



MBA – I YEAR
DKR16 : MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION
SYLLABUS

Unit – I

Communication – Managing and Significance for management – Types of Communication Media – Barriers to communication – Principles of effective communication.

Unit – II

Correspondence Norms for business – Letters for different kinds of situations – Personalised standard letters, enquiries, customer's complaints, collection letters, sales promotion letters.

Unit – III

Report Writing – Structure of Reports – Long and short reports – Formal and informal reports – Writing research reports – Technical reports – Norms for including exhibits and appendices.

Unit – IV

Conducting Meeting – Procedure – Preparing agenda, Minutes and resolutions – Conducting seminars and conferences. Procedure of regulating speech – Evaluating oral presentation – Group Discussion – Drafting speech.

Unit – V

Resume Writing – Application Letter – Interview Techniques – Body Language – Manners for Managers.

References :

1. Murphy and Peek – Effective Business Communication 2nd Ed. Tata McGraw Hill N.D.
2. Asha Kaul – Effective Business Communication Prentice Hall
3. Rajendra Paul and Koraiyahaili – Business Communication
4. L.Shuster and Peter Willimson – Written Communication in Business.



Unit – I

Communication – Managing and Significance for management – Types of Communication Media – Barriers to communication – Principles of effective communication.

COMMUNICATION :

Communication is a process that keeps the flow of messages from one to one, from one to many, many to one, or many to many. It acts as the vein that carries information and keeps all the systems in functioning condition. It acts as the trigger for the functioning of human as well as machinery. Communication is an irresistible and continuous process and happens even when a person is not willing to communicate.

The word Communication is derived from the Latin word “Communicare” which means ‘to share’. No living being in the universe can be alive without communication.

MEANING

There are many definitions for the term communication. In the words of T.S. Matthews, “*Communication is something so simple and difficult that we can never put it in simple words*”.

Definitions that are used very often to describe the communication to the maximum extend are given below.

“Communication is an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions or emotions by two or more persons”.

- Newman and Summer.

“Communication is the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another... It is the process of imparting ideas and making oneself understood by other”.

- Theo Haimann.

Finally, communication could be understood as “the exchange of information, ideas, and knowledge between sender and receiver through an accepted code of symbols”.

SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMUNICATION IN MANAGEMENT

Communication is one of the major skills that bring success to an individual. Communication skill is considered as an important while assessing an individual for his/her leadership qualities, managerial capability, interpersonal relationship skills, and as a whole in assessing the personality of an individual.



In business, communication system makes available the needed information in every situation for the making decisions. Communication system is helpful in eliciting actions to accomplish organisational goals. Communication system in business is equivalent to the neural system of human body.

Communication system enables the managers to function effectively. No business can be developed without an effective internal and external communication system. An organisation that lacks in communication network cannot succeed easily.

Bernard propounds, “Communication is the foundation for all group activities and the first executive function is to develop and maintain a system of communication”.

Herber G. Hicks defines, “Communication is basic to an organisation’s existence – from birth of the organisation on through its continuing life. When communication stops, organised activity ceases to exist”.

Some of the specific significances of communication system for management are discussed below

1. Decision Making

Communication is the process that provides required information for making decision. Before making final decision all needed information are provided to the decision-makers. Any flaw in information or in communication system may lead to wrong or non implementable decision.

2. Execution

Unexecuted plans and decisions are waste of resources. Good communication system helps in executing the decisions in planned manner. It is impossible to issue clear and concrete instructions with an ineffective communication system.

3. Motivation

Communication system enables the management to develop and maintain the morale of the employees. Positive communication is a motivating force that leads to improvements on performance. It also increases the efficiency of all functions of management.

4. Leadership

Collection of individuals becomes a mob when there is no effective leader. Effective leadership is achieved with excellent communication skills. Communication acts as a bridge between the leader and the follower and persuades the follower for certain action.

5. Co-ordination

Communication enables the managers to practice managerial functions in systematic manner in making the employees understand exactly the required functions to be performed.



Further, the individual should find a match between the organisational goals and the personal goals. This can be easily achieved through proper communication methods and devices.

6. Co-operation

Perfect communication system reduces the possibilities of misunderstanding and leads to better co-operation.

7. Controlling

Appropriate communication on performance appraisal and corrective measures leads to better controlling. Communication enables the smooth and unrestricted running of the enterprises.

8. Industrial Relations

Better performance is possible only when a good relationship between management and workers is in existence. The organised communication promotes mutual understanding between both the employers and the employees.

9. Distinguishing Factors

Communication divides the members from the nonmembers of the group. Members of certain group will possess the information and others do not. Communication system can act as a distinguisher of the member from the nonmember.

10. Consensus

Consensus means general agreement on an issue / opinion. Consensus is agreeing the same thing in the same sense with all others in a group. Consensus takes place only when a group, an organisation, a committee, a meeting or a conference has a good communication system and participants having good communication skills.

PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication takes place in a defined environment, referred as communication environment. The communication environment includes all the components of communication process and the physical environment prevailing in the situation like lighting, size of the audience, size of the space, sound media availability, audio-visual aids, etc. For example a classroom is the communication environment when a teacher delivers lectures to students.

Sender

Sender initiates the communication process. Sender has the fact, idea, or opinion which is to be conveyed to the receiver. Sender conceptualizes the subject matter and uses the language to make the message understandable to the receiver.



Message

Message is the ideas or facts, i.e. the subject matter, which the sender has. The ideas may be in the form of feelings, views, opinions, suggestions, attitudes, etc.,.

Encoding

Encoding is the process in which the idea of the sender is converted using any language into, words, actions or symbols so as to make the receiver to understand the message.

Channel

Channel is the media that transmits the encoded message. Normally, the encoded messages are transmitted through the media radio, T.V, telephone, letter, etc.,.

Decoding

Decoding is the process that converts the coded message into a meaningful and understandable message by the receiver. The message is decoded correctly when the language used in encoding is used for decoding. If different languages are used in encoding and decoding processes, the message is distracted.

Receiver

Receiver is a person who receives, decodes and understands the message sent by the sender.

Feedback

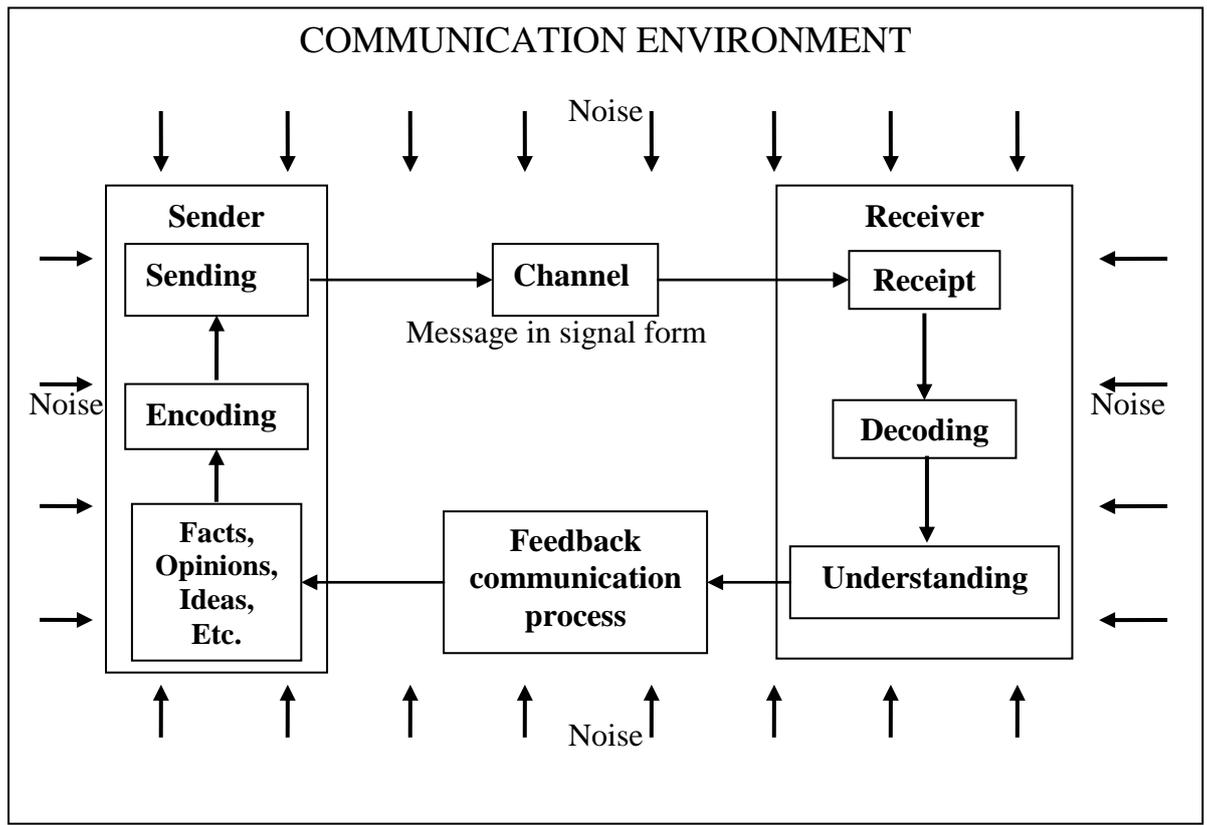
Communication is effective only when the receiver understands the message as is intended by the sender. It is verified by the feedback. Feedback is the response of the receiver to the communication. It acknowledges the reception of message and ensures the understanding in the right sense. Feedback helps the sender to know the reception and understanding of the message by the receiver. Feedback is essential as it is a barometer of effective communication. Communication process is said to be completed only when a response in the form of action or feedback is received from the recipient of the message. Otherwise, the message need to be resend or concluded that there is no recipient or recipient is not interested. The sender, in response to the feedback, gives corrections, clarifications, or new messages. Thus the process becomes a continuous one.

Noise

Noise is any unplanned disturbances like sound, fluctuations in electricity, distracting attractions, etc. that happened in the communication environment and affect the efficiency or effectiveness of the communication process. It may happen at any juncture of the



communication process. Noise here does not mean the literal meaning of unwanted sound, but a break in the communication process.



A Comprehensive model of Communication process

Source: Essentials of Executive Communication, Publication Division, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, 2011. Rajalingam & Ravi.

CLASSIFICATIONS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication may be of different categories and may be classified into different types on different bases. The common bases on which communication may be classified are

- A. Number of parties involved in communication
- B. Subject Matter / Purpose of communication
- C. Limits of reach of communication
- D. Authenticity of communication
- E. Direction of communication
- F. Nature of language of communication

A. BASED ON NUMBER OF PARTIES INVOLVED

Communication may be classified based on the number of parties involved in the communication process.

- i. Intrapersonal Communication



ii. Interpersonal Communication

iii. Group communication

i) Intrapersonal Communication

Interpersonal communication takes place within the individual. For example, the feeling of hotness in hand is sent to the brain as information and in turn, the brain instructs to take the hand away. The brain itself has many components for thinking, feeling, logical, emotional, rational, and the like.

Even during conversation with other persons, internal dialogue continuously and concurrently happens which plan, weigh, consider and process information and finally permit the conscious to express it.

ii) Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal communication occurs between two persons. It is a form of one to one communication. It also may happen in oral or written or non-verbal form.

iii) Intra-group Communication

Intra-group communication happens between the members belonging to a certain group. One individual may be a member in different groups depending on the context of the communication. An individual may be a member or a leader in the family, in the society, in the residential flats, in the organization, in the shop as a customer, in a bus as a traveler, and the like. The following may be the examples for intra-group communication – discussion on career development with the colleagues; discussion on birthday celebration with family members; discussion on the ticket charges in the bus; and discussion water / electricity problems with the co-residents.

iv) Intergroup Communication

Intergroup communication happens between the members of two different groups. It may be of a communication between the members of the employee union and the representatives of the management of the company. When any individual discusses with a member of other group relating to any common matter, it is considered as inter group communication.

B. BASED ON SUBJECT MATTER / PURPOSE

Communication process carries many subject matters through it. Communication may be classified depends on the subject matter of the communication as

- i. Personal communication
- ii. Official Communication



i) Personal communication

Personal communication is the one in which the subject matter is relevant to the person involved, either sender, or receiver, or both. It is informal in nature and follows no prescriptions or norms.

ii) Official communication

Official communication includes only the matters that are authorized to them to communicate. There are norms prescribed for the communication. All official communication should follow the prescribed structure.

C. BASED ON LIMITS OF REACH

Communication reaches to the limits as it is intended. However the expected reach for each communication differs. Communication may be divided into two types based on the reach of communication as

- i. Internal communication
- ii. External communication

i) Internal communication

Communication may be sent for the individuals within a group / organization / cluster. This communication flows within an organization / any organized setup is referred as internal communication.

ii) External communication

External communication includes all communications that transmit information from an organisation / any organised setup to any agency outside to the organisation like the government agencies, suppliers, distributors, customers, other departments authorities, etc.,

D. BASED ON AUTHENTICITY

Information that flows through the channel may not be used for decision making as the authenticity is questioned. Communication may be divided into two types based on its authenticity.

- i. Formal communication
- ii. Informal communication

i) Formal communication:

Formal communication is directed by the structure and system of an organisation. Formal communication follows the official hierarchy and is required to do one's job. Only official matters are communicated in formal communication and should be of prescribed format and within norms. There are many restrictions for formal communication. Every individual in the organization has limitation for their communication that depends on their



relative position in the organization. There is a restriction on language used, words used, tone of the words, subject matter etc.

ii) Informal communication

Informal communication is often referred as Grapevine communication. Informal communication is inseparable in every organization in addition to the formal communication. Informal communication breaks all hurdles or limitations in any organized setup and has no rules or formats. Informal communication may be of truth, half-truth or rumors which lacks in authenticity and cannot be believed as such. In the words of Keith Davis, 'Grapevine is more a product of situation than it is of person'.

E. BASED ON DIRECTION

The direction of the communication has its importance in any organized setup. There are certain communications that need to be in specific direction and other communications need not have specific direction. When the communication is direction specific, the communication may be classified into three types depending on the direction of the communication as

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| i. Downward communication | } | Vertical Communication |
| ii. Upward communication | | |
| iii. Horizontal communication. | | |
| iv. Diagonal communication | | |

i) Downward communication

Downward communication travels, level by level, from the higher level of the structure to the lower level. That is, information transmitted from a person of higher position to a person of lower position. Downward communication may be of oral or written. It is suitable for those organizations having a strict line of authority. Due care should be taken to transfer the required essential information to the receiver. Orders, instructions, policy statements, job sheets, circulars etc., are the examples of downward communication. In short, downward communication helps the management to instruct and control the subordinates.

ii) Upward communication

As that of downward communication, upward communication also travels level by level. But here the information is transmitted from a person of lower position to a person of higher position. Upward communication also possesses all characteristics of the downward communication. The upward communication helps the workers in putting their grievances, suggestions and reactions to the management. It also helps the management in achieving the desired goals.



Tips to improve upward communication

To improve the upward communication, the organizations try with various methods like Open door policy, Suggestion boxes/books, get-togethers, etc.

Open door policy:

Open door policy reduces the restrictions to the employees in communicating with the higher officials. This increased freedom to employees to pose their views.

Suggestion boxes / books:

Suggestion boxes / books give more encouragement as the identity need not be revealed while placing their views. The views can be put in the whenever they wish to place it.

Get-togethers:

Get-togethers offer a very conducive environment through informal atmosphere in which the no hierarchy is maintained. The information may be directly given to the concern person irrespective of the position of the sender or receiver.

Counseling

Counseling to employees may be given to understand the importance of upward communication and its potential role in improving the organizational performance.

Both upward and downward communication has a limitation that it may be altered / filtered / blocked at any level, when it progresses through different levels. Sometimes, the information may be under communicated or over communicated.

iii) Horizontal (lateral) communication

Communication between departments or persons on the same level in the managerial hierarchy of an organization is termed as horizontal / lateral communication. Information needed for one department from other departments may be shared by the personnel of same status of different departments through horizontal communication. For example, marketing manager sending some survey reports to production manager for further action. Lateral communication is very vital for the growth of an organization. Lateral communication also builds mutual relation with various departments. In a decentralized organization, lateral communication plays a vital role to fill the wide gap in communication. Horizontal communication may be in the forms of oral or written communication.

iv) Diagonal (Cross-wise) communication

Diagonal communication either happens in organic structure of organization or as an exception in inorganic structure of organization. Diagonal communication occurs in an organization / organized setup when an individual communicates with other individual whose



position is not vertically or horizontally related with him. This form of communication flows in all directions and pass across functions and levels of an organization. This flows from any position of the organisation to any other position in the same organisation. For example, a sales manager communicates directly with vice president (production), who is not only in a different department but also at a higher level in the organization. Though this form of communication deviates from the normal scalar chain principle, there is no doubt that it is quick and efficient. When diagonal communication is permitted, the flow of communication will be the fastest of any other organization. The increased use of e-mail also encourages cross-wise communication. Diagonal communication is also sometimes called as radial communication.

F. BASED ON THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE

Communication may also be classified based on the language used in the communication. Communication may take place in any of the forms as

- i. Verbal Communication
- ii. Non-verbal communication

i) Verbal Communication

Verbal communication uses combination of words in specific format. Verbal communication requires proper grammar so that the message is communicated without any flaw. Even a flaw in punctuation may change the meaning of the communication. Verbal communication may be further classified as

- a. Oral Communication
- b. Written communication

a. Oral Communication

Oral communication is a communication where two or more persons exchange their feelings, ideas, thoughts or any information using (voice) speech. This occurs in a situation like conversations (direct and telephone), interviews, meetings, conferences, group discussions, speeches, etc. It takes place either as face-to-face communication or using devices. When the space / gap / size of the audience are higher more efforts need to be made. Also, oral communication when flow through many levels is easily distorted.

In oral communication emotions and feelings are easily expressed and understood as well. Oral Communication is more effective in persuading others and enhances the motivation level and team spirit. The major drawback of oral communication is that it may not be easily made into permanent record.



b. Written communication

In written communication the message is conveyed in written form. Written communication may use paper, boards, charts, etc. Written communication becomes as records for future references and future communication. This type of communication is more authentic in nature and is a legal proof. In written communication the parties involved cannot get immediate feedback or clarification. Written communication may lead to misunderstanding when there is spelling mistakes or grammatical errors. Misinterpretation may also happen in written communication.

Written communication includes letters, circulars, notices, memos, reports, forms, manuals, or everything that is put down in writing comes under the purview of written communication.

ii) Non-verbal Communication

Anthropologists say that before human beings used words for conversation, they communicated with one another by using expressions, signals, postures, gestures, etc. Non-verbal communication is the basic, raw and unrestricted form of communication. Although sophisticated languages and mechanics have evolved, still the use of non-verbal cues to express superiority, dependence, dislike, respect, etc. are inevitable. Non-verbal communication is referred as Body Language. It differs from verbal communication in fundamental ways. Non-verbal communication includes facial expression, gestures, postures, vocal characteristics (Like 'Um'), touch, silence, personal appearance, etc.

Non-verbal communication is less structured, which makes it more difficult to understand by all. Non-verbal communication involves no words and it takes place through gestures, symbols, postures, etc. As actions speak louder than words, non-verbal communication enhances the effectiveness of oral communication in expressing the emotions and feelings. Emotions, thinking, and feeling are shown all over the faces of the communicator. Non-verbal communication plays an effective role in face-to-face communication.

Non-verbal communication leads to misunderstanding when parties involved are hailing from different cultures or different regions. Meanings of certain colors and certain gestures vary from culture to culture. Non-verbal communication is spontaneous, unconscious and not intended.

Though the classifications may be made based on different bases for understanding, for skill development, the communication may be categorized and skills may be developed in



oral, written and non-verbal communication. This book concentrates on skills development and thus chapterised based on oral , written, and non-verbal communication.

BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

Effective communication is an ultimate necessity for all the business activities of the organization. Even a slight break / hindrance in the flow of communication may lead to misunderstanding of the message. Communication effective is judged based on the desired impact created on the receiver. Often, managers get frustrated, and end up saying that nobody in the organization understands them. And many employees fail to listen attentively during meetings, or send incomprehensible business letters. Such situations arise due to inadequate communication skills.

Any factor that reduces the degree of understanding of the message in communication process is said to be barriers to communication. Barriers may affect the communication process in any stage. A barrier acts like a sieve, allowing only a part of the message to filter through; as a result, the desired response is not achieved. Communication barriers are also termed as 'Noise'. Communication barriers may be generally categorized in to five categories namely

- i. Physical barriers
- ii. Organisational barriers
- iii. Semantic barriers
- iv. Media barriers
- v. Personal barriers

i) Physical Barriers

These barriers are caused due to the physical defects in the system. Physical barriers are those which are visualized by the common man as the barrier for communication like excessive sound (Physical noise), time, and distance

Physical Noise

Physical noise is the sound that disturbs the communication process. Physical noise, which creates disturbance in the environment, can be a barrier in the communication process. The sound affects the thinking process of the sender and the receiver. Sound also disturbs the listening skills. Messages become distorted and unclear and also inaudible because of the surrounding noise. This leads to partial receipt of communication and thus misunderstanding. For example, when the audience discusses within themselves during deliberation, it becomes difficult to deliver as well as to follow the conversation in the same hall.



Time

Sometimes, media can only be used in limited periods of time. Information is useless or invalid, if it is received after decision has been taken. Redundant or delayed information also create confusion.

Distance

Distance between the sender and the receiver is also a problem in understanding messages. Sometimes, Mechanical, electrical, or electronic devices like telephones and fax are used to overcome this problem. However, these devices can only reduce the disturbances or delays, but cannot eliminate it fully.

ii) Organizational Barriers

Organizational barriers are those that are inherited in the organization.

Unsound Objectives

Many a time, the people involved in communication don't have specific objective in their mind. Either the sender or the receiver may not know the real theme of the communication. Unless the objective is clear to all the participants of the communication, the message cannot be communicated in right sense.

Improper Organizational Structure

In any organization, the message has to be travel through many levels to reach the receiver. When proper structural arrangement (Scalar chain) is not there in an organization, there happens unnecessary destructions or undue delays in the communication. In complex organizational structural arrangements, the sender and the receiver need to be clear with the ways and means of sending and receiving messages. Every member should know where to receive and deliver information.

Insufficient / inefficient Facilities

Communication in the present world happens in various way utilizing complex communication devices and systems. Inadequate or inefficient facilities will reduce the effectiveness of communication

Poor Structural relationship

In every organisation, every position is given with authority and responsibility. To accomplish the responsibility, everyone require communication of messages vertically, horizontally and or diagonally according to the situation. The employees have to communicate only the needed message to the positions prescribed. In a poor structural relationship, some positions receive limited information that may lead to lack of information



in taking decisions and some position receive lot of information than that of the needed. This filtering or dumping of information is the evident for poor structural relationship

Weak Organisational policies, rules, and regulations

Weak policies, rules, and regulations of the organisation has problems in providing directions regarding the method, media, and flow of communication. These restrict the organisation in providing information in the right time and to the needed.

Organizational Politics

A manager may withhold certain vital information so that someone else in the company is not benefited. Wrong information can also be conveyed to harm someone's career.

iii) Semantic Barriers:

Semantics is the study of words and signs. Semantic barriers occur either in encoding or decoding the message. Faulty communication can result if the receiver takes a different meaning of the words used. This happens majorly due to insufficient knowledge / skill in the language with either the sender or the receiver. It is not very easy to do away with these barriers.

Bad Expression

Wrong pronunciation of words in oral communication and spelling or grammatical error in written communication of the language lead to bad expression. Often the expressions are vague and not clear. Unnecessary repetitions and irrelevant matters in the expression may lead to distortion. Some of the possible errors are

1. Words are pronounced or spelled in different ways in different regions.
2. Words that are used with different contexts will bear different meanings.
3. Words with different facial expression or body language will represent different messages.
4. Words used in different sequence / order bears different meaning

Inaccurate coding

Insufficient knowledge of language leads to usage of improper words in encoding and leads to wrong understanding while decoding. Very often negligence is predominant factor for the errors in encoding and decoding.

Technical Language

People having varied level of technical knowledge use different words in different situation (to mention the same thing). This may be a barrier if the listener is not of the same educational background as the sender. Most words are capable of meaning different things.



This confusion takes place because of different social, cultural and educational backgrounds. Many people use high vocabulary to impress others. But easily understandable words are a prerequisite to effective communication. If the meaning is not clear, the ultimate purpose is not served and communication fails.

iv) Media Barriers:

Communication can also be destructed or delayed due to the barriers in media. There may be a number of reasons for destruction or delay.

Wrong media

Messages may become ineffective when the message is conveyed through a wrong media. People expect the messages through particular media depending on the relative importance of the message / sender.

Non-availability of media

All places are not fully equipped with all modern media facilities. Non-availability of media also becomes one of the factor that delays or restricts the communication.

Defects in the media

There may be defects in the communication devices, which are being used. For example the microphone does not work properly during a speech to a large audience or due to the echoes caused because of poor acoustics of the hall. A complete failure of the medium blocks the communication and enable sender to look for alternate option. However, a partial failure of the medium is normally undetectable and carries an incomplete or distorted message, which may evoke a wrong response from the receiver.

v) Personal Barriers

Personal barriers occur due to personal situations of the sender or the receiver.

Lack of time

Modern management requires fastest communication. Also due to modern communication devices people become more communicative. This created an artificial / real shortage of time for the people to their communication obligations. So people are fixing priorities and thus important for one person may not be the needed for the other and vice versa. This change in priorities creates lack of time and thus short communication by people.

Lack of awareness

When the communicator does not aware of the importance of the message or of the availability of the communication device, s/he may ignore or make delays in communicating. This delay / ignorance may happen when the communicator is not encouraged or compensated or acknowledged or recognized properly for the information provided.



Status in the organization / Society

People are given respect for the status in the society and to the positions held in any organisation. Due to the status, sometimes people will not try to convey or avoid listening messages of certain kind. Subordinates are afraid of talking to their boss. The feeling of superiority or inferiority leads to unwillingness and ignoring message which affect communication.

Physiological barriers

A poor physical condition may affect any person's efficiency in all fields especially communication. Pain, fever or other ailments can come in the way of effective speaking and listening. Hearing impairment, speaking disability, eye vision, etc. may also affect the communication skills of an individual. Perception is also slow when the body is not healthy.

Poor communication skills

Lack of skill in writing and speaking may hinder the proper formation of a message. A person having poor communication skill develops pressure within and struggle to communicate. This may lead to hesitation and poor communication. Poor reading habits and uninterested listening are also a part of poor communication skills.

Socio-psychological barriers

Socio-psychological barriers further may be classified as Attitudes and Opinions, Emotions, Perception, Defensiveness, fear, Inattention, Premature Evaluation / Prejudice, Poor retention, Distrust, Closed Mind, sloppiness, Unsolicited Communication, and the like.

Attitudes and opinions

Attitudes and opinions of people towards things differ situation to situation. Depends on the situation, people perceive things either favorably or unfavorably.

Emotions

The emotional state of a person like excitement, worried, tensed or nervousness may disturb communication. Emotional feelings of the sender have been reflected in the words that have been encoded. The receiver also reacts to the communication depends on his emotional feelings.

Perception

The words, tone, and media for the message will be selected based on the sender's perception on the message / receiver. Meaning of the message is understood by the receiver based on the perception of the receiver on the message, tone, words, media, and sender

Defensiveness



When the receiver feels that the message may threaten him/her, receiver decodes the message in defensive attitude that reduces understanding. Such behavior prevents understanding and acts as a barrier to effective communication.

Fear

Fear is a barrier to communication in the part of both the sender and the receiver. Fear to send or receive the message or to provide adequate feedback may be a great barrier to effective communication.

Inattention

If the receiver is distracted and not paying attention to the sender, it acts as a barrier to the effective communication. People will be more attentive only when they feel that the message is important for them.

Premature evaluation / Prejudice

Sometimes, receivers try to take decisions or to make reactions before the complete reception of messages. This leads the receiver either to misinterpret or to understand things in his preference.

Poor retention

People cannot remember things for a longer time, when the information is not used / retrieved from the brain. Retention will be more when the information is regarding interested areas. Studies show that employees retain only 40% of the communication.

Distrust

Distrust on the part of the sender for the receiver or on the part of the receiver towards the sender may be a barrier. Distrust on the sender make receiver uninterested towards the information given. And distrust on the receiver make sender reluctant in sending message. Unless there is trust on both sides the desired response will not happen.

Closed mind

Some people are not open to new ideas. The person having closed mind, won't convey all messages and won't listen to all messages. They believe that what they know and do is the best and hesitate to change. This leads to filtration and insufficiency of information that will not be of useful.

Sloppiness

In some organizations, superiors are not as smart as their subordinates and send sloppy communications. In such cases, the subordinates ignore the communication as they know that amendments and corrections will follow later.

Unsolicited communication



This means communication is sent even when it has not been asked for. Unsolicited communication will not have a good reach. When a sender tries to convey some messages unsolicited or when the receiver interrupts the sender's message unwontedly, then communication will not be efficient.

Over communication

When any communication is repeated more than the required number of times, it tends to become a hindrance. The receiver will be more prone to disregard it and the effort is wasted.

Vague assumptions

Sender may assume certain things before sending the communication. Sometimes, receiver may have some set of ideas in his mind before listening to the communication regarding the message or the communicator or the issue in discussion.

Overcoming Barriers to Communication

Noise that occurs in technological factors is considered as a smaller problem as it may be corrected by adjusting the technical faults. However, Noise that occurs due to human errors, i.e by the parties involved in the communication process, need more corrective measures. Constant effort is required to overcome the barriers, which are consciously or unconsciously built up.

Semantic barriers may be overcome by being careful in using the language and by using words which have clear meaning. Short and simple sentences may be used and visual aids may be included wherever possible for better comprehension. Personal barriers can be overcome only by making more efforts and by training for better communication skills. Emotional barriers should be controlled consciously and people must take care to keep unnecessary feelings out of communication. What sets effective communicators apart is the ability of the sender and the receiver to overcome the main barriers of communication. The careful choice of channel and medium helps the receiver to focus attention on his message. Potential sources of interference that stand between the sender and the receiver need to be eliminated.

The barriers may be resolved to a great extent if the human involved in the communication analyses the system thoroughly and anticipates the likely happenings in the transmission and the possible response to the communication. Physical barriers may be rectified very easily as it is identified easily. When communication fails to evoke the desired response, the following five steps will set back the communication in right path:



- Identify the problem
- Find the cause
- Work on alternative solutions
- Select the best solution
- Implement the solution relentlessly

By developing a good communication system that is understandable to everyone, the confusions in communication may be reduced even in complex structures. Whatever the communication that is, individuals need to improve the skills and knowledge in written, oral, and non-verbal communication to communicate effectively.

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION

Principles of communication are the essentials that make the communication effective. Communicators should follow the principles normally referred as 10C's of effective communication to improve the effectiveness of communication. Those are Clarity, Completeness, Conciseness, Consideration, Courtesy, Correctness, Confidence, Completeness, Cheerfulness, and Concern to topic.

1. Clarity

Clarity is required to make communication understandable. Clarity in communication is attained if the idea and expression are clear.

Clear idea: Clear idea in the mind of the sender about the messages is a prerequisite as idea is the foundation for communication. The communicators should have a clear idea on the Objective of communication, Message to be transmitted, and Suitability of Media.

All the three are interrelated and any change in any one will affect the effectiveness of communication.

Clarity in expression: Unclear coding and thereby the expression may lead to misinterpretation. So, the verbal and the non-verbal forms of communication should be rightly selected while encoding the messages. Clarity in expression may be improved with Simple words, Concrete expression, Usage of definite terms than generalized statements, Placement of words in right positions, Minimized jargons, Avoidance of ambiguity, Usage of correct punctuation and the like. This may help the clarity of communication in the following means.

- Usage of simple words
- The stationery
- Logical sequence of ideas



2. COMPLETENESS:

Needless to say, any communication must be complete. Incomplete information may lead to wrong decisions. It further restricts the receiver from understanding the message clearly. If there are gaps, it will leave the reader dissatisfied; it will not be of effective communication. The message should be organized in such a way that anyone who reads has no doubt anything contained in it. A complete message may give answers to questions like Who, What, Where, When, Why, Whom, How, etc.

3. CONCISENESS

Receivers usually spend limited time to understand messages. So, communication should be done with few words, as far as possible. Messages that are dumped over the receiver leads to reduced interest towards message. Unnecessary explanations or facts may distract the objective of communication. Communication should be as brief as possible. However, brevity need not be implemented at the cost of appropriateness, clarity, correctness, completeness or courtesy. The following may help in achieving proper brevity.

- i. Check and avoid unnecessary information
- ii. Avoid repeated explanation.
- iii. Organize your message well with all necessary information

4. CONSIDERATION

Consideration for the receiver increases the interest of the receiver to understand the message. This can be done using ‘You-attitude’.

You-attitude: It is the tendency of the human beings to listen to the information if he / she are given some importance in the communication. While opposing the views of the receiver one should be careful that it does not affect the receiver’s feelings. For example, Instead of the words “You are wrong”, use “Thank you for your valuable suggestion, but we can discuss some other points too”.

5. COURTESY

Everyone should be given due respect. Communication should make others to feel friendly while receiving the message. This may be attained by the following.

- a. Always respond to the previous communication
- b. Appreciate good things in everyone
- c. Thank everyone whenever possible
- d. Feel sorry for your faults
- e. Avoid unpleasant words
- f. Avoid demanding words



6. CORRECTNESS

Incorrect communication may deviate the basic purpose of communication. Correctness can be attained by proving correct facts, by sending the message at the correct time, in the correct style, and in appropriate language without grammatical error.

7. CONFIDENCE

Communication with confident tone will reach the receiver effectively. The confident tone will also keep the attention of the receiver to the message and increases believability. Developing confidence on the messages from the sender may increase the effectiveness.

8. CHEERFULNESS

The communication that bears full of positive feelings or information is more preferred by the receivers. It is advised to avoid a pessimistic and negative approach. A friendly and convincing tone of the communication with positive thinking and optimism is to be chosen to make any communication effective.

Effective communication is the basic necessity to be successful. The principles help the communicators to improve their efficiency and effectiveness. Though it is difficult to follow all the principles in all situations, the principles need to be followed to the maximum extent possible.



UNIT - II

COMMUNICATION (OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION) IN BUSINESS

All managerial or administrative activities, be it planning, organizing, recruiting, coordinating or decision making requires communication as a component to assist the activities. Writing reports, giving instructions, or reading manuals also are communication processes. Communication is inevitable and even serves as an instrument to measure the success / growth of an organization. Details of business dealings, financial information, issues regarding the employees, information about the market and host of other things are brought to the knowledge only through communicating with others.

Business communication is defined as “the process of transmission of information within the business environment”. The day to day operations of a business depend on the exchange of information among its employees in varied levels and positions. In short, the quality of the communication directly influences the success of business.

Significance of communication in business

Managing the complexity

New techniques in production, marketing, CRM, vendor management and newer methods of looking at profitability need to be communicated to all relevant executives. Proper communication between various departments reduces existing complexity in managing business by reducing frictions and avoiding misunderstanding.

Managing big size organization

All organizations are trying to grow in terms of turnover, employees, profits and products. Businesses are diversifying. In this globalization age companies have branches spread all over the world. Regular and effective communication enables tracking of all activities in all concerns.

Better understanding and cooperation

Good communication channels leads to mutual trust and confidence to a great degree. Effective business communication increases the understanding between the employers and the employees.

Supports profitability

If business communicates properly, duplication of work may be avoided and saves time, wastage, and ensures increased profit.



Better customer interaction

A proper communication system has interaction with customers and creates a good satisfied customer base and eventually higher profits. Customer feedback to the producers about their needs and wants help the company designing effective strategies for catering to the customer needs.

CLASSIFICATION OF BUSINESS (OFFICIAL) COMMUNICATION

Based on the nature of the communication made in a business, the communication may be classified into two broad areas namely

- i. Internal communication
- ii. External communication

i) Internal communication

Internal communication is communication within the organization. For example, communications between employees, superior giving instructions to their subordinate, interdepartmental memos, and the like are internal communication. Internal communication is important to promote harmony within the organization. People feel close to one another and they carry a family feeling. This can help in imparting a feeling of cohesion and closeness between the employees. Effective internal communication is required in various instances.

With superiors

With subordinates

Between departments

External communication

External communication is communication with external agencies, both statutory and private. All suppliers, customers, financial institutions, support organizations and other environmental organization that are related to the business which are external to the company, have to communicate each other for various business dealings. Effective external communication brings in orders, builds goodwill and ensures the continued existence and growth of the business. External communication may be understood in term of

- i. Dealing with statutory organizations
- ii Interacting with customers
- iii. With the public
- iv. With media
- v. Handling suppliers



It is not necessary that all these communication should exist in an organization. It depends on the nature of the business of the company. These internal and external communications can be carried in either oral or written form.

BUSINESS LETTERS

Effective communication is the secret of the success of every firm. Business letter should be pertinent and no irrelevant matter will be written. In the ever quickening pace of business life, the businessman very frequently need to write letters, reports, circulars, and the like. Business communication need to be relevant to the subject matter, precise and concise using a good language and courteous in expression.

Any business will have to correspond in writing with its customers, branches, suppliers, bankers and others with whom it has or would like to have a lasting relationship. Business letters serve as a means to reach out to people not only within the locality and neighborhood but also in other cities and nations. They have become such an integral part of everyday business that one cannot think of running a business without the related correspondence. Though there are many modern communication methods available these days, the traditional business letters are still important in the business world. The basic purpose of writing any business letter is to sustain the existing business relationships or to create and establish a new business relationship. But each individual letter will have a unique purpose. According to L.Gartside, the business letters are cost-effective and convenient way of communication without more personal contact.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The letter acts as the representative of the firm and thus it should create a good impression to the reader about the firm. As generally said, “First Impression is the best impression”, most of the times, the letter’s first impression becomes an important factor, which influences the readers’ final opinion. Good selection of paper, balanced printing, design of the cover, and structure of the letter are highly helpful in creating a good first impression. Due care should be taken in deciding the stationary and printing.

Quality of Paper

Colour of Paper

Size of Paper

Balanced printing

Folding of the typed letter

Mailing notation



STRUCTURE OR PARTS OF A BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Business letters are different from personal letters as they have a distinct structure and layout. The structure of a letter constitutes different parts. The parts of a letter have customary places in official letters. Business letter has some prescribed and some customized or optional parts. The writer should be familiar with these different elements and also their positioning in the letter.

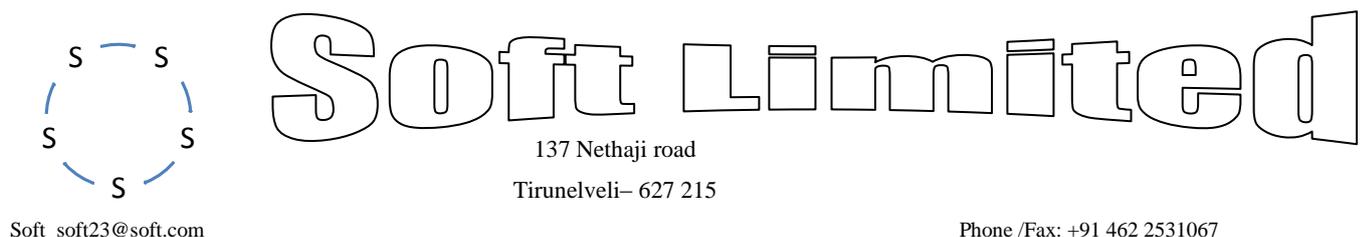
The usual parts of the letter and the customary places are listed and explained below.

1. Header
2. Date and reference number
3. Inside address
4. Salutation
5. Body of the letter
6. Complimentary close
7. Signature
8. Reference initials
9. Enclosures
10. Copy details
11. Post script / Note behind
12. Mailing Notation (Optional)

1. Header

Header of the company letter is referred as 'letterhead' or 'head address' which is normally be printed and where sender detail will be given. It contains the full details of the sender (firm or an individual), which includes name and address, logo, slogans, name and position of the sender, and other details (Phone / Fax numbers, Mail id, etc.) required to contact the firm.

A specimen Header of Soft Limited



D. M. Paneerselvam
Managing Partner

Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Directorate of Distance & Continuing Education, Tirunelveli.



2. Date and Reference Number

Date and reference number are written immediately below the sender detail. These are given for the reference for the purpose of future reference and filing.

The date may be given either right or left side of the letter depends on the layout of the letter. It includes date, month and the year of the letter.

Reference number is written usually in the left side of the letter just below the sender detail, in the same line or below the date line. Reference number is used to locate the details of the actual sender and the file in which it can be referred. Reference numbers will be written normally with abbreviated letters / numbers and depends on the preference of the organization.

For example

Ref.No. MS/P/E/5

MS represents the company

P represents purchase

E represents enquiry

5 represent the serial number of the letter

But there is no hard and fast rule for writing the reference part of the letter.

3. Inside address

The inside address contains the name and address to whom the letter is written (the firm or the individual), below the date and reference. It is written in the left hand side of the letter.

For Example

The Manager / Director / Supervisor - addressing the positions of the company

M/s. Soft Limited - addressing the company

Some of the forms of the title / rank (when name of the receiver is included) may be

Mr.	-	For men, both married and unmarried.
Miss.	-	For an unmarried woman.
Mrs.	-	For a married woman.
Ms.	-	For both married and unmarried woman.
Messrs. (M/s)	-	Plural for Mr.
Mmes. (Mesdames)	-	Plural for Mrs.
Dr.	-	For a medical practitioner / who acquired Ph.D.
Justice / Father/ Captain/ Prof. / etc	-	For an individual occupying the position
Honorable / Excellency	-	For dignitaries



Attention line

Attention line is an optional and will be given only when any particular person has to attend the letter. It can be clearly mentioned in the attention line.

For Example

Attn: Mr. Devakumar, Sr. Supervisor

Attn: The Purchase Manager

4. Salutation

The relationship between the sender and the receiver determines the form of salutations. The salutation is the greeting in a letter that is equivalent to that of “good morning”, “good evening” and the like in personal greetings in social interaction. General terms used are Sir, Dear Sir, Dear Mr. (if the person been addressed is personally known to the sender), Madam, Dear Madam, etc. Dear may be added only when the receiver knows the sender well. In official letters, Sir/Madam is the appropriate salutation that can be used when the sex of the receiver is not known. Dear customer, Dear subscriber, Dear member, Dear shareholder Dear student, Dear member and the like may also be used in the circular letters, sales letter, etc. Sometimes letters will be addressed as ‘To Whomsoever it may concern’ when the certificates and bonafide certificates are given for identity purposes.

5. Body of the letter

Body of the letter contains the message or the information to be communicated by the sender to the receiver. This part of the letter will usually occupy the greatest amount of space. This part of the letter includes four portions.

- i. Subject and reference
- ii. Opening paragraph
- iii. Main Paragraph
- iv. Closing Paragraph

i) Subject and reference

The major theme of the letter is given in single line in the subject that gives an idea about the contents of the letter to the reader. This helps the reader in making his mind to read the letter and to fix priority on different matters when many letters are to be considered.

Reference is useful to the sender as well as the receiver in maintaining files and to refer previous communications. Reference will be given below the subject as given in the following example.



For Example

Sub: Quotation – reply to enquiry – laptop – reg.

Ref: Your enquiry letter MS/P/E/5 dated 23 December 2010

ii) Opening paragraph

The opening sentence should arrest the attention of the reader immediately and completely to the subject matter of the letters. It should motivate the reader further.

iii) Main Paragraph

This paragraph contains actual message by keeping all the principles of communication in the mind. It should be brief and up to the point.

iv) Closing paragraph

The final words of the letter are written in such a way that the reader will be motivated towards the preferred action. The reader should not feel that he has been compelled or tempted to the preferred action. So that the closing paragraph should be natural as well as logical. The closing paragraph should be clear with the expected response from the reader for the letter. A thanking note, a closing remark, will be added to the closing paragraph, separately.

6. Complimentary close

The complimentary close is the one like saying “good bye” in the social interaction that expresses a smooth leave taking. For example, yours faithfully, yours truly, yours sincerely, etc. The complimentary close depends on the salutation made in the earlier stage of the letter.

Usual forms of complimentary close for different salutations are given below:

Salutations	Complimentary close
Sir / Sirs / Madam / Mesdames	Yours faithfully (Avoid yours very faithfully)
Standard close for different salutations in business letter	
Dear Sir / Sirs / Madam / Mesdames	Yours truly
Less formal and used by intimate person	
My dear Sir / Sirs / Madam / <Name of the receiver >	Yours very truly
Other forms	
Sir / Gentle man / Madam / Mesdames	Yours Cordially Yours respectfully (Avoid yours obediently)
While addressing superiors in official correspondence	
Respected Sir / Sirs/ Madam / Mesdames	Yours sincerely



In all the types of complimentary close ‘yours’ may be given as prefix or as suffix to the complementary close. However, ‘yours’ may be avoided in the plain letters where there are no formalities.

7. Signature

Signature is usually in the form of hand written that gives acceptance for the messages given in the body of the letter. However system generated letters bear no signature. Details like name, designation, organization’s name may also be included in this part, as needed.

Legal Aspect of the Signature

By putting the signature in any letter, the sender becomes the responsible person for messages given in it. When many persons are involved in a business and one partner’s signature who is authorized is enough to bind the firm legally.

8. Reference initials

To know the person who dictated the letter and who typed that letter, reference initials are given in the left side of the letter below the signature part of the letter. The first /left side component of the initials refer the dictator of the letter and second / right side component of the initials the typist. If the dictator and the writer are same and the name of the writer is given in the signature block, then typist detail alone is given in the reference initial.

For example

AAA/BBB or AAA:BBB

9. Enclosures

Letters may have to be sent with some attachments like brochures, bills, demand drafts, cheques, receipts, etc.,. Details of these attachments need to be listed under enclosures. Enclosures are normally given in the left side of the letter next to the reference initials.

For Example

Encls: 1. Report (5 Sheets)

2. Photos (3)

Encls: Two enclosures

10. Copy details

In certain situations same message is to be sent without any change to more than one person. The details of addressees may be listed under as copies to below the enclosures. This indicates who is receiving a carbon copy or courtesy copy (cc).

For Example

cc: Mary Andrews

Copy to Brian Adams

At times copies are sent to benefit readers other than the person who receives the original letter and the details of the recipients should not be known by the original receivers. In that occasion blind copy (bc), also known as blind courtesy copy or blind photocopier (bcc or bpc) will be sent. The details of recipients of blind copy were not written anywhere in the

Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Directorate of Distance & Continuing Education, Tirunelveli.



letter sent to the original recipients. However, the details will be recorded in the office copy for reference purposes.

11. Postscripts or Note Behind

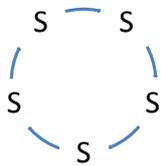
The word postscript is derived from Latin Post scriptum. Usually, it is represented by P.S. or N.B. The real meaning of postscript is written afterwards. It is useful in reminding the vital point of the message. Writer should be careful that additional messages that are not in the body of the letter should not be given as post script or note behind. Writing postscript is not normally preferred in official letters.

12. Mailing Notation

This is placed either at the bottom of the letter or at the top of the letter above the inside address. Mailing notations such as BY REGISTERED POST, BY COURIER, BY SPEED POST, etc. may be given in capital letters. In addition, the same notation will appear on the envelope also.

Sample letter format

A sample letter format showing the components is given below.



Soft Limited

137 Nethaji road
Tirunelveli- 627 215

Soft_soft23@soft.com

Phone /Fax: +91 462 2531067

D. M. Paneerselvam
Managing Partner

Date :

Ref No.

To

Dear sir,

Sub:

Ref:

[body of the letter]

Yours faithfully,

Director-Production

JLH/NPR (reference Initials)

Encl: 4 sheets

Copy to 1.
 2.

BY SPEED POST



Kinds of business letter

There are a number of occasions that necessitates a business letter. These can be classified into trade enquiries and replies, orders, trade reference and status enquiries, complaints and adjustments, collection letters, circular letters, and sales letters. The contents of every kind of letter are discussed separately. However the overall outline of each type of letter is listed in the table 2.1.

Table: 2.1 showing different purposes of a business letter

TYPE OF LETTER	PURPOSE
Enquiries	To enquire about the product features, pricing, offers, etc
Replies to enquiry	To provide quotations, details of the product, conditions for transaction, etc.
Credit enquiry	To enquire or request for a loan
Orders	To place the order for the supply of the product
Trade / bank reference Enquiry	To ask for reference detail of a firm / bank before granting credit
Reply to reference enquiry	To provide details of references (either a firm or a bank)
Reference enquiry	To ask about the applicant of credit / loan with the referee
Reply to reference enquiry	To recommend / warn / advice to deny the request of the applicant for credit / loan
Complaints	To inform the supplier about the defect of the transaction
Adjustments	Counteroffer of the supplier to compensate the defect in the transaction
Sales	To promote the sales of the product
Collection	To collect past due accounts
Fund raising	To ask for donation

TRADE ENQUIRIES AND REPLIES

Trade enquiries

Trade enquiries are made whenever the buyer needs goods. Until a customer knows what is available, the customer will not be able to place an appropriate order. The buyer tries to collect as much information as possible before making the decision of purchase. Through



the enquiry letters, the buyer tries to collect information regarding the product specification, quality of the product, price of the product, conditions for purchase, payment details, etc.,.

Buyers write different kinds of enquiry letters that depend on the situation. Majorly the enquiry letters are categorized as solicited enquiry and unsolicited enquiry. Buyer may make an enquiry based on the communication of the seller which is referred as solicited enquiry. Sometimes buyers may make enquiry on their own initiation which is referred as unsolicited enquiries.

Buyers send enquiry letters in many situations. The situations are listed below.

1. To find new suppliers
2. To find out the price of the offerings.
3. To enquire about special goods.
4. To find out any newer schemes which the seller offers.
5. To enquire about payment terms.
6. To decide on color or style preferences.

Opening paragraph of the enquiry letter should contain the details regarding the sender's company, in brief and how the sender comes to know about the seller in this regard. The main paragraph includes actual message that enquires about the needed details. In the closing paragraph, the buyer requests the seller to answer his enquiries with due interest within certain date limit. Enquiry is of two types namely, routine enquiry and special enquiry.

Routine enquiry is made by an existing buyer and / or old customer in the normal course of business. Special enquiry can be regarding something which does not form part of routine trade or by a new prospect.

Replies

Reply is a letter written by the seller in response to the enquiry made by the prospect. Every enquiry should be answered promptly by providing all information that will assist the enquirer in every respect. The seller should reply even if the terms and conditions promised by the buyer are not agreeable to him. If he feels that he will not be able to supply the goods or render any services, he should still make the effort to answer the enquiry promptly. Replies can either be positive or stating an inability to supply the goods. Enclosures like quotation, catalogue, terms and conditions (credit, payment, discount, delivery, etc.), demo copies, order form, special coupons, etc., are sent along with the reply letter.

Replies need to resemble a sales letter along with the details requested which means even additional details regarding all offers may be said in the reply letter. The seller might



have launched a new product or service, which might interest the existing buyer or an enquirer of some other product. When the requested goods are not available, the company can offer a close substitute. For example 21” inches Television instead of 20” inches Television.

OFFERS AND QUOTATIONS

Offer is the terms and conditions for sale that a seller is ready to provide to the buyer. It can be of general or specific. In the case of general offer, it is voluntarily framed and announced to the prospects without knowing the actual expectations of the prospect. But the specific offer is one, which is framed and announced to the prospect who enquired on this regard. It is also called as quotation. This quotation is meant for that particular prospect only.

The buyer used to go through all quotations and select the best that fits the requirements.

Terms used in Quotations

Sellers used to give some terms and conditions in the offer to protect themselves from undue claims. Some of the terms and conditions are given below.

- 1. Cash with Order (C.W.O.):** Cash should be paid along with the order.
- 2. “As is where is basis”:** Price quoted is for the commodity wherever it is lying and in whatever condition it is lying.
- 3. Ex-Warehouse:** Price of the goods at the warehouse of the seller. The cost of transportation of goods to the buyers’ place should be borne by the buyer.
- 4. At Station:** This price includes the cost of goods and the charges for transporting them to the station named. All other charges like loading and freight must be paid by the buyer.
- 5. Loco:** It is nearly equivalent to Ex-warehouse. But, in this the cost may or may not include the cost of packing. If extra charge has to be paid for packing, it is better to specify it in the quotation.
For example: “Loco. Tiruchendur factory, packing extra”.
- 6. Free on Rail (F.O.R):** Price of goods and the charges up to loading the goods into wagons are payable by the seller.
- 7. Free on Board (F.O.B):** Price of the goods and all charges for placing the goods on board of the steamer.
- 8. Carriage Forward (Carr. Fwd.):** Like F.O.R, the cost of transportation of the goods has to be paid by the buyer.
- 9. Carriage Paid (Carr. Pd):** In this, the seller is responsible for transportation of goods to the buyer’s address or to the station nearest to the buyer.



For example: “carriage paid to Tirunelveli Station”.

10. Cost Insurance and Freight (C.I.F.): Price quoted includes the cost of the goods, insurance and freight charges up to the destination station or port.

11. C O D (CASH ON DELILVERY)

Cash should be paid on the time of delivery. If the goods are delivered through post, it is referred as V.P.P.

12. Prompt Cash. Cash should be paid within 2 or 3 days after receiving the product. In this period, buyer can verify the product with invoice.

13. Net Cash. Cash to be paid as the net payable amount with specified time limit

For exmple : “Net cash within 15 days”.

14. 5 Per cent 10 Days

5 per cent of discount will be given to the buyer on the invoice if payment is made within 10 days.

15. Guarantee

It is an undertaking given by manufacturer on quality and service conditions of the product for a specified period.

ORDERS

Order is a letter sent by the buyer to seek the seller on required goods on specific terms and conditions. The order letters are by and large standardized letters. The contents are tabulated, if possible. Since order is a written commitment given to the seller sufficient care should be taken in writing the order letter. Every order has to be acknowledged by the seller. The seller replies to the order letters in different ways, depends on the situation. The situations are

Acceptance and immediate execution

Acceptance but delay in execution

Defective orders

Rejection of order

COMPLAINTS AND ADJUSTMENTS

These inconveniences that lead to dissatisfaction may be conveyed to the seller through a complaint letter. The seller attempts to compensate by the buyer, if needed.

Complaints

All business concerns may encounter some mistakes, accidentally as many people are involved in executing and processing an order. Customers feel the inconveniences when there



may be damages in delivered goods; incomplete execution of the order; differences in the specification of the ordered and delivered goods; delayed delivery; and mistakes in accounting. Presently, there is an increase in customer awareness about their demands and needs and legislations to protect their rights. Lodging a complaint requires a special care. It should be done very carefully, with tact. In the case of a supplier making a mistake, the buyer may claim for correction or adjustment. The customer while writing a complaint letter needs to mention the following points.

1. Reference should be made to the date of the order and the order number.
2. The actual thing that caused inconveniences in calm tone
3. Nothing should be left to imagination.
4. Exact facts and figures
5. Inconveniences in terms of financial, physical, and psychological.
6. Anticipated / actual loss due to the inconveniences with calculations, if needed.
7. Be definite in the expected alternative compensations.
8. Be firm about the need for fast redresses of the problem.

Adjustments

Goodwill can be created by prompt and genuine attention to customer complaints. In response to the complaint, the seller may offer adjustments as remedial measures to pacify and / or satisfy the customers. All the adjustments policies has to be framed focusing on the customer. However, a company should not incur loss continuously in the process of making adjustments. When the complaint is genuine, the seller attempts to compensate it. However, compensation cannot be as expected by the customer, due to many reasons. In handling the complaints the seller may follow either one of the policies as listed below.

Customer is always right

The seller always believe that

1. The customer is always reliable and realistic.
2. The customers make genuine claims
3. Retaining the customer is more important than the cost lost in granting compensation

Calculated compensation

The seller believes the customers. At the same time, the seller wish to have a check over the customer complaints.

1. The seller verify the fairness of the complaints



2. The seller calculate the amount of compensation for the inconvenience based on their policies
3. The seller calculate the cost and benefit of retaining the customer

Buyer beware

The seller does not believe the customer. The seller consider the buyer as least important. Normally, the seller will not entertain any complaints of the customer. They consider the customers as mere exploiters.

Possible adjustments

Though the customer make claim against the inconvenience, the seller may negotiate or offer other adjustment to the customers. The seller may compensate the customers by choosing either one of the adjustment or combination of the adjustments from the following.

1. Monetary compensation
2. Replacement of goods
3. Offers in future transactions
4. Offer discounts
5. Offer more credit period

When Customer's complaint is reasonable

1. Feel sorry for the mistakes
2. Assure that the problem will not arise in the future
3. Avoid unnecessary explanations
4. Details of adjustment granted

When Customer's complaint is not reasonable

1. Explain the case and try to pacify the customer
2. Assure reasonable compensation, though it is not your mistake
3. Express the inability to make adjustments as claimed politely and not as a matter of right
4. Gradually make the customer to think from being in your place

LETTERS IN CREDIT TRANSACTIONS

Credit transaction proves to be a profitable in many occasions for both the buyer and the seller. It enables a buyer to conduct a business with comparatively lesser capital. In normal course of time, the seller tries to know about the buyer on different fronts before granting credit to the buyer. If the trader feels it as no risk or less riskier, he may sanction credit even without the status enquiry. In other occasions the trader has to follow the



procedure of analyzing the credit worthiness before sanctioning credit. The sellers as well as the buyers may have some policies regarding credit transactions.

No business concern sanctions credit to the buyer without knowing the credit worthiness of the buyer. The sellers request some reference points from the buyer to enquire about the buyer. References may be inquired from other traders, called trade references, or with the bank, called bank reference.

The following details are collected by the seller to analyse the credit worthiness of the buyer, normally referred as 4Cs of credit worthiness of the buyer.

- a. Character
- b. Capacity
- c. Capital invested in the business
- d. Condition of the business

Credit applicant may be the customer of the same concern or a new customer. When the applicant is an existing customer, internal records relating to the earlier dealings are sufficient to appraise the applicant. New customers' information regarding the credit worthiness may be obtained through the external sources like trade association, chambers of commerce, enquiry agencies, banks of the applicant, etc. All communications relating to the reference matters will be kept confidential.

Since the referee is suggested by the buyer most of the times the seller receives a favourable reply. Referees may give a rather unfavourable reply when they cannot surely recommend credit for the applicant. Rather unfavourable reply gives only cautionary note but unfavourable reply gives a negative note and recommends not to sanction credit.

Credit may be for partial payment or for the entire invoice amount. Sellers may also request for some securities from the buyer like post dated cheques, bonds, etc. The sellers may request for additional references from the buyer when referees give rather unfavourable reply. Each kind of credit needs a different kind of credit system. Sellers normally deny credit for the buyers when the referees have given a unfavourable reply or rather unfavourable reply. Refusing credit does not mean that the customer should not be entertained or well manner. Refusing credit should be done in a diplomatic way.

COLLECTION LETTER

It is usually sent by the collection department to remind the debtor about the due amount and due date. It is sent to all creditors irrespective of the regularity in paying installments. Collection letters are written in different stages of collection. Collection letter differ in its tone depending upon the number of the earlier letters and response of the debtor



to the letter. These follow up letters from the time of sanctioning credit are referred as collection series. There is no standard procedure to this collection series. In normal course of action, the collection series includes different stages as listed below.

- a. Statement of account
- b. Reminders
- c. Enquiry and discussion
- d. Appeal and urgency
- e. Demand and warning

There is every possibility that the debtor may respond to the communication send by the seller. By being in the point of view of the debtor / buyer some explanation for the delay may be given which is called as customer explanation letter.

As a customer, the debtor may have any of the following as a possible reason for nonpayment of the due. In such cases, the debtor may draft a letter to the seller to explain the reasons for failure of payment.

1. Forget in busy schedule
2. Defects in the goods and complaint is launched
3. Defects in transaction like delayed delivery, wrong invoicing, etc.
4. Not yet compensated for the complaint
5. Disrespect in the sellers place

Whenever a debtor sends a letter of explanation, it is assumed that the debtor is really interested in making the payment and at present he is unable to make the payment. This kind of debtors should be dealt carefully. When the debtor responded to any stage of the collection series, the seller should acknowledge and send a reply to the explanation. The seller may commence legal action against the debtor when there is no response from the debtor.

Model content of the letters for different occasions are given for reference.

ENQUIRY LETTER

Letter Head of the Concern

Ref No. 2011/enq/sup/D/2

10 February 2017

To

Seller Address

Sir,



Sub: Geometry box – wholesale agent – reg.

Ref: Advertisement in The Hindu dated 9th December, 2016

We understood from the advertisement that quality oriented wholesale agent for your geometry boxes are required for your company. We are in the business that deals with stationary items for past 15 years in Kanyakumari. We have around 150 schools and 35 colleges as our regular customer for supplying stationary items to the office as well as to students of above-said institutions.

We wish to become one of your team members in selling the geometry boxes for the students. We are in need of following data, to make a decision to become your agent.

1. Price of the geometry box
2. Number of models available for different students
3. Minimum quantity of purchase
4. Commission percentage
5. Sales target, if any
6. Credit policy of your company

As we have limited time to grab this year's market, kindly send the above details at the earliest.

Yours faithfully,

Director-Purchase

AJ/NR

Encl: 1. Profile of our company

SPECIAL OFFER

Letter Head

Date

Ref No.

To

Buyer's Address

Attn: Purchase Officer

Dear Sir,

Sub: Distributors – Special offer – reg.

We are very much glad to inform that we got a quality certification from the state government. Our company has decided to celebrate this month with our stake holders. Being one among the few valuable distributors, we wish to include you also with us in the celebration. As a part of our expression of gratitude to our valuable distributors we have decided to introduce a new offer.



A price list of all varieties of tea is enclosed for your perusal, to facilitate the early orders. Apart from the discounts, a special rebate of 7 % is given for cash payment.

Hurry the offer is only for this month and only for the few like you.

Thank you,

Yours sincerely,

Manager – CRM
(Mr. Gobal)

ORDERS

Letter Head

Date

Ref No.

To

Seller's Address

Sir,

Sub: Printing paper – placement of order – reg.

Warm Greetings!

We are very happy to have association with you for the past 20years. We are in need of 50 tonnes of Yellow printing paper, urgently. We will be thankful if the order has been executed in a week.

The paper required is 50 tonnes and should be of the quality preferably as per the sample enclosed. We assumed the terms and conditions be as that of our regular dealings. We hope that you will be satisfying our requirement.

Thank you,

Yours sincerely,

Manager - Purchase

REPLY LETTER TO THE REMINDER LETTER TO ORDER

Letter Head

Date

Ref No.

To

Seller's Address

Sir,

Sub: Execution of order –reply - reminder – reg.

Warm greetings.



We wish to thank you, one of our regular customers, for your order for the books. We also received your communication, reminding us of the orders for book placed by you. We whole heartedly regret the lapse in not intimating to you regarding the execution status of your order.

Initially we thought of sending all the books in a single lot. However, we dispatch the available books to you immediately which you may receive tomorrow. We had made arrangements to send the remaining copies directly from the printer, which also you may receive day after tomorrow.

Kindly acknowledge the receipt of the books send along with this letter and the one you will be receiving directly from our printer.

Thank you for your kind cooperation

Yours faithfully,

Head - Sales team.

COMPLAINT LETTER

Letter Head

Date

Ref No.

To

Seller's Address

Sir,

Sub: Faulty execution of orders – TV sets - reg.

Ref: 1. Invoice no. 346

We thank you for the consignment of TV sets against our order with the invoice number 346. On inspection we found that some of the packages in the lot are different in size. The quantity of actual order and the quantity of sets send against the specific three models, where there are differences, are listed hereunder.

	Model	Numbers Ordered	Numbers
	Received		
1.	Size 21''	200	225
2.	Size 25''	350	390
3.	Size 20''	75	10



We may adjust the excess TV sets that we received against the order we need to place on next month. The payment for the excess TV sets may be made along with the payment for the next order. We hope that we keep on good relationship and continue our joint endeavours.

Thank You,

Yours Faithfully,

Manager – Electronics division

REMINDERS FOR COLLECTION

Letter Head

Date

Ref No.

To

Buyer's Address

Dear Sir,

Sub: Credit sales – Collection – reminder – reg.

Ref: Acceptance letter of consignment dated December 29, 2016.

Warm greetings.

We are pleased to have you like regular bulk purchasers as our customer. Thank you for your order placed on January 10, 2017. The consignment for your order is getting ready and will be dispatched as scheduled.

This is for your kind information that the credit amount sanctioned for the order executed on previous order has not been yet settled. Hope you might have been busy and may lost the due date. We just want to remind you the accounts. We have attached the statement of accounts for your reference.

Please, don't consider this letter if you have made payment in this interval. Or otherwise, please make the payment as early as possible so that we can make payment to the suppliers.

Thank you,

Yours sincerely,

Accounts Officer



CIRCULAR LETTER

Letter Head

Date

Ref No.

Dear customers,

As you all are our regular customers, you may perhaps be aware that we are awarded with 'Best Quality Supplier Award'. To be the leading marketer for textile items in Coimbatore we are grateful to all our customers.

As one of our milestone, we are opening the 50th branch, a new branch in Salem, in the way of our expansion. We have planned to keep stocks of silk sarees, blouses, printed sarees and other varieties as preferred by the bulk purchasers from the South Tamilnadu.

We assure our customers on quality at the least possible price as all other branches in the new branch also. As a continuing supporter for our business, we expect you to pay a visit to our new branch and also inform your friends about our new branch.

Yours faithfully,
Managing Partner

SALES LETTER

Letter Head

Mr. Kumaran
Sales Manager

Date

Dear sir/madam,

We have pleasure to inform you the latest inclusion addition to our galaxy of office equipments, photo copiers branded as PHOTOPPLUS. Our photocopier is a portable and unlike other models, our photocopier even can be operated using a 600VA UPS which is normally used for ordinary computers. The photocopier may even use as a printer when connected to computers.

The PHOTOPPLUS costs ` 57,999 /- and as an introductory offer, there is a rebate of 20 % for the purchase made in next one month.

We invite you to visit our showroom or website to visualize the product at your convenience. We have planned to also offer special concessions to educational institutions



and to the customers of any of our office equipment. The details on our special offers may be heard at the toll-free number 1500-1500-1500.

We are eagerly waiting for your action, enquiry and / or purchase.

Thank you,

Yours sincerely,

Sales Manager

Encl: Brochures



Unit - III

REPORTS

The word report is derived from the Latin reportare – ‘to bring back’. Over a period of time, it has evolved to mean that the gathered information is unbiased and evidence based.

A report is a logical presentation of facts and information. It is the basic tool on which decisions can be arrived. The information presented in the report is needed to evaluate progress and plan future action. Reports provide feedback to organization to guide future courses of action.

Every executive has to prepare and send reports, periodically and regularly. For example, the manager of a bank sends a periodic report to the immediate higher official on the status of deposits, loans, advances, etc. during a period. A foreman, at the end of the day, reports to the manager on the progress of the work carried out in his supervision. Thus reports become part of our lives. Starting from school reports to news reports on television and radio there are many kinds of reports we are required to submit in the course of our work. Often government sets up committees and commissions to report on various issues of social, political, and economic importance.

A report can be the description of an event by a person who witnessed it to others who were not present on the scene. In short a report is usually a piece of factual writing, based on evidence, containing organized information on a particular topic and/or analysis of that particular topic. It is formal in nature and is written for a specific purpose and audience. It discusses the topic in depth and contains conclusions and recommendations if required.

The purposes for which reports are written vary widely. Given below are some important purposes of reports:

- To record an experiment (Primary research report/laboratory report)
- To present a record of accomplished work (Project report)
- To record research findings or technical specifications (details of new product)
- To document schedules, timetables, etc.(a report on a long term plan)
- To document current status (an inspection report)
- To record and clarify complex information for future reference (a report on policies)
- To present information to large number of people (Annual report)
- To recommend actions that can be considered in solving certain problems (Recommendatory report)



Characteristics of Report

1. **Precision:** Effective reports clearly reflect their purpose. The investigations, analysis and recommendations should be directed towards the central purpose of the report. Precision gives unity and coherence to the report and makes it a valuable document.
2. **Factual Details:** The report should be very detailed and factual. The point of the report is to go into details; the kind of details should be relevant to the specific audience needs. Since reports invariably lead to decision making, inaccurate facts may lead to unfavorable decisions.
3. **Relevance:** The facts presented in a report should be not only accurate but also relevant. Irrelevant facts make a report confusing; exclusion of relevant facts renders it incomplete and is likely to mislead.
4. **Reader Orientation:** A good report is always reader oriented. While drafting a report, it is necessary to keep in mind the person(s) who is (are) going to read it. A report meant for the layman will be different from one meant for technical experts.
5. **Objectivity of recommendations:** If recommendations are made at the end of the report, they must be impartial and objective. They should come as a logical conclusion to investigation and analysis. They must not reveal any self interest on the part of the writer.
6. **Simple and Unambiguous language:** A good report is written in simple, unambiguous language. It is a document of practical utility; hence it should be free from various forms of phrases or any poetic writing. It should be clear, brief and grammatically accurate.
7. **Special Format:** The technical report uses a format which includes cover, title page, table of contents, list of illustrations, appendices.
8. **Illustrations:** Most technical reports contain suitable illustrations, which may be tables, charts, graphs, drawings or photographs.
9. **Homogeneity:** The report should deal with one topic at a time. All the sections of the report should focus on that topic.
10. **Documentation:** Technical reports acquire more value when adequately documented by acknowledging sources of information in an appropriate style.

Types of Reports

The reports are classified based on the purpose as Informative and Analytical; based on the frequency as Periodic and Special; and based on the mode of presentation as Oral and Written.



Informative reports

An informative report, as the name suggests, entails provision of all details and facts pertaining to the problem. As the presentation of information is the basic purpose of the report, details are worked out in a systematic and coherent manner. In a report of this kind, the various sections are simple and self explanatory. Recommendations do not arise in this type of report. The main purpose of an informational report is to present the information in an objective, factual and organized manner. It presents the situation simply as it is. To write an informational report, collect data, arrange it in proper order and present it in a style appropriate to technical writing.

Analytical reports

An analytical report is also known as interpretative report or investigative report. Analytical report analyses the facts, draws conclusions and makes recommendations, it is described as analytical report. The analytical report comprises of various stages like, identification of the problem, analysis and subsequent interpretation. Recommendations or suggestions are included depending upon the need.

Periodic reports

Periodic or routine reports are either informational or analytical in their purpose. As they are prepared and presented at regular, prescribed intervals in the usual routine of business they are called periodic or routine reports. They may be submitted annually, semi-annually, quarterly, monthly, fortnightly, weekly or daily. Generally such reports contain a mere statement of facts in detail, in summarized form, or in the layout of a prescribed form, without an opinion or recommendation. Progress reports of various kinds, inspection reports, annual reports and sales reports all come under this category.

Special reports

Special reports are related to a single occasion or situation. A report on the feasibility of starting a new venture could be an example for special report.

Oral and Written reports

Reports can be oral or written depending upon the mode of presentation. An oral report is simple and easy to present. It may communicate an impression or an observation.

WRITING OF REPORTS

The writing of report consists of two stages namely

- i. Prewriting the report
- ii. Writing the report



i) **Prewriting the Report**

The planning stage is the most crucial stage. Spend as much time as possible in collecting material, synchronizing details and ensuring that nothing has been left out. The various steps involved in planning of a report are as follows:

1. Understanding the purpose and scope
2. Analyzing the audience
3. Investigating the various sources of information
4. Organizing the material
5. Making an outline

Purpose and scope

Purpose defines the objective of the study, whereas scope determines the extent of coverage. It is the purpose of the report that enables to decide the amount or method of data to be collected, the quantity and quality of information to be included in the report and also the methodology to be adopted in analyzing the situation and arriving at the conclusion. Depending on the type of report to be written, there bound to be a difference in the definition of the problem and purpose.

For example

1. to identify the causes behind the sales decline
2. to analyse the existing schemes adopted towards sales increase
3. to suggest some new schemes to improve the sales

Audience

The audience for a technical report or any piece of writing for that matter – is the intended or potential reader. For most technical writers, this is the most important consideration in planning, writing and reviewing the document. Adapt the writing methodology to meet the needs, interests and background of the readers who will be the potential reader.

It is important to analyse the audience in terms of characteristics such as the following.

- Background- knowledge, experience and training
- Needs and interests
- Other demographic character in case of more than one audience.
- Wide variability in an audience

In the case of wide variability in an audience, write to the lowest common denominators of the readers, that are likely to end up with a cumbersome, tedious book like thing will turn off the majority of readers. Most writers go for the majority of the readers and



sacrifice the minority that needs more help. Others put the supplementary information in appendices or insert cross-references to beginners’.

Investigating the Sources of Information

Investigating the sources of information is a kind of spadework. To accomplish the objectives of the report, the requirement of facts and ideas are essential. It may be found from the company records, reports, bulletins, pamphlets and periodicals; the library sources; observation of some incidents, may be the different sources to collect facts and ideas. Sometimes the conduction of personal interviews with people to get information, etc. The extent of investigation will, of course, depend on the length and importance of the report. The important means of collecting data for the report are:

- searching library material, internal records , or databases
- personal observation
- conducting personal interviews or telephone interviews
- preparing and circulating questionnaires

Organizing the Material

Depending upon the topic, purpose and audience, you can organize the material/data collected for the report in the order of occurrence, the order of importance or a combination of orders.

Order of occurrence is otherwise known as chronological order. Here, the data is presented in a sequence that depends on time that is more or less of uniform value-none of the parts are uniquely important.

Examples: History of a transaction

Procedure for manufacturing or installing equipment

When the matter / data collected for the report is not of uniform value, you may have to organize the information in descending or ascending order of importance. Generally, the descending order of importance is used the reverse order is more effective in magazine articles and speeches as they slowly gain momentum. Of course, certain analytical reports based on a certain theory or principle may be organized in this order as the reader may wish to understand first the basic precepts or ideas on which the study is built.

Making an Outline

The formatting of the report should be carried out only after completion of the outline. An outline is a mechanical framework into which you can fit the collected information. It serves as the signpost to show the right direction in which report has to be written. Thoughts do not come to us in the way in which we want them to come. Preparing an outline requires a



considerable amount of time to make the report more systematic. The outline indicates the main topics and sub topics for the report in words and phrases. To prepare an effective outline, the following points can be considered:

- Use of words or phrases
- Use nouns whenever possible
- Use parallel grammatical construction
- Follow the principle of coordination and subordination
- Use decimal numbering system

Use words or phrases

The outline that is prepared with careful planning finally turns out to be the Table of Contents. Various parts of the outline are used as headings to the sections of the report. Normally, short construction (topic headings), is preferred, consisting of one or two words which merely identify the topic of discussion.

Use parallel Grammatical Constructions

Ideas that are parallel in thought must also be parallel in grammatical construction. Through parallel headings equal level divisions can be shown consistently.

Non-parallel construction	Parallel construction
Advantages of Computers	Advantages of Computers
Internet Browsing	Internet Browsing
Promotes sales	Sales Promotion
Analyzing Data	Data Analysis
Managing Finance	Financial Management

Avoid Needless Repetitions

Do not repeat words because repetition results in monotonous writing, which will make the outline dull and drab. By simply eliminating the repetition of the word in all subdivisions, the monotonous sound can be avoided.

Original	Revised
Present Status	Present Status
School Education	School Education
Primary Education	Primary
Secondary Education	Secondary
Higher Secondary Education	Higher Secondary



Follow the principles of coordination and subordination

The outline indicates the level of each heading in the report and how important each heading is. The closer a heading is to the margin, the greater is its importance in the report. According to the principles of coordination, it should be seen that all the main headings are of the same level in terms of their relation to the subject of the report and also the seriousness of discussion. The following table indicates the comparison between illogical and logical subordination.

Illogical coordination	Logical coordination
1. Computers: Its origin	1. Computers: Its origin
2. Applications	2. Applications
3. Education	2.1 Education
4. Industries	2.2 Industries
5. Advantages	3. Advantages and Limitations
6. Disadvantages	

Follow a Suitable Numbering System

Either the conventional numbering system or the decimal numbering system can be used to mark the levels of headings in outline.

Conventional system

The conventional system uses Roman numerals to show the main headings and the letters of the alphabet and Arabic numerals to show the subheadings, as shown below;

- I First level heading
 - A. Second level, first part
 - B. Second level, Second part
 - 1. Third level, first part
 - 2. Third level, Second part
 - a. Fourth level
- II First level heading
 - A. Second level, first part
 - B. Second level, Second part

Decimal system

The decimal system uses whole numbers to show the major sections. Whole numbers followed by decimal digits show subsections. That is, the digits to the right of the decimal show each successive step in the outline. The following is an example of this system.

- 1.0 First level heading
 - 1.1 Second level, first part



- 1.2 Second level, Second part
 - 1.2.1 Third level, first part
 - 1.2.2 Third level, Second part
 - 1.2.2.1 Fourth level
- 2.0 First level heading
 - 2.1 Second level, first part
 - 2.2 Second level, Second part

Though any of these numbering systems can be used for the report, the decimal numbering system is more popular and more convenient to use.

Structure of Reports

Various elements combine together to structure a report. Knowing these elements will help in writing better reports. The necessity of using these different elements in the report depends upon the nature of the report. While some of them may be included in all reports, some may find a place only when the report gets published. However, the selection of these elements of structure may be done considering the Usefulness, Terms of Reference, and Existing practice

Usefulness refers to the need for including any particular element. For example, an informational report does not require recommendations. Terms of reference tells about the objectives of the report. Existing practices in the organization are supposed to be considered to include the elements in terms of producing a report.

ELEMENTS AND STRUCTURE OF A REPORT

PREFATORY PARTS

- Cover
- Title Page
- Certificate
- Acknowledgements
- Contents
- List of Illustrations
- Abstract

MAIN TEXT

- Introduction
- Discussion
- Conclusions
- Recommendations

SUPPLEMENTARY PARTS

- Appendix / Appendices



References / Bibliography

Glossary

OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

Frontispiece

Letter of Transmittal

Copyright Notice

Preface

Summary

Index

PREFATORY PARTS

Cover and Frontispiece

The cover of your report not only gives it an elegant appearance but also protects it from damage. It also serves as quick reference to the readers to know the topic and author of the report. The classification of the report (secret/top secret) and report number may also be mentioned in the cover page on the top left corner and right corner respectively. If the report is less than ten pages or if it is bound with a transparent sheet at the top and bottom, it need not include a cover page. Many organizations have standard covers for reports imprinted with the organization's logo and name.

Title page

Title page is the first page of the report. This page is more or less similar to the cover page except that it contains the following additional information:

- Name and designation of the intended audience
- Name and designation of the approving authority, if any

Certificate

Certain reports such as project reports, research reports, etc, require a certificate vouching the original contribution of the report writer. Generally, the certificate contains the statement testifying the original work, place, date and signature of the project supervisor or guide.

Acknowledgements

This is a list of persons whom the writer would like to thank for their advice, support, or assistance of any kind.

- Some examples, Thanks are due to

Our sincere appreciation to



We owe a lot to

I am extremely grateful to

- Avoid listing the names
- Divide the content into well structured paragraphs

Table of contents

Generally, titled simply 'contents', helps the reader locate a specific topic easily and quickly. This table is the final form of the report outline, or simply known as frozen outline with page numbers. 'Contents' lists all the three parts, namely prefatory, main, and supplementary parts of the report along with their page numbers. Depending upon the length and complexity of the report, the contents page may show only the top two or three levels of headings or only first level headings.

List of illustrations

When the illustrations are less than five, it is listed along with the contents itself. When many illustrations are there a separate page will be added as illustrations. This serves as the contents page for all the illustrations. Illustrations have two parts namely tables and figures (such as graphs, maps, charts, drawings, etc.).

Abstract

An abstract gives the essence of the report. In business report it is known as synopsis. The length of the abstract is generally 2 to 5 percent of the report. An abstract is especially relevant in specialist to specialist communication where the reader would be expected to have some background knowledge of the subject. Abstract does not allow abbreviation, acronym or illustration.

Summary

While abstract is more appropriate in specialist to specialist communication, summary is meant for all readers. It is relatively longer than an abstract, normally 5 to 10 percent of the report. In business reports it is termed as Executive summary. It presents the entire report in a nutshell. Summaries can contain headings, adequately developed text and even visual aids. After reading the summary, the reader should know the essentials of the report and be able to make a decision.

Preface

Preface is the preliminary message from the writer to the reader. It is quite similar to the letter of transmittal, except that it does not formally transmit the report. It seeks to help the reader understand the report. The contents of a preface are:

- Factors that led to the report



- Organization of the report
- Highlights
- Significance
- Acknowledgements

Generally, the preface appears only when the report gets published.

Copyright notice

Copyright is a form of protection that covers published and unpublished literary, scientific and artistic works, whatever the form of expression, provided such work is executed in a tangible or material form. Copyright laws grant the creator the exclusive right to reproduce, prepare derivative works, distribute, perform and display the work publicly.

MAIN TEXT

Introduction

The function of an introduction is to put the whole report in perspective and to provide a smooth, sound opening for it. It presents the subject or problem to the readers and gets their attention. An introduction includes the following information:

- Background of the report
- Purpose and scope
- Authorization
- Basic principles or theories involved
- Methods of gathering data
- General plan in developing the solution
- General structure of the report

Ending the introduction with an explanation of the general plan of the report will provide a logical transition to the next section. A brief outline of the results or main conclusions may also provide a logical transition to the first part of the discussion section of the report.

Discussion

Discussion, the most voluminous part of the report, contains the information that supports the conclusion and recommendations, as well as the analysis, logic and interpretation of the information. The writer must decide between pertinent data to include in the text and less important information to omit or relegate to the appendix. The solution of a problem may be given with an explanation of its merits and demerits. Tables, charts and other media for presenting figures and data are used. The discussion should lead the reader through



the same reasoning process that the author used to reach the conclusions and show that they are sound.

Conclusion

Conclusion is that section of the report where all the essential points of discussion are brought together. The aspect of this section is to bring the discussion to a close and to signal to the reader gracefully that it has reached its end. It also refers to the logical inferences drawn, the judgments formed on the basis of analysis of data presented in the report or to the findings of the investigation. In summary, the conclusion section is a recapitulation of the significant points developed in the discussion section. Concluding statements are supported by the facts in the discussion section.

Recommendations

Recommendations pertain to the action that is to be taken as result of the report. They are supported by the conclusions, and they are aimed towards accomplishing the purpose of the report. Recommendations can be of following types;

- Tentative (temporary solutions which may have to be reconsidered in future)
- Conciliatory (suggestions which is felt may be accepted by the recipient)
- Aggressive (recommendations which are mandatory and are to be implemented immediately)

SUPPLEMENTARY PARTS

Appendices

This section of the report is used for information which has some relevance to the report but cannot be fitted into the text. Hence, before including any material in the appendix, it should consider the following points:

- See whether the material is related to the subject of the report
- Check whether it would interrupt the theme if included in the main body

An appendix should contain the material not strictly related to the main argument of the report but which nevertheless is of interest and the material which readers can safely omit but can consult if they want to examine the details and also to carry out further study. Generally, an appendix contains materials such as sample documents, detailed calculations, experimental results, statistical data tables and graphs, specimen questionnaires, samples of forms used in investigations, summaries of results achieved by other organizations, etc. If there are many appendices, name them as Appendix A, Appendix B and so on.



Bibliography

A bibliography is an alphabetical list of the sources – books, magazines, news papers, internet, interviews, etc that has been consulted in preparing the report. This list is used to acknowledge and give credit to the various sources that are referred, to give the readers information to identify and consult the sources and to give readers an opportunity to check the sources for accuracy. It can also be named as references or sources and sometimes called as work cited. The details that can be furnished in the bibliography may be name of the Author, Title, Place of publication, Publisher details, Year of publication, Page number(s)

Footnotes and Endnotes

Footnotes and endnotes are used to give credit to sources of any material borrowed, summarized or paraphrased. They are intended to refer readers to the exact pages of the works listed in the bibliography. The main difference between footnotes and endnotes is that footnotes are placed numerically at the foot of the very same page where direct references are made, while endnotes are placed numerically at the end of the essay on a separate page entitled Endnotes or Notes.

Glossary

This is the list of technical words used in the report and their explanations. The decision whether to include a glossary or not depends upon the readers, if they are from different fields, it would be better to include them.

Index

The index is intended to serve as a quick guide to locate the material in the report. The readers can locate the topic, subtopic or any other important aspect of the report quickly and easily. The index is arranged in the alphabetical order and it is extremely helpful in cross referencing.

ii) Writing the Report

First draft

First a rough draft of the report is prepared, and then it is revised, pruned and polished. The writer should also be careful that the language of the report is simple, unambiguous and free from grammatical errors.

Revising, Editing and Proofreading

After completing the first draft of the report, it will be reviewed carefully. The type of the report, its utility, and the time available and also the effectiveness of the first draft determine the amount of revision for the following:

- Accuracy of facts



- Clarity of expression
- Overall organization
- Adequacy and appropriateness of the contents to meet the objectives
- Suitability and conformity of illustrations
- Effectiveness in expression
- Grammatical accuracy
- Correctness of layout

Editing can be done by either the author or someone other than the author. The report, revised in all aspects like additions, deletions or corrections, is again read to check and improve it before submission.

Proof reading is done at each stage of preparing the first draft to ensure correctness.



Unit - IV

MEETINGS

Meeting involves a number of persons. A group of people from an organization participate in a meeting because people performing different functions may have to come together to get a specific task done. Meetings help organizational achievement as well as individual advancement. Effective meetings may become a potentially powerful tool for transforming the organization. Due to lack of open communication among members, meetings are often poorly conducted, with many people considering them a waste of time. In general, meetings are conducted to discuss informational and / or to make decisions. Meeting conducted for discussing information discusses available information, explore ideas and concepts, report the status of project / work, and attempt to gain support for an idea / project.

Decision making meetings are mainly concerned with persuasion, analysis, and problem solving. They often include a brainstorming session which is followed by a debate on the alternatives to reach a group decision, to solve a problem, to resolve a conflict, and to negotiate an agreement.

Preparations for a meeting

Before calling for a meeting, the agenda, participants, timings, venue, and the cost of the meeting are to be analysed and finalized. The agenda, timings and venue should be informed in the intimation letter which gives intimation to the members about the meeting. Meeting intimation may bear details of recipients when the participants should know about participating group.

Agenda

Agenda is the list of individual items that need to be discussed in the meeting. Depending on the type of meeting, there may or may not be a fixed agenda. The agenda keeps the meeting on course and helps to ensure that the stated objectives are accomplished.

Timings

If a meeting is mooted by a crisis or some emergency, there may not be much choice in terms of scheduling. But whenever possible, carefully consider the timing of the meeting because it may have a significant impact on the outcome.

Duration

The appropriate length for a meeting depends on the type of meeting it is and on the number, complexity, and sensitivity of agenda items. The more complex or controversial the



items, the fewer items may be addressed in one meeting. A second meeting may be planned when it is difficult to complete all agenda in a single meeting.

Venue and setting

The choice of a meeting room has a significant impact on the overall quality of the meeting. Among other things, a meeting room may affect productivity, quality and quantity of communication, creativity and mood of the participants. The details like size, lighting, ventilation, acoustics, sound system, presentation equipment, projection screens, electrical outlets, storage space, seating arrangement, special needs, and other amenities regarding the conference / room / auditorium is also need to be verified as per the requirement.

Procedure

The chairperson may direct the meeting towards achieving its specified goal as being a leader, facilitator, and participant. The chairperson has the responsibilities like a good start, encouraging participation, joining the discussion, managing emotions, dealing with late comers, managing conflict, injecting humour, and ending the meeting in making a meeting effective.

A good start

The chairperson/leader has to set the tone and stating the ground rules and objectives while commencing the meeting. A good brief orientation speech by the chair may get rid of the needless talks among the participants in the meeting. The chair must state the problems, general objectives and procedures, and also provide the relevant information base for the discussion. S/he also have a note on the boundaries and constraints of the discussion.

Encouraging participation

Encouraging participation is one of the leader's main duties. Participants may be encouraged by

1. Asking open ended questions.
2. Framing problems in positive terms.
3. Approving the ideas of participants.
4. Monitoring and correcting the direction of discussion
5. Providing chance to everyone
6. Avoid monopolized presentation

Joining the discussion

Though, it is better for the leader to stay out of the discussion and remain in the neutral, facilitative role. The leader also needs to advocate some point. However it is advisable to join discussion, when others have introduced the point. When the leader has



expertise in the field of discussion, the group may feel the leader is obliged to share it with them.

Managing emotions

The leader of the meeting should be conscious of not only the written agenda of the meeting but also the hidden and emotional agenda of the participants are discussed. The term hidden agenda is given to the unspoken motives and aspirations of the group members, which could often conflict with the main goals of the group. Hidden agendas indicate what people really want as against what they say as their want. The leader should realize that meetings also have the goal of creating and maintaining positive emotions that promote working together effectively. By exploring the reasons behind the anger the leader may work with the group to address the problem productively. Acknowledging the existence of these emotions and creating trust will help people voice their feelings more openly.

Dealing with late comers

The only way to ensure that a meeting starts on time is to start it on time. The leader should make the late comers realize the importance of their presence on time and their valuable contribution to the meeting and the late comers may be motivated to come on time.

Managing conflict

Conflict is inevitable as all participants may not have a common view. Conflicts may improve the quality of decisions, stimulate creativity and innovation when it is productive. Controversy promotes objectivity and enquiry and enables thorough discussion and effective problem solving. The best solutions and plans often develop from contrary points of view within the meeting group. A conflict is constructive or destructive depends on how skillfully the leader manages it in the meeting.

Ending the meeting

When all the items on agenda have been covered or the group has gone as far as it can without gathering more information, it is time to bring the meeting to a close, whether or not the scheduled time has run out. In closing the meeting, the leader should sum up what has been accomplished and what remains to be done. He/she should recapitulate what action is expected of each participant. If another meeting on the subject is to be scheduled, the leader should set a tentative date and time.

Minutes of the Meeting and Follow up

In general, the secretary takes notes during the meeting and then prepares the minutes. After the meeting is over, the secretary needs to work on the minutes of the meeting. Minutes are a record of what had happened at a meeting. They serve as a tool to remind the



participants what actions they need to take as a result of the meeting. Minutes serve as a repository of information for future reference. The minutes are to be read out and signed by the chairperson during the next meeting. The formal minutes may give:

1. The details of the venue and time of the meeting held and list of members present
2. The decision arrived at in minimal information, a précis of what was said at the meeting in the form of a structured report.
3. A bullet point / numbered list of decisions taken.
4. A narrative report of a conversation that took place between several people.

When putting together the minutes, ensure that you

1. Write up the minutes within a week from the date of the meeting.
2. Decide the style of writing minutes and prepare a template with all the headings.
3. Fill up one section at a time.
4. Make an action point list, noting down all the things that were agreed upon, who is to do them any deadlines agreed.
5. Make a note of all the items participants agreed to discuss at the next meeting and pass this on to the chair or committee secretary to include in the next agenda.
6. Circulate the minutes to the chair and appropriate participants for their comments; give them a deadline to send in amendments if they have any.
7. Wait until you receive the feedback from everyone before making changes.

Evaluation of the Meeting

In addition to paying attention to all the aspects discussed in the preceding sections and assigning follow up tasks, it is important to evaluate the quality of the meeting so that future meetings will be more productive.

CONFERENCES

A conference also is a type of business meeting. When one or two people gather in an office to discuss a project, the meeting style will be much less formal than when more number of people assembles to learn about a new venture. In general, the level of formality increases with the size of the group.

The purpose of a conference is to confer with people having similar interests and to pool their resources and opinions. In this collaborative thinking process, discussion generally results in a set of suggestions or recommendations on the topic/theme of the conference. The number of participants is greater and the spectrum of subject matter wider than those of a seminar or symposium. There may be a wide range of activities such as formal lectures, exhibitions and audio visual presentations organized on the occasion of a conference.



There has been a long tradition of organizing seminars and conferences in academic institutions. Often, academic institutions collaborate with business enterprises to organize conferences and seminars on various themes. These conferences serve as a forum for the experts from various organizations to meet, discuss and acquire new knowledge and insight into the theme of the conference.

Significance

Conferences play a significant role in developing an analytical and questioning attitude among the participants. The participants in a conference make an attempt to define the issue and to ascertain its depth, scope and related critical factors. They discuss all the factors and offer suggestions at the end of their deliberations. Since all the speakers are experts in their field, they suggest alternative solutions, which lead to the best decision.

Conferences have educational value in business and also in other fields where negotiation, collaboration and collective thinking are essential. A corporate manager who participates or leads a conference may develop ability not only to define, analyze and discuss a problem, but also to arrive at various solutions and take apt and sound decisions. Conferences may also be used for modifying attitudes, opinions and feelings of participants. A conference within a business organization may provide necessary information on the policies, procedures, customs, traditions and objectives of the organization to the conferees. The management may use conference tactfully to correct mistakes and misunderstandings among groups though not to warn or reprimand the individual participants. Conferences lead employees to think more effectively and more often about the objectives and challenges of the organization as a whole. At some industrial conferences, the experts and delegates with similar concerns are invited to discuss their common problems and prospects. Such conferences stimulate a creative flow of ideas and information, pooling of knowledge, views and experiences. Industrial conferences can also promote public relations and direct the attention of the public as well as the government to the problems and prospects facing a particular industry.

Preparations for a conference

Organizing a conference is a challenging task. It requires meticulous planning and systematic preparation. The following are a few guidelines to help you in conference planning.

1. Decide on a broad area
2. Narrow down the broader view to specific themes
3. Identify and prepare a list of prospective conferees



4. Decide the date
5. Identify the chief guest and get his consent
6. Work out the topics for various sessions and identify the chairperson
7. Prepare a list of invitees
8. Estimate the budget
9. Prepare a brochure
10. Form an advisory committee and organizing committee
11. Plan well ahead
12. Prepare a conference evaluation form
13. Ensure that information reaches all the prospective conferees and invitees
14. After receiving the replies from the participants, get the relevant information tabulated and make necessary arrangements (Transport, Accommodation, Reception, Timings and duration of the sessions, Seating, Audio visual aids, Rapporteuring, Identifying volunteers, Lunch and tea breaks, Preparation of souvenir, Production of required materials to be distributed.)

At the inaugural session, the convener of the conference should welcome all the guests and delegates and introduce the theme of the conference. Also briefly mention the arrangements that have been made for the conduct of various discussion sessions. During the valedictory session, circulate the conference evaluation form among the participants and get them filled in. Feedback, including suggestions, enables the organizing committee to detect any flaws and hitches and to plan future conference in better manner.

Once the conference is over, prepare a report containing the session details, names of the participants and summary of the discussion on each topic. This enables the organizers to prepare the conference proceedings later, which incorporate all the deliberations.

SPEAKING

Speaking is such an ingrained activity and everyone tend to do it without much thought. But sometimes, this casual approach may cause serious problems in business. A reluctant answer to a customer in the busy time may cost the relationship of the customer. Everyone must visualize speaking as a tool for accomplishing the objectives. This tool is very effective when it is used always with planning and never as spontaneous. One must learn to manage the situation by consciously tailoring the words, sentences, and delivery style to suit the occasion.

Useful speaking requires planning of the idea with respect to the audience and the purpose. Logical thinking and the delivery style matching audience creates good impression.



Decide on the style that suits the occasion and then edit the message mentally. Perhaps the most important thing is to project more effectively on the 'you' attitude.

Speech

The key to success of many businessmen, salesmen, leaders, etc. lies in the capability of making effective speeches. A good speech may even change the feelings of huge mobs. It may turn a friendly and calm group into a hostile and violent mob and also the reverse. These speeches are required at various occasions like inaugurations, seminars, annual general meetings and discussions. It requires skill to prepare speeches appropriate to the situation and even more skill to deliver it appropriately. But one thing is certain and unchanging, they all organize their speeches on certain fundamental principles.

Make-up of a good speech

Reasons for an effective speech may be understood from analyzing the good speeches. For practical purposes, these elements may be grouped under three general headings: knowledge, confidence, delivery, gestures and postures, physical appearance, etc.

Knowledge

Knowledge includes the idea / understanding on various elements like the subject in discussion, language, audience, appropriateness, style of speech, etc.

Confidence

Confidence will refer to the way you move with the audience. Confidence should not be misunderstood as arrogant. Arrogance on the part of the speaker will spoil the whole show.

Delivery

Delivery means the way the words are uttered in the speech. Voice, diaphragm, proper breathing, controlled rhythm and volume all enter into good delivery of the speech.

Gestures and postures

Gestures and postures are another important aspect of a good speech. Stress may be given to the important point using limbs, body, voice and facial expression. Posture should be corresponding to the situation. If the audience is senior citizens, then the posture should reflect the regard for their age and wisdom.

Dress code

It is very important to dress according to the occasion. When appearing for an interview, use a formal wear. For a birthday party, choose a casual wears Audience tend to conceive a prejudice based on the clothes that a speaker worn. Sometimes the audience gets



distracted and will not listen to the speaker due to inappropriate clothes and the speech will not be effective.

Mannerism

Certain mannerisms like scratching the head, tugging at the shirtsleeves, wiping their face, etc. is highly distracting and the audience tend to lose interest in the talk. This would obviously defeat the entire purpose. Practice to remove the peculiar mannerisms may help to become an effective speaker.

Smile

Every one of us likes to see a smile on the other person's face. This gives a pleasant outlook to the whole atmosphere. It makes the speaker more approachable.

Characteristics of a good speech

A good speech should possess the following characteristics.

1. Clarity
2. Appropriate words
3. Suitable examples
4. Appropriate pace
5. Quality of delivery
6. Audience oriented
7. Adequate time
8. Interest creating
9. Suitability to occasion
10. Factual

Clarity

This is the most important quality of a good speech. All the emotions, facts, arguments and ideas should be conveyed in a clear manner. There should be no scope for anomalies and confusion. The audience should understand the speech with minimum effort and concentration.

Appropriate words

The speaker should use familiar words to make everyone understand the message. More technical / jargons may create fear in the minds of the audience on the understandability of the topic.

Suitable examples

A known story if used as an example, audience may understand the concept / message easily.



Appropriate pace

The speaker should remember that, the presentation should be at the pace of the audience.

Quality of delivery

The right tone and pitch is very important. This has the right impact on the audience. Volume should be optimum and the speaker should be tension free. Audience should be able to visualize it. If the speaker is hesitant, it will not impact on the audience and it will eventually be a waste of time for everyone.

Audience oriented

The speech should be modeled on the type of audience who is going to listen. It should match the wavelength of the audience which may depend on age group, socio-economic background, religious views, mixture of the group (general / specific), group size, etc.

Adequate time

The concentration span of the audience should be kept in mind and should not test the patience of the listeners. The speaker must end the presentation just at the right time.

Interest creating

Speech should not be boring and dragging. Humor can be added if the topic allows it. Quotations may also be given. Some may present a few statistics that make the audience to sit up and take notice.

Suitability to occasion

If a speaker wishes to say something, say it in accordance with the situation and topic on hand. Too much of divergence removes the focus from the main topic and distracts the listeners.

Factual

Provide the details of reference to make the statements effective.

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

This is a formal well prepared talk given by an individual to a group. The responsibility of the presenter is to make sure that all the listeners understand the matter, Whether it is business organization or educational institution where we work, or even as a student, it is essential to possess good public speaking skills. Throughout the life / career, everybody is bound to encounter innumerable situations which demand effective oral presentations.



To mention a few, a team leader, has to present before the corporate body; a project manager need to present before a committee the results of a project undertaken; and a student may have to present in seminars or may have to present project reports. All these situations require effective oral presentations skills. Though these circumstances differ in purpose, the strategies used in making a good presentation do not differ much. The ability to make effective oral presentations is one of the most important qualities everyone needs to develop for having a successful life / career. Knowing the fundamentals of professional presentations will be helpful to emerge as an effective presenter.

To make an effective presentation it is necessary to understand the following components:

- i. Defining purpose
- ii. Analyzing audience
- iii. Organizing contents
- iv. Preparing an outline
- v. Deciding on visual aids
- vi. Nuances of delivery

i) Defining purpose

The purpose of the presentation not only decides the content and style but also affects the amount of audience interaction. Generally, the presenter should begin by providing facts and figures or statistical finding relating to the topic that increases the audience's interest on the subject and improves understanding. Depending on the purpose – to inform, to analyze or to persuade, the communication is designed. However, depending on the audience reaction, the situation may change. When the situation change the purpose also may change from one to the other. So the presentation should be planned to be flexible enough to adjust to new input and unexpected audience reactions.

ii) Analyzing audience

It is always important to have some prior knowledge of the audience characteristics. Those audiences who are not very conversant with the language or with the accent may appreciate relatively slow speech and use of visual aids to aid their understanding. According to the audience, structure the presentation and adapt the style to help them feel comfortable. Ensure to seek the following information characteristics of the target audience before the presentation.

1. Estimate their interests and dislikes
2. Determine their degree of knowledge of the topic



3. Know the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the audience
4. Estimate the size and composition of the audience

While presenting, the presenter has to make eye contact with the audience to assess the audience reaction such as excitement, resistant, hostile or dull. Always begin with a greeting in a pleasant tone with a smile. Respond to audience reaction / feedback with positive tone. The effectiveness of oral presentation may be increased with an effective usage of words. The presentation can further be skillfully managed by pauses, through interactions with the audience and through changes in delivery techniques. Usage of visual aids will hold the attention of the audience and promote understanding. Prior to the presentation, know the physical setting, the availability of podium, table, public address system, and so on. Also understand the physical conditions such as seating, room temperature and lighting. Appropriate arrangements for audio-visual aids also need to be checked before commencing the presentation.

iii) Organizing contents

People normally vary in their ability to speak confidently in public. Always prepare more material than required; this will help to feel confident. Arrangement of the contents of presentation can be done into three major parts namely,

1. Introduction
2. Main body
3. Conclusions
4. Interaction (Optional)

Introduction

The opening statement may be a question, a quotation, an anecdote a sincere greeting or a statement that arose interest of the audience. This prepares the audience to listen to the rest of the presentation. After the opening statement, state clearly and precisely the purpose of the presentation. End the introduction by giving an overview or road map of the presentation. After a preview, the presentation smoothly transits to the main body of the speech.

Main Body

The main body / the discussion follows the introduction and supports the aim / specific purpose. The major points that are highlighted in the opening will be expanded in the main body. Depending upon the topic and the introduction, any of the following patterns may be used to organize the main body of the speech.



- Chronological - If the contents of presentation is arranged sequentially, in the order in which the events occurred or appeared. The entire presentation may be arranged chronologically.
- Categorical - This is one of the easiest and most commonly adopted patterns for many topics. The entire presentation may be divided into various topics and sub-topics arranged on the basis of subordination and coordination.
- Cause and effect - This method may be adopted whenever there is a cause and effect relationship. Here the presenter has to illustrate a situation and explain the causes of the situation and then focus on the effects.
- Problem-solution - The presenter may divide the presentation into two parts. In the first part describe and analyze the cause and effect of the problem. The second part discusses the main objective of the presentation to suggest or propose a solution to the problem. It is a very helpful and effective way for presentation for topics like 'controlling population explosion'.

Conclusions

The conclusion of the presentation may be done by reviewing the main points. Give a signal such as *to sum up, to conclude, to review when commence the conclusion*. In conclusion, remind the audience briefly about the purpose of the presentation and persuade them. Conclusion also may be with a quotation or recall the earlier story, joke, anecdote with which the presentation is commenced to bring it to a full circle.

Interaction

Most of the interaction session becomes a questioning session. Feedback is vital for the ideas that have been put forth in the presentation. Preparing for questions, therefore, is as important as preparing for your presentation.

iv) Preparing an outline

An outline is a mechanical framework in which the bits and pieces of the presentation material are fitted. It serves as a guide to show the right path for the presentation. So spending time in developing an outline is more important for an effective presentation. In fact, an outline may be prepared so flexible to deviate in response to audience feedback. The outline may be framed in the form of words, phrases or sentences depending upon the convenience of the presenter.



v) **Visual aids**

Speeches with visual support – handouts, chalk boards, flip chart, overheads, slides, computers, charts, tables, film, etc is more efficient than the normal speed. If a picture is simple, clear and appropriate to its purpose and audience, it will deliver the message more accurately and quickly than a verbal explanation. Visual aids are required and more appropriate for the points that sound vague and require detailed discussion.

Importance of visual aids

1. Increase audience interest
2. Help illustrating key and complex points
3. Increase the impact of message
4. Help listeners retain information
5. May serve as a notes for the presenter

Guidelines to make effective use of visual aids

- ✓ Organize the visual aids to fit the plan.
- ✓ Emphasize the visual aids with pointing to them with bodily action and with words.
- ✓ Look at the visual aids only when the audience should look at them.
- ✓ Avoid blocking the listener's view of visual aids.
- ✓ Make sure that audience had an opportunity to absorb the material.
- ✓ Use enough visual aids to make the points clear.
- ✓ Make sure visuals are visible and clear to everyone in the hall / room / auditorium.
- ✓ Be familiar with the basic operations of the devices used visual aid.

Prerequisites specific to some of the visual aids are tabulated below.

vi) **Nuances of delivery**

Manner of presentation, the vocal inflections, perfectly timed pauses, facial expressions and the gestures are the factors that keep the attention and interest of the audience. All these are part of an expert delivery. Even a vague topic will turn out to be more interesting if presented well. Good delivery conveys ideas clearly, interestingly and without distracting the audience. Most audiences prefer delivery that combines a certain degree of formality with the best attributes of good conversation- directness, spontaneity, animation, vocal and facial expressiveness and as a whole lively sense of communication.

There are four modes of delivery which can be used for making presentations:

1. Extemporaneous - The presentation will sound quite spontaneous to the audience, as after thorough preparation, you are speaking while thinking. This is the result



of appropriate planning and practice, where you collect the material and organize it meticulously.

2. Manuscript - In manuscript presentation, the message is written / printed and the message is supposed to be read aloud. The written / printed message will be in front of the presenter and he has to read. For effective presentation, the presenter needs to rehearse it several times.
3. Impromptu - The impromptu mode, as the word suggests, is delivering an informal speech without preparation. For example, at a formal dinner party one may be invited to deliver a vote of thanks. The presentation should be as brief as possible during impromptu presentations. A brief presentation with smiling face satisfies the requirement.
4. Memorization - This method of presentation is very difficult for most of the people when presenting in front of a live audience. Usually the presenter memorizes the main points and the sequence of the points. Speech is initially written and memorized and finally delivered from the memory.

Among all the four modes of delivery, each mode is better in specific situation. However existence of some flexibility to the speaker may enhance the effectiveness.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Group discussion is a form of group communication in which 6 to 8 people have oral discussion face to face on the topic / issue / problem to arrive at a decision / solution. Group discussions are widely used in many organizations for decision making when problem is multi faceted / when consensus is required. Group discussions may be of two categories, namely purposive group discussions and examining group discussion. Purposive group discussions are used to evolve solution / consensus. Examining group discussions are used to shortlist candidates.

Purposive group discussion

In organizations, the group discussions are mainly used for group decision making. Members of the interacting group take their responsibilities of explaining the ideas and arriving at a consensus. Group discussions may reduce problems inherent in the interactive groups of traditional / tall structured organization. The participants may censor themselves and pressure other group members into agreement. Anyone of the following techniques may be used to improve the effectiveness of group discussion.

1. Brainstorming
2. Nominal group technique



3. Delphi technique

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a method for generating a variety of new ideas and perspectives. It is as uncritical as possible because criticism inhibits the free flow of ideas. A typical brainstorming session will be conducted in the following manner.

1. A group of six to twelve people sit around a table.
2. The group leader explain problem.
3. Members suggest as many alternatives as they can in a given time.
4. Each alternative should be recorded immediately and openly.
5. Ideas are generated without any intervention.
6. No criticism is allowed and all the alternatives are recorded for later discussion and analysis.

There are four types of brainstorming technique namely storyboarding, lotus blossom, nominal group technique, and Delphi Technique.

In storyboarding, participants identify major issues. Brainstorming is done for each of the issues separately. The creative solutions are analysed to formulate a comprehensive solution. It is often used to solve complex problems.

In the lotus blossom technique, participants generate ideas in stages. A core issue is presented to the participants to generate eight ideas surrounding it like the petals of a lotus blossom. Then each of the generated ideas will be considered as core thought to which another eight ideas are generated. This will be continued until participants can no longer generate ideas or until decision makers feel that they have potential creative solutions.

The nominal group technique restricts members from discussion or interpersonal communication during the decision making process. Each member tries with their own capability to find a solution. In other words, though group members are physically present in the meeting place, they operate independently. Each member is given a chance to present one idea, at a time, until all ideas have been presented and recorded (typically on a flip chart or chalkboard). No discussion takes place until all ideas have been recorded. The group now discusses carry idea for clarity and evaluates them. Each group member silently and independently rank the ideas. The final decision is taken based on the idea that acquired the highest aggregate ranking.

The Delphi technique is some more complex and time consuming alternative in group decision making. The problem is presented to all members. Members are asked to provide potential solutions through a series of carefully designed questionnaires. Each member



anonymously and independently completes the first questionnaire. The results of the first questionnaire are compiled at a central location, transcribed and reproduced. A copy of the results will be sent to each member. Members are again asked to offer solutions after knowing the results of the first round. The new ideas from the members are compiled in the central office and find the results. Steps are repeated until consensus is reached.

An organization may decide upon the type of group discussion it needs to have mainly on the basis of availability of time, urgency of the situation, location of the group members and also the complexity of the decision to be made.

Skills Required for purposive Group Discussion

During a group discussion, members may require the following qualities to make the group discussion as effective.

1. Active listening
2. Clarity of thought and expression
3. Apt language
4. Body language
5. Group behavior
6. Leadership skills

Examining group discussion

Group discussion conducted for the selection of candidates for a job or for admission to any professional courses is known as examining group discussion. Group discussions are well formulated devices for judging the personality of candidates, their communication skills, knowledge and their ability to work as a team. Now-a-days group discussions have become a filtering tool in most of the selection processes.

Candidates are given a topic or case for discussion to analyze and discuss within a given time limit of about 20 to 30 minutes. The given time is rationed as 1/3rd for preparation and remaining 2/3rd for discussion. Depending upon the infrastructure at the venue, the group is asked to sit in circle, block or u-shaped arrangement as specified by the examiner. The selection panel observes the discussion either directly or from behind a screen.

Criteria for evaluation

During a group discussion, employers evaluate the participants based on the following.

1. Knowledge
2. Critical thinking
3. Interpersonal relations



4. Language proficiency
5. Group behavior
6. Etiquettes
7. Analytical skills
8. Creative thinking
9. Leadership
10. Listening skills
11. Problem solving skills
12. Consistency in participation
13. Time sharing and orderly conduct
14. Ability to handle tough situations
15. Ability to dominate the proceedings without bullying others
16. Avoiding personal comments

Tips to Succeed in Examining Group Discussion

1. Be thorough with current issues
2. Always enter the room with a piece of paper and a pen
3. Listen to the topic carefully.
4. Write down as many ideas as you can in the first few minutes.
5. Try to dissect the topic and go into the underlying causes or consequences.
6. Organize your ideas before speaking.
7. Speak first only if you have something sensible to say. Speaking first is a high risk, high return strategy.
8. Try to speak meaningfully and substantially.
9. Identify your supporters and opponents and allow your supporters to augment your ideas.
10. Keep track of time and share time fairly.
11. Have an open mind and listen to other's views.
12. Maintain eye contact while speaking and listening.
13. Do not indulge in parallel conversations
14. Use tact and humour.
15. Display a spirit of cooperation.
16. Draw out the silent participants and encourage them to speak.
17. Attempt to arrive at consensus, which will reveal your capability and inclination towards being a good team player.



Unit V

LETTERS AND RESUMES

Application letters are written when anyone applies for a job. The objective of an application letter is to seek an interview or job. Generally, application letters are sent along with the resume which is also referred to as bio-data or curriculum vitae. The resume will normally be the same for almost all positions. Application letters are written such that application letters make authorities understand how the applicant benefits the organization. The application letter should be more like a persuasive letter which should project confidence. Application letters are more or less a sales letter. Hence the general principles governing a sales letter will be applicable to job application letters also.

People apply for jobs from different places to all parts of the world. Some go through the advertisements in the newspapers and magazines; others may go through personal contacts. Campus recruitments recruit people right from the concerned educational institutions where they study; still others browse through the internet and manage to find vacancies. Employment agencies and human resource consultants are also used. There may be two types of application letters, namely solicited and unsolicited.

- Solicited: Which are written in response to an advertisement.
- Unsolicited: Which are written on the writer's own initiative; without being asked for

When writing unsolicited applications, the letter should be especially good in capturing the attention and raising the interest of the employer. An unsolicited application letter may focus on one or more of the following:

1. Special work skills that would benefit the organization
2. The match between job requirements and the qualifications
3. Reference name who may be respected by the employer
4. News about the organization that attracts the awareness
5. The source of knowledge about the vacancy

Application for a job contains two essential parts

1. Cover letter
2. Resume

Contents of the application and the resume should be prepared such that it motivates the employer to call the applicant for an interview or for the job. Hence each of them plays an important role in your job search.



Cover letter

Application letter contains sentences that gain attention and develop an interest in the employer about your qualification in the introductory paragraph; experience, qualifications, past performance, and testimonials in the main body; and sentences to motivate the prospective employer to take a favourable action in the concluding paragraph.

Introductory paragraph

An introductory paragraph may have the following points.

1. State the reason for applying
2. Mention the source informing the job opening (advertisement, or through personal contacts)
3. Summarize the best credentials.

Write a distinctive covering letter by avoiding usual routine beginnings such as ‘with reference to your advertisement ...’ or ‘In response to your advertisement ...’ and the like.

Main text

Main text is where the applicant can sell his/her skills by describing the academic and professional skills. But remember not to make this section a replica of the resume. Present only the highlights of the appreciable skills. The following guidelines may be adopted to write the main body of the cover letter.

- Justify the requirement of the skill set in the organisation
- Give specific details of the achievements. For examples, rewarded for the accomplishment of a difficult project, nature of reward, type of project and also the year and month of the reward received.

Concluding paragraph

The concluding part of the cover letter has important function as seeking the reader for a specific action.

Generally the action expected is to give chance for an interview. Try to sound natural and appreciative. Also the willingness to come and meet the personnel at his office at a convenient time needs to be expressed. Refer again to the strongest selling point and if desired the date of availability.

Model Application Letter

<Date>

From

<Name and Contact details of the Applicant>

To

Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Directorate of Distance & Continuing Education, Tirunelveli.



<Name / Position of the Receiver>

Dear Sir

When I saw your advertisement in the Business Line dated 11th August 2010 for the post of Production Manager, I felt it was just the kind of post which I have been looking for. My experience in production department as manager for over 10 years and my bachelor's degree in Production and control engineering are my strongest qualifications for this position.

As you can see from the enclosed resume, all my experience are in reputed companies like yours. My expertise in meeting the production target definitely will prove valuable in increasing the efficiency of the productivity of Ingersoll Industries Ltd. I am enthusiastic in pursuing a career in production with 'Ingersoll Industries Ltd' because of its diverse product line and international scope.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet you. My contact details and the host of other qualities is mentioned in the resume enclosed hereby. Thank you for your valuable time. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely

<Signature of the Applicant

Encl: Resume (5 Pages)

Resume

Resumes or curriculum vitae are sent along with the job application letter. They are technical as well as marketing documents which present the past and present performance to the prospective employers so that they can assess the future potential. In fact, a prospective employer forms his first impression of the applicant from the letter and assures it from resume. The people doing the hiring have more applications than they can handle and hence they naturally look for ways of reducing the candidates to a manageable number. The resume should present a biographical sketch, which is objective, easily accessible and detailed. It does not mean that the entire history has to be included. Hence the more detailed information can be given during the interview.

APPEARANCE AND ELEMENTS

Like every important business document, resume should be impeccable. Resume must be well organized so that vital information is readily accessible. The resume creates the image of the applicant. Resume should be:

- Neat and error free
- Legible and avoid crowding



- Printed on good quality paper of A4 size
- Printed using a high quality printer or photocopier

Depends on the job the number of pages of the resume varies. The resume contains parts namely personal information, educational qualification, skills, achievements, membership, references, etc.

Personal information

Personal information includes name, address, phone numbers, e-mail address, etc. Make sure that the information allows an interested employer to reach you easily.

Career/professional objective

This element is optional. But most employers agree that a statement of professional objective should be included in a resume. When giving a career objective, make it effective by being as specific as possible about what to be achieved.

Educational / Academic qualification

Educational qualification is an important selling proposition. Employers are usually interested in knowing about education, training, degree earned, major and minor fields of study, course done and also the practical experience gained during the education. Begin with the recent education and work backward. Finally, note any honors you have received.

Work experience / Professional skills

Every employer wants to know different kinds of the work that can be performed by the candidate. When describing the work experience, list the jobs performed in chronological order, with the current or recent as the first. Include any part time or internships, projects done. The employers will see the ability to get and hold a job. In each experience include the name and location of the organization, job title / designation, duration of work, a brief about the work.

Activities and Achievements / Special Interests / Awards / Aptitudes

Special abilities that are valuable to the employer need to be listed. These include community service / volunteer activities, languages known to write and speak, operational knowledge of special equipment, relevant hobbies and so on. Mention the awards that are received. Give details regarding the nature of award, reason for the award, date or month and year of receiving and also the authority from whom it is given.

Memberships

If you belong to any professional /social/ service organizations in the related field, list them under memberships.



References

This section should always be the last one in a resume. For space and privacy considerations, it may be simply included as a phrase “References available upon request” and can provide the names only when asked for. The references should be impressive enough to merit listing. The references may be of three or four people who combine the best elements of familiarity with the work and a credible position and recommendations from high status people carry more weight. Before including the names in the reference get permission from the people.

TYPES OF RESUMES

There are three types of resume, they are chronological, functional and hybrid (combination resume). Each has its own merits depending upon the job applied for.

Chronological Resume

The chronological resume emphasizes the education and work experience and is most effective when such experience clearly relate to the job applied for. Within the categories Education, Work experience and related experience, list the entries in reverse order, beginning with the recent experience. Under each position, describe the responsibilities and accomplishments, emphasizing the ways skills developed which are suitable for the job applied for. The chronological approach is the most common way of organizing the information in resume and it is preferred by most employers.

Functional Resume

The functional resume features the skills the applicant has and its relevance to the job. This type emphasizes individual fields of competence and is hence used by applicants who are just entering the job market, who want to redirect their careers, or who have little continuous career related experience. Overall it demonstrates the applicants’ ability to handle the position they are applying for. While writing a functional resume, follow the skills category immediately with a chronological work history and a education section that lists only institutions, degrees and dates. The latter two categories may come first, depending on whether the skills are gained from experience in the college or on the job.

Hybrid Resume

Hybrid resume includes the best features of the chronological and functional resumes. However this type is not popular or not commonly used as it tends to be very long and also it may turn out to be repetitive in nature. Irrespective of the format chosen, remember that strong resumes should possess the same qualities like focus on the employer needs, make it concise and ensure honesty.



APPLICATION AND RESUME BLANKS

Many organizations have their own prescribed application forms, which contains various blanks to be answered by the candidate. The completed application form itself becomes an application and resume or Bio data. These blank forms are printed formats that have the basic information requisition. All that the candidate has to do is to fill in the blanks that are left so that personal details and work experience can be filled in. This is an easier way to get the people to apply for jobs as it makes the job simpler. The advantage of blank forms is that they ensure standardization. It becomes easier for the employer to compare the candidates for their qualification and ability. Also as an added advantage the candidate does not forget to write about some important information. The major disadvantage is that more experienced may find blanks as too small to write all important details about them.

INTERVIEWS

An interview is an interaction between two or more person for a specific purpose. Normally in interviews the interviewer asks specific questions to the interviewee in order to assess the suitability of the interviewee for admission, recruitment, promotion, entering into a business relationship, or for an opinion. It is systematized method of contact with a person to know the views and is also an important method of data collection.

Objectives

Generally, interviews are conducted to achieve some of the following objectives.

1. To collect information.
2. To exchange information.
3. To select a person for a specific task.
4. To counsel.
5. To monitor performance.

Types of interviews

When we compare the involvement and contribution of the interviewer and the interviewee, interviews may be classified as

1. Telling
2. Telling and listening
3. Problem solving.

In a telling interview the flow of communication is almost entirely one way – from the interviewer. It is used most effectively in a directing, time constrained situation. Telling interviews may cause hostility and defensive behavior when the interviewee does not have the opportunity to participate. In a telling and listening interview, more feedback from the



interviewee is allowed, but the interviewer still maintains the control over the flow of communication. In a problem solving interview the flow of communication is two way. The whole communication flows both upwards and downwards.

Depending on the objective, nature, and approach interviews may be categorized into the following types:

1. Job
2. Information
3. Exit
4. Evaluation
5. Counseling
6. Conflict resolution
7. Disciplinary
8. Termination

Job interview

In a job interview, the candidate wants to learn about the position and the organization; the employer wants to learn about the applicant's abilities and experience. Job interviews are formal and structured in the initial stages. But later, interviews may be relatively spontaneous as the interviewer explores the candidate's responses.

Information interview

The interviewer seeks facts that bear on a decision or contribute to basic understanding. Information flows mainly in one direction: one person asks a list of questions that must be covered and listens to the answer supplied by the other person. For example, meeting between doctor-patient is an information interview.

Exit interview

The interviewer tries to understand why the interviewee is leaving the organization or transferring to another department or division. A departing employee may often provide insight into whether the business is being handled efficiently or not. Encouraging the employee to focus on events and processes rather than on personal issues will elicit more useful information for the organization.

Evaluation interview

In evaluation interview, a superior and a subordinate periodically discuss progress towards predetermined standards or goals and evaluate areas that require improvement. They may also discuss goals of the organization as well as the employee's long term aspirations and general concerns regarding the near future.



Counseling interview

A counselor talks with a counselee about personal problems of the counselee that are interfering with work performance. The counselor is concerned with both the counselee and the organization. The goal of the counseling interview is to extract the facts, convey the authorities concern and steer the person towards a source of help. Only a trained professional should offer counseling. For example, friends, teachers, doctors very often listen to other's problems and help them to lighten their burden.

Conflict resolution interview

Two or more persons with opposing points of view explore their problems and attitudes. The goal is to bring the people with different attitudes close together, cause adjustments in perceptions and attitudes and create a cordial consensus to become more productive.

Disciplinary interview

A concerned authority tries to correct the behavior of subordinate who has ignored the organization's rules and regulations. The interviewer tries to justify the rules and persuade the interviewee to agree and comply. The interviewer also reviews the facts and explores the person's attitude in the interview.

Termination interview

A supervisor informs a subordinate of the reasons why termination is given. The interviewer tries to inform the interviewee that the company wishes to maintain a positive relationship. To accomplish these goals, the interviewer gives reasons that are specific, accurate and verifiable for the termination.

Skills Required Succeeding in a Job Interview

Any interviewer might be looking for the following qualities in a person when s/he appears for an interview.

1. Disposition
2. Career objective
3. Subject Knowledge
4. General Knowledge
5. Communication Skills
6. Mental agility
7. Consistency
8. Self confidence



Disposition

Appearance, clothes, facial expressions, gestures, manners, and the way the candidate present himself / herself, the impression the candidate leave on the employer – all these things are components of the personality of the candidate. Therefore, a candidate must ensure to make a good present that leaves a lasting impression.

Career objective

The interview panel will be trying to gauge what the candidate want to pursue in his / her life. The panel will try to evaluate the current occupation, stated objectives, consistency and reasons for change. The candidate should be clear about the career objective and should be able to clearly convey the same to the interviewer by linking the priorities in the life with the background and aptitude.

Subject knowledge

Every employer expects that the prospective employees are well versed with the subjects they had pursued. Hence the employer will be interested in assessing the knowledge in the subjects of study, which are mostly related to the job. So the candidate must be thorough with the fundamentals of the subject/s of specialization.

General knowledge

A good general awareness is the primary requisite of any candidate aspiring for a job. The employer tries to assess the interest of the candidate about global happenings, analytical ability, mental quotient and the potential for coherent perception of multiple happenings. The panel may ask questions ranging from the terrorism to technology. The way the candidate tackle each question with appropriate answer is very important.

Communication skills

Communicating effectively is very vital in an interview both for the interviewer and the interviewee. The employer will try to assess how effective the candidate is in communicating the ideas to others, both verbally and nonverbally and also assess how intensely the candidate listens and comprehends.

Mental agility

The ability to grasp the question quickly and reply appropriately is a sign of mental alertness. This quality implies quick thinking, presence of mind and quick response. The interviewer may judge the mental agility by asking an odd question or by making a tricky remark. The interviewer may also assess the candidate by the observations that the candidate make when the interviewer presents the problem. Anyone may improve mental agility by



developing the art of concentration, playing carom or chess, solving puzzles, reading witty and humorous plays, and / or conversing with intelligent people.

Consistency

A good candidate has a positive, definite and well developed approach to life and will stick to the opinion and make judicious decisions. Consistent people will not be moved by emotions and external impressions. The interviewer may ask the same question in a disguised form later in the interview to check the opinion. Never contradict with the earlier reply.

Self confidence

This is the most essential requirement of a good candidate. This generates self esteem and self respect. Having a positive approach and acting accordingly may enhance the self confidence.

Success factors

Taking the right courses, holding good grades and having related professional experience are all important criteria. But they do not matter much if the qualities are not projected and matched with organizational needs. The truth is that most interviewers seek individuals who are able to present them in a face to face interview. They seek to recommend those who will be a good reflection upon them and their selection skills. So, most interviewers naturally gravitate to specific 'critical success factors' that have worked for them consistently. The following are some of the factors nearly every company is looking for:

1. Positive attitude towards work
2. Proficiency in the subject
3. Communication skills (oral and written)
4. Interpersonal skills
5. Confidence
6. Critical thinking
7. Problem solving ability
8. Flexibility
9. Self motivation
10. Leadership
11. Teamwork

Showing the competence in as many of the above critical success factors as possible increases the probability of success.



Failure factors

There may be many reasons why a candidate may fail in an interview. The following are some common reasons for a candidate being rejected.

1. Arrogance
2. Apathy
3. Nervousness
4. Lack of concentration
5. Lack of grasping power
6. Lack of interpersonal skills
7. Lack of firmness
8. Inadequate qualitative and quantitative skills.
9. Unsuitable personality

Preparing for an interview

Success in an interview begins with proper preparation. The key to success in an interview is just not in the experience, academic credentials, extracurricular activities or any other basic necessities. It is in the attitude of the candidate that determines the success in the interview. The way most employers differentiate at the entry level is by the candidate's attitude towards work. They look for those who have the 'can do' attitude and are sincerely willing to put forth their very best effort.

Mock interview

The mock interview is an opportunity to practice the techniques in answering the questions, live. It is also a chance to hear constructive feedback from someone who may guide in improving the style and presentation during the real interview. Mock interview will bring about a marked improvement in the interview skills. For maximum effectiveness, the answers tendered may be reviewed after the interview and then go through a second mock interview. This will give a confidence to attend the real interview.

Gather adequate inside information

The very best thing to do when preparing for an interview with a specific company is interact with someone who is already working in the company / knowing about the company. If this is impossible then gather through any other sources. The company website, annual report, newspaper articles, etc. will provide information that is needed. It is better to collect details like mission, company's unique features, profitability, quality control and improvement, global market, important people, interview process, etc. Take a critical look at the information regarding the job responsibilities. Structure the resume to show the



qualifications, skills and experience in the best possible light, as expected for the job in the most attractive manner. It will give you an edge over others in the interview.

Dress appropriately

Select conservative, good quality clothes which are neat, clean and ironed. Make sure shoes are clean and polished. Wear the dress in good manner. Arrange all documents systematically in a file or folder and carry it to the interview, if needed.

Prepare asking questions

Interviewers prefer candidates to come with working knowledge of the company. Make up some questions to ask during the interview to the interviewer. They can be based on the job for which the candidate applied for.

Memorize your resume

Prepare a paragraph's worth of information for every item given in the resume - in addition to what is already mentioned in the resume. It is better to present each item such that it portrays the strengths or weaknesses. Prepare a list of important points that may fetch the attention of the interviewer and have a rehearsal for the presentation.

Be punctual

Always arrive at least ten to fifteen minutes early from that of the reporting time mentioned in the call letter. This will give a breathing time to do a quick mental review before attending the interview. Have some water to avoid the cottonmouth syndrome. Check in with the concerned person to know about the commencement of the interview to ration the time available.

Relax

Have a good sleep in the previous day. Eat well and take relaxing walk to the interview place. Keep it in the mind that it is just one opportunity and many other opportunities are there in the world.

Types of questions in the interview

Interview questions may either be open ended or close ended. There are basically six types of questions that any one may face during the course of an interview.

1. Experience questions
2. Credential questions
3. Opinion question
4. Dump questions
5. Behavioral questions
6. Difficult questions



Experience questions

This type of question is aimed at objective measurements on features of the experience background. For example, how long were you at..?

Credential questions

Credential question aims at subjectively evaluating the work background like responsibilities, target, etc.

Opinion questions

Opinion type aims at analyzing subjectively the possible reaction to different situation. For example, what would you do if the machine ...?

Dumb questions

These questions aim at finding out the capability of thinking in a short span of time. For example, Market this pencil to me in one minute?

Behavioral questions

This type of question tries to project the future responses based upon your past behavior. For example, can you say an example for your leadership.

Difficult questions

To establish the weakness as well as strengths of the interviewee, good interviewers often ask difficult questions.

Process of an interview

An interview consists of three distinct steps:

1. Establishing rapport
2. Gathering information
3. Closing

Establishing rapport

The rapport establishing is where the vital first impressions are formed. Some interviewers may claim themselves capable of making a decision about a candidate in 30 seconds or less. The truth is that the tone for the interview is set through the physical appearance and initial responses of the candidate. Establishing eye contact with the people, warm smile, handshakes, sitting posture, etc decides the tone of the interview. Interviewers will analyze the behavior in reference to the company culture.

Gathering information

The employers will be asking questions and matching the answers against the critical success factors. Both close ended and open ended questions may be posed. The honesty and sincerity in answering will be observed. Most interviewees are keenly aware of when they are



being snowed. The questions in this step will usually be probing questions from the resume. In fact this is the stage in which the employer's view is consolidated. The interviewee will be judged on attitude, work ethics, intelligence and honesty.

Closing

If the interview was successful, there will usually be an indication of what is to come next. The interviewee may be further supplied with company information which is reserved only for the few. Irrespective of the view of the interview, it is important to personally close the interview by establishing continuity of the process. Make certain and be prepared for follow up.

Answering techniques in Interview

The answering techniques may be of different types. All questions or same question in all occasion may not be answered using a single technique. Individual situation decides the type of answer that to be chosen. Answering techniques fall under the following categories.

1. Behavioral technique
2. Compelling story techniques
3. Personality matching technique
4. Parroting technique
5. Reframing technique
6. Abraham Lincoln technique

Behavioral technique

- Use examples from your past experiences.
- Offer your own example.

Compelling story technique

- Expand the answers by developing the specific examples into compelling stories with personality, flair and interest.
- Attract the interviewer by providing the details and nuances that bring story to life.
- Avoid lengthy monologues.

Personality matching technique

- Take the cue from the interviewer in terms of tone and approach.
- Avoid being too casual, even if the interviewer seems to be.
- Avoid being too loud, too pushy, too stuffy, too egoistic in your personality.

Parroting technique

- Avoid making any guess of what the interviewer is expecting for.



- When question is unclear, make sure to know the correct meaning.
- Use it as a temporary stall when the answer is not in the memory.

Reframing technique

- Answer all questions straightforwardly, initially.
- Reframe the original question and illustrate expertise.

Abraham Lincoln technique

- Insisting on strengths rather making excuses for shortcomings.
- Speak positive about others.
- Avoid blaming situations or others for the failures.

Standard interview questions

- Introduce yourself?
- What you want to do as ambition in your life?
- Tell about your work experience?
- Why did you choose this career?
- What goals do you have in your career?
- How do you plan to achieve your goals?
- How do measure success?
- What accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction in your life?
- Are you a team player?
- What would you prefer, to work with people or information?
- What motivates you?
- Why should I hire you?
- What did you see yourself doing five years from now?
- Where do you want to be ten years from now?
- How will you negotiate a conflict?
- Do you handle pressure well?
- What is your greatest strength and weakness?
- How has education prepared you for your career?
- What is your favorite subject of study?
- Do you have any plans for further education?
- How much training do you think you will need to become a productive employee?
- What qualities do you feel a successful manager should have?



- Why do you want work in this industry?
- What do you know about our company?
- Why are you interested in our company?
- Do you have any location preferences?
- How familiar are you with the community that we are located in?
- Will you relocate in future?
- What kind of salary are you looking for?
- How long will you work in our company?

Follow up

There are two simple steps you that may be done to create a lasting impression after the interview, which greatly increase the chances of success. Call the interviewers to thank them for their time. If possible, add additional information which was not discussed in the interview. And write the interviewers a short note, thanking them for their time and restating your interest in the position. These simple gestures of a phone call and thanks letter can make a big difference in distinguishing one from other competitors.

Tips for success

- Be well prepared.
- Brush up your subject and general knowledge.
- Memorize your resume.
- Know about the company.
- Dress appropriately.
- Be smart, clean and well groomed.
- Carry a neat folder containing all relevant papers.
- Make sure to be present on time, in case of any delay inform it early.
- Greet them confidently.
- Be polite.
- Be honest.
- Show a real interest in the job.
- Be aware of all answering techniques.
- If you do not understand a question, ask for clarification.
- Speak clearly using positive words.
- Appropriately use facial expression, posture, gestures, etc.
- In the end, restate your interest in the job.



- Smile and say thank you.
- Shake hands firmly.
- Tell them how much you enjoyed the interview.

BASICS OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

To understand how nonverbal communication happens, imagine a situation where there is no facility with words to speak or write or where no two individuals in a group know a common language. They communicate all emotions such as anger, irritation, frustration, warmth, excitement, boredom, defensiveness and competitiveness or any such message need to be conveyed through body language. This happens as something from the sensory environment creates a need in you to respond. The sense organs, eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin, got stimulated by the predominant cues in the sensory environment and the communication process begins. For example, a good scenery, sound of an animal, a tasty fruit, a hot weather, or a fragrance of a flower. Everyone feels it and expresses it unconsciously or consciously. People tend to express their feelings using sounds, signals, symbols, gestures, postures, and facial expression, and the like. These expressions do not use any words. However the receiver of the message understands it and responds to it. Rarely does the situation occur. However everyone in every situation communicate using either verbal or nonverbal or using both.

By nonverbal communication, “we mean all communication that involves neither written nor spoken words but occurs without the use of words”. In contrast, verbal communication involves words. In nonverbal communication, we are concerned with such things as body movements, space, time, touch and voice rhythm as well as general characteristics of the environment – color and layout.

Communication is effectively communicated through silence also. It can successfully convey a variety of responses. Shyness, shock, ignorance, anxiety, satisfaction are some of the examples that can be communicated through silence. Since silence is a powerful medium, it should be used carefully.

Classification of nonverbal communication

Nonverbal communication includes

- i. Kinesics
- ii. Proxemics (physical context)
- iii. Chronemics (time language), and
- iv. Paralanguage.



i) Kinesics

An important sub area of nonverbal communication is kinesics, or body movements widely referred as body language. Kinesics is defined as the study of the body's physical movements. The kinesics specifically looks for the inner states of emotion as expressed through different parts of the body and their physical movements. By nodding head, blinking eyes, shrugging shoulders, waving hands and making other such physical movements, may also been used to send message to others. Kinesics includes body states in the face, eyes, gestures, postures, and physical appearance.

Facial expression

The face is the most expressive part of the body. The face is a powerful conveyer of non-verbal messages; it is the primary site for expression of emotion. Facial expressions are subtle. Facial expression may be in a variety of ways: A smile stands for friendliness, a frown for discontent, raised eyebrows for disbelief, etc. It also aid / inhibit / complement communication. The face shows a series of messages like anxiety, recognition, hesitation and pleasure in quick succession.

Eye contact

Looking in to the eyes of a speaker, one may find the truthfulness, intelligence, attitudes, and feelings of the speaker. Looking directly at the eyes of the listeners builds rapport. Prolonging the eye contact by the speaker for three to five seconds increases the attention of the audience. The eye contact shows the intensity and elicits a feeling of trust on the message of the speaker. A direct look conveys openness. Eye contact and eye movement help tremendously in the filtering process or in getting the desired response or feedback.

Gesture

Gesture is the movement made by hands, arms shoulders, head, and torso. For example, waving hands signifies a greeting. Gestures may add / reduce to the impact of a speech depending on the appropriateness of the gesture. Gestures may assist in clarifying or reinforcing the ideas. The communicator should be careful that gestures do not divert the attention of the listener and distract the message. Gestures can roughly be divided into five types namely Enumerative (numbers); Descriptive (size of the objects); Symbolic (abstract concepts); Locative (location of an object); and Emphatic (emphasis).

Posture

Posture generally refers to the way an individual stand, sit or walk. Body movements such as slouching, leaning forward, fidgeting, etc fall into this category of communication.

These signs reveal whether a person is confident or nervous, friendly or hostile, assertive or



passive, happy or sad. When being in a friendly atmosphere postures are spontaneous. But in an unfamiliar situation, everyone is conscious on their posture and tries to make it in specific way. Seeing is believing; so be and appear at ease. Neither remains static nor fidgets. Move occasionally to hold attention, suggest transitions and increase emphasis. Understand that the way one sit, stand or walk reveals many things. For example

1. Slumped posture – low spirits
2. Erect posture – high spirits, energy and confidence
3. Lean forward – open, honest and interested
4. Lean backward – defensive or disinterested
5. Crossed arms – defensive and not ready to listen
6. Uncrossed arms – willingness to listen

ii) **Proxemics**

Proxemics is the study of physical space in international relations. Space is related to behavioral norms. In a professional situation, space is used to signal power and status. For example, the superior in a company has a larger office than more junior employees. A speaker will have an open space when addressing the audience. Moving closer to an audience is useful to invite discussion, to express agreement, or to emphasize a point. By observing dynamic, influential speakers one may learn how to use the available space to a great advantage.

iii) **Chronemics or Time language**

Chronemics is the study of how human beings communicate through their use of time. In order to use time as an effective communication tool, one should understand the impact it has and then act accordingly. In the professional world, time is a valuable commodity. Always be on time as late for an appointment turns other people in to negative feelings and early arrival is considered either over eager or aggressive. In many cultures, people demonstrate their importance by making people wait, at other places they show respect by being on time. Through time, one can communicate both subtly and explicitly. People have their own time language. Time language also varies from culture to culture.

iv) **Paralinguistic**

Paralinguistic features are nonverbal cues that help to give urgency to the voice. Voice gives extra life to your delivery of words. Therefore, one may find it useful to understand the characteristic nuances of voice, namely *quality, volume, rate, pitch, articulation, pronunciation and pauses.*



MANNERS FOR MANAGERS

Many a time it is seen that Good Manner = Good Manager. Good manners at work are important for the same reason good manners are important in your personal life. They demonstrate a concern for the feelings and rights of other people. They're the signals we give each other that can be translated without exhaustive explanation. Knowing the rules of etiquette lends an air of civility and limits boorish, unpleasant behavior that saps energy, destroys morale and causes time-wasting conflict among co-workers. Etiquette and good manners establish the guidelines for human interaction. They can be a wonderful communications tool – as long as everyone knows the rules and regulations. Good manners are also designed to protect other people's privacy and guide people through stressful situations with grace and good humor. All of which are crucial when managing other people. Business people who don't learn the basics of manners in the workplace can face a host of problems and hurt morale. You can learn to behave in a way that makes people comfortable and confident in your presence.

Managers can help to encourage workplace etiquette with a few simple techniques including:

- Showing appreciation for an employee's work especially if they have went beyond and above the standards required
- Setting workplace etiquette standards by setting a good example
- When employee conflicts arise avoid blaming one employee over the other; this will not solve the dispute
- Consider employee's views on changes in the workplace including etiquette changes
- Employees do have different etiquette standards, which is why etiquette rules should be laid out in writing
- Do not tolerate or join in with office politics or office gossip
- Build good workplace relationships; talk to employees in person rather than simply rely on emails
- Leave personal problems at home and always give out a friendly but professional attitude

Managers and employees should work together as a team, not just on work issues but also when it comes to workplace etiquette. Good standards of workplace etiquette can help with employee productivity and efficiency. Some of the tips are

- Arriving in time to meetings and do not waste others' time by keeping them waiting



- Do not engage with electronic gadgets while others are trying to carry on a conversation
- Pay attention during phone conferences so that things need not be repeated
- Lower the volume if a loud noise is disturbing others
- Return a greeting when someone does
- Use others' things with permission
- Speak in a good tone
- Do not attempt to embarrass others on sensitive issues
- Speak to all people when in a group
- Help others by sharing the unusual workload
- Say “please” and “thank you” or express appreciation for work done

If managers and employees do show each other respect in the workplace it can make a big difference to the working environment atmosphere.

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