present yourself.

Some essential skills enable people to perform tasks required by their occupation and other activities of daily life like punctuality, prioritizing work, staying positive, etc.

One should evolve one’s own signature style.

Today time is thus utilized to the fullest and business is not limited to closed rooms, it is all encompassing, the concept of power brunches, lunches and dinners is an accepted way of doing business.

**Key Words**

- **Business Etiquette**: Expected behaviours and expectations for individual actions within society, group or class. Within a place of business, it involves treating co-workers and employer with respect and courtesy in a way that creates a pleasant work environment for everyone.

- **Integrity**: Integrity means you act in an honest, truthful and trustworthy manner.

- **Personality**: Defined as a dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences his or her cognitions, emotions, interpersonal orientations motivations, and behaviours in various situations.

- **Grooming**: Care for one’s personal appearance hygiene, and clothing.

- **Business Card**: A small card printed or inscribed with a person’s name and business affiliation, including such information as title, address and telephone number.

- **Power Lunch**: A working lunch, especially one at which significant discussions are conducted in presence of powerful politicians, executives, etc.

- **Positive Attitude**: A predisposition or a tendency to react positively towards a certain idea, object, person or situation.

- **Sarcasm**: A cutting, often ironic remark aimed to hurt.
9.10 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. How essential is business etiquette and personal grooming to an organization?
2. What does making the right eye contact imply? Can it convey wrong meanings?
3. How can kinesics make or break a deal? Elucidate.
4. How pivotal are handshakes to a businessman? How can they lead to misconceptions?
5. What are business cards? What is the right way to present and receive a business card?
6. What do you understand by exchanging business cards? Does it have different meaning in different regions? Explain with example.
7. What are essential work habits that an individual must adhere to? How important is punctuality?
8. How can one aim at prioritizing work at workplace? How does it improve one’s performance?
9. What do you understand by staying positive and being appreciative in the work environment?

9.11 ANSWERS AND HINTS

ANSWERS FOR SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

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<td>20. negative, positive</td>
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HINTS FOR DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Refer 9.2.1 & 9.2.2

   In today’s highly globalized and competitive environment, executives are expected to know the essential business etiquettes which primarily entail business etiquette and personal grooming.

2. Refer 9.3

   In business, and social settings making the “right” eye contact never involves staring at someone or having a fixed gaze or else it can convey negative meaning.

3. Refer 9.4

   How you carry yourself when engaged in conversation is often as important as what you say. Body language is nonverbal, but it communicates volumes about you nonetheless.

4. Refer 9.5 & 9.5.2

   A good handshake not only makes you look more professional, but it could influence a significant business decision. Proper handshake etiquette includes not just hands, but also positioning the body properly and giving off good nonverbal communication.

5. Refer 9.6, 9.6.1 & 9.6.2

   A business card is a representation of who you are so be sure that the card is in pristine condition before you hand it over. Always present your business card in your right hand, or in both hands and follow the same for receiving.

6. Refer 9.7

   Business cards are internationally distinguished as a means of introduction and information exchange but in many cultures they are also seen as a representation of the individual which differ in different countries.

7. Refer 9.8

   Some essential skills enable people to perform tasks required by their occupation and other activities of daily life which become a part of habit, which includes: Staying Positive, Prioritizing Work Punctuality.
8. Refer 9.8.2

Precision planning is the key to any successful business, no matter its size. Planning can help alleviate workplace stress and increase productivity.

9. Refer 9.8.3

With the current world economy in a recession, it can be difficult to maintain a positive attitude in the workplace. Instead of falling victim to the negative work attitudes that surround you, make an effort to buck the trend. Look for the good in your co-workers and your workplace.

9.12 SUGGESTED READING FOR REFERENCE

SUGGESTED READINGS


E-REFERENCES

- http://www.slideshare.net/badarinathprasadavantsa/grooming-and-business-etiquette
CHAPTER

ASPECTS OF COMMUNICATION

CONTENTS

10.1 Introduction
10.2 Cultural Aspects of Communication
10.3 Intercultural Communication
  10.3.1 Language: Cornerstone of Intercultural Communication
  10.3.2 Diversity/Intercultural Communication Policies
10.4 Multicultural Communication
  10.4.1 Tips for Native English Speakers
  10.4.2 Tips for Non-native English Speakers
10.5 Ethical Aspects of Communication
  10.5.1 Characteristics of Ethical Communication
  10.5.2 Fundamental Assumptions of Ethical Communication
  10.5.3 Factors Affecting Organizational Ethics
  10.5.4 Key Areas for Ethical Communication
  10.5.5 Ethics and Organizational Responsibility
10.6 Legal Aspects of Communication
  10.6.1 Defamation
  10.6.2 Invasion of Privacy
  10.6.3 Misrepresentation and Fraud
  10.6.4 Other Legal Areas in Business Communication
10.7 Summary
10.8 Descriptive Questions
10.9 Answers and Hints
10.10 Suggested Reading for Reference
INTRODUCTORY CASELET

EFFECT OF CULTURE & SOCIETY

Mayank has been working as an Information Officer at a foreign consulate in New Delhi for several years. His boss, Hendrick, wants to reward Mayank for his hard work and offers him a promotion and pay raise to become an Information Clerk. Mayank politely declines the offer, leaving Hendrick confused.
After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- Discuss the cultural aspects of communication
- Understand the multicultural and intercultural aspect of communication
- Elucidate the ethical aspects of communication
- Explain the legal aspects of communication

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Communication is invariably in a cultural context and includes words, intonation, gestures, a continuum of styles, and shared meaning. The communication aspects provide a way of depicting the differing orientations of social activity relating reading, writing, speaking, listening and/or numeracy.

When we visit another country where a different language is spoken, it is necessary for someone to speak the other’s language in order to surmount this barrier and verbally communicate. What is not so obvious, nevertheless, is that cultural barriers are superior to language barriers and they often incite reactions that are both negative and emotional. What is thoughtful behaviour in one country may be rude in another. What is a sensitive issue to one culture, to another may not be a point of any substance. Hence, we really need to learn to “speak” the culture. Communication specialists guess that some two-thirds to three-fourths of our communication take place nonverbally through behaviour. Behaviour itself is learned from our culture and all behaviour communicates. Since, we cannot stop behaving in one way or another, we cannot stop communicating. Hence, during all of the waking hours that we spend with other human beings we “speak” volumes through the behaviour our culture drilled into us.

In business, the most worthy thing would be information and for it to be guided from one person to the other, communication is the vital element that drives such process. But when the communication is shaped by culture, it is a whole new thing to be understood.

10.2 CULTURAL ASPECTS OF COMMUNICATION

It’s no secret that nowadays workplace is rapidly becoming immense, as the environment of business grows to comprise several geographic locations as well as span various cultures. What can be problematic, however, understands how to communicate efficiently with persons who speak another language, or who depend on different ways to reach a common objective.

Communication to a great extent is determined by culture and cultural variables. Understanding cultural facets of communication relates
to having knowledge of dissimilar cultures so as to communicate effectively with cross culture people. Cultural aspects of communication are of great relevance in today’s world which is now a global village. Thus, cultural aspects of communication are the cultural differences that affect communication across borders.

However, the impacts of cultural dissimilarities on communication component are elucidated below:

- **Verbal communication**: It relates to form of communication which uses spoken and written words for conveying and transmitting opinions as well as thoughts. Language is regarded as the most significant tool of verbal communication and it is the part where cultural differences play its role. All nations have different languages and to have a better understanding of different culture it is necessary to have knowledge of languages of different nations.

- **Non-verbal communication**: It is a very wide concept and it comprises all the other methods of communication which do not uses spoken or written words. It takes following forms:
  - *Proxemics* deals with the concept of space component in communication. It describes four zones of spaces that is intimate personal, public and social. This concept varies with different culture as the permissible space differs in different nations.
  - *Kinesics* basically deals with the body languages for example postures, leg movements, head nods, gestures, etc. In different nations, similar postures and gestures are used to express different messages. Occasionally even a particular kinesics representing something good in a nation may have a negative meaning in any other culture.
  - *Artifactics* studies about the non-verbal signals or communication which arises out of personal accessories, for example, fashion accessories or dresses worn and it differs with culture as people of different nations follow different codes of dressing.
  - *Paralinguistics* are the voice involved in communication excluding actual language and comprises tones, vocal cues, pitch, etc. It also consists of sounds from throat and all these are greatly affected by cultural differences across borders.
  - *Chronemics* deals with the time aspects of communication and also comprise importance given to the time. Certain issues explaining this concept are silences, pauses, and response lag during an interaction. This aspect of communication is also affected by cultural differences as it is well known that there is a great dissimilarity in the value given by different cultures to time.
Therefore, in order to have an effective communication across the world, it is necessary to have knowledge of cultural variables affecting communication.

Given different cultural perspectives, this brings new communication challenges to the place of work. Even when workers located in different offices or locations speak the similar language (such as, correspondences among English-speakers in the UK and English-speakers in the U.S), there are some cultural dissimilarities which should be regarded in an effort to optimise communications among the two parties.

In such instances, an effective communication strategy starts with the understanding that the sender of the message as well as the receiver of the message are from different backgrounds and cultures. This, thus, introduces a certain amount of uncertainty, making communications even more difficult.

Without getting into cultures and sub-cultures, perhaps it is most significant for people to realize that a basic understanding of cultural diversity is the key to effective cross-cultural communications. Without necessarily studying individual languages and cultures fully, you must learn how to better communicate with groups as well as with the individuals whose language of choice, or first language does not match.

Hence, some learning about culture and at least something about the language of communication in different nations is essential. This is significant even for the basic level of understanding required to engage in suitable physical contact and greetings, which can be a complicated area inter-culturally. Such as, kissing a business associate is not regarded a suitable business practice in the U.S., but in Paris, one peck on each cheek is an acceptable greeting. And, the firm handshake that is broadly accepted in the U.S. is not recognised in all other cultures.

While various organisations now give training in the different cultures where the organisation conducts business, it is essential that employees communicating across cultures practice patience and work to enhance their understanding and knowledge of these cultures. If a manager or leader of a team that is working across cultures or incorporates persons practice different religions, who speak different languages, or are members of a society which entails a new understanding, he or she needs to work to express this.

International businesses are facing a new challenge where cross-cultural communication is introduced due to the major reforms brought about through internationalization, mergers and joint ventures. This would make culture a crucial aspect when it comes to business communication.

Deficiency of understanding or investment in cross-cultural training would lead to major business problems. Such as loss of clients, poor
staff motivation, lack of team building, internal conflicts, and poor productivity. These are all only the by-products of poor cross-cultural communication.

International companies with highly diverse workforce in terms of nationality and cultural background all face the identical problem when conflict arises from the difference of culture, language, value, belief, business ethic, behaviour, and cultural etiquettes.

Such conflict could have a negative impact on the business mostly in team cohesion and staff productivity. Cross-cultural communication problems can lead to the downfall of big international companies when taken lightly. That is why more and more companies have acknowledged the problem and are upgrading intercultural communication skills within their organization.

Cross-cultural consultants and intercultural team builders are called to deal with such dilemma as technology and science is improving by the second. Communication within companies is now more efficient and effective as smart phones, fax and various other means of communication tools are invented closing in on the barriers of distance but introducing cross-cultural communication consciousness.

The company’s working culture is significant as the company’s culture projects the company’s managerial abilities. Company’s culture depends upon how it views its staff and departments; does it see it as a close or an open system?

*Example:* When one works in the engineering department and one works in the HR department, is there cross communications of synergy between the two departments? If there isn’t this means lack of communication and team building is vital to improve such situations.

Such situations are generally supported by joint ventures and mergers of two separate cross-cultural companies whereby co-operation is required for their commitment to an open system. Without a doubt, most companies are merged in the expectations of better financial and strategic management without there being any intercultural communication mishaps.

As more and more companies recognize that their business problems are not just mere financial flaws made by lack of education in their staff but to the cross-cultural environment in which their staff works in. The need for understanding communication between cultures and managing intercultural business management has increased exponentially since the advent of the globalization era.

The primary reason for most failed ventures or cross-cultural business is generally due to the underestimation of the effects of culture in a working environment particularly in communication. Looking for expert help in such situations would prove to be a sound investment.

Most of us presume that our own culture’s ways are the natural order of things and we tend to see cultures that are different as less evolved. We think that people would all act the same way if they were acting the
right way. When we come in contact with people from other cultures, we may experience outrage or irritation when a person appears to be disruptive or “rude.” We are frustrated when a person with whom we are having a conversation just doesn't get something that seems simple.

We feel that foggy sense of disconnection when we do not have a clue as to what was just said or why, even though we thought we understood the words.

Although we think that free will governs our actions, most of the time it does not. Our culture is a stern taskmaster. It imposes its rules of behaviour on us from the moment we are born. We learn when to speak up and when to keep quiet. We learn that some facial expressions meet with approval and others provoke a reprimand. We are taught which gestures are acceptable and which are not, and whether we can publicly unwrap a gift; we learn how to use our hands during a meal, whether or not we can make noise with our mouths when we eat, which table utensils to use or not use, and in what fashion we may use them.

We learn how to address people in a manner approved by our culture, what tone of voice to employ, what posture is censored and what is praised, when and how to make eye contact and for how long, and countless other things that would be impossible to remember consciously and use all at the same time when interacting socially. As a consequence, this communicative behaviour is learned so well that it sinks to a subconscious level, so that when we interact with others we operate on a sort of auto pilot. We rarely take note of what we consider “normal” behaviour.

We almost always negatively evaluate any behaviour that differs from our own, because we ourselves were trained by negative feedback. To use a common expression, we “take offense.” However, we can consciously choose not to take offense.

One of the most useful tools we can use when we engage in cross-cultural communication is to be alert for any negative reaction to a person or situation that we experience. We can mentally stop, take a breath, and treat this reaction as a red flag that signals “different cultural convention.”

Suspending reaction helps us sidestep the instant negative judgment that provokes irritation or anger; it allows us to consider that the offending behaviour may be proper in its own place. In addition, it is certainly possible to learn the most significant rules for behaviour prescribed by a foreign culture so that we ourselves can communicate more effectively, as well as better interpret what someone is trying to communicate to us.

Intercultural communication in its most basic form refers to understanding how people from different countries and cultures behave, communicate and perceive the world around them. Given the growing multicultural population in the US, intercultural
communication research is actively being applied in healthcare settings so that doctors and their staffs can relate effectively to their patients from diverse cultural backgrounds.

One of the most important skills needed for intercultural communication is the ability to recognize, in any given interaction with someone from another culture, which of their behaviours are universal human behaviours and which are peculiar to a cultural group(s) and which are specific to that individual.

The most effective communication skills are the same in an intercultural setting as those we use to communicate within our own culture: listen without judging, repeat what you understand, confirm meanings, give suggestions and acknowledge a mutual understanding. However, when we are communicating with a different culture, we need to add to these basic skills. We need to build some understanding of how, even with the best intentions, our misperceptions can cause confusion and create misunderstanding. In patient-doctor interactions, the stakes are high. Confusion over which bus takes you downtown is one thing, but misunderstanding that leads to misdiagnosis is quite another.

At first glance, it might make sense to learn the beliefs, customs, and taboos of each “foreign” culture we interact with regularly. But memorizing lists of dos and don'ts is both impractical and ineffective because every situation is different. It is the context of an intercultural interaction that is the key.

Example: In Japan it is customary to bow when you are greeting someone. True, but you need to understand the status relationships of the people involved to know how to bow. If you don't bow appropriately, you will surely offend someone more severely than if you don't bow at all because a Japanese person doesn’t expect a foreigner to understand their custom. In fact, many Japanese will say they prefer that foreigners not bow unless they really understand what the gesture means and the context of the interaction. Obviously, it would be peculiar to bow to a Japanese patient during an office visit here. It would be totally out of context.

If rote learning about beliefs, customs, and taboos is ineffective, then how can we learn to be better intercultural communicators? The answer lies in developing both an intercultural mind-set and skill set. We need to learn to recognize cultural differences and also be able to maintain a positive attitude towards those differences. We need to develop a skill set, beginning with a thorough understanding of what culture is and what our own culture looks like. What lens do we look through when judging other cultures? Many Americans can't say much when asked to describe American culture – just as a fish can't describe the water it swims in. Our skill set also includes a thorough understanding of the difference between stereotypes and generalizations. Stereotypes are very destructive to good communication, but generalizations, if used mindfully, are necessary to making sense of the human experience.
State whether the following statements are true/false:

1. Cultural aspects of communication are the cultural similarities that affect communication across borders.
2. All nations have different languages and to have a better understanding of different culture it is unnecessary to have knowledge of so many languages of different nations.
3. Kinesics basically deals with the expression language.

Make it a point to notice dissimilarities when you talk to people from different cultural origins. It will help you have better interactions.

Understanding cultural facets of communication relates to having knowledge of dissimilar cultures so as to communicate effectively with cross-culture people.

10.3 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

The term “intercultural communication” is often used to refer to the wide range of communication issues that inevitably arise within an organization composed of individuals from a variety of religious, social, ethnic, and technical backgrounds. Each of these individuals brings a unique set of experiences and values to the workplace, many of which can be traced to the culture in which they grew up and now operate. Businesses that are able to facilitate effective communication, both written and verbal, between the members of these various cultural groups will be far better equipped to succeed in the competitive business world than will those organizations that allow internal cultural differences to fester and harden, for such developments inevitably have a negative impact on overall performance.

The importance of effective intercultural communication can hardly be overstated. Indeed, as Trudy Milburn pointed out in Management Review, communication serves not only as an expression of cultural background, but as a shaper of cultural identity. “Cultural identities, like meaning, are socially negotiated,” she wrote. “Ethnic identities, class identities, and professional identities are formed and enacted through the process of communication. What it means to be white, Jewish, or gay is based on a communication process that constructs those identities. It is more than just how one label oneself, but how one acts in the presence of like and different others, that constructs a sense of identity and membership.”
Like everything else we learn, the way we communicate is determined strongly by the culture we grow up in, and there are many aspects of communication which differ from culture to culture, including how loud we talk, the directness with which we speak, how much emotion we express in various situations, the rules for turn taking, the use or avoidance of silence, and many non-verbal aspects of communication like posture, eye contact, proximity, touching, tone of voice, etc. that occur almost totally beneath our conscious awareness. Today’s multicultural work place creates significant challenges to effective communication beyond the obvious barriers created by varying competence in the primary language of communication, which, for global businesses, is generally English.

It is easy to misinterpret other cultures’ communication, even when it occurs in a language we understand, since many aspects of culture influence communication style, regardless of the language in which it is expressed. For instance, East Asians sometimes say that Westerners treat strangers like friends and friends like strangers. Observing a U.S. American giving money to a beggar on the street or holding a door open for a stranger could provoke such a remark, as could overhearing an American turn down a request by a family member or close friend to help out with something. What does this say about relationships and obligations across the East/West cultural divide?

Individualistic cultures such as the English-speaking and the Northern European cultures, as well as Italy, may be seen as collections of individuals, each of whom may have simultaneous memberships in numerous overlapping, informal, loose groups that they join and leave when convenient. Churches, companies, business associations, social clubs, sports clubs, civic associations, political groups, etc., are examples. While family ties may be quite strong, membership obligations to other groups are weak, and loyalty is neither required nor highly valued. Common rules of polite behaviour apply equally to group members and non-group members. Relationships with strangers are easily formed and dissolved, and friendships entail little obligation. Individuals assume as primary their rights to self-expression, self-realization, and self-protection.

On the other hand, highly group-oriented cultures, such as most East and South Asian, South American, Middle Eastern, Eastern European, and sub-Saharan countries, can be seen as a collection of strong groups, starting with close family and extending to other blood relatives, school groups, work and military units, community groups, churches, etc. In-group interaction is heavily circumscribed. Individuals are bound to their groups by heavy obligations and strict rules of intra-group relationships; loyalty is required and highly prized. Friendships exist primarily within groups, are formed with serious intent, and imply increasing reciprocal obligation. Individuals learn early to subordinate personal desires to the consensus and well-being of the group. However, there are few rules of behaviour
with respect to outsiders. One conducts oneself with friends and with strangers quite differently.

It is clear that communication patterns develop very differently in individualistic and in group-oriented cultures. In the latter, where communication is shaped to protect relationships, the rules governing directness and emotional expression, for instance, are quite constraining when communicating within the group and relatively loose when communicating with people outside one’s group. Within the group, the dimension of power distance (hierarchy) moderates these behaviours and speaking across status boundaries constrains directness as well as the expression of negative emotions. Many group-oriented cultures tolerate high power distance, and emotional expression seems to be stronger in these (particularly non-Asian) cultures, despite the restraints across status boundaries. The Slavic and Mediterranean countries, the Middle East, the less-Northern European-influenced South American nations, and many of the sub-Saharan nations are highly expressive, with varying degrees of directness, for instance.

Individualistic cultures tend toward lower power distance and thus permit more direct expression in most circumstances where self-expression trumps relationship. However emotional expression in individualistic cultures is again related to power distance, with, for example, France and the Francophone countries or parts of countries (example, French-speaking Switzerland, Québec in Canada, French-speaking Belgium, etc.) being more emotionally expressive than the lower power distance Nordic, Germanic, and English-speaking countries.

In short, communication, like all human behaviour, is governed unconsciously by deep cultural values, and preferences for particular value sets produce distinctive communication patterns. In today’s multicultural work environment, it is increasingly important to understand the implicit values that affect our own and our workers, communication styles and to be able to address differences openly and check for clarity and comprehension in order to enhance our collaboration, our success, and our relationships. To work in the global environment, we have to develop communication as a conscious skill.

10.3.1 LANGUAGE: CORNERSTONE OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Differences in culture reflect themselves in a variety of ways. For instance, one cultural norm may have a significantly different conception of time than another, or a different idea of what constitutes appropriate body language and personal space when engaged in conversation. But most researchers, employees, and business owners agree that the most important element in effective intercultural communication concerns language.

Small business owners, then, should make sure that they do not make assumptions about the abilities of another person either a vendor,
employee, or partner, that are based on ethnocentric assumptions of their own culture’s superiority in the realm of communication. Frequently overlooked in discussion of intercultural communication are the sometimes significant cultural differences that exist concerning the practice of listening. Tips about establishing culturally sensitive verbal and written communication practices within an organization are plentiful, but in many cases, relatively short shrift is given to cultural differences in listening, the flip side of the communication coin. Codes of conduct that specify how listening should be demonstrated are based upon certain cultural assumptions about what counts as listening, but as the prevailing norms of communication in American business may call for the listener to be quiet and offer body language (steady eye contact, for instance) meant to guarantee the speaker that his or her words are being heeded, many cultures have different standards that may strike the uninitiated as rude or disorienting. A person who communicates by leaning forward and getting close may be very threatening to someone who values personal space, and that person could be perceived as hostile and unfriendly, simply because of poor eye contact. The key is to make certain that your organization makes out those cultural differences abound in listening as well as speaking practices, and to institute intercultural communication practices accordingly.

10.3.2 DIVERSITY/INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION POLICIES

In recent years, many companies of various shapes, sizes, and industry sectors have embraced programs designed to celebrate diversity and encourage communication between individuals and groups from different cultural backgrounds. Most business owners recognize that their companies are far more likely to be successful if they are able to establish effective systems of intercultural communication between employees of different religious, social, and ethnic backgrounds. But profound differences in communication styles can also be found within functional areas of a company as well, and these too need to be addressed to ensure that the organization is able to operate at its highest level of efficiency.

Example: Employees engaged in technical fields (computers, mechanical engineering, etc.) often have educational and work backgrounds that are considerably different from workers who are engaged in “creative” areas of the company (marketing, public relations, etc.). Consultants and researchers agree, though, that many differences between these distinct functional cultures can be addressed through proactive policies that recognize that such differences exist and work to educate everyone about the legitimacy of each culture. Today’s dynamic marketplace demands that high-tech companies are able to move quickly, which, in turn, needs accurate communication, both with customers and among employees. Poor communication can mean loss of morale, production plunges, and perhaps even a failed start-up.
Fill in the blanks:

4. __________________________ is often used to refer to the wide range of communication issues that inevitably arise within an organization composed of individuals from a variety of religious, social, ethnic and technical backgrounds.

5. Communication patterns develop very __________________________ in individualistic and in group-oriented cultures.

6. Most researchers, employees, and business owners agree that the most important element in effective intercultural communication concerns __________________________.

Read about five diverse cultures and see how they have different professional attitude due to the culture they grow up in.

10.4 MULTICULTURAL COMMUNICATION

The term ‘multicultural’ is adopted here to highlight the multi-layered nature of the situations in which corporate communication across cultures (especially in English) today takes place. Louhiala Salminen et al. in multicultural situations, the various cultures of the interactants interact with and influence encounters, which, in turn, influence the nature of discourse. In the corporate world, cultural influences on communication may stem from not only the native language and national cultures of the interactants, but also from the organizational and other cultures that the interactants are associated with.

A large part of cultural literacy depends upon communicating in a way that effectively gets the message across to all team members, while excluding no one and offending no one due to unintended cultural misunderstandings. To that end, here are some language and communication tips to managers of culturally diverse teams:

- Simplify your message by using less complex sentence structures and vocabulary.
- Never shout to be understood.
- Define the meaning of critical technical words and acronyms.
- Avoid non-standard abbreviations, such as “U R” for “you are.”
- Be patient and try to follow team members’ ideas and logic, which may be different from yours.
- Ask people to repeat once, maybe twice, if you do not understand them. If that does not work, ask them to say it in a different manner.
Remain cool and composed, even when you have made a mistake that results in embarrassment for you or when you feel embarrassed by others (in most cases, they did not mean to embarrass you).

When you feel strong emotions about something said or done by someone who comes from a culturally different background than you do, clarify their meanings and intentions before you express your emotions.

If you cannot think of any positive interpretation of someone else’s actions or words, chances are you are missing something. Clarify with the person or with someone who has experience in dealing with similar cultural groups.

Adapt your space requirements to those of your counterparts whenever possible. You can judge someone’s comfort zone by the distance to which they extend their hand when shaking hands.

When someone does or says something that seems weird and/or wrong, give him/her the benefit of the doubt. Ask yourself: “How else could I interpret these words or actions?”

Communicate important messages via several different media to ensure that they are received. Make sure that all the messages are consistent.

10.4.1 TIPS FOR NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKERS

Avoid “isn’t it?” questions. Because this way of formulating questions does not exist in many other languages, it can be confusing for non-native English speakers.

Example: To the question, “You are coming, aren’t you?” they may answer, “Yes” (I am coming) or “No” (I am coming), depending on how they interpret the question.

Ask the person if he/she wants help with finding words that might convey their meaning.

If you do not understand a word, ask the person to spell it, write it down, use a synonym or say the word in his/her native language and have someone else translate, if possible.

Try to involve non-native English speakers, particularly during brainstorming sessions, by asking explicitly for their input.

If you receive a voice mail message that you do not understand, ask another non-native English speaker from the same linguistic background to listen to it and “translate” for you.

In continuous meetings, provide some break time so that non-native English speakers can take a rest from the concentration required to follow the conversation.

Avoid scheduling presentations by non-native English speakers at the end of the day, when fatigue may affect their English speaking skills.

Consider providing ESL courses to the non-native English speakers on your staff or team.
Offer to proofread non-native English speakers’ documents or presentations.

Slow down your delivery and clearly articulate each word. Avoid contractions that are difficult for non-native English speakers to understand (i.e., “gonna,” “wanna”).

In face-to-face meetings, face the people to whom you speak.

10.4.2 TIPS FOR NON-NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKERS

- If you do not mind people suggesting words so that you can communicate more quickly, say so.
- Try to participate in discussions, especially brainstorming sessions, even if you feel uncomfortable.
- If your organization offers ESL courses, take them, even if your English is already functional. Courses designed to help you modify your accent to make it more understandable by native English speakers can be particularly beneficial.
- Keep a dictionary handy and make sure the words you use mean what you think they mean.
- Ask a native English speaker for help with your documents, presentations and even sensitive e-mails or phone calls, if necessary.
- Before calling someone, think of what you want to say and look up any words that you are unsure of. If you must leave a voice mail message, compose the message on paper, and then read it into the phone.
- Make sure you know and use appropriately the technical words that people in your field use. Find a native English speaker who will take the time to discuss this with you; use sketches, diagrams and pictures to ensure that you understand correctly. Use the terms repeatedly until they become second nature.
- Do not attempt to use slang and idiomatic expressions until you are quite comfortable with the language. Using these incorrectly or in the wrong situation can backfire.

**SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

State whether the following statements are true/false:

7. A large part of cultural literacy depends upon communicating in a way that effectively gets the message across to all team members, while excluding no one and offending no one due to unintended cultural misunderstandings.

8. When you feel strong emotions about something said or done by someone who comes from a culturally different background than you do, clarify their meanings and intentions before you express your emotions.
Talk to a friend who hails from a different background and talk in a native dialect. Try to assess the way you two interact and pick the positives out of it for you to inculcate the same professionally.

10.5 ETHICAL ASPECTS OF COMMUNICATION

Ethics, also known as moral philosophy, is a branch of philosophy which seeks to address questions about morality, such as what the fundamental semantic, ontological, and epistemic nature of ethics or morality is, how moral values should be determined, how a moral outcome can be achieved in specific situations, how moral capacity or moral agency develops and what its nature is, and what moral values people actually abide by.

Different people have different beliefs about what constitutes ethical behaviour. The law defines what is and is not legal, but the distinctions between moral right and wrong are not always so clear. In many situations, lines between right and wrong are blurred. Such situations can lead to ethical dilemmas. When faced with ethical dilemmas, it’s important to consider outcomes of the decision-making process. One way of dealing ethical dilemmas is by using the four way test to evaluate decisions.

This test involves asking four questions:
- Is my decision a truthful one?
- Is my decision fair to everyone affected?
- Will it build goodwill for the organization?
- Is the decision beneficial to all parties who have a vested interest in the outcome?

When these four questions can truthfully be answered with a ‘yes’, it is likely that the decision is an ethical one. Another way of making sure decisions are truly ethical is by using the publicity test. Ask yourself how you would feel if your actions were published in your hometown newspaper. If you would be comfortable having your parents, teachers, and other people find out what you did, chances are that your decision is an ethical one. However, if you would not want these individuals to learn about your actions, you probably need to rethink your decision.

We communicate our values and beliefs to others via verbal and non-verbal behaviour. We are defined in the eyes of others according to the way we behave. It follows, then, that we have a responsibility to act in ways that promote honesty and fairness to maximize the personal worth of each person in the organization. We also need to communicate to others the importance and necessity of good ethics. Foremost, corporate leaders and managers set a corporation’s ethical tone. Leaders’ actions demonstrate corporate values, whether the
organization is corrosive, manipulative, and prone to deviousness or whether it is honest, open, and willing to admit possible failures.

In 1987, the Chrysler Corporation was indicted for mail and wire fraud and conspiracy after it was learnt that Chrysler had disconnected the odometers on new cars so that assembly plant managers could take them home for test drives. Managers were to keep them only one night, but some drove the cars for a few weeks; some even had minor accidents. Later, the cars were sold as new. In both print and television, Lee Iacocca said, “America, we apologize. Testing cars is a good idea. Disconnecting odometers is a lousy idea. That’s a mistake we won’t make again at Chrysler.” Although some say that Chrysler attorneys dragged their feet in identifying and compensating people who had purchased these cars, Lee Iacocca nevertheless made the right ethical decision regarding corporate wrongdoing.

A major conclusion is this: Ethical leaders speak out when something is wrong; ethical people influence others by acting in line with their personal values. Often we know what is right, but we lack the impetus or collective feeling that reinforces our acting ethically in the face of other choices. Observing other people making the right choices inspires us and supports others to do the same.

10.5.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF ETHICAL COMMUNICATION

Some important characteristics of ethical communication are discussed below:

- **Getting your point across without offending the audience:** One of the most important issues that should be kept in mind while communicating is that, to get the desired response from the target audience, one need to get his/her point across in an effective manner.

  *Example:* Employees can be asked to increase their productivity in a very crude manner when communicating to a group of workers in the shop floor, but executives and managers in a PR team could easily be offended with a message in a similar tone. There are other ways to tell them exactly the same thing; ways which are more subtle, but the message will be loud and clear for managers to interpret and, accordingly, work harder. Managers must always remember that when they are communicating, they are not just communicating the message to be conveyed – they are also indirectly communicating the rules, policies, and principles the company follows.

- **Maintaining and sustaining a relationship with your audience:** It is always very important for the communicator to maintain the same wavelength with the target audience so that the target audience feels ‘at home’. Master communicators strike a chord with the audience immediately and develop a relationship which is based on trust. Great orators such as Gandhi and Churchill did not have any problem in developing a sustainable relationship.
with their audience primarily because of their ability to strike a one-to-one relationship within minutes, and the audience experienced a feeling of comfort and security in their presence.

- **Presenting information to the audience without deliberately withholding vital information:** In the modern world, when information is such an important input to all strategic decisions, it becomes essential for organizations to be careful when communicating with the outside world. They should see to it that the information being communicated is complete, and that no vital information is being withheld on purpose. With more and more accounting scandals coming to light in recent corporate history, the importance of corporate information is even more critical now. Professional organizations are trying to practice ‘corporate governance’ by sharing each and every piece of information which could be price sensitive with the investors’ community at large. Companies are becoming increasingly aware that, while filing prospectus for listing in stock exchanges for an IPO, all material information must be disclosed, and that such an attempt will actually result in a better corporate image in the long run.

- **Understanding that ethics are related to values, and may differ for the audience:** For this concept to be successfully understood and practiced in an organization there should be a conscious effort by the top management to have a well-defined value system perpetuating throughout the organization – a value system cherished by each employee. It is only when the organization is functioning on some common, shared value systems that the employees will respect each other and take into cognizance each other’s ethical stances. A sound and robust value system imbibed in the corporate culture is a guarantee for ethical employees and ethical communication. Once that is done, employees tend to have mutual respect for each other and the war they communicate within the organization and with outsiders. Respect for each other comes naturally.

- **Making sure all information is accurate and researched:** The information passed on during any kind of communication has not only to be complete but also correct and true, that is, valid. It is pointless to share information that is actually false or based upon premises that are not tested. The information should be tested, source identity must be verified, and only then should information be communicated formally. Information that is not true is even worse than no information at all.

Complexities in post-modern information societies driven by media and communication technology have led to an increased interest in values and principles that provide a platform for decision-making. The study of ethics within communications and the communication of ethical ideas represent such a platform.
10.5.2 FUNDAMENTAL ASSUMPTIONS OF ETHICAL COMMUNICATION

Every communication decision has some ethical dimension to it, whether acknowledged or not. Starting from the time when an individual joins an organization to the time he retires, there are many landmark events in his career where communication has ethical dimensions attached to it. There are some fundamental assumptions that shape this discussion on communication ethics.

- **Look before you leap:** Few would doubt that ethical concerns are inherent to the act of speech, but what about the act of listening? In the modern world, because instant and credible information has to be given, it becomes necessary to resort to guesswork, rumours, and assumptions to fill in the voids. Remaining silent may seem like the safest way to avoid ethical dilemmas. However, even here, there is no safe harbour, because remaining silent in the face of unlawful behaviour or a potentially harmful situation is a serious ethical decision. In sum, whether communicators choose to speak, listen, or remain silent are ethical considerations.

  *Example:* If the marketing head of an organization chooses to remain silent to reports given by the sales team that the product is suffering because of its poor quality, which is probably because of the substandard raw material supplied by a particular supplier, it is a direct indication of some unethical behaviour on part of the marketing head, and his behaviour comes under the ethical scanner.

- **Communication ethics inevitably involves both motives and impacts:** It is easy to condemn people who lie to pull off swindles. Their motive is deceit, and the results are immoral. But what happens when the motives are good but the impact is bad? For instance, a manager wanting to boost contribution in his/her unit tried something strange. A noble motive, no doubt. He/she proceeded to attain salary information about each employee from the personnel department. On each employee’s cheque, he/she attached a note suggesting a ‘fair percentage gift’. The means used to attain this noble goal are, at best, questionable. Indeed, most of the employees felt that this action was a violation of their privacy. A well-intended communication could be wrongly interpreted, and the impact could be entirely different from what was originally thought of.

- **Ethics often are seen as irrelevant to the fundamental purpose of business:** Do ethics have an impact on the bottom line? It would be nice to say that ethical behaviour always results in increased profits or productivity. But that is simply not the case. Many corporations with high ethical standards have been overwhelmed by unscrupulous competitors. Employees who altruistically ‘blow the whistle’ on unethical corporate practices frequently suffer from financial strain, social ostracism, and harassment.
10.5.3 FACTORS AFFECTING ORGANIZATIONAL ETHICS

Many factors affect and impact ethical decisions employees and managers make on a daily basis, including:

- Corporate culture
- Existence and application of a written code of ethics
- Formal and informal policies and rules
- Norms for acceptable behaviour
- Financial reward system
- System for recognizing accomplishment
- Company attitude toward employees
- How employees are selected for promotions
- Hiring practices
- Applications of legal behaviour
- Degree to which professionalism is emphasized
- The company’s decision-making processes
- Behaviours and attitudes of the organization’s leaders.

10.5.4 KEY AREAS FOR ETHICAL COMMUNICATION

Ethical treatment of a subject takes time, thought, and preparation. As a manager, it is important for you to focus on ethical communication in three key areas:

- Your personal written and spoken messages,
- Cross-cultural messages, and
- The advertising your company creates.

The latter area is important because our work is becoming increasingly international, and sensitivity to diversity is now an important managerial skill.

Personal Written and Spoken Messages

Your messages, both written and spoken, demonstrate not only the message you intend but also a message regarding your values and integrity. Use the following guidelines to evaluate your purpose and motives in each situation.

- **Message purpose**: If my purpose is accomplished, will it be in the best interests of my listeners? Will a small group benefit, or will the larger organization/society be served? Do I have any hidden agendas that affect my purpose and/or thesis?

- **Research methods**: Are my sources recent, reliable, and unbiased? Was my research thorough? Have I explored all avenues in gathering information pertinent to my subject and purpose?
- **Selection of material**: Have I chosen information that will communicate my ideas fairly and accurately? Are my sources representatives of the information available on my topic? Have I avoided the propaganda technique of card stacking (omitting relevant opposing information)?

- **Development of ideas**: Have I relied too heavily on emotional appeals? Is my logic and reasoning sound? Have I avoided propaganda techniques that omit, exaggerate, or otherwise distort information? Is my information accurate and relevant?

- **Use of language**: Am I easily understood by my listeners? Is my language appropriately concrete and specific, or have I relied on ambiguities, abstractions, and loaded words? Does my language show respect for my listeners?

- **Ethical context**: Have I considered my listener’s values, feelings, and attitudes in designing my presentation? Have I avoided using communication strategies that would take advantage of their role, status, or background?

- **Self-analysis**: Do I feel comfortable with the purpose and development of my presentation? Do I sincerely believe that what I have to communicate is important and true? Have I done everything possible to prepare a message that is within my ethical comfort zone?

**Cross-culture Messages**

Never before have so many people from different cultures lived and worked together. Our world has become a global village, and our workforce reflects that diversity. Because we have such different customs and ways of communicating, it is natural that misunderstandings occur in the workplace. Ethical communicators anticipate and avoid cross-cultural miscommunication whenever possible and avoid gaining an advantage based on misunderstanding.

The following guidelines in cross-cultural ethical outline will help you assess your ethicality in multicultural situations.

- **Cultural context**: Have I considered the other individual’s values, feelings, and attitudes from his or her cultural point of view? Have I attempted to understand the context of the transaction from the other person’s position? Do I believe that all the other people involved fully understand the context of the transaction and all its implications?

- **Misunderstandings**: Have I anticipated and tried to correct any possible misunderstandings that might occur? Have I attempted to gain an understanding of the other party’s culture and what their expectations might be?

- **Language**: Have I used language that can be clearly understood by others? Am I taking care not to use language and expressions
that might be offensive to another culture? Am I aware of the nonverbal aspects of my message and the ways they might change the message in a different culture?

- **Accountability:** Have I completely fulfilled my own standard for cross-cultural ethics? How would I feel if my family and friends knew all the details of the transaction? Am I being fair to all involved? How would I feel if the events were published on the front page of the newspaper?

### Advertising Messages

It is ethically wrong to advertise products in ways that confuse. Whether promoting a college jazz event, a getaway weekend, or a line of products for a multimillion dollar company, the rule for ethical advertising is consistent: Tell the truth, don’t misrepresent, and don’t manipulate language to create a false impression. The small gain realized by misrepresentation is not worth the loss of company reputation and customer trust. Advertisers should also consider the moral consequences of impressions created by advertising. The media, particularly television, plays a major role in shaping our ideas and opinions of events.

Following points should be kept in mind while advertising:

- **Language:** Have I represented the product or event using clear, straightforward language, taking care not to make exaggerated claims? Is the language truthful? Can the product be taken at face value?

- **Graphics/print:** Do the graphics used in the advertising depict the product accurately? Is any of the significant information in small print, or is it placed in an unobtrusive spot? If so, does this slant the customer’s perception of the product?

- **Omission:** Have I omitted any key details that may affect the way the customer views the advertised product? Is significant information unstated? Would it change the customer’s perception of the product if this information were included?

- **Truth:** Does the product or event live up to the claims made in the advertising? Is it a quality product that can fulfil all the expectations of the customer?

- **Accountability:** Would I be comfortable if my advertising techniques were scrutinized by a customer products magazine and the results printed for the public to read? Would I want to have a face-to-face meeting with a group of consumers who purchased my product?

### 10.5.5 Ethics and Organizational Responsibility

Organizations dominate our life and workplace. These organizations typically attempt to create a corporate culture. But the task is difficult: Our individual ethical beliefs are extremely complex and
diverse. How can an organization with employees from different ethnic backgrounds, religious perspectives, and family values have a common set of beliefs? Think of the organizations in which you have worked. Did you share the same beliefs about work and personal commitment as others in the organization? What about values such as honesty, commitment, and concern for others? Were your views different from others? Did you fully accept the values and standards of the organization as you came to understand them?

Organizations are stronger than individuals; organizations have access to money, which gives them the power to influence others. Money purchases both power and influence: Corporations must think carefully about the extent to which they use money to purchase influence.

**Formal versus Informal Ways of Communicating Ethics**

Should managers decide the values of an organization—much like strategic policy—and communicate them downward to individual members? Or should ethical statements and values emerge from the ranks of employees themselves? Are ethics more effective when members are told what to do? Or are organizational values stronger if created from the middle and lower ranks of organizations, thus reflecting what the majority of workers believe? How do people in an organization come to know and understand the beliefs others hold? These are questions companies must answer as they seek to define and make ethics part of the organization’s culture.

**Formal Ways**

When organizations use a top-down approach to communicate ethical standards, they typically express ethical values in the following three ways:

- **Public messages:** Formal statements of organizational values and ethics appear in speeches by CEOs and in public statements such as press releases and annual reports. Speeches and press releases frequently follow organizational crisis, and when the crisis calls the organization’s values into question, high-level executives usually attempt to explain the company’s position. Ethical statements are also found in the body of the annual report or the chairperson’s letter preceding the report. Executives use these channels to formally communicate the ethics and values of the organization to employees, stockholders, and other constituencies.

- **Employee manuals and policy statements:** Ethical statements appear in employee policy books and manuals, which typically contain the rules and regulations of the organization. Many courts view the employee manual as a contract between the employee and employer; language used in these manuals must be carefully constructed. Organizations publishing their ethical statements in manuals need to make sure the statements are communicated
in other ways in addition to the manual. Many employees do not read the employee manual or merely consult sections on a need-to-know basis. The organization’s ethical statements may not receive much attention unless they are reinforced and communicated through other channels in the organization.

- **Mission statements and ethical codes**: Mission statements attempt to address fundamental strategic issues that distinguish the business from others. Product and markets are often core to identifying the business. Although they differ from corporate ethical codes by more directly addressing strategic planning and bottom-line issues, mission statements may contain statements of values and ideals. To avoid confusion, however, it is better to keep strategy in the mission statement and place value statements in the ethical code.

Ethical codes are written documents that state the ethics and values of an organization. Firms frequently attempt to manage ethics through these codes, often intending the code for both internal and external audiences. A code may be part of a personnel policy manual, or it may be a separately issued document. Some have affidavits of understanding that require the employee’s signature. Most important, they are messages by which organizations shape employee behaviour and effect change through explicit statements of desired behaviour.

**Informal Ways**

- Culture and values are imported into organizations through membership; that is, individual organizational members bring their attitudes and values into the organization.

- Organizations themselves are social instruments producing their own value systems. Besides creating values systems, organizations frequently produce symbols of these values, such as rituals, customs, and legends that reinforce their meaning. Awards for safety, outstanding customer service, or honesty may symbolize organizational ethics.

- Symbolic acts of managers can create culture and corporate values. When managers act in organizations, others in the organization observe and model their behaviour, and their actions are interpreted symbolically. Thus, managers, as seen in their behaviour, shape and influence the direction of organizational values.

Organizations that want to manage their ethics better should explore both formal and informal ways of establishing and communicating ethics. Both ways are useful in creating an ethical culture, and managers may want to use both paths simultaneously.
Fill in the blanks:

9. …………………, also known as moral philosophy, is a branch of philosophy which seeks to address questions about morality, such as what the fundamental semantic, ontological and epistemic nature of morality is.

10. We are defined in the eyes of others according to the way we …………………

11. The small gain realized by ………………… is not worth the loss of company reputation and customer trust.

Think of a product/service, where you felt it was unethical approach adopted by the seller/provider.

**10.6 LEGAL ASPECTS OF COMMUNICATION**

The following are the basic legal aspects in business communication:

- **Date**: In a business communication, the date should be cited properly. Undated communication does not have legal sanctity.

- **Address**: The address of the sender should be mentioned clearly both on the envelope and on the letter.

- **Company seal and mono**: The company seal and mono should also be present. Without using them, the individual will be personally liable.

- **Time of receiving the communication**: The communicator should note down the time of getting the information.

- **Time of sending the communication**: The time of sending should also be noted. Time aspect should be taken care of.

- **Technical language**: It should be used wherever required, but with due caution. If we have better non-technical words, they may also be used.

- **Signature**: There should be the signature of a legal advisor and a solicitor in legal matters. In other cases, there should be the signature of the chairman and the secretary of the organization.

**10.6.1 DEFAMATION**

Simply stated, defamation is a communication made public which inclines to be false and harmful to an individual’s character, reputation and fame.
There can be the following types of defamation:

**Oral Defamation**

The firm cannot equate its products and services with those of its competitors and thus, give an edge to its own products and services. Though many governments allow such comparisons to be made, firms should not use such platforms. This would lead to bitter wars as the competitors would also reply in the same coin, highlighting their own products and services when passing derogative remarks about the products of the firm in question. Further, oral defamation is nothing but slander. The marketing executive of a firm cannot claim that the product of his competitor is the worst ever produced. He can state, “Sir, the product of firm XYZ is very good. However, we have added some features to our product that make it better than those available in the market.”

**Written Defamation**

The firm publishes an article, or issues an advertisement in which, it equates its products with those of its competitors. In this process, it undermines or damns the products or services of its competitors. It also tries to defame its competitors through written text in media. It raises a pointed finger at the ‘character and integrity of the members of competitor firms. Written information is libel. Letters, fax messages, IOMs, circulars, newspaper advertisements (there are too many of them nowadays),’ articles in magazines, trade bulletins and special booklets (published for the purpose) are some of the tools used for mudslinging in the corporate world. It would be suicidal for the firm to adopt such tactics even if the blessings of State were with it. When you accuse a firm of marketing or producing ‘dirty’, “poorly designed” or “low-quality” products, your firm is also likely to be attacked on some other front. So, respect your competitors and get respect from the markets, your quality battlegrounds. If such published comparisons are necessary (normally, they are not), do not write or publish the name(s) of the competitor(s). Instead, state, “The product of the competitor A is having specifications (mention specifications clearly), which do not match ours. The respected customers can try products of both the firms, judge and then decide.”

**Personal Defamation**

The firm may try to defame a person on account of the following reasons:

- The employee may have been fired due to his dishonesty or liaison with the rival of the firm.
- The employee may have indulged in a verbal duel or physical conflict with the members of the firm when he was an employee of the firm.
The employee may have been sent by a competitor to slip corporate secrets off the firm.

In such cases, the best option is to call the fired employee and handle him tactfully. It is better to send him with nice memories than to have him on the opposite side of the fence. Monetary incentives and extra bonus must be paid to him. Such tactics do pay rich dividends in the long run. Here, we are assuming that he is guilty and still, we are trying to ward him off in a decent manner. However, due to the mistake of an employee of the firm, another employee may leave, or he may be forced to leave. In such cases, the employee (who left the firm) may file a defamation suit against the firm and the firm may find itself in a precarious situation. Money could work in such a case. There is no harm in settling scores by paying him extra amounts of money. He would be persuaded not to speak about the firm in public. But money may not work in other cases. Hence, it would be most logical to call him back (if he is innocent), or send him to a subsidiary unit of the (if he is partially guilty). If he is also equally guilty as that of a member of the firm, there is no need to offer a job, monetary incentive or an apology. The policy adopted, when the employee is guilty, should be the same in all such cases.

Finally, employees should never be criticized or threatened in the presence of their subordinates or peers. They must be handled politely and in privacy. The sets of information regarding former employees should be kept for at least three years after their departure. The sets of information about the present ones should also be upgraded regularly. All the employees should be allowed to air their grievances on day selected for the purpose.

The following four suggestions are important in this context:

- A company should establish a policy for handling information regarding both present and former employees.
- Resist making public any information unless it is required by legislative or judicial authority.
- Keep a record of released information.
- Avoid making any subjective statements in the released materials.

The key element in defamation is making certain information public. That statement leads to understand two legal terms: Publications and Privilege.

**Publication**

To ‘publish’ defamatory material about a person is to make public that information to a third party. A private one-to-one discussion wherein you tell an employee that he is incompetent, lazy, unorganized, unreliable, is within your rights. Only the speaker and the other person have heard those statements. But as soon as the speaker makes that information available to another person or to others who
are not’ privileged’, he risks serious legal consequences. Therefore, the sender must be careful even in sending a sealed letter wherein he/she accuses the recipient. If the letter is read by a third person (a secretary for instance), the person may be liable for ‘publishing’ defamatory material.

**Suggestions to Avoid Defamations**

- Seal the envelope.
- Mark the envelope as “personal and confidential”.
- Wrap the enclosed message with opaque material to further screen the material from possible readers.

Accidental communication to the third person (unauthorized readers, casual room attendants) is not actionable unless one knows or should have foreseen such possibilities. Conversely, most authorities consider dictating defamatory material to a secretary is a form of publication.

**Privilege**

Defamatory information, if made public, is known as ‘privilege.’ It may not be in the interests of the firm to release defamatory information, or watch a competitor (or a former employee) release it; either way, the prestige of the firm shall receive severe jolts. But privilege may become a necessity in some cases. In such cases, two formats of the same can be identified, as follows:

*Absolute Privilege*

Firstly, it is possible to file defamatory statements in the court of law. So, juries, counsels witnesses and the public at large are “absolutely privileged” to make defamatory statements. Many judicial and quasi-judicial personnel are also absolutely privileged. All these people have the privilege of releasing defamatory information either verbally or in writing.

Secondly, government officials are also absolutely privileged to make defamatory statements but the same must relate to their official performances and duties. A government official or bureaucrat cannot go beyond the gamut of his “official limits.”

Thirdly, the media (electronic print or audio) are absolutely privileged for making defamatory statements against those in power or enjoying luxuries of life due to their political status. Criticism of such people in power (or having authority) is absolute privilege; if the charges are later proved to be false and intentions of the media person or owners of the media were proved to be mala fide, the person or firm against which, a case of defamation was filed, could claim staggering amounts of money as compensation.

In sum, absolute privilege is enjoyed by all these three sections of society but the facts and data must be correct, relevant to the suit and without mala fide motives.
Qualified (Conditional) Privilege

Those defamatory statements, which are made during the course of normal commercial activities, are known as Qualified Privilege. Qualified privilege is also known as “conditional privilege”. The firm enjoys qualified privilege when it supplies information related to a present or former employee. In such an event, it can appoint a senior manager (preferably a personnel manager) so that he can respond to such requests. The firm must accept a request for such sets of information in writing. Before releasing such statements or sets of information, it must ensure that they are correct, in a chronological order and not against the interests of the targeted individual or firm (even if negative statements or weak point; of the latter may have been demanded). Tact is also required while issuing such statements.

Further, the firm enjoys qualified privilege when it asks for recommendations. When a firm (X) seeks information from another firm or person (Y) about a third firm or person (Z), it has to promise that received sets of information shall be kept as classified and confidential unfavourable evaluations, disciplinary actions, unhealthy remarks, references and reasons for termination disclosed by a firm or person (Y) could create problems for that firm or person (Y). In future, that firm or person (Y) may not entertain requests of the firm or person (X) to release information with respect to any firm or person (Z or anybody else). These are circumstances when defamatory information can be made public.

Responding to request for information: Whenever one replies to an inquirer (potential employer, credit reference, or the government), one must reply in good faith, tell the truth, and include no malice. If one carelessly and intentionally misleads the inquirer who seeks information about another person, it would be considered as malice or deceit and one could be sued for damages.

The following suggestions in this regard are important:

- Appoint one individual to respond to all requests for information concerning individuals within the company.
- It is to be demanded that reference requests be submitted in writing.
- Accept, if possible, a release from the former employer, absolving the company from future liability.
- He should double check all statements about the former employees and authenticates their variety.
- Avoid the belief that all conversation concerning former employees is off the record.

Requesting Recommendation

More safeguards are being put in place to protect the reference writer. This is becoming more important when the instances of oral references
through phone calls to former employers and others are occurring to replace the written response. When one requests information from another person about a former employee, one must be clear in showing that one will protect the received information and keep it confidential too. One must bear in mind that more and more employees are filing defamation claims against current or former employers, particularly in the following areas:

- Publication of unfavourable evaluations.
- Publication of disciplinary action.
- Publication of unfavourable references.
- Publication of reasons for termination.

One person must check the comments made in a reference letter – probably a member of the human resources department, so that the same office could be solely responsible for asking others to send the company a reference letter, about a current employee or an outside candidate, for a higher position.

**Defamatory Terms**

There are a few terms, which have been listed as defamatory in some cases. The list is not exhaustive. But these words should either be avoided or be used with caution when referring to a person or organization. Like adultery, agnostic, alcoholic, altered records, atheist, bad moral character, bankrupt, blackmailer, cheat, communal, corrupt, crook, dead beat, dishonest, disreputable, drug addict, faker, falsified, forger, fraud (fraudulent), gauged money, grafter, hypocrite, incompetent, inferior, infidel, informer, insolvent, intolerance, or Jekyll-Hyde personality, kept woman, kickbacks, love mate, mental illness, misappropriation, misconduct, misrepresentation, perjurer, plagiarist, price cutter, profiteer, racketeer, rascal, scandal, mischief monger, sharp dealing shyster, simpleton, slacker, sneak, subversive, swindler, thief, unchaste, unethical, unmarried mother, unprofessional, unreliable, unworthy of credit, villain, worthless.

Entirely unacceptable are words that suggest that a particular an individual has:

- An undesirable disease
- A conviction for committing a crime, or words falsely charging arrest or an indictment for or confession of a crime
- An anti-Semitic attitude or other prejudices based on race, creed, colour, or sexual orientation
- A tendency to lie
- A life of squalor or poverty
An unwillingness or refusal to pay a debt or evasion of payment of a debt.

Traditionally, legal malice has meant ill-will or a desire to do harm. In the court, a plaintiff must prove to the satisfaction of the referee from the evidence available. Most importantly, the employee of the company who made the defamatory statement knew at the time that the said statement was made and that it was false and defamatory.

10.6.2 INVASION OF PRIVACY

Each employee has the expectation that one’s personal life should be free from invasion by others. When there is an unconsented, unprivileged, or unreasonable intrusion into the private life of an individual, it is called invasion of privacy.

- **Personal disabilities:** Any time an employer deals with the private health matters of the employee; he must keep that information private, measuring the health issues, against the job requirements.

  Some companies carry out certain medical tests of the employees. This testing could constitute an invasion of privacy in two ways:
  - If the method of use fails to give due regard to the privacy of the employee.
  - If the results disclose private facts of an employee, such as an illness that he does not wish to disclose.

- **Personnel identity and private acts:** One cannot use a person’s name, photograph, or other identifications for commercial benefit without permission of the concerned.

- **The personal information:** Customers may give this when they apply for credit (insurance, medical care, jobs). It should be kept confidential.

- **Opinion and decision on health:** Misuse of these opinions is creating more problems. We suggest that the company’s human resources department review any communications in this area.

An employee’s right to privacy will be violated if private records, reports, letters and more recently, electronic mail are read by persons not entitled to seeing or examining them.

10.6.3 MISREPRESENTATION AND FRAUD

**Innocent misrepresentation:** It is a “communication not in accordance with the facts, but for which the communicator thought or merely assumed to be true”. To be legally significant, the person to whom it is made must rely upon the misrepresentation.

**Fraudulent misrepresentation (fraud):** It occurs when the communicator knows that the representation is not true and, that the person, to whom it was made, relies on it to his or her disadvantage.
Fraud occurs when one party acts on the basis of a material presentation and consequently suffers as a result of that representation. A communicator in the business world must be aware of these communication possibilities:

- Purposeful silence;
- Deliberate concealment of facts and sets of information;
- Misrepresentations through third parties;
- Presentation of half-baked sets of information (though they may be correct); and
- Misappropriation of money through false or confusing letters, fax messages, e-mail messages, contracts, tender notices, etc.

An act of fraud is punishable by law. All the nations have different laws with respect to fraudulent activities resorted to by business firms, professionals and individuals. It is advisable to take the help of a counsel, who knows mercantile law, so that the firm or individual does not suffer simply due to negligence or lack of knowledge about such issues. Ignorance of law is no excuse. Ignorance of business law is not a small mistake; it could snowball into a major blunder!

**Indian Contract Act:** This has elaborate provisions regarding fraud and misrepresentation. Further, this act has elaborate provisions regarding essentials of valid control and various types of contract like bailment, agency, and pledge, etc. Legal aspects in the area force the managers to draft messages carefully and cautiously.

### 10.6.4 OTHER LEGAL AREAS IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

The following are the other areas in business communication where legal aspects are very strategic:

- **Copyrights:** The firm cannot copy published or electronically manufactured material (or data) without the prior permission of the person or firm who owns it. Executives are advised not to indulge in such acts as may involve copyright violations. Such violations may be resorted (deliberately or inadvertently) by the executive with respect to copying of user manuals, articles, text and data from books, photographs (including photographs of nature and man-made things) circuit diagrams, engineering specification sheets, product specifications, etc.

  If at all such copying procedures have to be resorted to, the executive or firm must mention the source from which, data or sets of information were taken. If the executive has slightest doubt that he would not be able to use such sets of information without prior permission, it would be better for him (or his firm) to ask the owner of the copyright before using the material in question. This step is better than indulging in copyright violation
activities because at the most, the executive or firm would be denied the permission to use those data. However, he or his firm would escape legal proceedings due to this wise step.

- **Computer data security**: Regardless of whether another employer is introduced into your private database or not, a core question must be answered: Does an employer monitor a worker’s electronic files together with private information employee, if the information is gathered to improve production within the organization?

- **Companies Act**: Most of the business houses were set up as companies. The resolutions, notices, agenda, minutes etc., require careful review. Further, the basic documents like memorandum, articles and prospectus are drafted with legal precautions.

There exists a fine line between what is considered private and what is considered public. Surfing the Internet and the cellular network is becoming serious business. Both those areas are protected from outside infringement but invasions of these communication systems continue. As an employer or employee, you must be alert to possible intrusion into one’s private business communications.

### SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

State whether the following statements are true/false:

12. Do not respect your competitors and indulge in defamation to get the respect from the markets, your quality battlegrounds.

13. In a business communication, the date should be cited properly. Undated communication does not have legal sanctity.

14. When one requests information from another person about a former employee, one must be clear in showing that one will protect the received information and keep it confidential too.

### ACTIVITY

Study about products which have not stuck to the ethical approach and attempted towards defamation of their competitor.

### NOTE

Simply stated, defamation is a communication made public which inclines to be false and harmful to an individual’s character, reputation and fame.

### 10.7 SUMMARY

- Effective communication in organizations is always embedded with the ethical aspects of communication. With growing
complexity in businesses, it has become imperative for organizations to have a sound value system and to try to instil a reasonable level of ethics in the employees.

- Ethical issues related to business communication are one such issue. Understanding the ethics of communication helps us to communicate effectively.

- The chapter discusses meaning, characteristics, fundamental assumptions and factors affecting organizational ethics in communication. The ethical dilemmas facing managers are also discussed.

- Ethics is often a communication issue. Your employees and co-workers learn about your ethics and values by observing your actions.

- Modelling ethical behaviour is an important managerial tool.

- The chapter also discusses personal ethics in communication.

- Your family and peers influence your personal ethics. Other factors that influence your culture, philosophy, local, state, and federal laws, and even your religious perspective.

- Managers need to be aware of these influences, especially are monitoring their ethics in written and spoken messages, in cross-cultural communication, and in advertising.

- The chapter has discussed guidelines that help you focus on key ethical areas.

- The chapter also examines how ethics are communicated in organizations using downward communication and how ethical values and statements also emerge from the lower and middle echelons of the organization. Both are viable ways by which organizations create ethical values.

- While communicating, a few legal issues are to be kept in mind. Defamation, misinterpretation and fraud, publication, employment, computer data security, etc., are important, especially in business dealings.

- The chapter further discusses the various legal aspects in business communication.

- To deal with the legal aspects, an organization may also formulate a communication policy. Communication policy and its specifics are discussed.

- The chapter also discusses basic legal aspects in business communication – defamation, misrepresentation and fraud and invasion of privacy.
KEY WORDS

- **Cross-cultural Communication**: It is also referred to as Intercultural communication. The ability to successfully form, fosters, and improves relationships with members of a culture different from one’s own.
- **Ethics**: A set of principles of right conduct.
- **Business Ethics**: Business ethics can be defined as written and unwritten codes of principles and values that govern decisions and actions within a company.
- **Deontology**: The study of moral obligations or duty.
- **Teleology**: The study of evidence of design in nature.
- **Company Seal**: Stamped or blind-embossed imprint of a firm’s legal name, as an additional evidence that an agreement or a document was executed on behalf of the firm by its authorized agents or officers. It is also called corporate seal.
- **Defamation**: Defamation is a communication made public which tends to be false and harmful to an individual’s character, reputation and fame.
- **Privilege**: Defamatory information, if made public, is known as privilege.
- **Qualified Privilege**: Defamatory statements which are made during the course of normal commercial activities.

10.8 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. In regards with verbal and non-verbal communication, what does the cultural aspect of communication imply?

2. What do you understand by intercultural communication? Explain.

3. How do language and diversity impact on an organization?

4. What is multi-cultural communication? What are the points managers must adhere to while dealing with culturally diverse people?

5. What do you gather by the ethical aspect of communication? What are its characteristics?

6. What should your ethical responsibilities be, when it comes to your organization?
## 10.9 ANSWERS AND HINTS

### ANSWERS FOR SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Q. No.</th>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Aspects of</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>10.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>misrepresentation</td>
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<td>14.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### HINTS FOR DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Refer 10.2

   It’s no secret that nowadays workplace is rapidly becoming immense and it can be problematic how to communicate efficiently with persons who speak another language.

2. Refer 10.3

   The term “intercultural communication” is often used to refer to the wide range of communication issues that inevitably arise within an organization composed of individuals from a variety of religious, social, ethnic, and technical backgrounds.

3. Refer 10.3.1 & 10.3.2

   Differences in culture reflect themselves in a variety of ways. Most business owners recognize that their companies are far more likely to be successful if they are able to establish effective systems of intercultural communication between employees of different religious, social, and ethnic backgrounds.
4. Refer 10.4

The term ‘multicultural’ is adopted here to highlight the multi-layered nature of the situations in which corporate communication across cultures today takes place and managers must adhere to communication tips while dealing with culturally diverse teams.

5. Refer 10.5 & 10.5.1

Ethics, also known as moral philosophy, is a branch of philosophy which seeks to address questions about morality which must be inculcated in business communication as per a a set of characteristics.

6. Refer 10.5.5

Organizations dominate our life and workplace and so we must keep a balance as to what is ethical in our personal life must also be so in professional.

10.10 SUGGESTED READING FOR REFERENCE

SUGGESTED READINGS


E-REFERENCES

- http://kelmcultural.wordpress.com/
- http://www.libraryofbirmingham.com/articles/business/businessstartupslegal
## CASE STUDIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
<th>Case Study 1: Chapter 1</th>
<th>Barriers in Communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case Study 2: Chapter 2</td>
<td>Non-verbal Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study 3: Chapter 3</td>
<td>Organisational Communication: External</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study 4: Chapter 4</td>
<td>Effective Business Writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study 5: Chapter 5</td>
<td>An Effective Communicator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study 6: Chapter 6</td>
<td>From Anxiety Pangs to Effective Public Speaking, Leading to a Top Business School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study 7: Chapter 7</td>
<td>Oral Presentation and Telephonic Conversation Helps Business and its Better Functioning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study 8: Chapter 8</td>
<td>Central Tech Solutions Unifies Business Communications and Enables Mobility with SIP Trunking and Videoconferencing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study 9: Chapter 9</td>
<td>Business Etiquette</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study 10: Chapter 10</td>
<td>Multi-cultural and Ethical Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study 11: Chapter 2</td>
<td>Non-verbal Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study 12: Chapter 2</td>
<td>Accurate Verbal Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BARRIERS IN COMMUNICATION

Daily life sees several challenges in communication. If we identify the challenges we can eliminate and ensure better understanding among the individuals. We shall take a case study on communication that helps in averting any misunderstanding among the people.

Shaw worked in a research department for a year as a researcher and was laid off as the entire department was closed due to recession. He decided to meet the CEO for a possible outplacement as the organisation had several other departments to accommodate him. However, the secretary of the CEO, Lucia did not permit Shaw to meet him by saying that the CEO was busy. Shaw returned without meeting the CEO. He got better employment opportunity elsewhere and joined.

Shaw, being a researcher, wrote an article for an international journal while working in the research department. It was published after 9 months and received complimentary copies from the publisher. Therefore, Shaw wanted to share the successful publication with his former CEO and went to meet him to gift the book as a complimentary copy. To get the same done he got in touch with the Secretary of the CEO who was known for being a thorough professional. She was curt and clear in her approach which was probably the result of her monotonous job that did not seem to give her any recognition. Therefore, she did not entertain someone easily as per the strict instructions given to her regarding a personal meeting with the CEO. She believed in the traditional thoughts of following procedure with stringent policies ruling out the flexibility of authority so as to provide with instant results. All of this reflected in her personality and communication which came out to be abrupt, as shown in the conversation below with Shaw.

Shaw: I would appreciate if you could arrange an appointment with the CEO. I want….. (Secretary interrupted)

Secretary: Why did you come? We had already handed over your resume to Heath for outplacement. You may go now.

Shaw: I did not come for employment opportunity. Don’t assume that people would come here for employment only. I have come to gift a complimentary copy where my article featured in an international journal. The CEO would be glad to share the success.

Secretary: No, No, the CEO sees everything and knows everything as every article publication is known to him.

Shaw: It is not a departmental journal. It is a prestigious journal globally, and I want to inform him and gift the book.

Secretary: “You will not get an appointment. The CEO is busy,” she said firmly.

Shaw: I anticipated that the CEO would be busy and I have already written the details of my name over the complimentary copy.

Contd...
Secretary: Okay, leave it and go (She said this impolitely and started looking here and there).

Shaw handed over the complimentary copy to the Secretary.

Shaw: Fine, please hand it over to the CEO. I am leaving the place. However, I will send an email to the CEO about my coming physically to gift the book. (Secretary probably got worried, as Shaw had already mentally prepared to send the email and keep the CEO informed. If Secretary had any intention to skip handing over the complimentary copy, the CEO will come to know as Shaw would send the mail.)

Shaw handed over the complimentary copy to Secretary and departed the office. He sent an email to his ex-CEO about his coming and he could not meet as the latter was busy with his schedules.

After 5 hours, the Secretary telephoned Shaw and said firmly, “CEO told to return the book to you. You come and take the book back.”

Shaw replied, “It is the complimentary copy meant for the CEO only”. Secretary insisted to take back the book immediately. Shaw told Secretary to courier and he was about to give his address. Secretary interrupted Shaw’s conversation and replied, “No we will not send it to you through courier. You have to come and take.”

Shaw responded politely, “Right now, I am far away from that place. When I come to that area, I would take back the book.”

The very next day, Shaw received email from his ex-CEO congratulating Shaw for the publication and thanked for coming all the way to gift the book. Shaw felt excited that his ex-CEO was pleased with the publication.

1. What were the communication challenges in the above case study? Do you think it was difference in status or just the standard attitude of the Secretary that caused the above situation?

2. Was the Secretary right in avoiding Shaw who came all the way from long distance to gift the complimentary copy? Do you think it was only her general attitude towards all or was she also following her duty?

3. Why do you think the secretary insisted Shaw to come and take the complimentary copy back physically, instead of couriering it?

4. Was the Secretary a good listener? What barriers does she need to overcome in order to be a good listener?

5. Did the Secretary empathise with Shaw?

6. What were the other challenges which prevented smooth communication between Shaw and the Secretary?
Crème Solutions Pvt. Ltd. is where Nadia works. She works there as Project Leader. Occasionally, her job demands coming early for her duties or stay till late evening hours.

Once she was handling 2 projects simultaneously and on one such day she had convened a meeting with her team members regarding project delivery. She had called her team members at 0800 hours.

Nadia is a disciplinarian and generally she follows duty timings strictly. Discipline starts with me, was her firm principle. She had made a habit of coming 5 minutes early at least. However, on that day she could not make at the scheduled meeting time of 08:00 hours and she was worried that her reputation could be at stake.

Time was 08:35 and she reached main gate of her company. Hurriedly, she swiped her card and rushed towards board room. That time few housemen were doing cleaning. One of the housemen had spread soap solution on the floor. Unaware of what is on the floor, she continued to rush to the board room. The floor was made of marbles and soap solution was sprinkled over it. The floor had become quite slippery. Nadia, could not control her balance on the slippery floor and fell down. Slippery floor dragged her couple of feet further.

The impact was so strong that she wailed loudly. Her team members rushed to help her. Somehow she could get up with the help of her team members. Considering her wailing because of pain, she was taken to the hospital. In the hospital it was discovered that her hip bone was broken. As a result, she was immobile for about two months because of the hip injury.

Later in investigation, it was revealed that the houseman who was cleaning the floor had not put the display board “Caution: Floor is Wet”.

1. What was the major cause of the accident?
2. Bring out the importance of Non-verbal Communication in the case.
3. What would happen to Nadia’s reputation after the incident?
CASE STUDY 3: CHAPTER 3

ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION: EXTERNAL

Mostly, advance intimation of the total consignment is sent to a particular station, from the courier and cargo companies, by way of sending E-mail (pre-alert message in their language). Sumer Logistics was no exception to this procedure. Whenever they sent their load by evening flight to Delhi, they sent pre-alert to Delhi, giving details of the load like flight number, total number of bags, total weight of the bags, etc. Night-duty Airport Executive at Delhi Airport used to retrieve the load and used to confirm the receipt of the load to the Bangalore office.

The arrangement worked fine for months and even years. Airport Executive continued to get the pre-alert message and after retrieval of the load, he continued to confirm the receipt of the load.

On one fine night, Giriraj who was on night-duty at Delhi airport observed that neither any pre-alert has been received from Bangalore office, nor had they sent load to them. He tried calling Bangalore office. But it was well past midnight and there was no response from Bangalore office. Security guard on duty told to the Airport Executive that nobody is available in the Bangalore office and staff on duty had left already. Giriraj knew that generally Kamak works in the night time. He tried calling on Kamak’s mobile number but it was switched off.

Giriraj had no other option except calling Assistant Manager Operations of Bangalore, Alagiyananthan. Alagiyananthan tried contacting Kamak but he encountered the same problem.

This was unique situation. He was concerned about what had happened. Alagiyananthan tried calling other operations staffs to find out whether anybody knew home of Kamak. But none of them knew Kamak’s house’s location. Alagiyananthan was disappointed. Though he had disturbed a couple of staff in the dead of the night, there was no much headway. Alagiyananthan was on the horns of dilemma. Should I defer the matter for early morning or settle right away? After deliberating for couple of minutes, he chose latter.

As a last resort, Alagiyananthan called Saja, HR Executive. Alagiyananthan explained situation to him and told him to go to office and find out address of Kamak from the personal documents of Kamak. By that time it was 01:30 hours and Saja was aghast to find out that he was told to go to office at the dead of the night.

Willy-nilly, Saja went to the office, pulled out personal documents of Kamak and noted his address. Later, he confirmed the address to Alagiyananthan.

Alagiyananthan had no option but to commute 15 km in order to go to house of Kamak. He reached Kamak’s home at 02:15 hours. For Kamak, it was a strange experience to find out that his manager

Contd...
was knocking his door at well past midnight. When questioned why he did not send the pre-alert, he just told that “very simple, today there was excess booking by other logistics companies and there was no space, so cargo officials of all the airlines refused to accept our load”. “And since no load was connected, I did not send pre-alert as well. However, I have done booking for morning flight and load will be connected through morning flight.”

Alagiyananthan was damn infuriated by his answer. However, his fate had a little more frustration for him in store, as while returning home from Kamak’s home, the night duty patrol cops caught him driving his two-wheeler without a driving license.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Who is to be blamed for Alagiyananthan’s condition at the end?
2. What steps should Alagiyananthan, Saja or Kamak take to avoid such problems in the future?
3. Is Kamak to be blamed for what happened? Why or why not?
4. Was Giriraj justified in raising an alarm over no pre-alert email and no load?
CASE STUDY 4: CHAPTER 4

EFFECTIVE BUSINESS WRITING

Read a badly-written business letter which contains faults and errors:

Lee’s Furniture Mart
62/66 Downtown, Moreville DT23. Tel: 608 0097
The Manager,
Seaview Guest House,
Parade DT12.
Dear Sirs,
The furniture you ordered has arrived at our showrooms. Please telephone the undersigned personally to say whether you will collect it or we should deliver it to you; we shall be unhappy with either. Remember we want your money when you get the furniture so have it ready. Your early reply will be appreciated. Yours sincerely, Manager

The business letter rewritten correctly:

Lee’s Furniture Mart
62/66 Downtown, Moreville DT23. Tel: 608 0097
The Manager,
Seaview Guest House,
Parade DT12. 12, July 20XX.
Dear Sir,
The furniture you ordered has arrived at our showrooms. Please telephone the undersigned personally to say whether you will collect it or whether we should deliver it to you; we shall be happy with either. Please note our terms are payment on collection/delivery.
Your early reply will be appreciated.
Yours sincerely,
Henry Lee
Manager

Contd...
NOTES

The above example clearly provides:

- A report or response (here’s what was done as per the customer’s requirement);
- A silent directive to move further (do this); and
- A professional persuasion to action (we should do this).

This implies that all basics of business writing are adhered to. It employs short sentences that are brief with to-the-point paragraphs. The letter is in line with Audience

- Tone
- Style and language

As per the customer’s need, the letter identifies it and is accurate in the message.

QUESTIONs

1. Write down the errors in the badly written letter.
2. Rewrite the letter in full, before going through the rewritten letter to compare it later.
3. Why is it so important for the appearance of a business letter to be attractive?
4. For each word, write two sentences which show that you clearly understand two different meanings of that word, used exactly as “given”:-
   (a) file; (b) pen; (c) room; (d) right; (e) cross.
5. Pick the one correct statement in each set.
   (a) The addressee of a business letter is:
      i. the person or organization from which it was received.
      ii. the person or organization on behalf of which it is written.
      iii. the person or organization to whom it is to be sent.
      iv. the person who wrote and/or signed it.
   (b) The greeting “Dear Sir or Madam” needs the closing:
      i. Yours faithfully.
      ii. Yours sincerely.
      iii. Faithfully to you both.
      iv. Yours truly.
   (c) The first paragraph of a business letter usually:
      i. contains only one sentence.
      ii. states what the writer wants the addressee to do.

Contd...
iii. starts with the addressee's name.
iv. gives the reason why the letter has been written.

(d) The term “justification” in relation to a business letter means:

i. that the writer has good reason for the facts contained in it.
ii. that it contains all the proof necessary to convince the reader.
iii. that it only just fits on one sheet of paper.
iv. that all lines containing sufficient words end at the right-hand margin.

(e) A prefix:

i. is a senior boy or girl at school.
ii. is added to the front of a word to form a new word.
iii. involves the use of glue or an adhesive.
iv. is added at the end of a word to form a new word.
AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR

Sunday, 10:55 A.M.

Scene: Woodland Store in a posh market of a metro city.

Mr. and Mrs. Arora, holding a box of Woodland Shoes, walk towards the showroom from the parking lot. Mr. Arora is an HRD executive with a multinational company. Mr. Arora is sporting a brick black T-shirt and a pair of trousers and sports shoes. Mrs. Arora is wearing a green plain dress. She has a shopping bag and a small purse. Mr. Arora enters the shop first as Mrs. Arora decides to stay on for a while to do some window shopping. On entering the shop, he is greeted by Sanjay, the young sales executive trainee, who is on a visit to the showroom from the headquarters.

Sanjay: Good morning, Sir! May I help you?

Mr. Arora: Oh, yes. Well, I had bought this pair of shoes last Sunday. I have just worn it twice. I have a feeling that they are from a ‘seconds’ lot. (Tries to hand over the box, but Sanjay have his hands behind his back).

Sanjay: Sir, we don’t stock ‘seconds’ in this showroom.

Mr. Arora: (Opening the box of shoes) It did strike me here itself but I was more keen on the colour; maybe, therefore, I overlooked it. (Pointing at the toes of the shoes) There is a difference between the two shoes here. The stripes are not aligned identically. It seems to be a manufacturing defect.

Sanjay: (Looking at the shoes but still with his hands behind the back) Sir, this is the way they are designed. It is not a manufacturing defect.

Mr. Arora: (Getting closer to Sanjay and trying to hand over the pair to him to have a look). This can’t be the design. It is an alignment defect and it looks like a “seconds” pair.

Sanjay: (Still not taking the pair) Sir, I can show you other pairs. They are all made the same way. (He asks one of the shop assistants to get a couple of pairs of the same make, and moves on to attend other customers. When he returns about after six minutes, he finds Mr. Arora trying a different pair) See, I said that they were all made the same way. It is the design, not a manufacturing defect.

Mr. Arora: Then I have a feeling that this showroom is selling defective pieces. They are not from the fresh stock.

Sanjay: I told you as a policy, we do not keep any ‘seconds’ in this showroom. In fact, we don’t have much of ‘seconds’ stock because our production line is most modern.

Mr. Arora: (Picking up his pair of shoes) Anyway, I want to return them. I don't want to wear a defective pair.

Contd...
Sanjay: Sorry, sir. We can’t take it back. We don’t have a policy of accepting sold goods back.

Mr. Arora: What! (raising his voice) First you do not accept that this is a defective pair. And, then, you tell me that I can’t return it. What kind of shop is this?

Sanjay: (Looking grim but speaking steadily) Sir, I told you that they are not defective. Secondly, you have already used them. How can I take them back? [At this moment, Mr. Ajmani, the manager of the showroom, comes from his cabin, notices them and walks up to Mr. Arora.]

Mr. Ajmani: May I help you, gentleman?

Sanjay: He is Mr. ... (trying to introduce Mr. Arora)

Mr. Arora: (Interrupting Sanjay) I’m Arora. I bought this pair (showing him the shoes) last week from your showroom. I find that there is something wrong with the design (points to the toes). In fact, a couple of my friends pointed it out.

Mr. Ajmani: Did you notice this while buying them?

Mr. Arora: I noticed it but didn’t bother much.

Mr. Ajmani: Why?

Mr. Arora: May be I was concentrating on the colour.

Mr. Ajmani: Well; Mr. Arora, this is no design or manufacturing defect. On the contrary, this is the way they are made to look. You can see that all of them (pointing at the pairs lying on the floor) have the same pattern.

Mr. Arora: But, they look old. And, I don’t want to wear something, which looks like ‘seconds’.

Mr. Ajmani: Mr. Arora, we don’t have a policy of...

Mr. Arora: Interrupting him) Then, I am leaving them here (drops the pair on the floor). Please do whatever you want to do with them.

Mr. Ajmani: (Looking down at the pair for a while) Do you have a receipt?

Mr. Arora: (Searching for a while in his wallet and the box of shoes) Let me check with my wife (and turns to look for her; she is coming towards them). You have the receipt for these shoes?

Mrs. Arora: No, I don’t think you gave it to me (and starts looking into her purse). No.

Mr. Arora: I don’t know. I may have left it at home.

Mr. Ajmani: Please give us a moment (and asks Sanjay to accompany him to his cabin).
Mrs. Arora: What are they saying?
Mr. Arora: They don’t have a policy of taking sold goods back.
Mrs. Arora: I told you; they won’t take them back.
Mr. Arora: Is it? They will have to take them back; you wait and see. [In the meanwhile, Sanjay emerges from behind the shop and approaches Mr. Arora.]
Sanjay: See, we will have to check with our head office regarding this. You may find out after two days.
Mr. Arora: I can’t come on weekdays.
Sanjay: Then, next Sunday?
Mr. Arora: But, I have other things to do on Sunday.
Sanjay: Then, you can find out over phone (and gets him a card with the phone number).
Mr. Arora: (Instead of taking the card, he takes out his own business card from the wallet and gives it to him) Why don’t you inform me?
Sanjay: (Taking the card) Sure, we will. But, in case we are not able to get through to you, you could also try.
Mr. Arora: (Reluctantly) O.K. (takes the card and turns to exit).
Rahul: (Picking up the pair from the floor) You may keep them with you in the meanwhile.
Mr. Arora: (Moving back towards him) What will I do with them?
Sanjay: Sir, unless and until I have heard from our head office, I can’t keep them here. Secondly, in the absence of any receipt, they might get misplaced.
Mr. Arora: (Looking hard at him and thinking for a while) O.K. But do let me know soon
Sanjay: (Packing the pair back in its box and handing it over to him) Sure.

[On the advice of Mr. Ajmani, next day, Sanjay speaks to Mr. Vajpai, General Manager (Sales) at the headquarters. Mr. Vajpai asks him to fax the details. Sanjay sends the following communication:]  

Dear Sir,  
10 September, 20XX  
A customer, Mr. Vimal Arora, wants to return a pair of shoes, which he had bought from this showroom a week back. He claims that there is a manufacturing defect in the design. In fact, he is accusing us of selling seconds from this shop. Mr. Ajmani and I tried to convince him about our policies; but all in vain. Finally, to prevent him from creating an ugly scene, we promised that we would let him know our decision after consulting head office. I have also
been successful in convincing him to take the pair back with him. But, he will certainly want to get an answer from us within a couple of days.

Please advice.

Regards,

(Sanjay)

[The following day being Tuesday, Sanjay leaves the town on an official tour. On Wednesday morning, Mr. Ajmani finds the following message from Mr. Vajpai on the fax machine].

“If he is a ₹ 4,500-customer, don’t ask any questions, take the shoes back, give him a new pair, and salute him. But if he is a ₹ 1,250-customer, then tell him clearly that it is not possible.

Please remember that customer is king; but, kings are also big and small and rich and poor.”

QUESTIONS

1. Who is most effective communicator in this case?
2. What is the role of personality in communication?
3. Analyze the art of resolving conflicts.
4. Do you think if Sanjay had talked about his company’s goodwill instead of focusing on their selling and non-refunding policy, it would have served better to make Mr. Arora understand the complexity of the situation? Or was he right in his approach?
5. Sanjay should have have taken the feedback from Mr. Arora and given him hope that the shoes would be readily changed, only the formal approval would be required. As mentioned by Mr. Khare, “customer is king”, do you think this statement stands true in your view?
6. While Mrs. & Mr. Arora were in the retail store, Sanjay had a professional approach to offer. Now that the customer’s requirement is readily approved, how do you think Sanjay should convey the message to Mr. Arora? Should he still maintain his professional approach or get back with a candid message to the customer? Also, if Sanjay applies the latter, would Mr. Arora take the right picture of the whole situation? Give your view.
FROM ANXIETY PANGS TO EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SPEAKING, LEADING TO A TOP BUSINESS SCHOOL

Background Information and Problem

Mark was always a good student, and pursued his academic undergraduate studies at a competitive college in Massachusetts. He was a solid student, head of a school club, and had an active social life that balanced nicely with his professional and academic one. While in college Mark made the realization that he was attending, what he considered, an extremely elite university where competition would be fierce and numerous smart and talented students would surround him. From this realization, Mark strived to stand out and be different, and thereby increased his competitiveness in order to achieve his goals.

During his undergraduate career, Mark was in class he was commenting on material that they had been studying when he lost his thought mid sentence. Immediately he was unable to concentrate, calm his mind, and bring himself back to what he was initially discussing. Mark, eventually pardoned himself, and the class resumed their discussion without the pertinent information Mark was unable to provide. From that moment, Mark began to feel a sense of incompetence in public speaking. He made the association that from losing his train of thought people would think he was not smart. As a result of this incident, before public speaking Mark would begin to feel anxious, nervous, or hesitant instead of feeling focused, prepared comfortable, or at ease.

Mark's goal in life was to join a top business school, graduating from which he would land himself a high paying and respectable job. But his fear of public speaking was paralysing his dream. While Mark was on the road to being groomed as a future executive, he became more and more aware of the anxiety that accompanied him during public speaking. Simply preparing for a talk would begin to cause an adverse reaction in his body that included sweating, increased heart rate, tightness in his chest, sweating, butterflies in his stomach, and an overall uncomfortable feeling. Mark realized that given his goal of becoming a successful entrepreneur, his career would lead him to speak in front of large groups of people. In addition, he would have to pitch his ideas to board members, top executives, and investors. Despite the idea of having to do these things caused him to be excited, execution of delivering the talks caused an unwanted response.

Method of Treatment

Having heard me discussing the fear of public speaking with a friend of mine, he approached me to discuss his case further.

He was an intelligent man which was pretty evident by the fact that he was the one to approach me, since he realized the importance of public speaking in life and work sphere.

Contd...
In order to move forward with helping Mark move past his fear of public speaking, it was necessary to ask Mark how he wanted to feel before and after his talk. In our sessions we worked directly with large group talks rather than small group discussions or class work. Mark outlined the following:

**Goals**

Feel relaxed before public speaking, and to be ready for “start up weekend” which is a large conference where entrepreneurs come together to discuss their ideas. Mark would be going there to pitch his idea as well.

**Result**

Mark is a business school student studying at one of the top MBA programs in the country after having cleared one of the most difficult interviews, to gain admission to the business school he always wanted, only due to his public speaking skills.

It was with his sheer patience and hard work that he not only overcome his public speaking fear but now he could get on stage and “own it” (being in total control with a plethora of information).

When he was asked if he had any advice for friends of his that had similar issues with public speaking he stated that some of the best ways to prepare and be ready were to:

- Practice speaking by yourself
- If you become flustered while on stage that you can take a breath and simply move on to the next topic
- Relax

That even though there are more people in the audience it’s no scarier than being in front of a small group of people.

### Questions

1. Rewrite the case study in your own words.
2. Mark was an academically strong man. Why did he need public speaking to be successful?
3. Public speaking is a learned art. Elaborate the statement relating it to the case study above.
Sommerfields are one of the largest independent car dealership groups in the UK, with over 300 employees spread across its numerous sites. As a family-run business, Sommerfields has established a successful dealer network over a number of decades, developing a reputation for excellence in all areas and a loyal customer following along the way, especially through a personal touch with its clientele which mostly involves face-to-face meetings. Sommerfields has always believed in direct interaction with its existing or prospective clients. However in the past 2 years Sommerfields has been experiencing a drop in its profits and its management suspects that it is narrowness of its communication medium and culture that is probably causing the drop.

In the light of the above situation, when Sommerfields researched it was indeed the communication practices that were causing the business to slacken. Communicate Better after having completely surveying the situation came to the conclusion that Sommerfields required a more advanced and interactive communication system. Sommerfields legacy telephony infrastructure consisted of individual telephone system that did not all perform or give any statistical reporting functionality as to the performance of call handling or sales staff. With eleven garages across the UK, each site PBX had ISDN lines connected, and the company was incurring huge costs for 2MB lease lines for each location. Sommerfields were also experiencing very slow internet speeds and high call costs for internal calls between locations. Also, the personal interactions with the clients only involved face-to-face meeting and no oral reports to support their product (cars).

Communicate Better assessed the situation and provided Sommerfields with an oral presentation that depicted the current communication system at Sommerfields and how it could be reformed for Sommerfields and its employees to perform better. The Before and After status along with the presentation was what visually and logically inspired them to get the implementation done at the hands of Communicate Better.

Communicate Better provided a high-performance private network to run demanding applications such as IP telephony, email, video conferencing, file transfer and data sharing. A secure MPLS network was installed to manage all of the internet traffic and replace the 2MB lease lines with up to 100MB of Ethernet connectivity at each site for faster, guaranteed internet access. Each pipe was then prioritised for voice and SIP trunks were overlayed to replace and rationalise the traditionZl ISDN lines. The state of the art Hosted solution called Horizon, which is a broadsoft-based...
communications platform was then rolled out across the company to give a centrally managed system.

Horizon can be administered from any internet facing device, enabling the customer to make changes both easily and instantaneously. A unified internal directory provides ease of site to site calling and transfers and also significant cost savings on telephone usage. Online call statistics enable the customer to analyse staff performance levels, which helps improve sales figures and reporting on customer service calls to help shape the overall customer experience.

Without a mention, Sommerfields was highly motivated to use presentations as a mode to create interest in their prospective clients. It was made as a mandate that every sales staff would have to prepare oral reports.

As per the Sommerfields management, “Sommerfields are extremely pleased with the service and new capabilities that have been provided by moving to using Horizon. We were particularly impressed with Horizon’s roadmap and we will be implementing call recording and the mobile integration module when it is launched. As Communicate Better also look after our mobile devices and contract, we now have the benefits of a truly converged solution.”

1. Explain the case study in your own words.
2. What was the strategy adopted by Communicate Better which worked for Sommerfields professionally?
3. Do you think, if oral presentation was not improved at Sommerfields, it would still be able to improve its business by doing in depth analysis?
4. How is it that presentation reports inspire a customer to act instantly? Elaborate giving the above case study as an example.
CENTRAL TECH SOLUTIONS UNIFIES BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS AND ENABLES MOBILITY WITH SIP TRUNKING & VIDEOCONFERENCING

As a provider of IT services, products and support for 300 businesses, Central Tech Solutions is committed to living their business, using the latest technologies themselves and taking that knowledge to their customers. So when the company moved office locations, they knew it was time to improve their own communications platform first to maximize their workforce’s flexibility and enhance customer service and access and therefore provide the same to its customers. They did their research and went all in, settling on a “bleeding edge” SIP trunking solution, also simultaneously promoting videoconferencing to stay in touch easily. This is after their study and research that technology has majorly taken over the business communication sphere and added to the interactivity level. This has in a way helped organizations, within and outside, to stay connected and perform better with instant guidance available at their desks.

Company

With 300 clients in the Greater Toronto Area and an expanding national presence, Central Tech Solutions offers a comprehensive portfolio of IT implementation and support services for small-medium businesses.

Challenge

Committed to implementing an SIP telephone and trunking solution in a short time frame, Central Tech Solutions needed a provider with deep technical knowledge and a cooperative work model.

Outcomes

Fully converged technologies on a single unified communications platform.

Enabled 70 users (from Central Tech Solutions and its sister company) to work continuously on integrated desk phones, laptops and cell phones for approximately $500/month as an added incentive to expedite the work and experience the results.

Cut out the majority of long distance expenses.

Improved customer service and guidance availability across the organization.

Demonstrated their commitment to “bleeding edge” technology to their own clients by showcasing that how they believed in having a well connected organization, so much so that they implement their services in their organization, first.

Contd...
Leveraged platform scalability to implement new features and functionality on an ongoing basis.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Point out the major assessment of this case study. State how is it useful or not to businesses.

2. Do you think technology has made businesses to evolve with time both through the use of formal and informal medium (instant messaging, etc.)?

3. The strategy of implementing its’ services within their organization first, to showcase to their prospective clients work as a attraction tool. Explain in your view.
BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

Karan goes to dine in a restaurant and Suraj is a waiter. Upon entering Karan notices that the restaurant is profusely populated and the staff seems to be in a rush. However, Karan chooses to take a seat and enjoy a meal. While he waits for the waiter to attend him, he notices that the ambience of the restaurant is pretty nice with an open kitchen where chefs prepare food right in front of customers’ eyes. Simultaneously, he is getting slightly irate since no one has still come to attend to his order. The contrast to the peaceful looking restaurant is the clutter in the kitchen where chefs are not wearing hand-gloves or any head gear to prevent form hygiene issues. Even the waiters are, in general, shabbily dressed not leaving a very good image of the organization. Karan still waits and finally calls out for a waiter himself.

Karan: Waiter!
Suraj: Yes, Sir?
Karan: Look. I’ve been sitting here for ten minutes and you still haven’t even given me the menu.
Suraj: I can't help that. We’re very busy. You’ll have to wait.
Karan: I'm damned if I’ll wait any longer. Bring me the menu immediately.
Suraj: I'm sorry. I've got those people over there to serve first.
Karan: Right. I’m going and I won’t come to your blasted restaurant again.
Suraj: Good. We can manage very well without customers like you.

QUESTIONS

1. Karan and Suraj do not seem to get on well! What goes wrong?
2. Action & appearance of every member of the organization leads to its image being built in the eyes of the customer. Give your view in accordance with the case study mentioned above.
3. What type of etiquette has the waiter shown?
4. Role-play the dialogue making the waiter much more patient and conciliatory (likely to win goodwill).
5. Do you really think dressing of the waiters can really affect the notion of a customer who visits a restaurant only to eat? Should it really matter? Explain.
The young girl at a Bangalore call centre tried to be as polite as she could. I don't want to speak to you. The response she got was, “Connect me to your boss in the US,” hissed the American on the phone. At another call centre, another day, another young girl had a Londoner unleashing himself on her, “Young lady, do you know that because of you Indians we are losing jobs?”

The outsourcing backlash is getting ugly. Handling irate callers is the new brief for the young men and women taking calls at these outsourced job centres. Supervisors tell them to be ‘cool’. Manta Shah, managing partner of NEOIT, a leading US-based consultancy firm says, “Companies involved in outsourcing both in the US and India are already getting a lot of hate mail against outsourcing and it is hardly surprising that some people should behave like this on the telephone.” Shah says Indian call centres should train their operators how to handle such calls.

Indeed, the furore raised by the Western media over job losses because of outsourcing has made ordinary citizens there sensitive to the fact that their calls are being taken not from their midst, but in countries such as India and the Philippines.

The angry outbursts the operators face border on the racist and sexist, says the manager of a call centre in Hyderabad. But operators and senior executives of call centers refuse to go on record for fear of kicking up a controversy that might result in their companies' losing clients overseas.

“It’s happening often enough and so let’s face it,” says a senior executive of a Gurgaon call centre, adding, “This doesn’t have any impact on business.”

1. Assume you are working as an operator at a call centre in India and are receiving irate calls from Americans and Londoners. How would you handle such calls? Imagine a situation and state your response.

2. “Keep your cool.” What does this mean in terms of conversation control?

3. Do you agree with the view that such abusive happenings on the telephone do not have any impact on business? Give reasons for your answer.
CASE STUDY 11: CHAPTER 2

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

A young, pretty woman is dancing to an American classic tune in front of her apartment window. Across the street a young man looks out of his apartment window and notices her. He moves closer to the window, taking interest. She cranks up the volume and continues dancing, looking out the window at the fellow, who smiles hopefully and waves meekly. He holds up a bottle of wine and waves it, apparently inviting her over for a drink. The lady waves back. He kisses the bottle and, excitedly says, “Yes.” Then, he gazes around his apartment and realizes that it is a mess. “No,” he exclaims in a worried tone of voice. Frantically, he does his best to quickly clean up the place, stuffing papers under the sofa and putting old food back in the refrigerator. He slips on a black shirt, slicks back his hair, sniffs his armpit, and lets out an excited, “Yeah!” in eager anticipation of entertaining the young lady. He goes back the window and sees the woman still dancing away. He points to his watch, as if to say “Come on. It’s getting late.” As she just continues dancing, he looks confused. Then a look of sudden insight appears on his face “Five,” he says to himself. He turns on his radio and it “too is playing” the same tune. The man goes to his window and starts dancing as he watches his lady friend continue stepping. “Five, yeah,” he says as he makes the “okay” sign with his thumb and forefinger. He waves again. Everyone in the apartment building is dancing by their window to the same classic number. A super appears on the screen: “Are you on the right wavelength?”

QUESTIONS

1. Why do you suppose that this commercial relies primarily on non-verbal communication between a young man and a gorgeous woman?

2. Would any of the non-verbal communications in this spot (ad) not work well in another culture?
Mallika Saha, who teaches 15-year-olds at Government Secondary School, had always believed that speaking and reading skills were two separate things with very little in common. Because reading focused on comprehension, he thought reading classes could not be used to practise pronunciation — until he visited Mrs. Katra’s class at Jaipuria College. Mrs. Katra always used interesting reading texts from the course book as resources for improving students’ pronunciation. She saw reading aloud as an opportunity to practise the sounds she taught in isolation and to train her students to read with proper stress and intonation.

To give them a good model of pronunciation, Mrs. Katra took care to read the passage herself in a natural, unaffected style, using an audible voice and pacing her speed to help her students follow her easily. She injected a sense of drama by using facial expressions and gestures, and Mr. Saha noticed that the students listened with attention, mesmerised by Mrs. Katra’s enunciation. Because her class was quite large (47 students), it was difficult to give all the students the opportunity to read aloud, but Mrs. Katra had a clever strategy to remedy this. She trained ten of the best students during breaks, and made each of them group leaders for pronunciation practice. These students led the others in reading aloud in their groups, and made each group member, in turn, read a section every day. This way, all the students had an opportunity to improve their pronunciation, and so become familiar with the conventions of spoken English.

Mr. Saha noticed that these efforts had made Mrs. Katra’s students much more confident and fluent than his students. He decided to replicate Mrs. Katra’s strategy with his own students.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Do you agree that pronunciation practice can be made a part of reading classes? What difficulties do you anticipate in using this strategy?
2. Do you think reading lessons aloud actually helps students in speaking in English outside the classroom? Why or why not?