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JAGAT GURU NANAK DEV
PUNJAB STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY, PATIALA

(Established by Act No. 19 of 2019 of the Legislature of State of Punjab)

The Motto of the University
(SEWA)

SKILL ENHANCEMENT **EMPLOYABILITY** **WISDOM**
ACCESSIBILITY



DIPLOMA IN OFFICE AUTOMATION AND E-GOVERANCE (DOAEG)
SEMESTER-II
Course: Basic Communication Skills
Course Code: BCS-2-01T

ADDRESS: C/28, THE LOWER MALL, PATIALA-147001
WEBSITE: www.psou.ac.in

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BCS-2-01T: Basic Communication Skills

Total Marks: 100
External Marks: 70
Internal Marks: 30
Credits: 6
Pass Percentage: 40%

Course: Basic Communication Skills	
Course Code: BCS-2-01T	
Course Outcomes (COs) After the completion of this course, the students will be able to:	
CO1	Gain competence in verbal and non-verbal communication
CO2	Increase comprehension levels
CO3	Use language for effective communication
CO4	Understand the processes of communication
CO5	Overcome barriers in communication

Detailed Contents:

Module	Module Name	Module Contents
Module I	**Understanding Human Communication:**	Constitutive Processes of Communication, Language as a tool of communication, Barriers to Effective communication, Strategies to Overcome the Barriers, Non-Verbal Communication, Importance of Non-Verbal Communication, Non-Verbal Communication and Cultural influences
Module II	**Listening Comprehension**	Difference between Hearing and Listening, Effective Listening Strategies, Listening in Conversational Interaction
Module III	**Speaking Skills**	Expressions in different Communicative Functions: Asking Questions; Making Requests and suggestions; Expressing Greetings, Apologies and Gratitude Job Interviews, Group Discussions, Presentation Skills
Module IV	**Reading Comprehension**	Introduction, Reading Process, Reading different kinds of Texts, Reading Methods- Using KWL for reading comprehension
Module V	**Effective Written Communication**	Constituents of Effective Writing, Coherence and Cohesion for effective writing
Module VI	**Business Correspondence**	Letter writing, Resume/CV, E mails for Communication, Writing Reports, Describing Tables and Charts, Meetings: Agenda and Minutes

Books

1. Koneru, Aruna. Professional Communication. Delhi: McGraw. 8th Ed, 2017.
2. Mahanand, Anand. English for Academic and Professional Skills. Delhi: McGraw, 2013.
3. Rani, D Sudha, TVS Reddy, D Ravi, and AS Jyotsna. A Workbook on English Grammar and Composition. Delhi: McGraw, 2012.
4. Rizvi, M. Ashraf. Effective Technical Communication. Delhi: McGraw, 2nd Ed. 2017

Examination Pattern:

Evaluation should be in Subjective style.

As this paper pertains to communication skills, it should not be evaluated on MCQ pattern.

MCQ pattern for this course is an inappropriate way of testing communication skills of the learner.

BACHELOR OF COMPUTER APPLICATIONS (BCA)

Semester-I

BCS-2-01T: BASIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS

MODULE I: UNDERSTANDING HUMAN COMMUNICATION

STRUCTURE

1.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1.1 INTRODUCTION - UNDERSTANDING HUMAN COMMUNICATION

1.2 CONSTITUTIVE PROCESSES OF COMMUNICATION

1.3 LANGUAGE AS A TOOL OF COMMUNICATION

1.4 BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

1.5 STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME THE BARRIERS

1.6 INTRODUCTION TO NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

1.7 IMPORTANCE OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

1.8 TYPES OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

1.9 CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

1.10 NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION IN THE INTERNET WORLD

1.11 QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

1.12 SUGGESTED READINGS

1.13 REFERENCES

1.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Grasp the nature of human communication
- Understand the process involved in communication
- Realise the significance of language as a tool of communication
- Pinpoint the barriers to effective communication
- Overcome the barriers and become an effective communicator
- Know how to communicate without words
- Understand how Non-verbal communication is complimentary to Verbal communication
- Describe the elements of writing style
- Understand the benefits of non-verbal communication
- Recognize the different forms of non-verbal communication

1.1 INTRODUCTION - UNDERSTANDING HUMAN COMMUNICATION

This unit will focus on a key component of language acquisition – Communication. You may be interested to know that the word 'communicate' comes from the Latin word *communicare*, meaning 'to give' or 'to share'. So it is clear that the idea of communication has always involved more than one person – there are always those who send a message of some kind and those who receive it. Having good communication skills involves being aware of both sender and receiver.

There are, primarily, two types of communication – verbal and non-verbal.

Given the complexity of communication, it is not surprising that we can often get misunderstood or misinterpreted. It is perhaps surprising that so much of our communication does appear to achieve at least some success.

Communication continues most of the time while we are awake. It even seems to go on while we are asleep. When we dream, research suggests that some parts of our brain are communicating with other parts.

Human societies have developed many ways of communicating. Often, these make it possible for one person, or groups of people, to communicate with many others. These people may or may not be present when the process of communication is started. These types of communication include lectures, concerts and the media (such as television, radio, newspapers and the internet).

To summarise:

- Communication takes many different forms.
- Communication uses different channels.

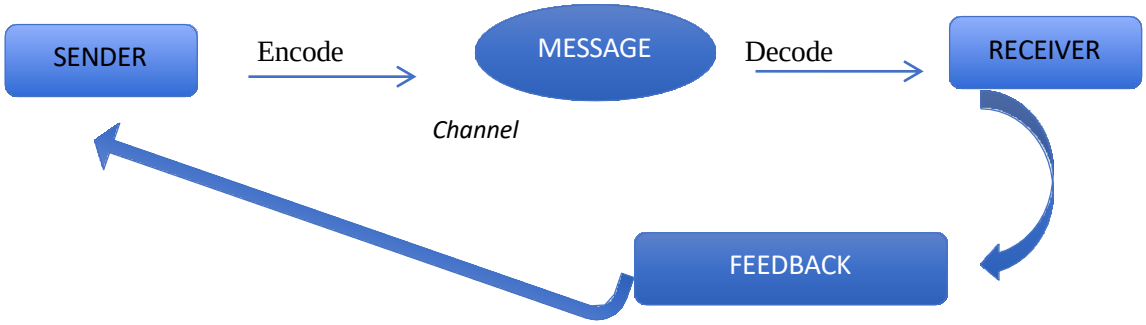
- Communication affects all aspects of life.

Sometimes we feel we are communicating well, only to find that we have been misunderstood – that we haven't really communicated at all.

It has been suggested that:
The meaning of communication is the response you get. (O'Connor and Seymour, 1995, p. 18)

1.2 CONSTITUTIVE PROCESSES OF COMMUNICATION

Look at the following diagram that shows the process of communication:



The process of communication thus involves the following basic elements:

- Sender – The one who initiates communication
- Message – The actual content that is being communicated
- Receiver – The one to whom the communication is directed at
- Feedback – Communication is complete ONLY when one receives a feedback
- Encode – This refers to converting thoughts and feelings into understandable language
- Decode – Understanding the thoughts and feelings that have been conveyed by the sender.
- Channel – This is the medium of communication. eg. A phone, a letter, etc.

1.3 LANGUAGE AS A TOOL OF COMMUNICATION

The renowned critic I.A. Richards explained that communication is basically an exchange and exact replication of thoughts, feelings, ideas, emotion, etc between one or more human beings using mutually understandable system of symbols.

This mutually understandable system of symbols is what we call 'language'. Therefore, language is not merely limited to English, Hindi, Punjabi, etc, but includes much more. For instance, what we wear, use, possess, etc, constitutes language as well. Consider the following – Tom's friend has bought a very expensive car. He does not need to print the price tag on the car itself as people look at the car and understand that it must be quite expensive. This car therefore 'speaks' for itself.

Check your progress:

1. What do you understand by Encoding and Decoding?

Ans._____

___

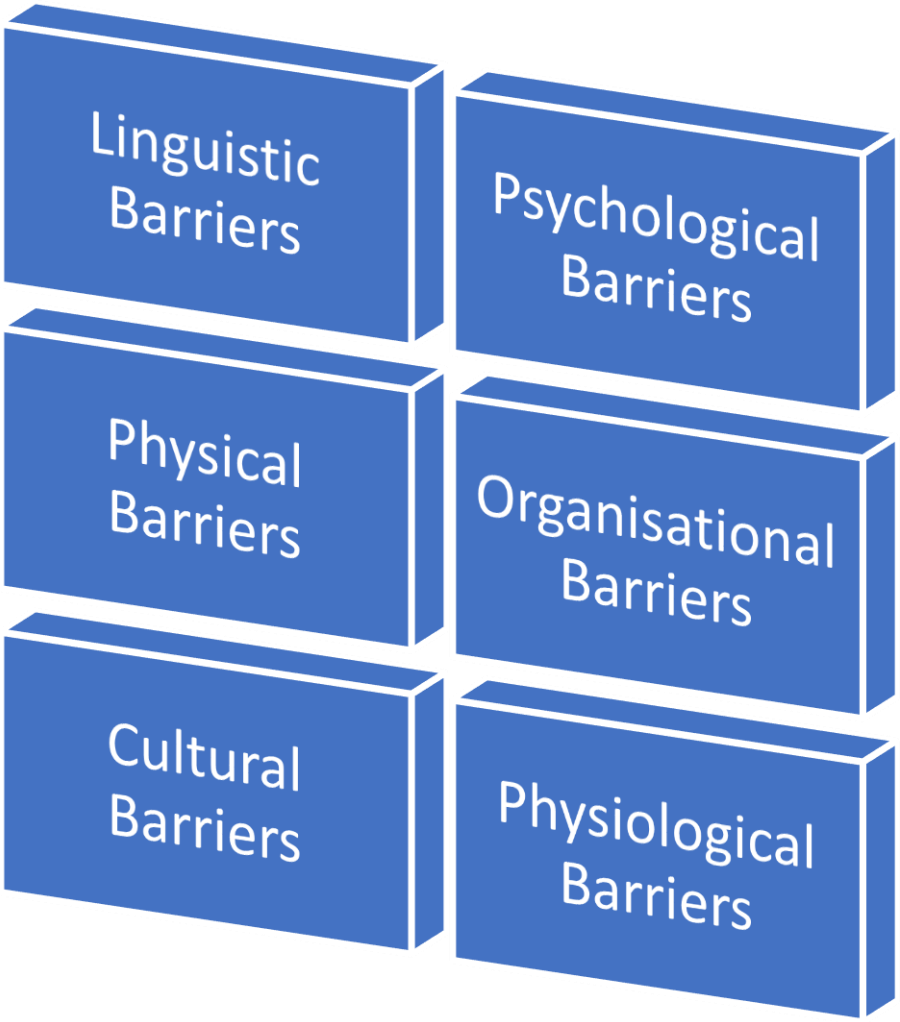
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2. The process of communication is complete only when the sender receives a .....

1.4 BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

We communicate with people throughout each and every day. We communicate through conversation, our expressions and body language, social media, email, telephone, etc. We rely on our communication skills to further our friendships, plan vacations, repair marriages, order dinner, purchase a car, express our opinions, ask for help, negotiate deals, accept job offers, etc. Regardless of the type of communication: verbal, nonverbal, written, listening or visual, if we don't communicate effectively, we put ourselves and others at risk. There are SIX barriers to effective communication we should strive to eradicate.



I. **Linguistic Barriers** – This is primarily a language barrier. Various subtypes are discussed as under:

a. Semantic Gap – When the sender and the receiver do not know a common language.
b. Semantic Noise – When the sender and receiver do know a common language, but owing to outside interference, there arises a barrier. For instance, in a lecture hall, students are unable to understand what the teacher is trying to explain not because the students do not understand English, but because there seems to be a lot of noise coming from outside the classroom. This noise acts as an interference.
c. Difficult words and/or jargon - Like a secret "insider" language, jargon is terminology only understood by people in a certain group. Most words in the English language are a part of common, everyday speech, understood by almost anyone who speaks the language. However, jargon is like a type of shorthand between members of a particular group of people, often involving words that are meaningless outside of a certain context.
d. Mispronounced or Misspelled words - Misspellings are not only common, but also awkward in professional contexts. When you receive an email or document with spelling errors, it's difficult to trust the person sending it. Spelling speaks to attention to detail as well as level of education, and you want to make sure yours is on point. Similarly, it is

always better to know fewer words and pronounce them well than to know a lot of words and pronounce them badly. Bad pronunciation can lead to misunderstandings that may cause mishaps. It can also lead to people avoiding communication with you because they feel you are too difficult to talk to.

e. High-flown expressions – Using expressions/words that are very pretentious, bombastic or simply using certain words to sound very intellectual is absolutely wrong. The receiver may have problems in understanding your message. Remember, the aim of communication is to express, NOT to impress.
f. Poor vocabulary - Some people have low vocabulary in a particular language whereas some very high. Though literacy and education increases the need to learn new words, it might not be the only reason. People can increase their vocabulary by reading and with their own interest too. Vocabulary is also less if a person uses the language as their unofficial language. Likewise, linguistic ability is the capability of a person in a particular language. If a person with high vocabulary and linguistic ability talks with another with low ability, the second person will not understand the words used leading to miscommunication of whole message.
g. Poor Grammar: A major barrier occurs when the sender, in encoding the message, does not pay attention to the grammatical structure of the sentences. Punctuation marks, if not placed properly, can also lead to the distortion of the message. For eg. 1.(Grammar) I want to marry my daughter. Correct: I want to get my daughter married. 2. (Punctuation: Story of the king who ordered to leave a convict to be hanged, after finding him innocent) Hang him. Not Leave him. Correct: Hang him not. Leave him.

II. **Psychological Barriers** – Psyche means mind. Psychological barriers are created in the mind. Communication is a mental activity and its aim is to create understanding. But the human mind is complex and not all communication can result in understanding. There are several kinds of psychological barriers which can come in the way of understanding.

a. Emotions: Emotions are among the most common psychological barriers to communication. The emotion may be connected to the communication received or it may be present in the sender‘s or receiver‘s mind, even before the communication takes place. In both cases, it acts as a barrier. Emotions can be positive, like happiness and joy, or negative, like fear, anger, mistrust etc. Both positive and negative emotions act as barriers, if they are not kept in check.
b. Prejudice: A prejudice is an opinion held by a person for which there is no rational basis or valid reason. It can be against something or someone, or in favour of it, but it becomes a barrier to a meaningful communication. Prejudices are based on ignorance and lack of information, e.g., prejudices about certain communities or groups of people.
c. Halo effect: Sometimes our reactions to people are not balanced or objective; they are of an extreme nature. Either we like a person so much that we can find no shortcomings in her/him, or we dislike someone so much that we can see nothing good in her/him. In both cases, we commit errors of judgment and fail to understand the person.
d. Self-image or different perceptions: Every person has in her/his mind a certain image of herself/himself. S/he thinks of herself/himself in a certain way. This is their perception of themselves, their self-image. One‘s self-image is the product of one‘s heredity, one‘s environment and one‘s experiences, and thus every person‘s self-image is unique and different from the others. Self-image can create a barrier because we accept communication

which is compatible with our self-image. We avoid or reject communication, which goes against our perception of ourselves.

e. Closed Mind: A closed mind is one which refuses to accept an idea or opinion on a subject, because it is different from his idea. Such persons form their opinion on a subject, and then refuse to listen to anyone who has something different to say about it. A closed mind may be the result of some past experience or just habit. It is very difficult to remove this psychological barrier.

f. Status: Status refers to rank or position. It could be economic, social or professional status. In any organisation, hierarchy creates differences in rank, and this is a normal situation. Thus, status by itself does not cause barriers; but when a person becomes too conscious of his status, whether high or low, then status becomes a barrier. For instance, in a business organisation, a senior executive who is unduly conscious of his seniority will not communicate properly with his juniors, and will refrain from giving them the required information. Similarly, if a junior is acutely conscious of his junior status, he will avoid communicating with his seniors, even when it is necessary.

g. Inattentiveness and Impatience: Sometimes the receiver may not pay attention to the sender‘s message, or he may be too impatient to hear the message fully and properly. Such barriers are common in oral communication.

III. Physical or environmental barriers:

a. Noise - The noise created by external factors like traffic, playing of loud music, trains and airplanes, or by crowds of people, affects our communication.

b. Time & distance - Time becomes a physical barrier when people have to communicate across different time zones in different countries. The physical distance between people who need to communicate can also cause problems because it does not allow oral or face-to-face communication.

c. Defects in communication system – Mechanical problems and defects in instruments of communication also create physical barriers, as in a faulty fax machine or typewriter. Similarly, a computer that hangs, or a dead telephone line can lead to non-transmission of messages. eg. No range in mobile, technical problem in mike or speakers.

d. Wrong selection of medium – The sender selects the medium which is not familiar to the receiver.

IV. **Organisational barriers:**

a. Negative Tendencies: Bonding between people who share similar values, attitudes, opinions, beliefs and behaviours is often termed as Group-ism. Often organizations too create work groups to facilitate certain organizational tasks. Communication barrier here surfaces often due to a conflict between the members and non-members or among the members themselves.

b. Over/Under Communication- Neither there should be excess of information nor should it be too scanty. Excess information may confuse the receiver as he has to figure out the exact import of the message and scanty information would make him grope for the actual intent of the message.

c. Use of Inappropriate Media: While choosing the medium you should keep in mind the advantages, disadvantages and potential barriers to communication. If the choice of the channel or medium is not right the impact of the message is lost. The responsibility lies with the sender, as he should ensure that all channels are free of noise before commencing communication.

d. Fear of Superiors: In rigidly structured organizations, fear or awe of superiors prevents subordinates from speaking frankly.

V. Cultural barriers:

a. This is one of the predominant factors in communication failure. As global residents we need to be aware of the customs, laws, and business practices of the companies of other nations we are dealing with. eg. Maintaining Eye-Contact during conversation is seen as a sign of self-confidence in the USA, whereas the same activity is termed rude in Japan.
b. Time and space are also culture-bound, so it is essential to value these elements, not doing so would result in communication failure.

VI. Physiological barriers:

a. Physiological barriers to communication are related with the limitations of the human body and the human mind (memory, attention, and perception). Physiological barriers may result from individuals' personal discomfort, caused by ill-health, poor eye sight, or hearing difficulties.

Check your progress:

1. How many types of barriers can exist in communication? Explain any two in detail.

Ans._____

_____

2. Tom uses words that are very difficult to understand. Even though Jerry understands basic English, he still seems to be clueless as to what Tom is trying to convey. What seems to be the problem here and what can be done to alleviate this problem?

Ans._____

_____

3. Scooby was trying to explain a lot of things to his friends, but his friends could not understand everything since they felt that Scooby had given a lot of information to them in very little time to process it. What communication barrier is responsible for this situation?

Ans._____

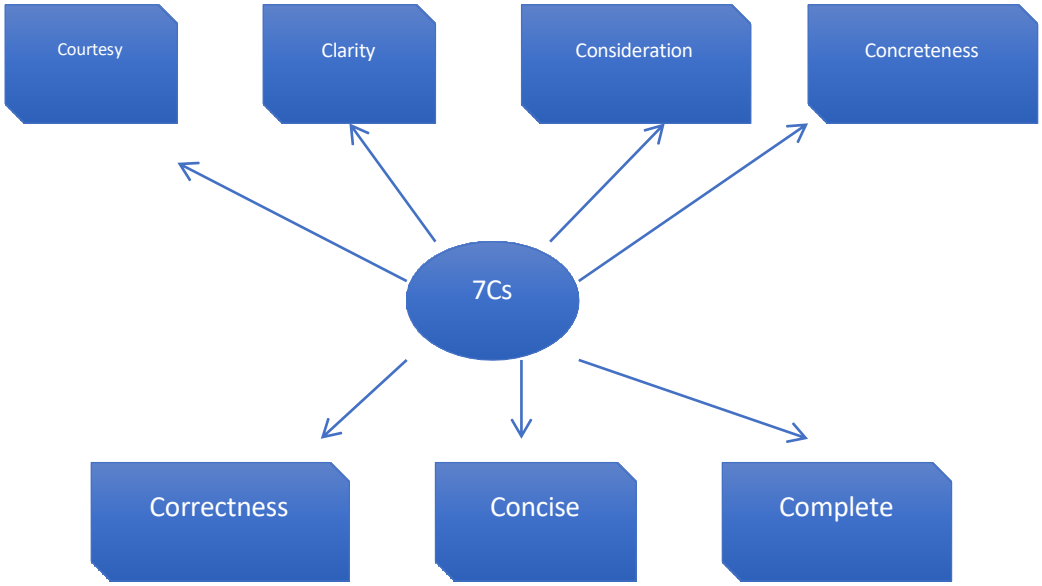
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4. What do you understand by "Halo effect"? Give an example to explain the same.

Ans. _____

1.5 STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME THE BARRIERS

Barriers disrupt communication and interfere with understanding. They must be overcome if communication has to be effective.



To be an effective communicator, thus, one must follow what is known as the '7C Principle" .

i. Courtesy: You must always be pleasant and courteous while communicating.
ii. Clarity: Always communicate clearly. This includes your handwriting, your speech, your gestures, etc
iii. Consideration: Be considerate towards the people you are communicating with.
iv. Concreteness: Facts! Your message must have some substance. Do not lie, otherwise you will end up ruining your reputation. Remember the story of the Lion and the Shepherd?
v. Correctness: This refers to the fact that your message should be correct, i.e. correct use of grammar, punctuation, pronunciation, spellings, etc.

vi. Concise: When communicating messages of this nature it's important to stick to the point and keep your messages short and simple. Don't use 10 words if you can use five. Don't repeat your messages. The more you say, the more risk there is of confusion. Avoid that risk by focusing solely on the key points you need to deliver.

vii. Complete: Completeness is often one of the most important of the 7 Cs of communication. When creating a message, it's important to give the recipient all of the information they need to follow your line of reasoning and to reach the same conclusions you have. This level of detail will be different in different situations, and you should adjust your communications accordingly.

Check your progress:

1. The _____must be followed for you to overcome any barriers that may arise during the process of communication.

2. What do you understand by the term Courtesy? Explain with reference to the 7C Principle.

Ans._____

_____

3. Snoopy was feeling ill so he decided to visit the doctor. The doctor checked him and prescribed some medicines to him. Snoopy went to the local drug-store and the druggist looked at the prescription and handed him the medicine. When Snoopy reached home, he took the medicine as directed by his physician but unfortunately, he developed some side effects and realised that his condition had not improved at all. Later tests concluded that he had been given a medicine that was not the same as in the prescription. The shopkeeper later claimed that he could not make out what was actually written in the prescription. After having read this story carefully, explain which of the 7C principle should have been employed and by whom.

Ans._____

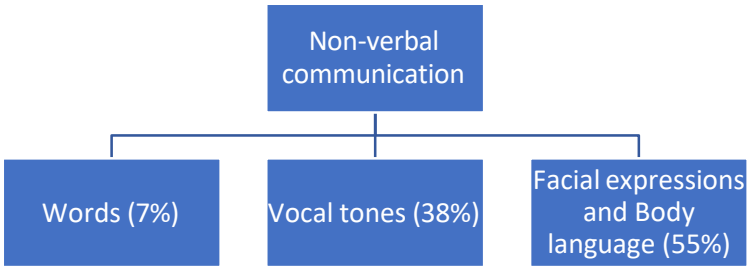
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1.6 INTRODUCTION TO NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Communication means transferring information from one person to another. It is believed that as human beings, we spend nearly 75 percent of our day's time communicating our knowledge, thoughts, and ideas to others. But we forget to understand that the means which we use to communicate is actually the non-verbal form instead of the oral and written forms. Facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice, body posture and gestures, positioning within groups, and of course, our dressing sense, our attire, are nothing else but non-verbal communication. It also includes the way we touch each other, the way we say something, and not say something, means how we maintain silence.

Communicating a message without using words or meaning of words is also known as "non-verbal communication". Non-verbal language involves hidden messages and cues which deliver the messages. Experts have stated that true feelings are conveyed more accurately through non-verbal messages than the spoken or written language. Non-verbal messages do not have universal meaning, because the meaning changes differently in different contexts. Moreover, our understanding of non-verbal messages increase with experience and age. According to one study, only seven percent of a message effect is carried by words and listener receives remaining 93% through non-verbal means. Further, out of the 93%, 38 % is through vocal tones, and 55% is through facial expressions and body language.



Communicating without words, using a simple smile, a firm handshake, a warm hug, are means which say so much, even more than words, sometimes. The eyes, the hands, the overall body movements of the person always complement the verbal messages of a person and enhance the process of communication.



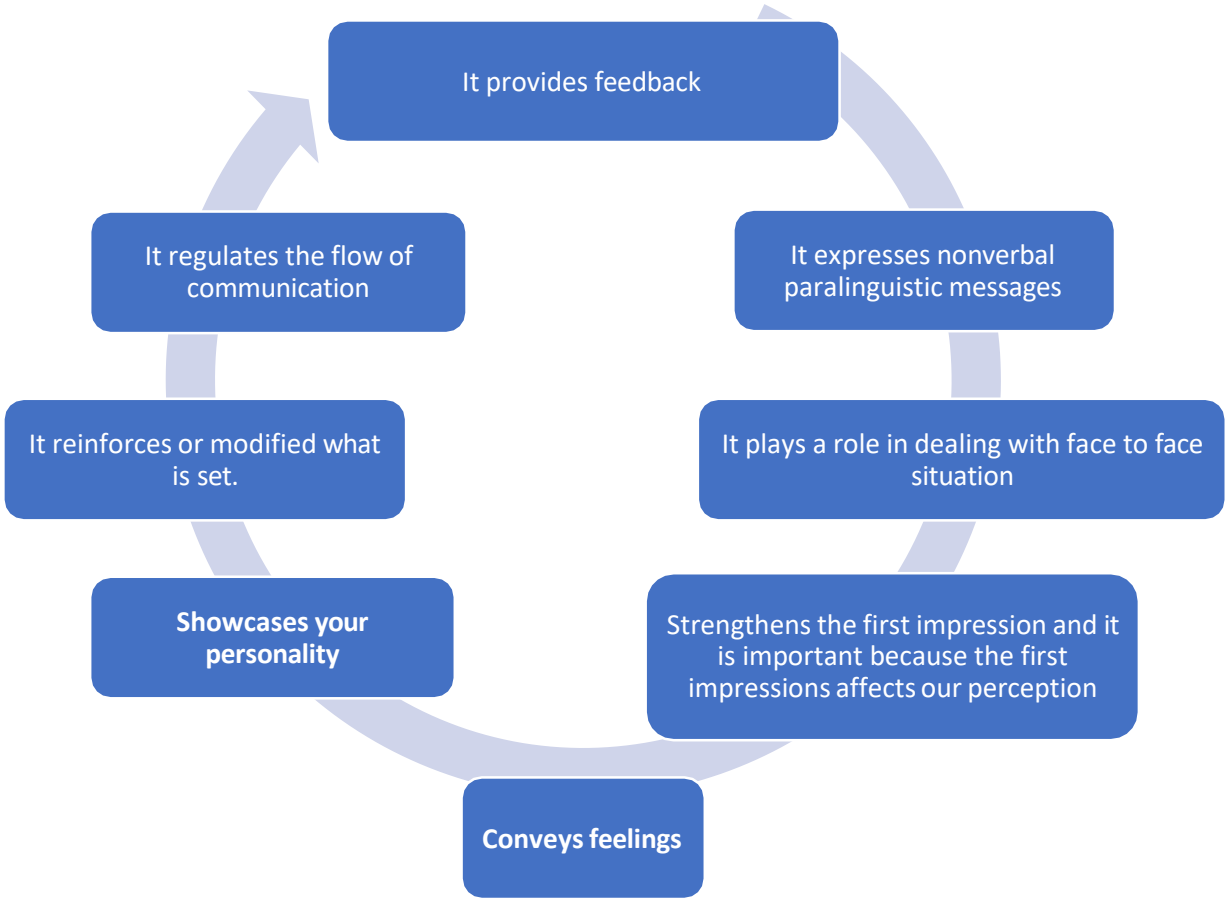
(https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/db/Universal_facial_expressions.jpg)

It is important to note that sometimes, our body begins to speak even before we start speaking or the moment we face an audience, in any context. The audience immediately starts decoding your body language, the message through your sitting position, posture, and the expressions that appear on your face, the twists and turn. Even how we enter, how we move, the manner in which you walk, generally known as gait, how you hold your manuscript, how you stand, how you move your hands, the look in your eyes, everything is under observation by the numerous people, with numerous interpretations. Thus, the judgments about us as what kind of speaker you are, are made to some extent.

Definitely, an appropriate training in the use of visual codes is necessary for acquiring effectiveness and success in communication. Sometimes, the efficiency in their use can, to a great extent, make up for the lapses and inadequacies one has in verbal communication.

1.7 IMPORTANCE OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Nonverbal communication is important because it gives us valuable information about a situation including how a person might be feeling, how someone receives information and how one approachs a person or group of people. Paying attention to and developing the ability to read nonverbal communications is an invaluable skill you can leverage at every stage of your career.



There are several ways nonverbal communication can support your ability to communicate effectively in all situations, including:

- First impression: Nonverbal communication mostly strengthens the first impression and it is important because the first impression affects our perception.
- Supports your message. During a discussion or a meeting or engaging in conversation, nonverbal cues can put emphasis on and draw attention to the content of your message. For example, using hand gestures to indicate the importance of an idea may tell your listeners to pay attention to and remember a key point.
- It provides feedback. Sometimes, through nonverbal means one may nod, saying yes (when moving head upward to downward position) or no (when moving head from right to left), or sometimes, raised eyebrow to express surprise. More often one can use nonverbal communication completely to communicate with others.
- Communicates intention. Your body language may also intentionally or unintentionally express your current condition. For example, people may pick up nonverbal cues that you are being dishonest, unengaged, excited or aggressive.
- Conveys feelings. You can also use nonverbal communication to show your feelings, such as disappointment, relief, happiness, contentment, and more.
- Reduces tension. When we use a calm tone or soft voice, open body language, and clear gestures. It helps to deal with difficult and tense situations.
- Offering support. Nonverbal signals are also a great way to show support, whether it's a simple smile or pat on the back. Action may speak louder than words in many cases.
- Showcases your personality. Nonverbal communication is a great way to show who you are. For example, a kind and optimistic person might frequently smile with open body language and offer friendly touches.
- Showing actions. Sometimes, one may just do an action to say something. Like pointing towards a door to indicate your desire to leave the room, raising your hand to offer an idea or putting your hand out to meet someone new.

Check your progress:

Mark True or False:

- Communication means transferring information from one person to another.
- Listener receives 7 % of the message through non-verbal means.
- Non-verbal communication supports your message and provides feedback.

1.8 TYPES OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Nonverbal communication is everything except your words. It includes your body language as well as object language. Object language here means sending message through our style, our sometimes, different attire (like wearing torn jeans intentionally), sometimes, wearing a causal, dirty, un-ironed sweat shirt, etc. So, all these are non-verbal means of communication. It should always be kept in mind that our listeners or observers are processing non-verbal cues

automatically and almost unconsciously. Having an increased awareness about and using nonverbal cues on purpose are probably the best means of improving our positive impact on others. Kinesics is the systematic study of body language which works through facial expressions eye contact, gestures, head position, body shape, posture and appearance. Following are some details about the most prominent aspects of body language which invite attention:

- Facial Expressions: Smile, Eye contact, Head movements
- Posture
- Gestures
- Proximity and orientation
- Hepatics: Touch behaviour
- Paralanguage
- Silence and Time
- Appearance
- Dress code

Facial Expressions: We gain a good deal of information about people's emotional and mental state from the expressions on their face. Pleasure or displeasure, interest or boredom, fear or anger, all these expressions can be understood from the attitude. Facial expressions are very powerful in controlling the type and amount of communication taking place between two persons. Facial expressions add meaning to the verbal content. Facial expressions usually communicate emotions. Through expressions the attitudes of the communicator is conveyed. The lower face reveals happiness or surprise; the smile, for example, can communicate friendliness and cooperation.



(https://unsplash.com/photos/XECZHb6NoFo)

The facial expressions, like a smile, a frown, the raising of eyebrows or tightening of jaw muscle convey a lot in communication. Wooden expression or a cold look on the listeners expresses prejudice, whereas a bright and illuminated face may evoke an enthusiastic response. For sustaining the interest and response of the audience the facial expression should be meaningful. One exudes zeal in making a point or smiling while one is explaining an intricate problem. Biting the lips or raising the eyebrows at regular intervals or blinking the eyes too often, not only disappoints the audience but also spoils the smooth flow of the message.



Source: (pxhere.com)

It is advisable to continually change facial expressions during interaction as these are monitored constantly by the recipient. It must not be forgotten that the meaning of these expressions may be or may not be similar across cultures.

How do we talk through our face:

- *A smile tells people we are pleased to see them*
- *A frown wears them off.*
- *A downcast look says that we are not feeling too happy.*
- *A raised eyebrow and a twist to the mouth shows that we are in a playful mood.*
- *A head cocked on one side shows that we are listening attentively.*

Smile: When we talk of facial expressions, what comes first to our mind is the smile on the face of an interacting person along with the look in his eyes. Should there or should there not be a smile when interacting or communicating? Smile is an ultimate and universal expression. A smile during the course of the interaction sends a positive signal. But one should learn to distinguish between a cheeky grin and a genuine smile. The change in the nature of the interaction will also bring about a change in the manner of smiling. It may regress from being a genuine one, sarcastic or sardonic.



(https://unsplash.com/photos/JaoVGh5aJ3E)

Smile shows reassurance, amusement and sometimes, even ridicule. Uses of smile:

- To mask other emotions.
- Be a submissive response to ward off another's attack.
- To make a tense situation more bearable and comfortable.

It is useful in disturbed and depressing situation. Force a smile for as long as possible. It helps feel better. So never restrain from smiling in a situation where you must smile.

Eye contact: Eye contact is a direct and powerful form of communication one possesses. The eyes being the window of the mind express the elemental passions and the wearing moods of a person. One can guess sincerity, intelligence, attitudes, and feelings of a person by looking at one's eyes. A stress on continuous eye contact between the speaker and the listener indicates how sincere the speaker is and how much interested the listener is. Eye contact, therefore, is an important nonverbal means that helps one establish a bond with one's listeners.

If one avoids the gaze of one's audience one is bound to mar their interest. By a proper eye contact one can detect the level of interest the audience has in one's speech. An improper eye contact is the sign of waning interest on the part of the audience. For comprehension and meaningful participation in the communication, one can change the tenor of one's voice and the style of presentation along with a proper eye contact. The right eye contact helps up become better speakers.

Simply looking at the audience is not all but one should know how to look at them. A blank stare or a fierce gaze may prove worse than having no eye contact at all. Looking intently at one listener or one section of the audience with the rest of the audience being ignored may in turn worsen the impact of the speech. It is also equally disastrous if one looks over the heads of the listeners or at the ceiling of window, or on the door. One should also not try to hide oneself behind the lecture stand or flip pages or the manuscripts.

PRIME USES OF EYE CONTACT:



- REVEALING ATTITUDES.
- INVITING AND CONTROLLING INTERACTION.
- PROVIDING FEEDBACK DURING A CONVERSATION.
- SHOWING INTEREST AND ATTENTION.
- THREATENING, DOMINEERING AND INFLUENCING OTHERS.

Eye Contact reveals the speakers identity and helps him or her in getting over his or her self-consciousness. Eye contact acts as a means to gain feedback, which in fact, enables the communicator alter, adjust or reframe his or her message while transmitting it. Very often, this process becomes automatic between the speaker and the listener.

Check Your Progress:

- Define kinesics.
- What is proximity?
- Write a short note on role of smile in nonverbal communication.

Head movements: Head movements are extremely important, both while speaking as well as listening. Most frequently used head movement is a 'nod', signifying approval, agreement, affirmation, and of course sometimes, disapproval. The direction of head movement or a nod conveys meanings. Coupled with a smile is the need to nod once in a while during interaction to indicate that whatever is being said is being comprehended. There could be a slight variation in the manner of nodding to indicate the degree of acceptance of the message. For example, a strong nod could indicate acceptance of a point while a slow nod could indicate that a person is contemplating the message being sent. One must understand that it's not advisable to shake head when a nod is required. There are times when the head should be bowed and sometimes to be kept erect. Head movements can be used as speech markers, in social acknowledgements. Heads move to indicate attitudes; to replace speech; to support whatever is being said; and sometimes, to contradict what is said. There are three basic head positions:

- Head up position: It means the person has a positive attitude.
- Tilted head or head cocked position: It conveys development of interest.
- Head down position: This signals a negative and judgmental attitude.

When listening in an intimate setting, one brings head closer to the other person speaking. This is known as Tete-a tete or head to head talk. It conveys closeness of speakers, formally or informally. So movement of head is purely situational and interacts with other nonverbal means of communication.

Posture: Posture and gesture are closely related, interdependent and inseparable. Posture can be a clue to personality and to character. Posture refers to the way one stands, sits and walks. There are many variations on these postures, depending upon the different positions of the arms and legs. Changing postural patterns is an important part of the process of changing attitudes and of improving the ability to establish positive attitude and communicative relationships with others. The position of hands and legs and other parts of the body reveal an individual's state of mind whether he is vibrant, alive and dynamic or nervous and jittery, are confident and self-assured and having his grip on the subject matter of communication. An efficient speaker stands tall feet together with the weight directing over the instep keeping his chin on a line parallel to the floor or at right angles to the backbone. Standing in this posture before a group is indeed essential for some successful people. A speaker with a drooping shoulder and a protruding stomach seems to be discouraged, tired and worn out. The sitting posture may execute an air of optimism or despondency or may be indicative of a sense of failure or inattentiveness. A speaker may guess the measure of success of his communication even by observing the posture of his or her listener. Whenever we explain an important point we do not recline in our chairs, we prefer to sit straight.

In a group discussion, a participant taking a turn to speak changes his posture. However, different situations demand different postures. One may keep one's back straight from the waist up, both the feet may be on the floor one slightly in front of the other. The chest should come out in line. One's walk across the stage with ease and grace contributes a great deal to one's impression upon one's audience. The walking posture may convey how much confident or

defendant or energetic or withdrawn a speaker is. For walking gracefully a speaker should remember to move his or her legs freely from the hips, to move his or her feet from the floor to walk in a straight line to avoid a stride or taking tiny steps. While standing one should know how to shift the weight of the body on the legs and to learn where to place his or her hands while speaking. If one has to wait for some time before one speaks, one should sit in a relaxed manner and look straight at the audience, not keeping his or her eyes glued to a particular section of audience, or to his or her notes on manuscript, or any other object. While invited to speak one should go straight to the lecture stand, keep one's notes or menu script on it and stand erect at about 8 inches from the mike.



(https://unsplash.com/photos/meetings/JaoVGh5aJ3E)

It's impressive to hold the lecture stand or keep one's hands on the sides. Glancing at the entire audience, pausing a while, one may begin the speech with shoulders up, without slumping or leaning. One should avoid platform mannerism, awkward movement of limbs, and sudden jerks of the body because these call the attention of the audience to themselves rather than to what is being spoken. After the speech, the speaker should return to his or her seat with equal confidence as has been displayed while he or she went to the podium. One's posture communicates the degree of his alertness and sense of purpose, and it is the time to create one's image. One should always remember that first impression is the last impression.

Gestures: Gestures are basically arm and hand movements, which play a significant role in making the intent of the communication effective and content productive. A well timed gesture drives the intent home. The gestures like playing with the ring, twisting a keychain, holding one's hand tightly, may indicate the state of mind of the speaker, affecting both the encoding and decoding of his or her message in communication. Sometimes, without accompanying gestures is difficult to speak. The gestures enhance the impact of the message upon the listener. An efficient speaker learns to inculcate appropriate gestures by practicing the same before a mirror. He or she also seeks the guidance in this regard from his or her friends and colleagues. However, in the use of gestures one should be constantly self- evaluating and judging one's gestures, which in effect, make one learn to use the right gesture for the right impact. It is also true that while making gestures one should be careful and cautious about the cultural limitations, sexual implications, and moral bindings. Gestures too add meaning to the message but they make us awkward if not used keeping time, place, and person in the communication in mind. Some conventional gestures with universal meanings are as followed:

- Shaking the fist to show anger
- Placing first finger on lips to indicate to ‘be silent’
- Patting the adjacent seat means ‘inviting to sit beside’
- Rubbing the palms together in anticipation
- Clapping as a sign of approval and encouragement
- Raising one’s hands to gain attention
- Yawning out of boredom
- Patting on someone’s back to encourage
- Rubbing the stomach to indicate hunger





(https://unsplash.com/s/photos/non-verbal-communication)

Open palms: Body sport by itself has the capacity to indicate whether an individual has a positive or a negative personality. Various methods by which a speaker conducts himself when interacting with co-participants, sends forth the required signals. Open palms while talking instead of clenched fists is a positive side of the interaction. It is evident through the gesture that the individual is of an open nature, willing to accept suggestions, and on the whole receptive to ideas and suggestions. Open palms name for positive personality. Honest and direct smile means open personality.

Handshake: Handshake has a very important role to play in non-verbal communication when people meet. The way or the energy and attitude with which people shake hands can be interpreted in different manner. Equal handshake suggests a behavior and attitude with no complexes associated.

- Equal handshake- Equal in behaviour and attitude
- Tight grasp-Superiority complex
- Limp handshake- Inferiority complex and dejection



(https://unsplash.com/photos/n95VMLxqM2I)

Check Your Progress:

Fill in the blanks:

- .....refers to the way one stands, sits and walks.
- Gestures are …….. and ..... movements, which play significant role in communication.
- Tight grasp of handshake shows ……

Proxemics (Space/ Spatial Distance and Orientation): Proxemics is the study of how we communicate with the space around us. How we guard our zones and how we aggress to others' zone is an integral part of how we relate to others. The distance one maintains while standing from another frequently conveys a non-verbal message. In some cultures it is a sign of attraction, while in others it may reflect status or the intensity of the exchange. Each communicator has a personal zone and territory built or constructed around himself or herself which he or she does not allow to be invaded during communication. Unless the relationship between the speaker and the listener is intimate, in social interaction, distinct zone spacing is maintained which is formal. This also includes the space that exists between the standing and the seated positions. The person in a superior or commanding position usually stands and the others remain seated. In a large group one can prove more effective if one stands while speaking. In public gatherings this distance depends upon many other considerations to. How close or far we stand in relation to another person, where we sit in the room, or how the office furniture is arranged, all of this has a real impact on communication.



(https://unsplash.com/photos/6awfTPLGaCE)

Space distancing differs from one culture to another. Space distancing having been mis-construed may, sometimes, affect the communication and the message content. However, in a heightened emotional state of mind the normal distancing might be ignored. Generally, there are different interpretations of zones on the basis of distance observed between two or more individuals. Like,

- Intimate zone- physical touch to 18 inches

- Personal zone- 18 inches to 4 feet
- Social zone- 4 to 12 feet
- Public zone-12 feet to as far as we can see and hear.

Space used by group of people in an office is important to understand. People in higher designation in an organization usually have more space available to them. Like, they have bigger, attractive offices and more windows as compared to other junior officers. They have protected territory with closed offices. This means better the quality of office, better position in an organization. Senior officers can easily invade in the territory of lower status personnel at their will. The subordinates don't have the same access to the superiors.

Depending upon the compatibility, sitting positions, their orientation, people may present themselves in various ways: face-to-face, side-to-side, or even back-to-back. It is believed that when there is cordial environment and people have no biases, they cooperate and usually sit side-by-side, while in situations like debates and discussions, competitors face one another.

Hepatics or Tactile behavior or Touch Communication: Hepatics is the name often given to describe touching behavior. But it might be worth while making some distinction between bodily contact and touching. The main difference is bodily contact refers to actions that are accidental, unconscious and made by any part of the body. Touching implies that the actions are deliberate, conscious and made primarily by the hands.

Touching and being touched are essential to a healthy life. Touch can communicate power, empathy and understanding. Tactile communication is the information transmitted in the form of physical contact or touch signal. Tactile communication in the early stages of life may establish the foundation of all other forms of communication that humans later develop. As one grows older, the frequency of touch decreases. Psychologists contend that the denial of extensive touching can have untold negative impact upon the infant's development. Touch, sometimes, helps better than verbal communication. It is an important form of communication. It is used to comfort, to establish dominance, and to establish bonds.



(https://unsplash.com/photos/Wvbcr7KeZDE)

Humans communicate by shaking hands to tell they're agreeing. Communication through touch is obviously non-verbal. Used properly it can create a more direct message than dozens of words; used improperly it can build barriers and cause mistrust. You can easily invade someone's space through this type of communication. If it is used reciprocally, it indicates solidarity; if not used reciprocally, it tends to indicate differences in status. Touch not only facilitates the sending of the message, but the emotional impact of the message as well.

Touch can also show tenderness, affection and encouragement. Touching actions serve as regulators. Touching conveys the total range from highly impersonal to highly personal meanings. Touch can be categorized in four categories:

- Intimate touch: A child and mother usually touch each other to show affection. True friends or brothers who meet each other after a long gap can also indulge in an intimate touch.
- Friendly touch: When two people meet they touch their shoulders and back to show their feelings. This is friendly touch.
- Professional touch: Doctors examine their patients by touching and surgeons operate their patients again by virtue of touching and feeling physically.
- Social touch: Hand shake is one of the commonest forms of touch. When a teacher touches his student to encourage him it is a social touch. By touching the head of younger ones, and blessings are bestowed by the elder ones. It is a social form of physical contact.

Paralanguage: Paralanguage is a combination of two words 'para' means 'like' and 'language' means 'mode of communication'. It literally means like language. Paralanguage refers to not what is said but how it is said. Some of the characteristics of paralanguage include volume, rate, rhythm, and pitch. The major role of paralanguage is to express emotion. It is the voice and intonation that accompanies speech including pitch, tone and the rhythm of speech.

Paralanguage can alter the meaning. For example, when the voice tone rises in a sentence it means a sentence is a question. Paralanguage can give emotional context to the content of speech. For example, a loud high pitched voice tone can express excitement, anger or fear.

Paralanguage can show membership in a linguistic subgroup. For example, accents are partially caused by paralanguage. Usually it is believed that we make use of paralanguage when we gasp, sign, clear our throat, change our tone, whisper or shout, emphasize certain words, wave our hands, frown or smile, laugh or cry.

One's attitude while sending a message affects its reception, and further, perception. Through research it has been found that the tone, pitch, quality of voice, and rate of speaking convey emotions which are judged regardless of the content of the message. Voice is most important, both as the conveyor of the message and complement to the message. A cautious communicator is always sensitive to the influence of tone, pitch, and quality of voice on the interpretation of your message by the receiver.

Silence and Time: Silence is the lack of audible sound or presence of sounds of very low intensity. By analogy the word silence can also refer to any absence of communication for hearing. Silence can be a positive or negative influence in the communications process. It can provide a link between messages or severe relationships. It can create tension and uneasiness or create a peaceful situation. Silence can also be judgmental by indicating favor or disfavor - agreement or disagreement. Silence is also known as total communication in reference to nonverbal communication and spiritual connection. Silence is an important factor in many cultural spectacles as in rituals.

Not saying anything when there is an expectation that something should be said is silence. To interpret this kind of nonverbal communication requires careful exploration, understanding of the context and most probably additional information. There are different situations in which

silence may be used to provide thinking time, that is to assess the impact or gather your thoughts. It is also used to isolate oneself using as a response to personal anxiety, shyness or threats. When you meet a new company or a person then also sometimes silence is used. It is important to understand when to speak and when not to, and know how much to say. It can be used to express affection or agreement.

To better understand this point read following thought provoking quotations by some well known personalities:

“Well-timed silence hath more eloquence than speech” by Martin Farquhar Tupper.

“Silence is the most perfect expression of scorn” by George Bernard Shaw.

Appearance: Appearance in the context of body language would include clothing, hair, jewellery, cosmetics, etc. All these can be seen as related to body language. But on having a closer look, we find that they are very meaningfully related to our facial expression and communication style. Every occasion has its own particular type of dress which may be formal or informal. It is normally a part of our organisation’s work rules to have a formal suit for the working hours. Certain organisations have a uniform for all levels of workers. If one changes from the formal dress to an informal or casual one he is easily noticed and his dress speaks volumes about his attitude towards life work and his own feelings. It is not just the dress or cloths that are important for any occasion but also the choice of shoes, hairstyle and perfume that convey meaning in a nonverbal form.




(https://unsplash.com/photos/MYbhN8KaaEc)

Dress code: Clothes can be categorized in many ways but one basic distinction is whether they are formal or informal. Formal can include more than suits or dinner jackets. It includes uniforms of various kinds and even the business executive suit. School uniforms may be regarded as formal. We tend to choose what we shall wear on the basis of what is comfortable, what covers our body with appropriate modesty or what displays our body, so as to convey to others the image we have of ourselves. It appears that with care and a bit of selection, even overtly fat can be disguised and so promote the possibility of achieving a better first impression. Some people seem to wear the same sweater and jeans forever, whereas others go through

several changes a day. Appearance does give some useful clues as to what people we are meeting for the first time will be like. That is why candidates going for an interview, salesmen and public relation officers take so much trouble to be smart in appearance.

Check Your Progress

Match the following:

Hepatics	Like language
Proxemics	Space distancing
Paralanguage	Touch behavior

1.9 CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Non-verbal communication is different for everyone, and especially people from different cultures, except some common signals. Basically, there are six universal expressions; they are happiness, sadness, disgust, fear, anger and surprise. Facial expressions are considered to be mostly similar in most cultures, like smile and cry are innate. But the extent to which people show these feelings vary. Like in some cultures, people express openly and in some people do not.

Cultural background defines their non-verbal communication as many forms of non-verbal communications like signs and signals are learned behavior. It is best to understand the cultural differences before we communicate so as to do it effectively. Not understanding these differences of non-verbal communication, may result into miscommunication when meeting people from different cultural backgrounds. Sometimes, people can offend others if they are not aware of the knowledge of their cultural differences in non-verbal communication.

Body language and physical gestures are one of the most important - and misunderstood - facets of communication. From posture to tone of voice, it's important to be aware of the usage of different gestures and other forms of physical communication in different situations and circumstances. For instance, you are an Indian, you are traveling to America and you don’t speak English. So in this situation, obviously, you would only use non-verbal communication to share your views with people or present your need. You can ask for something by pointing at it or use sign language. It is also important to know when to bow while you visit a restaurant in some countries. Some of the specific nonverbal communication differences in different cultural are:

Gestures: Showing feet is considered offensive in some Middle Eastern cultures. Some cultures consider pointing fingers as insulting. Strangely, in Polynesia, people stick out their tongue to greet people, whereas it is a sign of mockery in many other cultures. Thumbs up is

an important and widely used gesture, usually to approve or encourage. But surprisingly, it cannot be used at anytime and anywhere. It is interpreted differently in different cultures. For instance, it is a sign of "Okay" in many cultures. On the contrary, in Latin American cultures and in Japan, it is a sign of vulgarity and sometimes, expectation of money. Some cultures consider snapping fingers to call the attention of a waiter as alright whereas some take it as disrespect and very offensive.



(https://unsplash.com/photos/3KEFp35FVB0)

- **Eye Contact:** Eye contact is the foremost element in this category, especially when cultural differences are considered. It is considered as a good gesture in Western cultures. Although it signals attentiveness, confidence and honesty, yet some cultures like Middle Eastern, Asian, Hispanic and Native American do not consider it as courteous. It is a sign of rudeness and offensive expression. In case of women, who are considered to be placed at the margins even in this modern time, making a direct eye contact with men, elders, strangers, even father, is a sign of boldness and modernity. Unlike in Western cultures taking it as respectful, other do not consider it that way.

- **Touch:** Touch is the most commonly used nonverbal means of communication and is considered to be acceptable in many countries. Where and how you are touched means differently. But let's not forget it to be rudeness in most cultures. Similarly, acceptability of kissing, hugs, and many other touches are different in different cultures. Conservative Asians don't approve of these types of non-verbal communication.

  Patting on head or shoulder also has different meanings in different cultures. In some Asian cultures, patting children's head is very bad signal as head is taken to be sacred. Touch of any kind in Middle Eastern countries, especially in opposite sexes, is taken as immoral. Although, it is generally accepted custom to shake hands when meeting a person for the first time, there are some circumstances in which it may be unwise for you to initiate the handshake. In India, China, Japan and other Asian countries, women avoid shaking hands with persons they are meeting for the first time. Under these circumstances, sales trainees are told that it is better to wait for the other person to initiate the handshake and if it is not forthcoming he can just do with a nod as a sign of greeting.

  Hugging and kissing experiences are less easy to generate because of their more frequent sexual associations. In some families and social groups, it is customary for members meeting or departing from each other to exchange a brief kiss. In others there is hardly any kissing at all. So, it is advisable to be careful when intermixing culturally.

- **Appearance:** We know that before we speak our body, our appearance has already said a lot about us. So, appearance is also an important form of non-verbal communication. People are easily judged from their appearance. Our appearance, our clothing sense instantly tells about our race, class, gender, etc. In most cultures, people groom themselves to look good, which is an important aspect of personality. But, of course, one must be aware of differences in cultures in this context also. Modesty is also measured from appearance.
- **Body Movement and Posture:** As discussed above, body movements and posture pass on many messages. People start judging about you, quite often. If a person does not face you while talking to you this may mean that the person is nervous or shy. It might also mean that the person is probably avoiding you or doesn't like to talk to you. Other body movements, like coming to sit near or far, can also show confidence, power or trying to control the environment.

  Postures, like sitting straight or slouched, also show the mental condition of the person like alertness or lethargy. Hands in pocket show either overconfidence or disrespect in different cultures. For example, if we talk about Ghana and Turkey, sitting with crossed legs is considered offensive.

- **Facial Expressions**: Face is a mirror showing feelings, attitudes and emotions of a person. And mostly it is hard to hide emotions through face. Culture also affects the degree of facial expressions. People from United States are considered somewhat open in showing emotions more than their Asian counterparts. Most facial expressions are believed to be similar all over the world. But people show them differently in different cultures when in public.

- **Personal Space** (Proxemics) – Personal space is one of the important aspects of physical communication. Inter-culturally, it is very advisable to be aware of how close people should be when talking. People from different cultures have different tolerance for physical distance between them. In Middle Eastern culture, people like to go near to others to talk, while in others people might get afraid if anybody does so. People in the West prefer to stand apart about arm's length. On the contrary, in Arab and Latin cultures, people stand together as close as six inches. It's important to be comfortable with close quarters. Backing up is usually seen as a sign of rejection and insult.



(https://unsplash.com/photos/ZmwxGJxLoSk)

1.10 NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION IN THE INTERNET WORLD

In the present scenario where everything is hyper linked, and online system has become an indispensible part of our daily life. We commonly communicate through the use of chats, use of emails, blogs and other online methods. We often prefer to send symbols and signs along with use of emoticons for expressing our feelings and emotions. We heavily rely on the following emoticons to convey our momentary life. So in this stance, we have to be careful making use of exclamation points and question marks, bold, underline, colorful emoticons and other highlights. These act like nonverbal communication in emails.



(https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/39/%C3%96ffentliche_Emoticons_von_Skype.p ng)

Thus it is clear that the visual codes are as important as the verbal codes and speaker must train in the visual code which is as essential as rightly and timely is the verbal codes. Both when combined and contrasted produce the right impact and a smooth communication.

1.11 QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

Q1. What do you understand by communication?
Q2. What are the elements involved during the process of communication?
Q3. What are the different barriers that may arise during communication?
Q4. What is the 7c Principle? What is its importance?
Q5. What is kinesics? What is the role of body language in communication?
Q6. Define proxemics. What is included in proxemics?
Q7. Write short notes on a) gesture b) touch
Q8. What is the use of facial expressions and eye contact in communication? Explain with examples.
Q9. What are the advantages and limitations of proxemics?
Q10. How does body shape and posture affect communication?
Q11. Nonverbal communication is complementary to verbal communication. Elaborate.

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BACHELOR OF COMPUTER APPLICATIONS (BCA)

Semester-I

BCS-2-01T: BASIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS

MODULE II: LISTENING COMPREHENSION

STRUCTURE

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2.11 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READING

2.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit will help you to:

- Understand difference between hearing and listening.
- Identify barriers that can affect listening.
- Overcome various barriers to listening.
- Inculcate effective listening skills.
- Improve levels of comprehension.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

"Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen"

Winston Churchill

The efficacy of an act of communication relies highly on the appropriate use of the non-verbal modes and on the four skills namely, listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Although, Listening is one of the essential skills of effective communication yet people tend to give less attention and importance to it. Effective communication demands attention and comprehension which isn't possible without having good listening skills.

Listening is done for several purposes:

- To gather information
- To gain knowledge
- For better comprehension
- For appreciation

2.2 HEARING Vs LISTENING

Hearing is a physiological process. It is one of the five senses that nature has endowed upon us. As a result, we are able to hear all kinds of sounds that hit our ear drums. These sounds could be all sorts of sounds that surround us. It could be sound of some vehicle going past us, the food processor being used in the kitchen, kids crying or fighting, or sound of people talking.

Thus, it is an involuntary process.
On the other hand, Listening is a voluntary process. It requires effort on the part of the receiver. Here, the listener pays attention to what is being said in order to comprehend the message, evaluate it, interpret the meanings, and give proper feedback. So, Listening is a focussed activity.

Hearing does not require the receiver to concentrate on specific sound whereas in order to listen, one has to concentrate and pay attention to specific sounds.

It is difficult for an unmotivated person to pay heed to what is being said. In order to concentrate, one has to have some level of motivation. Listening can not take place in the absence of motivation.
In Hearing, a person may or may not understand what he hears, but Listening involves comprehension. Good listener is the one who is able to grasp the message.

Effective communication is considered to be incomplete without feedback. Proper feedback can be given only after one has understood the message. So, one has to listen with the aim to provide good feedback.

2.3 BARRIERS TO LISTENING

Despite putting up our best efforts to be a good listener, we may come across some hindrances or obstacles that can affect our listening in a negative way. These hindrances could be identified as barriers that render the communication process ineffective.

These barriers could occur due to several reasons and could result in the misinterpretation of the message and cause semantic gap. There could be several factors that can cause barriers to effective listening. These barriers could be caused by the sender, the receiver, the channel of communication, or the physical environment where communication is taking place.

2.3.1 *NOISE*

Noise is one of the major barriers to listening and can result in non-transmission, distortion, or misinterpretation of the messages. Noise barriers can be caused by people, or by gadgets being used by the sender or the receiver, etc.

2.3.2 *PHYSICAL BARRIERS*

Physical environment must be conducive for effective communication. The venue chosen for the purposes of communication must be devoid of any kind of distractions. While selecting the venue, following factors must be taken care of:

- Unnecessary physical movement by people can distract the speaker as well as the listener and thus hamper the process of communication
- Electrical or electronic gadgets being used in the room should not create disturbance.

- Extremely dim lit and unventilated room can cause uneasiness among the listeners and thereby distract them from concentrating on the message.
- Uncomfortable furniture and unorganised seating arrangement could make the listener uncomfortable and affect his/her listening capabilities.

2.3.3 ***PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS***

The mental status of the individual is very crucial in determining whether one can focus on what's happening around. In order to concentrate on something, one needs to be in good mental condition.

Following are the psychological barriers:

2.3.3.1 EGO

An egoistic person tends to have an inflexible attitude. He is not open to new ideas or opinions. He is unable to listen to other with an open mind.

2.3.3.2 PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS

We all are born and brought up in a society that abides by certain norms. Every culture has its set notions about various issues related to life. These notions get deeply embedded in our minds. Whenever we listen to someone speaking contrary to our set beliefs, our mind finds it difficult to accept it. Preconceived notions are not restricted to some issues, they can be about people, races, religion, culture, etc. We tend to act defensive by not listening to views that seem to be challenging our preconceived notions.

2.3.3.3 FAMILIARITY TRAP

The person is supposed to be caught in the trap of familiarity when he feels that what he's listening to is already known to him. This becomes a barrier to listening because the person believes that he has already mastered the concerned topic. As a result, the listener doesn't feel the need not pay attention to it.

2.3.3.4 FEAR

The fear of being judged prevents us from listening attentively. This fear sets in when we believe that we lack skills of speaking that are essential to give a proper feedback. Fear blocks our mind and drastically affects our ability to concentrate.

2.3.3.5 PERSONALITY TRAITS

Our psychological make up is determined by the personality trait that dominates us. People whose minds are governed by negative emotions like jealousy, anger, feeling of superiority over others, lack of patience, intolerance, etc. tend to be judgemental. They are unempathetic towards others. Owing to such personality traits, they are unable to appreciate and understand the speaker's point of view. They have the tendency to hold the speakers as incompetent without attentively listening to them.

2.3.3.6 POOR CONCENTRATION

The ability to concentrate is an essential prerequisite for effective communication. People having poor concentration levels tend to have low attention spans. They are unable to listen attentively and thus are not able to comprehend much of what is being said.

2.3.4 *LINGUISTIC BARRIERS*

Language functions as a tool in the process of communication. Both the sender and the receiver ought to be familiar with the language being chosen for the purposes of communication. Despite using a common language, there could arise situations where language can create barrier in communication.

2.3.4.1. SEMANTIC BARRIERS

Semantic barriers are responsible for the misinterpretation of the message. These barriers could occur owing to ambiguous words, mispronunciation, mother-tongue influence (MTI), dialectical differences, incomplete or lack of knowledge of the body language.

2.3.4.2. JARGONS

Jargons are the special kind of words or expressions used by people who belong to same profession or some group. Terms related exclusively to the fields of medicine, engineering, science, and business, etc. are examples of jargons. When such words are used to communicate with people not belonging to the same profession, then either the listener misinterprets the message or is not able to comprehend anything at all.

2.3.5 *ORGANISATIONAL BARRIERS*

Effective communication is very crucial to the growth of an organisation. It depends on various factors in a professional environment.

Organisational barriers could occur as a result of the working style of the professionals working in the same organisation:

- If the professionals are jealous of their colleagues or superiors or have a feeling of superiority over their subordinates, then these negative feelings tend to act as barriers to effective professional communication.

- When the professionals choose some inappropriate medium of communication, then it can result in misinterpretation or lack of communication within the organisation.

- Insufficient or lack of knowledge of using IT for the purposes of professional communication can also give rise to organisational barrier.

- Noisy and distracting physical environment too becomes cause of organisational barrier.

- It is important for the professionals to properly structure the material. Whether the material is being shared orally or is being presented visually to the audience, it must be carefully organised. Disorganised presentation of material often results in misinterpretation of the message, thus contributing to organisational barriers.

2.3.6 ***CULTURAL BARRIERS***

The term culture is used to describe set of ideas, opinions, rituals, customs, language, behaviour, attitudes, gestures, signs, and symbols, etc. shared by people belonging to a specific society.

Owing to cultural differences, people are often unable to understand or agree with each other's viewpoints. These barriers can occur in general as well as professional environment.

2.4 EFFECTIVE LISTENING STRATEGIES

2.4.1. MOTIVATION

Effective listening demands paying attention to speech sounds. Generally, people find it difficult to pay attention to what someone is saying without any motivational factor. So, it is highly beneficial if we're able to find some reason that motivates us to listen to the speaker.

There are numerous motivational factors:

- We tend to pay attention to things that we like or are of our interest.
- We listen attentively to things that can help us in achieving our personal or career goals.
- When we listen to someone in order to have better understanding of the concept, or to arrive at a solution to some problem then we tend to listen attentively to the speaker.
- Most often the students tend to focus more on what is being said, when they're told by the teacher that a particular topic is very important from examination point of view.

Thus, its important for the listener to be motivated to listen to the matter of the subject. If, before listening we can find some factor that motivates us to listen then it helps us become effective listeners.

2.4.2. CONCENTRATION

Lack of concentration adversely affects our listening. People with better or high concentration levels turn out to be effective listeners. Motivation has a great role in improving our concentration level. If we are driven by some motivational factor then we remain focussed on the task we are doing.

Mental exercises and meditation have proven to improve concentration in humans. The greatest benefit of high concentration level is that it helps in better comprehension. Listeners who listen with full concentration are able to understand things easily and are able to retain what they've learnt for a long period of time. Such listeners don't need to cram anything to store it in their memory.

2.4.3. HEALTH

The listener ought to be in a good mental and physical state in order to concentrate and listen. A listener suffering from any mental blocks or physical weakness will not be able to focus on the speech sounds.

When we are suffering from any kind of physical ailment or fatigue, it affects our ability to grasp things. As a result, we either misinterpret or are unable to understand the message.

2.4.4. EYE CONTACT

Non-verbal codes play a great role in making communication effective. There're lot of messages that are exchanged by speaker and listeners through body language whilst they're talking to each other.

One of the non-verbal codes is Eye Contact. The listeners who maintain eye contact with the speaker manage to concentrate and understand the subject matter better than the listeners who don't maintain eye-contact during the conversation.

Maintaining eye-contact with the speaker makes the listener feel alert all the time and helps him/her remain focussed.

2.4.5. POSTURE

Posture is an important constituent of body language. The way we sit or stand while listening has a great impact on our quality of listening. Incorrect posture makes us either very uncomfortable or too relaxed to focus and concentrate on the speaker's speech.

The body language experts consider the upright posture to be the correct posture. Whether we are sitting or standing while listening, we must maintain the upright posture. The correct posture is to sit or stand with the spinal column straight.

Maintaining upright posture while listening boosts up our concentration levels and improves our faculty of comprehension, thereby inducing effective listening.

2.4.6. NOTE TAKING

While listening, our mind needs to stay focused. If we keep the mind focused on what we intend to do then it is able to concentrate for longer duration and registers things easily.

Note taking is a strategy which requires the listener to put down the things that his/her mind has registered in a precise form. When our mind is involved in performing three tasks i.e., listening, retaining and composing consecutively; it stays triply occupied and improves our levels of comprehension. Consequently, we tend to become effective listeners.

2.4.7. FEEDBACK

No communication is effective without a proper feedback. Feedback is defined as the response given by the receiver to the sender after he/she has read or listened to the subject matter. It is through feedback that the sender is able to analyse or judge whether the message has been communicated and comprehended appropriately. Feedback completes the process of communication.

In the absence of feedback from the listener, the sender remains unsure of whether the message has been understood or not. So, it is important for the listener to give feedback through either verbal or non-verbal or by using both the modes of communication.

An effective listener is the one who not only pays attention to what the speaker is trying to convey but also asks questions, when in doubt. Feedback can also be given by responding through nods, gestures, and expressions. These non-verbal responses could be either affirmative or negative.

So, if we inculcate the habit of giving feedback while listening, it can help us become better listeners.

2.4.8. AVOID INTERRUPTING

Though it is important to give feedback to the speaker, we must know how the etiquettes of giving feedback or asking questions. An effective listener is the one who lets the speaker complete the topic being discussed, He/she doesn't interrupt the speaker while he/she is speaking.

Good listener is the one who seeks permission from the speaker before asking any question or giving feedback verbally.

Untimely interruptions can irritate or distract the speaker. These can break the chain of the speaker's thoughts, thereby creating a barrier in effective communication.

2.4.9. AVOID TALKING

Listening is an activity that involves full concentration. One can't focus on two things simultaneously without compromising with the level of concentration. One can either listen or speak.

So, to be an effective listener we must avoid talking to people around while we are listening to the expert or a resource person. Talking to other people makes us lose track of what is being said by the speaker and as a result we are unable to comprehend the message being delivered.

2.4.10. DON'T MUNCH

Eating while listening can distract us from focusing on the speaker's speech. We, often avoid maintaining eye-contact with the speaker when we are eating. As a result, we lose focus and our listening gets negatively affected.

2.4.11. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The venue must be chosen carefully for the purpose of listening. The room must be free from all kinds of distracting noises. Moreover, the room must not be used by people as thoroughfare.

The room should be well lit and well ventilated to provide comfortable environment to the listener. This will assist him/her in focussing on listening to the speaker.

Besides this, the chair and the table being used by the listener must support upright posture.

2.5 Check Your Progress:

1. Hearing is a voluntary process : Y/N
2. It isn't important to maintain eye-contact with speaker while listening : Y/N
3. Upright posture helps in listening effectively : Y/N
4. It is alright, if we eat while listening : Y/N
5. Feedback is always given using verbal modes of communication : Y/N

2.6. LISTENING IN CONVERSATIONAL INTERACTION

The Oxford Learner's Dictionary defines Conversation as an informal talk that involves either two people only or a small group of people. Conversation is a term generally used to refer to an informal interaction between people. Since, conversation is a two-way process, so both the sender and the receiver need to participate equally.

The general purposes of conversational interaction may include interacting in order to:

- Break the ice.
- Become friends.
- Share emotions and feelings.
- Discuss problems/issues.
- Find solutions.

For the conversation to be fruitful, listener must carry on his/her responsibility effectively. Effective listening would require the

2.6.1. FLEXIBLE

Listener must listen to the speaker with an open mind. His/her mind should be devoid of any misconceptions and prejudices so that the speaker's perspective could be understood without being judgemental.

2.6.2. AVOID INTERRUPTING

Untimely and uncalculated response by the listener renders communication ineffective. Listener must let the speaker complete the topic or finish an idea/opinion, before plunging in with any kind of reaction. Speaker must not be interrupted while he/she is in the midst of discussion.

2.6.3. EMPATHETIC

Since, conversational interactions could be about emotional matters, so it is important that one must listen empathetically. A listener should not only focus on speech but also on emotions behind that talk. Empathetic listening enables the listener understand emotions and feelings of the speaker.

2.6.4. APT BODY LANGUAGE

In conversational interactions, lot is conveyed through body language i.e., Eye-contact, gestures and expressions, etc. People show interest in the talk by maintaining eye-contact with each other. It is also a sign of mutual respect. Facial expressions, hand gestures, nodding of the head are non-verbal codes that can add to the meaning of what's being talked about.

2.6.5. BE TOLERANT

An effective listener is tolerant towards other people's ideas, opinions, and beliefs. Generally, people don't feel like listening to opinions that are contrary to their own opinions. A good

listener is the one who may not agree with the speaker's viewpoint, but is tolerant enough to let others express their opinions and pays attention to what they're saying.

2.6.6. BE PATIENT

Patience is quintessential to effective listening. Impatient person cannot become an effective listener. All activities, namely, concentrating on the speech, evaluation, decision making or waiting for the turn to speak require the listener to be patient.

2.6.7. TAKE TURNS

Conversation is a two-way process, hence taking turns in speaking and listening is crucial for making conversation fruitful. Listener must know when to take turn to speak without interrupting the speaker.

2.6.8. RESPONSIVE

Any conversation would be ineffective without feedback. Absence or delay in feedback renders the communication ineffective. Effective listening involves being responsive. Once an opinion is expressed or a feeling is shared by the speaker, the listener must respond promptly with an appropriate feedback.

2.7. LISTENING TO A STRUCTURED TALK

2.7.1. STRUCTURED TALK

Unlike general conversational interactions, a structured talk tends to be formal and well-organised. Structured conversations are goal-oriented. These may be done in order to arrive at solution to some problem or to take some decision, etc. Hence, it is important for the people participating in structured talks to be well prepared with the issues or topics to be discussed.

2.7.2. PLANNING

Structured talk requires prior planning and preparation. Before talking one must be having answers to the following questions:

- What ?
  The participants must be aware of the issue/issues to be discussed so that they can gather relevant information for the purpose of conversation.

- Why ?
  The objective of carrying out the conversation must be clear to all the people participating in a structured talk.

- Who ?
  It is important that the participants know whom they're going to address. Such an information helps them in getting an idea as to what the other participants must already be aware of and what would be their expectations from each other.

- Where ?
  The knowledge about the venue can help participants identify and overcome any distractions they might come across during conversation.

- When ?
  Sticking to time is crucial to effective talks. The participants must know when the talk is going to start and how much time they have been allotted for the structured conversation. This helps the participants to stay focussed and prevents them from indulging in irrelevant conversations.

- How ?
  The participants must know how to go about talking. They must be well aware of the of the structure of the talk. Each participant should know when to speak, when to pause, and when to listen.

2.7.3. STRUCTURE

Structured talks have some essential components that make them different from informal talks or conversations. Following elements lend an organised structure to structured talks:

2.7.3.1 Introduction

Every structured talk will begin with an introduction to the topic to be discussed. A good introduction aims at familiarising the audience about the issue and the need to address that issue. It also gives an idea about the sub-topics that would be discussed.

2.7.3.2 Body

The body of the structured talk constitutes the various sub-topics. It involves defining, explaining and having detailed discussion on the topic and the sub-topics. The discussion must be supplemented with examples or illustrations to support the arguments being presented.

2.7.3.3 CONCLUSION

The aim of every organised or structured discussion is to arrive at some conclusion. So, once the issue or issues have been discussed, it is important to summarise the main points, observations, findings or arguments. This helps the participants to conclude and arrive at some solution or decision.

2.7.3.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Once the talk is concluded and decisions have been taken, recommendations must be made to take the necessary course of action. Making recommendations involves dividing the tasks or assigning duties, etc.

2.7.4. ACTIVE LISTENING

Listening plays an important role in the successful outcome of structured talks. One needs to listen actively while participating in structured talks. Following are the characteristics of active listening:

2.7.4.1 EYE CONTACT

Maintaining eye-contact with the speaker helps us in concentrating on the issue being discussed. It also acts as a sign of respect to the speaker who feels motivated to share his/her ideas and information. It helps us remain focused.

2.7.4.2 PATIENCE

Active listening demands a lot of patience. The listener must know when to speak and when to pause. One must not interrupt the speaker as it shows disrespect and can break the chain of thought of the speaker.

2.7.4.3 DELAYED EVALUATION / DON'T JUDGE

Good listener never tries to judge the speaker before the speaker has finished telling his/her part of the story. This could result in misinterpretation of the message. At the same time, it will spoil the structure of the talk.

2.7.4.4 OPEN MINDEDNESS

Listening to a structured talk requires the listener to listen to the speakers without being prejudiced. Listener should adopt flexible approach. He/she must listen with an open mind.

2.7.4.5 TOLERANCE

Active listening involves exercising a tolerant attitude towards all speakers and their views. An effective listener is not

2.7.4.6 TAKE NOTES

Taking notes while listening helps us not only on remaining focused but also assists in better comprehension of the subject matter. Active listener always keeps a notepad where he/she can take notes of the things being discussed. This technique is also instrumental in keeping record of the discussion.

2.7.4.7 QUESTION

Questioning helps in clearing any doubts that a listener might have. An active listener must ask questions whenever he/she is unable to grasp the message or has a different set of opinions.

2.7.4.8 FEEDBACK

The purpose of a structured talk will remain unfulfilled without a proper feedback. An active listener must ensure that he/she is giving feedback timely. The feedback could be a verbal or a non-verbal response. Non-verbal response like nodding in affirmative or negative, facial gestures could be given while listening. Verbal response must be given after the speaker has taken a pause or finished speaking and is ready to take feedback or questions. Feedback helps clear all kinds of doubts and avoids misinterpretation of the message.

2.8. Check Your Progress:

1. Being empathetic is important in general conversational interactions : Y/N
2. Audience analysis plays a crucial role in making a structured talk effective : Y/N
3. Introduction, Body, Conclusion and..... are the elements of a Structured talk.
4. .....can help keep record of the discussion.
5. One should refrain from asking questions during a structured talk : Y/N

2.9. SUMMARY

Effective listening skills are crucial to the success of the process of communication. Active listening isn't possible in the presence of barriers that can either delay the delivery of the message or result in misinterpretation of the message.

It is important to identify various barriers and know how to overcome them for listening effectively. Good listening skills help us in comprehending the message and thus are instrumental in making the process of communication extremely rewarding.

2.10 QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

1) Define Listening. How is Hearing different from Listening?
2) What are the various purposes of Listening?
3) Discuss various barriers to Listening.
4) How can we overcome barriers to Listening?
5) Discuss effective listening skills.
6) What is the importance of body language in listening?
7) Write a note on the importance of feedback.
8) Distinguish between Conversational Interactions and Structured Talks.
9) What role does Planning play in making a Structured Talk effective?
10) What do you understand by Active Listening? How can you listen effectively in a structured talk?

2.11. REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READING

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BACHELOR OF COMPUTER APPLICATIONS (BCA)

Semester-I

BCS-2-01T: BASIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS

MODULE III: SPEAKING SKILLS

STRUCTURE

3.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.2 EXPRESSIONS IN DIFFERENT COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTIONS

3.3 JOB INTERVIEWS

3.4 GROUP DISCUSSIONS

3.5 PRESENTATION SKILLS

3.6 SUMMING UP

3.7 FURTHER READING

3.8 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

3.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will:

- learn the right technique of expression in different communicative functions like asking questions, making suggestions and requests, asking as well as refusing permission, expressing greetings, gratitude etc.
- learn the art of facing job interviews
- learn the relevant aspects of group discussions
- learn the right way to make a successful presentation

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Speaking is an act of making vocal sounds. We can say that speaking means to converse, or expressing one's thoughts and feelings in spoken language. To speak often implies conveying information. It may be from an informal remark to a scholarly presentation to a formal address. Speaking skills: Speaking skills are the skills that give us the ability to communicate effectively. These skills allow the speaker, to convey his message in a passionate, thoughtful, and convincing manner. Speaking skills also help to ensure that one won't be misunderstood by those who are listening.

Speaking is the productive skill in the oral mode. It, like the other skills, is more complicated than it seems at first and involves more than just pronouncing words. There are three kinds of speaking situations in which we find ourselves: 1. interactive, 2. partially interactive, and 3. Non-interactive. Interactive speaking situations include face-to-face conversations and telephone calls, in which we are alternately listening and speaking, and in which we have a chance to ask for clarification, repetition, or slower speech from our conversation partner. Some speaking situations are partially interactive, such as when giving a speech to a live audience, where the convention is that the audience does not interrupt the speech. The speaker nevertheless can see the audience and judge from the expressions on their faces and body language whether or not he or she is being understood. Few speaking situations may be totally non-interactive, such as when recording a speech for a radio broadcast. In all the above explained conditions speaking is always a headache for most of the people. Although the fear of speaking is common, studies show that ability to speaking can be enhanced by improving speaking skills.

3.2 EXPRESSIONS IN DIFFERENT COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTIONS

3.2.1 Asking Questions

“Garbage in, garbage out”, is a popular truth, often said in relation to computer systems: if you put the wrong information in, you'll get the wrong information out. The same principle applies to communications in general: if you ask the wrong questions, you'll probably get the wrong answer, or at least not quite what you're hoping for.

Asking the right question is at the heart of effective communications and information exchange. By using the right questions in a particular situation, you can improve a whole range of communications skills. For example, you can gather better information and learn more, you can build stronger relationships, manage people more effectively, and help others to learn too.

Open and Closed Questions

A closed question usually receives a single word or very short, factual answer. For example, "Are you thirsty?" The answer is "Yes" or "No"; "Where do you live?" The answer is generally the name of your town or your address.

Open questions elicit longer answers. They usually begin with what, why, how. An open question asks the respondent for his or her knowledge, opinion or feelings. "Tell me" and "describe" can also be used in the same way as open questions. Here are some examples:

- What happened at the meeting?
- Why did he react that way?
- How was the party?
- Tell me what happened next.

- Describe the circumstances in more detail.

Open questions are good for:

- Developing an open conversation: "What did you get up to on vacation?"
- Finding out more detail: "What else do we need to do to make this a success?"
- Finding out the other person's opinion or issues: "What do you think about those changes?"

Closed questions are good for:

- Testing your understanding, or the other person's: "So, if I get this qualification, I will get a raise?"
- Concluding a discussion or making a decision: "Now we know the facts, are we all agreed this is the right course of action?"
- Frame setting: "Are you happy with the service from your bank?"

A misplaced closed question, on the other hand, can kill the conversation and lead to awkward silences, so are best avoided when a conversation is in full flow.

Funnel Questions

This technique involves starting with general questions, and then drilling down to a more specific point in each. Usually, this will involve asking for more and more detail at each level. It's often used by detectives taking a statement from a witness:

"How many people were involved in the fight?"
"About ten."

"Were they kids or adults?"
"Mostly kids."

"What sort of ages were they?"
"About fourteen or fifteen."

"Were any of them wearing anything distinctive?"
"Yes, several of them had red baseball caps on."

"Can you remember if there was a logo on any of the caps?"
"Now you come to mention it, yes, I remember seeing a big letter N."

Using this technique, the detective has helped the witness to re-live the scene and to gradually focus in on a useful detail. Perhaps he'll be able to identify young men wearing a hat like this from CCTV footage. It is unlikely he would have got this information if he's simply asked an open question such as "Are there any details you can give me about what you saw?"
Funnel questions are good for:

- Finding out more detail about a specific point: “Tell me more about Option Two”.
- Gaining the interest or increasing the confidence of the person you're speaking with: “Have you used the IT Helpdesk?”, “Did it solve your problem?”, “What was the attitude of the person who took your call?”

Probing Questions

Asking probing questions is another strategy for finding out more detail. Sometimes it's as simple as asking your respondent for an example, to help you understand a statement that they have made. At other times, you need additional information for clarification, "When do you need this report by, and do you want to see a draft before I give you my final version?" Or to investigate whether there is proof for what has been said, "How do you know that the new database can't be used by the sales force?"

Probing questions are good for:

- Gaining clarification to ensure that you have the whole story and that you understand it thoroughly.
- Drawing information out of people who are trying to avoid telling you something.

Leading Questions

Leading questions try to lead the respondent to your way of thinking. They can do this in several ways:

- **With an assumption** – "How late do you think that the project will deliver?" This assumes that the project will certainly not be completed on time.
- **By adding a personal appeal to agree at the end** – "Lori's very efficient, don't you think?" or "Option Two is better, isn't it?"
- **Phrasing the question so that the "easiest" response is "yes"** – Our natural tendency to prefer to say "yes" than "no" plays an important part in the phrasing of questions: "Shall we all approve Option Two?" is more likely to get a positive response than "Do you want to approve Option Two or not?" A good way of doing this is to make it personal. For example, "Would you like me to go ahead with Option Two?" rather than "Shall I choose Option Two?"
- **Giving people a choice between two options** – both of which you would be happy with, rather than the choice of one option or not doing anything at all. Strictly speaking, the choice of "neither" is still available when you ask "Which would you prefer... A or B?" but most people will be caught up in deciding between your two preferences.

Note that leading questions tend to be closed.

Leading questions are good for:

- Getting the answer you want, but leaving the other person feeling that they haven't got a choice.
- Closing a sale: "If that answers all of your questions, shall we agree on a price?"

Rhetorical Questions

Rhetorical questions aren't really questions at all, in that they don't expect an answer. They're really just statements phrased in question form: "Isn't John's design work so creative?"

People use rhetorical questions because they are engaging for the listener – as they are drawn into agreeing ("Yes it is and I like working with such a creative colleague") – rather than feeling that they are being "told" something like "John is a very creative designer." (To which they may answer "So What?")

Rhetorical questions are good for:

- Engaging the listener.
- Getting people to agree with your point of view.

3.2.2 Making Suggestions and Requests

Making Requests:

When you ask someone to do something for you, or ask if you can do something, it's important to sound polite. Here are some of the common ways that you can do this.

Asking someone to do something for you

"Could you open the door for me, please?"
"Would you mind opening the door for me, please?"
"Can you open the door for me, please?'

Speaking tip: could and **can** are followed by the verb without **to**. Would you mind is followed by the verb and **-ing**.

We also use modals for asking for something (making a request or asking permission).
Can you do me a favour? (more informal)
Could you say thanks to your mum for me? (more polite)
I've finished my homework. *Can* I go now? (more informal)
Could I speak to Amy, please? (more polite)

Asking if you can do something

"Can I use your computer, please?"
"Could I borrow some money from you, please?"
"Do you mind if I turn up the heating?"
"Would you mind if I turned up the heating?"

Speaking tip: **Could** is more polite that **can**.
Do you mind if…" is followed by the verb in the **present tense**, but **would you mind if…** is followed by the verb in the **past tense**.
When you're using these two sentences, don't use **please**. It's already polite enough!

ASKING FOR AND GIVING PERMISSION:
When you ask for permission to use something that belongs to someone else you have to do your best to be polite. It is desirable to use the word "**please**."

Asking for Permission:
- **Can** I go out, please?
- **May** I open the window, please?
- Please, **can** I have a look at your photo album?
- Please, **may** I taste that hot spicy couscous dish?
- **Do you mind if** I smoke?
- **Would you mind if** I asked you something?
- **Is it okay if** I sit here?
- **Would it be all right if** I borrowed your mobile Phone?

Giving Permission:
- Yes, please do.
- Sure, go ahead.
- Sure.
- No problem.
- Please feel free.

Refusing to give permission:
- No, please don't.
- I'm sorry, but that's not possible.
- I'm afraid, but you can't.

3.2.3 Expressing Greetings
The first step in starting a conversation is your greeting. This is what you say at the very first moment that you see someone or speak on the telephone.

And this is the first impression a new person will have about you when you speak.
When greeting someone, it is important to use the appropriate level of formality for each situation.

English Greetings for Professional/Formal Situations
There are many situations in which we may need more **formal** or **business professional** language in English. Some common examples include:

- Business meetings & negotiations
- At a job interview
- Communicating with high-level management
- Saying hello to the company president or CEO
- Showing respect to elderly individuals or people we do not know well
- Meeting new business colleagues
- Communicating with new clients, high-level clients, angry clients

In these situations we use more formal or professional language to show respect, to show the importance of a situation or the person or to keep a professional tone. Use the example words and expressions below to appropriate greet individuals or groups and start conversations.

Good morning / Good afternoon / Good Evening

This is the most common form of greeting in a formal situation and is appropriate to use anytime – with colleagues, business clients, formal relationships, new neighbors, etc.
To be particularly respectful, you can also include the person's last name, for example: "*Good morning, Ms Jones*." If you know someone well, you can also use the first name.
When you are greeting a group of people – for example at a meeting – you can also say something such as:

- *Good morning, everyone. I hope you are doing well this morning.*

Hello. How do you do?
This is used when meeting someone for the first time and is very formal. It may be used in a formal business situation or a formal dinner party event.
Be careful. This is not really a "How are you?" question. It is really a simple greeting and has a similar meaning to *"Nice to meet you.*

Nice to meet you. / Pleased to meet you.
You are probably already familiar with these expressions from your English studies as they are common in many English books.
These expressions are best used in formal or business situations when you meet someone for the first time, for example, A: "*Good morning. How do you do? I'm Josef Rammas with X Company.*" B: "*Pleased to meet you Mr. Rammas.*"

How have you been doing? / How have you been?
This is a very simple, polite and appropriate question to use to start a conversation in a business or formal situation. It is a respectful way to ask "How are you?" with someone you have not seen in a long time or someone you do not see every day.

English Greetings for Informal Situations:
With colleagues you know well, clients you have developed a relationship with or people who are acquaintances of yours (not close friends or family, but people you are friendly with), it is appropriate to be a little more relaxed with the language.
Example situations include:

- In the office with your team and colleagues
- Meeting or a lunch with a regular client
- Networking events
- Trade show or job fair
- Conferences

- Greeting neighbors
- Seeing an acquaintance unexpectedly (for example, seeing someone you know at the grocery store or in a restaurant)

It is often also very common to shake hands with someone when you greet them. This is common for business contacts and acquaintances.

Hello / Hi / Hey

Hello and hi are very common and appropriate to use in more informal situations. Most of the time, people include the person's first name (English speakers tend to be more informal generally speaking).

- *Hello, Susan.*
- *Hi, Lara.*

Hey should be reserved for people you know well. This is the most informal of these 3 greetings but it is definitely appropriate for people in your office you see every day and your close work colleagues.

How are you? / How are you doing? / How is it going?

Most of the time we follow "hello" or "hi" with one of these questions.

Careful! These questions should have very simple answers and should be focused on the positive or neutral. You should not answer with a list of everything you did during the day nor should you provide a negative answer.

Example answers include:

- *Fine, thanks. And you?*
- *Great! You?*
- *Hi, Susan – good thanks. How about you?*
- *Doing well. And how have you been?*
- *Not bad. And you? How are you?*
- *Hello, Lara. How are you?**

*Yes, sometimes the answer is with the same question (remember – we have this same situation in Business Professional greetings with *How do you do?*). This is often confusing the first time you hear it or experience it. Remember – these questions can also be a greeting, not a real question. This is commonly used when passing or walking by someone you know but you have no time to talk.

Good to see you. / It's great to see you. / Nice to see you.

You can use these expressions when you have not seen someone in a long time or when you see someone unexpectedly.

For example, meeting a client for a lunch, seeing a business contact at a meeting or seeing an acquaintance at the grocery store.

These expressions can be used:

- Immediately after saying hello or hi in the greeting. For example, *Hello, Susan. It's good to see you!*
- As part of your closing, after you finish a short conversation. For example, *Well, it was great to see you. I have to get going. Have a good day. Goodbye.*

Long-time, no see. / It's been awhile. / When was the last time we saw each other?
These expressions are used when you have not seen someone for a long time. These are also great expressions to use to start a little small talk. The question "*When was the last time we saw each other*?" is an easy way to start a conversation about what has happened since you last saw each other.
How have you been? / How have things been going (since I last saw you)? / What have you been up to?
These questions are often used after an expression such as, "Long-time, no see" or "It's been awhile."
These are similar to asking "*How are you?*" and are great ways to start some small talk. The questions invite the person to say how they are doing or to share any new, interesting information they are comfortable sharing. For example:

- *Great thanks. Did you hear we are moving to California next month?*
- *Doing well. We've just returned from our summer vacation. And how about you?*
- *Nothing to complain about! The family is good and work is fine. Just the same old, same old. What about you?*

3.2.4 Apologies and Gratitude

Apologies
Apologies are a funny thing. Some are accepted and some aren't. Certain apologies are accepted by some, and not others. For leaders and managers of all types, knowing when and how to communicate a prompt and sincere apology is one of the keys to earning the respect of those around you.

With that said, consider some of the dos and don'ts when it comes to apologizing:

- **Apologize quickly.** If it takes longer than 24 hours—especially in a high-profile or very public situation—people become suspect. When you do apologize, do it willingly in a proactive fashion, instead of waiting to have your back against the wall and after testing the public reaction to the situation.
- **When apologizing, give specifics.** What exactly are you apologizing for? Lawyers often tell their clients to be vague and general when apologizing. And if there is more than one thing to apologize for, they recommend apologizing for the least embarrassing mistake. Yet, communication experts know that apologies must be specific to be

accepted. When using vague generalities in an apology, most audiences don't buy it, because they are not convinced you are really acknowledging what exactly you did wrong.

- **When apologizing, talk directly about what you are going to do to fix the situation, if possible.** Just saying you are going to "fix it" isn't enough. How are you going to fix it? How are you going to measure whether the same mistake is made again? It is easy to say, "I'm sorry. This isn't going to happen again." It is a lot harder to say, "I take responsibility and apologize for X and am going to do XYZ to make sure it never happens again."
- **Apologize face-to-face.** Do not rely on e-mail or an organization-wide memo sent to employees to express your apology. That is the easy way out and sends the message that you are afraid to confront the situation head on. We all make mistakes, so when you do, apologize in person, face-to-face, and be willing and open to receive feedback and answer any questions from those in your audience. Doing so sends the message that you truly care about how your mistake impacted them and that you are interested in hearing their perspective.
- **Apologies must pass the credibility test.** Sometimes, no matter how sincere you can be when apologizing, if your offense or mistake is so egregious, it is going to fall on deaf ears. That is not to say that you can't rebound from such a situation, however, it means you will have to go the extra mile in terms of your apology as well as the actions you take after you apologize to show that you are willing to put in the time and effort to make things right.
- **Move on.** In most situations, if you apologize keeping the above tips and tools in mind, your apology will be accepted and everyone can move on with the work at hand. However, if you feel you have done everything in your power to truly apologize and for reasons outside your control your apology is not accepted, you need to let it go and move on. Overthinking or carrying the extra weight of the unaccepted apology could cause you to lose focus, thereby increasing the potential of future mistakes, and nothing good will come of that.

Gratitude

Think about the people around you, who have helped you along the way. And make sure your communication with them includes a healthy dose of gratitude. Support should always lead to gratitude. And, gratitude usually leads to more support.

Gratitude is a positive emotion felt after being the beneficiary of some sort of gift. It is also a social emotion often directed towards a person (the giver of a gift) or felt towards a higher power.

So, to help you build your appreciation muscle, here are ten simple ways to add the practice of it to your daily life at work and at home.

- **Say "please" and "thank you."**

This should be an easy one – but most people are "please" and "thank you" poor. Make it a habit to ALWAYS say please and thank you. Practicing kindness on a regular basis is an important way to show everyone you appreciate them.

- **Catch someone doing something right.**

Pay attention to things going on around you and when something is going well, say so! Pop your head in a cubby and say something like "wow, you are doing a great job." Tell your child you love the project they are working on.

- **Show genuine interest.**

Take notice of pictures, what someone is wearing, or something else you like about them. Show them that you care about who they are.

- **Go to lunch or take a break.**

Give the gift of your time — go to lunch, take a break, or go for a walk and connect with someone on a more personal basis.

- **Give a small gift.**

Give a favorite coffee drink, candy bar, or flower to someone you appreciate and just say "thanks for all you do". It can be as simple as a sticky note with that same sentiment.

- **Create traditions.**

Come up with a silly award to pass around or show at staff meetings to acknowledge the hard work that's going on, like the longest phone call from a customer, or the funniest incident. Or have everyone write down one person they appreciate and why, and put them in a hat. Draw one out for a prize. This is also really fun to do at home!

- **Celebrate successes.**

When things go right, celebrate! Acknowledge everyone involved, even for the small stuff. It can make a huge difference in office *and* family morale.

- **Say it out loud.**

Tell someone you appreciate them in front of others. Tell your spouse you are thankful for him in front of the kids. Acknowledge someone's work in a staff meeting.

- **Tell their boss.**

Don't you wish someone would do that for you? What a powerful way to show gratitude that can have a lasting impact!

Check Your Progress:

1. What are probing questions good for? How are they different from leading questions?

Ans._____

2. What is the importance of being polite?

Ans._____

3. _____is a greeting that should be used for people you know well whereas _____ may be used with other people.

4. Why is an expression of gratitude necessary?

Ans._____

3.3 JOB INTERVIEWS

The more you know about the style of the interview, the better you can prepare.

The Telephone Interview

Often companies request an initial telephone interview before inviting you in for a face to face meeting in order to get a better understanding of the type of candidate you are. The one benefit of this is that you can have your notes out in front of you. You should do just as much preparation as you would for a face to face interview, and remember that your first impression is vital. Some people are better meeting in person than on the phone, so make sure that you speak confidently, with good pace and try to answer all the questions that are asked.

The Face-to-Face Interview

This can be a meeting between you and one member of staff or even two members.

The Panel Interview

These interviews involve a number of people sitting as a panel with one as chairperson. This type of interview is popular within the public sector.

The Group Interview

Several candidates are present at this type of interview. You will be asked to interact with each other by usually a group discussion. You might even be given a task to do as a team, so make sure you speak up and give your opinion.

The Sequential Interview

These are several interviews in turn with a different interviewer each time. Usually, each interviewer asks questions to test different sets of competencies. However, if you are asked the same questions, just make sure you answer each one as fully as the previous time.

The Lunch / Dinner Interview

This type of interview gives the employer a chance to assess your communication and interpersonal skills as well as your table manners!

All these types of interviews can take on different question formats, so once you've checked with your potential employer which type of interview you'll be attending, get preparing!
Here's a list of interview formats that you should prepare your answers for;

Competency Based Interviews

These are structured to reflect the competencies the employer is seeking for the particular job. These will usually be detailed in the job spec so make sure you read it through, and have your answers ready for questions such as "Give me an example of a time you worked as a team to achieve a common goal."

Formal / Informal Interviews

Some interviews may be very formal, others may be very informal and seem like just a chat about your interests. However, it is important to remember that you are still being assessed, and topics should be friendly and clean!

Portfolio Based Interviews

In the design / digital or communications industry it is likely that you will be asked to take your portfolio along or show it online. Make sure all your work is up to date without too little or too much. Make sure that your images if in print are big enough for the interviewer to see properly, and always test your online portfolio on all Internet browsers before turning up.

The Second Interview

You've passed the first interview and you've had the call to arrange the second. Congratulations! But what else is there to prepare for? You did as much as you could for the first interview! Now is the time to look back and review. You may be asked the same questions you were asked before, so review them and brush up your answers. Review your research about the company; take a look at the 'About Us' section on their website, get to know their client base, search the latest news on the company and find out what the company is talking about.

General Interview Preparation

Here's a list of questions that you should consider your answers for when preparing…

• Why do you want this job?
• Why are you the best person for the job?
• What relevant experience do you have?
• Why are you interested in working for this company?
• What can you contribute to this company?
• What do you know about this company?
• What challenges are you looking for in a position?
• Why do you want to work for this company?
• Why should we hire you?
• What are your salary requirements?

3.4 Group Discussions

Group Discussion or **GD** is a type of discussion that involves people sharing ideas or activities. People in the group discussion are connected with one basic idea. Based on that idea, everyone in the group represents his/her perspective.

Types of Group Discussion

There are two types of Group Discussion, which are listed below:

- Topic-Based Group Discussion
- Case Study Based Group Discussion

Topic-Based Group Discussion

There are few candidates in a group, where each group is given any topic. The group members discuss the topic, which is called a Group Discussion.

Case Study Based Group Discussion

The Case study based Group Discussion is generally followed by the MBA Institutes, such as IIM, etc. In such a discussion, a problem is given, and the participants are asked to resolve them. The preparation time is also higher as compared to other discussions. The panelists test the teamwork and decision-making skills of the participants.

The participants need to active and updated with the things around them. It also tests the observation capability of the participants.

The example of Case study based topics can be 'Discussion between boss and manager'.

Rules of Group Discussion

There are some rules of a Group Discussion. The rules of Group Discussion are listed below:

- **Prepare well for the topic.**
  The quick trick is to note all the important points during the preparation time. Do not write brief paragraphs. Try to write short points and explain them briefly in the discussion.
- **Be confident about your content**
  It would help if you always were confident about your content. If you are not confident, you may hesitate while speaking, which will create a negative impression.
- **Participants Introduction**
  Most participants only focus on their content. You should be aware during the introduction of all the participants in your group. To get attention, you can call out the person's name when the discussion gets diverted.
- **Body Language**
  Always take care of your body language. Do not focus only on the content.
- **Leadership**
  Try to take the lead in the group if you are confident about the topic and the knowledge.
- **Avoid false starts or commitments**
  Do not initiate the discussion if you are not sure about your content. Do not present any wrong information.
- **Follow your Domain**
  Every company has its own culture. Prepare your content according to the company requirements. For example, industrial companies will focus more on technical talks, while marketing companies seek the combination of creative and oriented content.
- **Do not fight**
  In the Group Discussion, some candidates often get aggressive. Do not fight during the discussion. Most of the companies require sensitive and polite candidates rather than aggressive ones.

3.5 PRESENTATION SKILLS

Presenting information clearly and effectively is a key skill in getting your message across. Today, presentation skills are required in almost every field, and most of us are required to give presentations on occasions. While some people take this in their stride, others find it much more challenging.

It is, however, possible to improve your presentation skills with a bit of work.
There are different types of presentations, but they're all presentations. There are any number of occasions when you may be asked to speak in public or to a group of people. They include:

- Presenting or making a speech at a conference or event.
- Objecting to a planning proposal at a council meeting.
- Making a speech at a wedding.
- Proposing a vote of thanks to someone at a club or society.
- On behalf of a team, saying goodbye and presenting a gift to a colleague who is leaving.
- Seeking investment or a loan to help you set up a new business.

These can all be considered presentations.
They do not, however, all require the same approach. You would not, for example, use PowerPoint to thank a colleague who was leaving. It would be unusual (though it has been done) to use it in a speech at a wedding. However, a conference audience would be somewhat surprised NOT to see slides projected onto a screen.
It follows, therefore, that there is no single set of rules that apply to all presentations. There are, however, some things that every presentation opportunity has in common. These include:

- **You will present better if you have prepared effectively**. This does NOT necessarily mean that you have written out your speech verbatim and rehearsed it until you know it off by heart—although that might work for some people. It does, however, mean that you have to be confident that you are saying the right thing, in the right way, to the right people.
- **You need to be clear about your audience and your message**. Every presentation will be better if you have clearly considered the message that you want or need to convey, and how best to convey it to your audience. These two pieces of information drive your style, structure, content, and use of visual aids.
- **You must never overrun your allocated time**. In other words, don't outstay your welcome. Almost every speech or presentation is better if it is shorter. Nobody minds going for coffee early or finishing before they expected to do so. Everybody minds being held up.
- **Generally speaking, your audience starts on your side.** As a rule, your audience is there (more or less) voluntarily. They have chosen to listen to you, and they want to enjoy your presentation. The occasion is yours to lose.

When you present, you are in charge of the room. The audience has effectively handed you

control and is sitting back waiting for you to do something. You may have prepared a specific talk, but if you see that isn't working, you can always change it. You are, after all, the expert. You can, for example:

- Skip through some slides to a section that they may find more interesting;
- Ask your audience whether there is particular information that they were expecting that you are not providing;
- Suggest that everyone looks a bit sleepy, and maybe it would be better to start questions early, or have a discussion; or
- Ask the audience at the start of the presentation what they are expecting and what they want you to cover. That way, you can tailor the presentation to fit their expectations.

Just as when you are facilitating, you want to help your audience get the most out of your presentation. The best way to do that is to accept feedback—which may include smiles, nods of interest, or people getting their phones out.

Check your progress:

1. What are some ways that will help you prepare for a telephone-interview well?

Ans._____

2. How a topic-based GD is different from a case-study based GD?

Ans._____

3. What are the essentials of a good presentation?

Ans._____

3.6 SUMMING IT UP

Speaking skills are the skills that give us the ability to communicate effectively. These skills allow the speaker, to convey his message in a passionate, thoughtful, and convincing manner. Speaking skills also help to assure that one won't be misunderstood by those who are listening.

Asking questions, making requests and suggestions are an important part of speaking skills. Expressing greetings, apologies and gratitude are an inherent part of efficient speaking skills. These skills allow the speaker to communicate effectively while interacting in a business or social setup.

Participation in group discussions, presentation skills and the ability to face job interviews confidently reflect the speaking skills of the person concerned.

3.7 Further Reading

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• Sharma, R.C. and Krishna Mohan. Business Correspondence and Report Writing. Delhi: McGraw, 2013.

3.8 QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

Q1. What is the importance of speaking skills in communication?

Q2. What is the difference between open and closed questions?

Q3. What should be kept in mind while making requests and questions?

Q4. What could be the various forms of greetings in formal and informal situations?

Q5. When and why should a formal apology be offered?

Q6. Why is it necessary to express gratitude?

Q7. Name some different formats of job interviews.

Q8. How can you prepare well for a group discussion?

Q9. What should you do to make a viable presentation?

Section – B

BACHELOR OF COMPUTER APPLICATIONS (BCA)

Semester-I

BCS-2-01T: BASIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS

MODULE IV - READING COMPREHENSION

STRUCTURE:

4.0 OBJECTIVES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.2 GENERAL REASONS FOR READING

4.3 FACTORS AFFECTING READING EFFICIENCY:

4.4 READING PROCESS

4.5 READING DIFFERENT TYPES OF TEXTS

4.6 KWL READING STRATEGY

4.7 TYPES OR GEARS OF READING

4.8 SQ3R APPROACH

4.9 VISUAL REGRESSION AND VISUAL WANDERING

4.10 TECHNIQUES FOR IMPROVING RETENTION

4.11 LET'S SUM UP

4.12 QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

4.13 REFERENCES

4.0 OBJECTIVES:

After studying this unit, students will be able to:

- State the process of Reading;
- Explain the reading of different texts types;
- Describe different types of reading;
- Understand the techniques of improving Retention;
- Describe the SQ3R Approach;
- Understand the difference between visual regression and visual wandering.

4.1 INTRODUCTION:

The four skills of communication are reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Though each skill has its own importance, efficiency in one is dependent upon and also affects the efficiency

in the other. We begin our day by picking up the newspaper and reading the headlines. During the day we read our emails, letters, other books and magazines. While going on the road, we read banners and advertisements on the boards, and before going to bed we read our prayers. Knowingly or unknowingly we spend a lot of time on reading. Executives working in business, industrial, organisations depend daily on the information contained in the official manuals, newspapers, magazines, books, journals, letters, business reports, legislations and office orders. The success of any organisation depends upon its executive's ability to read and understand the material quickly and adequately. It is important to note that one must read efficiently so as to understand and retain the studied material for a longer period. At the same time, after knowing how to read efficiently, retention can be improved by sharpening the skills of reading.

Reading as a part of our daily life, expands the horizons of our awareness. It makes us liberated. The more we read, the freer we become. It is an indispensible activity that we perform consciously or unconsciously daily. We should, of course, read regularly. And then we should talk about our reading, which helps us to better understand what we have read and this enriches us.

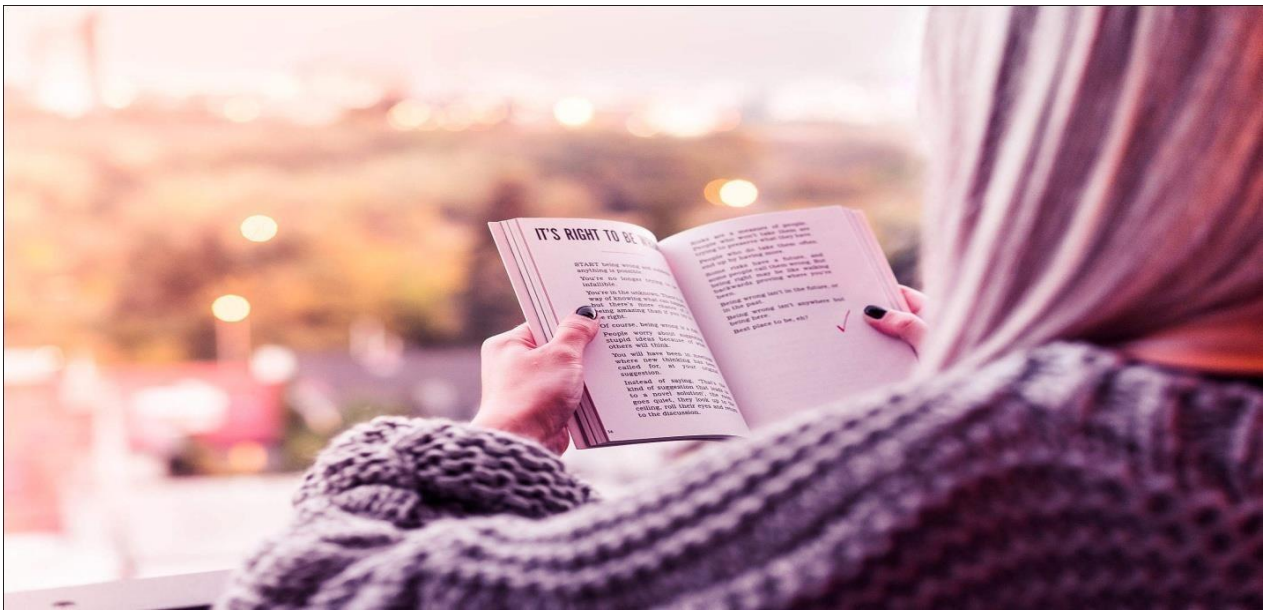
Definition:

Reading is a process of meaning making from a print, usually visual, involving the identification of the symbols or signs or decoding, word recognition, comprehension and interpretation in a fluent manner, based on background knowledge.
Valid reading assessments, therefore, evaluate students' ability to apply their knowledge, skills and strategies to reading situations that are representative of those they encounter in their daily lives.

4.2 GENERAL REASONS FOR READING:

Everyone has a different reason for reading. It may be for information, literary pleasure, literary experience, for growth, for learning, for responding, for enquiry, etc. People read, think and use text's content depending on the nature of text and their requirement. It can be explained in the following ways:
1. Reading for growth: More a person reads, more he grows. The habit of reading is necessary for managing the world around us practically. It is the transmission of ideas, facts, feelings and decisions from the mind and the soul of an author to the mind and soul of the reader. So reading is growth, moral development, and enrichment.

2. When reading is done for Literary Experience: The reader generally reads articles, novels, short stories, poems, plays and essays, and indulges into exploration of the human condition and the interplay among events, emotions and possibilities in the texts. The reader attempts to know what and how the writer might write in these specific genres and forming expectations of how the text will be organized. He is able to guess how the writer explores or uncovers experiences with a feeling of empathy. So, the reader in this way gains a lot of different situational experiences after reading the text.



(https://picjumbo.com/reading-a-book-free-photo/)

3. Reading for responding: Reading acts as a stimulus to images memories and in the identification of fresh and creative thoughts. Reading contributes to the development of values in life. It generates reassurance and makes people achieve experience and knowledge. It also injects curiosity about and zest for living, and develops compassion and courage in a person's personality. Reading, like thinking or problem-solving, occurs always in some context. The cognitive processes involved in reading are those of assimilation and accommodation.

4. Reading for learning: In conducting the reading as an enquiry, a person gathers and processes information from the text. He or she should raise questions on the text and develop hypothesis while going through the pages. Also one should test and evaluate the validity of findings obtained through reading. The reader must program his reading, selecting the text, raising questions, drawing inferences and reaching conclusions.

5. Reading for Information: For this kind of reading, the readers usually look for articles, chapters, entries in magazines, newspapers, textbooks, encyclopedias and catalogs, or maybe entire books on the required topics.

6. Reading to Perform a Task: This involves reading documents such as bus or train schedules, directions for games, classroom and laboratory procedures, tax or insurance forms, recipes, voter registration materials, maps, referenda, consumer warranties and office memos. It requires understanding of the purposes and structure of documents which guide the selection, understanding and application of information.

4.3 FACTORS AFFECTING READING EFFICIENCY:

The factors which affect reading speed, comprehension ability and overall reading efficiency of a person have been observed to vary from one person to another. Though the list of these factors may be very exhaustive, some of the factors are listed below:

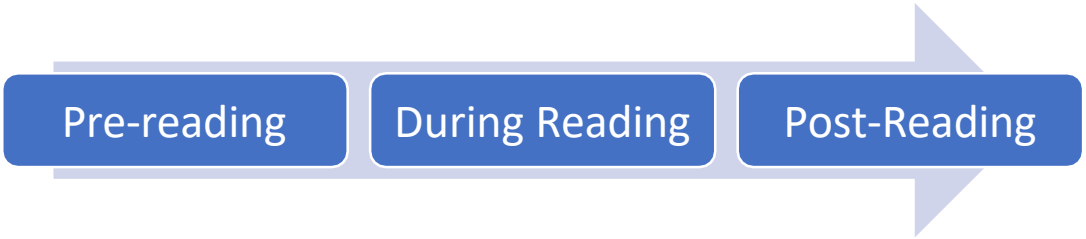
- Educational background: A well educated person may have a higher reading efficiency than one who is illiterate.
- Physical ability: Sometimes some physical defects in a person may hinder his efficiency to read and comprehend.
- Mental ability: People have different mental abilities. While some are born intellectual others acquire intelligence through their efforts. A higher mental capability will definitely lead to a better reading efficiency and retention.
- Interest: If the reader finds reading material interesting he will definitely read it faster understand it and retain it for a longer time. On the other hand, if the reading material is boring or not of interest to the reader, his efficiency will be hindered accordingly.
- Practice: Reading speed is a by product of practice and time spent on reading. Avid readers enhance their reading skills by stepping up their reading. It is rightly said 'practice makes a man perfect'.

Check Your Progress:

- Define reading.
- How does educational background affect reading comprehension?

4.4 READING PROCESS:

The process of reading involve: pre-reading state, during-reading and post-reading stages. These have different situations, different methods, and different purposes:



Pre-reading or Deciding the Purpose:

As it is the initial stage, the reader begins to activate prior knowledge, followed by selecting and previewing of the texts, and deciding the purpose. Then he puts up certain questions while choosing the text. A variety of strategies like KWL, Anticipation Guide, Pre-read Prep, questioning, etc. can be applied to activate this critical reading process. The best way is to start critical reading using the skimming method covering the pages you plan to read and get a general idea out of it. Look at section headings, topic sentences and chapter titles to formulate some ideas about what the author is going to address in the text. This step allows the students to contemplate about the ways the chosen text might connect to self, text, and world.

During Reading or Gaining an access:

This is the stage when the reading has actually started and so now it is expected that the reader is constantly putting up questions, justifying and making predictions. Here the "Think Aloud", method proves to be quite helpful. Taking the time to make annotations or notes about the text or in response to the text while reading it, is another important technique. After a lot of practice and repetition of the process in a large group, readers become habitual of this process themselves. Another helpful technique is the use of sticky notes to mark content which they find really simple and easy to understand, content which they find difficult to understand, and of course content which brings forth "burning questions."
As you read, in addition to annotations, make a working outline, keeping in mind the ideas you noted in your pre-reading. The reader will be able to understand not only structure, but also observe how the argument is formulated. So as said earlier, repetition and practice makes the students effective critical readers.

Post reading or Justification or Confirming the predictions made in the previous stage:

While writing down the summary of a text one should review the purpose of the reading conducted by him, the author's argument/point of view, the organizational logic and structure, key concepts used by the author, and material covered. Also, consider in your summary how the reading connects back to the lecture, discussion or lab work you have done for the class. Now the reader has read a lot and comprehended the content which confirms his or her predictions, questions, thoughts and some non-verbal sounds "ah ha's". Here, discussions, rewriting, and retelling prove beneficial. When he re-reads the same content, this enables him to validate its meaning and connections to him and to the writer. Thorough and repeated reading process enable readers to better develop their writer styles and strengthens the vocabulary.

Sticky notes: According to Wikipedia, a 'sticky note is a small piece of paper with a re-adherable strip of glue on its back, made for temporarily attaching notes to documents and other surfaces. A low-tack pressure-sensitive adhesive allows the notes to be easily attached, removed and even re-posted elsewhere without leaving residue. Originally small yellow squares, Post-it Notes and related products are available in various colors, shapes, sizes and adhesive strengths'.



(https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sticky_Note_Therapy_(31135998640)_(cropped2).jg)

Think Aloud – In literacy instruction, this is a meta-cognitive technique or strategy in which the teacher verbalizes aloud while reading a selection orally, thus modeling the process of comprehension (vocabulary, connections, questions, etc.). An extension of the think aloud is the recording of the spoken thoughts, thereby providing insight into the thinking processes involved in writing.

4.5 READING DIFFERENT TYPES OF TEXTS:

There is a wide variety of reading material available if one has an intention of reading. Choosing the right kind of reading material depends on the mood of the person, need of the hour i.e., whether the reader wants to read for pleasure, or to gain information or the purpose is to conduct an in-depth research. So, one can choose any kind of text depending upon the availability. So we need to understand, first of all, the different types of texts available and their distinct characteristics. Following are some of them:

Discussion Texts:

Sometimes, the purpose of the reader may be to participate in a discussion. So as to explore more points and information and to participate in the discussion effectively, the reader will have to make choice from discussion texts. Discussion texts help in providing some background detailed information on the topic. More similar texts on the same topic can be read which will help the reader in contributing in the discussion in an impressive way. In these texts, writers provide straightforward information and make use of diagrams and charts to support their arguments. Usually these are written in the present tense.

Explanatory Texts:

These texts concentrate on the causes and reasons of why certain things happen and so they help providing more than just the straightforward information. Explanatory texts generally begin with a simple statement introducing the topic needed to be explored, for example, "Weather these days is changing frequently." Then the various steps are explained one by one. Time connectives such as *first, after, then, next, finally* etc. are used. To elaborate on the topic, diagrams, flowcharts, illustrations, etc., are used. Sentences have direct addressing e.g. "You'll be surprised to learn…", etc.

Instructional or Procedural Texts:

Instructions or procedural texts throw light on the rules or processes to be followed for doing something specific. Like, in the case of instructions about games, household appliances, processes or in recipes, etc. There are lot of similarities between explanatory texts and instructional / procedural texts but the only difference is that instructions or procedural texts tell you what to do, while explanatory texts describe something. Process is described step-by-step using bullet points, numbers, etc. Sometimes, the diagrams or illustrations may replace the written text entirely.

Persuasion Texts:

As the title indicates, the main aim of persuasive type texts is to convince the reader about the possible merits of adopting a particular viewpoint or taking a specific course of action. Usually, starting with an effective opening statement, or thesis statement, persuasive texts start by summing up the viewpoint to be presented. The paragraphs are used to organize, present, and elaborate on different aspects of the topic. A closing statement then restates and reinforces the original conclusion of the text. These texts use facts and evidence to support arguments. These texts move from a general point to specific points.

Literary Text Types:

Another important category is text or genre types in literature. Understanding the various aspects of the different writing genres helps the reader to steer his way to gain such ability to write something very useful and effective. Moreover, this helps the reader in making his own text compositions. He will also be able to organize his own work as per his need.

Readers should be given an exposure to as many different genres as possible, and of course, opportunities to explore how these text types operate. Following are the types of literary texts:

Poetry: Poetry is written in different forms, and sometimes, these forms come with their own specific purposes. Poetry is usually written to entertain, to inform, to amuse, to share knowledge, pass on culture, to advance culture, etc. Like, the purpose of writing elegies is to either praise or mourn a person, and limericks, on the other hand are crafted to amuse readers. The different types of poetry make use of a variety of different structures, metre, rhythm, rhyme schemes, rhythmical patterns, grammatical patterns, and line and stanza length. Language in poetry usually appeals to the readers. Imagery and literary devices are used to control the readers' mind.

Narrative: Narration of any incident or happening or anything which may be told like a story is the basic idea about narratives. Like, myths narrate about the natural phenomena and legends, essentially, passing on the cultural beliefs. These generally entertain and inform readers and allow the writers to express themselves creatively and imaginatively. Some more narrative text types are myths, fables, traditional tales, novels, short stories, etc, almost all of these begin by establishing setting and introducing characters, followed by conflicts, problems or complications related to the narrated events. Climax or a resolution is achieved at the end of the story. These are usually the most interesting of all the above mentioned text types, and usually the plot keeps the reader glued to it till the end.

Drama: Drama is a means of social commentary, communicating culture, amusing, and informing at the same time. It is quite similar to narrative storytelling. But drama narrates the story through enacting it on the stage, involving dialogue. Audience or the reader plays an important role here. Extensive use of dialogue and occasional stage directions are some essential elements of a dramatic text type. These are also source of information, and readers find them quite interesting.

Check your progress:

Fill in the blanks:

- ..... is the initial stage, when the reader begins to activate prior knowledge.
- ..... is a small piece of paper with a re-adherable strip of glue on its back.
- ..... texts throw light on the rules or processes to be followed for doing something specific.

4.6 K-W-L READING STRATEGY:

KWL is most often used with expository reading materials, such as classroom textbooks, research articles, and journalistic pieces. The K-W-L strategy is a useful tool for teaching reading comprehension. The technique ties together students' prior knowledge, their desire to learn more, and the conclusions of their learning.



(https://unsplash.com/photos/XECZHb6NoFo)

Importance of the K-W-L Strategy

KWL is an acronym for 'know-want to know-learn', found to be an effective reading strategy. As per this strategy charts are created and labeled- K (Know), W (Want to know), and L (learned). On the chart with alphabet K, students will list everything they know about the topic of discussion, based on their previous knowledge. On the chart with the letter W, students are supposed to enlist what they want to know about the topic. These two steps should be performed before the reader starts reading. Under the letter L, students make list of everything that they have learnt after completing their reading. This strategy is useful for individuals as well as in group setting.

It is an instructional technique helpful in improving reading comprehension among the struggling readers. It also improves a student's ability to remember the material. This method is easy to apply and after usage brings forth desired positive results among the readers. The applicants are able to learn efficiently and have been observed to retain. Teachers are able to

activate the students' prior knowledge about a certain topic. This method also promotes research, active reading, and enhances learning. It is basically, a pre-reading strategy. KWL also helps to:

- **Promotes Active Learning** – Researches have shown that students are able to better comprehend topics and remember them if they actively participate in the activity. KWL method results into active learning by allowing teachers to assess their students' learning levels.
- **Encourages Academic Success** –As the participants are actively involved, they are more connected to the class and the subject matter. Interaction of such students with classmates and the teacher increases their chance for academic success.

4.7 TYPES OR GEARS OF READING:

For reading well it is essential to adopt the right approach to reading a text. Each piece of material decides the approach to be followed. The sense of good reading is to be flexible. The term flexibility in approach means first to decide the speed for a material beforehand, secondly, to vary the speed according to the changes encountered. The approach to reading is with regard to using gears like we do while driving a car. We change gears as we speed up. There are four gears for the sake of classification of reading which are as followed:

- Study reading: This approach is applied when the text is very difficult or 100% comprehension of the text is required. Here the reading speed ranges from 50- 200 words per minute. This is called study reading. Sometimes, the same material is read more than once. This gear is called studying also. It also depends on the purpose of memorizing the text. Such a text is to be read logically considering the problems in the text and tackling then so that the mind finds it easy to assimilate. This is a slow but highly powerful gear of reading with lots of comprehension.
- Slow reading: This type of reading ranges from 200 - 300 words per minute. It is the normal reading speed generally followed by all. This reading is also specifically used when the text is difficult. Normally, it is considered to be an inefficient reading. In this type of reading, word by word progress or line by line progress is done on the basis of the text.
- Rapid reading: The speed in this gear of reading is between 300 to 800 words per minute. This is considered to be the most efficient and the most useful gear or approach of reading, and here one has to practice hard to maintain the speed of reading. The efficiency of reading does not imply understanding each and every word in the very first reading of the text. This approach is used for the texts of average difficulty level, with only 60 to 70% comprehension. However, for efficient rapid reading one needs to do regular breathing exercises.
- Skimming: This is the fastest gear. It is a reading tool or approach for a busy reader. Skimming does not involve reading every word. In this method we intentionally miss words, skip sentences, and sometimes paragraphs too. The speed in skimming ranges from 600-60 thousand words per minute. The comprehension value of this approach is

obviously very less. It is mostly used for getting an overall view of a passage or for finding some specific information from a text. It neither involves line by line progress nor implies reading words in block. Further there are three types of skimming, namely, scanning, sampling and locating:

a) Scanning: In scanning we do not move eyes rhythmically in blocks of words across the page of the text. We allow our eyes to wander around the page without regular fixations. Our eyes move wherever they like to move trying to pick out important words. Scanning may begin from the top or the bottom of the page unlike the regular reading practice beginning at the top. In scanning that begins at the bottom, the reader gradually moves upwards. In scanning one can move his or her eyes diagonally across the page or sometimes even erratically all over the page. The important requisite in scanning is that the reader should not make line by line progress. It doesn't matter if some parts of the text are missed. In this approach of reading we not only try to see a general impression of the text we read but also do it as quickly as we can. We can practice skimming by taking a newspaper article, setting a time limit.

b) Sampling: Sampling differs from scanning in technique and approach but achieves a similar result. In sampling the first step is to choose certain parts of the text that possibly give an outline picture of the whole text. We may, for example, see the introductory paragraph of a text for reading or may even start reading the first line of each paragraph of the written material. For sampling a book we may choose the introduction and conclusion for reading and look at all the chapter headings. Sampling is a more structured way of reading than scanning to achieve the same result that is the general outline of a text.

c) Locating: Locating is to find some material in a text. If we require certain information from a document it is futile to waste time reading it all. We can use the deduction to discover what we require. We do locating using the index given at the end of a book or through the table of contents given at the beginning and then we note the way the sections are headed. Practicing it regularly one may locate details, find relevant parts and extract information from a mass of text faster each time. Skimming is, therefore, a very fast mode of reading but, indeed, it has a very poor capacity of comprehension and retention of a text. However, if combined with other methods it may prove to be a useful aid to understanding. It is a poor technique on its own unless it is used to obtain specific information or general understanding. However, for reading a great deal of material this method proves useful.

- Labelling: Labelling is also a kind of reading technique in which we group letters and label them for understanding. Using this method we try to remember that each letter is used to conceive a text. The words also make us recall the letters. In labelling we also recognise a series of facts in a paragraph or text relating to the same aspect of a subject. Each level reminds of the facts that come under it. Labelling helps as in framing questions, building a picture, or structure of the text. We also help ourselves in retention through labelling and further, the retention is reinforced by recalling the labels at regular intervals of reading.

Check Your Progress:

- Give full form of K-W-L reading strategy.
- Define skimming.
- Write a short note on how scanning and sampling are different?

4.8 SQ3R APPROACH:

SQ3R stands for **Survey, Question, Read, Recall** and **Review**.
It is a proven technique to sharpen text book reading skills. In college you will frequently be assigned multiple chapters for several different courses in books that can be quite complicated. SQ3R approach makes reading purposeful and meaningful so that you use your time most effectively. Here's how this strategy works.

Survey: Survey means to get an idea of what the chapter is about by reviewing the highlights. This can be done by:

- reading the title headings and subheadings
- taking notes of words that are *italics* or bold
- looking at charts, graphs, pictures, maps and other visual material
- reading captions
- reading the beginning and the end of the chapter

Question: As you survey the text ask a question for each section. Ask what, why, how, when, who, and where questions as they relate to the content. Here's how you can create questions:

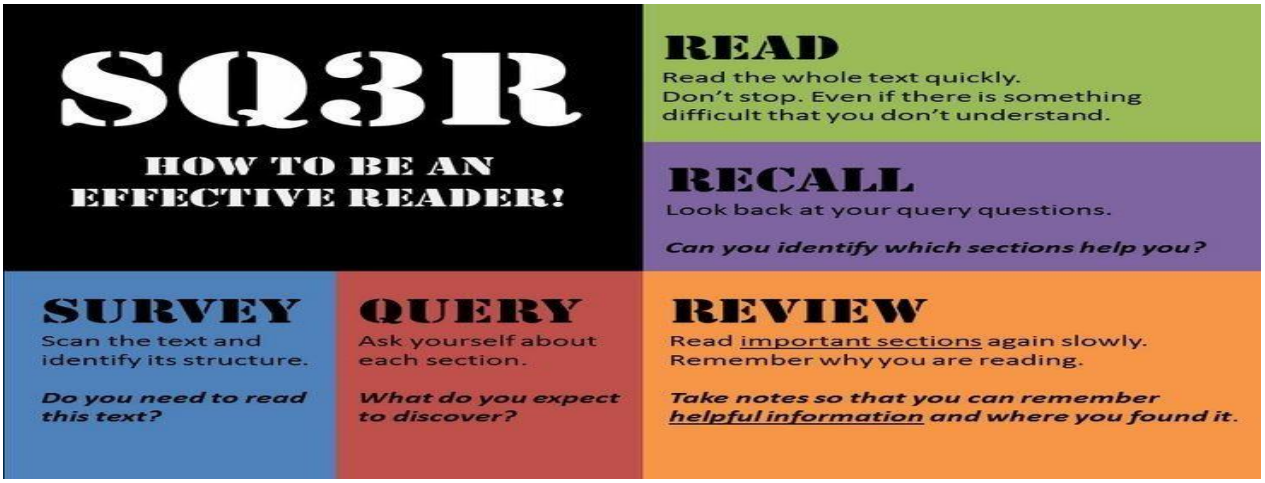
- Turn the title headings and subheadings into questions.
- Rewrite the question at the end of the chapter or after each subheading in your own words.

Write down your questions. Questions help you pay attention, understand the text better, and recall the information more easily later on.

Read: Read one section of a chapter at a time actively looking for an answer to your question for that section. Pay attention to bold and italics in the text that authors use to mark important points. Be sure to review everything in the section, including tables, graphs and illustrations as these features can communicate the idea more powerfully than written text.

Recite: At the end of each section look up from the text, and in your own words recite and answer to your question for that section. Then write down your answer. Be sure to provide examples that support it.
Now repeat the question, read and recite steps for each section of the chapter. First ask question for the next section. Then read to find the answer. Finally, decide the answer in your own words and write it down. The written questions and answers will help you study in the future.

Review: After completing each chapter and reading assignment, review your notes. Identify the main points of the reading by looking for the most important idea in each section. Recite or write a brief summary of the chapter or assignment.
Review your study notes every week to help you remember the information. When it's time to study for your tests you will find you have created an invaluable guide. So,



(https://miuc.org/sq3r-study-method/)

4.9 VISUAL REGRESSION AND VISUAL WANDERING:

Visual regression is reading backward implying letting the eyes go back to the words and phrases previously read in the printed page. Contrary to this an efficient reader always makes a forward movement. Visual regression not only reduces the speed but also disrupts the smooth and continuous flow of meaning and interferes with one's comprehension. To get rid of this habit one may take the help of a 3 inch by 5 inch blank card placed on the top of the line of the written text. As a line is read it is concealed. This would force us to enhance our concentration and practice to understand the words or phrases when read simultaneously increasing the eye span so that fixations provide the appropriate clue to have the brain do the necessary mental activity and comprehend that. This blank card increases our speed of reading.
Visual regression apart from being due to a bad habit and elusive writing also occurs due to boredom and tiredness. Visual wandering on the other hand means drifting from the actual word for a line being read to something else on the printed page. It occurs because the reader may find something or some word more interesting or strange and unconventional as per his expectation. This may also occur because of elusiveness of the words and expressions resulting in boredom. The reader may go to seek some relief elsewhere on the page. This could be a picture, a diagram, something written in bold fonts for impressions, or something in italics, or

any other calligraphic detail. Visual wandering brings discontinuities in perception and understanding causing a decrease in the pace of reading.

Check Your Progress:

Give one word for the following:

- Surveying, Questioning, Reading, Recalling and Reviewing to sharpen text book reading skills.
- Drifting from the actual word for a line being read to something else on the printed page.

4.10 TECHNIQUES FOR IMPROVING RETENTION:

Memory is the store house of our experiences and learning. It is true that all the learning cannot be stored forever. But some experiences and teachings remain forever in our memory. The following steps will improve the practical ability to retain information:

- Using memory aids: Acronyms and abbreviations can be used as effective devices for improving retention. For example 4 P's of marketing refer to product, price, place, and promotion, and SWOT in strategic management refers to strengths and weaknesses opportunities and threats.
- Deciding priorities of retention: Human mind has the capability to retain vast amount it of information. At the same time it is difficult to recall information from various layers of access. And the closer to the surface that information lies the easier it is to recall the same. For this the reader should decide his priorities of retention. Instead of retaining relevant information in his mind he should store and concentrate only on priority areas.
- Thinking: If the reader wants to retain reading material he must think about it. If one applies the mind with regard to significance of reading material its relationship with one's knowledge utility for future references, etc., will automatically contribute to his retention. Linking the reading material with some personal experiences and persons helps retain the same.
- Eye training: To become an efficient reader, eye training is an important requisite. Mind training is also important. Along with mind training we develop an appropriate strategy to get reading out of a written text, if we learn to use our mind while reading our eyes take care of themselves. For becoming efficient readers we must change ourselves into strategic readers who follow the appropriate system of reading to get the meaning out of the text.

- Reinforcing: Reinforcement means to concretize in the mind what has been read and learnt. This improves retention ability. A brief note should be prepared and periodical reviews of such notes should be done. After reading the speaker should speak to someone and explain in his own words what he has learnt. For improving the quality of repetitive input the materials read should be supplemented by audio visual lectures discussions, etc. The read information should be related with other material and should not be considered as an end only.
- Ensuring determination: It is rightly said where there is a will there is a way. A final set of procedures for retention involves the commitment to retain knowledge. While reading one gets a lot of information but he also keep only that piece of information which he intends to retain. If an individual does not have the will to retain, the retention is not possible.

4.11 LET'S SUM UP:

- Reading is one of the four communication skills.
- Various factors like educational qualification, interest, environment, etc., affect the reading efficiency of a person.
- Some of the basic techniques for improving retention are using memory aids; deciding priorities of retention, thinking and reinforcing.
- Visual regression is reading backward implying letting the eyes go back to the words and phrases previously read in the printed page. Contrary to this an efficient reader always makes a forward movement.
- KWL is an acronym for 'know-want to know-learn', found to be an effective reading strategy. As per this strategy charts are created and labelled- K (Know), W (Want to know), and L (learned).

4.12 EXERCISE QUESTIONS:

1. Throw light on the factors affecting reading.
2. How do visual regression and visual wandering affect reading?
3. Explain briefly the process of reading.
4. What are sticky notes?
5. What is the importance of KWL strategy?
6. Describe the SQ3R approach.
7. Define skimming and enlist its types.

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BACHELOR OF COMPUTER APPLICATIONS (BCA)

Semester-I

BCS-2-01T: BASIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS

MODULE V: EFFECTIVE WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

STRUCTURE

5.0 OBJECTIVES

5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.2 BENEFITS OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

5.3 WRITING TYPES

5.4 ELEMENTS OF A GOOD WRITING STYLE

5.5 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE WRITING

5.6 ART OF PARAGRAPH WRITING

5.7 NOTE MAKING

5.8 LET'S SUM UP

5.9 QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

5.10 REFERENCES

5.0 OBJECTIVES:

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- State the meaning of writing skills;
- Explain note making;
- Describe the elements of writing style;
- Understand the benefits of written communication; and
- Recognize the structure of paragraph writing.

5.1 INTRODUCTION:

Written communication is used to express all kinds of messages to share stories, note financial transactions, record history, imagine the future, to express love, hatred, humour or melancholy. Writing gives you access to knowledge. Learning to write must go along with learning to read because one reinforces the other. Writing is an act of recording. The word written becomes fixed. Depending on what it is written with, its mark can remain preserved for a very long time.

An effective piece of writing is a combination of accurate grammar, spelling, language, style, selection of words and need to write.

5.2 BENEFITS OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:

- Written communication is permanent. Once the words are down on paper they are saved for future reference.
- Written communication is easier to understand. Complex messages can easily be understood.
- Written communication can be composed in advance. You can take as much time as you want to draft a message.
- Written communication is less prone to errors. Since the message is drafted in advanced errors can be avoided.
- Written communication leaves a lasting impression. Visual representation leaves a lasting impression on the readers instead of oral representation.

5.3 WRITING TYPES:

- Narrative writing is written to narrate or relate any event, drama, story or dialogue.
- Descriptive writing is written to describe the cause and effect of a problem.
- Expository writing is used to create something new, attractive and unique.
- Argumentative or analytical writing is used to present arguments and opinions on specific issue.
- Impromptu writing is written for extempore topics in short length
- Research and term papers are written for knowledgeable and investigative writing.

5.4 ELEMENTS OF A GOOD WRITING STYLE:

Style in writing is the way we express ourselves in writing. Although there is not just one particular standard style, every writer follows a different one. Some of the key elements in an effective writing style are its simplicity, expression, readability, use of words, phrases, sentences, grammar, punctuation, and paragraphs for communicating facts and ideas clearly. Some more elements are elegance, content, organization and structure, etc. Good writing style always appeals the reader and keeps a reader's attention and interest intact. Good style communicates information effectively. The reader flows along with the writer seamlessly, from word to word, sentence to sentence, paragraph to paragraph, and one section of the paper to the next. On the contrary, poor writing style repels, bores and often confuses the reader. Following are some of the key points of effective writing style:

- Unity: Correct sentences with a regular plan.
- Coherence: Connection of the various parts of the sentences or ideas in a logical order.
- Variety: Same Idea in a variety of sentences.

EFFECTIVE WRITING SKILLS:

- SIMPLICITY
- USE OF LANGUAGE
- EXPRESSION
- CONTENT
- GRAMMAR AND PUNCTUATION
- CHOICE OF WORDS
- SENTENCES
- ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE
- HANDWRITING

- Economy: Limited number of words with complete idea.
- Proper selection: Appropriate words to make sentences.
- Sequence and ranking: Order of sentences according to their weightage.
- Simplicity: Choice of words to give a simple look to the sentences.

To be successful in career as well as any job or business, it is essential to develop effective writing skills. There are many aspects of writing which should be taken care of while writing anything effectively. Following are some of them:

a) Simplicity:
Most important feature of effective writing is to maintain simplicity in style, choice of words, content and presentation. Unnecessary complicated language should be avoided. The message to be delivered should be clear. Furthermore, the factual presentation of data should not be swamped with sophisticated, lengthy sentences. Avoid using unnecessary jargons. This confuses even the most informed reader. Ensure that your abbreviations are standardized. Sometimes, authors invent their own jargons to ease the pressure on writing things in full. Be cautious of confusing your reader.

b) Use of language:
Language is everything in writing. It is the soul of writing one's expression of feelings, be it formal or informal. Language should be such that it is able to convey the message in a straightforward way. It should be simple, clear, precise and easy to understand.

c) Expression:
Best expression can only be done through use of correct words and sentences, which are authors' own depicting his point of view. The statements should be concise and clear with lesser number of difficult words. Vocabulary should be formal and factual to make the idea clear.

d) Content: The content is expected to be a logical development of ideas from one section to another, and within each section. The material chosen to express ideas should be citing evidences in support of those ideas. The sentences and content should be relevant, objective and specific.
e) Grammar and Punctuation:

Grammar and punctuation give life and meaning to sentences through which the message is put forth. Accurate writing helps in accurate reading. Meaning will only be clear if appropriate punctuation marks like, full stop, comma, inverted comma, etc. are used at the right place. Hyphens should be used, where they affect the sense; they are also helpful in lists of adjectives, to show which belongs together. Fragmented, incomplete and irrelevant sentences should be avoided as much as possible. The rules of punctuation are easy to learn and apply.

f) Choice of words:
Choice of correct words is as important as other elements of effective writing style. Common and simple words should be used. Jargons and clichés should be avoided. Overworked words and repetition of words is also not advisable. Straightforward, relevant, and meaningful words convey the message in the best manner.

g) Sentences:
Sentences should be kept under control. There should be variety in sentence length and paragraph length. The sentences should preferably be not very long or very short. Always remember that the right selection and placement of words make a good sentence. Short sentences produce a clear, easily-to-read style for factual material. Information which needs to be considered and held in tension with other information is better given in longer sentences.

h) Handwriting:
Handwriting is to be taken care of while we are writing a message by our hands. Otherwise, these days typed letters are preferred. Handwriting should be legible, not very flowery and oversized. It gives a good first impression, if it is beautiful.

i) Organization and structure:
For a well-organized and structured piece of writing, it is advisable to understand first what has to be written. Different texts like, reports, papers, articles, books, etc., have different outlines. There should be an effective opening, with a supportive main body and a meaningful conclusion. There should be cohesion and logical connection among the sentences and paragraphs.

Check your progress:

Mark true or false:

- Written communication is permanent.
- Overworked words and repetition of words is advisable.
- Research and term papers are written for knowledgeable and investigative writing.

5.5 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE WRITING:

1. Cut the boring parts unless you are writing for personal reasons. You need to consider the attention of your readers. There is no point in writing content that is not useful, interesting or both.
2. Eliminate unnecessary words. Avoid using words like really, actually or extremely. They only distract the reader.
3. Write with passion. It's important to realise that unless you are excited about your writing no one else will be.
4. Keep it simple. It's more difficult to express yourself in the simplest possible manner. So keep your message short and simple.
5. Learn to thrive on criticism. Writing means putting yourself at the mercy of anonymous readers. Learn to make the most of the insults and distrust the praise.
6. Write all the time. The way you define yourself as a writer is that you write every time you have a free minute. Constant writing improves the quality of writing.
7. Write what you know. If you are confident of a topic you can think of writing. Otherwise it is better you stay away from writing. If you don't have an expertise. Reading and writing is the best way to develop oneself and put it on display.
8. Be unique. Your writing should be unique and should not replicate anyone's. Successful writing is all about trust and authority. It makes sense to write about your area of expertise.

5.6 ART OF PARAGRAPH WRITING:

Paragraph writing is also an art which requires a lot of practice. For any piece of writing to be impressive and meaningful, it must have a collection of paragraphs, with unity, cohesion and coherence. Paragraph is a collection of meaningful sentences with a single topic or idea. Paragraphs should have separate ideas. Every new paragraph takes the development of idea to the next level of meaning. With a change in paragraph, the reader expects a change in idea. To write an effective paragraph.

5.6.1 Structure of paragraphs:

There can be a variety of correct structures. It is important for a writer to understand where to use which structure. However, a commonly applicable structure is:

- Topic Sentence: This is the first sentence and it expresses the main point of the paragraph. It gives the paragraph a sense of direction.
- Supporting Sentences: These provide details that elaborate the main idea making use of examples, comparison, contrast, data, etc.
- Concluding Sentence: It is the last line of the paragraph, a rounding off, possibly by summarizing what has been said or drawing a logical conclusion from it.

5.6.2 Development of the paragraph:

A. Unity: Sense of unity if maintained in a paragraph means there is a connection or link of the ideas, as per the main topic of the paragraph. All the sentences speak about the main idea

of the paragraph and the reader flows with the writer while reading it. The momentum of reading remains the same till the end.

B. Coherence: This means that the information provided in the sentences should be organized in a logical manner, and plot or the idea is developing logically.

C. Topic Sentence: Topic sentence is the first sentence, expressing the main idea of the paragraph. It, in the beginning itself, conveys what the writer has in his mind. It should be carefully structured, with most suitable words. If the topic sentence is not impressive, sometimes, the reader is not motivated enough to read further. So it's a means of gripping the attention of the reader.

D. Development of the ideas: Every sentence or an idea, be it the topic sentence, the middle part of the paragraph or the concluding part. All must be effectively explained with the help of examples and evidences. The progress of ideas in proper sequence actually means development of the paragraph. Selected words should be relevant and easy to understand. Length of sentences must also be taken care of, keeping them not very long or short.

5.7 NOTE MAKING:

Making notes is one of the most essential tasks in the life of a student or a professional that can pave his way to success. If a student makes notes in time, can easily refer to them at the time of need or to recall the things done earlier. Notes keep a record of the reading and keep one focused on the ideas once developed on a particular topic. Note making requires a proper format to jot down the material read to avoid the confusion in the future reference. These should be legibly prepared for better understanding.

5.7.1 Note Making from reading:

There are different techniques in which notes can be made from reading. Some of these are as followed:

Summary: Summarize if you are a writer and want to store large amount of data. It broadly means that brief account of the main points should be given while making notes on any topic for stop it needs a great alertness on the part of the reader as he should be aware enough to decide what material to be deleted and what to be included. It gives him a very precise form of the piece he reads. This way the art of the précis writing is also inculcated in the writer while preparing the notes.

Paraphrasing: This actually means to restate the material in our own words. In other words we can say that it is simplifying the text and reproducing it. This does not require the exact wording of the attended material. In making a paraphrase of a given text the reader may have his or her own sequence as he or she understands the text after reading it. While paraphrasing we can abridge the examples. An important thing to be followed by the writer while paraphrasing is that he should not go out of track while simplifying the text. Rather he should explain the confusing and ambiguous expressions. He too can rearrange the text in terms of an easily understandable sequence, initiating the figure of speech, the technical jargon, clichés, idiomatic expressions and proverbs. An important thing to note here is that paraphrasing does not need a title as is required in Précis writing.

Quotation: The short word we used for this is “to quote”. It means to note down somebody’s comments, remarks, and sayings as it is in our notes. Here, we are every obligatory to use the punctuation marks. No change can be made while quoting these sentences, and so called quotations. We believe that some sentences or passages would make the paper more authentic and have more influence by their effective addition to the paper.

Check Your Progress:

- Define a paragraph.
- What is the importance of topic sentence in a paragraph?
- Define note making.

5.7.2 Some other ways of making notes:

Note making while listening: It is a very well way of noting down all the important points of the listener. Fresh information is noted while the listener is listening. So the chances of dropping anything important are very low.

Notes from memory: Here you need to observe both verbal and nonverbal communication of the speaker and to feed everything he speaks in your memory. It allows you to focus fully on the information being conveyed, but sometimes, that can result in dropping many important points from the mind.

Recording: This is one of the best methods for future reference. Many sources are available in the market to record the lectures. Through this way correctness of the message is ensured as it is recorded when the speaker is speaking. Though it takes time to listen again everything that surely lessens our interest too in the same topic, but still it promotes accuracy. Another advantage of this method is that the listener need not fully concentrate on the speaker while he's speaking.

Photocopying: This is the way of getting as it is information of the original text. Doubtlessly, the time and energy of the listener are saved here. But on the other hand, this is an expensive way of storing information as it causes wastage of papers.

Highlighting: This is the way you can adopt while reading text and making notes of it. Highlighting or underlining the important points that can be reviewed quickly gives assistance in revising the text at a glance. But the major drawback of this is that one needs to possess our own material as underlining or highlighting of the things in the borrowed books cannot be afforded.

5.7.3 Tips for Effective Note Making:

- Shapes, symbols, signs and abbreviations save time. While making notes in a business meeting writing a triangle against the list may simply mean that the list is in increasing order. Do's and don'ts categories can be shown with a tick or a cross symbol. A common code can be given to a group of similar things. This saves time, otherwise wasted in mere repetition.

- Change the size of the word. In the modern business scenario the shortage of time is one common challenge. Changing the font size to increase extremely big or minutely small, slanting or bold indicates emphasis or importance on a particular point in a meeting. Later on retaining for a good long period and to maintain the accuracy of these can be changed too with the right words and phrases.

- Making use of colours in note making. Using colour codes while making notes saves time and energy. Recognising colours is one of the appreciative trait of human beings. One can make a colour code for denoting certain tasks as green colour can be used to indicate completion, yellow in process or still to be completed, red colour can show the problems in completion or the impossibility of completing any task.

- Altering the position or location while writing also indicates the importance of the statement. Writing sometimes on the top, at the extreme left, or in the centre of the page, indicates the nature of the statement if it is a title or what.

5.8 LET'S SUM UP:

- Written communication has come to acquire great significance in the lives of individuals as well as businessmen.
- Written communication serves as a ready reference and is used for mass communication. It serves a legal defence and allows scope for change and modification of message before sending it.
- Paragraph writing is also an art which requires a lot of practice. For any piece of writing to be impressive and meaningful, it must have a collection of paragraphs, with unity, cohesion and coherence. Paragraph is a collection of meaningful sentences with a single topic or idea.
- Making notes keeps a record of the reading and listening by keeping one focused on the ideas once developed on a particular topic. Summarising and paraphrasing are some useful methods.

5.9 QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE:

1. Enlist some benefits of written communication.
2. Describe the most essential elements of an effective writing style.
3. Explain the structure of a paragraph.
4. Write a paragraph on the following:

    a) Mobile technology
    b) Global warming
    c) Deforestation
    d) Social distancing

5. Differentiate between summary and paraphrasing.
6. Why do we make notes?
7. Throw light on some of the important tips for making notes.

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BACHELOR OF COMPUTER APPLICATIONS (BCA)

Semester-I

BCS-2-01T: BASIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS

MODULE VI: BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE

STRUCTURE:

6.0 OBJECTIVES

6.1 INTRODUCTION

6.2 ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

6.3 PARTS/ ELEMENTS OF BUSINESS LETTERS

6.4 TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

6.5 LAYOUT OF BUSINESS LETTERS

6.6 RESUME AND CURRICULUM VITAE

6.7 EMAIL

6.8 INTRODUCTION TO REPORT WRITING

6.9 KINDS OF REPORTS

6.10 CHARACTERISTICS OF BUSINESS REPORTS

6.11 ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE REPORT WRITING

6.12 PURPOSE OF BUSINESS REPORTS

6.13 PLANNING FOR A REPORT

6.14 OUTLINE OF A REPORT

6.15 TYPES OF ILLUSTRATIONS

6.16 MEETINGS: NOTICE, AGENDA, MINUTES

6.17 LET'S SUM UP

6.18 QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

6.19 REFERENCES

6.0 OBJECTIVES:

After studying business correspondence, you will be able to:

- State the meaning of business correspondence;
- Explain the importance of business correspondence;
- Describe the essential qualities of a good business letter;
- Identify the various parts of a business letter;
- Recognize the different types of letters used in business;
- State the meaning of Report writing;
- Explain the kinds of Reports;
- Describe the elements of effective Report writing;
- Understand the purpose of writing reports; and
- Recognize the different types of Illustrations.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Correspondence is communicating through the use of all sorts of letters as per the need of the communicator. We express our feelings, thoughts, etc., to our friends and relatives through letters that may be called personal correspondence. Letters form the most important form of business correspondence. There are various kinds of letters that go in and out of a business house. There are different occasions and contexts for which letters are written.

In the business world, there are various types of written communication. A businessman writes and receives letters in his day to-day transactions, which may be called business correspondence. It means a written communication between two parties. They exchange letters with supplier of goods. Customers may write letters to businessmen seeking information about availability of goods, price, quality, sample, etc., or place order for purchase of goods. So, business letters are a means through which communicator's views are expressed and ideas or information is communicated in writing in the process of business activities.

6.2 ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF A GOOD BUSINESS LETTER

A letter should serve the purpose for which it is written. If a businessman writes a letter to the supplier for purchase of goods, the letter should contain all the relevant information relating to the product, mode of payment, packaging, transportation of goods, etc., clearly and specifically. Then there will not be any kind of confusion and delay in getting the goods. Here, the quality of paper used in the letter, its size, colour, etc., should also be kept in mind because it creates a positive impression in the mind of the receiver. Following are two essential qualities of a good business letter:

- Internal Qualities; and
- External Qualities

a) Internal Qualities - The internal qualities of a good business letter refer to the quality of language, its presentation, etc. These facilitate quick processing of the request and that leads to prompt action. Following are the various inner qualities of a good business

letter:

Clarity: Both in thought and expression we have to be clear in our correspondence. He should therefore be clear about what information we are seeking or wishing to give. All the facts and figures must be expressed in the simplest language. The language should be clear, concise, so that the receiver understands the message immediately, easily and correctly. Ambiguous language creates confusion. The letter will serve the purpose only when the receiver understands it in the same manner in which it is intended by the sender.

Simplicity: Business letters will be effective and easily understood if there is simplicity of language. Keeping in mind the formality to be maintained, the message should be conveyed in such a way that the receiver instantly understands the appeal. It is advisable to use a polite personal touch which is more effective than the harsh, straightforward, stiff, detached style generally associated with business correspondence. Uncommon, unfamiliar, and difficult words should not be used.

Coherence: Effective letters present information in a logical order by careful use of linking devices, use of pronouns that are reference words, and repetition of keywords. Repetition of keywords gives the content of the letter a force. A skillful writer knows which words to repeat.

Persuasion: The main function of business communication is to persuade the receiver of the letter. Effective business letters are written in a variety of circumstances and for a variety of reasons. The basic purpose of an effective letter is to influence or to sell an idea to the readers.

Accuracy: The message written in the letter should be accurate and verifiable. This means that there are no errors in the usage of language - in grammar, spellings, punctuations, etc. An accurate letter is always appreciated.

Completeness: A complete letter is one that serves its purpose best and is able to provide all necessary information to the receiver. Like when we are sending an order it is desirable that we mention the detailed features of the goods required, like, quality, shape, colour, design, quantity, date of delivery, mode of transportation, etc.

Relevance: Avoid any kind of unnecessary information in the business letters. There should only be relevant details which may actually be required by the receiver. A letter should contain only essential information. Irrelevant information should not be mentioned while sending any business correspondence. This is one of the most important principles of business communication.

Care for culture: In an international correspondence we have to be especially careful in the choice of words so as not to offend the receiver who may be having a very different cultural background. We should avoid use of culturally derived words, slangs, colloquialism, idioms and phrases. It is best to write letters in simple general service list words that are universally understood and acceptable.

Timeliness: Business letter to be effective should have proper timing. Letter should be written

and dispatched on time. Some messages carry a sense of urgency. Letters which carry such messages should reflect the associated urgency. It is not uncommon to see letters seeking some action by a specified date reaching the receiver after that date. This should be taken care of.

Courtesy: Courtesy and politeness are the best means to win the heart of the reader. It is advisable to exclude the words expressing feelings, like irritation or anger and statements that very often spoil communication. No receiver of a letter ever likes to be rated and told. In business letters, courtesy can be shown or expressed by using words like please, thank you, etc. It is advisable not to use sentences like "we cannot permit it any further".

Neatness: Anything which is neat and clear always appeals, and if it is such a letter, it will definitely be impressive. Even if it is a handwritten or typed letter, it should be neat and attractive in appearance. Overwriting and cuttings should be avoided.

b) External Qualities - The external or outer qualities of a business letter are actually its appearance. Like before we speak our body speaks. Similarly is the case of letter writing, before we start reading the content of a formal letter, we have a look at it, like, colour of the paper, size of the paper, its paper quality, how it is folded and of course the envelope, etc. Let us discuss the various external qualities of a good business letter which are as followed:

Colour of the Paper: Colour of the paper should be chosen keeping in mind the colour of the text or ink, especially in case of hand written letter. It is better to use different colour for different types of letters, so that the receiver will identify the letters quickly and prompt action can be taken.

Size of the paper: Usually, standard sized paper (A4) should be used for writing business letters. The size of the paper should be in accordance with the nature of the letter, because in some cases legal sized papers are also used.

Quality of paper: The paper used should be in accordance with the economic status of the firm. Now-a-days the cost of the paper is very high. It also helps in documenting the letters properly.

Therefore, good paper should be used for original copy and ordinary paper may be used for duplicate copy. Good quality paper gives a favourable impression in the mind of the reader.

Folding the letter: It is advisable to fold the letter neatly, properly and uniformly. Care should be taken to give minimum folds to the letter so that it will fit the size of the envelope. If window envelope is used then folding should be done in such a way that the address of the receiver is clearly visible through the transparent part of the envelope.

Envelope - The size, colour, shape and quality of the envelope also needs special attention. It is necessary that size of the envelope should be according to the size of the letters. The business firms use different types of envelopes i.e., ordinary envelope, window envelope, laminated

envelope, etc. In window envelope there is no need to write the address of the receiver separately on the envelope, as it is clearly visible through the transparent part on the face of the envelope, which may be called as window. In laminated envelopes a thin plastic sheet or cloth is pasted on the inner side that gives extra protection to letters from being damaged during transit.

Check Your Progress:

- Define correspondence.
- Enlist any five qualities of a good business letter.

6.3 PARTS/ELEMENTS OF A LETTER

Let us now learn about the different parts of a business letter. Following are the essential parts of a business letter:

1. Heading
2. Date
3. Reference
4. Inside Address
5. Subject
6. Salutation
7. Body of the letter
8. Complimentary close
9. Signature
10. Enclosures
11. Copy Circulation
12. Post Script

1. **Heading**– The heading also called letterhead contains the name and postal address of the business, E-mail address, Web-site address, Telephone Number, Fax Number, Trade Mark or logo of the business (if any)

2. **Date** - The date of the letter is of crucial importance. The date is generally written on the right hand side corner after the heading as the day, month and years. Some examples are 28th Feb., 2009 or Feb. 28, 2009.

3. **Reference**- Every business or official letter usually carries a reference number to which the receiver may refer in all future correspondence. It includes the letter number, the sending department and the year. It is placed on the left hand corner after the heading. For example, we can write reference number as 45/HRDept./2017/07.

4. **Inside address** -It contains the name and full address of the person or the firm to whom the

letter is to be sent. This is placed on the left hand side of the sheet below the reference number. It should be complete. Letters should be addressed to the responsible head e.g., the Secretary, the Principal, the Chairman, the Manager, etc. Example:

Bridge Rock Productions Ltd
7, CARTHER Road Mumbai, India
tel: 044- 2 337 476
fax: 044- 2 337 477

7 May 2020

Mr Hari Prashad
Sales Director
Universal Aspects Ltd
67, Bridya Road
Jhansi- M.P
India

Your ref: 27861
Our ref: HR/tlh/5

Dear Mr Prashad

Subject: Planned visit to Mumbai

Thank you for your letter dated 3 May 2020.

We intend to stay in Mumbai for five days and I should be grateful if you could make the necessary arrangements as per our discussion.

I am enclosing a copy of our intended programme.

I very much look forward to meeting you.

Yours sincerely

Reet Khanna

Reet Khanna
Managing Director

Bridge Rock Productions Ltd

Enc: Schedule

P.S.: I WILL BE ACCOMPANIED WITH TWO MORE PERSONS.

12th March 2003.
Subject: Enquiry about LG television
Subject: Fire Insurance policy

M/S Bharat Fans
Bharat Complex
Hyderabad Industrial Complex
Hyderabad
Andhra Pradesh – 500032
or

The Chief Manager,
State Bank of India
Prashant University Campus
Bhubaneswar,
Orissa- 751007

5. **Salutation** –It is a way of greeting the addressee. This is placed below the inside address. It is usually followed by a comma (,).

Various forms of salutation are:

Sir/Madam: For official and formal correspondence

Dear Sir/Madam: For addressing an individual

Dear Sirs/Dear Madam: For addressing a firm or company.

6. **Subject**–Many offices use subject lines to enable the reader to quickly identify the subject of correspondence. It tells what the correspondence is about. This statement should include brief and straightforward information to which the letter relates. It attracts the attention of the receiver immediately and helps him to know quickly what the letter is about. For example,

Subject: In reference to order No. C317/8 dated

7. **Body of the letter**- This is the main part of the letter as it carries its message or content. It is may be divided into two, three or four paragraphs, each having its own function. This comes after salutation. It contains the actual message of the sender. It is divided into three parts:

(a) Opening part – As the letter opens, the reader should be drawn to the previous correspondence, if any. For example, with reference to your letter no. 326 dated. 12th March 2003, I would like to draw your attention towards the new brand of television.

(b) Main part - This part states about the subject matter of the letter. It should be simple, clear, and precise.

(c) Concluding Part –This part ends the body of the letter and states about the sender's intentions, hopes or expectations in the context of the next course of action. It is expected that the sender looks forward to getting a positive response. At the end, terms like Thanking you, With regards, With warm regards may be used.

8. **Formal close** - It is a polite and formal way of ending a letter. It is generally as per the salutation. For example:

Salutation-Complementary close
i. Dear Sir/Dear Madam -Yours faithfully
ii. Dear Mr. Raj -Yours sincerely
iii. My Dear Meera - Yours very sincerely (express very informal relations)

9. **Signature** –There is a fixed place for the signature of the writer. Just as the signature is important so is its place in the layout of the letter. It should be preferably written in ink, immediately below the complimentary close. As far as possible, the signature should be legible. The name of the writer should be typed immediately below the signature, followed by the designation. Where no letterhead is in use, the name of the company too could be included below the designation of the writer. For example:

Yours faithfully
For M/S Acron Electricals
(Signature)
SUNIL KUMAR
Partner

10. **Enclosures**–Usually a letter carries along with it some important papers such as proofs of date of birth, photo identity card, cheque, draft, bills, receipts, lists, invoices, etc., are attached with the letter. These enclosures are listed one by one in serial numbers. For example:

Encl: (i) The list of goods received
(ii) A cheque for Rs. Twenty Thousand dt. May 19, 2020 (Cheque No. .....) towards payment for goods supplied.

11. **Copy Circulation**–Very often the copies of a letter are supposed to be sent to some other people directly or indirectly concerned with the subject matter of the letter. This is required when copies of the letter are also sent to persons apart from the addressee. It is denoted as C.C. For example,

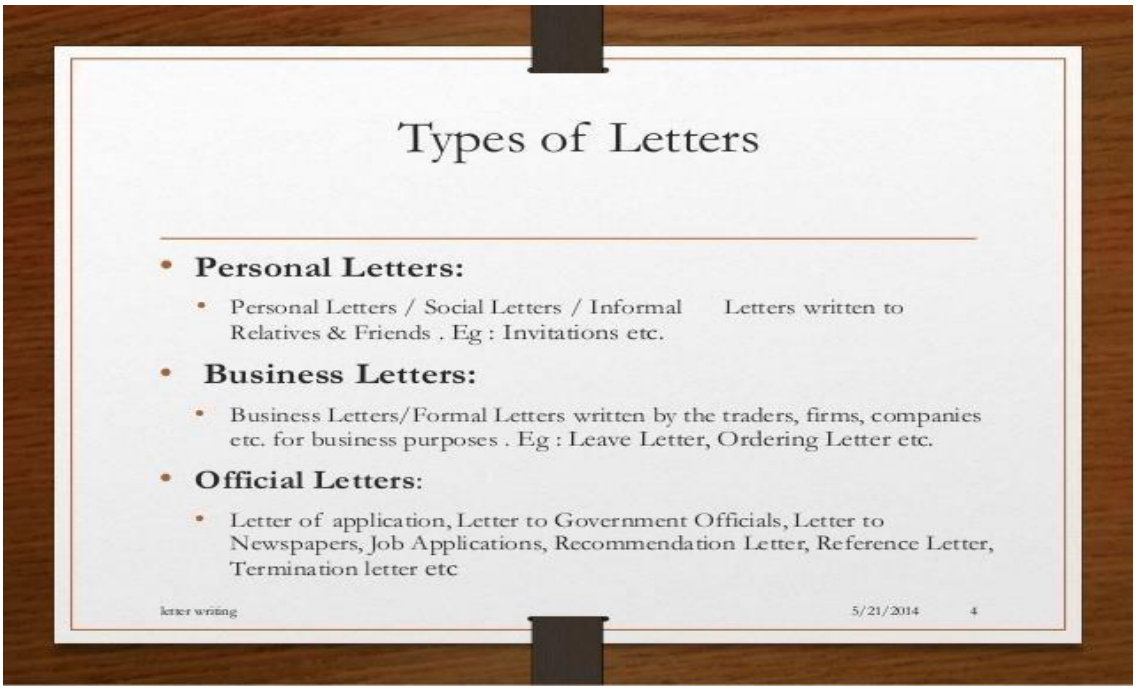
C.C. i. The Chairman, Electric Supply Corporation
ii. The Director, Electric Supply Corporation
iii. The Secretary, Electric Supply Corporation

12. **Post script** –It is written if the writer has forgotten to mention something important in the letter. Generally a writer is not supposed to forget any important item. But if it happens to be, then post script can be used. It is expressed as P.S. For example,

P.S. - In our offer, we provide two years warranty.

6.4 Types of business letters:

There are various kinds of letters flowing in and out of a business organisation. These official letters are a means through which an organisation keeps in touch with the business world outside like, its suppliers, departments, banks, insurance agencies, customers, government, jobseekers, transporters, and so on. Then there are different occasions or context for which suitable letters have to be written. In a way every letter is a unique piece of communication. A systematic study of the art of letter writing is essential. Following are ways in which letters, depending upon their functions, structure, tone and approach, can be classified:



(Source: https://letternay.blogspot.com/2020/04/types-of-letter-writing.html)

- **Personal Letter**

Informal letters are also known as personal letters. Such types of letters are usually written to relatives, family, friends, or acquaintances. These letters may or may not have a concrete reason for writing. The aim of writing informal letters is to create a personal memoir. It need not adhere to any formalities or follow any set pattern.

- **Business and Official Letters**

The letters that follow a certain formality and set pattern are formal letters. Such letters are precise, directly addressing the concerned issue and are kept strictly professional in nature. Formal letters are short and to the point. A variety of letters that fall within the category of formal letters are –

- ✓ Business letters
- ✓ Official letters
- ✓ Employment letters
- ✓ Social letters
- ✓ Circular letters

Check Your Progress:

Fill in the blanks:

- C.C. in a letter stands for …….
- 'Dear Sir/Madam' in a letter is ……
- The letters that follow a certain formality and set pattern are .....letters

6.5 LAYOUT OF THE LETTERS:

Layout means the design in which the different parts of the letter are placed on the letter head. The parts are placed in the same order from top to bottom in all forms of letters. The letters are different due to the indentation and paragraph styles. Many companies choose their own layout. But the differences in layout are not as many as the similarities. The differences occur due to the typing for printing conventions, indenting and spacing.

Indented form: This is the oldest style and is now considered outdated. In this form addresses are in indented style and every paragraph begins 3 to 5 spaces away from the left margin. The indentation causes the letter to look even at the left margin. Besides it takes more time to type because of the indenting. This style is not used these days.

Full block form: This is the most modern style. There is no indentation from the left margin at all. Every line including the date and complimentary close begins at the left margin. The address has no punctuation at the end of the line. The salutation and complimentary close do not have a comma at the end. There is a double line space between the parts and paragraph. The typist finds the style as the easiest as there is no confusion and no time needed for indentation. This style looks heavy on the left and the right side looks blank.

Modified block form: This style is a modification of the full block form. It keeps the date and the complimentary close on the right in their usual position. The inside address is in block form. The salutation and complimentary close are followed by a comma. All paragraphs begin at the left margin and there is double space between the paragraphs. This is the most popularly used form as it has many advantages of the full block form. Its appearance is streamlined and neat.

Semi indented form: This form is also called semi block form. It has the inside address in block form but the beginning of every paragraph is indented. The date and the complimentary close are on the right side. The salutation and complimentary close are followed by a comma as in the traditional style.

6.6 RESUME AND C.V.:

6.6.1) Introduction: CV (Curriculum Vitae) and Resume

When it comes to getting a job the most important document you own is your CV. It is the document that gets you the call from the recruitment agency or any job hunter gets you the interview and eventually land you a job with due importance to your performance at the interview. As important as these few sheets of paper are, not all of us pay as much attention to the details we put on it. We should work carefully while making a resume or CV because these sheets will be scrutinized by every person who has a role to play in getting you hired.
Meaning:

A resume or CV is a self proportional document. Basically it sells you to the company. It is not a job application. A resume should consist of the information about your performance and accomplishments, especially those that are relevant to the position you are applying for. It is important to be truthful, specific and brief.

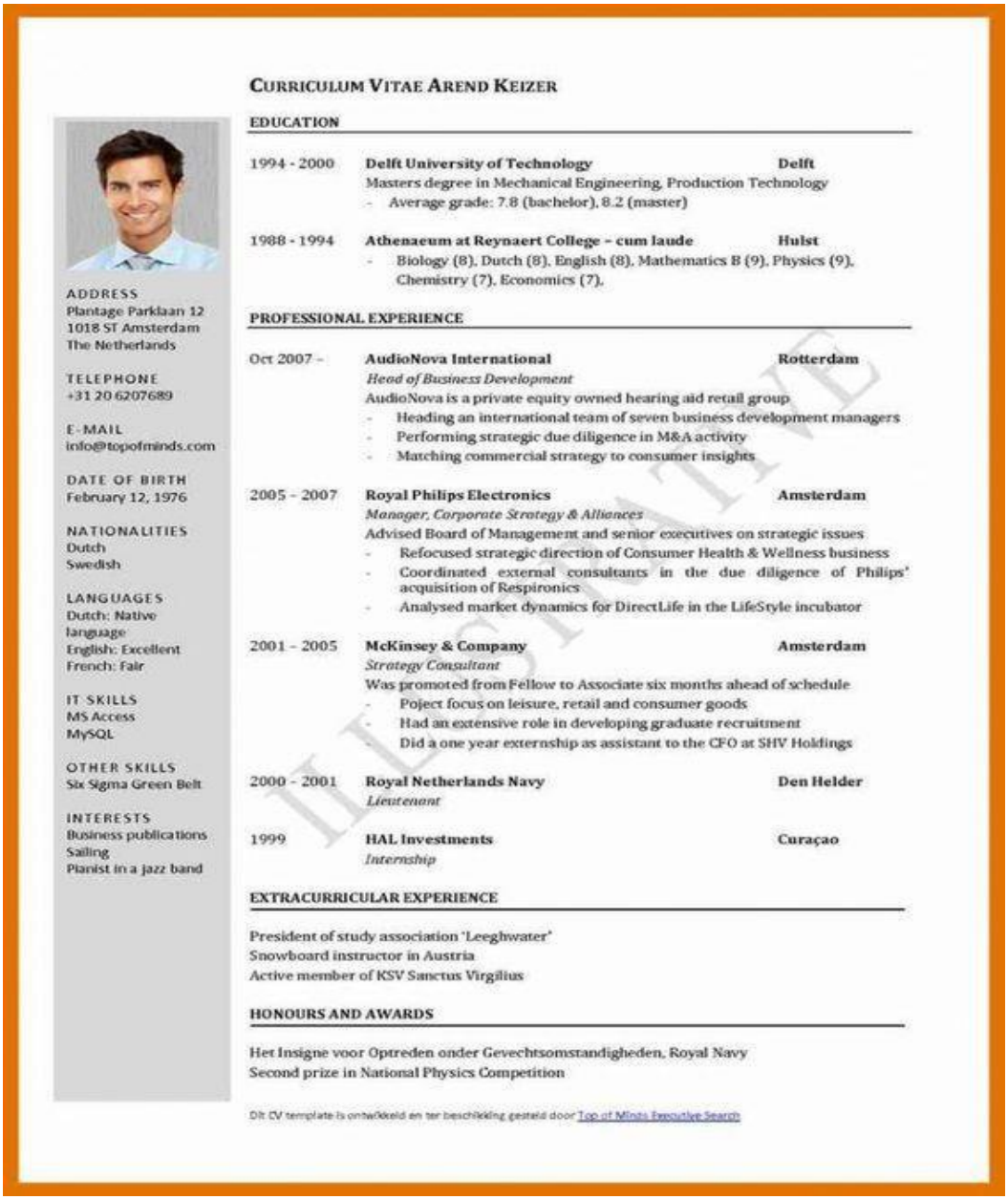
CV writing is like advertising. Your CV sells you to the prospective employer and competes against other applicants, if it is an effective one. The way you present your CV efficiently demonstrates your ability to communicate and particularly to explain professional business proposition. A well presented CV also indicates that you are professional business like and well organised.

A CV is a brief document which outlines your general personal details your relevant skills experiences and qualification. It is used to help you self yours sell yourself to the prospective

employer by highlighting your strengths and achievements. This goes beyond experience, training and skills. It needs to demonstrate your personal strengths, capabilities and the type of person you are.

A resume is a one page summary of your skills, education, and experience. It is like an advertisement for a company trying to sell something. One must spend a good deal of time creating, proofreading, editing, and perfecting your resume. A resume is one of the most important pieces of writing which is the key that will open the door to good jobs.
Difference between a resume and CV:

As mentioned earlier, a resume is a one- to two-page document presenting key facts about your professional experience, educational background, and skills. A CV (Curriculum Vitae) on the other hand is a longer document that details the whole course of your career. Moreover, a resume is used for job search and a CV is made for academic purposes.



CURRICULUM VITAE AREND KEIZER

ADDRESS
Plantage Parklaan 12
1018 ST Amsterdam
The Netherlands

TELEPHONE
+31 20 6207689

E-MAIL
info@topofminds.com

DATE OF BIRTH
February 12, 1976

NATIONALITIES
Dutch
Swedish

LANGUAGES
Dutch: Native language
English: Excellent
French: Fair

IT SKILLS
MS Access
MySQL

OTHER SKILLS
Six Sigma Green Belt

INTERESTS
Business publications
Sailing
Pianist in a jazz band

EDUCATION

1994 - 2000 **Delft University of Technology** **Delft**
Masters degree in Mechanical Engineering, Production Technology
- Average grade: 7.8 (bachelor), 8.2 (master)

1988 - 1994 **Athenaeum at Reynaert College – cum laude** **Hulst**
- Biology (8), Dutch (8), English (8), Mathematics B (9), Physics (9), Chemistry (7), Economics (7),

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Oct 2007 – **AudioNova International** **Rotterdam**
Head of Business Development
AudioNova is a private equity owned hearing aid retail group
- Heading an international team of seven business development managers
- Performing strategic due diligence in M&A activity
- Matching commercial strategy to consumer insights

2005 - 2007 **Royal Philips Electronics** **Amsterdam**
Manager, Corporate Strategy & Alliances
Advised Board of Management and senior executives on strategic issues
- Refocused strategic direction of Consumer Health & Wellness business
- Coordinated external consultants in the due diligence of Philips' acquisition of Respironics
- Analysed market dynamics for DirectLife in the LifeStyle incubator

2001 - 2005 **McKinsey & Company** **Amsterdam**
Strategy Consultant
Was promoted from Fellow to Associate six months ahead of schedule
- Poject focus on leisure, retail and consumer goods
- Had an extensive role in developing graduate recruitment
- Did a one year externship as assistant to the CFO at SHV Holdings

2000 - 2001 **Royal Netherlands Navy** **Den Helder**
Lieutenant

1999 **HAL Investments** **Curaçao**
Internship

EXTRACURRICULAR EXPERIENCE

President of study association 'Leeghwater'
Snowboard instructor in Austria
Active member of KSV Sanctus Virgilius

HONOURS AND AWARDS

Het Insigne voor Optreden onder Gevechtsomstandigheden, Royal Navy
Second prize in National Physics Competition

Dit CV template is ontwikkeld en ter beschikking gesteld door Top of Minds Executive Search

ILLUSTRATIVE

(Source -https://in.pinterest.com/pin/717831628086683085/)

The terms

- The term resume is used more in the USA.
- The term *Curriculum Vitae* is used more in UK.
- *Curriculum Vitae* is abbreviated as CV.

6.6.2) Purpose of CV writing:

The purpose of CV writing is to disclose your qualification and accomplishments to the committee. You need to show the committee what have you completed, and where your experiences lie in case of experienced employee. Your Resume is an example of your communication and Organization scale.

This does not mean that the CV should be full of graphics, colors or printed on the coloured paper. The employees will feel that if you have to use the gimmicks to impress them then you probably don't have anything to offer. The CV needs to have a clean professional look about it. It needs to be easy to read and should look balanced.

6.6.3) Types of Resumes:

There are several basic types of resumes used to apply for job opening. Depending on your personal circumstances choose a chronological, functional, combination or targeted resume.
Chronological resume:
Chronological resume may start by listing your work history with the most recent position listed first. Your jobs are listed in reverse chronological order with your current or most recent job first. Employers typically prefer this type of resume because it's easy to see what jobs you have held and when you have worked at them. This type of the resume works well for the job seekers with a strong solid works history.

Functional resume:

A functional resume focuses on your skills and experiences rather than your chronological work history. It is used most often by the people who are changing careers or who have gaps in their employment history.

Combination resume:

A combination resume lists your skills and experiences first. Your employment history is listed next. With this type of the resume you can highlight the skills you have relevant to your jobs you are applying for and also provide the chronological work history that employers prefer.

Targeted resume:

A targeted resume is specifically prepared to highlight the experiences and skills that are particularly relevant to the jobs you are applying for.

Mini/Brief resume:

A mini resume contains a brief summary of your career highlights and qualification. It can be used for networking purposes or shared upon request for a prospective employer or reference writer who may want an overview of your accomplishment rather than a full length resume.

6.6.4) CV writing tips:

Today's job market is competitive. Many companies receive thousands of resume every year making it difficult for you to stand out from the crowd. The following tips will help you learn

how to get employers to read your resume:

1. Do your research: Read the job posting carefully to ascertain what your prospective employer is looking for. In order to meet his needs you must know what he wants. Once you've figured out what he wants enquire about his line of business and his corporative philosophy.
2. Use action verbs: Make use of action verbs in your resume to show that you are proactive and result oriented. This will help you focus on your accomplishments. Action verb at the beginning of the sentences will most likely catch your prospective employers' attention. Remember to alternate the verbs that you use.
3. Write clear and concise sentences: Keep your sentences short and to be point. Convey only one idea per sentence. If possible use bullets. Make it easier for someone to scan through your resume and absorb the information.
4. Restrict your use of articles to a minimum: In order to save valuable spaces on your resume and put as much focus on your accomplishments, avoid using articles such as the, an or a.
5. Never use I or other pronouns to identify yourself: Keep your resume to the 3rd person meaning that you should not be the narrator. This will make your resume look more professional and will give credence to your accomplishments.
6. Use professional language: Use professional language in your resume. You want to convey the impression that you are presentable, reliable and professional.
7. Use area specific terminology: If you have a specialization, use terminology specific to your areas of expertise. This will highlight your knowledge.
8. Tailor your qualifications to the job: Determine your job objectives and customize your resume to achieve those objectives. This will help you tailor your resume for the specific job that you are applying to.
9. Prioritize the content of your resume: Some of your past work experiences or accomplishments will be more relevant to the job than others. Prioritize the more relevant information. Mention the most relevant on the top of the page in a list or first in an enumeration.
10. Use PAR statements: Par stands for problem action result. In order to sell to your employer the benefits of your skills you need to show concrete example of what you did in your previous functions. Simply showing what you did is not enough. You also need to show what you contributed.
11. Screen out unnecessary or irrelevant information: Don't include in your resume personal information such as your age, marital status or height and weight. Focus on your skills and what you can bring to the job
12. Be positive: Avoid being negative in your resume. Omit the negative information or filter it out by rephrasing a negative experience into a positive one.

Check your progress:

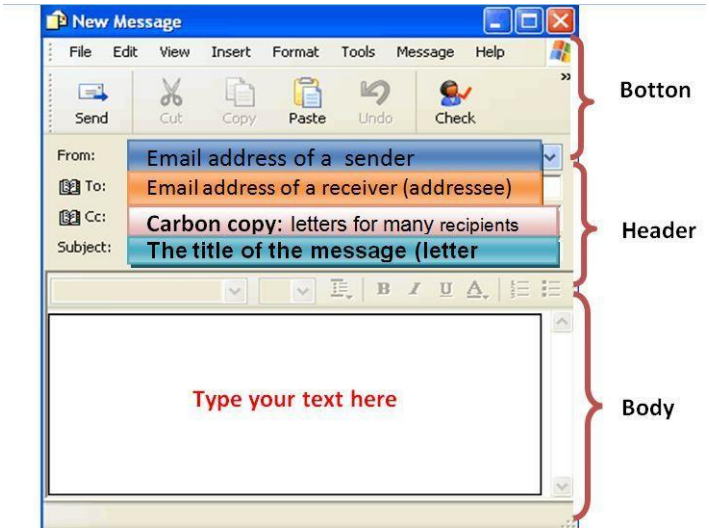
Tick the correct option:

- Indented form in a letter is the oldest/new style.
- The term resume is used more in the USA/UK.
- A mini resume contains a brief/detailed summary of your career highlights and qualification.

6.7 E-MAIL:

6.7.1) Introduction:

Email refers to electronic transmission of messages, letters, documents and other materials. The email includes point-to-point services such as telegraph facimile (fax) systems. It is commonly thought of however, in terms of computer based message systems where the text file that is received can be electrically edited, replied to, or pasted into another electronic document that can be manipulated or used by a word processing desktop publishing or other computer program. Uses of such system can broadcast messages to multiple recipients, read and discard messages, file and retrieve messages or forward messages to other users. Extension to email allows the user to add graphics and sound to messages.



(Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anatomy_of_an_Email_message.JPG)

Name and address on email: In order to send an email you must know the recipient's "name" that is, computer I.D. and address. This has the form: someone @ someplace; "someone" could be person's real name like Geeta or it may be a word/letters chosen by the person or anything else; "someplace" is the address off the computer and network on which the person has an account, like hotmail.com, yahoo.com, vsnl.com.

6.7.2) How e-mail is different from fax:

In the 1980s, faxing became a popular way to send letters and documents without the delays of regular mail. But now E-mail has more immediacy than a fax and is much more efficient and economical also.

Fax, like telephonic, sets up a temporary circuit between the origin and the destination of the call for which you have to pay regular phone rates. E-mail uses "packet switching" technology which makes efficient use of a network of permanently open lines. There is no additional cost in sending e-mail, even to long distances and you do not need STD or ISD connection to send e-mail to any country in the world.

6.7.3) Steps for sending email:

1) First log on the computer and open an email program.
2) Click on 'Create/New mail'. A refresh page for writing a new mail will open.
3) Bring the cursor to the 'From:' line. Write your e-mail address here.
4) Bring the cursor to the 'To:' line. Write the email address to the person to whom you want to send an e-mail.
5) Bring the cursor to 'cc:' line if you want to send the same e-mail to second or third person. Write their e-mail addresses on this line.
6) Bring the cursor to the 'Subject:' line. Write an effective subject heading so that the reader knows what the email contains and what actions is/ are required of him/her.
7) Now, come to the body of the message. Begin with the salutation. Keeping e-mail etiquette in mind, compose your message in clear and grammatically correct paragraphs. Close with the salutation.
8) After completing your message, proofread it and go through the computer's grammar and spell checkers. In case of any doubt about the contents or about the feasibility of sending the mail, it's better to keep it as a draft and send after some reworking on it.
9) If you have to send a file along with your e-mail, click on the 'attach' key and then on the name of the file you want to send as attachment. The message will show the attachment icon.
10) Once you are confident sending the mail, click on the 'Send' button.
11) Your e-mail client will connect to an e-mail server and pass it to the name of the recipient, name of sender and the body of the message.

Check your progress:

Fill in the blanks:

- .....refers to electronic transmission of messages, letters, documents and other materials.
- Fax costs ..... as compared to Email.

6.7.4) What constitutes a Good E-mail?

- ✓ Make sure your mail is easy to read.
- ✓ Use the subject line to tell the recipient the purpose of the message. Have one subject in each mail.
- ✓ Use concrete words that avoid negative connotations. Be aware of the positive and negative meanings, that is, know the denotation and connotation of the words used.
- ✓ Use short, focused paragraphs. Each paragraph should have a topic sentence, related sentences and translational elements. In business writing the topic sentence should usually comes at the beginning of the paragraph.
- ✓ Quote previous e-mails when responding to questions or requests.
- ✓ Respect other people's electronic space by sending messages only when necessary.
- ✓ If you are sending emails within your organization know and follow the follow the rules using this facility. Do not write anything in a way that could become embarrassing for you or your organisation.
- ✓ Use the appropriate level of formality. If you are writing to your boss be as formal as you would be in printed letters. Read your fellow employees emails to inform yourself about the organisations approach.
- ✓ Write in a clear and organised manner. For instance, instead of using passive voice write in the active voice.
- ✓ Generally, the length of your message should be kept in one screen only. If there is a field, file or document you want your reader to view, send it as an attachment with your email.
- ✓ Use a salutation (even if it is only the recipient's name) and a closing (even if it is just your name).
- ✓ Start your message with the important information you want to exchange with or received from the recipient.
- ✓ Use bullets/markers/numbers so that the recipient can focus at once on important details.
- ✓ Be sure of the recipient's email address. A mistake in a single letter will send it to the wrong person.
- ✓ Check that the computer's internal clock and date setting are correct.
- ✓ Adopt the attitude that emphasizes positive points. Be polite on use of voice, language and project the company's image.

Avoid the following mistakes:

- ✓ Do not treat email as casual conversation. This may lead to including comments or remarks that one would not dream of saying in person or trying in a letter, thereby creating inter-personal conflicts and tensions. Do not use jokes or personal comments in business emails.
- ✓ Do not use jargon or slang. Some people use jargon in order to impress others; some use it when they have nothing to say or want to hedge or cover up their lack of knowledge; still others uses use it because they are sublimely unaware that their intended recipients would not understand it.

- ✓ Message should not be highlighted as "Read Now", "Extremely urgent" or "Top priority" unless absolutely necessary.
- ✓ Do not think that the e-mail is a private affair. Some people send information to recipients who should not read, receive or do not need it as they are careless about screening their electronic mailing lists.
- ✓ Do not overuse e-mail because it is cheap and easy to send. This contributes to hundreds of junk mail that executives receive everyday and may overload company networks, resulting in system crashes and/or lost messages.
- ✓ Do not think that just because you have deleted email it has been destroyed permanently. It can still exist in the company's hard disc and backup storage device at both senders and receivers location.
- ✓ Avoid using the "Reply all" button unless necessary.
- ✓ Do not send large files without prior notice.
- ✓ Do not overuse e-mail abbreviation or acronyms.
- ✓ Do not use exclamation marks in every important sentence. This is too informal as is the use of emotions in business letter.

If you are forwarding or replying to a mail keep the following guidelines in mind.

- ✓ Delete the previous message if the recipient does not need to know about it.
- ✓ Make sure to change the content in the subject line.
- ✓ While forwarding messages, write a brief note at the beginning of the forwarded message to explain why you are sending it and what action you wish the recipient to take.

E-mail is less formal than a printed business letter. Ask yourself the following questions before sending an email.

- ✓ What is the time frame involved? How soon do I need to reply to another person's message?
- ✓ Who is the recipient a friend, a boss or a total stranger?
- ✓ Am I on equal terms with the receiver?

6.8 INTRODUCTION TO REPORT WRITING:

A report is a logical presentation of facts and information. A good business report must be an orderly arrangement of some factual information that is objective in nature and serves some business purpose. It is designed to give a complete picture of what has taken place at a distance from the reader who does not know about it and gathers knowledge about it from what the writer presents in the report.

According to the American marketing society, the purpose of a report is to convey the interested persons the whole results of the study. Sufficient details are arranged so as to enable each reader to comprehend the data and determine for him the validity of conclusions. The British Association for commercial and industrial education has defined a report as a document in

which a given problem is examined for the purpose of conveying information and findings, putting forward ideas first, and sometimes making recommendations.

6.9 KINDS OF REPORT:

A Report is a compilation of information that has been sought, collected, organized, and returned to convey a specific message. The objective is either to present information or to analyze a particular situation. Consequently, reports are broadly categorized into routine report, information reports and research reports.

Routine reports: The reports which are prepared on a routine basis in an organization are called routine reports. These are prepared in the normal course of business whether or not something extraordinary takes place. This report may be about the growth of an organization or any regular inspection to be held or performance appraisal of the employees. This may include reports prepared at regular intervals, so called periodical reports like monthly report, annual report, bi-annual report, etc.

Information report: An information report may present a record of previous events, or it may periodically cover past and new information that will allow readers to stay current on a topic, see progress on a project, or gain insight on product development. The purpose of the information report is to convey ideas and data as clearly, concisely, and correctly as possible.

Research report: A research report is concerned with analyzing information. The writer looks at a problem that needs to be solved, gather data and analyse the data that are available, arrives at a decision, and then makes recommendations. Research reports may solve merchandising or production problems, offer remedies for better ways of financing, or give insights into anticipated acts by competitors. The objective is that the reader of a research report will desire to take some action as a result of the new information presented in the report.

6.10 CHARACTERISTICS OF A BUSINESS REPORT:

Business reports should be an orderly and objective presentation of information that may help in decision making and problem solving. The report must show that the reader can locate the needed information quickly. It must be objective because the reader will use the report to make decisions that affect the health and wealth of the organization. It must present information and facts. Where subjective judgments are required, as in making recommendations, reports must be presented ethically and be based squarely on the information presented in the report. Finally, the report must be useful. They must provide the specific information that management needs to make a critical decision. This objective should be of top priority in the writers' mind during all phases of the writing process.

6.11 ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE BUSINESS REPORT WRITING:

In presenting information, an effective Business Report should be accurate and objective.

Accurate: Accuracy in a Business Report includes accuracy of information and accuracy of writing. Since the information in a business report is used to make decisions, there should not be any chance of inaccurate information, objectivity in writing, inaccurate decisions. Therefore, make sure your reports deals with factual information only. The accuracy of any report depends upon the correctness of the data that was gathered to prepare it. Use reliable sources and be accurate in reporting all information. The accuracy of writing depends on accuracy in mechanics, spelling, punctuation and grammar and accuracy in writing style. To avoid writing style errors, use precise words and terms that are not likely to be misinterpreted by the reader.

Objectivity: In writing, objectivity means presenting material free from personal feelings or prejudices, which is sometimes difficult to accomplish. Make a distinction between facts and opinions. Minimize unsupported judgments and inferences. While this information is valuable for your report, it should be included as an opinion rather than a fact. Reporting all pertinent information is important, presenting both positive and negative aspects. However, your credibility as a writer and the value of your report depends upon your objectivity.

6.12 PURPOSE OF BUSINESS REPORTS

A Business Report conveys information to assist in decision making. Some reports might present the actual solution to solve a business problem. Other reports might record historical information that will be useful in making future decisions. Either with, the information being reported will be useful in making decisions. In order for the writer to have a clear understanding of preparing a report, he must understand its purpose and have an awareness of the nature of his audience, their requirement.

Check Your Progress:

Fill in the blanks:

- A good business report must be an …….. arrangement of some factual information.
- An effective Business Report should be ……. and ……
- A Business Report conveys..... to assist in decision making.

6.13 PLANNING FOR A REPORT:

Planning is the first stage of any organised activity. Even for drafting a formal report planning is a must. The planning stage is the most crucial one. Spend as much time as possible in collecting material, synchronising details and ensuring that nothing has been left out. If the planning is done in a detailed manner there are few chances of missing out errors at the final stage. In fact planning of a report is an important process of writing itself. The various steps involved in report planning are as follows:

1. Define the problem and the purpose: The problem and the purpose have already been identified at the stage when the answer to the question what and why are attempted. It is essential at this stage to understand the nature of the report whether it is informational analytical or routine report. With the variance in the type of the report there is bound to be a difference in the definition of the problem and purpose. So this must be taken care of.

2. Outline the issues for organisation: A problem solving or analytical report has issues pertaining to the problem which need to be highlighted in the initial stage. None of the alternative or variable should be ignored or sidetracked. Once the issues have been clarified delineation of the points become easier. Further, if the report is of an informational nature all issues to be exemplified have to be understood. There should be a basic pattern that has to be observed and it should clearly emerge in the reading of the report.

3. Prepare a work plan: What is the best procedure to collect the data? How should the writer proceed? What are the strategies that need to be observed? These are a few of the questions that need to be well answered before taking the final plunge into conducting research on the topic.

4. Conduct research: Analyse and interpret the modus operandi at the time of conducting research. This should, however, be taken care of at the stage of preparing a work plan. The manner in which research is conducted is contingent upon the problem defined in the initial phase of report writing. Once the research has been conducted begins the process of analysis and subsequent interpretation which happens to be the toughest part in report making. An attempt should be made to bring that accuracy in the analysis and make the interpretation objective and unbiased as far as possible.

5. Draw conclusions: Subsequent to the stage of interpretation of data certain conclusions need to be drawn and recommendations or suggestions made. This comprises of the last stage of the report and the tone of it is determined by the position held by the report writer. For instance, if it is a report being written by a subordinate he can only make suggestions. However, if it is one being run by superiors it would definitely have in the terminal section rather well-developed part comprising recommendations.

6.14 OUTLINE OF A REPORT:

There is no set outline that can be used in preparing reports. The most appropriate form and contents of a particular report should be determined by nature of the target audience. The following is the suggested broad outline of a report:

- Preliminary pages:
  - Title page is showing the heading
  - Content along with chapter headings, page numbers, preface, acknowledgements, foreword, list of tables, list of graphs and diagrams, abbreviations
- Main text:
  - Summary: introduction, main findings, conclusions, and recommendations
  - Introduction: introducing the theme, review of related literature, methodology
  - Results: statistical analysis, testing of hypothesis, conclusions, and recommendations
- End matter:
  - Annexure: It is an added information, usually an attachment, along with a document or a report or any piece of written work.
  - Bibliography: It is a systematic enlisting of resources, description of books, referred to any scholarly work to give credit to the writers' works referred to.
  - Questionnaire: It is a research technique which involves setting a series of questions related to one subject to be filled up by respondents so as to gather information and data.
  - Indexing: Usually arranged in an alphabetical order, it is a list of keywords, themes or ideas and may include page references.
  - Appendices: This part of report contains supplementary information about any topic that is not essential to be added in the main part of the report such as some derivations, symbols, etc.

A few important aspects regarding the various part of the report are briefly narrated below:

1. Summary: It is useful to all those who have little time to read the whole text. Business executives mostly read summaries of the reports. The report is organized on the assumption that everyone will not like to read all the matter presented in the report. Consequently, a report should unfold like a newspaper article. In other words, the summary of the most important information appears first and the detailed story is shown later on. The report should begin with the objectives, methodology, brief summary of finding of the study, along with the conclusions and recommendations which the presenter has made. The remainder of the report should provide a detailed discussion of the analysis interpretation and survey process. The analytical issue are outlined.

2. Introduction: The purpose of the introduction is to discuss the background of the project. This section introduces the problem at the macro and micro levels. An explanation of the problem and its history, related to the research problem are explained. Firstly, it provides a complete

and comprehensive picture of the topic presented. This will also show how the present problem fits into the topic. Secondly, tells the reader what research has been carried out on the problem.

Through the process the research gap may be identified. The investigator must show that his particular investigation has not been done before. It should clearly indicate that the work is not repeated.

3. Methodology: It broadly includes the objectives and significance of the study, description of the methodology, formulation of hypothesis, testing and tools of analysis, and the technical aspects on the limitation of the study. It tells the reader what was done to solve the problem. The purpose of this information is to twofold. First, it aims at satisfying the criterion of the reliability. In other words, it must provide researchers requisite information to produce another piece of research. Secondly, it aims at enabling the reader to review the quality and the worth of study.

4. Findings: This presents the inference derived from statistical analysis. From the point of view of findings, report may be either descriptive or explanatory. The findings are presented in simple language. The problem in writing a descriptive report is to communicate effectively in the simple language. The audience is provided discrete facts about the population studied. In the descriptive report an author has to describe the details of findings. The findings should be arranged in the way that makes it easier for the reader to understand them quickly. Like a guide the author helps in pointing out important findings. Possible interpretations and applications are also suggested in the report.

    a) Hypothesis: It may begin by stating the hypothesis. It also shows how they are implied in the theory. It may then describe the method used to present the data. Finally, it judges the validity of the hypothesis in the light of research results. The process of testing the hypothesis is seen carefully. The level of significance is also decided. A conducting section might offer some review and reassessment of both hypothesis and theory.

    b) Focused argument: Another model for an explanatory report is the legal brief. To the investigator, the data may seem to contribute to a single conclusion, and to support a single central proposition. This will be most precise presentation. The investigator may feel then that his task in his report is to win the assent of his readers and bring them towards the general conclusion. Unnecessary elaborations distort the central idea. Focused idea brings clarity and the audience can understand it in minimum possible time. A focused argument is like legal brief. This will contain a central issue. Further, its examination of evidence in term of its bearing on that issue also can be made. In this presentation the line of argument is extremely important. Unnecessary details are to be avoided.

c) Structural model: Perhaps the most difficult conceptual framework to manage for the presentation of quantitative data is one that proposes a structural or system model. The model has empirical relevance. This is prepared more logically. It considers implementation aspects. A report of this sort might first concern itself with structural aspects such as the number of personnel at their positions, goals, environment, etc., and then considers all other aspects of the system.

Check Your Progress:

Define in one sentence: a) Annexure b) Questionnaire c) Preliminary pages

6.15 TYPES OF ILLUSTRATIONS:

There are several types of illustrations which can be used in reports. They are usually black and white. The content of your report will determine which types of illustrations are to be applied. All types are not suitable for presenting a particular kind of information. So it depends upon the author to decide which of the following types may be required for enhancing the effect of the provided information in a report. Following are some of the useful types of illustrations:

a) Tables and figures: Table in reports can be used for displaying original numerical data and derived statistics in a logical, orderly and compact fashion. It generally has a row of columns across the page. Data is written in the centre of the concerned columns. Tables and figures are crucial elements in report writing but are usually overlooked by authors. It is common to receive tables which contain a necessary data and figures which are of poor quality. Tables and figures must only contain data and information that are relevant to the purpose of the paper and the report, and specifically, referred to in the text. They should contain sufficient information so that the figure of the table can be understood by a general reader without reference to the text. Legends or captions of tables and figures must follow guidelines set out by the journal. Do not deviate from this format. The information contained in tables and figures must relate directly to the text and not contain any additional superfluous and redundant data. Do not repeat the same data in several tables and figures again and again. As far as possible avoid drawing a table on more than one page. But if it is unavoidable use parenthetical note at the bottom of the page stating ‘continued on page…’.

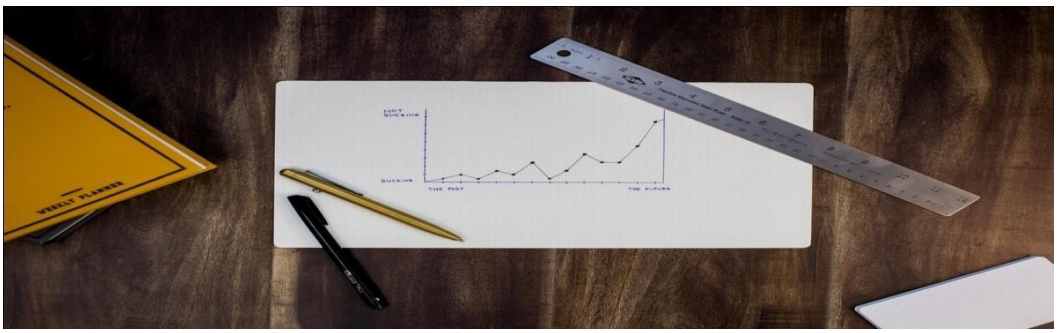
b) Charts: Charts usually depict the organisation of information by representing its subdivisions or the sequence of steps in a process. There are mainly three types of

charts: organisation charts, flow charts, and block charts. Organisation charts show the chain of command in an organisation, showing the organisation of a corporation. The information moves vertically from top to bottom and horizontally.

A flowchart is generally used to indicate various steps in a process or a sequence of operations. The symbols are put into blocks which are connected by straight lines or arrows.

Block charts, as the name indicates, use blocks to indicate the major elements or components or major groups of elements of a complex structure generally, of a technical nature. They are designed to inform the technical men of fundamental arrangements of the complex. The general plan is intelligible even to the lay man.

c) Graphs: Graphs are a very commonly used means of providing data that is usually in tables. They are more effective in indicating distribution trends and comparisons of two or more quantities. The reader at a glance is able to understand the information provided. Various types of graphs can be rectilinear graphs, semi log graph, bar graphs, pie graphs, pictorial graph and scatter graph.



(https://unsplash.com/s/photos/graphs)

d) Maps: Maps are used to show geographical distribution of data. To focus attention on the main facts, extraneous details are admitted. Lines, dots for shaded areas are generally used for plotting the data.

e) Photographs or images: This is a very common kind of method of illustration used for supporting any kind of information in a report or an article. Photographs are of limited use in reports in as much as they cannot be used to emphasize any important details. Reproduction costs are high and so they are used only when the actual appearance of something has to be shown. For reproduction, it is essential that the photograph is free from any glare effects or shadows or blackness. It should be large enough for retouching and eliminating any unwanted detail.

f) Drawings: Drawings are mainly composed of lines but may include shade, solid or cross hatched areas. They are used to represent objects as they appear to us.

Check Your Progress:

Give one word for the following:

- Commonly used means of providing data that is usually in tables-……..
- Used to show geographical distribution of data-……..
- Used for displaying original numerical data and derived statistics in a logical, orderly and compact fashion-…….

6.16 MEETINGS:

Meetings are the most popular method of interactive communication. They facilitate direct face to face communication and are essential at various levels in all organisations. When there are two or more persons there is a meeting, structured or otherwise. They serve the valuable objective of facilitating exchange of information, fostering team spirit, and commitment to common goals and objectives. On a regular basis there can be customer meets, dealer meets or managers' meets, staff meetings, association meetings, business meets, review meets, and so on. While meetings which are effective contribute to decision making and result in positive outcomes, ill-conceived and indifferently conducted meetings result into enormous waste of time, effort and resources.



(https://unsplash.com/photos/faEfWCdOKIg)

They may even lead to cross and confusion. It would, therefore, be important to give attention to certain details while convening meetings. The preparation for an effective meeting starts well in advance and there is so much that needs to be attended to on the day of the meeting, during the meeting, and thereafter, the minutes are drawn up and sent.

6.16.1 Why meetings?

- To save time in communication.
- To instruct a group for a specific purpose or briefing.

- To discuss and solve problems relating to business.
- To resolve conflicts, confusion and disagreement among target groups.
- To give and get new ideas and immediate reactions.
- To generate enthusiasm and positive attitude.
- To arrive at consensus on issues of concern.
- To learn from others and to train them.

6.16.2 Conducting meetings:

As meetings are imperative part of any organisation much effort needs to be made to conduct meetings successfully. It is an important skill which each manager is expected to have. Conducting meetings requires some prior preparations, like deciding the time, place, venue, etc. and arranging other documents relating to meetings. While the meeting is actually going on, it goes through the stages of beginning, leading, conducting, and closing. The role of chairperson is significant in giving shape and character to the meeting.

Important points for conducting meetings:

- **Agenda:** Agenda is the list of items that are to be taken up for discussion during a meeting. It communicates the purpose for calling a meeting. It is essential to make sure that there are enough number of issues pre-decided which need attention at the meeting. Prior arrangements should be made for the successful conduction of the meeting.

- **Prior documentation:** Every important meeting will have a set of background papers which are sent in advance to members who will participate in the meeting. They relate to items listed in the agenda and provide glimpses of the issues involved. Documentation is normally done by the concerned functionaries and departments seeking a decision on the issue or a subject matter. This is followed by preparation and sending of minutes of the previous meeting. They are considered as the first items on the agenda. They are, first of all, confirmed before proceeding to the other items.

- **Invitation:** Invitation for the meeting is to be clearly drawn up indicating the day, date, time and venue of the meeting. Invitations should be sent well in advance to ensure that participants coming from other stations have sufficient time to make appropriate travel arrangements. Meeting notices should clearly indicate the list of participants of the meeting. Sometimes, people in organization receive notices which do not clearly indicate whether they are sent as an invitation or just as intimation. So this should be taken care of in advance.

- **Timing and Venue:** Care should be taken in fixing up the meeting in a manner that is convenient to most of the members of participants. A notice should be sent well in advance which should ensure that participant get enough opportunity to schedule or reschedule their engagements. The date and time should be fixed, keeping in view, the upcoming holidays and other important events and functions which may clash with the meeting dates and time and make it difficult for members to choose between one or the

other. It is generally expected that the person convening the meeting will take some trouble to ensure that most of the members are in a position to attend and contribute.

- Approximate duration of the meeting will also prove helpful so that participants would know how much time they have to allot for attending the meeting. The decision of venue and its preparation prior to the meeting always leads to a successful meeting. With so many meetings taking place in an organization there is bound to be considerable demand for meeting halls and conference rooms. For the meeting one should have all the required physical facilities ready like, fans, air conditioners, micro phones, projectors, toilets, etc., that have the potential to hinder the effectiveness of communication. A little extra care always avoids upcoming embarrassment and inconvenience during the time of the meeting.

- **Punctuality and time management:** Starting the meeting on time is an area that cost conscious efforts. Keeping the venue open and ready well in time, reminding the chairperson, and other members, and showing that all papers have reached the participants' table, items are placed and ensuring that the convener and the organisers have arrived at the venue, all these are the keys to a successful meeting. Meetings which start on time and provide adequate time for a purposeful deliberation of all listed items ensure maximum cost effectiveness. Refreshment like snacks and drinks are always appreciated at meetings.

6.16.3 Steps in conduction of meetings:

This involves four important aspects of beginning, leading, conducting, and closing.

Beginning:

- Establish the right tone, usually serious, polite and positive.
- Identify participants who are not known to the group.
- Offer background information and comments that might prove useful to the group.
- Review of objectives of the meeting in terms of items on the agenda.
- Identify time constraints not expressed on the agenda.
- Prepare oneself for arguments and counter arguments.

Leading:

- Arrive early and start on time.
- Remain impartial and objective.
- Restate the purpose and objectives periodically.
- Listen attentively to other group members.
- Summarise the group decisions for progress at intervals during the meeting.
- Diffuse hot controversies with patience and calmness.
- End with the summary of the decisions made.
- Highlight the action to be taken and decide who is responsible for it.

Conducting:

- Preparing the plan including agenda, seating arrangements, physical facilities, etc.
- Implementing the plan by keeping the discussions on track and to constantly monitor them.
- Monitoring the time of the meeting in case of limited availability of time.
- Allowing everyone to present their point of view and controlling those who talk too much and do not let the discussion move.
- Encouraging less confident participants to speak up and share their views and participate in the meeting.
- Summarising key items of the meeting at regular intervals.

Closing:

- Meetings should end on time.
- All decisions taken should be summarised.
- Courtesy should be extended by thanking members.
- Vehicle should be arranged for those who have come from outside and have no conveyance.
- Minutes should be prepared after winding up.
- Follow up of decisions made during the meeting should be done.

6.16.4 Role of chairperson:

The chairperson or the convener or the secretary and senior members have a vital role to play in conducting meetings effectively. They ensure that as far as possible all the agenda items stated for discussion are duly taken up for deliberation. With experience and wisdom the chairperson brings in authority and decisiveness to the deliberations.

It is the chairperson who should work on the agenda before the meeting and ensure that all requirements are made available in the meeting room. All the concerned staff should be in full attendance to assist as and when required. The meeting leader should ensure that there is someone to take notes, and if one such person is not available someone from among the participants can be appointed to be the reporter. Chairperson should play his role actively for attaining success in the meeting.

6.16.5 Notice:

An official meeting is supported by several written documents. Some documents like the notice of the meeting are routine documents and there is a need to change information like the date, time, venue, and purpose of the meeting. Other documents like agenda, minutes and resolutions need to be prepared as per the need of each meeting. So the most essential documents are notice of the meeting, agenda, and minutes.

The notice of the meeting is typed or printed on the organisations' letterhead. It must include:

- name of the body or group which is to meet

- day, date and time of the meeting
- place of the meeting
- agenda of the meeting

The notice of the meeting must be sent well in advance according to the requirements laid down in the organisation rules. Usually at least two weeks' notice is required to stop, if members have to come from different places to attend the meeting longer notice.

6.16.6 Agenda:

It is a list of items or issues to be discussed at the meeting. It is also called business of the meeting. It is usually sent with the notice of the meeting but it may be sent later if it takes time to prepare it. Items included in the agenda depend on the type of meeting before held. The agenda begins with the item of approval of minutes of the previous meeting. When all the items on the agenda have been dealt with and decisions recorded, the chairman of the meeting may allow members to raise any items which are not on the agenda, keeping in view the time available. The chairman may also himself raise a matter which is not included in the agenda. To allow for this the item any other business with the permission of the chair is included, at the end of all business items. The order of the items on the agenda should not be changed during the course of the meeting, except by consent of the members.

The chairman of the meeting must take great care to decide the order in which the items are to be put on the agenda, especially if they are likely to be controversies over any of the items. It is desirable to take up urgent items and non-controversial items first.
Sample agenda:

Agenda

- To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting held on 25th may 2015 (enclosed)
- To approve the revised budget for 2014-15 and the budget estimates for the year 2015-16 with or without modifications.
- To consider application for life membership
- To review the working of the society and its institutions
- Any other matter permitted by the chair
- Discussion about the next meeting.

6.16.7 Minutes:

A record of the decisions taken at a formal meeting is called minutes. Minutes are the written record of work done and decisions taken in the meeting. They must be precise and clear, as per the record, what was decided and done. They are meant for future references. The minutes of companies and statutory bodies are written in formal style. Minutes is a legal document and can be produced in a court of law as evidence. At the next meeting the minutes are read out by the secretary or may be taken as read if a copy was sent to members earlier. The minutes are then approved and signed by the chairman and secretary. Essential points in minutes:

- Name of the body and organization
- Day and date of meeting
- Time and place of meeting
- Name of chairperson of the meeting, list of members present should be attached.
- Name of persons in attendance, who are not members of the meeting
- Leave of absence to those who are not present
- Resolutions
- Thanks to the chair

Check your Progress:

Fill in the blanks:

- ..... facilitate direct face to face communication.
- ..... is the list of items that are to be taken up for discussion during a meeting.
- ..... is a record of the decisions taken at a formal meeting.

6.16.8 Listening and Speaking skills required during a meeting:

At speaking level:

- While speaking in a group discussion we should avoid too many gestures or body movements. Our body should not convey any message of aggressiveness, irritation, tiredness, panic, hurry or hesitation.
- An emphasis while participating should be on important points, pleasant deliberation, and searching questions which make the discussion effective. Ours should be a friendly approach.
- Impressive voice helps the participants to pronounce words with proper stress and intonation. It attracts other participants to hear what we speak. So it should be easily heard and should be pleasant in quality.
- General poise and bearing makes us maintain our cool. Poise does not allow us to pound on someone or on some point of view. Poise also helps to know our attitude.

Poise also includes our preparedness, calmness, a courteous attitude, and confidence. All these help us to participate efficiently in a meeting.

- The participant should know how to modulate his or her voice with effective articulation combining stress on syllables and appropriate subordination. He or she should know the right kind of pronunciation.
- For effective discussion we should always know how to explain elaborate, compare, describe, illustrate, trace, relate, summarise, and view matters.

At Listening level:

- Focus should be on the subject matter or on the problem of the discussion.
- Be frank and friendly in receiving the views and opinions of others. Our gestures should not be of a hostile kind.
- As a participant we should know how to listen, what to listen and derive the right meaning. We should know how to generalise information gathered. We must recognise the significance of the information received.
- We should perceive the viewpoints expressed in the discussion and then interpret the viewpoints and opinions of others, rationally and objectively.
- We should adopt a positive approach to what has been heard. So as to find meanings, slow down your thinking process while listening to others.

6.17 LET'S SUM UP:

- Business communication is a vast area of communication. Having expertise in writing business letters will prove to be very beneficial for businessmen and others who need to write formal letters.
- Clarity, brevity, impact, relevant information, simplicity, timeliness, vocabulary, etc., are some of the important qualities of effective business letters.
- The internal qualities of a good business letter refer to the quality of language, its presentation, etc. These facilitate quick processing of the request that leads to prompt action.
- External qualities of letter include size, shape, material of paper used, folding of paper, size and type of envelope, etc.
- A resume or CV is a written document of your personal history- biographical details, educational qualifications, work experience, achievements, etc.
- Chronological, functional, targeted, combination, mini or brief resume are some of the common types of resume used these days.
- Email is an electronic mode of communication, very easy and very fast.
- Fax, like telephonic, sets up a temporary circuit between the origin and the destination of the call for which you have to pay regular phone rates. E-mail uses "packet switching" technology which makes efficient use of a network of permanently open lines.
- A business report is an orderly, unbiased means of written communication of factual information written for a specific purpose.
- Business reports may be of: Routine type, Informational type, Research type

- Prepared through proper planning, there are every chances of getting success in a meeting.
- Tables, flowcharts, graphs, images, etc., are visual aids which help in better comprehending a report.
- Meetings facilitate direct face to face communication and are essential at various levels in all organisations.
- A notice is a formal written document used for interdepartmental or inter-organizational communication.
- An agenda is a list of items or issues to be discussed at the meeting.

6.18 QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE:

1) What are the different parts of a business letter?
2) What are the essentials of a good business letter?
3) Enlist the differences between fully block form or modified block form of letter.
4) Throw light on the types of resumes.
5) What is a targeted resume?
6) Define an Email.
7) Make a list of the tips for constructing an effective email.
8) Discuss the structure of the formal report.
9) Define a report and write its characteristics.
10) Write a note on various kinds of reports.
11) Discuss briefly how illustrations add value to the report.
12) Imagine that you are the district collector. Your district has been affected by the worst floods of the seasons. Write a letter report to the chief secretary of your state giving him all the details about the flood situation in your district.
13) You are the sales manager in a detergent company; your General Manager wants to launch upon a new kind of bathing soap containing neem. Write a survey report giving reasons whether this bathing soap will be popular among people.
14) What kind of preparation is required before writing a report?
15) What is a meeting?
16) Define agenda.
17) Draft a notice of the Annual General Meeting of an organization.

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