Master of Business Administration

(Open and Distance Learning Mode)

Semester – I

Managerial Communication

Centre for Distance and Online Education (CDOE)

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Managerial Communication

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Unit 1: Introduction to Managerial Communication

Structure

Objectives

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

● Understand the concept and philosophy and nature of managerial communication & its process.

● Discuss the components of Effective communication and barriers to communication.

● Explain the communication skills; writing, reading, logic analysis and listening.

1.1 Introduction

Communication plays a fundamental role in information sharing. Information if not shared is of no use. Communication is the act of conveying information for the purpose of creating a shared understanding. It's something that humans do every day. Individuals working together in the same organization need to speak to each other to keep themselves abreast with the latest developments in the organization. The discipline of communication focuses on how people use messages to generate meanings within and across various contexts, cultures, channels, and media. It is practically not possible for an individual to do everything on his own. He needs a medium which helps him discuss various ideas and evaluate pros and cons of proposed approaches with people around. Here comes the role of communication.

The act of communicating pulls on numerous interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. These include talking, listening, noting, enquiring, processing, analyzing and evaluating. Receivers of a message must be able to ascertain the source's intent, take into account the message's context, resolve any confusion, accurately decode the information and decide how to act on it. Such skills are essential to learning, forming vigorous dealings, creating a sense of community and achieving achievement in the workplace.

In today's globalized, media-driven world, communication studies have become more relevant and exciting than ever. Managerial communication is a function which helps managers connects individually with each employees & peers within the organization. It aids in the smooth movement/ flow of information among managers working towards a mutual objective. The message has to be clear and well understood in effective communication. The team members should distinguish what their manager or team leader intends to converse. Effective managerial communication enables the information to flow in its preferred form among managers, team leaders and their respective teams. Within the business perspective, managerial communication is 'the downward, horizontal, or upward exchange of information and spread of meaning through casual or official channels that enables managers to achieve their objectives' (Bell and Martin, 2008: 130). Within this framework the role of managers is to enable the communication in the organization and practice it as a means to trail the organizational goals & objectives.

Listening is the most important part of communication, because if you fail to understand the message being expressed to you, you will also fail in providing a substantial and meaningful response. This is the root cause of many arguments, misunderstandings, and complications, whether at home, school, or work. Being able to take control of the listening process will turn you into a better communicator, overall.

In this unit, we shall be discussing about the nature, meaning & process behind the effective communication. We will also learn about the barriers to communications & various communication medium in an organization.

1.2 Managerial Communication: Concept, Meaning and Definition

Managerial communication allows people to interchange information and feedbacks within the organization and permits people to follow the organizational goals.

Knowledge of the interpersonal communication process and potential barriers is an important managerial skill in order to assurance the effectiveness of the communication.

Effective Communication Increases Managerial Efficiency

1.2.1 Concept and Meaning

Managerial communication is a significant process in order to ensure a perfect understanding of the organizational goals and involve people at all levels towards their attainment. In fact, through an effective communication, managers can communicate objectives, tasks and policies to employees and transmit their feedbacks to the top management. Managers can inspire, whenever necessary, the perception of the recipients and trigger the adequate reaction to the information delivered (Stefanescu and Popa, 2008: 3) Communication is the exchange of messages between people for the persistence of achieving common connotations. Communication and associated interpersonal processes are important ingredients of organizational efficiency. Good communication does not require agreement with the message; just clear understanding of the message.

Basically, communication is the means with which managers can exercise their duties of planning, direction and control (Mullins, 2010: 433) in order to pursue their goals of improving the productivity of the organization and fulfil the expectations of the employees (Richmond, Wagner and McCroskey, 1983: 27). In particular communication is crucial during the process of change which is becoming more and more important within moderns organizations and that requires an extraordinary level of engagement as well as a strong leadership (Flock, 2006: 1; Kotter, 1996: preface).

1.2.2 Definition

Managerial communication defines" managerial communication enables people to exchange information and feedbacks within the organization and enables people to follow the organizational goals.

The Communications Process
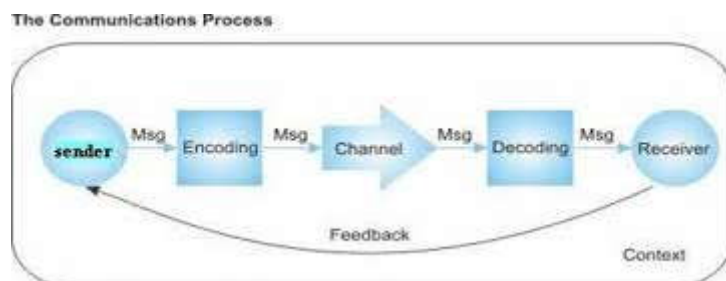
There are a number of definitions of the term communication. A few of them are being reproduced below:

"Communication is the sum of all things, one person does when he wants to create understanding in the minds of another. It involves a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening and understanding." **– Allen Louis**

Communication has been defined "As the transfer of information from one person to another whether or not it elicits confidence." **– Koontz and O' Donell**

"Communication is an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions or emotions by two or more persons." **– George Terry**

"Communication is defined as "the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another, it is essentially a bridge of meaning between people. By using the bridge of meaning a person can safely cross the river of misunderstanding." **– Keith Davis**

Effective communication is "purposive interchange, resulting in workable understanding and agreement between the sender and receiver of a message". – **George Vardman**

"Communication is interchange of thoughts, opinions, or information, by speech, writing, or signs". **– Robert Anderson**

Communication is the process by which information is passed between individuals and/ or organizations by means of previously agreed symbols. **– Peter Little**

Communication is any behavior that results in an exchange of meaning. – **The American Management Association**

Communication may be broadly defined as the process of meaningful interaction among human beings. More specifically, it is the process by which meanings are perceived and understandings are reached among human beings. **– D.E. McFarland**

1.3 The communication process

Effective communication is vital to all businesses. If the right message does not get to the right person, in the right format, then this could affect the overall efficiency of the business. Worse still, the wrong messages might be passed on to the wrong people. This could actually harm the business.

What is communication process?

"Transmission of a message from a sender to a receiver in an understandable manner."

- The communication process is a guide toward realizing effective communication.
- Effective communication leads to understanding.

There are a number of parts to any communication. For instance, sending a text message involves:

● the sender - the person writing the text

● the receiver - the person to whom the message is addressed

● the content of the message - for example, news, information, an invitation

● the format of the message - in this example it is text but many other different ways are possible

- the communication channel through which the message is sent - in this case a mobile phone network
- the medium - how the message will be sent, in this case it is in writing.

It is vital that each part of the message is correctly chosen and in place. If not, the message may not be received or understood. Sending a text to someone without a mobile phone will obviously fail.

It is important for a business to choose how and when it will send messages to intended receivers. For example, a building society will only send information about a new savings product to its members by text or email, if they have specifically chosen to receive communication by that method. Sending information by this method to people who cannot receive text or email could result in losing an opportunity to sell a new product.

1.3.1 What is Effective Communication?

In its simplest of forms communication can be defined as a two-way communication between sender and receiver. One must also consider several factors that complicate communication; such as the format of the message, the medium by which the message is transmitted, the interpretation by the receiver and whether any reply is warranted. All of these components present a variety of challenges and obstacles, which frequently cause breakdowns in communication. Most of what people believe is communication is actually what we would define as "advertising." With the best of intentions, organizations have been attempting to communicate with their people by using a variety of means that are more supplemental in nature. These misguided communication tools include intranet pages, newsletters, bulletin boards, check stuffers, meeting minutes and mass e-mails. In reality, Effective Communication occurs when you have **face-to-face interaction, documentation** on the content of the conversation **and reinforcement** of what was communicated prior to the conclusion of the discussion.

1.3.2 Importance of Effective Communication

One of the leading factors in determining the success or failure of organizations today is the effectiveness of their people to properly communicating with one another. To verify the importance your people place on communication, check your employee survey results. You'll likely find several issues all pointing back to a lack of true communication. For both small and large organizations to be successful; one must understand what is meant by effective communication and how to achieve it.

Key elements for Effective Communication:

1. **Meeting Structure.** By creating a standard agenda in a face-to-face environment, you can ensure clarity of the message and know that everyone will speak the same language.

2. **Standardized Frequency.** With everyone having an establish rhythm for when communication will occur, you will establish a foundation for timely completion of tasks.

3. **Provide Connectivity.** With a built-in process for passing and receiving critical information, you'll create direct links from top to bottom and bottom to top.

4. **Forward-looking Mindset.** While reporting on the present, leaders and employees can look ahead to "what's next" and discuss best practices for taking issues head-on.

1.3.3 How can you create a standardized communication cascade?

Communication is crucial to businesses to day and meetings are the fundamental component. Developing a communication cascade in your organization driven by a standard meeting process. Our system engages all participants in meetings that are focused on the business and drive to specific outcomes. Utilizing our process, organizations are able to eliminate many ineffective meetings, reducing time spent in meetings and significantly increasing overall meeting effectiveness.

1.3.4 Effective Ways to Communicate

The following actions have been observed in teams with effective communications skills.

- Acknowledge ("Roger") communications.
- Provide information in accordance with SOP's.
- Provide information when asked.
- Repeat, as necessary, to ensure communication is accurately received.
- Use standard terminology when communicating information.
- Request and provide clarification when needed.
- Ensure statements are direct and unambiguous.
- Inform the appropriate individuals when the mission or plans change.
- Communicate all information needed by those individuals or teams external to the team.
- Use nonverbal communication appropriately.
- Use proper order when communicating information.

1.3.5 Basic Principles of Effective Communication

Many definitions describe communication as a transfer of information, thoughts or ideas to create shared understanding between a sender and a receiver. The information may be written or spoken, professional or social, personal or impersonal to name a few possibilities. Basically, the communication process involves a sender, receiver, message, channel and feedback. However, this simplistic description significantly under-represents what can actually be a very complex process. Click here for a brief overview of the communication process.

Essential issues to be aware of in any communication situation are:

- Content refers to the actual words or symbols of the message that are known as language - the spoken and written words combined into phrases that make grammatical sense. Importantly, we all use and interpret the meanings of words differently, so even simple messages can be misunderstood. And many words have different meanings to confuse the issue even more.

- Process refers to the way the message is delivered - the nonverbal elements in speech such as the tone of voice, the look in the sender's eyes, body language, hand gestures and state of emotions (anger, fear, uncertainty, confidence, etc.) that can be detected. The non-verbal that we use often cause messages to be

misunderstood as we tend to believe what we see more than what we hear. Indeed, we often trust the accuracy of nonverbal behaviors more than verbal behaviors. A well-known UCLA study found that only around 7% of the meaning of spoken communication came from words alone, 55% came from facial expression and 38% came from the way the words were said.

● Context refers to the situation or environment in which your message is delivered. Important contextual factors that can subtly influence the effectiveness of a message include the physical environment (e.g. a patient's bedside, ward office, quiet room etc.), cultural factors (e.g. international cultures, organizational cultures and so on) and developmental factors (e.g. first, second or third year student, experience in similar clinical settings, stage of the practicum etc.).

The goal of communication between a sender and a receiver is the understanding of the message being sent. Anything that interferes with this can be referred to as 'noise'. Communication noise can influence our interpretation of messages and significantly affect our perception of interactions with others. Read more about some examples of noise.

However, there are a number of strategies that can help to help minimize communication noise and maximize communication efficiency. Read more about these strategies.

Developing competence in communication, particularly in the professional context, requires ongoing practice and reflection on practice. Watch these Videos for practical suggestions from students and staff for enhancing communication in the workplace. While you're watching the videos, think about your own communication skills and what you can learn from the information in this section that will help you communicate even more effectively.

1.4 Communication Guidelines

● Use short, clear direct sentences. Long, involved explanations may be difficult to follow as some mental disorders make concentrating difficult. Short, clear, and specific statements are easier to understand and answer.

● Keep the content of communication simple and focused. Cover only one topic; give only one direction at a time. Otherwise, it can be very confusing to follow the conversation, especially for someone with a mental illness.

● Do what you can to keep the 'stimulation level' as low as possible. A loud voice, an insistent manner, making accusations and criticisms can be very stressful for anyone who has suffered a mental breakdown.

● If your family member appears withdrawn and uncommunicative, back off for a while. Your communication will have a better chance of getting the desired response when your family member is more open to talking.

● You may find that your family member has difficulty remembering what you have said. You may have to repeat instructions and directions.

● Be pleasant and firm. If you make your position clear and do not undermine what you are expressing, your family member will not as readily misinterpret it.

● If the discussion turns into an argument, everyone involved in the discussion should agree to call a 'time-out.' It can be helpful to take a few deep breaths or take a short walk, then go back to the discussion.

● Listen carefully to what your family member tells you. Acknowledge that you appreciate their point of view and understand their feelings.

1.5 Barriers to Effective Communication

There are many reasons why interpersonal communications may fail. In many communications, the message (what is said) may not be received exactly the way the

sender intended. It is, therefore, important that the communicator seeks feedback to check that their message is clearly understood.

The skills of Active Listening, Clarification and Reflection may help but the skilled communicator also needs to be aware of the barriers to effective communication and how to avoid or overcome them.

There are many barriers to communication and these may occur at any stage in the communication process. Barriers may lead to your message becoming distorted and you therefore risk wasting both time and/or money by causing confusion and misunderstanding. Effective communication involves overcoming these barriers and conveying a clear and concise message.

1.5.1 Common Barriers to Effective Communication:

A Categorization of Barriers to Communication

Language Barriers

Language and linguistic ability may act as a barrier to communication. However, even when communicating in the same language, the terminology used in a message may act as a barrier if it is not fully understood by the receiver(s). For example, a message that includes a lot of specialist jargon and abbreviations will not be understood by a receiver who is not familiar with the terminology used.

Regional colloquialisms and expressions may be misinterpreted or even considered offensive.

Psychological Barriers

The psychological state of the communicators will influence how the message is sent, received and perceived.

For example, if someone is stressed they may be preoccupied by personal concerns and not as receptive to the message as if they were not stressed. Stress management is an important personal skill that affects our interpersonal relationships.

Anger is another example of a psychological barrier to communication, when we are angry it is easy to say things that we may later regret and also to misinterpret what others are saying.

More generally people with low self-esteem may be less assertive and therefore may not feel comfortable communicating - they may feel shy about saying how they really feel or read negative sub-texts into messages they hear.

Physiological Barriers

Physiological barriers may result from the receiver's physical state. For example, a receiver with reduced hearing may not grasp to entirety of a spoken conversation especially if there is significant background noise.

Physical Barriers

An example of a physical barrier to communication is geographic distance between the sender and receiver(s).Communication is generally easier over shorter distances as more communication channels are available and less technology is required. Although modern technology often serves to reduce the impact of physical barriers, the advantages and disadvantages of each communication channel should be understood so that an appropriate channel can be used to overcome the physical barriers.

Systematic Barriers

Systematic barriers to communication may exist in structures and organizations where there are inefficient or inappropriate information systems and communication channels, or where there is a lack of understanding of the roles and responsibilities for communication. In such organizations, individuals may be unclear of their role in the communication process and therefore not know what is expected of them.

Attitudinal Barriers

Attitudinal barriers are behaviors or perceptions that prevent people from communicating effectively. Attitudinal barriers to communication may result from personality conflicts, poor management, and resistance to change or a lack of motivation. Effective receivers of messages should attempt to overcome their own attitudinal barriers to facilitate effective communication.

1.6 Internal and External Communication verses Business Communication

Internal and External Communication & Business Communication encompasses a huge body of knowledge both internal and external for any business.

Internal communication includes communication of corporate vision, strategies, plans, corporate culture, shared values and guiding principles, employee motivation, cross pollination of ideas etc. External communication includes branding, marketing, advertising, customer relations, public relations, media relations, business negotiations, etc.

Whatever form it takes, the objective remains the same, i.e. to create a business value. It can be majorly classified on basis of.

1. Number of persons/ receivers to whom message is addressed:-

   1. Intrapersonal:- talking to one's own self. E.g. Dramatic works.

   2. Interpersonal:-exchange of messages between two persons. e.g. Conversation, dialogue, an interview, some other cases like an author, a letter etc.

   3. Group:-Can be among small groups like organization, club, class rooms where all individuals retain their individual identity.

   4. Mass: - occurs when the message is sent to large groups of people e.g. newspaper, radio, T.V etc.

2. On basis of medium employed

   5. Verbal: - means communicating with words, written or spoken

   6. Nonverbal: - includes using of pictures signs, gestures and facial expressions for exchanging information between persons E.g. personal space, touch, eyes, sense of smell and time. Nonverbal Communication is communication transmitted without words. The best-known types of Nonverbal communication are body language and verbal tone. Nonverbal Communication is by means of elements and behaviors that are not coded into words. It is a written communication which includes letters, memoranda, reports, newsletters, policy manuals, etc

   7. Meta communication: - the speaker's choice of words unintentionally communicates something more than what the actual words state.

1.7 Managerial Skills to Encourage and Raise Productivity

Managerial Skill Sets: Managerial skills are what the manager uses to assist the organization in accomplishing its goals. Specifically, a manager will make use of his or her own abilities, knowledge base, experiences, and perspectives to increase the productivity of those with whom they manage. Much like a professional basketball player needs to know how to dribble and shoot a basketball, or how a home builder understands the process of framing a house, managers also need to have a specific set of skills in order to effectively perform their jobs. The toolbox for what a manager needs in order to perform their job effectively, typically, fall into one of three categories:

1. Technical skills,

2. Human skills, and

3. Conceptual skills.

To give you a better understanding of these skills, let's take a look at how each of these skills is applied by a hypothetical character Person A the Manager and his employee Person B the Financial Analyst.

1. **Technical skills** are those skills needed to achieve a definite assignment. It is the 'how to' skill set that permits a manager to complete his or her job. These skills are the combination of formal education, training, and on-the-job experience. Most employees expect their managers to have a technical skill set above their own so that, when needed, an employee can come to their manager to find out how to do something specific to their individual job.

   For example, let's say that part of Person B the Financial Analyst's job is to update a balance sheet each week. Person B is a novice financial analyst and is new to the company, so he's expecting his manager, Person A, to show him how to perform this task initially, so that he can, eventually, do it on his own. Therefore, it is essential for Person A to have the technical skills of how to update a balance sheet so that he may, in turn, share that skill with Person B. As a low-level manager, technical skills are most important for Person A due to how close his role is to the general workforce - in this case, Person B.

2. ***Human Skills:*** The next styles of skills a manager must have are human skills. These interpersonal skills are what a manager will use to work with his or her employees. Some people are born with good human skills; others must work much harder at it. Human skills are critical for all managers because they work with people. Managers with good human skills understand their role inside the manager/employee relationship and how important things, like trust, cohesion, fairness, empathy, and good will, are to the overall success of the organization. Human skills help the manager to communicate, lead, and motivate an employee to work towards a higher level of productivity.

    For example, let's go back to Person B and Person A. Imagine Person B's job description was changing to include a greater deal of responsibility but for the same pay. Person B is upset, and feels overwhelmed by this change. Person A is a manager with good human skills, so he is able to empathize and communicate his understanding of Person B's frustration with the change to him. Person A quickly works to find ways to motivate Person B to continue to work at a higher level, despite the additional workload being placed on him.

3. ***Conceptual Skills: Conceptual skills*** are the final type of skills a manager must possess inside their toolbox. The level of analytical ability to envision both the parts and its sum directly translates into a manager's conceptual skill set. Essentially, a manager's conceptual skills allow him or her to solve problems in a strategic and calculated fashion. Conceptual skills are becoming increasingly more important in today's chaotic ***business environment***.

    Managers are, continually, being challenged to think conceptually about their organizations to develop action plans and harness resources to achieve organizational goals. A manager with good conceptual skills can look at a problem, break it down into manageable pieces, consider a variety of possible solutions, all before putting it back together again in a more effective and efficient manner. Conceptual skills are most important for top managers but still important for middle and low-level managers as well.

1.8 Listening and Types of Listening from Business Communication

Listening: It is a process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and/or nonverbal messages. (International Listening Association)

Listening is a highly complex, collaborative process "by which spoken language is converted to meaning in the mind". Most people, most of the time, take listening for granted, it's something that just happens. It is only when you stop to think about listening and what it needs that you begin to understand that listening is in fact an important skill that needs to be cultivated and established. Listening is more than just hearing, although these two terms are often used synonymously. Hearing is only an important component of listening. Listening is a specialized form of hearing and is the primary function of the ear. The most crucial part of the listening process is thinking or converting to meaning what one hears.

Active listening is an essential mentoring skill. One of the most common mistakes mentors can make is confusing hearing and listening. Hearing is merely noting that someone is speaking. Listening, however, is making sense of what is heard and requires the individual to constantly pay attention, interpret, and remember what is heard. Hearing is passive; listening is active. The passive listener is much like a tape recorder. If the speaker is providing a clear message, the listener will probably get most of what is said. For mentors, this is not enough. They must be active listeners. Active listening requires the listener to hear the words and identify the feelings associated with the words. Mentors should be able to understand the speaker from his or her point of view. There are four essential requirements for active listening:

  • Intensity

  • Empathy

• Acceptance

• Willingness to take responsibility for completeness.

An active listener concentrates on what the speaker is saying. The human brain is capable of handling a speaking rate six times that of the average speaker. Thus, the listener must focus on the speaker. Tuning out distractions will increase listening ability

Listening: It is an active process. It involves the conscious desire to determine the meaning of what is heard. While listening, one is engaged in processing the date, reconstructing the data and also giving meaning to the data.

Effective listening is very often the foundation of strong relationships with others, at home, socially, in education and in the workplace.

1.8.1 Types of Listening

Discriminative listening

As the name itself suggests, discriminative listening is the most basic type of listening, whereby the difference between the sounds is identified. If you cannot hear differences, then you cannot grasp the meaning that is expressed by such differences.

Discriminative listening is first developed at a very early age – perhaps even before birth, in the womb. This is the most basic form of listening and does not involve the thoughtful of the meaning of words or phrases but merely the diverse sounds that are made. In early childhood, for example, a distinction is made between the sounds of the voices of the parents – the voice of the father sounds different to that of the mother.

Discriminative listening develops through juvenile and into majority age. As we grow older and develop and gain more life experience, our ability to distinguish between different sounds is improved. Not only can we recognize different voices, but we also develop the ability to recognize restrained differences in the way that sounds are made – this is fundamental to ultimately considerate what these sounds mean. Differences include many refinements, knowing foreign languages, distinguishing between regional accents and clues to the emotions and feelings of the speaker.

Being able to distinguish the refinements of sound made by somebody who is happy or sad, angry or stressed, for example, ultimately adds value to what is actually being said and, of course, does aid comprehension. When discriminative listening skills are combined with visual stimuli, the resulting ability to 'listen' to body-language enables us to begin to understand the speaker more fully – for example recognizing somebody is sad despite what they are saying or how they are saying it.

For Example: Imagine yourself surrounded by people who are speaking a language that you cannot understand, perhaps passing through an airport in another country. You can probably distinguish between different voices, male and female, young and old and also gain some understanding about what is going on around you based on the tone of voice, mannerisms and body language of the other people. You do not understand what is being said but using discriminative listening to gain some level of comprehension of your surroundings.

Comprehension listening

When the discrimination between sounds is achieved, one should learn to make sense of the perceived sound. To comprehend the meaning, one requires a dictionary of words and all rules of grammar and grammar by which one can understand what others are saying.

Comprehensive listening involves understanding the message or messages that are being communicated. Like discriminative listening, comprehensive listening is fundamental to all listening sub-types.

In order to be able use comprehensive listening and therefore gain understanding the listener first needs appropriate vocabulary and language skills. Using overly complicated language or technical jargon, therefore, can be a barrier to comprehensive listening. Comprehensive listening is further complicated by the fact that two different people listening to the same thing may understand the message in two different ways. This problem can be multiplied in a group setting, like a classroom or business meeting where numerous different meanings can be derived from what has been said.

Comprehensive listening is complimented by sub-messages from non-verbal communication, such as the tone of voice, gestures and other body language. These non-verbal signals can greatly aid communication and comprehension but can also confuse and potentially lead to misunderstanding. In many listening situations it is vital to seek clarification and use skills such as reflection aid comprehension.

Evaluative listening

Evaluative listening is also called 'critical listening' because we make judgments about what the other person is saying. We seek to assess the truth of what is being said, We also judge what they say about our values, assessing them as good or bad, worthy or unworthy.

Appreciative listening

In appreciative listening, the main intention is to seek certain information which will be appreciated.

Empathetic listening

When we listen empathetically, we seek to understand the beliefs, moods, emotions and goals of other people. This requires excellent discrimination and close attention to the nuances of emotional signals. Empathic listening involves attempting to understand the feelings and emotions of the speaker – to put you into the speaker's shoes and share their thoughts.

Therapeutic listening

In therapeutic listening, the listener has a purpose of not only empathizing with the speaker but also to use this deep connection in order to help the speaker understand, change or develop in some way.

Dialogic listening

The word 'dialogue' stems from the Greek words 'dia', meaning 'through' and 'logos' meaning 'words'. Thus dialogic listening means learning through conversation. Dialogic listening is also known as 'relational listening' because with the help of exchange of ideas while listening, we also indirectly creation a relation.

Why Is Listening Important in a Business Organization?

Listening is important to effective working relationships.

Verbal communication involves both speaking and listening. In a business organization, listening is a key to effective working relationships among employees and between management and staff. Listening skills also impact a company's interaction with customers and other businesses. To improve your listening skills, give the other person your full attention and maintain eye contact. When she is done speaking, rephrase her remarks and ask whether you understand her correctly. Continue to ask questions to gain a better understanding of her statements.

1. **Gain Information:** Listening enables you to acquire facts so that you can make decisions that benefit your business. By listening to a job applicant in an interview, for example, you might discover his attitudes toward the profession, performance in previous jobs and information not detailed on his resume. This additional insight can help you decide whether the applicant is a good fit for your company. A supervisor who listens to an employee's complaint about a health risk on the job might reduce injuries and enhance job performance.

2. **Develop Trust:** Listening is essential to building trust. If one member of a team doesn't listen to instructions, an entire project might fail. To develop trust, pay attention to verbal instructions and deadlines. Listen for statements a coworker might make regarding his own strengths and weaknesses as it relates to a project, so that you can collaborate in a way that maximizes each other's strengths.

3. **Maintain Reputation:** The reputation of a business depends upon listening skills. If you fail to listen to a customer, for example, the customer might not receive the service or product she expected. When this occurs repeatedly, it can tarnish the company's reputation. A company develops relationships with other businesses through verbal communication, too. Talking on the phone and working on a task at the same time can result in misunderstandings.

4. **Reduce Conflict:** Listening can reduce conflict. A conflict can arise when an individual feels misunderstood or mistreated. For example, if you fail to listen to

instructions and your coworker does the task you were supposed to perform, the coworker might be unhappy with you. Pay attention to nonverbal cues, as well. If an individual's facial expressions, gestures or behavior contradict her words, ask questions to find out what she really means.

5. **Motivate Employees:** A manager can improve morale and productivity by understanding what motivates each employee. Listen to employees to discover what aspects of the job they find most rewarding and challenging. Don't expect to understand an employee's needs from a single conversation. Continue to be an attentive listener so that the employee knows you are sincerely interested in what she has to say.

Suggestions for Improving Active Listening Skills

1. **Make Eye Contact:** Lack of eye contact may be interpreted as disinterest or disapproval. Making eye contact with the speaker focuses attention, reduces the chance of distraction, and is encouraging to the speaker.

2. **Show Positive Nods and Appropriate Facial Expressions:** The effective listener shows signs of being interested in what is said through nonverbal signs. Together with good eye contact, non-verbal expressions convey active listening.

3. **Avoid Diverting Actions or Gestures:** Do not look at other people, play with pens or pencils, shuffle papers, or the like. These activities make the speaker feel like the listener is not interested in what is being said.

4. **Ask Questions:** Questioning helps ensure clarification of what the speaker is saying, facilitates understanding, and lets the speaker know that the listener is engaged.

5. **Precis:** Precis/ phrasing means restating what the individual has said in different words. This technique allows the listener to verify that the message was received correctly.

6. **Avoid Interrupting the Speaker:** Allow the speaker to complete his or her thought before responding, and do not anticipate what he/she will say.

7. **Do Not Talk Too Much:** Talking is easier than listening intently to someone else. An active listener recognizes that it is impossible to talk and listen acutely at the same time.

Effective listening requires both deliberate efforts and a keen mind. Effective listeners appreciate flow of new ideas and information. Organizations that follow the principles of effective listening are always informed timely, updated with the changes and implementations, and are always out of crisis situation. Effective listening promotes organizational relationships, encourages product delivery and innovation, as well as helps organization to deal with the diversity in employees and customers it serves.

To improve your communication skills, you must learn to listen effectively. Effective listening gives you an advantage and makes you more impressive when you speak. It also boosts your performance.

Effective Listening Skills

1. Discover your interests' field.

2. Grasp and understand the matter/content.

3. Remain calm. Do not loose your temper. Anger hampers and inhibits communication. Angry people jam their minds to the words of others.

4. Be open to accept new ideas and information.

5. Jot down and take a note of important points.

6. Work upon listening. Analyze and evaluate the speech in spare time.

7. Rephrase and summarize the speaker's ideas.

8. Keep on asking questions. This demonstrates that how well you understand the speaker's ideas and also that you are listening.

9. Avoid distractions.

10. "Step into the shoes of others", i.e., put yourself in the position of the speaker and observe things from his view point. This will help creating an atmosphere of mutual understanding and improve the exchange of ideas in communication process.

Characteristics of Good and Effective Listener

Good and effective listener tries to give maximum amount of thought to the speaker's ideas being communicated, leaving a minimum amount of time for mental exercises to go off track. A good listener:

1. **Is attentive:** Good listener must pay attention to the key points. He should be alert. He should avoid any kind of distraction.

2. **Do not assume:** Good listener does not ignore the information he considers is unnecessary. He should always summarize the speaker's ideas so that there is no misunderstanding of thoughts of speakers. He avoids premature judgements about the speaker's message.

3. **Listen for feelings and facts:** Good listener deliberately listens for the feelings of the speaker. He concentrates totally on the facts. He evaluates the facts objectively. His listening is sympathetic, active and alert. He keenly observes the gestures, facial expression and body language of the speaker. In short, a good listener should be projective (i.e. one who tries to understand the views of the speaker) and empathic (i.e. one who concentrates not only on the surface meaning of the message but tries to probe the feelings and emotions of the speaker).

4. **Concentrate on the other speakers kindly and generously:** A good listener makes deliberate efforts to give a chance to other speakers also to express their thoughts and views. He tries to learn from every speaker. He evaluates the speaker's ideas in spare time. He focuses on the content of the speaker's message and not on the speaker's personality and looks.

5. **Opportunists:** A good listener tries to take benefit from the opportunities arising. He asks "What's in it for me?"

1.9 Why Is Writing Important in a Business Organization?

Notes

The activity or process of expressing ideas and feelings or of giving people information, communication is of great value and significance to a business organization. There are three primary methods of communication in business organizations, they are, verbal, non-verbal and written communication. Though, of all the three, speech is considered as the fastest method of communication between people, yet, in order that it may be used as and when needed for references and providing a permanency of record, written communication is preferred as it is the most effective method of communication.

● Written communication is an excellent way of conveying the information across the organizational level. The documents that contain the rules and regulations and procedures or the policy manuals are the example of written communication. Besides, the written communication, through email or memos or in the form of letters, is used whenever the superiors need to advise or instruct their subordinates to carry out particular tasks.

● Employees need to be well informed about the policies and the procedures of the organization, so that they may act accordingly. The written communication through policy manual and procedure written on the related documents, such as, loan application form, leave application form etc., serve the purpose.

● Written communication serves as an evidence of the events or the actions that have been taken. Also, there are situations that call for the letters or memos on whose basis certain actions are to be taken. In this way, written communication is of great importance to clear the discrepancies. Aside from these, whenever there is a need to convey the important and urgent message to various persons in organization, written communication may be of great help and assistance providing the required information, which can save the time and effort to be taken to conduct a meeting for that particular purpose. This way written communication provides permanency of records as well.

● Written communication involves any type of interaction that makes use of the written word. It is one of the two main types of communication, along with oral/spoken communication.

● Written communication is very common in business situations, so it is important for small business owners and managers to develop effective written communication skills. Some of the various forms of written communication that are used internally for business operations include memos, reports, bulletins, job descriptions, employee manuals, and electronic mail. Examples of written communication avenues typically pursued with clients, vendors, and other members of the business community, meanwhile, include electronic mail, Internet Web sites, letters, proposals, telegrams, faxes, postcards, contracts, advertisements, brochures, and news   releases.
Ironically, the importance of good writing skills in the business world has become more evident even as companies rely increasingly on computers and other new technologies to meet their obligations. Indeed, business experts warn that any business's positive qualities—from dedication to customer service to high-tech expertise—will be blunted to some degree if they are unable to transfer that dedication and knowledge to the printed page. "Whether you are pitching a business case or justifying a budget, the quality of your writing can determine success or failure," wrote Paula Jacobs in InfoWorld. "Writing ability is especially important in customer communication. Business proposals, status reports, customer documentation, technical support, or even e-mail replies all depend on clear written communication."

1.9.1 Advantages and Disadvantages of Written Communication

● One advantage is that written messages do not have to be distributed on the shoot of the moment; instead, they can be edited and revised several times before they are sent so that the content can be shaped to maximum effect.

● Another advantage is that written communication provides a permanent record of the messages that have been sent and can be saved for later study. Since they are

permanent, written forms of communication also enable recipients to take more time in reviewing the message and providing appropriate feedback. For these reasons, written forms of communication are often considered more appropriate for complex business messages that include important facts and figures.

● Other benefits commonly related with good writing skills include increased customer/client pleasure/ desire; improved interorganizational competence; and enhanced image in the community and industry.

There are also several potential drawbacks associated with written communication, however.

● For instance, unlike oral communication, wherein impressions and responses are replaced instantly, the sender of written communication does not generally receive immediate feedback to his or her message.

● This can be a source of hindrance and indecision in business situations in which a swift response is desired.

● Written messages often take more time to compose, both because of their information-packed nature and the difficulty that many individuals have in composing such correspondence.

● Many companies, however, have taken a proactive stance in addressing the latter issue. Mindful of the large number of workers who struggle with their writing abilities, some firms have begun to offer on-site writing courses or enrolled employees in business writing workshops offered by professional training organizations, colleges, and community education programs.

1.10 Forms of communication in an organization
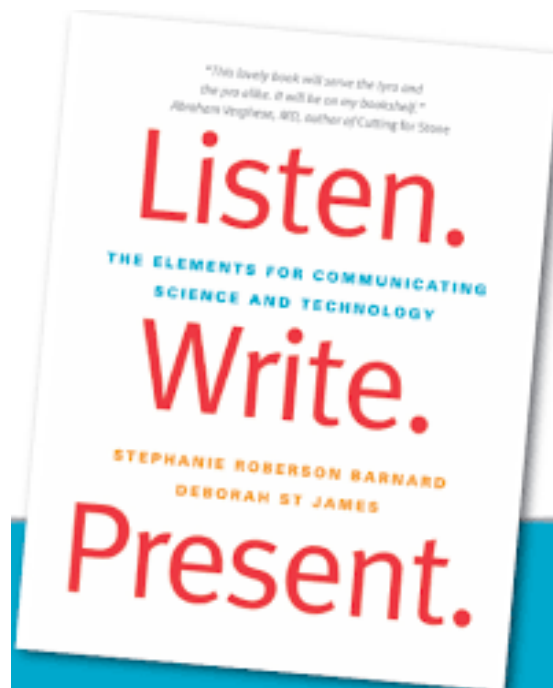
● **Employee handbook:** Employee handbook is given to the new employee at the time of induction or orientation program. It provides complete information of the organization with details on nature of the business, its customers, products, policies, benefits and services available to its employees. Some organizations use charts, photographs, and cartoons to make it more interesting for reading.

● **In-house Magazines & journals:** Organizations publish quarterly or monthly in-house magazines to keep employees updated about the latest development in the business, activities conducted in the company like social or cultural and achievements by the sales team. Management can unite with employees in an

informal or direct way through these magazines. It also contains promotions, retirements, honors and awards with pictures of employees receiving award from management.

- **Financial reports to employees:** Financial reports published for shareholders & general public with all the technical accounting language & its terminologies, do not serve any purpose for the employees. So, some organizations publish financial reports specifically for employees with details on expenses, income, profits and distribution of income, which gives the idea about financial standing of the organization to the employees.

- **Information racks or display stands:** Information racks or stands are usually placed at places like front lobby, factory gate, cafeteria, shop or at a place which is most frequented by employees. These stands are used to display books dealing with wide range of topics such as help yourself, hobbies, sports, accident prevention etc.

- **Bulletin boards:** Bulletin boards in attractive colors & types can be used for display of clippings from newspapers, magazines, clippings on retirements, honors, marriages and other events in the lives of employees.

- **Museums & exhibitions:** Small museum or an exhibition can be used to display quality control ideas, old photographs of the factory, old designs and good quality products. It can create interest among the employees in their own work.

- **Posters:** Posters are used to display topics related with health and safety, hygiene, improvement in production process, etc. Along with text matter, it should contain pictorial diagrams, charts, and photographs to explain the topic in a simple way.

- **Notice Boards:** Notice boards are usually placed at the factory gate or in front lobby. These are used to display notices and circulars issued by the management for administrative purposes, circulars related with hours of work, factories act and any new rules and regulations.

- **Suggestion system:** Some organizations use suggestion system to provide an opportunity for a working communication with the management. Employees can use this system to give positive proposals for improvement in machines, devices, techniques and procedures or to express their dissatisfaction with existing facilities or particulars.

- **Memo:** Memos are business letters but used within an organization and only for employees. Memos are used to give information to employees such as changes in some procedures or rules, policy change or for specific purpose like request to attend a meeting. The format of the memo differs from business letter format.

1.11 Managerial Activities: Influence on Refining Employee Performance

An awesome body of suggestion survives to highpoint the important and vital role of managers on employee performance and retention. However, the potential list of activities that a manager can undertake to improve employee performance is as long as the oceans are wide. Thus, questions often arise about which managerial activities have the most impact on improving employee performance and what the extent of that improvement is.

Abundant professionals claim that the most effective leaders use methodologies that balance their focus between interpersonal skills and driving for results. These approaches seem consistent with the perception on good leadership, yet only anecdotal evidence is available to support such a contention.

A review of several studies and assessments on these important topics discloses unusual similarities in findings and recommendations and suggests that an application of hard science might offer us some insight on how best to exercise and build the soft skill of leadership. Specifically, the evidence supports the establishment of a performance-management based organizational culture, although not from a command

and control perspective, but one that involves a coaching environment and conscious attempts at continuous dialogue within work teams to achieve a balance between driving for results and interpersonal skills. Furthermore, managers who undertake specific activities related to this approach have a much better chance of achieving "breakthrough" employee performance improvements, leading to "breakthrough" results for the organization.

1.11.1 Performance Management

Most managers agree on the importance of performance management as a leader and would probably rate themselves fairly proficient in this role. Performance management is the systematic process by which the manager involves its employees, as individuals and members of a group, in improving organizational efficacy in the achievement of its mission and goals.

It is used to communicate organizational goals and objectives, reinforce individual accountability for meeting those goals, and track and evaluate individual and organizational performance results. It reflects a corporation and partnership in which managers share responsibility for developing their employees in such a way that enables employees to make contributions to the organization. It is a clearly defined process for managing people that will result in success for both the individual and the organization.

In mid-2002, the Corporate Executive Board's Learning and Development Roundtable analyzed survey responses from nearly 20,000 employees and managers on a wide range of manager-related activities involving performance management. Overall, managers received a poor report card on their performance on these activities as only 30-40 percent of employees agreed that their managers communicated performance standards and provided fair and accurate feedback to help them do their jobs better.

1.11.2 Instantaneous and speedy Feedback

Interestingly, most of the performance improvement activities that managers can utilize have minimal impact on individual employee performance. The results clearly show that managers have a much better chance of vastly improving employee performance by targeting their efforts on a much smaller list of activities. In fact, managers who set clear performance standards, become more well-informed about employee performance, and provide fair and accurate informal feedback on performance strengths which can significantly improve individual performance. And when discussing weaknesses, managers who clearly focus on specific suggestions for improvement or development can improve employee performance; those who emphasize weaknesses can dramatically decrease performance. In short, managers who provide feedback that is voluntary, detailed, immediate, and positive can positively influence employee performance.

This information shouldn't surprise most managers as we've heard it all before and it seems intuitive. However, survey responses show some disparities in perceptions between employees and managers. The majority of employees believe that formal performance reviews do nothing to actually help their on-the-job performance, yet they crave voluntary and detailed informal performance feedback, especially on strengths.

Stimulatingly, the greater part of managers view formal performance reviews as an administrative necessity rather than as a prominent lever to positively influence employee performance. In fact, many managers report that they specifically cite performance weaknesses to lower an employee's rating below the highest mark rather than emphasizing strengths to raise performance ratings above minimally successful. On informal feedback, employees report that most managers provide general praise, rather than specific and detailed recognition.

1.11.3 Manager-Led in Employee Development Growth & Improvement

Managers need to devote a considerable extent of their valuable time on manager-led development activities. One of a manager's most important tasks is management of the personal growth and leadership development for themselves and their subordinates.

When managers are effective at developing their employees, they can impact their businesses in two primary ways; - First, effective managers can enhance essential employee attitudes and behaviors, such as their commitment to the organization core values and goals and in effect their overall dependability. Improvements in these attitudes and behaviors in turn, increase employees' strengths and overall performance. - Second, effective managers directly improve the performance of employees by helping them become more productive and efficient in carrying out their work.

By examining the employee development activities of the highest rated managers, we see that some activities have a much more positive influence on improving employee performance than others. Statistical estimates show that improving a manager's effectiveness at employee development can positively influence employee performance by as much as 25 percent.

	Specific	Define expectations and explain the objectives Avoid generalities and use action verbs as much as possible.
S	Measurable	Define specific metrics for quantity, quality, timeliness, and cost that can be objectively measured.
M	Achievable	Ensure that the goals are challenging, but within reason. While each individual goal may be achievable, do not assign the employee more goals than he / she could reasonably be expected to successfully complete.
A	Relevant	Where appropriate, link the goal to a higher-level departmental or organisational goal, and ensure that the employee understands how their goal and actions contributes to the attainment of the higher level goal
R	Time based	Specify a date or elapsed amount of time when the goal needs to be completed contributes to the attainment of the higher level goal.
T		

1.11.4 Mark Less Activities

Similar to the results of the performance management survey, managers have a much better chance of vastly improving employee performance by targeting their efforts on a much smaller list of employee development activities. The top three managerial activities highlight the importance of managers ensuring that day-to-day work experiences provide learning and encourage development and that they clearly explain performance standards.

Managers howling that time constraints or competing priorities limit the time they spend on employee development, but the good news is that they can undertake the activities listed above every day as a part of their normal job responsibilities to further "blur the line" between learning and work.

1.11.5 Effectiveness at Employee Development Increases Employee Performance

Survey responses show some attractive disproportions in insights between employees and managers concerning employee development. The vast majority of employees seek to learn and grow in the course of doing day-to-day work and want their managers to create a learning environment in that context.

On the other hand, the majority of managers do not believe that their employees want them to emphasize development and report a lack of confidence to perform well in that role. Armed with the results of this survey and organizational support, managers can precede with much more confidence in performing specifically targeted employee development activities and the business case is compelling.

For example, managers who improve their effectiveness at employee development by only 20 percent can increase employee performance by about 5 percent. That may not sound like much, but a company with a sales force of 2,000 employees who each average $1 million in annual sales can increase company-wide annual sales by about $100 million!

1.11.6 Leadership Competencies- Improving Certain Leadership Competences Can Increase Leadership Effectiveness

Organizations normally specify a set of leadership competencies that describe success for its managers and typically use 360-degree evaluations to assess managerial behaviors associated with these competencies. The results of the 360-degree assessments of nearly 1,000 managers in a large government agency and found that the most successful managers (in the top 10 percent) did not receive high scores on all

of the 21 designated leadership competencies. In fact, the best managers had a much smaller set of competency strengths that differentiated them from the rest.

Similar to the results of both the performance management and employee development surveys, managers have a much better chance of vastly improving their leadership effectiveness by targeting their development efforts on a much smaller list of leadership competencies. For example, by focusing on improving the behaviors associated with the "Developing Others" and "Communication" competencies, managers can increase overall leadership effectiveness scores by 50-60 percent. The associated behaviors of these two competencies relating to employee development and performance management are: 1) creates an environment and strategy to support continuous on-the-job learning, and 2) strategically uses communication to produce enthusiasm and foster an atmosphere of open exchange and support.

1.11.7 Build Profound Strengths

My analysis also uncovered interesting insights into the most effective methods of improving leadership competencies. Traditional leadership development efforts focus on correcting weaknesses and, at best, achieve only small incremental improvements and do not offer an effective strategy for making "good" leaders "great," since evaluation respondents identify the best leaders not by a lack of weaknesses, but by the possession of a few profound strengths. However, by identifying and focusing on competencies in which the manager is performing strongly, though not exceptionally, small amounts of improvement tend to dramatically increase a manager's overall leadership effectiveness.

In addition, focusing on "competency companions" (closely related competencies that support those targeted for development) can improve a manager's overall effectiveness even more. In fact, building a few of a manager's existing strengths to even higher levels through developing "competency companions" can achieve behavioral improvements as much as 8 times more effective than traditional methods because, according to respondents, profound strengths in a few areas overshadow perceived weaknesses. Since this study also correlated increases in overall leadership effectiveness to employee engagement results, discovered that correcting weaknesses only raised employee engagement scores a paltry 2-3 percent, while building a few profound strengths offered the potential of increasing employee engagement by nearly 80 percent.

1.11.8 Employee Engagement

Many organizations conduct periodic surveys that probe employee, and sometimes customer, attitudes and opinions relating to productivity, profitability, retention, and job/customer satisfaction. The number one reason why people thrive in an organization is their immediate supervisor and it's also the number one reason they quit. Employee engagement is a property of the relationship between an organization and its employees. An "engaged employee" is one who is fully absorbed by and enthusiastic about their work and so takes positive action to further the organization's reputation and interests.

An organization with 'high' employee engagement might therefore be expected to outperform those with 'low' employee engagement, all else being equal.[1] There are, however, a range of definitions that have emerged around concepts relating to employee engagement. Research has looked at the involvement, commitment and productivity of employees. Organizations have often had a focus on how to generate engagement, rather than seeking objective ways to measure it. Care must therefore be taken when looking at some of the statistics presented around engagement.
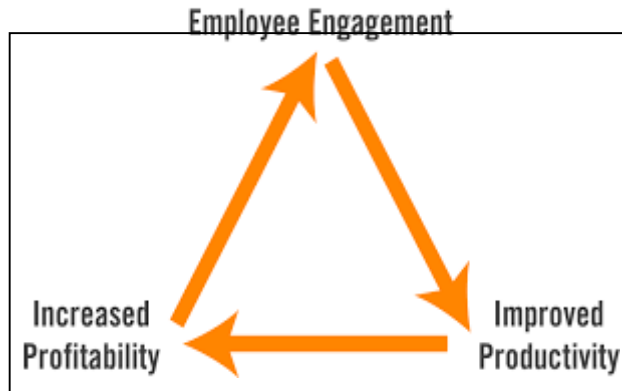
Similar to the results of the previously cited surveys, managers have a much better chance of vastly improving the workplace environment for their employees by targeting efforts on a much smaller list of performance drivers. By listing the 5 key differentiating questions, we clearly see patterns of what survey respondents are telling their managers to focus on.

Generating engagement

● Increasing engagement is a primary objective of organizations seeking to understand and measure engagement.

● Some additional points from research into drivers of engagement are presented below:

● Employee perceptions of job importance - "...an employee's attitude toward the job's importance and the company had the greatest impact on loyalty and customer service than all other employee factors combined."

● Employee clarity of job expectations - "If expectations are not clear and basic materials and equipment are not provided, negative emotions such as boredom or resentment may result, and the employee may then become focused on surviving more than thinking about how he can help the organization succeed.

● Career advancement / improvement opportunities - "Plant supervisors and managers indicated that many plant improvements were being made outside the suggestion system, where employees initiated changes in order to reap the bonuses generated by the subsequent cost savings.

● Regular feedback and dialogue with superiors - "Feedback is the key to giving employees a sense of where they're going, but many organizations are remarkably bad at giving it.' What I really wanted to hear was 'Thanks. You did a good job.' But all my boss did was hand me a check.

● Quality of working relationships with peers, superiors, and subordinates - "...if employees' relationship with their managers is fractured, then no amount of perks will persuade the employees to perform at top levels. Employee engagement is a direct reflection of how employees feel about their relationship with the boss."[

● Perceptions of the ethos and values of the organization - "'Inspiration and values' is the most important of the six drivers in our Engaged Performance model. Inspirational leadership is the ultimate perk. In its absence, [it] is unlikely to engage employees."

● Effective internal employee communications - which convey a clear description of "what's going on".

Managers and Employees Have Different Perceptions on Employee Engagement

By separating the survey responses by managers and employees, it has been seen that there are some disparities in perceptions concerning employee engagement. A vast majority of employees want someone at work (usually their managers) to conduct dialogues on performance, mission importance and alignment with organizational goals,

emerging work trends, and career development. On the other hand, many managers do not believe that their employees want them to discuss these issues. The implications of this disparity clearly stand out when we compare the business results of the highest scoring workgroups to those with the lowest scores (remember, managerial effectiveness is the number one reason that employees thrive in an organization.
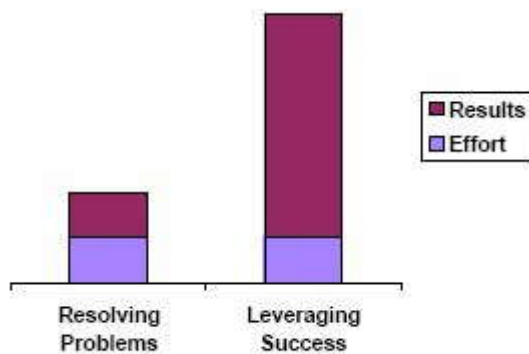
Simplifying the Life of a Busy Manager

"What's a Manager to do?" Given the vast range of responsibilities and activities that managers can undertake, any method of simplifying a time-oppressed manager's life is worthwhile, especially if it can cite specific empirical evidence in support of a few key concepts. In that light, it has summarized the results of the previously cited surveys around the common themes that emerge involving employee development, performance management, and communication. Overall, activities involving employee development have the highest average impact on managerial effectiveness and employee performance at 33. 3 percent, performance management averages 28.5 percent, and communication comes in a close third at 25.7 percent.

A specific criterion of success for "great" organizations is the emphasis on specific activities that generate "breakthrough" performance improvement and not just a general emphasis on the common themes. By studying success and recognizing and appreciating what works for "great" leaders and organizations, we can determine the actions that have the most impact on performance improvement. And the best news is that busy managers can decrease emphasis on some of the activities we have done in the past that have the least impact. In other words, we can edit our "To-Do" list to ensure that all remaining activities have maximum impact. The chart below clearly shows the distinct advantage in results of applying similar levels of effort toward either resolving problems (i.e., correcting weaknesses) or leveraging success (i.e., building strengths). We can only achieve incremental improvement by emphasizing the former, while the latter offers the type of "breakthrough" results we really seek.

By focusing on just a few recommended activities, organizations can greatly improve both workforce and leadership quality, which is very high on the list of CEO top priorities and for good reason. In their excellent work, When Teams Work Best, Frank LaFasto and Carl Larson show that companies with "top tier" leadership quality ("great" leaders) outperform their competitors in revenue margins by over 500 percent, in net income by over 700 percent, and in stock price performance by over 800 percent. As we suspected, a manager's, or maybe I should say a leader's, role does have a significant impact on employee performance and now we can offer specific, empirically justified suggestions for improvement. It seems we can use hard science to help apply the soft skill of leadership.

Differences between Oral and Written Communication

- Speaking is a dynamic transfer of information. To be an effective speaker, you must exploit the dynamism of oral communication, but also learn to work within its limitations. While there is a higher level of immediacy and a lower level of retention in the spoken word, a speaker has more ability to engage the audience psychologically and to use complex forms of non-verbal communication

- The written language can be significantly more precise. Written words can be chosen with greater deliberation and thought, and a written argument can be extraordinarily sophisticated, intricate, and lengthy. These attributes of writing are

possible because the pace of involvement is controlled by both the writer and the reader. The writer can write and rewrite at great length, a span of time which in some cases can be measured in years.

● Similarly, the reader can read quickly or slowly or even stop to think about what he or she has just read. More importantly, the reader always has the option of re-reading; even if that option is not exercised, its mere possibility has an effect upon a reader's understanding of a text. The written word appeals more to a contemplative, deliberative style.

● Speeches can also be precise and indeed they ought to be. But precision in oral communication comes only with a great deal of preparation and compression. Once spoken, words cannot be retracted, although one can apologize for a mistake and improvise a clarification or qualification.

● One can read from a written text and achieve the same degree of verbal precision as written communication. But word-for-word reading from a text is not speech-making, and in most circumstances audiences find speech-reading boring and retain very little of the information transmitted.

● Oral communication can be significantly more effective in expressing meaning to an audience. This distinction between precision and effectiveness is due to the extensive repertoire of signals available to the speaker: gestures, intonation, inflection, volume, pitch, pauses, movement, visual cues such as appearance, and a whole host of other ways to communicate meaning. A speaker has significantly more control over what the listener will hear than the writer has over what the reader will read. For these techniques to be effective, however, the speaker needs to make sure that he or she has the audience's attention--audiences do not have the luxury of re-reading the words spoken. The speaker, therefore, must become a reader of the audience.

● Reading an audience is a systematic and cumulative endeavor unavailable to the writer. As one speaks, the audience provides its own visual cues about whether it is finding the argument coherent, comprehensible, or interesting.

● Speakers should avoid focusing on single individuals within an audience. There are always some who squeeze up their faces when they disagree with a point; others will stare out the window; a few rude (but tired) persons will fall asleep. These persons do not necessarily represent the views of the audience; much depends upon how many in the audience manifest these signals. By and large, one should take the head-nodes and the note-takers as signs that the audience is following one's argument. If these people seem to outnumber the people not paying attention, then the speech is being well-received. The single most important bit of evidence about the audience's attention, however, is eye contact. If members of the audience will look back at you when you are speaking, then you have their attention. If they look away, then your contact with the audience is probably fading.

● Speeches probably cannot be sophisticated and intricate. Few audiences have the listening ability or background to work through a difficult or complex argument, and speakers should not expect them to be able to do so. Many speakers fail to appreciate the difficulties of good listening, and most speakers worry about leaving out some important part of the argument. One must be acutely aware of the tradeoff between comprehensiveness and comprehension. Trying to put too much into a speech is probably the single most frequent error made by speakers. This desire to "say everything" stems from the distinctive limitations of speeches: after a speech, one cannot go back and correct errors or omissions, and such mistakes could potentially cripple the persuasiveness of a speech.

● A speaker cannot allow himself or herself to fall into this mentality. At the outset, a speaker must define an argument sharply and narrowly and must focus on only that argument. There are certainly implications of an argument that are important but cannot be developed within the speech. These aspects should be clearly acknowledged by the speaker, but deferred to a question-and-answer period, a

future speech, or a reference to a work that the audience can follow-up on its own. Speakers must exercise tight and disciplined control over content.

- As a rule of thumb, the audience will remember about one-half of what was said in a twenty-minute talk. After twenty-minutes, recall drops off precipitously. Oral arguments should therefore be pared down as much as possible. There are very few circumstances in which an audience will recall a great deal of the information in a speech longer than twenty minutes. Most evidence suggests that audience recall declines precipitously after 16 and one-half minutes.

- Oral communication uses words with fewer syllables than the written language, the sentences are shorter, and self-referencing pronouns such as I are common. Oral communication also allows incomplete sentences if delivered properly, and many sentences will begin with "and," "but," and "except."

1.12 Summary

The process of communication allows managers to plan, direct and control their subordinates. Through this process, information, thoughts and ideas can be shared among the members of the organisation. Communication is essential to outline and pursue the organisational goals and to evaluate the feedbacks provided by workers which can contribute to improve the quality of the company outputs and policies. Good communication can help to express concerns and worries that an employee/ manager or an individual may have about workplace/ working style in a non-threatening way. It reduces the risk of relapse by creating a positive environment at workplace. Effective communication takes time, practice and cooperation

Elements of Good Communication are clear communication as this will increase the chance that the message we intend to send is the one that is received; willingness to listen to concerns and worries of employees/ subordinates; Use of language that is understandable to all persons involved. It can also be stressful when there are many arguments or too much criticism in the household. Stress is a common trigger for relapse, so it is important to reduce stress whenever possible.

Social communication is influenced by the different perception that individuals has of the reality. A manager must therefore be aware of the human factor in order to carry out an effective communication and avoid conflicts. Handling and overcoming the possible personal or environmental barriers which affect the communication is fundamental to assure the effectiveness of the whole process and therefore to use it properly and accordingly to the organisational goals.

Listening skills are a very important part of any effective communication. Unless you carefully follow what you hear, you will not be able to respond to it effectively. Listening skills can be improved with practice. To conclude, effective listening enhances the communication quality. It makes all attentive. It encourages optimistic attitude, healthy relations and more participation. It leads to better decision- making in an organization. Effective listening is directly related to our ability to do team work. It must be noted that "We listen at about an efficiency rate of 25 percent maximum, and we remember only about 50 percent of what is delivered during a ten minute speech/lecture/communication."

1.13 Check Your Progress

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Communication is an ……………… of facts, ideas, opinions or emotions by two or more persons
   (a) exchange
   (b) discussion
   (c) dialogue

    (d) negotiation

2. ………………. barriers may result from the receiver's physical state?

    (a) Systematic

    (b) Attitudinal

    (c) Physiological

    (d) Physical

3. Stress management is an important personal skill that affects our …………………relationships?

    (a) Intrapersonal

    (b) Interpersonal

    (c) Relational

    (d) Interactive

4. The goal of communication between a sender and a receiver is the understanding of the message being sent?

    (a) Correct

    (b) Partial correct

    (c) Wrong

    (d) Immoral

5. Managers with good …………………… skills understand their role inside the manager/employee relationship

    (a) Conceptual

    (b) Technical

    (c) Managerial

    (d) human

6. Managers howling that time constraints or competing priorities limit the time they spend on …………………………………….

    (a) Employee development

    (b) Employee improvement

    (c) Employee recreation

    (d) Employee refreshment

7. ………………. communication includes communication of corporate vision, strategies, and guiding principles

    (a) External

    (b) Oral

    (c) Written

    (d) Internal

8. External communication includes branding, marketing and advertising

    (a) Internal

    (b) Oral

    (c) Written

    (d) External

9. Manager's ……………………skills allow him or her to solve problems in a strategic and calculated fashion

    (a) Conceptual

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(b) Technical

(c) Managerial

(d) human

10. Improving Certain Leadership Competences Can Increase Leadership

Effectiveness

(a) False

(b) True

1.14 Questions and Exercises

1. What do you understand by the term Managerial Communication? Differentiate between internal and external communication verses business communication

2. What to understand by the term Oral Communication.

3. Define Effective communication.

4. Why is Effective Communication so important within your organization? Discuss.

5. Discuss the basic philosophy of merchandise management

6. Explain the different types of barriers in communication..

7. Managers and employees have different perceptions on employee engagement command on the statement by giving relevant examples.

8. Discuss the Managerial Activities which has an influence on Refining Employee Performance.

9. Explain how managerial skills can encourage and raise productivity

10. List any seven quality characteristics of a product.

1.15 Key Terms

●   **Performance Management:** The objectives of commerce, whatever is usually bought or sold in trade, or market, or by merchants, wares, goods, commodities.

●   **Manager-led development activities:** Retail is the sale of goods and services from individuals or businesses to the end -user

●   **Leadership competencies:** They are leadership skills and behaviors that contribute to superior performance. By using a competency-based approach to leadership, organizations can better identify and develop their next generation of leaders.

●   **Memos:** The full form of Memos is memorandum. Memos are business letters but used within an organization and only for employees. Memos are used to give information to employees such as changes in some procedures or rules, policy change or for specific purpose like request to attend a meeting.

●   **Proposal:** a plan or suggestion, especially a formal or written one, put forward for consideration by others.

Check Your Progress: Answers

1. (a)

2. (c)

3. (b)

4. (a)

5. (d)

6. (a)

7. (d)

8. (b)

9. (a)

10. (d)

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Unit 2: Communication for Problem Solving

Structure

Objectives

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the concept and philosophy of Problem Solving.
- Discuss the stages involved in Problem Solving
- Explain in length about the group discussions in problem solving.

2.1 Introduction

Communication is one of the most frequent activities we engage in on a day-to-day basis. It has been suggested that 75% of our waking time is spent communicating. How

often have all of us probably felt at one time or another that we were not as effective as we would have liked in our communications with others?

Success in communicating depends on the communication choices we make and awareness about the factors that can influence how messages are delivered and reacted to by others. The more you know about. Even at the best of times, it can be difficult to talk about sensitive topics. Sometimes communicating with a family member who has mental illness can be one of the hardest things we do. The goal of this unit is to provide managers with the skills they need to discuss their thoughts, feelings, needs and problems constructively and successfully. This will help to ensure that issues are discussed and that action is taken to resolve problems.

In this unit, we will be discussing bout how managers can solve the day-to-day working problems through various means of communication and what all are the best practices & exercises linked with the good problem solving process.

2.2 Definition & Concept: Problem Solving

The term problem-solving is used in many disciplines, sometimes with different perspectives, and often with different terminologies. For instance, it is a mental process in psychology and a computerized process in computer science.

Problems can also be classified into two different types (ill-defined and well-defined) from which appropriate solutions are to be made.

● Ill-defined problems are those that do not have clear goals, solution paths, or expected solution.

● Well-defined problems have specific goals, clearly defined solution paths, and clear expected solutions. These problems also allow for more initial planning than ill-defined problems.

Being able to solve problems sometimes involves dealing with pragmatics (logic) and semantics (interpretation of the problem). The ability to understand what the goal of the problem is and what rules could be applied represents the key to solving the problem. Sometimes the problem requires some abstract thinking and coming up with a creative solution.

What is a Problem?

The Concise Oxford Dictionary (1995) defines a problem as:

"A doubtful or difficult matter requiring a solution" and

"Something hard to understand or accomplish or deal with"

Everybody can benefit from having good problem solving skills as we all encounter problems on a daily basis; some of these problems are obviously more severe or complex than others. It would be wonderful to have the ability to solve all problems efficiently and in a timely fashion without difficulty, unfortunately there is no one way in which all problems can be solved. You will discover, as you read through our pages on problem solving, that the subject is complex. However well prepared we are for problem solving there is always an element of the unknown. Although planning and structuring will help make the problem solving process more likely to be successful, good judgement and an element of good luck will ultimately determine whether problem solving was a success.

2.3 Interpersonal relationships fail and businesses fail because of poor problem solving
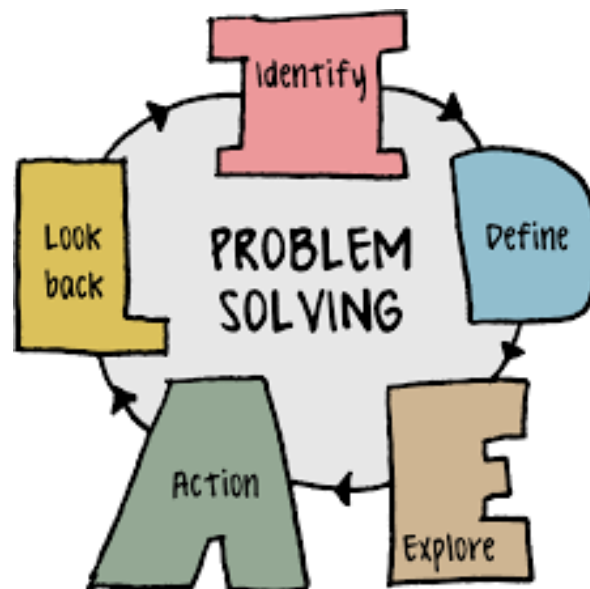
This is often due to either problems not being recognized or being recognized but not being dealt with appropriately. Solving a problem involves a certain amount of risk and this risk needs to be weighed up against not solving the problem.

The approach referred to is generally designed for problem solving in an organization or group context, but can also be easily adapted to work at an individual level. Trying to solve a complex problem alone however can be a mistake, the old adage: "A problem shared is a problem halved" is sound advice. Talking to others about problems is not only therapeutic but can help you see things from a different point of view, opening up more potential solutions. The measure of success is not whether you have a tough problem to deal with, but whether it is the same problem you had last year.

2.3.1 Communicating to Solve Problems

- Vital to solving the problem is communication, which involves a process of identifying problems, seeking alternatives, selecting the best alternative, and implementing a solution. This process should involve the people as close to the problem as possible and be conducted in a supportive and non-judgmental manner. Problem solving does not focus on the past and the fixing of blame. Rather, it focuses on the present and the future toward improving work and relationships.

- Individuals (employees, colleagues, supervisors) are able to raise issues in an objective manner that invites discussion

- The issue is stated in low-key, objective language;

- There is an invitation to mutually explore what has been happening as opposed to presenting a conclusion or accusation

- There is an invitation to mutually explore solutions instead of imposing a decision

- Ability to listen with thoughtful attention and to acknowledge another's perspective;

- Ability to hear yourself talking or presenting yourself to others? look at your words, your body language, and your tone of voice

- Giving up some control and authority

- Being able to challenge your own viewpoint(s) or conclusion(s)

- Asking, "What do I really want in this situation?"

2.3.2 All problems have two features in common: Goals and Barriers

Goals: Problems involve setting out to achieve some objective or desired state of affairs and can include avoiding a situation or event.

Goals can be anything that you wish to achieve, where you want to be. If you are hungry then your goal is probably to eat something, if you are a head of an organization (CEO) then your main goal may be to maximize profits. In the example of the CEO the main goal may need to be split into numerous sub-goals in order to fulfil the ultimate goal of increasing profits.

Barriers: If there were no barriers in the way of achieving a goal, then there would be no problem. Problem solving involves overcoming the barriers or obstacles that prevent the immediate achievement of goals.

Following our examples above, if you feel hungry then your goal is to eat. A barrier to this may be that you have no food available - you take a trip to the supermarket and buy some food, removing the barrier and thus solving the problem. Of course for the CEO wanting to increase profits there may be many more barriers preventing the goal from being reached. The CEO needs to attempt to recognize these barriers and remove them or find other ways to achieve the goals of the organization.

2.4 Stages of Problem Solving

Problem solving is the process by which managers acquire knowledge, skills, habits, values and attitudes. Like skills, problem solving must be practiced; when it is practiced it becomes far less difficult. Some problem solving techniques at times are so very important; they should be the focus of instruction. Problem solving is a challenge for the majority of managers. The most important aspect of problem solving is the quality of thinking it produces among managers/ management. Clarity of thought is aided by precision; the development of precise language is more than a matter of memorizing mathematical words and phrases. Systematic attention should be given to the development of problem solving skills as they relate to word or story.

There are several ways to present problems other than to refer to textbooks and workbooks. Problems can be written on the chalkboard, thus inviting a discussion. An overhead projector may be used when presenting a problem, it can be presented either

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in its entirety or line by line to focus manager attention and pinpoint parts in case there is difficulty in understanding the problem.
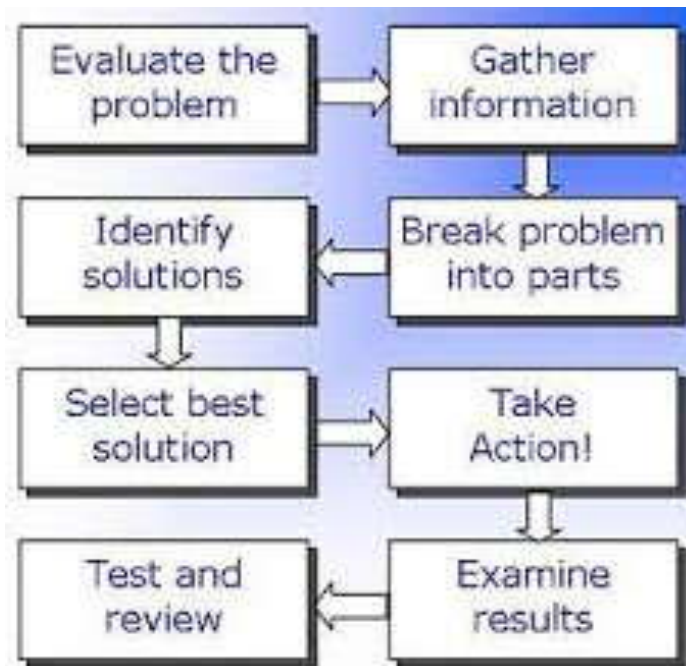
Problem solving is the process by which managers acquire knowledge, skills, habits, values and attitudes. Problem solving includes a variety of learning experiences and it takes place outside the workplace as well as inside the workplace. It involves both learning and teaching. Problem solving is as old as humanity. People have always needed problem solving in order to survive. Problem solving is more important today than ever before. It helps managers acquire skills that are needed in everyday activities. It also gives them training that they may need to prepare for a career or job. The art of problem solving is the developed ability over a period of time. The information and activities is this unit will be designated to offer managers opportunities to enrich their problem experiences.

It is important to realize that managers cannot be expected to use strategies that are unfamiliar to them. Problem solving skills are learned just like other skills are learned. Managers need to be exposed to a wide variety of problems so that they can try out new strategies and practice using them. Problem solving is more than the ability to compute. It is believed that the ability to solve problems develops automatically from the mastery of computational skills. This is not true; problem solving is itself a skill that has to be taught. Problems can be solved in a variety of ways, yet not one of these ways is appropriate to the solution of all problems. However it is helpful to have at least a general framework within which managers can organize their efforts.

There are several techniques, methods and strategies used in problem solving. Problem solving involves trying several ways to solve the problem before deciding on which to use. Problem solving situations are likely to be representative of those which the manager will face sometime in the future. Problem solving will give the managers experiences to help them in their thinking and decision making processes. The main thrust of problem solving should be toward the development of logical thinking. Taking the numbers out of problems seems to be one way of doing this without the negative reaction that usually accompanies problems. Another important aspect of problem solving is motivation. Motivation for the study of problem solving comes from a variety of resources. Managers are also motivated by working with special activities that require the application of principles.

Another motivating factor, and one that should not be overlooked, is the success in learning. A learning manager is a motivated student. When the managers experiences

in lead to success and achievement, they has excellent motivation for more and further study. Problem solving ability develops over a long period of time and grows with experience in solving a variety of problems in many different ways. Manager must learn to be flexible and make use of a variety of methods, techniques and strategies. If a problem is more complex, the strategy for solving it may not be immediately apparent. Problem solving requires some degree of creativity on the part of the problem solver. The problem solver can be the actor by acting out the problem or by devising a plan to solve the problem.

Effective problem solving usually involves working through a number of steps or stages, such as those outlined below. For more detail continue to Stages of Problem Solving.
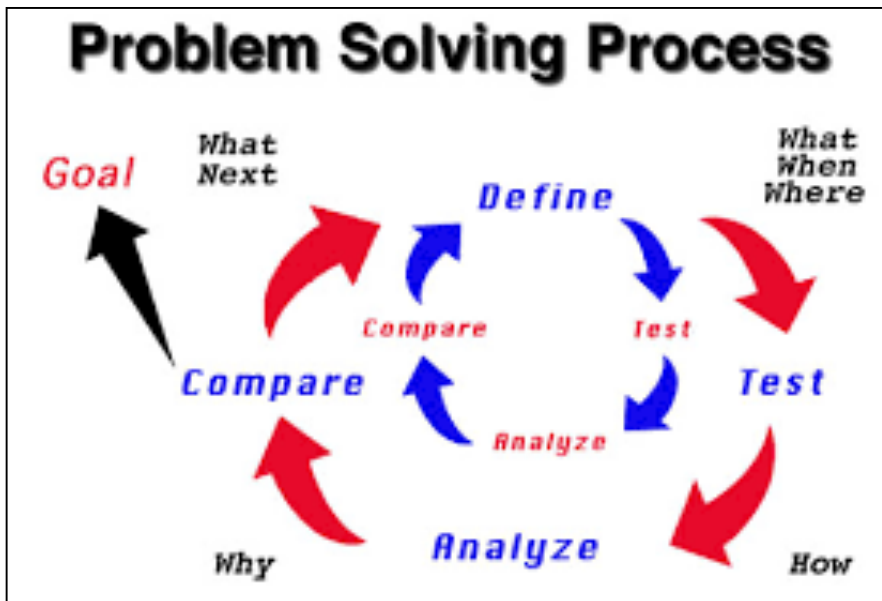
1. **Problem Identification: This stage involves: detecting and recognizing that there is a problem; identifying the nature of the problem; defining the problem:** The first phase of problem solving may sound obvious but often requires more thought and analysis. Identifying a problem can be a difficult task in itself, is there a problem at all? What is the nature of the problem, are there in fact numerous problems? How can the problem be best defined? - by spending some time defining the problem you will not only understand it more clearly yourself but be able to communicate its nature to others, this leads to the second phase.

2. **Structuring the Problem: This stage involves: a period of observation, careful inspection, fact-finding and developing a clear picture of the problem:** Following on from problem identification, structuring the problem is all about gaining more information about the problem and increasing understanding. This phase is all about fact finding and analysis, building a more comprehensive picture of both the goal(s) and the barrier(s). This stage may not be necessary for very simple problems but is essential for problems of a more complex nature.

3. **Looking for Possible Solutions: During this stage you will generate a range of possible courses of action, but with little attempt to evaluate them at this stage:** From the information gathered in the first two phases of the problem solving framework it is now time to start thinking about possible solutions to the identified problem. In a group situation this stage is often carried out as a brain-storming session, letting each person in the group express their views on possible solutions (or part solutions). In organizations different people will have different expertise in different areas and it is useful, therefore, to hear the views of each concerned party.

4. **Making a Decision:** This stage involves careful analysis of the different possible courses of action and then selecting the best solution for implementation.

This is perhaps the most complex part of the problem solving process. Following on from the previous step it is now time to look at each potential solution and carefully analyses it. Some solutions may not be possible, due to other problems, like time constraints or budgets. It is important at this stage to also consider what might happen if nothing was done to solve the problem - sometimes trying to solve a problem that leads to many more problems requires some very creative thinking and innovative ideas.

Finally, make a decision on which course of action to take - decision making is an important skill in itself and we recommend that you see our pages on decision making.

Implementation: This stage involves accepting and carrying out the chosen course of action. Implementation means acting on the chosen solution. During implementation more problems may arise especially if identification or structuring of the original problem was not carried out fully.

Monitoring/Seeking Feedback: The last stage is about reviewing the outcomes of problem solving over a period of time, including seeking feedback as to the success of the outcomes of the chosen solution. The final stage of problem solving is concerned with checking that the process was successful. This can be achieved by monitoring and gaining feedback from people affected by any changes that occurred. It is good practice to keep a record of outcomes and any additional problems that occurred.

2.5 Ways to present problems

- Problems can be written on the chalkboard, thus inviting a discussion. An overhead projector may be used when presenting a problem; you may project the entire problem at once on each individual part pinpointing any difficulty in the understanding of the problem.

- Duplicated masters are another way of presenting a problem where each manager has its own individual sheet. Some manager may find it easier to refer to a problem in this way. It also eliminates possible errors in copying a problem from a chalkboard or an overhead projector.

- Oral presentation is another way of presenting a problem.

2.5.1 Learning Objectives of Managers by way of solving problems

1. Help managers increase their thinking skills and decision making process.

2. Apply questions to decision making process.

3. Manager will understand that there are certain conditions under which they must work in order to bring about a desirable and valued solution.

4. Manager will become familiar with and understand the language that is used in problem solving.

2.6 Problem-solving strategies

At times, however, situations arise which cannot be solve by its own. In those situations the use of problem solving skills becomes an invaluable asset that allows making the best choices and decisions available. In addition, problem-solving is a life skill that will serve well throughout your life.

Problem solving are the steps that one would use to find the problem(s) that are in the way to getting to one's own goal. Some would refer to this as the 'problem-solving cycle'. (Bransford & Stein, 1993) In this cycle one will recognize the problem, define the problem, develop a strategy to fix the problem, organize the knowledge of the problem cycle, figure-out the resources at the user's disposal, monitor one's progress, and evaluate the solution for accuracy. Although called a cycle, one does not have to do each step in order to fix the problem; in fact those who don't are usually better at problem solving. The reason it is called a cycle is that once one is completed with a problem another usually will pop up.

It is not unfamiliar for problems to stand up when managers and employees are working towards a goal and run into obstacles along the way. Organizations have many and varied goals and it is likely that managers and employees will encounter barriers to your success at times. As these barriers are encountered, problem-solving strategies can be utilized to help you overcome the obstacle and achieve your goal. With each use of problem-solving strategies, these skills become more refined and integrated so that eventually their use becomes second nature.

The following techniques are usually called problem-solving strategies

1. **Abstraction**: solving the problem in a model of the system before applying it to the real system

2. **Analogy**: using a solution that solves an analogous problem

3. **Brainstorming**: (especially among groups of people) suggesting a large number of solutions or ideas and combining and developing them until an optimum solution is found

4. **Divide and conquer**: breaking down a large, complex problem into smaller, solvable problems

5. **Hypothesis testing**: assuming a possible explanation to the problem and trying to prove (or, in some contexts, disprove) the assumption

6. **Lateral thinking**: approaching solutions indirectly and creatively

7. **Means-ends analysis**: choosing an action at each step to move closer to the goal

8. **Method of focal objects**: synthesizing seemingly non-matching characteristics of different objects into something new

9. **Morphological analysis**: assessing the output and interactions of an entire system

10. **Proof**: try to prove that the problem cannot be solved. The point where the proof fails will be the starting point for solving it

11. **Reduction**: transforming the problem into another problem for which solutions exist

12. **Research**: employing existing ideas or adapting existing solutions to similar problems

13. **Root cause analysis**: identifying the cause of a problem

14. **Trial-and-error**: testing possible solutions until the right one is found

2.7 Problem-Solving Approach to Communication for Better Team Performance

There are probably as many managerial communication styles out there as there are managers. If you could peek in on team meetings in hotels, restaurants, and resorts around the world, you'd be likely to observe managers doling out effusive praise, tough love, sales reports, scolding, business (speak, pep talks) and everything in between.

Every manager out there has a signature style of communication, and it is usually devised and carried out with the very best of intentions. But what many managers fail to take into consideration is that communication should serve a very specific purpose. If the way that you tend to address your employees has more to do with emotions than with goal-oriented solutions, you could be missing out on some great opportunities to shape and improve your team's performance.

2.7.1 Talk Through -- Not About -- Performance Problems

According to David Cottrell, director of the Cornerstone Leadership Institute and the author of The Manager's Communication Handbook, the best way managers can inspire top-notch performance from their team is to develop a problem-solving communication style. Rather than simply dressing down your employees when they falter or lavishing them with non-specific praises when they succeed, managers should view every interaction as a "teachable moment" that can be used to further hone the team's skills and expertise.

As with any new habit, developing a problem-solving communication style can take some time and practice. The process might feel awkward and affected at first, but within a few weeks' time, problem-solving prompts will be rolling off your tongue with no effort at all. Here are some guidelines to help you adapt your own problem-solving approach to communication.

2.7.2 Present problems accurately

Whether you're discussing an employee's specific weaknesses, or an organization-wide challenge, such as boosting dessert sales, take care to keep your language neutral and non-judgmental. By sticking only to physical facts, you'll focus the team's attention on actions, which can easily be changed, rather than mistakes, which are a more overwhelming challenge to refurbish.

2.7.3 Ask for input

After you've described the problem, engage employees in a suggesting session. Have everyone think of several truthful solutions to the challenge your fronting. If possible, assign this as "homework." After several days, arrange another meeting to go over the ideas everyone has developed. Express appreciation for each idea and accept everyone's contributions non-critically.

2.7.4 Work together to select the best solution

Whether the setting is a team meeting or an individual employee review, the next step is systematically assessing each of the possible solutions that have been brought to the table. As the manager, your role in this process is to lead the discussion as a facilitator. Although it is clear that you have the ultimate responsibility for choosing the best solution, make it equally clear that you are considering every option that is put forth by the team.

2.7.5 Make implementation a team effort

Once a solution has been decided upon, involve employees in the campaign to put their ideas into action. By delegating as much of the implementation process as possible to the employees themselves, you will increase their sense of ownership, investment, and engagement -- all qualities that experts identify as foolproof performance-boosters.

Once you've adopted a problem-solving communication style, don't be surprised if you find out that it's transmissible. Workplace studies have shown that when managers consciously adopt a more proactive communication strategy, it often catches on among employees, as well!

2.8 Different Ways to Fix Poor Communication in the Workplace

Whenever any type of problem arises due to any type of communication, the first step is to understand what's going on. A manager needs to assess the audience and current state to identify key issues or opportunities before making recommendations.

Typically, this involves using some type of communications measurement tool or method to guide the solution.

1. **Highlight key issues and pinpoint critical areas for action:** One need to understand the attitudes that exist and the extent of communications breakdowns, which highlight the issues that need to be solved. Advanced statistics help a manager to know where to start to have the most impact or improve a specific outcome. This allows organizations to target the most critical areas to address – whether it's a specific attribute such as timeliness or completeness, or an opportunity such as how supervisors communicate – allowing managers to be more prescriptive and get better results faster.

2. **Establish a baseline:** If the organization/ managers are serious about effective communication, then it need a baseline from which to measure progress and success, which comes from an initial assessment of problem areas. This benchmark provides the basis for comparing future research so to know what's working well and where to adapt strategies going forward.

3. **Make smart decisions:** Many senior managers demand proofs to back up communication references. Measurement can show the numbers behind the efforts made, document progress and help managers to understand how and why to make smart decisions that will ultimately help the managers to achieve the business and communications outcomes.

4. Communication measurement can find out if employees have received and understood key messages to deliver, and/or if the channels one using are effective at delivering those key messages. The results can help the managers to modify and focus future communications, while also reinforce to employees that the need to care enough to listen – and take action on manager's feedback.

5. **Leverage communication resources:** With the right data, managers can drill down to understand how communication is working in various geographies, divisions, functions or even employee level, and use the results to leverage communication resources in more efficient ways.

6. **Demonstrate commitment to change:** If the organization/ managers are serious about improving communications, the act of measuring is a symbol of change, and will be valued by employees. However, beware of measuring without the commitment to follow through -- to be effective in supporting change, managers need to do something with the data to show progress.

7. **Drive accountability:** The bottom line is, what gets measured is what gets done. If leaders and managers know they're being judged on communications efforts, they'll start paying attention to how and when they engage employees.

8. Communication measurement is an excellent way to assess where communication works and doesn't work within an organization and can help to get on the right track to more effectively connect with and engage employee**s.**

2.9 Group Problem Solving

The problem-solving process involves thoughts, discussions, actions, and decisions that occur from the first consideration of a problematic situation to the goal. The problems that groups face are varied, but some common problems include budgeting funds, raising funds, planning events, addressing customer or citizen complaints, creating or adapting products or services to fit needs, supporting members, and raising awareness about issues or causes.

Problems of all sorts have three common components:

1. An undesirable situation. When conditions are desirable, there isn't a problem.

2. A desired situation. Even though it may only be a vague idea, there is a drive to better the undesirable situation. The vague idea may develop into a more precise goal that can be achieved, although solutions are not yet generated.

3. Obstacles between undesirable and desirable situation. These are things that stand in the way between the current situation and the group's goal of addressing it. This component of a problem requires the most work, and it is the part where decision making occurs. Some examples of obstacles include limited funding, resources, personnel, time, or information. Obstacles can also take the form of people who are working against the group, including people resistant to change or people who disagree.

Discussion of these three elements of a problem helps the group tailor its problem-solving process, as each problem will vary. While these three general elements are present in each problem, the group should also address specific characteristics of the problem.

Five common and important characteristics to consider are task difficulty, number of possible solutions, group member interest in problem, group member familiarity with problem, and the need for solution acceptance

1. **Task difficulty.** Difficult tasks are also typically more complex. Groups should be prepared to spend time researching and discussing a difficult and complex task in order to develop a shared foundational knowledge. This typically requires individual work outside of the group and frequent group meetings to share information.

2. **Number of possible solutions.** There are usually multiple ways to solve a problem or complete a task, but some problems have more potential solutions than others. Figuring out how to prepare a beach house for an approaching hurricane is fairly complex and difficult, but there are still a limited number of things to do—for example, taping and boarding up windows; turning off water, electricity, and gas; trimming trees; and securing loose outside objects. Other problems may be more creatively based. For example, designing a new restaurant may entail using some standard solutions but could also entail many different types of innovation with layout and design.

3. **Group member interest in problem.** When group members are interested in the problem, they will be more engaged with the problem-solving process and invested in finding a quality solution. Groups with high interest in and knowledge about the problem may want more freedom to develop and implement solutions, while groups with low interest may prefer a leader who provides structure and direction.

4. **Group familiarity with problem.** Some groups encounter a problem regularly, while other problems are more unique or unexpected. A family who has lived in hurricane alley for decades probably has a better idea of how to prepare its house for a hurricane than does a family that just recently moved from the Midwest. Many groups that rely on funding have to revisit a budget every year, and in recent years, groups have had to get more creative with budgets as funding has been cut in nearly every sector. When group members aren't familiar with a problem, they will need to do background research on what similar groups have done and may also need to bring in outside experts.

5. **Need for solution acceptance.** In this step, groups must consider how many people the decision will affect and how much "buy-in" from others the group needs in order for their solution to be successfully implemented. Some small groups have many stakeholders on whom the success of a solution depends. Other groups are answerable only to themselves. When a small group is planning on building a new park in a crowded neighborhood or implementing a new policy in a large business, it can be very difficult to develop solutions that will be accepted by all. In such cases, groups will want to poll those who will be affected by the solution and may want to do a pilot implementation to see how people react. Imposing an excellent solution that doesn't have buy-in from stakeholders can still lead to failure.

2.9.1 Group Problem-Solving Process

A group should attend to each step of the process, group leaders or other group members who facilitate problem solving should be cautious not to dogmatically follow each element of the process or force a group along. Such a lack of flexibility could limit group member input and negatively affect the group's cohesion and climate.

Step 1: Define the Problem

Define the problem by considering the three elements shared by every problem: the current undesirable situation, the goal or more desirable situation, and obstacles in the way. At this stage, group members share what they know about the current situation, without proposing solutions or evaluating the information. Here are some good questions to ask during this stage: What is the current difficulty? How did we come to know that the difficulty exists? Who/what is involved? Why is it meaningful/ urgent/important? What have the effects been so far? What, if any, elements of the difficulty require clarification? At the end of this stage, the group should be able to compose a single sentence that summarizes the problem called a problem statement. Avoid wording in the problem statement or question that hints at potential solutions. A small group formed to investigate ethical violations of city officials could use the following problem statement: "Our state does not currently have a mechanism for citizens to report suspected ethical violations by city officials."

Step 2: Analyze the Problem

During this step a group should analyze the problem and the group's relationship to the problem. Whereas the first step involved exploring the "what" related to the problem, this step focuses on the "why." At this stage, group members can discuss the potential causes of the difficulty. Group members may also want to begin setting out an agenda or timeline for the group's problem-solving process, looking forward to the other steps. To fully analyze the problem, the group can discuss the five common problem variables discussed before. Here are two examples of questions that the group formed to address ethics violations might ask: Why doesn't our city have an ethics reporting mechanism? Do cities of similar size have such a mechanism? Once the problem has been analyzed, the group can pose a problem question that will guide the group as it generates possible solutions. "How can citizens report suspected ethical violations of city officials and how will such reports be processed and addressed?" As you can see, the problem question is more complex than the problem statement, since the group has moved on to more in-depth discussion of the problem during step 2.

Step 3: Generate Possible Solutions

During this step, group members generate possible solutions to the problem. Again, solutions should not be evaluated at this point, only proposed and clarified. The question should be what we could do to address this problem, not what should we do to address it. It is perfectly OK for a group member to question another person's idea by asking something like "What do you mean?" or "Could you explain your reasoning more?" Discussions at this stage may reveal a need to return to previous steps to better define or more fully analyze a problem. Since many problems are multifaceted, it is necessary for group members to generate solutions for each part of the problem

separately, making sure to have multiple solutions for each part. Stopping the solution-generating process prematurely can lead to groupthink. For the problem question previously posed, the group would need to generate solutions for all three parts of the problem included in the question. Possible solutions for the first part of the problem (How can citizens report ethical violations?) may include "online reporting system, e-mail, in-person, anonymously, on-the-record," and so on. Possible solutions for the second part of the problem (How will reports be processed?) may include "daily by a newly appointed ethics officer, weekly by a nonpartisan nongovernment employee," and so on. Possible solutions for the third part of the problem (How will reports be addressed?) may include "by a newly appointed ethics commission, by the accuser's supervisor, by the city manager," and so on.

Step 4: Evaluate Solutions

During this step, solutions can be critically evaluated based on their credibility, completeness, and worth. Once the potential solutions have been narrowed based on more obvious differences in relevance and/or merit, the group should analyze each solution based on its potential effects—especially negative effects. Groups that are required to report the rationale for their decision or whose decisions may be subject to public scrutiny would be wise to make a set list of criteria for evaluating each solution. Additionally, solutions can be evaluated based on how well they fit with the group's charge and the abilities of the group. To do this, group members may ask, "Does this solution live up to the original purpose or mission of the group?" and "Can the solution actually be implemented with our current resources and connections?" and "How will this solution be supported, funded, enforced, and assessed?" Secondary tensions and substantive conflict, two concepts discussed earlier, emerge during this step of problem solving, and group members will need to employ effective critical thinking and listening skills.

Decision making is part of the larger process of problem solving and it plays a prominent role in this step. While there are several fairly similar models for problem solving, there are many varied decision-making techniques that groups can use. For example, to narrow the list of proposed solutions, group members may decide by majority vote, by weighing the pros and cons, or by discussing them until a consensus is reached. There are also more complex decision-making models like the "six hats method," which we will discuss later. Once the final decision is reached, the group leader or facilitator should confirm that the group is in agreement. It may be beneficial to let the group break for a while or even to delay the final decision until a later meeting to allow people time to evaluate it outside of the group context.

Step 5: Implement and Assess the Solution

Implementing the solution requires some advanced planning, and it should not be rushed unless the group is operating under strict time restraints or delay may lead to some kind of harm. Although some solutions can be implemented immediately, others may take days, months, or years. As was noted earlier, it may be beneficial for groups to poll those who will be affected by the solution as to their opinion of it or even to do a pilot test to observe the effectiveness of the solution and how people react to it. Before implementation, groups should also determine how and when they would assess the effectiveness of the solution by asking, "How will we know if the solution is working or not?" Since solution assessment will vary based on whether or not the group is disbanded, groups should also consider the following questions: If the group disbands after implementation, which will be responsible for assessing the solution? If the solution fails, will the same group reconvene or will a new group be formed?

Certain elements of the solution may need to be delegated out to various people inside and outside the group. Group members may also be assigned to implement a particular part of the solution based on their role in the decision making or because it connects to their area of expertise. Likewise, group members may be tasked with publicizing the solution or "selling" it to a particular group of stakeholders. Last, the group should consider its future. In some cases, the group will get to decide if it will stay

together and continue working on other tasks or if it will disband. In other cases, outside forces determine the group's fate.

2.9.2 Problem Solving and Group Presentations

Giving a group presentation requires that individual group members and the group as a whole solve many problems and make many decisions. Although having more people involved in a presentation increases logistical difficulties and has the potential to create more conflict, a well-prepared and well-delivered group presentation can be more engaging and effective than a typical presentation. The main problems facing a group giving a presentation are (1) dividing responsibilities, (2) coordinating schedules and time management, and (3) working out the logistics of the presentation delivery.

In terms of dividing responsibilities, assigning individual work at the first meeting and then trying to fit it all together before the presentation (which is what many college students do when faced with a group project) is not the recommended method. Integrating content and visual aids created by several different people into a seamless final product takes time and effort, and the person "stuck" with this job at the end usually ends up developing some resentment toward his or her group members. While it's OK for group members to do work independently outside of group meetings, spend time working together to help set up some standards for content and formatting expectations that will help make later integration of work easier. Taking the time to complete one part of the presentation together can help set those standards for later individual work. Discuss the roles that various group members will play openly so there isn't role confusion. There could be one point person for keeping track of the group's progress and schedule, one point person for communication, one point person for content integration, one point person for visual aids, and so on. Each person shouldn't do all that work on his or her own but help focus the group's attention on his or her specific area during group meetings. Chaunce Stanton, "How to Deliver Group Presentations: The Unified Team Approach," Six Minutes Speaking and Presentation Skills, November 3, 2009, accessed August 28, 2012, http://sixminutes.dlugan.com/group-presentations-unified-team-approach.

Scheduling group meetings is one of the most challenging problems groups face, given people's busy lives. From the beginning, it should be clearly communicated that the group needs to spend considerable time in face-to-face meetings, and group members should know that they may have to make an occasional sacrifice to attend. Especially important is the commitment to scheduling time to rehearse the presentation. Consider creating a contract of group guidelines that includes expectations for meeting attendance to increase group members' commitment.

Group presentations require members to navigate many logistics of their presentation. While it may be easier for a group to assign each member to create a five-minute segment and then transition from one person to the next, this is definitely not the most engaging method. Creating a master presentation and then assigning individual speakers creates a more fluid and dynamic presentation and allows everyone to become familiar with the content, which can help if a person doesn't show up to present and during the question-and-answer section. Once the content of the presentation is completed, figure out all introductions, transitions, visual aids, and the use of time and space. Chaunce Stanton, "How to Deliver Group Presentations: The Unified Team Approach," Six Minutes Speaking and Presentation Skills, November 3, 2009, accessed August 28, 2012, http://sixminutes.dlugan.com/group-presentations-unified-team-approach. In terms of introductions, figure out if one person will introduce all the speakers at the beginning, if speakers will introduce themselves at the beginning, or if introductions will occur as the presentation progresses. In terms of transitions, make sure each person has included in his or her speaking notes when presentation duties switch from one person to the next. Visual aids have the potential to cause hiccups in a group presentation if they aren't fluidly integrated. Practicing with visual aids and having one person control them may help prevent this. Know how long your presentation is and know how you're going to use the space. Presenters should know how long the whole

presentation should be and how long each of their segments should be so that everyone can share the responsibility of keeping time. Also consider the size and layout of the presentation space. You don't want presenters huddled in a corner until it's their turn to speak or trapped behind furniture when their turn comes around.

Of the three main problems facing group presenters, which do you think is the most challenging and why?

Why do you think people tasked with a group presentation (especially students) prefer to divide the parts up and have members work on them independently before coming back together and integrating each part? What problems emerge from this method? In what ways might developing a master presentation and then assigning parts to different speakers be better than the more divided method?

What are the drawbacks to the master presentation method?

Decision Making in Groups

We all engage in personal decision making daily, and we all know that some decisions are more difficult than others. When we make decisions in groups, we face some challenges that we do not face in our personal decision making, but we also stand to benefit from some advantages of group decision making.

Rodney W. Napier and Matti K. Gershenfeld, Groups: Theory and Experience, 7th ed. (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 2004), 292. Group decision making can appear fair and democratic but really only be a gesture that covers up the fact that certain group members or the group leader have already decided. Group decision making also takes more time than individual decisions and can be burdensome if some group members do not do their assigned work, divert the group with self-centered or unproductive role behaviors, or miss meetings. Conversely, though, group decisions are often more informed, since all group members develop a shared understanding of a problem through discussion and debate. The shared understanding may also be more complex and deep than what an individual would develop, because the group members are exposed to a variety of viewpoints that can broaden their own perspectives. Group decisions also benefit from synergy, one of the key advantages of group communication that we discussed earlier. Most groups do not use a specific method of decision making, perhaps thinking that they'll work things out as they go. This can lead to unequal participation, social loafing, premature decisions, prolonged discussion, and a host of other negative consequences. So in this section we will learn some practices that will prepare us for good decision making and some specific techniques we can use to help us reach a final decision.

Brainstorming before Decision Making

Before groups can make a decision, they need to make possible solutions to their problem. The most commonly used method is brainstorming, although most people don't follow the recommended steps of brainstorming. As you'll recall, brainstorming refers to the quick generation of ideas free of evaluation. The originator of the term brainstorming said the following four rules must be followed for the technique to be effective: Alex F. Osborn, Applied Imagination (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959).

1. Evaluation of ideas is forbidden.

2. Wild and crazy ideas are encouraged.

3. Quantity of ideas, not quality, is the goal.

4. New combinations of ideas presented are encouraged.

To make brainstorming more of a decision-making method rather than an idea-generating method, group communication scholars have suggested additional steps that precede and follow brainstorming. John F. Cragan and David W. Wright, Communication in Small Group Discussions: An Integrated Approach, 3rd ed. (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing, 1991), 77–78.

● Do a warm-up brainstorming session. Some people are more apprehensive about publicly communicating their ideas than others are, and a warm-up session can help ease apprehension and prime group members for task-related idea generation. The warm-up can be initiated by anyone in the group and should only go on for a few minutes. To get things started, a person could ask, "If our group formed a band, what would we be called?" or "What other purposes could a mailbox serve?" In the previous examples, the first warm up gets the group's more abstract creative juices flowing, while the second focuses more on practical and concrete ideas.

● Do the actual brainstorming session. This session shouldn't last more than thirty minutes and should follow the four rules of brainstorming mentioned previously. To ensure that the fourth rule is realized, the facilitator could encourage people to piggyback off each other's ideas.

● Eliminate duplicate ideas. After the brainstorming session is over, group members can eliminate (without evaluating) ideas that are the same or very similar.

● Clarify, organize, and evaluate ideas. Before evaluation, see if any ideas need clarification. Then try to theme or group ideas together in some orderly fashion. Since "wild and crazy" ideas are encouraged, some suggestions may need clarification. If it becomes clear that there isn't really a foundation to an idea and that it is too vague or abstract and can't be clarified, it may be eliminated. As a caution though, it may be wise to not throw out off-the-wall ideas that are hard to categorize and to instead put them in a miscellaneous or "wild and crazy" category.

The nominal group technique guides decision making through a four-step process that includes idea generation and evaluation and seeks to elicit equal contributions from all group members. Andre L. Delbecq and Andrew H. Ven de Ven, "A Group Process Model for Problem Identification and Program Planning," The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science 7, no. 4 (1971): 466–92. This method is useful because the procedure involves all group members systematically, which fixes the problem of uneven participation during discussions. Since everyone contributes to the discussion, this method can also help reduce instances of social loafing.

To use the nominal group technique, do the following:

● During the first step, have group members work quietly, in the same space, to write down every idea they have to address the task or problem they face. This shouldn't take more than twenty minutes. Whoever is facilitating the discussion should remind group members to use brainstorming techniques, which means they shouldn't evaluate ideas as they are generated. Ask group members to remain silent once they've finished their list so they do not distract others.

- During the second step, the facilitator goes around the group in a consistent order asking each person to share one idea at a time. As the idea is shared, the facilitator records it on a master list that everyone can see. Keep track of how many times each idea comes up, as that could be an idea that warrants more discussion. Continue this process until all the ideas have been shared. As a note to facilitators, some group members may begin to edit their list or self-censor when asked to provide one of their ideas. To limit a person's apprehension with sharing his or her ideas and to ensure that each idea is shared, I have asked group members to exchange lists with someone else so they can share ideas from the list they receive without fear of being personally judged.

- During step three, the facilitator should note that group members can now ask for clarification on ideas on the master list. Do not let this discussion stray into evaluation of ideas. To help avoid an unnecessarily long discussion, it may be useful to go from one person to the next to ask which ideas need clarifying and then go to the originator(s) of the idea in question for clarification.

- During the fourth step, members use a voting ballot to rank the acceptability of the ideas on the master list. If the list is long, you may ask group members to rank only their top five or so choices. The facilitator then takes up the secret ballots and reviews them in a random order, noting the rankings of each idea. Ideally, the highest ranked idea can then be discussed and decided on. The nominal group technique does not carry a group all the way through to the point of decision; rather, it sets the group up for a roundtable discussion or use of some other method to evaluate the merits of the top ideas.

Specific Decision-Making Techniques

Some decision-making techniques involve determining a course of action based on the level of agreement among the group members. These methods include majority, expert, authority, and consensus rule.

Table 2.1 "Pros and Cons of Agreement-Based Decision-Making Techniques" reviews the pros and cons of each of these methods.

Majority rule is a simple method of decision making based on voting. In most cases a majority is considered half plus one. Majority rule is a commonly used decision-making technique in which a majority (one-half plus one) must agree before a decision is made. A show-of-hands vote, a paper ballot, or an electronic voting system can determine the majority choice. Many decision-making bodies, including the US House of Representatives, Senate, and Supreme Court, use majority rule to make decisions, which shows that it is often associated with democratic decision making, since each person gets one vote and each vote counts equally. Of course, other individuals and mediated messages can influence a person's vote, but since the voting power is spread out over all group members, it is not easy for one person or party to take control of the decision-making process. In some cases—for example, to override a presidential veto or to amend the constitution—a super majority of two-thirds may be required to make a decision.

Minority rule is a decision-making technique in which a designated authority or expert has final say over a decision and may or may not consider the input of other group members. When a designated expert makes a decision by minority rule, there may be buy-in from others in the group, especially if the members of the group didn't have relevant knowledge or expertise. When a designated authority makes decisions, buy-in will vary based on group members' level of respect for the authority. For example, decisions made by an elected authority may be more accepted by those who elected him or her than by those who didn't. As with majority rule, this technique can be time saving. Unlike majority rule, one person or party can have control over the decision-making process. This type of decision making is more similar to that used by monarchs and dictators. An obvious negative consequence of this method is that the needs or wants of one person can override the needs and wants of the majority. A minority deciding for the majority has led to negative consequences throughout history.

The white Afrikaner minority that ruled over South Africa for decades instituted apartheid, which was a system of racial segregation that disenfranchised and oppressed the majority population. The quality of the decision and its fairness really depends on the designated expert or authority.

Consensus rule is a decision-making technique in which all members of the group must agree on the same decision. On rare occasions, a decision may be ideal for all group members, which can lead to unanimous agreement without further debate and discussion. Although this can be positive, be cautious that this isn't a sign of groupthink. More typically, consensus is reached only after lengthy discussion. On the plus side, consensus often leads to high-quality decisions due to the time and effort it takes to get everyone in agreement. Group members are also more likely to be committed to the decision because of their investment in reaching it. On the negative side, the ultimate decision is often one that all group members can live with but not one that's ideal for all members. Additionally, the process of arriving at consensus also includes conflict, as people debate ideas and negotiates the interpersonal tensions that may result.

Table 2.1 Pros and Cons of Agreement-Based Decision-Making Techniques

Decision-Making Technique	Pros	Cons
Majority rule	• Quick • Efficient in large groups • Each vote counts equally	• Close decisions (5–4) may reduce internal and external "buy-in" • Doesn't take advantage of group synergy to develop alternatives that more members can support • Minority may feel alienated
Minority rule by expert	• Quick • Decision quality is better than what less knowledgeable people could produce • Experts are typically objective and less easy to influence	• Expertise must be verified • Experts can be difficult to find / pay for • Group members may feel useless
Minority rule by authority	• Quick • Buy-in could be high if authority is respected	• Authority may not be seen as legitimate, leading to less buy-in • Group members may try to sway the authority or compete for his or her attention • Unethical authorities could make decisions that benefit them and harm group members
Consensus rule	• High-quality decisions due to time invested • Higher level of commitment because of participation in decision • Satisfaction with decision because of shared agreement	• Time consuming • Difficult to manage idea and personal conflict that can emerge as ideas are debated • Decision may be OK but not ideal

2.10 Influences on Decision Making

Many factors influence the decision-making process. For example, how might a group's independence or access to resources affect the decisions they make? What potential advantages and disadvantages come with decisions made by groups that are more or less similar in terms of personality and cultural identities? In this section, we will explore how situational, personality, and cultural influences affect decision making in groups.

2.10.1 Situational Influences on Decision Making

A group's situational context affects decision making. One key situational element is the degree of freedom that the group has to make its own decisions, secure its own resources, and initiate its own actions. Some groups have to go through multiple approval processes before they can do anything, while others are self-directed, self-governing, and self-sustaining. Another situational influence is uncertainty. In general, groups deal with more uncertainty in decision making than do individuals because of the increased number of variables that comes with adding more people to a situation. Individual group members can't know what other group members are thinking, whether or not they are doing their work, and how committed they are to the group. So the size of a group is a powerful situational influence, as it adds to uncertainty and complicates communication.

Access to information also influences a group. First, the nature of the group's task or problem affects its ability to get information. Group members can more easily make decisions about a problem when other groups have similarly experienced it. Even if the problem is complex and serious, the group can learn from other situations and apply what it learns. Second, the group must have access to flows of information. Access to archives, electronic databases, and individuals with relevant experience is necessary to obtain any relevant information about similar problems or to do research on a new or unique problem. In this regard, group members' formal and information network connections also become important situational influences.

The Situational Team Decision-Making Model
Jesse Lyn Stoner
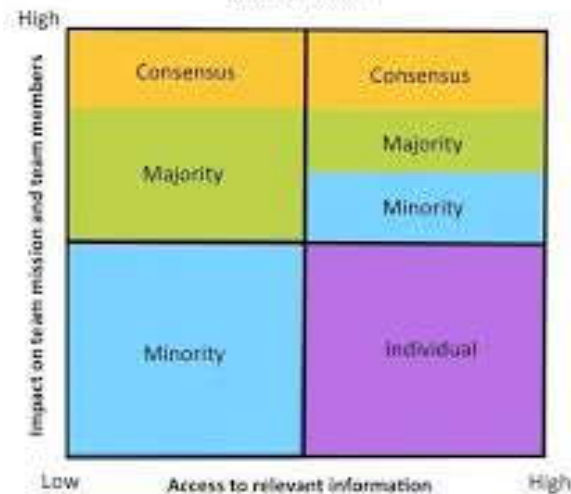
The origin and urgency of a problem are also situational factors that influence decision making. In terms of origin, problems usually occur in one of four ways:

1. Something goes wrong. Group members must decide how to fix or stop something. Example—a firehouse crew finds out that half of the building is contaminated with mold and must be closed down.

2. Expectations change or increase. Group members must innovate more efficient or effective ways of doing something. Example—a firehouse crew finds out that the district they are responsible for is being expanded.

3. Something goes wrong and expectations change or increase. Group members must fix/stop and become more efficient/effective. Example—the firehouse crew has to close half the building and must start responding to more calls due to the expanding district.

4. The problem existed from the beginning. Group members must go back to the origins of the situation and walk through and analyze the steps again to decide what can be done differently. Example—a firehouse crew has consistently had to work with minimal resources in terms of building space and firefighting tools.

In each of the cases, the need for a decision may be more or less urgent depending on how badly something is going wrong, how high the expectations have been raised, or the degree to which people are fed up with a broken system. Decisions must be made in situations ranging from crisis level to mundane.

The group problem-solving process has five steps:

1. Define the problem by creating a problem statement that summarizes it.

2. Analyze the problem and create a problem question that can guide solution generation.

3. Generate possible solutions. Possible solutions should be offered and listed without stopping to evaluate each one.

4. Evaluate the solutions based on their credibility, completeness, and worth. Groups should also assess the potential effects of the narrowed list of solutions.

5. Implement and assess the solution. Aside from enacting the solution, groups should determine how they will know the solution is working or not.

6. Several factors influence the decision-making process:

Situational factors include the degree of freedom a group has to make its own decisions, the level of uncertainty facing the group and its task, the size of the group, the group's access to information, and the origin and urgency of the problem.

Personality influences on decision making include a person's value orientation (economic, aesthetic, theoretical, political, or religious), and personality traits (dominant/submissive, friendly/unfriendly, and instrumental/emotional).

Cultural influences on decision making include the heterogeneity or homogeneity of the group makeup; cultural values and characteristics such as individualism/collectivism, power distance, and high-/low-context communication styles; and gender and age differences.

Exercise

1. In terms of situational influences on group problem solving, task difficulty, number of possible solutions, group interest in problem, group familiarity with problem, and need for solution acceptance are five key variables discussed in this chapter. For each of the two following scenarios, discuss how the situational context created by these variables might affect the group's communication climate and the way it goes about addressing its problem.

   ❖ Scenario 1. Task difficulty is high, number of possible solutions is high, group interest in problem is high, group familiarity with problem is low and need for solution acceptance is high.

   ❖ Scenario 2. Task difficulty is low, number of possible solutions is low, group interest in problem is low, group familiarity with problem is high and need for solution acceptance is low.

2. Getting integrated: Certain decision-making techniques may work better than others in academic, professional, personal, or civic contexts. For each of the following scenarios, identify the decision-making technique that you think would be best and explain why.

    ❖ Scenario 1: Academic. A professor asks his or her class to decide whether the final exam should be an in-class or take-home exam.

    ❖ Scenario 2: Professional. A group of coworkers must decide which person from their department to nominate for a company-wide award.

    ❖ Scenario 3: Personal. A family needs to decide how to divide the belongings and estate of a deceased family member who did not leave a will.

    ❖ Scenario 4: Civic. A local branch of a political party needs to decide what five key issues it wants to include in the national party's platform.

3. Group communication researchers have found that heterogeneous groups (composed of diverse members) have advantages over homogenous (more similar) groups. Discuss a group situation you have been in where diversity enhanced your group experience.

2.11 Summary

More than ever, it's important to know how to communicate one's point quickly and professionally. Many people spend a lot of time writing and reading, so the better you are at this form of communication, the more successful you're likely to be.

Always identify the audience before start creating the document. And if it is felt that there's too much information to include, create an outline to help organize the thoughts & ideas. Learning grammatical and stylistic techniques will also help to write more clearly; and be sure to proof the final document. Like most things, the more we write, the better we are going to be!

Every problem has common components: an undesirable situation, a desired situation, and obstacles between the undesirable and desirable situations. Every problem also has a set of characteristics that vary among problems, including task difficulty, number of possible solutions, group member interest in the problem, group familiarity with the problem, and the need for solution acceptance.

Before a group makes a decision, it should brainstorm possible solutions. Group communication scholars suggest that groups (1) do a warm-up brainstorming session; (2) do an actual brainstorming session in which ideas are not evaluated, wild ideas are encouraged, quantity not quality of ideas is the goal, and new combinations of ideas are encouraged; (3) eliminate duplicate ideas; and (4) clarify, organize, and evaluate ideas. In order to guide the idea-generation process and invite equal participation from group members, the group may also elect to use the nominal group technique.

Common decision-making techniques include majority rule, minority rule, and consensus rule. With majority rule, only a majority, usually one-half plus one, must agree before a decision is made. With minority rule, a designated authority or expert has final say over a decision, and the input of group members may or may not be invited or considered. With consensus rule, all members of the group must agree on the same decision.

2.12 Check Your Progress

Multiple Choice Questions

1. ……………… problems have specific goals and allow for more initial planning?

    (a) Well-defined

    (b) Ill- defined

    (c) Situational

    (d) Cultural

2. Sometimes the problem requires some abstract thinking and coming up with a creative solution?

    (a) Justified

    (b) Non- Justified

    (c) Not relevant to the context

    (d) None of above

3. …………………………relationships fail and businesses fail because of poor problem solving

    (a) Intrapersonal

    (b) Interpersonal

    (c) Social

    (d) Interactive

4. Taking the time to complete one part of the presentation together can help set those …………………….. for later individual work

    (a) Standards

    (b) Timeline

    (c) Benchmark

    (d) Window display

5. The problem-solving process involves thoughts, discussions, actions, and decisions that occur from the first consideration of a ………………. situation to the goal.

    (a) undesirable

    (b) Resolved

    (c) Unresolved

    (d) Problematic

6. Majority rule is a simple method of decision making based on ………….

    (a) Voting

    (b) Discussion

    (c) Communication

    (d) Polling

7. ………………. rule is a decision-making technique in which all members of the group must agree on the same decision

    (a) Expert

    (b) Majority

    (c) Minority

    (d) Consensus

8. The ……. of a group is a powerful situational influence, as it adds to uncertainty and complicates communication.

    (a) Scope

    (b) Size

    (c) Magnitude

    (d) Range

9. Evaluate the solutions based on their credibility, completeness, and worth.

    (a) True

    (b) False

10. ………………….. influences on decision making include the heterogeneity or homogeneity of the group makeup.

    (a) Physical

    (b) Personality

    (c) Situational

    (d) Cultural

2.13 Questions and Exercises

1. What do you understand by Problem solving?

2. Explain the stages involved in problem solving.

3. What are the methods used in specific Decision-Making Techniques? Discuss.

4. Discuss the Group Problem-Solving Process.

5. Explain the influences on Decision Making.

6. What are the different Ways to Fix Poor Communication in the Workplace?

7. Explain the Problem-Solving Approach to Communication for Better Team Performance.

8. Discuss the Problem-solving strategies.

9. "Communicating to Solve Problems". Explain this statement in length by giving necessary example.

2.14 Key Terms

● **Problem solving:** It consists of using generic or ad hoc methods, in an orderly manner, for finding solutions to problems. The term *problem-solving* is used in many disciplines, sometimes with different perspectives, and often with different terminologies.

● **Problem-solving strategies:** Problem-solving are the steps that one would use to find the problem(s) that are in the way to getting to one's own goal. Some would refer to this as the 'problem-solving cycle'.

● **Pragmatics: Pragmatics** is a subfield of linguistics and semiotics that studies the ways in which context contributes to meaning. Pragmatics encompasses speech act theory, conversational implicate, talk in interaction and other approaches to language behavior in philosophy, sociology, linguistics and anthropology.

● **Semantics:** It is the study of meaning. It focuses on the relation between signifiers, like words, phrases, signs, and symbols, and what they stand for; their denotation.

● **Decision Making:** Decision-making is regarded as the cognitive process resulting in the selection of a belief or a course of action among several alternative possibilities. Every decision-making process produces a final choice that may or may not prompt action.

Check Your Progress: Answers

1. (a)

2. (c)

3. (b)

4. (a)

5. (d)

6. (a)

7. (d)

Notes

8. (b)

9. (a)

10. (d)

2.15 Further Readings

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Notes

Notes

Unit 3: Writing Skills for Managerial Communication

Structure

Objectives

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the concept and philosophy of writing skills.
- Discuss the composition & style of writing.
- Explain the structure and process of creating business messages

3.1 Introduction

In today's business environment, the majority of important work communications takes place over emails, reports and even messaging. Managers who are able to write clearly and effectively are able to influence positively, achieve productively and build stronger networks. Gain essential and practical skills in high-impact business writing to customize your writing for different readers, organize your thoughts coherently and communicate concisely and clearly to achieve business objectives with impact.

Speaking and listening skills are critical for managers, but solid writing skills also are important because so much managerial communication still ends up on paper. Proposals, project discussions, suggested ideas, and decisions will appear in writing at some point in the process. And when managers and executives analyze issues, document what happens, and make the business case for their strategy, they put it in writing.

Managers need to write well because they write and edit their own messages, unlike in the past when they had more opportunity to hand it to an administrative assistant. They also need to be good writers because, like nuclear fuel, written documents have a long afterlife. The permanence of writing allows a person to refer back to documents, which is helpful, but a written message also can bring unforeseen consequences because it lingers, for everyone to see.

Language is the principal means of communication. In this chapter, we will be concerned with one aspect of Language, i.e. the written word to help develop an effective business writing skills.

3.2 Writing Skills: Concept and Philosophy

Communicating better with customers leads to improved client relationships, and ultimately increases revenue growth. Writing better emails, reports and proposals for senior management leads to better communication and decision making in strategy, operations, processes and other key business areas.

- Integrate effective methods to craft better business writing
- Construct more organized business documents for management updates, project updates, action plans and other key business contexts
- Develop an awareness for the power of words and compose emails to influence and impact positively on customers, colleagues and superiors
- Write in a concise and clear manner to aid management decisions and actions
- Formulate customer-centric messages for desired results.
- Become more productive through efficient and effective writing practices

3.3 Composition & Style of writing

Once you know what you're writing, and for whom you're writing, you actually have to start writing. A blank, white computer screen is often intimidating. And it's easy to get stuck because you don't know how to start. Try these tips for composing and styling the document:

- **Start with your audience** – Remember, your readers may know nothing about what you're telling them. What do they need to know first?

- **Create an outline** – This is especially helpful if you're writing a longer document such as a report, presentation, or speech. Outlines help you identify which steps to take in which order, and they help you break the task up into manageable pieces of information.

- **Use AIDA** – If you're writing something that must inspire action in the reader, follow the Attention-Interest-Desire-Action (AIDA) formula. These four steps can help guide you through the writing process.

- **Try some empathy** – For instance, if you're writing a sales letter for prospective clients, why should they care about your product or sales pitch? What's the benefit for them? Remember your audience's needs at all times.

- **Use the Rhetorical Triangle** – If you're trying to persuade someone to do something, make sure that you communicate why people should listen to you, and pitch your message in a way that engages your audience and present information rationally and coherently. Our article on the Rhetorical Triangle can help you make your case in the most effective way.

- **Identify your main theme** – If you're having trouble defining the main theme of your message, pretend that you have 15 seconds to explain your position. What do you say? This is likely to be your main theme.

- **Use simple language** – Unless you're writing a scholarly article, it's usually best to use **simple** , direct language. Don't use long words just to impress people.

3.4 Structure of writing

Your document should be as "reader friendly" as possible. Use headings, subheadings, bullet points, and numbering whenever possible to break up the text. After all, what's easier to read – a page full of long paragraphs, or a page that's broken up into short paragraphs, with section headings and bullet points? A document that's easy to scan will get read more often than a document with long, dense paragraphs of text.

Headers should grab the reader's attention. Using questions is often a good idea, especially in advertising copy or reports, because questions help keep the reader engaged and curious. In emails and proposals, use short, factual headings and subheadings, like the ones in this article. Adding graphs and charts is also a smart way to break up your text. These visual aids not only keep the reader's eye engaged, but they can communicate important information much more quickly than text.

3.4.1 Grammar & Vocabulary

You probably don't need us to tell you that errors in your document will make you look unprofessional. It's essential to learn grammar properly, and to avoid common mistakes that your spell checker won't find.

Grammar is made up of rules that allow us to organize our words and sentences into coherent, meaningful language. In business, correct English grammar is essential in communicating effectively, in both speech and writing.

(a) **To be effective:**

- ❖ The structure of English – words, phrases, clauses & sentences
- ❖ Countability of nouns – equipment or equipments, damage or damages
- ❖ Tenses
- ❖ Match verbs to prepositions to convey the right meaning
- ❖ Forming sentences
- ❖ Commonly confused and misused words – revert or reply, compliment or complement
- ❖ Punctuation
- ❖ British and American spellings

Here are some examples of commonly misused words:

(b) **Affect/Effect**

- ❖ "Affect" is a verb meaning to influence. (Example: The economic forecast will affect our projected income.)
- ❖ "Effect" is a noun meaning the result or outcome. (Example: What is the effect of the proposal?)

(c) **Then/Than**

- ❖ "Then" is typically an adverb indicating a sequence in time. (Example: We went to dinner, and then we saw a movie.)
- ❖ "Than" is a conjunction used for comparison. (Example: The dinner was more expensive than the movie.)

(d) **Your/You're**

- ❖ "Your" is a possessive. (Example: Is that your file?)
- ❖ "You're" is a contraction of "you are." (Example: You're the new manager.)
- ❖ Note: Also watch out for other common homophones (words that sound alike but have different spellings and meanings) – such as their/they're/there, to/too/two, and so on.

(e) **Its/It's**

- ❖ "Its" is a possessive. (Example: Is that its motor?)
- ❖ "It's" is a contraction of "It is." (Example: It's often that heavy.) (Yes, it is this way around!)

(f) **Company's/Companies (and Other Possessives Versus Plurals)**

   ❖ "Company's" indicates possession. (Example: The Company's trucks hadn't been maintained properly.)

   ❖ "Companies" is plural. (Example: The companies in this industry are suffering.)

Business language skills are critical needs in this modern era of globalization and cut-throat competition. An employee that has competency in business language skills is likely to be able to climb up the career ladder with ease. And that applies to businesses as a whole, too: a recent study conducted by Bersin and Associates reveals that organizations that are able to communicate their strategies in a clear and precise manner are 113 times more likely to achieve higher levels of profitability and efficiency.

For Effective Grammar usage, Managers

● Use a dictionary to check their grammar accuracy

● Communicate more accurately and effectively

● Use precise vocabulary to convey the intended meaning

● Avoid common English errors to polish their business writing

3.4.2 Vocabulary

Improving vocabulary is a key in mastering the specialized words used in business language. Manager always tries to enhance meaningfully vocabulary by reading an extensive variety of material related to business. This can again be achieved by applying simple strategies like learning business language by playing games like crosswords and word search games, watching programs that focus on business is an outstanding approach to progress language skills.

Learning new business vocabulary will not influence communication skills until and unless these expressions are used properly & accurately in the daily communication. It's important to have these language skills if managers want to have a successful & good career. The success of a business lies in the abilities and aptitudes of its employees and refining the business language skills can help an employee/ manager to become a vital asset for the business or organization.

3.4.3 Proofing

The enemy of good proofreading is speed. Many people rush through their documents, but this is how you miss mistakes. Follow these guidelines to check what you've written:

● **Proof your headers and sub headers** – People often skip these and focus on the text alone. Just because headers are big and bold doesn't mean they're error free!

● **Read the document out loud** – This forces you to go more slowly, so that you're more likely to catch mistakes.

● **Use your finger to follow text as you read** – This is another trick that helps you slow down.

● **Start at the end of your document** – Proofread one sentence at a time, working your way from the end to the beginning. This helps you focus on errors, not on content.

The basic purpose of any written communication is to convey a message to the reader. To serve this purpose well, the message must be easily understood and quickly read.

3.4.4 How to Write Effectively - Good Business Writing Skills

A well-written document approaches the subject logically and shows the writer has a thorough knowledge of the subject. The message is simple, clear, and direct. The importance of Effective Business Writing Skills has been of concern to many people.

Many people who are good on their feet can't put together four good sentences in a row.

Jack Shaw, partner in the accounting firm of Touche, Ross & Co. is quoted as saying, "It's hard for me to believe grown men write the kinds of things I see in some client organizations." Many industrial firms are offering writing courses or seminars for managers, to overcome observed deficiencies.

3.5 Developing Effective Business Writing Skills

Effective writing, based on adequate preparation, involves analyzing, selecting, and organizing ideas. This process establishes the foundation for all work that follows. At the outset arrange the ideas in your mind. Then, follow the six basic steps indicated below in preparing a report, staff paper, or article for publication.

1. **Determine the basic purpose of the message.** Divide it into two elements: the general and specific purposes. The general purpose may be to direct, inform, question, or persuade. The specific purpose may be obvious or may require a great deal of thought. If you cannot define the specific purpose clearly, it will be difficult to transmit a clear message to the intended receiver. Always consider who will read, understand, and possibly respond to the message.

2. **Collect and evaluate the facts and information needed.** Formulate the conclusions and/or recommendations in your mind and check them against the facts.

3. **Organize and divide the material into principal topics.** Arrange the principal topics, with the subordinate topics, in a logical sequence. Examine the logic of the outline. Are closely associated topics properly grouped and sequenced? Should the outline be altered - simplified, reduced, extended?

4. **Write the first draft of the message, preferably using a conversational style.** Dictating the message may help to make the manuscript closely approximate a good conversation? Concentrate on one section of the message at a time; don't try to write the first draft and revise it at the same time. Set the draft aside for a while. Then, examine it from a fresh, critical point of view. Have you been objective and logical in your reasoning? Are there any possible fallacies in your reasoning? Have you said precisely what you intended? Does the draft include enough detail to satisfy the intended receiver? Does the text flow smoothly - in a clear, logical order?

5. **Consider the intended receiver.** Have you kept his background in mind? Have you made the message personal to him? Does the message cover all of the bases?

6. **Review the text** to ensure you have observed the commonly accepted practices for capitalizing, abbreviating, numbering, and punctuating. Have you carefully selected and used the right words?

3.6 Exercises in drafting business Letters

Business letters should be brief and to the topic. Managers should formally communicate with their subordinates, peers by the way of writing. As time is very important and valuable and business people are usually busy, so business letters must be precise and up to the topic/ matter or subject. Formal letters/ communication within the organization or workplace should not be such that takes long time to read and understand and creates communication unlike personal letters, business letters are written in a more formal style. Certain polite expressions such as those given below are commonly used in business letters:

● 'I shall be obliged if you will send me …'

'Please dispatch the ––– at your earliest convenience'

There are also certain phrases of business jargon that should be avoided.

● Examples are: 'Dispatch the same at once'.

Expressions of this kind are commonly used in business letters, but note that they are not good English. In many cases it is also possible to convey the meaning in simple, everyday English. Avoid abbreviations as far as possible.

For instance, write advertisement, and not advt. Write examination, and not exam. Also avoid the tendency to omit the subjects.

I and we
Write 'We have received' instead of 'Have received'

Directions for shipping (by rail, air, post etc.) should be given. Also clearly state the manner in which the payment will be made. While ordering goods, give clear and exact descriptions of the articles in the letter. It is also a good idea to provide an itemized list of the articles wanted with the quality and quantity clearly specified.

In replying to business letters always quote the number of reference if there is any and the date of the letter you are answering. For example, 'In reply to your letter no. 304/p, dated January 5th, 1010, I would like to say'.

3.6.1 Writing a formal letter

1 = sender

2 = references

3 = optional: 'Private and confidential' for confidential documents

4 = date: September, 10th 2008

5 = recipient

6 =Attention: The Manager / Mr. / Mrs. / Ms.

7 = Dear Sirs / Dear Mr. / Dear Mrs. / Dear Ms.

8 = main object

9 = body

10 = 'Yours faithfully / Yours sincerely'.

11 = Signature

12 = your name

13 = optional

'Encl.' (enclosed) if you've enclosed documents

'Copy to' if you've sent this letter to several people

3.6.2 Useful idioms

I - Being polite:

(a) **You are already known to the addressee:**

❖ Starting:

Dear Mr. Sameer,

❖ End:

Yours sincerely

(more friendly): With all good wishes,

(or) With kindest regards,

b) **You are writing to a relative:**

Starting:
Dear Reena, My dear Reena, Dear Aunt Reena, Dearest Reena,

My dearest Reena, My darling Reena,
End:
With love from Rita
Love from Rita
(more familiar)
Love to all
Love from us all
Yours
All the best

(extra/ added)
With much love from Rita
Lots of love from Rita
Much love, as always
All my love

(c) **You are writing a business letter:**

Start:
-> you are writing to a company: Dear Sirs,
-> you are writing to a man: Dear Sir,

-> you are writing to a woman: Dear Madam,
-> you don't know if the recipient is a man or a woman: Dear Sir or Madam,

End:
Yours faithfully

d) **You are writing to a friend:**

Start:
Dear Reena,
My dear Reena;

End:
Yours sincerely
With best wishes,
Best wishes,
With kindest regards,
Kindest regards,
All good wishes

WRITING A LETTER
15th April 2003
Dear Sir/Dear Sirs
Dear Mr (Mrs) Smith
Dear Jenny,
Thank you for your letter.
It was kind of you to write to me.
I got your lovely letter.
I am writing to inform you that...
I am writing to confirm my telephone call.
Following our telephone conversation...
I'm sorry I haven't written before.
I am sorry I cannot accept your invitation.
I shall be arriving at 6 pm.
We'll be at the airport to meet you.
Let me know which train you'll be on.
Thank you very much for having me to stay.
I had a really good holiday.

I enclose a stamped addressed envelope.
Could you let us have it by return of post?
Please give my best wishes to Tim.
Say hello to Sandra for me.
Tell Mike I was asking after him.
John and I send you our very best wishes.
Mike has asked me to say that...
Give my love to the rest of the family.
Must go now.
Love from Sandra
Much love from Peter.
See you on Sunday, Yours, Sandra
Yours faithfully,
Looking forward to seeing you soon, Yours sincerely,

3.6.3 Focus on business letters

Starting
Dear Personnel Director, Dear Sir or Madam
Dear Mr, Mrs, Miss or Ms
Dear Frank
Quoting references
With reference to
Thank you for your letter of March 5th.
Why you are writing this letter
I am writing to
Asking for something
Could you possibly … ?

I would be grateful if you could …
Accepting
I would be delighted to …
Bad news
Unfortunately …
I am afraid that …
Enclosed documents
I am enclosing …
Please find enclosed …
Enclosed you will find …
Adding comments
Thank you for your help
Please contact us again if
Appointments
I look forward to
End
Yours faithfully,
Yours sincerely,
Best wishes, Best regards,

3.6.4 - How to send the letter

POSTING A LETTER
Is there a post office around here?
Where is the nearest postbox?
Where can I buy some stamps?
I want to post this to France.
How much is a stamp for a letter for France?
First- or second-class mail?

| I'd like to send some money by post. |
| How long will it take to get there? |
| When does the last post go? |
| Is there any mail for me? |
| Could you post it for me? |
| Could you send on my mail? |

TEST

Please use this layout to complete this letter.

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│   ┌────────────────┐                          │
│   │ 1              │                          │
│   └────────────────┘                          │
│                                               │
│   ┌──────────┐          ┌──────────────┐      │
│   │ 2        │          │ 4            │      │
│   └──────────┘          └──────────────┘      │
│   ┌────────────────────────┐                  │
│   │ 3                      │                  │
│   └────────────────────────┘                  │
│   ┌──────────────┐                            │
│   │ 5            │                            │
│   │              │                            │
│   └──────────────┘                            │
│   ┌────────────────────────────┐              │
│   │ 6                          │              │
│   └────────────────────────────┘              │
│   ┌──────────────┐                            │
│   │ 7            │                            │
│   └──────────────┘                            │
│   ┌───────────────────────────────────────┐  │
│   │ 8                                     │  │
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│   │ 9                                     │  │
│   │                                       │  │
│   │                                       │  │
│   └───────────────────────────────────────┘  │
│   ═══════════════════════════ 10              │
│   ═══════════════════════════ 11              │
│   ═══════════════════════════ 12              │
│   ═══════════════════════════ 13              │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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Structure of writing Business Letters

Your Name]

[Address]

[Address]

[Phone]

[Date today]

Re: [To what this letter refers]

[CERTIFIED MAIL]

[PERSONAL]

[Recipient's Name]

[Company Name]

[Address]

[Address]

Attention [Recipient's Name]

Dear [Recipient's name]:

[SUBJECT]

The main characteristic of full block business letters is that everything (except maybe a

preprinted letterhead) is flush with the left margin. Full block letters are a little more formal than modified block letters.

If your letter is only one page, type the complimentary close and optional components as shown below. Otherwise, type them on the last page of your letter. (See page 2 after you download this letter, or click on the appropriate link in the menu below.)

Sincerely,

[Sign here]

[Your name, title]

[Identification Initials]

Enclosures: [Number]

cc: [Name for Copy] [Name for Copy]

Business Letter Format

Company Letterhead

Company Name
610 Fountain Ave
Burlington, NJ 08016

Sender's Address - Press enter 4X from the top of the page (1"margin) **or** Company letterhead, centered at the top (2" margin).

Today's Date

Dateline – Located 2x after the Sender's address

Burlington Township Student
Street Address
City, State Zip

Inside Address – Press enter 4x after the Date. The person to whom you are sending the letter

Salutation – 2x below the address

Dear Sir

Use this sample letter as a template to help you complete your activities throughout this course. I have purposely set up the spacing and content to make it easier for you to delete existing text and replace it with the content that you need to use. Please be sure to use all the tools provided to you so that you are more efficient with your work.

Be sure to copy down the text boxes I have provided, they may be helpful when you need to compose different types of business letters. Be sure to save this document as: *Letter Template.*

Sincerely,

Complimentary Closing – located 2x below the body of the letter.

Body – the text of the letter, single spaced. Be sure to 2x between paragraphs.

Mr. Carson
Business Ed. Teacher

Signature Line/Author – the person who wrote the letter. It may include a title. Be sure to leave 4x between so you can sign the letter.

Enclosure

Enclosure Notation – 2x below the author. Use if there are other pages in the envelope besides the letter.

urs

encl. [use this only to signify that there are one or more enclosures

Typist's Initials –the person who typed the letter. 2x below the enclosure note or the signature line. **Lower case letters only.** If you are the author of the letter, you need not put your initials here.

Sample Interview Thank You Letter

Your Name
Your Address
Your City, State, Zip Code
Your Phone Number
Your Email

Date

Name
Title
Organization
Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

It was very enjoyable to speak with you about the assistant account executive position at the Smith Agency. The job, as you presented it, seems to be a very good match for my skills and interests. The creative approach to account management that you described confirmed my desire to work with you.

In addition to my enthusiasm, I will bring to the position strong writing skills, assertiveness and the ability to encourage others to work cooperatively with the department.

I understand your need for administrative support. My detail orientation and organizational skills will help to free you to deal with larger issues. I neglected to mention during my interview that I had worked for two summers as a temporary office worker. This experience helped me to develop my secretarial and clerical skills.

I appreciate the time you took to interview me. I am very interested in working for you and look forward to hearing from you about this position.

Sincerely,

Your Signature

Your Typed Name

[Your Name]
[Street • City • State • Zip Code]
[Phone # • Fax phone # • Messages phone # • Email]

[Date today]
Re: [To what this letter refers]

[CERTIFIED MAIL]
[PERSONAL]

[Recipient's Name]
[Company Name]
[Address]
[Address]

Attention [Recipient's Name]

Dear [Recipient's name]:

[SUBJECT]

The main characteristic of modified block business letters is that everything is flush with the left margin, except as shown. Modified block letters are a little less formal than full block letters.

If your letter is only one page, type the complimentary close and optional components as shown below. Otherwise, type them on the last page of your letter. (See page 2 after you download this letter, or click on the appropriate link in the menu below.)

Sincerely,

[Sign here]
[Your name, title]

[Identification Initials]
Enclosures: [Number]

cc: [Name for Copy]
    [Name for Copy]

3.7 Exercise in writing a MEMO

The full form of memo is memorandum which means a short note designating something to be remembered, especially something to be done or acted upon in the future; reminder. It is a record or written statement of something and is a kind of an informal message, especially one sent between two or more employees of the same company, concerning company business:

   Stage 1: Identify the task- It is the first & the foremost step while drafting a letter/ memo to identify the task for which the memo should be written.

   Stage 2: layout- Use the standard layout format while already exists in the workplace/ company/ organization and fill the important information in the required columns

Notes

To:	Mr. Sumit Kapoor
From:	Your name
Subject:	It department job interviews
Date:	Current date

Stage 3: ascertain relevant information

- Over 100 applications for new member of staff in it department
- selected 10 candidates for interview
- will be writing to candidates shortly to invite for interview
- when should interviews take place?
- suggest initial interviews in personnel department
- how many people from it dept. Will be attending?
- will arrange room
- anything else you require
- will show candidates around the company
- member of your staff to show around it department?
- coffee and biscuits
- plan 30 minutes per candidate for interview
- cv's to personnel department

Stage 4: group/order relevant information

- received over 100 applications for new member of staff in it department
- have put together a short list of 10 candidates
- have made copies of their cv's and will send to you this afternoon
- when would you like interviews to take place?
- i will inform candidates when i write to invite them for interview
- would be a good idea if initial interviews held in personnel department
- how many people from your department would like to be present?
- will arrange suitable room
- will arrange coffee and biscuits for interviewers and interviewees
- will arrange for candidates to be shown around the company
- perhaps one of your staff could show them around the IT department?
- have allocated 30 minutes per candidate. Will you need more?
- anything else you will require?

State 5: Write the Memo: After practicing all the above mentioned stages above, now the last stage is to write the memo.

Few Examples of Memo are pasted below for your knowledge and reference.

1. **MEMO-1**
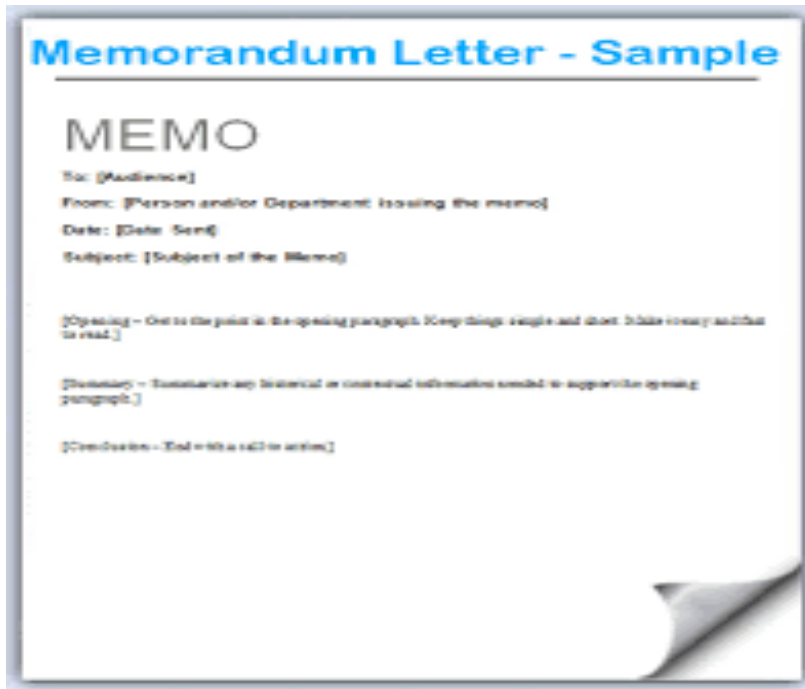
2. **Memo-2**

MEMO

To: Mr. Sumit Kapoor
From: Your name
Subject: IT Department job interviews
Date: Today's date

I have received over 100 applications for the new position in the IT Department and have put together a short list of 10 candidates. I have made copies of their CV's and letters of application and will send them over to you this afternoon.

Could you let me know when you would like the interviews to take place so that I can inform the candidates when I write to them to invite them for interview?

I think it would be a good idea if the initial interviews took place in the Personnel Department and if you could inform me how many people from your department would like to be present at the interviews. I will arrange for a suitable room. Coffee and biscuits will be available both for the interviewers and the interviewees.

I will arrange for the candidates to be shown around the company and brought along to the IT Department where perhaps one of your staff could show them around. I have allocated 30 minutes per candidate but if you would like more time this can be changed.

Let me know what you think and if there is anything else you will require.

---

3. **Memo-3**

MEMO	
TO:	[CLICK **HERE** AND TYPE NAME]
FROM:	ACER
SUBJECT:	[CLICK **HERE** AND TYPE SUBJECT]
DATE:	FEBRUARY 24, 2016
CC:	[CLICK **HERE** AND TYPE NAME]

Try some of the following scenarios to practice your skills in writing memos and e-mails. You will be provided with the necessary information to create a new piece of correspondence for each scenario; however, it is up to you to add the details.

Exercise in writing Memos

Scenario 1: As the owner of a small company, you are organizing a ballgame and picnic in two weeks' time for your employees and their families. There are many fun activities that you have planned. For the children there will be games like three legged races and kite-flying. For the adults, besides the baseball game in the afternoon, there will also be bingo and horseshoes. There will be prizes for the winners of all the events. Lunch should be around noon, and you are generously providing all the food and drinks, so let your employees know that they do not need to bring anything. Write a memo requesting, but not demanding, that employees attend the picnic. Also ask your employees to let you know at least one week in advance whether they are coming or not, and also how many guests they are bringing, and make sure employees know when and how to respond to you. Be sure to list the activities for that day as well.

Scenario 2: As the resident computer technician, you have installed a new software program on the company computers. Write a memo to all the staff, including your managers, letting them know that they need to come see you for a half-hour training and information session within the next week. Be sure to include what times you are available as well as where and how you can be reached. Below is an example of an informative memo. Request Information 1. You and three other employees are working closely in a small group to create a report on how plants in the workplace affect the employees' morale. Create a memo asking what plants they would like to study, how many employees they should survey, who will be doing what task, what time they should meet each week, and when they want the report to be done by. Below is an example of a request for information memo.

3.8 Writing a Report

A report is prepared to permanently record information or opinion on a given subject. It may be prepared periodically or to satisfy a specific requirement of higher management. It expresses the thoughts of the reporter and impresses the recipient.

The purpose of writing a report is to communicate results of an investigation or to identify progress made during a specific period of time. The report represents on paper some new knowledge gained. It conveys your accomplishments to the recipient. It should not be looked upon as simply a recording tool, but an action tool - a document frequently used by management in planning and decision-making. Do your reports usually have the impact they should? If not, to what do you attribute the problem? Is it the logic you used, or is it the report structure?

The conventional structure may be outlined as follows:

1. Summary
2. Introduction

3. Discussion

4. Observations, Conclusions, Recommendations

5. Appendix

If you have been preparing reports in this manner, and they have not been receiving the attention they should, perhaps the use of a different format would be helpful in gaining the attention of the recipients. If ground rules for report structure have not been established, consider structuring the next report as follows:

1. Highlights

2. Conclusions and/or Recommendations

3. Analysis of Details

4. Details

The traditional "Summary" can be replaced with a single page behind the title page containing the report highlights. This page can address such items as the title, objective, a brief statement of the conclusions and recommendations, and, if applicable, advantages, disadvantages, and limitations. Such a highlights page forces you, the writer, to be concise in choice of words and discriminating in selection of ideas. If the highlights page is used, the "Introduction," which normally presents background or historical material, may be eliminated. If it must appear in the report, do not include it as a monolithic block. In the suggested change of format, the "Discussion" is eliminated and replaced by a detailed expansion of the conclusions and/or recommendations. Placing conclusions and recommendations at the beginning of the report will show the recipient at the outset whether the report contains information he wants.

Reports often go awry because they are prepared in the sequence followed in researching the subject matter. The traditional stepped sequence used in research is as follows:

● Search for and collect the material/data;

● Analyze the material/data collected and separate it into logical groupings or steps;

● Develop the conclusions; and

● Make the recommendations.

The main ideas of the report - the "what" and "why" - are generally contained in the third and fourth steps. Therefore, as reports are traditionally written, the receiver does not have a full grasp of the "what" and "why" until he reads the final pages, since the writer has forced the recipient to go through all of the research detail.

When you prepare your next report, place the conclusions and recommendations at the beginning. Then follow with the analysis and details to reinforce your recommendations. The advantage is that the recipient learns what he wants to know immediately. The conclusions are more to the point. The advantage to you, as the writer, is that once the recipient has grasped the main ideas, and learned the reasons for them, he is forced to consider your point of view throughout the report. There is another advantage. When your conclusions are clearly drawn and stated at the outset, many of the traditional problems of report organization tend to disappear.

3.8.1 The Polishing Process

The principal difference between a well-prepared report, or paper, and a poorly prepared one may be the amount of effort spent "polishing" it. This is often a tedious process, but even the best writers admit it is important and endure it.

The polishing process begins with reading the text from beginning to end; first time through, check for content; second time, for overall organization; third time, for appropriateness; and fourth time, for correctness. These checks are inseparable. Although it may be possible to separate one for the purpose of analysis, each depends upon the others. All combine to produce an effective message.

Content is of primary importance. If the message is not complete, the receiver will not understand the purpose and will not respond as you wish.

Organization is a quality you should look for and strive for in appraising the results of your written report or paper. The reason is simply this: a clear, logical organization of the manuscript leads to a better understanding of your message. To ensure you have accomplished this objective, three basic questions should be answered affirmatively:

● Have I used the best text pattern or organization to present my message - to make my point?

● Does my principal objective come through clearly?

● Are my transitions between ideas and major sections of the text logical? In other words, is there a natural easy flow from one idea to the next?

Directness is another quality for concern. You can achieve directness in your report or paper by using simple, uncomplicated sentences, and by selecting words the receiver will understand effortlessly. You can improve the quality by varying word arrangements and length of sentences. An example or two - even an illustration - might help to explain a difficult point. As implied earlier that good writing is little different from good conversation.

Write as you talk but tighten it up a bit when you edit the text. Appropriateness must also be considered. The general tone of your paper or report should suit the subject addressed. Consider the receiver in deciding on the tone, level, and style of your message.

Correctness is the final quality you should try to attain. This is probably the quality the reader will use most frequently to form his opinion of you. Although your message may possess the other qualities, the recipient will ignore your message if he believes it was prepared by an uneducated person.

To be successful in preparing reports and papers, you must abide by generally recognized standards - standards that determine correct usage of language. You must acquire a "feel for the language" just as a driver acquires a "feel for the road." To do so, you might read the text aloud. If you tend to stumble over a word or phrase, it could indicate the need for punctuation or rephrasing. Sometimes you will find that a sentence doesn't hang together and should be divided into two or more separate statements. Ask yourself these additional questions:

● Are my subjects and verbs in agreement?

● Is my spelling correct?

● Have I capitalized correctly?

● Have I avoided over-capitalization?

● Have I selected correct pronouns?

● Have I been consistent in use of abbreviations and special terms?

● Can I eliminate a word, phrase, sentence, paragraph, or section of text without losing important data or continuity?

3.8.2 Testing the Business Writing effectiveness

The effectiveness of a report or paper you have prepared can be judged by the answers to these questions:

● Have I used an approach that will arouse the interest of the intended receiver?

● Have I found a way to hold the receiver's interest?

● Have I determined what information I would like the receiver to remember after reading the document? (Note: When you have made this determination, emphasize the information by illustrating it and including it in the summary,)

If you have met the quality criteria described in the polishing process, and can give an affirmative answer to each of these test questions, you have prepared a report or paper to successfully accomplish the intended purpose.

3.9 Writing a Proposal

A proposal is basically a formal way of requesting or suggesting something that you want or think is necessary. The aim is to get the person you are sending it to, to approve or agree to do it.

Writing a proposal is similar to but not exactly the same as crafting a persuasive essay or producing a report. Here are suggestions for developing a proposal, including some pertinent to its specific purpose.

1. A proposal should define a problem and describe a solution that will persuade busy, thrifty, skeptical readers to support it.

2. Employ facts, not opinions, to bolster the argument for approval. Research similar plans or projects and cite them, emphasizing their successes and/or how your proposal resolves the weaknesses, omissions, or mistaken priorities apparent in them.

3. Analyze your plan or project, demonstrating possible outcomes. If possible, model a small-scale version of the plan or project, report on the results, and extrapolate how the full-scale plan or project will turn out based on the test.

4. Any discussion of financial or other resources should be conducted carefully and should present a realistic picture of the expense required.

5. Be meticulous in writing, editing, and design of the proposal. Revise as necessary to make it clear and concise, ask others to critique and edit it, and make sure the presentation is attractive and engaging as well as well-organized and helpful.

6. **A proposal should include the following elements:**

   ❖ Executive Summary: State the rationale for putting the proposal into effect, and summarize the proposal. (This allows a decision maker to quickly get the gist of the proposal, hence the name.)

   ❖ Statement of Need: Detail why the plan or project the proposal recommends is necessary.

   ❖ Project Description: Explain specifics of the plan or project, and how it will go into effect and how it will be evaluated.

   ❖ Budget Analysis: Provide and explain how the plan or project will be financed and categorize and annotate operating expenses.

   ❖ Organization Details: If the proposal is being submitted to an outside party, provide information about the beneficiary organization, including its mission, its stakeholders and who its serves, and the scope of its programs and services.

   ❖ Conclusion: Summarize the proposal's main points.

3.9.1 What makes a good proposal?

● **Planning:** The most important factor in deciding if a proposal will be approved is 'does it solve a problem?'. If it does and the person or people who have the power to approve it think it's an important one, the likelihood of getting it approved is high. So first identify an important problem which your proposal resolves. Once you have, think about how you can justify your proposal. Think of how your proposal rectifies the problem and what the benefits are of implementing it. Also think about any potential costs of not implementing it. When doing this, think from the perspective of the person/people you are sending it to. What benefits and costs will they see as important? For most companies, the people who run them are motivated by improving profits/sales. So they are more likely to be persuaded that a proposal makes sense if you focus on the financial benefits and consequences. Another important part of justifying your proposal is providing evidence that it will do what

Notes

you say it will. The less risky it seems, the more likely they'll agree to do it. So, get evidence if you can of where it has been done successfully.

● **Before you send it:** To improve your chances of getting the proposal approved, make sure that the person/people know a little about your proposal before you send it to them. When you do this, tell them that you've thought of a way to resolve a problem or improve a situation but don't give too many more details (your proposal will do this). It is better to either speak to them by phone or face-to-face when you do this. If the person/people you're sending it to have asked you to propose/come up with something, then this isn't necessary.

● **The structure:** Once you have done all of this, you have to decide how you are going to structure it in the email (the order you use to write the different parts). Getting the structure right is extremely important in persuading the person/people you are sending it to that your proposal is something that needs to be done. In the structure, you need to:

   ❖ First, talk about the problem(s) it will resolve.

   ❖ Then explain what the cause(s) of this or these are.

   ❖ Then (and only then), introduce your proposal. Both explain and justify how it will solve the problem(s).

   ❖ Make some type of compromise about your proposal (e.g. suggest a test period).

   ❖ Explain a negative consequence of not doing your proposal.

Business Proposal

Prepared for: _____, located at _____, _____, _____, _____

Prepared by: _____, located at _____, _____, _____, _____.

Description: _____ is seeking funding from _____ for _____. The funding request, market analysis, and return of investment analysis of the project are included in this Proposal. _____ is seeking the flexibility, guidance and funding of _____ for growth of business in order to benefit both the parties.

Executive Summary
The purpose of this proposal is to forge a strategic relationship between _____ and _____ to leverage the customer base for _____'s newly developed product.

The Business has developed a new _____ which has the following specifications and advantages over similar products in the industry:

The Business has a window of opportunity to introduce its products and gain a significant piece of the market share. The new product/service caters to a wide range of customers and is expected to hold a market share of 0%.

Project Description
The project will be completed at follows:

_____ is planning to _____.

Sales and Marketing Strategy
The main target markets for the business include:

It is estimated that there are 0 potential customers within the Business's defined trading area that are estimated to spend $0.00. To seek the most profitable market segments in the target markets overall, the Business will focus on the following areas within the target market:

Financial Summary
The Business is expected to generate $0.00 in the first year and gross profit is expected to be $0.00. Out of the gross profits 0% will be earmarked to pay back _____ loans. _____ will also get a share of profits generated every year, which shall be

● **The vocabulary:** Once you have structure, the last part of writing an effective proposal is using the right type of vocabulary in it. The vocabulary you use needs to sound both professional and persuasive. This is often the most difficult to get right. The only way to know what to use is to learn and practice using this type of vocabulary and phrases.

TEMPLATE FOR PREPARING PROJECT PROPOSALS-   PAGE 1

I.   **Project Cover sheet –** include contact information, project director, project period, indigenous population that your organization represents or works with, and project summary

II. **Organizational history, mission, vision and structure** – include a few brief paragraphs explaining how your organization was established, its mission, vision and structure, as well as its record of working on indigenous issues

III. **Background and analysis of the problem to be addressed** – provide an an analysis of the field, what are the existing gaps and challenges, and what exactly is the problem to be addressed? Which indigenous peoples are affected by this problem and how can the proposed project/program help address the issue?

IV. **Proposed goal, objectives, target population and implementation plan** – What is the overall goal of the program/project, and what are the objectives? How will the project be implemented?

V.   **Annual project budget** - provide a line item budget in US$ with short narrative explanations for each line item, which can be footnoted to the budget.   A sample budget is attached on the following page.

VI. **Attachments:**
Overall organizational budget (operating budget)
List of other potential sources of support (if any)
By-laws of association/organization, where appropriate

* Note: This template is intended to serve as a sample to assist in writing a project proposal. The organization should feel free to use other formats, as long as all the above-mentioned elements are included in the proposal. Project proposals should be no longer than 10 pages, although shorter proposals would be preferred.

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Business Proposal / Project Plan

Applicant Company's Information

Name of Company	:
Project Title	:
Project Start Date	:
Project End Date	:
Name of Project Manager	:
Contact Number	:
E-mail	:
No. of Staff	:

ICT Solution Provider's Information

Name of Company	:
Name of Project Manger	:
Contact Number	:
E-mail	:
No. of Staff	:

3.10 Writing Resume

A resume is a formal document that showcases the basic yet crucial information about a person's education and professional experience. These details are expected to be relevant to the requirements of a particular position one is applying for. A resume is a one page summary of your skills, education, and experience. The resume acts much like an advertisement for a company trying to sell something. The resume is your advertisement. Just as a sneaker company spends countless hours (and millions of dollars) designing their latest advertising campaign, you too 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 you will ever create. A solid resume is the key that will open the door to good jobs. Don't cheat yourself...work hard on it.

How long do employers typically look at a resume?

A. Less than 30 seconds

B. 3 Minutes

C. 1 Minute

If you answered "A", you are correct. Employers often receive hundreds of resumes for a single position. They do not have time to pour over every word on each one. This increases the importance of the smallest details.

Not all resumes are the same, but there are some common elements that they all should include. The necessary elements are: Heading - Your heading should include the essential personal inform

3.10.1 Resume Format

1. **Contact Details:** Name, address, telephone, e-mail. All of your contact information should go at the top of your resume.

   ❖ Your contact information should be up-to-date. If you're a student or constantly moving, it is best to use a permanent address, such as your parents.

❖ Avoid nicknames.

❖ Use a professional e-mail address.

❖ Check your voice mail message. Make sure it conveys a professional message to potential employers.

2. **Education**: If you're a new college graduate, list your education before your work experience—especially if you have a limited amount of work history. For instance, if you're fitness professional with little to no college experience, list your work experience first. Listing your most attractive features before anything else will help give a good first impression to potential employers.

❖ List your most recent education first.

❖ Include your degree (A.S., B.A., M.S., etc.), major, institution attended, and minor/concentration.

❖ Include your grade point average (GPA) only if it is higher than 3.5 and you have limited work experience. If you have several years of work experience, this information is more relevant to employers and trumps the importance of a GPA.

❖ Mention academic honors.

❖ List all fitness certifications and advanced specializations (i.e., NASM-CPT, CES, PES).

3. **Work Experience**: List all work experience that has taught you important and applicable skills. Many skills can be marketed to fitness employers besides exercise and nutrition (especially if you're lacking fitness-related work experience). For example, previous jobs emphasizing sales, customer service, leadership, and multi-tasking should be included on your resume. List all work experience that relates as closely as possible to the position you're applying for.

Include your work experience in reverse chronological order—that is, put your last job first and work backward to your first relevant job. Include:

❖ Title of position

❖ Name of organization

❖ Location of work (city, state)

❖ Dates of employment

❖ Describe your work responsibilities with emphasis on specific skills and achievements.

❖ Emphasize how past experiences help qualify you for the position you're applying for.

4. **Other Information:** List important information that may prove beneficial for employers to know about you.

❖ Special skills or competencies (ex. Microsoft Office, Web Design, Photoshop)

❖ Leadership and/or teaching experience (ex. Scuba Instructor, Community College Instructor)

❖ Participation in sports, bodybuilding, fitness workshops or conventions, or continuing education courses

❖ Charity and volunteer work

❖ Professional memberships

5. **References**: Most employers ask for three references. It is recommended to list your references on a separate sheet of paper. It's much better to use space on your resume for important skills, experience and education. You may note at the bottom of your resume: "References furnished on request."

When listing professional references include:

❖ Reference's Name

❖ Job Title

❖ Relationship

❖ Company

❖ Address

❖ Phone Number

❖ E-mail Address

If possible, choose references that hold positions in a related health and fitness field. In this instance, employers will be interested in feedback about you from someone who was in a position of responsibility and authority that can judge your work experience, professionalism and reliability. Avoid listing family members as references. Former managers, supervisors and professors make great references.

Ask permission to use their name and contact details as references. Share if you've had a name change since you worked with them so they recognize your new name. Forward them your current resume so they can be prepared to speak about your strengths and potential for the types of positions you are seeking.

6. **Cover Letter:** Some companies won't even consider your resume without a cover letter. Use the cover letter to introduce you, your skills, and how they directly apply to the position.

❖ Include the same contact details as your resume.

❖ Personalize the cover letter with professional greeting and closing lines (Dear Mr. ABC, Sincerely).

❖ Thank the reader for considering your application.

Sample of cover letter are pasted below for reference & knowledge:

YOUR COVER LETTER - Template Extract   ABSOLUTE RESUME

_____ (Date)

RE: _____ (Insert Job Title and Reference)

Dear _____ (Name of Recruiter)

I am writing to express my interest in the _____ _____ (indicate the position you are applying for) position, as advertised in _____ (indicate name of media where the role is advertised, i.e. The Australian, SEEK, PULSE IT, etc).

Having worked as a/an _____ (indicate your current or previous position) for the past __ (#) years, I am

Above is an extract from one of our Cover Letter templates.

- Our templates are easy to use. We provide the (direction) and you simply add your specific detail
- Templates are Professionally structured to capture your essential Cover Letter information
- We have a range of Industry specific templates that will suit your background
- You can add delete or modify templates to suit your own specific needs
- Successfully used by hundreds of our clients

Your Name

Street Address
City, State Zip Code
Phone Number

Date

Individual's   Name
Job   Title
Name   of   Organization
Street   Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. _____:

First Paragraph: State the reason for writing. Name the specific position or type of work for which you're applying. Mention how you learned of the opening.

Second Paragraph: Explain why you're interested in working for this employer and specify how you're PERFECT for this position. Don't repeat the information on your resume. Include something special or unique about yourself that will benefit the employer. Remember, the reader will consider this an example of your writing skills.

Third Paragraph: Mention that your resume is enclosed and indicate your desire to meet with the employer. You may want to suggest alternate dates and times, or simply advise them of your flexibility to the time and place. Include day and evening contact information. Include a statement or question that will encourage the reader to respond. Be sure to communicate your plan to follow up. You might state that you'll be in the area on a certain date and would like to set up a meeting, or you'll call on a certain date to set up a meeting. Finally, thank the employer for his/her time.

Sincerely,

(*Your Signature in blue or black ink*)

Your typed name

Enclousre

7. **Revise:** You've written your resume and cover letter, now it's time to have them reviewed and critiqued by a peer or mentor.

    Suggestions:

❖ Check all spelling (Microsoft Word has a spell check feature).

❖ Read them out loud, word for word.

❖ Ask a mentor or peer to perform a grammar review.

❖ Ask another friend to proofread. The more people who see your resume (and cover letter), the more likely misspelled words and awkward phrases will be seen and corrected.

8. **Design:** These tips will make your resume easier to read and/or upload into an employer's computer database.

❖ Use clean high quality white paper.

❖ Use 8-1/2- x 11-inch paper.

❖ Only print on one side of the paper.

❖ Use a font size of 10 to 12 points.

❖ Use plain, easy to read fonts.

❖ Choose one typeface and stick to it.

❖ Avoid italics, script, and underlined words.

❖ Do not fold or staple your resume.

❖ If you must mail your resume, put it in a large envelope.

9. **Online Resume Submissions:** Many of the bigger organizations now require that candidates submit an online application. After all the work designing a top-notch resume, you may need to do some quick redesign (don't panic!) to get your online application and resume noticed. Some online programs will search your application for key words that were in the job description. Make sure you incorporate some of them throughout your materials (and this also includes the cover letter). The online submission process will probably include text boxes that you can copy and paste sections of your resume, like previous work experience details.

A few points to remember:

❖ Include job description key words.

❖ Save a copy of your responses and revised resume.

❖ Review and adjust formatting when copy/pasting materials.

❖ Save a copy of the revised resume (and cover letter) in a pdf for uploading.

❖ Name this revised resume with your name and the position you are applying for, with correct spellings.

One of the challenges of submitting applications online is formatting. Most sites will allow you to upload a complete copy of your resume. It's important to save a copy of your newly revised resume in a pdf format for easy uploading.

3.10.2 Resume tips and suggestions

1. Final hiring decisions are rarely based solely upon the resume. The resume is your advertisement (just like the Nike swoosh or McDonald's arches) that will get you an interview. The resume should be a concise, factual, and positive listing of your education, employment history, and accomplishments.

2. Make sure your resume is PERFECT! It only takes one error in spelling, punctuation, or grammar to cause an employer to stop reading. Ask people to proofread your resume. Go over it with a fine tooth comb.

3. Limit your resume to one page. Only people with a great deal of related experience should have resumes longer than one page.

4. One inch margins around the page and blank lines between sections will make all the information easier to read. Use a 10-point font size minimum and avoid overuse of italics, bold, and underlining.

5. Since you probably have little work experience, you will want to emphasize your accomplishments in and out of the classroom. Volunteer activities, hobbies, sports, honor roll, and student organizations are things that help define who you are and should be highlighted. List only recent honors and awards unless they are specifically relevant to the position for which you are applying.

6. Present your job objective in a manner that relates both to the company and the job description.

7. Sell yourself! Create a good first impression by highlighting skills and abilities appropriate to the position. If you don't sell yourself, your resume will stay in the pile with all of the others. Separate yourself!

8. Tell the truth and nothing but the truth! Employers will pick up on "little" white lies when they interview you.

9. Choose your words carefully. In a resume, you need to sound positive and confident, neither too aggressive nor overly modest. Do not use "I." Each description of your responsibilities should begin with a verb. The following words and phrases are intended as suggestions for thinking about your experience and abilities: accomplish; achieve; analyze; adapt; balance; collaborate; coordinate; communicate; compile; conduct; contribute; complete; create; delegate direct; establish; expand; improve; implement; invent; increase; initiate; instruct; lead; organize; participate; perform; present; propose; reorganize; research; set up; supervise; support; train; travel; work (effectively, with others)

Some resume formats are pasted below for the reference & knowledge:

Name Surname
Adress
Phone number
Email

Career Planning

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Etiam vel egestas nulla. Donec vestibulum dapibus mi at venenatis. Integer volutpat lacinia convallis

Education

Institution Name, Degree Level, Location – Certification (GPA)	2003
Institution Name, Degree Level, Location – Certification (GPA)	2002
Institution Name, Degree Level, Location – Certification (GPA)	2001

Professional Experience

2004 : Job title – Company name – Industry - Location
A brief description of your achievements in that job
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Etiam vel egestas nulla. Donec vestibulum dapibus mi at venenatis. Integer volutpat lacinia convallis.

2003 : Job title – Company name – Industry - Location
A brief description of your achievements in that job
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Etiam vel egestas nulla. Donec vestibulum dapibus mi at venenatis. Integer volutpat lacinia convallis.

2002 : Job title – Company name – Industry - Location
A brief description of your achievements in that job
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Etiam vel egestas nulla. Donec vestibulum dapibus mi at venenatis. Integer volutpat lacinia convallis.

2001: Job title – Company name – Industry - Location
A brief description of your achievements in that job
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Etiam vel egestas nulla. Donec vestibulum dapibus mi at venenatis. Integer volutpat lacinia convallis.

Skills

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Etiam vel egestas nulla. Donec vestibulum dapibus mi at venenatis. Integer volutpat lacinia convallis

References

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Etiam vel egestas nulla. Donec vestibulum dapibus mi at venenatis. Integer volutpat lacinia convallis

Name & Surname
Address
City

JOB TITLE

Phone: 098.23.23
Mail : mymail@mall.com

Professional Objective
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Etiam vel egestas nulla. Donec vestibulum dapibus mi at venenatis. Integer

EDUCATION

Year ... : Institution Name, Degree Level, Location - Certification (GPA)
A brief description of the training : Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

Year ... : Institution Name, Degree Level, Location - Certification (GPA)
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OTHERS INFORMATIONS

Computer Skills

Languages

Hobbies :

NAME SURNAME   JOB TITLE

Professional Objective

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Adress:
Xxxxxxxxx   Phone: 06000.03.04   Mail : mail@email.com

Professional Objective
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Name & Surname
Address
City
Phone: 098.23.23
Mail : mail@mail.com

JOB TITLE

EDUCATION

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LANGUAGES

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3.11 What is a Business Message & Its Importance?

Generally a business message has precise content related to the business. It can be a message for internal purposes such as the employees or board of directors; or external – for clients, creditors and service providers.

Whoever the recipient of the business message is, it is necessary to comply with a degree of formality in conveying the message to achieve the goal of disseminating the message to the recipients.

Types of Business Messages

There are different types of business messages, and it all depends on what is the purpose of giving out that business message to other person on the other end.

1. **Verbal Business Messages:** Verbal messages are the primary mode of passing a message. There is no need of much structure and strict compliance compared to written messages. Verbal Messages are frequently passed on in-order to carry out routine business activities.

2. **Written Business Message:** Written messages are used whenever the information being passed on needs to be compiled and filed. This is where some of the employees may commit mistakes while drafting a written business message. In case any mistakes occur in the written business message, it can become permanent and get filed. It is important to be extremely careful when writing a business message. Written business message is not just an ordinary message but a message that will either make or break the business. Due diligence should be considered so that there are no mistakes and loss of money arising out of incorrectly written business message.

3. **Routine Business Message:** This is to relay routine information to a particular audience; it is used to convey details about an upcoming event.

4. **Positive Business Message:** This type of message specifically applies to employees and to clients as well. For employees, this is done by commending an employee for a job well done or to the sales team for having reached the month's quota. For clients, this is to send out a message showing an appreciation for doing business with the company. This can also serve when advertising for a job hiring.

5. **Negative Business Message:** This is designed specifically to impart a message both to employees, clients or any other person who has a part in the business. It is to convey a sense of dismay or frustration without making it rude but just a sense of professionalism being showcased with.

6. **Persuasive Business Message:** This is for influencing the person who receives the message to take into action what the message has partakes. This is where a sales letter should be written at through persuading the reader to take an immediate action to avail the product or service.

3.12 Importance of Business Messages

A business message plays a vital role in the daily operations of the business. Giving out a clear business message will aid the people within the business organization to function properly and reach the organization's goal. It should be taken into consideration that a business exist not by its own self or by the owner of such business but by engaging the help of others especially employees and communicating with other people that will affect the operations of business such as clients and creditors.

There is a need that every message should conform to the standard set in, in order to convey professionalism and formality towards the person receiving the message and to receive prompt and accurate reply. Conveying a business message is not just a mere typing or writing a letter that contains business matters but it is a message that will impart to the whole world the type of business is being dealt with for the person who handles professionalism very well. This is one way of making an impression to the

people that business is business and the degree of formality and professionalism is being achieved and the result is an effective business message.

3.13 Structuring the business messages

Poor formatting and a lack of structure are common complaints that can dilute the actual content. For instance, there is nothing worse than seeing 10-12 lines of words with no paragraphs. Structuring a document, therefore, becomes critical for the content to achieve its goal.

3.13.1 Organizing content

Content refers to the information included in the message. The objective should be to comprise enough information to keep the reader's interest but not so much that it waste the reader's time and unclear your main point. Organization states to the order in which information is presented. Once it is known what information to include in the document, it can then be decided how to organize that information. Some common methods that can be used to organize content are:

1. **Outlining:** This involves creating a hierarchy of the ideas. It will help to identify what the main points are, what supporting material is available, and what other information need to include making the message meaningful.

2. **Brainstorming:** Write down ideas, facts, and anything else that seems related to the purpose. When it's finished, decide what's important and what can be deleted or revised.

3. **Clustering:** Write the main point in the middle of the page and circle it. When more ideas come, write them down and link them to either the main idea or to another point.

4. **Configuration for achievement:** A little bit of preparation will make the business documents look good. Make sure every business message incorporates these aspects:

5. **Background:** Why are you writing? Maybe refer to a previous letter, contact or document.

6. **State the facts:** Give information/instructions. Ask for information. Provide all relevant details.

7. **Expected response:** Action the reader should take and a timeframe. Action you will take.

8. **Conclusion:** A simple one-line closing sentence.

9. **Use paragraphs effectively:** Try to keep the paragraphs short. Readers are more likely to read a longer message broken into several short paragraphs than they are a shorter message without breaks. Each paragraph should contain only one main point, and this should be developed with concrete evidence and details. Expecting a positive response will present the conclusions or major idea first, followed by the reasons or support. If expect a negative response, present the reasons first and conclusions later. Use display appropriately within paragraphs to help get the message across. Numbered points and bullets are very helpful, and side headings can be useful to include things like date, time and venue.

10. **Skimmers and disbelievers:** These are two general types of business readers. Skimmers are readers that are typically very busy. Pressed for time, they often skim documents in a rather short period of time. The documents prepared for skimmers should:

    ❖ State the main point clearly and up front.

    ❖ Place the most important information at the beginning or end of paragraphs.

    ❖ Highlight key dates or figures.

❖ A disbeliever, on the other hand, is a reader who is cautious and doubtful. Such readers will tend to read a document carefully and question its validity. In order to meet the needs of this reader, it is necessary to support the statements with sufficient details and evidence. Provide specific examples, numbers, dates, names, and percentages.

3.13.2 When writing won't help

There are times when you need to take your discussion out of the virtual world and make a phone call. If things become very heated, a lot of misunderstanding occurs, or when you are delivering very delicate news, the best way is still face-to-face.

A well-structured business document is the core of effective business communication. This is why you should pay attention to how you structure your messages.

3.14 Advantages and Disadvantages of Written Communications

The decision to use a written rather than oral communication often rests with the manager - the communicator. In such cases, the communicator must weigh the advantages and disadvantages of each form of communication in order to make an intelligent decision.

The advantage of oral over written communications is that a complete interchange of thoughts and ideas can take place faster. The speaker is in direct contact with the listener (receiver) and is challenged to make him understood. Too frequently the listener fails to ask the right questions, so he does not receive the message clearly. This, in turn, can result in wasted efforts and costly errors. Written communications also have advantages. They are usually more carefully formulated than oral communications, so the message conveyed tends to be more clearly stated. Written messages also can be retained as references or legal records.

There are some disadvantages to written communications. First, the writer often fails to carefully compose his thoughts and ideas. When a poorly prepared message has to be followed by many written or oral communications to clarify the writer's original written word, the real message becomes garbled and the process becomes costly and time-consuming.

3.15 Summary

More than ever, it's important to know how to communicate one's point quickly and professionally. Many people spend a lot of time writing and reading, so the better you are at this form of communication, the more successful you're likely to be.

Always identify the audience before start creating the document. And if it is felt that there's too much information to include, create an outline to help organize the thoughts & ideas. Learning grammatical and stylistic techniques will also help to write more clearly; and be sure to proof the final document. Like most things, the more we write, the better we are going to be!.

3.16 Check Your Progress

Multiple Choice Questions

1. ………………is the principal means of communication
   - (a) Body Language
   - (b) Language
   - (c) Philological
   - (d) Writing

2. ………………….. is the final quality one should try to attain?

(a) Rightness

(b) Falseness

(c) Correctness

(d) None of above

3. A well-structured business document is the core of effective business ………………..

(a) Messages

(b) Communication

(c) Engagement

(d) Growth

4. Skimmers are readers that are typically very ………………...

(a) Busy

(b) Ideal

(c) Perfect

(d) Demanding

5. The enemy of good proofreading is ………………..

(a) Swiftness

(b) Rate

(c) Stagnation

(d) Speed

6. …………………… is made up of rules that allow us to organize our words and sentences into coherent, meaningful language.

(a) Grammar

(b) Vocabulary

(c) Business messages

(d) None of above

7. An employee that has competency in business language skills is likely to be able to climb up the career ladder with ………...

(a) Cautious

(b) Good speed

(c) Easy steps

(d) Ease

8. Writing a proposal is similar to but not exactly the same as crafting a persuasive essay or producing a report.

(a) False

(b) True

9. A ………….. is prepared to permanently record information or opinion on a given subject.

(a) E-mail

(b) Memo

(c) Report

(d) Proposal

10. A solid resume is the key that will open the door to …………..

(a) Great opportunities

(b) Good growth

(c) Great prospects

(d) Good jobs

3.17 Questions and Exercises

1. What is the role of using good grammar & vocabulary in effective business writing?

2. What do you understand by the Polishing Process?

3. State the tips for composing and styling the document.

4. How you can develop an effective business writing skills?

5. What do you understand by memorandum? What all are the stages involved in drafting a good and well explained memo?

6. What makes a good proposal?

7. How can the manager structure business messages?

8. "Resume is one advertisement." Comment.

9. List various types of business messages.

10. What are the various advantages and disadvantages of written communications?

3.18 Key Terms

● **AIDA:** AIDA, Attention-Interest-Desire-Action is an acronym used in marketing and advertising that describes a common list of events that may occur when a consumer engages with an advertisement.

● **Resume:** Resume provides a summary of a person's background including education, work history, and other qualifications for a job.

● **Memo:** Memorandum is an acronym used in the workplace which refers to a document or other communication.

● **Proposal:** A business proposal is a written offer from a seller to a prospective buyer. Writing a successful proposal can be made easier through the development of a proposal checklist that contains the necessary standardized information.

Check Your Progress: Answers

1. (b)

2. (c)

3. (b)

4. (a)

5. (d)

6. (a)

7. (d)

8. (b)

9. (c)

10. (d)

3.19 Further Readings

● http://www.exforsys.com/career-center/business-communication/business-messages.html

● http://www.englishpractice.com/letter/business-letter-writing-tips/

- http://www.mpg-saarlouis.de/till/exam12.php
- http://www.humber.ca/liberalarts/sites/default/files/memos&emails.pdf
- http://www.dailywritingtips.com/how-to-write-a-proposal/
- http://www.blairenglish.com/exercises/emails/exercises/email-of-proposal/email-of-proposal.html

Unit 4: Oral Communication

Structure

Objectives

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

● Understand the meaning & concept & importance of Oral Communication.

● Discuss the principles of oral communication.

● In-depth knowledge of value of good communication skills.

● Discuss in Length about the advantages & disadvantages of oral communication.

● In-depth knowledge of Exercises in speaking, discussing, listening and negotiating, body language and kinesics, business etiquettes

4.1 Introduction

The cultivation of the skills and habits of good oral communication is necessary for an organization or business.

Oral communication or verbal communication is the communication through mouth. It includes individuals communicating with each other, be it direct or telephonic conversation. Speeches, presentations, discussions are all forms of oral communication. Oral communication is generally recommended when the communication matter is of temporary kind or where a direct interaction is required. Face to face communication (meetings, lectures, conferences, interviews, etc.) is significant so as to build a rapport and trust.

Human beings interconnect through a variety of channels. Language is not the sole means by which humans exchange information. In conversation, we express our ideas and feelings not only with words but also through facial expressions, voice tones, and gestures. These non-verbal languages are called "Body Language". It is just like our verbal language, is also a part of our culture. In business communications, body language plays a significant role in the communication. It is necessary to master the skills of using and reading body language. Different people have different ways of making nonverbal communication.

Business etiquette provides a standard framework within which business people can operate as they communicate and collaborate. Attention to etiquette is a sign of professionalism and respect for others, and it can make positive first impressions while building trust among colleagues.

In this unit, we shall be discussing about the meaning, principles, advantages/disadvantages of Oral communication and its implications in business presentations. We shall also be discussing about the Exercises in speaking, discussing, listening and negotiating, body language and kinesics, business etiquettes

4.2 Meaning of "Oral communication"

Oral communication is the process in which messages or information is exchanged or communicated within sender and receiver through the word of mouth. Oral communication is a two-way process, as it provides a clear insight about the meaning to the message, and the message transmitted and the feedback is immediate. We communicate orally with our family, friends, in meetings, committees, conferences, over the telephone, radio, public, etc.
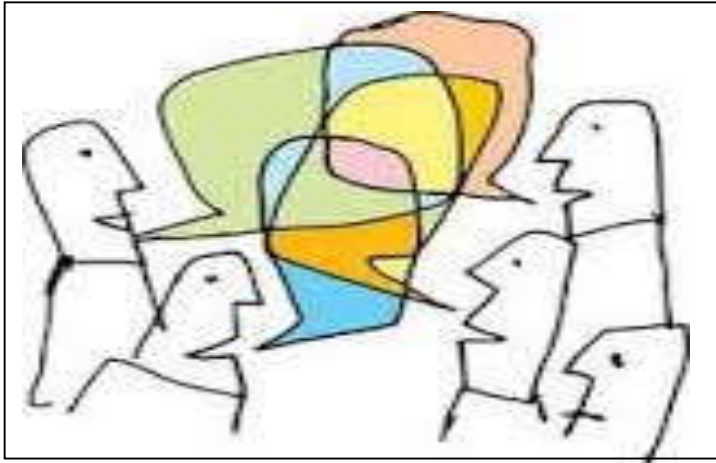
According to **Ricky W. Griffin**, "Oral communication takes place in face-to-face conversations, group discussions, telephone calls and other circumstances in which spoken word is used to express meaning."

According to **Bovee and others**, "Oral communication expresses ideas through the spoken word."

According to **S. K. Kapur**, "Oral communication takes place when spoken words are used to transfer information and understanding form on person to another."

4.3 The principles of oral communication are discussed below

1. **Clear pronunciation:** Clear pronunciation of message sender in the main factor or oral communication. If it is not clear, the goal of the message may not be achieved.

2. **Preparation:** Before communicating orally the speaker should take preparation both physically are mentally.

3. **Unity and integration:** The unity an integration of the speech of the message sender is a must for successful oral communication.

4. **Precision:** Precision is needed to make oral communication effective. The meaning of the words must be specific.

5. **Natural voice:** The speaker's must not be fluctuated at the time of oral communication. On the other hand artificial voice must be avoided.

6. **Planning:** Organized plan is a must for effective oral communication. The speaker should take proper plan for delivering speech.

7. **Simplicity:** The speaker should use simple an understandable words in oral communication. It should be easy and simple.

8. **Legality:** The speaker's speech should be legal and logical at the time of oral communication.

9. **Avoiding emotions:** At the time of oral discussion, excessive emotions can divert a speaker from main subject. So, the speaker should be careful about emotion. The speech must be emotionless.

10. **Acting:** Many people lose concentration after listening for a few minutes. So speech must be emotionless.

11. **Efficiency:** Speakers efficiency and skill is necessary for effective oral communication.

12. **Vocabulary:** Words bear different meanings to different people in different situations. In oral communication, a speaker should use the most familiar words to the receiver of the message to avoid any confusion in the meaning of the words.

4.4 Employers value good oral communication skills

1. Staff needs to interact effectively and productively in, and on behalf of, the organization;

2. Listening to and conveying information accurately is crucial;

3. Giving instructions and explanations clearly is essential; and

4. Engaging in constructive debate and contributing to meetings and

5. Committees is fundamental to the success of the organization

6. The important elements of communication identified by small, medium

   And large enterprises are:

   ❖ listening and understanding;

   ❖ speaking clearly and directly;

   ❖ writing to the needs of the audience;

   ❖ negotiating responsively;

   ❖ reading independently;

   ❖ empathizing;

   ❖ using numeracy effectively;

   ❖ understanding the needs of internal and external customers;

   ❖ persuading effectively;

   ❖ establishing and using networks;

   ❖ being assertive

   ❖ Sharing information; and

   ❖ Speaking and writing in languages other than English.

4.5 Oral Communication Activities

There are six comprehensive types of oral communication activities that might be combined into programs in many fields of study. Some are realistically possible only in smaller classes or recitation sections, while others are appropriate for large speeches as well.

On their own, any of them can help students learn course materials or ways of thinking (speaking to learn). Incorporated more systematically into a broader curriculum or major, they can together help move students to become more proficient speakers by the time they graduate (learning to speak).

1. **One-on-One Speaking (Student-Student or Student-Teacher):** Can range from moments punctuating a lecture, where students are asked to discuss or explain

some question or problem with the person next to them, to formal student conferences with their instructor.

2. **Small-Group or Team-Based Oral Work:** Smaller-scale settings for discussion, deliberation, and problem solving. Appropriate for both large lectures and smaller classes and allows levels of participation not possible in larger groups.

3. **Full-Class Discussions (Teacher- or Student-Led):** Typically less agonistic, argument-based, and competitive than debate and deliberation but still dialogic in character. Often times has the quality of creating an atmosphere of collective, out-loud thinking about some question, idea, problem, text, event, or artifact. Like deliberation and debate, a good way to encourage active learning.

4. **In-Class Debates and Deliberations**: A structured consideration of some issue from two or more points of view. Debates typically involve participants who argue one side throughout, while deliberation allows for movement by individuals within the process. Both feature reason-giving argument can be applied to issues of many kinds, from disputed scientific facts to theories, policy questions, the meaning of a text, or the quality of an artistic production and can range from two participants to a lecture hall.

5. **Speeches and Presentations:** Classically, the stand-up, podium speech delivered by an individual from an outline or script. Also includes group presentations or impromptu speaking. A strong element of monologue, but dialogue can be built in with question and answer or discussion with the audience afterward.

6. **Oral Examinations:** Can take place in the instructor's office, in small groups, or before a whole class. Range from one oral question on an otherwise written exam to an oral defense of a written answer or paper to an entirely oral quiz or examination. It is difficult with very large groups, but an excellent way to determine the depth and range of student knowledge and to stimulate high levels of preparation.

4.6 Advantages of Oral Communication

- There is high level of understanding and transparency in oral communication as it is interpersonal.

- There is no element of rigidity in oral communication. There is flexibility for allowing changes in the decisions previously taken.

- The feedback is spontaneous in case of oral communication. Thus, decisions can be made quickly without any delay.

- Oral communication is not only time saving, but it also saves upon money and efforts.

- Oral communication is best in case of problem resolution. The conflicts, disputes and many issues/differences can be put to an end by talking them over.

- Oral communication is an essential for teamwork and group energy.

- Oral communication promotes a receptive and encouraging morale among organizational employees.

- Oral communication can be best used to transfer private and confidential information/matter.

4.7 Disadvantages/Limitations of Oral Communication

- Relying only on oral communication may not be sufficient as business communication is formal and very organized.

- Oral communication is less authentic than written communication as they are informal and not as organized as written communication.

● Oral communication is time-saving as far as daily interactions are concerned, but in case of meetings, long speeches consume lot of time and are unproductive at times.

● Oral communications are not easy to maintain and thus they are unsteady.

● There may be misunderstandings as the information is not complete and may lack essentials.

● It requires attentiveness and great receptivity on part of the receivers/audience.

● Oral communication (such as speeches) is not frequently used as legal records except in investigation work.

4.8 Meaning & Importance & Type of Body language

"Body language" also defined as the nonverbal communication or the communicative functions of body, it is also called kinesics. It is part of the way in which we communicate. This "body language", like our verbal language, is also a part of our culture.

We all unconsciously give gestures and facial expressions which reveal our inner thoughts. It's hardwired into our brains and stretches back to our earliest days in the cave when facial expressions and gestures were all we had to communicate with.

Like music tracks on a CD these communication tools have been burned into our brains. Our body language becomes part of our conversation. It sends signals to another person about us. Present ourselves with confidence and authority and practice good posture. Stand with our back straight, shoulders back, and our chin up. Our voice does not sound clear when our chin is dropped toward our chest. Keep our arms relaxed at our side and avoid clasping our hands behind our back or hugging our arms in front. Portray calmness. Avoid nervous gestures such as tapping our foot or jingling coins in our pocket or playing with a pen. Keep our hands off our face and never pick at our nose. The way we walk and the way we talk all tell something about our social status. These gestures have come to be accepted in general as having the meanings mentioned, at least to Chinese and Americans.

As we mentioned earlier, it is impossible for us to stop communicating non-verbally. We all lean, point and look away. We move our hands to emphasize in our talk. We frown, smile, fold our arms, and move toward objects or people, then move away. How we stand, walk, eat, and gesture reveals much about our personality. It is called "body language". It is an important media through which people communicate with each other. It refers to the patterns of facial expressions and gestures that people use to express their feelings in communication.

4.8.1 The necessity and importance of learning body language

It is an extremely powerful tool which can improve our life in many ways. With patience, persistence, and practice we can use nonverbal behavioral patterns to more easily detect truth and lies, project a more confident, powerful presence, persuade, influence, and sell better, put people at ease, create a sense of trust, make friends.

It is especially important in business dialogs. If you are only aware of a mediator's verbal message, you will likely miss the major portion of the overall communication.

Being aware of both nonverbal and verbal messages will give you an important edge. Communication is more than verbal. Good negotiators must first be good communicators. Unfortunately, many negotiators think of communication only as oral or written verbal exchanges. But verbal exchanges account for only a fraction of the messages people send and receive. Research has shown that between 70 and 90 percent of the entire communication spectrum is nonverbal. Consequently, you should be aware of the different forms of nonverbal communication that you are likely to encounter during negotiation conferences.

4.8.2 Types of the body language

Types of body language Body language or kinesics can be understood by recognizing the following important aspects.

1. **Distance between the two is the key factor:** By the end of the intervention, the two may be quite a distance from the compromise; the two may be quite a distance from the place where they were originally standing! .Different people have different ideas about the proper distance between people conversing. According to studies, it seems there are four main distances in American social and business relations: intimate, personal, social, and public.

    ❖ Intimate distance ranges from direct physical contact to a distance of about 45 centimeters; this is for people's most private relations and activities, between man and wife, for example.

    ❖ Personal distance is about 45—80 centimeters and is most common when friends, acquaintances and relatives converse.

    ❖ Social distance may be anywhere from about 1.30 meters to 3 meters; people who work together, or people doing business, as well as most of those in conversation at social gatherings tend to keep a distance is farther than any of the above and

    ❖ Generally for speakers in public and for teachers in classrooms. The important thing to keep in mind is that most English-speaking people do not like people to be too close.

Notes

In talks being too far apart, of course, may be awkward, but being too close makes people uncomfortable, unless there is a reason, such as showing affection or encouraging intimacy.

2. **Physical appearance and physical contact:** It plays a very important role in creating first impression. Awareness may permit you to build on your natural advantages. However, awareness of any natural disadvantage may be even more important. Research has found that: Physical attractiveness affects the way you perceive yourself and the way other perceive you.

    ❖ *Personal Dress:* The importance of how we dress is highlighted by the saying, "Dress for success." Clothing has been found to affect perceptions of credibility, likeability, attractiveness, and dominance, but researchers agree that clothing has the most potent effect on credibility. Unfortunately, many otherwise good representatives ignore the importance of personal dress during talks, and that ignorance negatively affects their ability to attain mutually satisfactory concession results.

    ❖ For instance, In English-speaking countries, physical contact are generally avoided in conversation among ordinary friends or acquaintances. Merely touching someone may cause an unpleasant reaction. If one touches another person accidentally, he/she usually utters an apology such as "Sorry, Oh, I'm sorry, Excuse me." Such behavior—whether touching, patting, hugging or kissing—can be quite embarrassing and awkward.

3. **Eye contact:** Eye contact is an important aspect of body language. One could draw up quite a list of "rules" about eye contact:

    ❖ to look or not to look;

    ❖ when to look and how long to look;

    ❖ Who and who not to look at.

There are different formulas for the exchange of glances depending on where the meeting takes place. If you pass someone in the street you may eye the oncoming person till you are about eight feet apart, then you must look away as you pass. Before the eight-foot distance is reached, each will signal in which direction he will pass. In conversation, a person shows that he is listening by looking at the other person's eyes or face. If the other person is speaking at some length, the listener will occasionally make sounds like "Hmm", "Ummm", or nod his head to indicate his attention. If he agrees with the speaker, he may nod or smile. If he disagrees or has some reservations, he may slant his head to one side, raise an eyebrow, and have a quizzical look. Staring at people or holding a glance too long is considered

inappropriate. Even when the look may be one of appreciation—as of beauty—it may make people uneasy and embarrassed. Looking someone directly on the eye to be a mark of rudeness until a more familiar relationship is established.

4. **Facial expression:** As the most communicative part of the body, the face is probably the single most important source of non-verbal communication. It is capable of conveying several emotions instantaneously. The face not only can communicate a great deal, but also seemed to be the type of non-verbal behavior that people are beat able to control. However, facial expressions should be interpreted in cultural context and with caution. Take for example smiles and laughter. Smiles and laughter usually convey friendliness, approval, satisfaction, pleasure, joy and merriment. This is generally true in China as well as the English-speaking countries. However, there are situations when some Chinese will laugh that will cause negative reactions by westerners. Other facial expressions also vary from culture to culture. For instance in some US businesses, it is considered acceptable to frown, swear, and yell, but not to cry. But for the Japanese in situations of strong emotion it is considered acceptable to smile or laugh, but not to frown or cry.

5. **Gestures:** Gesture is the expressive movement of a part of the body, especially the hand and the head. People talk with their hands, but what they mean depends on their culture. As with verbal language, non-verbal codes are not universal. Same gestures have different meanings in different cultures. The forefinger near lips with the sound "shah", which is a sign for silence, means disapproval. In different cultures, different gestures are used for the same meaning. The OK sign (the circle formed with the thumb and first finger), which has the similar meaning in most of Western Europe, is a vulgar insult in Greece, an obscene gesture in Brazil, Mediterranean countries and Southern Italy, a sign for the sex act in some Latin American nations and can mean "you're worth nothing" in France and Belgium . Like hand movements, head movements differ from one culture to another. In Bulgaria, for example, people may nod their heads to signify no and shake their heads to signify yes. So gestures can be very confusing inter-culturally. But there are some gestures that have widely understood meanings. For example, foot-shaking, finger-tapping and fidgeting with a tie or hair usually signify nervousness or boredom; a clench fist typically indicates hostility or aggression. Specialists in the study of body movement emphasize that no single gesture carries meaning in and of itself. The gestures just discussed do not always mean the same thing. To understand a person's meaning, pay attention to all the cues they are sending and the context in which the cues occur, not to just a single gesture. When one communicate in a certain language, it is generally advisable to use the non-verbal behavior that goes with that particular language.

6. **Posture:** The way people carry themselves communicates volumes. People from different cultures learn to sit, to walk and to stand differently. The impact of culture on non-verbal communication is so strong that even people with great experience in cross-culture communication might be unaware of how meaning of a non-verbal act varies from culture to culture. In many European countries, such as Germany, where lifestyle tends to be more formal, a slouching posture is considered a sign of rudeness and poor manners. Similarly, in Japan, the formality is important and the Japanese value the ability to sit quietly. They might see the Americans fidget and shift as an indication of lack of mental or spiritual balance. But there are similarities. For instance, even in North America, swinging a foot in interview makes negative impression. Also, people respond unfavorably to standing with weight back on heels and hands in pockets at work place or sitting with feet up on the desk in office. And slouching or leaning on the stand in business presentation may make the audience feel that the speaker's ideas area as careless as his or her posture, Generally, standing erect, shoulders back, head held high display confidence, energy, and self-assurance, which gains more attention from the audience. And a relaxed posture, a comfortable seating position, uncrossed arms, and lack of stiffness indicate openness with no communication obstacles. On the other hand, abrupt movements, shifting seating positions, crossed arms or legs may signal defiance,

disinterest or an unwillingness to listen. Women in many settings will often hold their arms closer to their bodies than men. They will also keep their legs close together and seldom cross them in mixed company.

4.9 Application of the body language
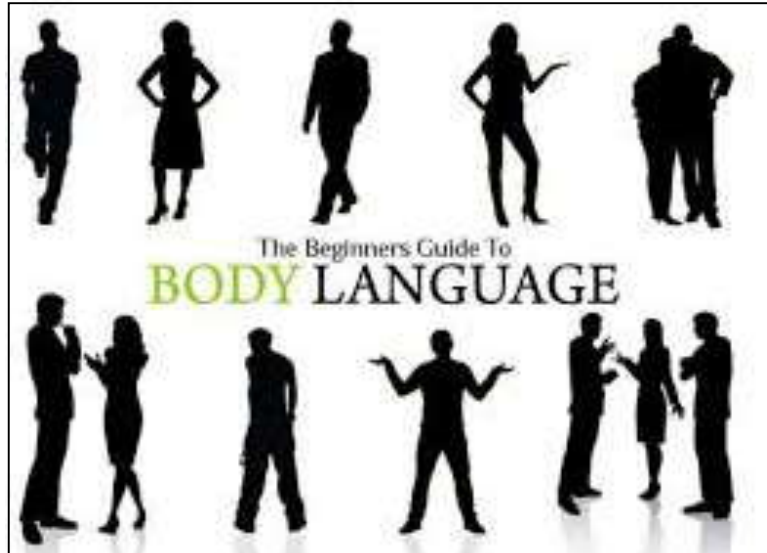
Good managers know how to use body language to their advantage. They also know how to read employee's body language to gain the upper hand. Crossed arms, raised eyebrows, wandering eyes - they all mean something. Pay attention and you'll be surprised what you might learn about what is really going on in the negotiation regardless of what is being said with words.

Body language research has catalogued 135 distinct gestures and expressions of the face, head, and body. Eighty of these expressions were face and head gestures, including nine different ways of smiling. These gestures and expressions provide insight into the attitude of the originator. Simultaneous physical signals often reinforce each other and reduce the ambiguity surrounding the message. For example, eagerness is often exhibited with the simultaneous physical displays of excessive smiling along with frequent nodding of the head. Common attitudes communicated nonverbally during negotiations can be grouped into two broad classifications—positive attitudes and negative attitudes. Positive Attitudes: Positive attitudes indicated by body language may signal a sincere effort to achieve win/win results. Key indicators of positive attitudes are listed below. Gestures: Be particularly careful when you are interpreting or using gestures. A gesture that means one thing in one society can mean something completely different in another. There is a good chance that you will encounter differing interpretations whenever you are negotiating with someone from another part of the world. Even if the other party is from the United States, some of these differing interpretations may remain as part of the person's heritage.

1. Shaking your head up-and-down means "yes" in the United States and left-to-right means "no". In some parts of the world the meanings are just the opposite.

2. The hand signal for O.K. in the United States is an obscene gesture in some societies.

3. The thumbs-up gesture is a positive sign in most of the world, but in some cultures it considered a rude gesture.

4. The V-shaped hand gesture with the index finger and middle finger may mean victory or peace in the United States, but in some countries it could be interpreted as an obscene gesture.

4.10 Use and to understand body language

During conversations or interactions of Managers with their peers or employees, once you become aware of your counterpart's body language, you can change your own nonverbal communication. By putting your notepad on the table, sliding forward in your seat, and uncrossing your legs, you can change your position to a much more receptive one. Once you begin to manage your nonverbal behavior and that of your colleague/ employee, you will start reaping the benefits of "speaking the language."

Body language reflects people's true feelings. The better you understand that language, the more you will be able to use it to your advantage. Human nature dictates that people considered more powerful are typically awarded greater personal space by the other people in the room. Control over the dominant chair (usually the head of the table) may be the most obvious sign of power. Learning the language of nonverbal communications is almost as difficult as acquiring fluency in a foreign language. Reading body language is perhaps the most powerful form of human communication! And armed with the right information about reading body language, you can almost read people's minds. In addition to studying your own gestures and the meaning you are conveying, you must also become aware of what your counterpart is conveying.

Gesture Knots many skeptics argue that it is difficult to tell what someone is thinking by singling out one gesture—and they are right. A single gesture is like a single word; its true meaning is difficult to understand out of context. However, when gestures come in clusters, their meaning becomes clearer. For example, while a person's fidgeting may not mean much by itself, if that person is avoiding eye contact, holding his hands around his mouth, touching his face and fidgeting, there's a good chance he is not being totally honest.

Involuntary hand movements can be particularly telling. People often touch their nose, chin, ear, arm or clothing when they are nervous or lack confidence in what they are saying.

Legs: When asked why they cross their legs, most people say they do so for comfort. Although they are being truthful, they are only partially correct. If you have ever crossed your legs for a long period of time, you know that this position can become painfully uncomfortable.
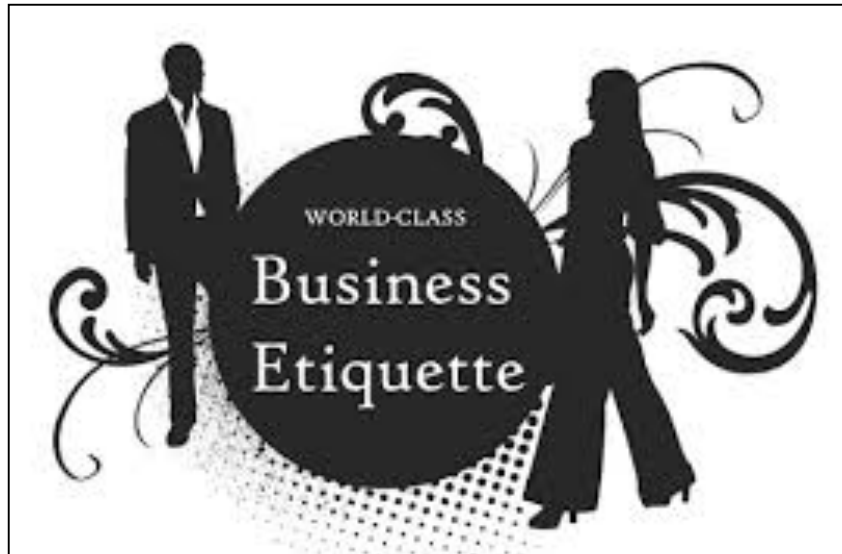
4.11 Meaning of "Business Etiquette"

Business etiquette is about constructing relationships with other people. Etiquette is not about rules & regulations but is about providing basic social well-being and generating

an environment where others feel comfortable and secure, this is possible through better communication.

Etiquette is a code of behavior that delineates expectations for social behavior according to contemporary conventional norms within a society, social class, or group. Business etiquette consists of two things. Firstly, thoughtful consideration of the interests and feelings of others and secondly, being able to minimize misunderstandings. These are influenced by individual behavior & character.

4.12 Why business Etiquette is required?

● Differentiates you from others in a competitive job market

● Enables you to be confident in a variety of settings with a variety of people

● Honors commitment to excellence and quality

● Modifies distracting behaviors and develops admired conduct

● Exhibit Professionalism and develop a polished image "Be one step ahead, practice the social skills necessary to help you make a great first impression and stand out in a competitive job market".

Business etiquette instructs this behavior. Business etiquette differs from organization to organization, region to region and from country to country. This creates a difficult situation for people as it is hard to balance the focus on both international business etiquette and other business activities at the same time. Therefore, a wise step is to focus on some key pillars of business etiquette.

4.13 Here are some key pillars of business etiquette

4.13.1 'Thank You' Note

If you want to differentiate yourself from others then never forget to write a 'Thank You' note to your job interviewer or your client. This will leave a good impression and also reflect well on your company.

4.13.2 Know the Names

Give others respect by knowing their names which will increase goodwill and communication. It is also worth management stepping back and acknowledging people individually for their good work as this will enhance their self-esteem and increase motivation.

4.13.3 Observe the 'Elevator Rule

Be mindful of saying appropriate things at a job interview or client meeting. Don't start discussing business with a client or interviewer as soon as you step out of the lift. By doing so, you avoid the risk of damaging your reputation.

4.13.4 Focus on the Face, Not the Screen

Never forget to switch off your phone and try not to use any other device just to prove you are a multitasking individual. In fact, in the world of business this is considered bad manners. Concentrate on the meeting and listen to what people are saying.

4.13.5 Don't Judge

Everyone is unique in their own way and uses a different approach to deal with situations. Therefore, if you disagree with another person's approach instead of criticizing try to understand it from their point of view. By doing so, you create a friendly environment. Always remember you get respect by giving respect.

Whether, in business or between individuals, one concern is brand awareness. Individuals want to be noticed both socially and professionally. People want to be remembered by others.

However, in the digital landscape you have to be very careful when trying to pursue your brand awareness. Think carefully before doing. What we mean by this is that before creating a hashtag, posting on a Facebook wall or texting – think how the other person will feel when they receive your message.

4.13.6 Character, Behavior, Honesty

Your character reflects your individuality and your behavior exhibits your personality. Business etiquette encourages revealing your positive qualities. This helps your reputation.

Always be honest and remember that it takes a long time to develop trust and a good reputation and only one small mistake to lose it. Business etiquette provides a framework for stating the boundaries of terms & conditions, contracts and promises.

4.13.7 Sensitivity & Diplomacy

A key pillar of business etiquette is sensitivity, meaning giving careful thought to every business aspect before making a judgement. This gives a strong foundation to your business. Also, thoughtless words and actions lead to a negative outcome. Being aware of business etiquette encourages careful thought.

4.14 Elements of business etiquette

Business etiquette instructs on you how to present yourself professionally in different cultures. The keys for making a good impression are dressing appropriately, your body language, presenting your business cards, gift giving, conducting meetings and many other important elements. Certain important business Etiquettes are: E-mail etiquette, Dining etiquette, Telephone etiquette, Office etiquette, Meeting etiquette, Business card, etiquette Cubicle etiquette Dress etiquette networking

1. **Handshake:** Handshake is a gesture of acceptance and welcome. Extend your right hand Web to web, finger to finger Give slight pressure Grasp the other

person's hand firmly and completely look into the eyes and smile Release the hand in three seconds But no matter what, never, ever refuse to accept someone's hand.

2. **Email etiquette**: This etiquette is quite new and its rules are evolving because of the increased use of email. Some general rules of etiquette should be observed and needs professionalism, efficiency, and protection from liability, like:

- ❖ always be concise and to the point;
- ❖ use proper spelling, grammar & punctuation;
- ❖ Make the email message personal and avoid to use Bcc and Ccc pointlessly;
- ❖ Use templates for frequently used responses; answer swiftly;
- ❖ Use a meaningful subject;
- ❖ read the email before you send it; keep attachments to a minimum and mention your attachment in the content;
- ❖ take care with abbreviations and emotions;
- ❖ take care with rich text and HTML messages;
- ❖ use active voice instead of passive voice.
- ❖ Use Smart Subject Lines: All messages should have clear and specific; "Subject Lines" that describes the message content and specifies if there are any actions required & due dates; mentions clearly who the message is for; Subject Line Template: ₋TAG description [actions] [due date] [(EOM)]; FYI: Meeting minutes from 3/14 discussion; Reports Included: Minutes from MRM, all Reports due Friday 4/1

- ❖ DISTRIBUTE: Program agenda & related information, for example Howard, Malden: need your presence at noon meeting Mon with your updates; AGENDA: Staff meeting Fri 4/10/16 12:00 pm etc

- ❖ Type (EOM) at the end of the subject line. EOM means "end of message" ;

- ❖ Think Before You Click ; Don't automatically "REPLY TO ALL"

- ❖ Take one last look at your distribution list to see whether this email necessary for all recipients. E.g. Welcome Mail – when replying, send it only to the person to be welcomed.

- ❖ Once the email discussion goes beyond 2-3 replies anyway, it's time to pick up the phone;

- ❖ Write For Action: In the first 1-3 lines of your email, specify what this email is about and does it include action required? Does it require a reply back by a certain date?;What information is contained that the reader will find necessary for their job?

- ❖ Use the To: and Cc: addresses appropriately

- ❖ Stop replies before they start: If a reply is not required, end the message with "(Reply Not Necessary)"

- ❖ Use Follow Up Flags,

- ❖ If you find you are on a distribution list you don't need to be on – Send a note to the originator to be removed

- ❖ If you get involved in an email discussion that you don't need to be in – Ask to be taken off the distribution;

- ❖ While forwarding the message delete the list of email addresses if not necessary

- ❖ If you see someone else practicing bad email etiquette – Send a friendly note and ask them to correct it ;

- ❖ Use standard font throughout the message content

- ❖ Avoid colored fonts in a professional email

- ❖ Be very specific with the use of bold, italic or underline font style

- ❖ Keep the size of the font visible and constant

- ❖ Paragraph and line spacing should be legitimate and visually appealing

- ❖ Avoid short forms or slang (e.g. 'u' instead of 'you', 'y' instead of 'why', 'r' instead of 'are', etc)

  - ❑ **Poor Usage Examples**: Examples of poor usage of email etiquettes are

    - ❖ no subject line

    - ❖ Action required and key points are hidden in the message

    - ❖ Misusing the global distribution list

    - ❖ Discussion that could have been done on the phone;

❖ Blank subject line: Unrelated subject line; sending an email with an old subject line; if you can type your entire message in the subject line and don't need to write anything in the body of the message.

❑ **Rules of Email communication**

❖ Do not circulate junk mail to your staff members

❖ Always use the company email for company purpose

❖ Do not enter unnecessary sites through company internet (Like job portals, entertainment sites etc.).Because your activities will be monitored through the server

❖ Do not circulate sensitive mails into office staff. Because you can get positive and negative impression. This can lead a person to lost his job and so on (Like Violence article, videos about the community)

❖ Always segregate the important mail. If u r using in outlook create folders, So that in future if u want the details from the mail

❖ Take a backup copy of your email (Weekly, Monthly whichever is easy)

❖ Check whether you anti-virus are updated and protected. If it is not inform the server admin.

❖ Even though using the office equipment u should always very cautious.(Like Usage o Internet, Telephone ,Office mobile, Stationery item, Transport).These are the things should not be misused

❖ Never show and write violent and words in the mails.

3. **Telephone Etiquette:** When as a manager you start a call, always ascertain your position/ designation first and tell the basic nature of the call made

❖ Have someone answer the business calls;

❖ Always return calls;

❖ No phone calls to made and attend during meetings,

❖ Managing Angry Callers by listening his/her problem or complaint carefully; Do not interrupt him/her while they are speaking and let the caller finish the whole thing first; Do not say, "you are wrong"; Empathize with the caller; Communicate the caller that the process is one for solving the problem and never mislead the caller; Call him back when you have the solution, this feedback is important.

4. **Office Etiquette:** Those who follow good office etiquette are promoted and given choice assignments;

❖ Those who are seen as crass are passed over or have their employment terminated.

❖ Be self-aware-use common sense

❖ Mind your own business

❖ Never go over your supervisor's head

❖ Obey your company's business dress code

❖ Treat every employee with the same respect

❖ Do not post things of an offensive nature ;

❖ Reasons for firing employees - Bad language. -Excessive workplace gossip. -Drinking on the job. -Leaving without telling anyone. -Too many personal calls Breaches of office etiquette -Bad hygiene. -Bad habits. -Wastefulness with paper.

❖ Show a healthy respect for colleagues experience and expertise

❖ Exhibit a positive attitude and know what your role will be on the team – "How can I best assist"

❖ Leave your personal life at the front door

❖ Inquire about the proper way to respond to coworkers, supervisors, clients (Business letter head, phone call etc.);

❖ Greetings, Punctuality, Space, Time, Play the Host Posture

❖ Balanced Communication

5. **Meeting etiquette**

❖ Avoid swear words and vulgar references

❖ Poor communicating skill is not professional;

❖ Avoid personal questions during first meeting

❖ Whoever gets to the door first should open it and hold for others who are following

❖ Turn off your cell phone ringer ,accept voicemail and text messaging only

6. **Business card etiquette**

❖ Always have a business card

❖ Have it in a good shape and updated

❖ Have it readily available

❖ Be selective about distributing

❖ Present it in an appropriate time and manner

7. **Cubicle Etiquette:**

❖ Never enter someone's cubicle without permission.

❖ Announce yourself at their doorway or lightly knock on the wall.

Notes

  ❖ Post a sign or flag at your cube entrance to signal when you can be interrupted.
  ❖ Don't peek in as you walk past each one;
  ❖ Don't loiter outside someone's cube while you wait for him or her to finish a phone call.
  ❖ Never read someone's computer screen or comment on conversations you overhear.
  ❖ Keep your hands off others desk.
  ❖ Just because there's no door doesn't mean you can help yourself to their paper
  ❖ Avoid eating meals inside the cube

8. **Dress Etiquette:**

  ❖ The Professional looks
  ❖ Dress for the part
  ❖ Simple but Classy

9. **Professional Appearance:** Self appearance is one of the very important business etiquette and it portrait overall personality of the manager/ employee. Grooming is fundamental feature of managerial communication
  ❖ Hair clean and styled appropriately
  ❖ Clean nails, skin and teeth
  ❖ Many professionals wear make-up (depends on field)
  ❖ Check fragrance and clothing care ;

❖ Wardrobe -For women: skirted/pant suit, dress shirt, clean well maintained dress shoes (generally closed-toe shoe) -For men: suit, dress shirt, tie (well maintained dress shoes) – Outerwear -Appropriate for women/men: Trench coat, umbrella; no tennis shoes, flip flops, etc.

4.15 Speaking and listening skills in Managerial Communication

The speaking and listening skills help the managers to communicate more effectively, in the workplace, and in society. These two sets of competencies and a brief explanation of each set are presented below.

4.15.1 Speaking

Speaking is the process of conveying ideas and information orally in a variety of situations. Effective oral communication involves producing / generating ideas/ messages and delivering them with attention to vocal variety, articulation, and nonverbal signals. In order to be a competent manager/ subordinate, a person must be able to create a message and provide ideas and information suitable to the topic, purpose, and audience. Specifically, the competent manager should demonstrate the following competencies by demonstrating the abilities included under each statement.

Spoken change in speed, pitch, and force & power.

● Use vocal diversity to increase and sustain interest.

● Use a rate that is appropriate to the message, occasion, and receiver.

● Use pitch (within the speaker's optimum range) to clarify and to emphasize.

● Use intensity appropriate for the message and audible to the audience.

Expressive clearly

● Establish knowledge of the sounds & use it expressively.

Engage language suitable to the elected audience

● Engage language that increases the speaker's credibility, promotes the purpose, and the receiver's understanding.

● Use standard pronunciation.

● Use standard grammar.

● Use language at the appropriate level of concept or generality.

Establish nonverbal behavior that supports the verbal message

● Use appropriate paralanguage (extra verbal elements of voice such as emphasis, pause, tone, etc.) that

● Achieves similarity and boosts the verbal intent.

Notes

- Use appropriate kinesics elements (posture, gesture, and facial expression) that achieve similarity and enhance the verbal intent.
- Use appropriate proxemics elements (interpersonal distance and spatial arrangement)
- Show self-awareness as a communicator
- Choice from a list of interpersonal skills those strategies that enrich relationships.
- Use a conversational mode through self-presentation and response to feedback.

4.15.2 Listening

Listening is the process of acceptance, building meaning from, and answering to spoken and or nonverbal messages. People listen in order to understand information, analysis and assess a message, show empathy for the feelings conveyed by others, or appreciate a performance. Effective listening includes both accurate and precarious comprehension of ideas and information transmitted in oral language. In order to be a competent manager/ subordinate, a person must be able to listen with literal comprehension. Specifically, the competent listener should be able to display the following competencies by indicating the abilities included under each statement.

1. **Identify main ideas**
   - ❖ Identify transitional, organizational, and nonverbal signals that direct the listener to the main ideas.
   - ❖ Identify the main ideas in structured and unstructured dialogue.

2. **Ascertain supporting details**
   - ❖ Identify supporting details in spoken messages.
   - ❖ Differentiate between those ideas that support the main ideas and those that do not.
   - ❖ Determine whether the number of supporting details adequately develops each main idea.

3. Know clear relationships among ideas
   - ❖ Reveal an understanding of the types of organizational or logical relationships.
   - ❖ Identify moves that suggest relationships.
   - ❖ Determine whether the declared relationship exists.

4. **Remembrance basic ideas and details**
   - ❖ Regulate the goal for listening.
   - ❖ State the basic cognitive and affective contents, after listening.

5. **Join with an open mind**
   - ❖ Establish an awareness of personal, ideological, and emotional biases.
   - ❖ Show awareness that each person has a unique perspective.
   - ❖ Show awareness that one's knowledge, experience, and emotions affect listening.
   - ❖ Use verbal and nonverbal behaviors that demonstrate willingness to listen to messages when variables such as setting, speaker, or topic may not be conducive to listening.

6. **Perceive the speaker's purpose**
   - ❖ Identify the speaker's purpose & organization ideas and information.

7. **Differentiate between statements of fact and statements of opinion**
   - ❖ Distinguish between assertions that are verifiable and those that are not.

8. **Differentiate between emotional and logical arguments.**

   ❖ Demonstrate an understanding that arguments have both emotional and logical dimensions.

   ❖ Identify the logical characteristics of an argument.

   ❖ Identify the emotional characteristics of an argument.

   ❖ Identify whether the argument is predominantly emotional or logical.

9. **Spot bias and preconception**

   ❖ Identify instances of bias and preconception in a spoken message.

   ❖ Specify how bias and preconception may affect the impact of a spoken message.

10. I**dentifies the** speaker's attitude

   ❖ Identify the direction, intensity, and salience of the speaker's attitude as reflected by the verbal and non-verbal messages

11. **Create and estimate by drawing logical conclusions**

   ❖ Draw relationships between prior knowledge and the information provided by the speaker.

   ❖ Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of suggestion.

   ❖ Identify the types of verbal and nonverbal information.

   ❖ Draw valid suggestions from the information.

   ❖ Identify the information as evidence to support views.

   ❖ Assess the suitability of evidence.

   ❖ Identify patterns of reasoning and judge the validity of arguments.

   ❖ Analyze the information and inferences in order to draw conclusions.

12. **Recalls the implications and arguments**

   ❖ Recognize the arguments used to justify the speaker's position.

   ❖ State both the open and indirect arguments.

   ❖ Specify the implications of these arguments for the speaker, audience, and society at large.

13. **Identifies differences between the speaker's verbal and nonverbal messages**

   ❖ Identify when the nonverbal signals oppose the verbal message.

   ❖ Identify when the nonverbal signals minimize or overstress the verbal message.

   ❖ Identify when the nonverbal message is unrelated to the verbal message.

14. **Engage active listeni**ng techniques when appropriate

   ❖ Identify the cognitive and affective dimensions of a message.

   ❖ Determine comprehension by formulating questions that clarify or qualify the speaker's content and affective intent.

   ❖ Determine comprehension by paraphrasing the speaker's message.

4.16 Expectations from Speaking and Listening skills of Managers

Speaking and listening skills expectations are necessary for effective functioning in the workplace. These skills must result in operative results and be seen as appropriate (a) by the audience, (b) in the context enacted, and (c) for the purpose specified. Demonstration of the skills of listening & speaking tends to blends the knowledge, skill, and attitude; they require greater levels of behavioral flexibility/adaptability.

These are useful and required for reasoning and audience analysis. It can able to understand people from other cultures, organizations, or groups, and adapting messages to the demands of the situation or context. Managers need to refine their listening skills; they need to identify important issues or problems, draw conclusions, and understand others to manage conflict better and empathize with their colleagues.

4.17 Summary

Communication skills include the mix of verbal, interpersonal and physical strategies needed to interact confidently and effectively with a range of audiences. A skillful communicator draws on a number of different means (e.g., graphical, visual, statistical, audio-visual and technological) to get the point across. Oral communication does not require much planning. It requires appropriate para-linguistic features like tone, pitch, register, facial expressions, gestures and body language. Effective oral communication depends on purpose of the message.

Oral communication should be used because it is simple, faster, informal, more direct and more personal. It saves more time and creates efficiency.

In oral communication, there are no formalities of using pen, paper, stamps, etc. and waiting endlessly for the response. Thus, even most personal and confidential matters can be placed before the receiver in a simple and direct way.

Oral Communication is the ability to talk with others to give and exchange information & ideas, such as: ask questions, give directions, coordinate work tasks, explain & persuade. How we use this skill

● greeting people and taking messages

● reassuring, comforting or persuading

● seeking information & resolving conflicts

● facilitating or leading a group

Within the extremely competitive call centre industry, one local company frequently reviews staff training needs as part of its goal of continuous improvement. Even though there were no glaring performance concerns, the company decided to include Essential Skills training for their new hires.

A needs assessment determined that effective call centre work requires a full range of oral communication skills, including speaking with confidence and providing clear and concise information using listening, questioning, reiteration and problem-solving skills.

Unexpectedly, incorporating Essential Skills into the existing training for new hires resulted in a decrease in customer dissatisfaction rates. Company officials were doubly pleased because increased customer satisfaction is often associated with higher employee satisfaction and retention.

The study of body language should be complementary to the study of language in communications. The understanding of one should be helpful in the further understanding of the other. Some authorities feel that the two are dependent on each other. This is certainly true in most situations. But it is also true that in certain situations body action contradicts what is being said, just as the spoken words may mean something quite different from what body language communicates. When this occurs, one must try to get further information, or guess the meaning from the context of the situation.

In a sense, all body language should be interpreted within a given context; to ignore the overall situation could be misleading. A word of general advice: when one negotiate in a certain language, it is generally advisable to use the nonverbal behavior that goes with that particular language. Observation shows that a truly bilingual person switches his body language at the same time he switches languages. This makes negotiation easier and better.

A powerful piece of body language which you can have control over is the closeness between you and the buyer. To conclude a negotiation there needs to be a feeling of connection. If the buyer is well away from his desk or leaning back, place some brochures on the table but sufficiently far away that he has to come closer to you. You should then mirror his action and move closer as well. The end result is that you will be in a better position to strike a deal. Trying to spot the body language, listen to what is being said and deciding what your next action takes practice and patience.

When business partners and co-workers follow to a well-understood code of etiquette, it can be relaxed for varied individuals to work together, focusing their energies on the task at hand rather than trying to understand the cultural unconventionalities of others. Etiquette plays a great role in the business cultures of different countries and topographical regions. An attention to etiquette can help inter-cultural business dealings to be as productive as possible by bringing all parties together

4.18 Check Your Progress

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Oral Communication requires appropriate …………………..features
   (a) para-linguistic
   (b) Managerial interaction
   (c) partial-linguistic
   (d) Controllable

2. Always be honest and remember that it takes a long time to develop ……….and ………..and only one small mistake to lose it.
   (a) listening & speaking skills
   (b) relation & empathy
   (c) trust & good reputation
   (d) none of above

3. People often touch their nose, chin, ear, arm or clothing when they are ………...
   (a) angry
   (b) nervous
   (c) calm

    (d) silent

4. ………………………skills are useful and required for reasoning and audience analysis.

    (a) Gestures

    (b) Body Language

    (c) Communication

    (d) Speaking & Listening

5. Etiquette exhibits a positive attitude and knows what your role will be on the team?

    (a) Incomplete statement

    (b) Not a justified statement

    (c) False

    (d) True

6. In oral communication, there are no formalities of using pen, paper, stamps, etc. and waiting endlessly for the response.

    (a) Incomplete statement

    (b) Not a justified statement

    (c) False

    (d) True

7. Use ……………… at the appropriate level of concept or generality.

    (a) Listening skills

    (b) Gestures

    (c) Expressions

    (d) Language

8. An attention to ………….. can help inter-cultural business dealings to be as productive as possible

    (a) Communication skills

    (b) Etiquette

    (c) Body language

    (d) Listening skills

9. Self-appearance is one of the very important …………… etiquette.

    (a) Meeting

    (b) Email

    (c) Business

    (d) Cubical

10. ……………………… is the process of acceptance, building meaning from, and answering to spoken and or nonverbal messages.

    (a) Gestures

    (b) Body Language

    (c) Speaking

    (d) Listening

4.19 Questions and Exercises

1. Explain the meaning of oral communication? Explain the various principles of oral communication.

2.   State the advantages and disadvantages of oral communication.

3.   What are the major oral communication activities? Explain by giving examples.

4.   Discuss the principles of oral communication in detail.

5.   What do you understand by business etiquettes? Highlight its important pillars which are followed internationally.

6.   Discuss in length on the elements of business etiquette

7.   How to use and understand body language?

8.   Elaborate the various types of the body language. State the necessity and importance of learning body language.

9.   What do you understand by speaking & listening skills and what are the expectations derived out of these

10. Explain the different types of business etiquettes.

4.20   Key Terms

● **Kinesics:** It is the study of facial expressions, postures & gestures. .

● **Physical Appearance:** Your physical appearance always contributes towards how people perceive you. Neatly combed hair, ironed clothes and a lively smile will always carry more weight than words.

● **Business Etiquettes:** Expected behaviors and expectations for individual actions within society, group, or class. Within a place of business, it involves treating coworkers and employer with respect and courtesy in a way that creates a pleasant work environment for everyone.

Check Your Progress: Answers

1.   (a)

2.   (c)

3.   (b)

4.   (d)

5.   (d)

6.   (d)

7.   (d)

8.   (b)

9.   (c)

10. (d)

4.21 Further Readings

● http://www.speaking.pitt.edu/about/oral-comm.html

● http://www.ecu.edu.au/conferences/herdsa/main/papers/ref/pdf/Tanian.pdf

● http://science.uniserve.edu.au/pubs/procs/wshop8/jones.pdf

● http://www.careerpathsonline.com/skills/article.html#developingskills

● http://www.wem.mb.ca/oral_communication.aspx

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- Jones, E. A. (1995b, November). Toward national assessment of communication: A report of the results of the U.S. Department of Education's survey of communication skills and needs in the U.S. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association, San Antonio.

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- Morreale, S. P., & Rubin, R. B. (1997). Setting expectations for speech communication and listening. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Eastern Communication Association, Baltimore.

Unit 5: Business Presentations
Hands–on with Excel and Office Power Point

Structure

Notes

Objectives

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

● Understand the meaning & concept of Business Presentation.

● Discuss how to make & use Microsoft Power Point Presentations & Excel in business communications.

5.1 Introduction

In today's globalized and highly competitive market and working scenario, use of technology plays a pivotal role. Microsoft Two popular Microsoft products used extensively in business Communication plays a fundamental role in information sharing. Information if not shared is of no use. Communication is the act of conveying information for the purpose of creating a shared understanding. It's something that humans do every day. Individuals working together in the same organization need to speak to each other to keep themselves abreast with the latest developments in the organization. The discipline of communication focuses on how people use messages to generate meanings within and across various contexts, cultures, channels, and media. It is practically not possible for an individual to do everything on his own. He needs a medium which helps him discuss various ideas and evaluate pros and cons of proposed approaches with people around. Here comes the role of communication.

Microsoft Excel has the basic features of all spreadsheets, using a grid of *cells* arranged in numbered *rows* and letter-named *columns* to organize data manipulations like arithmetic operations. It has a battery of supplied functions to answer statistical, engineering and financial needs. In addition, it can display data as line graphs, histograms and charts, and with a very limited three-dimensional graphical display. It allows sectioning of data to view its dependencies on various factors for different perspectives (using pivot tables and the *scenario manager*). Excel is used widely in any financially-related activity. The ability to create new spreadsheets where users can define custom formulas to calculate anything from a simple quarterly forecast to a full corporate annual report makes Excel highly appealing. Excel is also used widely for common information organization and tracking like a list of sales leads, project status reports, contact lists, and invoicing. Finally, Excel is a useful tool for scientific and statistical analysis with large data sets. Excel's statistical formulas and graphing can help researches perform variance analysis, chi-square testing, and chart complex data.

In this unit, we shall be discussing about the meaning, history, versions, uses & criticism of using Microsoft power point presentations & Microsoft excel. We will also learn about its usage in Business communications.

5.2 Meaning, History & Versions: "Power Point Presentation, PPP"

Microsoft   PowerPoint is   a slide   show presentation   program currently   developed by Microsoft. PowerPoint initially named "Presenter was created by Forethought Inc.. Microsoft's version of PowerPoint was officially launched on May 22, 1990, as a part of the Microsoft Office suite. PowerPoint is useful for helping develop the slide-based presentation format, and is currently one of the most commonly-used presentation programs available. Its most common acronym is PPP.

5.2.1 Meaning of PPP

PowerPoint is a persuasive tool for businesses to use, but it also has to be managed wisely. It's easy for a business meeting to turn boring and fact-filled really quickly. Overall, PowerPoint is only half of the puzzle. The other half is giving a stellar verbal presentation to accompany the material. That's why presentation skills training go so well with a PowerPoint certification. A presenter needs to avoid merely reading off the slides and be able to adequately answer all questions. With PowerPoint and presenter training, employees will be ready to tackle any business meeting.

5.2.2 History behind the Development of PPP & its Various Versions

- PPP was developed by Thomas Rudkin and Dennis Austin of Forethought, Inc. originally designed for the Macintosh computer and it's called Presenter", and further in 1987 due to problems with trademarks, it was renamed to "PowerPoint". The idea for the former name was suggested by Robert Gaskins. Microsoft's version of PowerPoint was officially launched on May 22, 1990 and on the same day Microsoft released Windows 3.0.

- PowerPoint introduced many new changes with the release of PowerPoint 97. It incorporated the Visual Basic for Applications (VBA) language, underlying all macro generation in Office 97.

- PowerPoint 2000 (and the rest of the Office 2000 suite) introduced a clipboard that could hold multiple objects at once, and the Office Assistant was made less intrusive.

- PowerPoint 2002 massively overhauled the animation engine, allowing users to create more advanced and custom animations.

- PowerPoint 2011 makes it possible to remove image backgrounds, and provides additional special effects for pictures, such as 'Pencil effects'.

- As of 2012, various versions of PowerPoint claim ~95% of the presentation software market share, with installations on at least 1 billion computers. Among presenters world-wide, this program is used at an estimated frequency of 350 times per second.

5.2.3 Versions for Microsoft Windows include

- 1990 PowerPoint 2.0 for Windows 3.0
- 1992 PowerPoint 3.0 for Windows 3.1
- 1993 PowerPoint 4.0 (Office 4.x)
- 1995 PowerPoint for Windows 95 (version 7.0; Office 95)
- 1997 PowerPoint 97 (version 8.0; Office 97)
- 1999 PowerPoint 2000 (version 9.0; Office 2000)
- 2001 PowerPoint 2002 (version 10; Office XP)
- 2003 Office PowerPoint 2003 (version 11; Office 2003)
- 2007 Office PowerPoint 2007 (version 12; Office 2007)
- 2010 PowerPoint 2010 (version 14; Office 2010)
- 2013 PowerPoint 2013 (version 15; Office 2013)
- 2015 PowerPoint 2016 (version 16; Office 2016)

5.3 Usage Power Point Presentations & its Impact on the business communication

Most people have used PowerPoint at some point in their education or career. It's fairly easy to pick up the basic functions of the program for simple presentations, and information can easily be conveyed through bullet points and images on various slides.

Most people do not delve into the broader functionality of the program though, but those interested in business management should look into everything PowerPoint has to offer.

The useful program is often used during business meetings and proposals to persuade others of a company's merits, among other uses, so knowing how to manipulate the program is a great advantage in business. Receiving a Microsoft certificate in PowerPoint training would give any employee the ability to create compelling presentations for any occasion.

● Followers/ users of PPP says that the easiness of use of presentation software can save a lot of time for people who otherwise would have used other types of visual aid—hand-drawn or mechanically typeset slides, blackboards or whiteboards, or overhead projections.

● It also encourages the users who otherwise would not have used visual aids, or would not have given a presentation at all, to make presentations.

● Having a feature of an "AutoContent Wizard" which suggested a structure for a presentation, PowerPoint's style, animation, and multimedia abilities have become more refined, and as the application has commonly made it stress-free to produce presentations.

● Usage of PPP in the classroom lectures has a good effect on the student performance in contrast to lectures based on overhead projectors, traditional lectures, and online lectures.

● There are no convincing results to prove or disprove that PowerPoint is more effective for learner retention than traditional presentation methods.

● Presentations are not the only useful business tools created in PowerPoint. The program can be used for all types of important projects. For example, Small Business Computing points out that the program can be used to make videos for clients and employees. These videos can also be uploaded onto YouTube and distributed over social media. For startups and small businesses, this is a simple, cost-effective way to create engaging content for customers and investors.

● Important business materials can also be created in this program. Brand style guides are often composed in PowerPoint because users can create visually appealing instructions for distributors to flip through. Slideshows are also perfect for trade shows when a business wants to attract viewer attention. Interesting photos or statistics can help bring potential clients over to a business's booth.

● Inspiration for the artist: "PowerPoint Art" or "PptArt" are used to define a contemporary Italian artistic movement which believes that the corporate world can be a unique and exceptional source of inspiration for the artist. For example- Musician David Byrne has been using PowerPoint as a medium for art for years, producing a book and DVD and showing at galleries his PowerPoint based artwork.
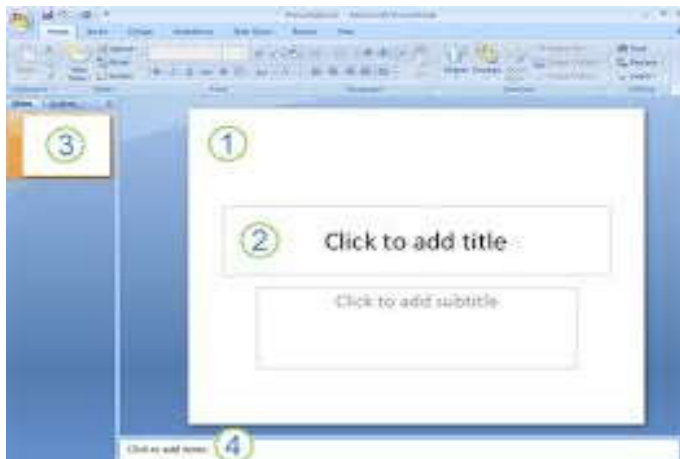
Microsoft Office PowerPoint Viewer is a program used to run presentations on computers that do not have PowerPoint installed. Office PowerPoint Viewer is added by default to the same disk or network location that contains one or more presentations packaged by using the Package for CD feature. PowerPoint Viewer is installed by default with a Microsoft Office 2003 installation for use with the Package for CD feature. The PowerPoint Viewer file is also available for download from the Microsoft Office Online Web site. Presentations password, protected for opening or modifying can be opened by PowerPoint Viewer. The Package for CD feature allows packaging any password-protected file or setting a new password for all packaged presentations. PowerPoint Viewer prompts for a password if the file is open password-protected. PowerPoint Viewer supports opening presentations created using PowerPoint 97 and later. In addition, it supports all file content except OLE objects and scripting. PowerPoint Viewer is currently only available for computers running on Microsoft Windows.

## 5.4 How to Make a Simple & basic PowerPoint Presentation

In educational PowerPoint presentations, especially for Elementary & Secondary Education, you may be interested to make original presentations simulating a blackboard.

1. Using the following techniques you can quickly design a blackboard template for your elementary or secondary PowerPoint presentations with a few simple steps.

    ❖   **Add the background:** First, start adding the background. Since we are going to simulate a blackboard, you can use the dark preset available in PowerPoint 2010. Go to Design -> Background Styles and choose the dark style 12.
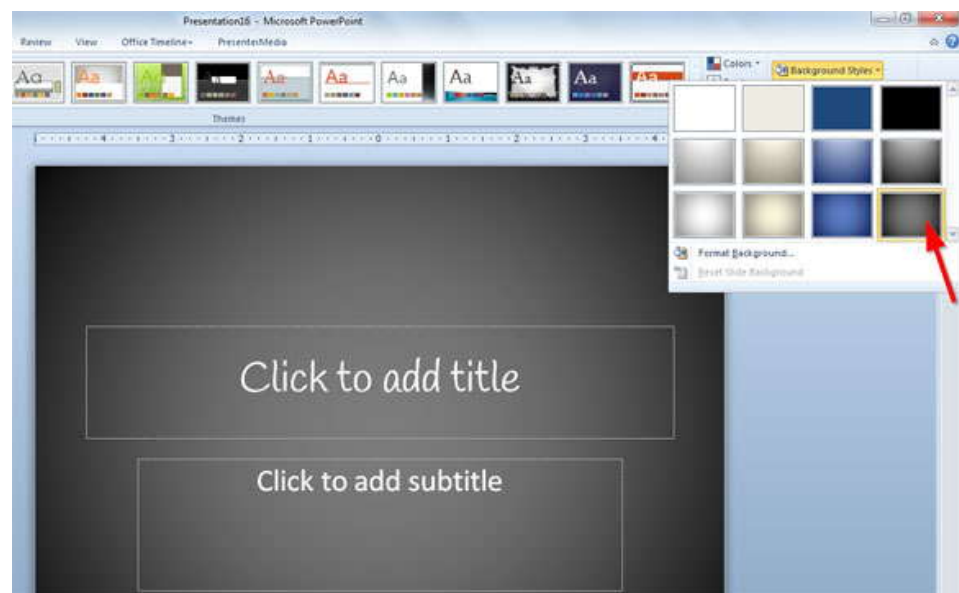

    ❖   **Install a Hand Writing Font:** Then you need hand writing font to make it more realistic. You can download free fonts from many different font resources like dafont, but if you are looking for a quick solution, you may consider using our previous tip how to install Google Fonts API for PowerPoint; you can move forward and install the Handee font from Google Fonts API. Then, restart PowerPoint and add a textbox using such font. You can rotate the text to make it look like written by hand.
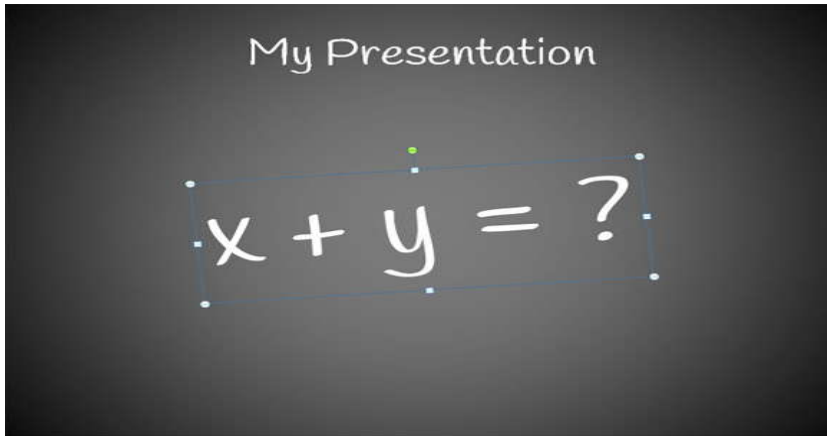
❖ Use hand drawn PowerPoint Graphics: To make your blackboard template more realistic, you can then download free hand drawing graphics and pictures that will be really helpful to decorate your blackboard slides. You can download free graphics from Articulate blog or effortlessebookwriting.com. Here is an example of hand drawn circles and arrows. Or you can get the boatload of free hand drawn graphics from Articulate blog.
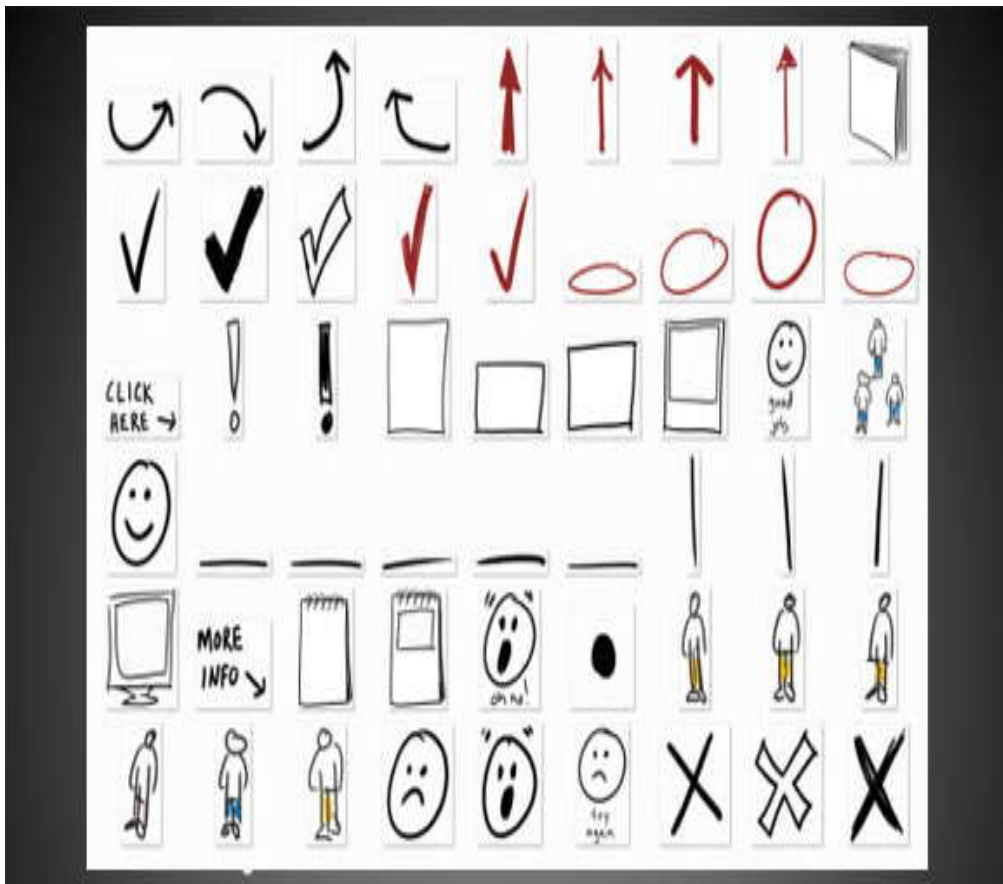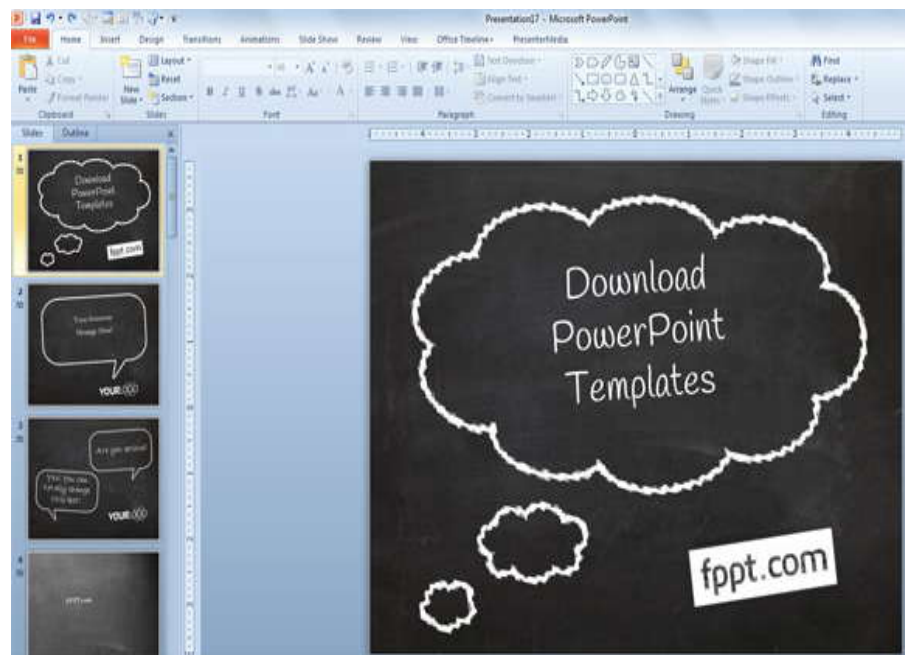

❖ Finally, add shapes and the text that you want to show in the slide. Here is an example after using a simple hand drawn picture for PowerPoint blackboard.
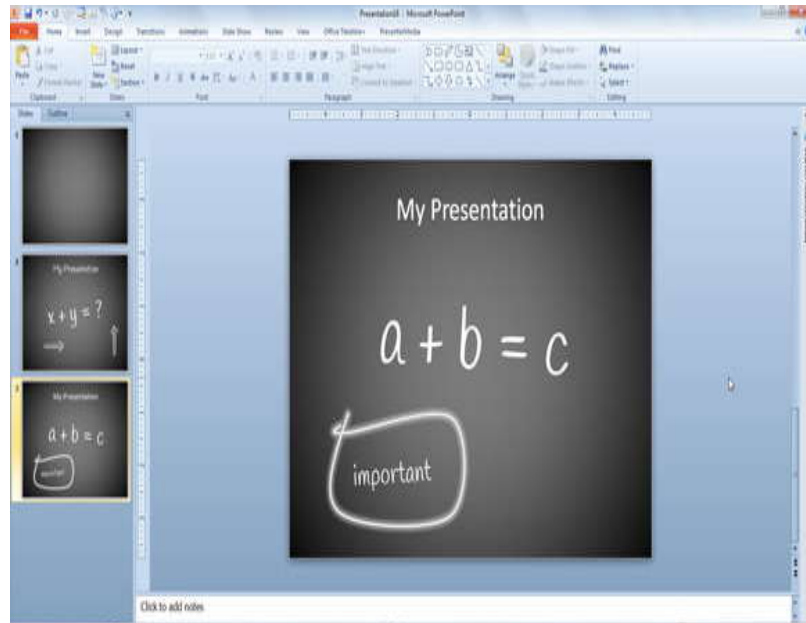
❖ You can download other free hand drawn PowerPoint templates, icons or shapes to make presentations for your classroom. This was just a basic guide how to make a simple blackboard for your presentations.

The possible uses of PowerPoint are countless. A slide show can help a teacher teach a lesson, illustrate an event in history, easily display statistical information, or be used for training in corporations. A slide show can be a valuable tool for teaching, sharing and learning.

2. PowerPoint presentations are useful no matter what the topic and help communicate ideas to an audience. The invention of PowerPoint by Gaskins has saved presenters hours of systematically handcrafting displays, and created a professional and easy way to relay information. The following are steps on how to create a basic PowerPoint presentation; however certain steps may vary slightly depending upon what version of PowerPoint you are using.

Launch the PowerPoint Program
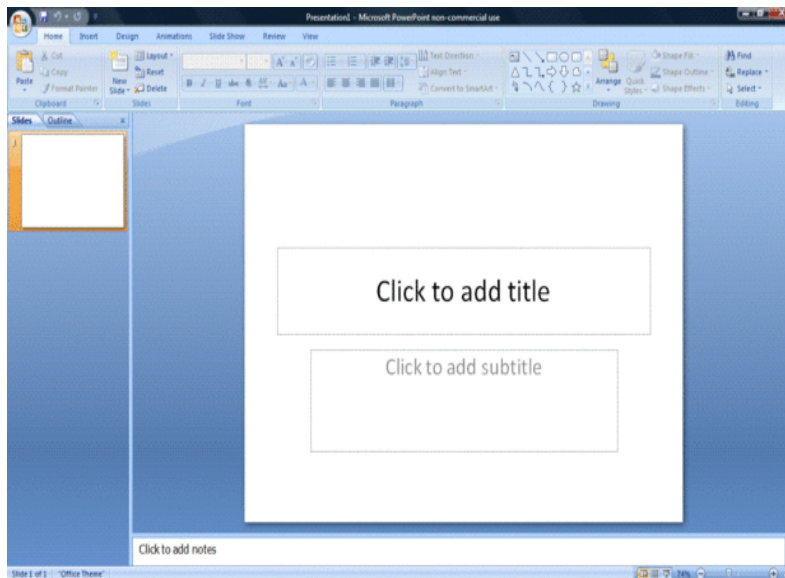
When you launch the PowerPoint program, you may be prompted to pick what kind of document you want to create. Choose to create a blank presentation. If it does not ask you this, a blank presentation will automatically launch.

Choosing a Design
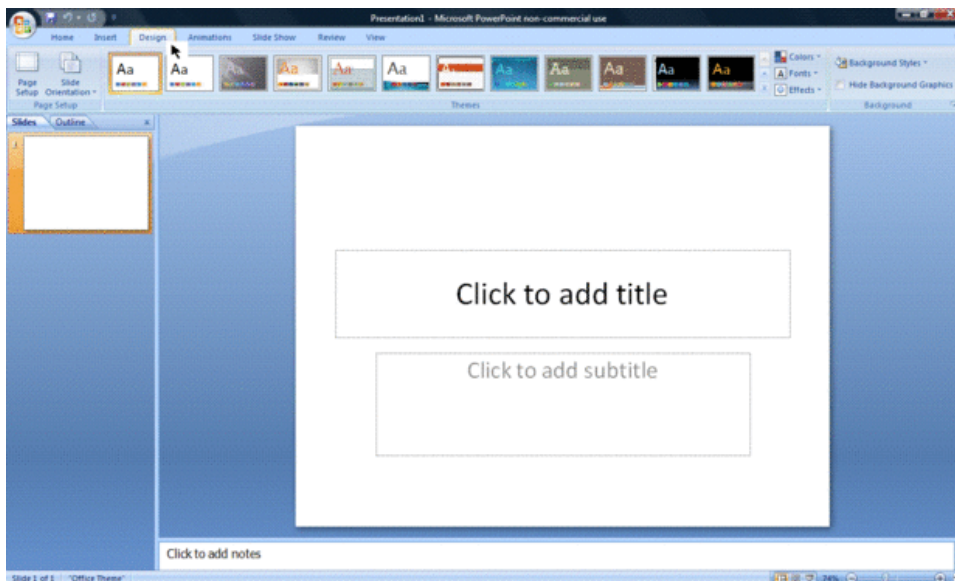
The next thing you want to do is decide what design you want for the presentation. To do this, go to the 'Design' tab at the top of the page. Scroll through all the options and decide which one looks best for the presentation you want. To get a preview of what the design will look like before applying it to the presentation, hover over the design you want to preview. This design will be automatically continued throughout the rest of your presentation. Once you have more than one slide, you can add a different design for just one slide. To do this, select the slide you want to change the design on by clicking on it. It will pop-up as the big slide in the screen. Then you can right-click the design you want for this slide and select 'Apply to Selected Slide'. It will appear on that slide, but will not change the design of the other slides.

Create Title Page
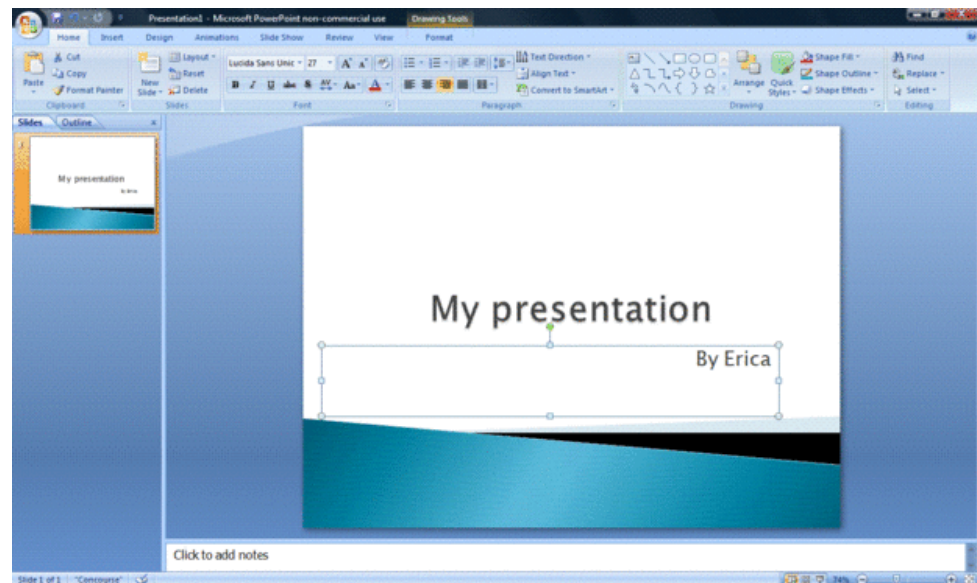
Click the first box that says 'Click to add title' and add the title of your presentation. Click the bottom box to add your name, or any other subtitle that you choose. Once you have your text in the boxes, you can change their font, size, color, etc. with the toolbar options at the top. You can change the size of the text box by selecting it, and then dragging the corners of the box. To move the text boxes, select the box, and move your arrow over the border of the box. A four-arrow icon will appear, and clicking with this icon will allow you to move the text boxes wherever you choose.

Add More Slides
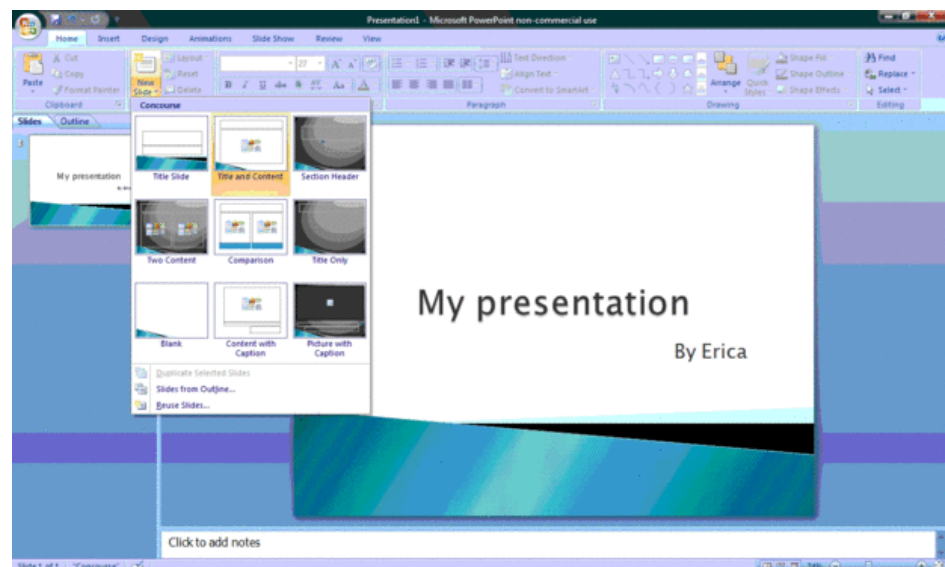
Chances are you are going to need more than one slide. There are a few ways you can add more slides. Notice that there is a separate area to the left of the screen where your first slide is located. The first way to add a slide is to right-click the area under where your first slide is located and selects 'New Slide'. A new slide will appear. The second way to add another slide is to click 'New Slide' icon in the toolbar above the slides. This button is divided into two parts. The top will insert a new slide with a default layout. You can also click the bottom half of the button, which will allow you to choose what type of layout you want. You can choose a slide with two text-boxes and a title, one text-box, only a title, and many other options. You will see your new slide appear to

the left under the first, as well become the large slide that you can edit. The design you picked earlier will have carried over to this slide. The design will carry over for the rest of the slides you create unless you decide to change just one, like described earlier. The guideline layout you chose will appear, and you can then add in your information.

Add charts, pictures, graphs, etc.

If you want to insert a chart, picture, graph, or any other graphic, click on the 'Insert' tab at the top of the window. Here you will see buttons of all the options of what you can insert into your slide. Click the designated box and insert what it is you want to have on that slide. A second way you can insert pictures and graphs is when you have an empty text or image box. Little pictures of the same options you saw in the toolbox will show up in the middle of the box, and you can click any of these to insert as well. Once you have your chart or picture, you can add a border or edit it however you want in the 'Format' tab.
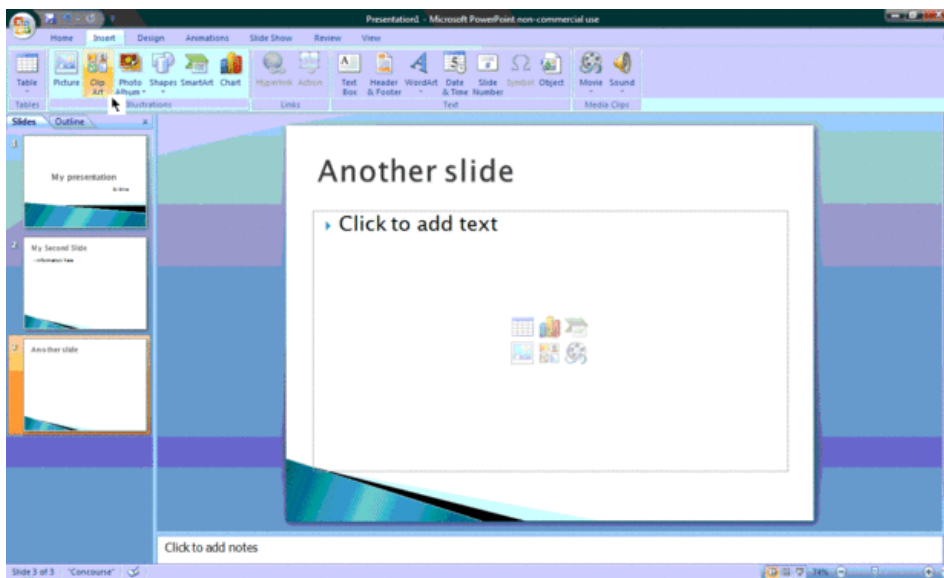
Add Transitions
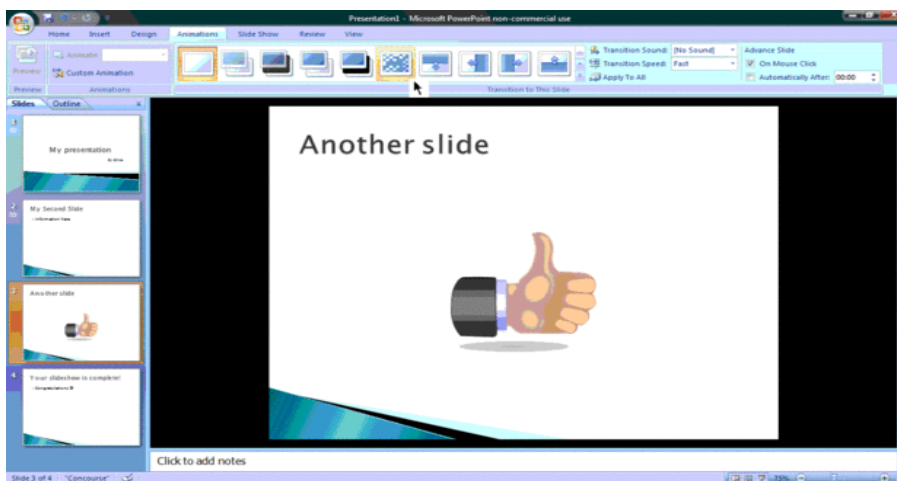

To add transitions in between your slides, click the 'Animations' tab at the top of the page. Here you can scroll through all the options of transitions, and hover over them to see a preview. Select the slide you want the transition applied to, and then click the transition you chose. You can do this for every slide, selecting the same or different transitions.

Changing the Order

Once you have all your slides made, you can change the order of the slides. To do this, click and drag the slides from where they are to where you want them in the order.
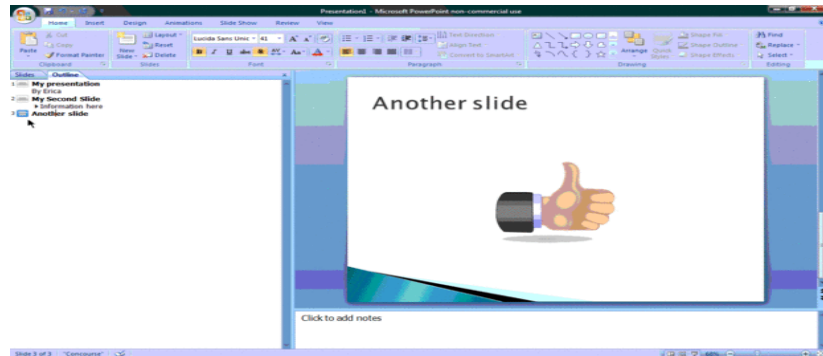
Another possibility, which is particularly useful if you presentation is longer, is to click the 'Outline' button. You can find this small button above the left area where all your slides are located smaller, directly to the right of the 'Slides' button. Here you will see a list of all your slides and you can click and drag your slides to where you want them.

Play the Presentation

Once you have all your slides completed and in the order you want, view your slideshow. Click the 'Slide Show' tab at the top of the page and select 'From Beginning'. You can go through your entire slideshow, and change slides by clicking or pressing the right arrow. A shortcut to this is pressing F5. Congratulations! You have now made a PowerPoint presentation.
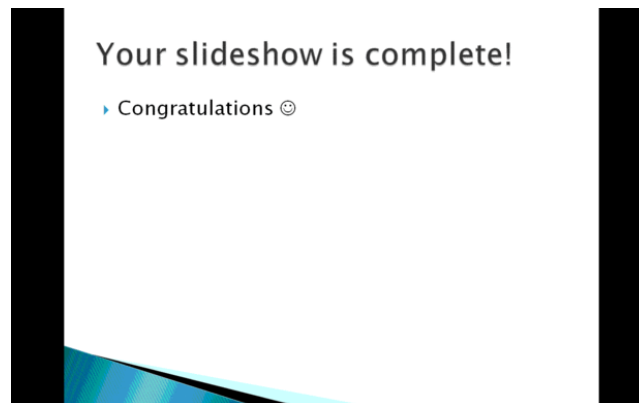
5.5 Style Tips of using PowerPoint Presentation

5.5.1 Don't let PowerPoint decide how you use PowerPoint

Microsoft wanted to provide PowerPoint users with a lot of tools. But this does not mean you should use them all. Here are some key things to look out for:

● Make sure that preset PPT themes complement your needs before you adopt them.

● Try to get away from using Microsoft Office's default fonts, Calibri and Cambria. Using these two typefaces can make the presentation seem underwhelming.

● Professionals should never use PPT's action sounds. (Please consider your audience above personal preference).

● PowerPoint makes bulleting automatic, but ask yourself: Are bullets actually appropriate for what you need to do? Sometimes they are, but not always.

● Recent PPT defaults include a small shadow on all shapes. Remove this shadow if it's not actually needed. Also, don't leave shapes in their default blue.

5.5.2 Create custom slide sizes

While you usually can get away with the default slide size for most presentations, you may need to adjust it for larger presentations on weirdly sized displays. If you need to do that, here's how.

1. In the top-left corner, choose "File."
2. Select "Page Setup."
3. Type the height and width of the background you'd like, and click "OK."
4. A dialogue box will appear. Click "OK" again.
5. Your background is resized!

Tip: Resize your slides before you add any objects to them or the dimensions of your objects will become skewed.

5.5.3 Edit your slide template design

Often, it's much easier to edit your PowerPoint template before you start -- this way, you don't have design each slide by hand. Here's how you do that.

1. Select "Themes" in the top navigation.
2. In the far right, click "Edit Master," then "Slide Master."
3. Make any changes you like, and then click "Close Master." All current and future slides in that presentation will use that template.

5.5.4 Make sure all of your objects are properly aligned

Having properly aligned objects on the slide is the key to making it look polished and professional. It can be manually done by aligning the lines up the images, but it is very typically done. Trying to make sure all of the objects hang out in the middle of the slide, but when dragging them there, it still doesn't look quite right.

How to align multiple objects

1. Select all objects by holding down "Shift" and clicking on all of them.
2. Select "Arrange" in the top options bar, then choose "Align or Distribute."
3. Choose the type of alignment you'd like.

How to align objects to the slide

1. Select all objects by holding down "Shift" and clicking on all of them.
2. Select "Arrange" in the top options bar, then choose "Align or Distribute."
3. Select "Align to Slide."
4. Select "Arrange" in the top options bar again, then choose "Align or Distribute."

5.5.5 Get more control over your objects' designs using "Format" menus

Format menus allow you to do fine adjustments that otherwise seem impossible. To do this, right click on an object and select the "Format" option. Here, you can fine-tune shadows, adjust shape measurements, create reflections, and much more. The menu that will pop up looks like this:

Although the main options can be found on PowerPoint's format toolbars, look for complete control in the format window menu. Other examples of options available include:

1. Adjusting text inside a shape.
2. Creating a natural perspective shadow behind an object.
3. Recolouring photos manually and with automatic options.

5.5.6 Take advantage of PowerPoint's shapes

Many users don't realize how flexible PowerPoint's shape tools have become. In combination with the expanded format options released by Microsoft in 2010, the potential for good design with shapes is readily available. PowerPoint provides the user with a bunch of great shape options beyond the traditional rectangle, oval and rounded rectangle patterns, unlike even professional design programs like Adobe Creative Suite or Quark.

Today's shapes include a highly functional Smart Shapes function, which enables you to create diagrams and flow charts in no time. These tools are especially valuable when you consider that PowerPoint is a visual medium. Paragraphing and bullet lists are boring -- you can use shapes to help express your message more clearly.

5.5.7 Create custom shapes

When you create a shape, right click and press "Edit Points." By editing points, you can create custom shapes that fit your specific need. For instance, you can reshape arrows to fit the dimensions you like.

Another option is to combine two shapes together. When selecting two shapes, right-click and go to the "Grouping" sub-menu to see a variety of options.

1. **Combine** creates a custom shape that has overlapping portions of the two previous shapes cut out.
2. **Union** makes one completely merged shape.
3. **Intersect** builds a shape of only the overlapping sections of the two previous shapes.
4. **Subtract** cuts out the overlapping portion of one shape from the other.

By using these tools rather than trying to edit points precisely, you can create accurately measured custom shapes.

5.5.8 Crop images into custom shapes

Besides creating custom shapes in your presentation, you can also use PowerPoint to crop existing images into new shapes. Here's how you do that:

1. Click on the image and select "Format" in the options bar.
2. Choose "Crop," then "Mask to Shape," and then choose your desired shape. Ta-da! Custom-shaped photos.

5.5.9 Present websites within PowerPoint

Tradition says that if you want to show a website in a PowerPoint, you should just create link to the page and prompt a browser to open. For PC users, there's a better option.

Third party software that integrates fully into PowerPoint's developer tab can be used to embed a website directly into your PowerPoint using a normal HTML iframe. One of the best tools is Live Web, third-party software developed independently. By using Live Web, you don't have to interrupt your PowerPoint, and your presentation will remain fluid and natural. Whether you embed a whole webpage or just a YouTube video, this can be a high-quality third party improvement.

Unfortunately, Mac users don't have a similar option. A good second choice is to take screen shots of the website, link in through a browser, or embed media (such as a YouTube video) by downloading it directly to your computer.

5.5.10 Embed your font files

One constant problem presenters have with PowerPoint is that fonts seem to change when presenters move from one computer to another. In reality, the fonts are not changing -- the presentation computer just doesn't have the same font files installed. If you're using a PC and presenting on a PC, then there is a smooth work around for this issue. (When you involve Mac systems, the solution is a bit rougher.

Here's the trick: When you save your PowerPoint file (only on a PC), you should click Save Options in the "Save As …" dialog window. Then, select the "Embed TrueType fonts" check box and press "OK." Now, your presentation will keep the font file and your fonts will not change when you move computers (unless you give your presentation on a Mac).

5.5.11 Save your slides as JPEGs

In PowerPoint for Mac 2011, there is no option to embed fonts within the presentation. So unless you use ubiquitous typefaces like Arial or Tahoma, your PPT is likely going to encounter font changes on different computers.

The most certain way of avoiding this is by saving your final presentation as JPEGs, and then inserting these JPEGs onto your slides. On a Mac, users can easily drag and drop the JPEGs into PPT with fast load time. If you do not use actions in your presentation, then this option works especially well.

If you want your presentation to appear "animated," you'll need to do a little tinkering. All you need to do is save JPEGs of each "frame" of the animation. Then, in your final presentation, you'll just display those JPEGs in the order you'd like the animation to appear. While you'll technically have several new slides in place of one original one, your audience won't know the difference.

An important consideration: If your PPT includes a lot of JPEGs, then the file size will increase.

5.5.12 Embed multimedia

PowerPoint allows you to either link to video/audio files externally or to embed the media directly in your presentation. You should embed these files if you can, but if you use a Mac, you cannot actually embed the video (see note below). For PCs, two great reasons for embedding are:

Embedding allows you to play media directly in your presentation. It will look much more professional than switching between windows. Embedding also means that the file stays within the PowerPoint presentation, so it should play normally without extra work (except on a Mac).

Note: Mac OS users of PowerPoint should be extra careful about using multimedia files. If you use PowerPoint for Mac, then you will always need to bring the video and/or audio file with you in the same folder as the PowerPoint presentation. It's best to only insert video or audio files once the presentation and the containing folder have been saved on a portable drive in their permanent folder. Also, if the presentation will be played on a Windows computer, then Mac users need to make sure their multimedia files are in WMV format. This tip gets a bit complicated, so if you want to use PowerPoint effectively, consider using the same operating system for designing and presenting, no matter what.

5.5.13 Bring your own hardware

Between operating systems, PowerPoint is still a bit jumpy. Even between differing PPT versions, things can change. One way to fix these problems is to make sure that you have the right hardware -- so just bring along your own laptop when you're presenting.

5.5.14 Use "Presenter View"

In most presentation situations, there will be both a presenter's screen and the main projected display for your presentation. PowerPoint has a great tool called Presenter View, which can be found in the "Slide Show" tab of PowerPoint 2010 (or 2011 for Mac). Included in the Presenter View is an area for notes, a timer/clock, and a presentation display.

For many presenters, this tool can help unify their spoken presentation and their visual aid. You never want to make the PowerPoint seem like a stack of notes that you use a crutch. Use the Presenter View option to help create a more natural presentation.

Pro Tip: At the start of the presentation, you should also hit CTRL + H to make the cursor disappear. Hitting the "A" key will bring it back if you need it!

With style, design, and presentation processes under your belt, you can do a lot more with PowerPoint than just presentations for your clients. PowerPoint and similar slide applications are flexible tools that should not be forgotten.

5.6 Criticism of Using Power Point Presentation

The benefit of PowerPoint is continually debated, though most people believe that the benefit may be to present structural presentations to business workers. Its use in classroom lectures has influenced investigations of PowerPoint's effects on student performance in comparison to lectures based on overhead projectors, traditional lectures, and online lectures. There are no compelling results to prove or disprove that PowerPoint is more effective for learner retention than traditional presentation methods.

Statistician and designer Edward Tufte, (Edward Rolf Tufte, born March 14, 1942 is an American statistician and professor emeritus of political science, statistics, and computer science at Yale University. He is noted for his writings on information design and as a pioneer in the field of data visualization) suggests that as PowerPoint on its own has limited ability to present complex tables and graphics, a better approach is to provide the audience with printed data and a written report for them to read at the start of the meeting, before leading them through the report with a talk. He noted that after the Columbia disaster, a report on the accident recommended that PowerPoint should never be used as the sole method for presenting scientific material.

Tufte has criticized the way Microsoft PowerPoint is typically used. In his essay "The Cognitive Style of PowerPoint," Tufte criticizes many aspects of the software:

- Its use to guide and reassure a presenter, rather than to enlighten the audience;
- Its unhelpfully simplistic tables and charts, resulting from the low resolution of early computer displays;
- The outliner's causing ideas to be arranged in an unnecessarily deep hierarchy, itself subverted by the need to restate the hierarchy on each side;
- Enforcement of the audience's lockstep linear progression through that hierarchy (whereas with handouts, readers could browse and relate items at their leisure);
- Poor typography and chart layout, from presenters who are poor designers or who use poorly designed templates and default settings (in particular, difficulty in using scientific notation);
- Simplistic thinking: Ideas being squashed into bulleted lists; and stories with beginning, middle, and end being turned into a collection of disparate, loosely disguised points, presenting a misleading facade of the objectivity and neutrality that people associate with science, technology, and "bullet points".

A "PowerPoint Ranger" is a military member who relies heavily on presentation software to the point of excess. Some junior officers spend the majority of their time preparing PowerPoint slides. Because of its usefulness for presenting mission briefings, it has become part of the culture of the military, but is regarded as a poor decision-making tool. As a result, some generals, such as Brigadier-General Herbert McMaster,

(**Herbert Raymond McMaster** , born July 24, 1962 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is an American soldier, and a career officer in the U.S. Army. His current assignment is Director, Army Capabilities Integration Center and Deputy Commanding General, Futures, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command) have banned the use of PowerPoint in their operations. Example: In September 2010, Colonel Lawrence Sellin was fired from his post at the ISAF for publishing a piece critical of the over-dependence of military staffs on the presentation method and bloated bureaucracy.

Presentations mainly stand or drop on the quality, significance, and reliability of the content. If your numbers are uninteresting, then you've got the wrong numbers. If your words or images are not on point, making them hop in color won't make them significant or relevant. Audience boredom is usually a content failure, not a decoration failure.

At a minimum, a presentation format should do no damage. Yet the PowerPoint style regularly disturbs, governs, and plays down content. Thus PowerPoint presentations too often resemble a school play -very loud, very slow, and very simple.

The practical conclusions are clear. PowerPoint is a competent slide manager and projector. But rather than complementing a presentation, it has become a standby for it. Such misuse ignores the most important rule of speaking: Respect your audience.

5.7 Meaning & History: "Microsoft Excel"

The power of Excel lies in its flexibility to define the layout and structure of the information you want to manage. Microsoft Excel provides a grid interface to organize nearly any type of information. Basic tasks require no special training, and Excel allows you to work with text, numbers, and date information in a relatively open and unstructured way. Nearly 30 years after its initial introduction, Excel remains the world's leading spreadsheet software.

5.7.1 Meaning

Microsoft Excel is a spreadsheet developed by Microsoft for Windows, Mac OS X, and iOS. It features calculation, graphing tools, pivot tables, and a macro programming language called Visual Basic for Applications. It has been a very widely applied spreadsheet for these platforms, especially since version 5 in 1993, and it has replaced Lotus 1-2-3 as the industry standard for spreadsheets. Excel forms part of Microsoft Office.

Microsoft Excel is a software program produced by Microsoft Corp. that allows users to organize, format and calculate data with formulas using a spreadsheet system. This software is a part of the Microsoft office suite and is compatible with other applications in the office suite.

5.7.2 History behind the Development of Microsoft Excel

Microsoft originally promoted a spreadsheet program called Multiplan in 1982. Multiplan became very popular on CP/M systems, but on MS-DOS systems it lost popularity to Lotus 1-2-3. Microsoft released the first version of Excel for the Macintosh on September 30, 1985, and the first Windows version was 2.05 (to synchronize with the Macintosh version 2.2) in November 1987. Lotus was slow to bring 1-2-3 to Windows and by 1988 Excel had started to outsell 1-2-3 and helped Microsoft achieve the position of leading PC software developer.

This accomplishment, dethroning the king of the software world, solidified Microsoft as a valid competitor and showed its future of developing GUI software. Microsoft pushed its advantage with regular new releases, every two years or so

### 5.7.3 Versions of Microsoft Excel

- Excel 2.0 is the first version of Excel for Intel platform. There never was an Excel 1.0 for DOS or Windows.

- **Excel 2.0 (1987):** The first Windows version was labeled "2" to correspond to the Mac version. This included a run-time version of Windows.

- **Excel 3.0 (1990):** Included toolbars, drawing capabilities, outlining, add-in support, 3D charts, and many more new features.

- **Excel 4.0 (1992):** Introduced auto-fill. Also, an Easter egg in Excel 4.0 reveals a hidden animation of a dancing set of numbers 1 through 3, representing Lotus 1-2-3, which was then crushed by an Excel logo.

- **Excel 5.0 (1993):** With version 5.0, Excel has included Visual Basic for Applications (VBA).

- **Excel 95 (v7.0):** Released in 1995 with Microsoft Office for Windows 95, this is the first major version after Excel 5.0, as there is no Excel 6.0.

- **Excel 97 (v8.0):** Included in Office 97 (for x86 and Alpha). This version of Excel includes a flight simulator as an Easter Egg.

- **Excel 2000 (v9.0):** Included in Office 2000. This was a minor upgrade, but introduced the upgrade to the clipboard where it can hold multiple objects at once. The Office Assistant, whose frequent unsolicited appearance in Excel 97 had annoyed many users, became less intrusive.

- **Excel 2002 (v10.0):** Included in Office XP. Very minor enhancements.

- **Excel 2003 (v11.0):** Included in Office 2003. Minor enhancements, most significant being the new Tables.

- **Excel 2007 (v12.0):** This release was a major upgrade from the previous version. Similar to other updated Office products, Excel in 2007 used the new Ribbon menu system. This was different from what users were used to, and was met with mixed reactions.

- **Excel 2010 (v14.0):** Included in Office 2010, this is the next major version after v12.0, as version number 13 was skipped. Minor enhancements and 64-bit support, including the following: Multi-threading recalculation (MTR) for commonly used functions; Improved pivot tables; More conditional formatting options; Additional image editing capabilities; In-cell charts called spark lines; Ability to preview before pasting; Office 2010 backstage feature for document-related tasks; Ability to customize the Ribbon; Many new formulas, most highly specialized to improve accuracy

- **Excel 2013 (v15.0):** Included in Office 2013, along with a lot of new tools included in this release: Improved Multi-threading and Memory Contention; Flash Fill; Power View; PowerPivot; Timeline Slicer; Windows App; Inquire ; 50 new functions

- **Excel 2016 (v16.0):** Included in Office 2016, along with a lot of new tools included in this release: Power Query integration; Read-only mode for Excel; Keyboard access for Pivot Tables and Slicers in Excel; New Chart Types; Quick data linking in Visio; Excel forecasting functions; Support for multi-selection of Slicer items using touch; Time grouping and Pivot Chart Drill Down; Excel data cards

**5.8 Basic operation of Microsoft Excel**
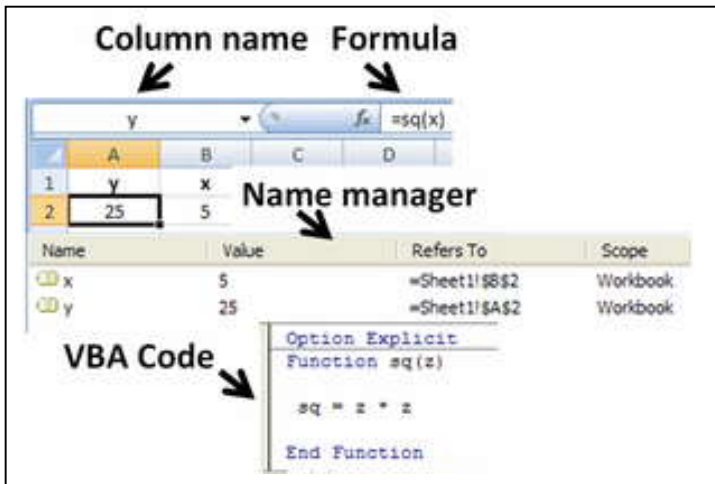
- Microsoft allows for a number of optional command-line switches to control the manner in which Excel starts.

- It has a programming aspect, Visual Basic for Applications, allowing the user to employ a wide variety of numerical methods, for example, for solving differential equations of mathematical physics, and then reporting the results back to the spreadsheet. The Windows version of Excel supports programming through Microsoft's Visual Basic for Applications (VBA); Programming with VBA allows spreadsheet manipulation that is awkward or impossible with standard spreadsheet techniques. VBA code interacts with the spreadsheet through the Excel Object Model, a vocabulary identifying spreadsheet objects, and a set of supplied functions or methods that enable reading and writing to the spreadsheet and interaction with its users.
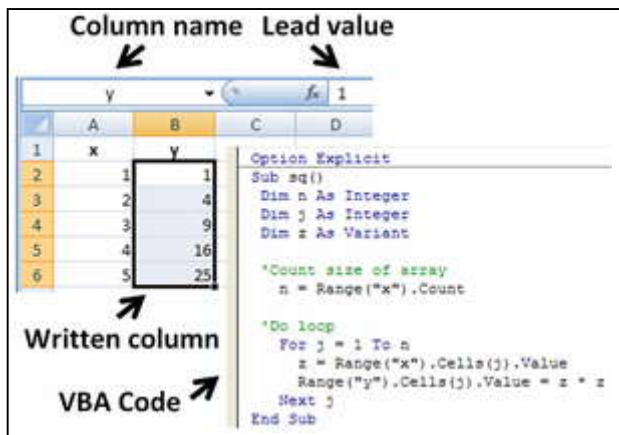
- It also has a variety of interactive features allowing user interfaces that can completely hide the spreadsheet from the user, so the spreadsheet presents itself as a so-called application, or decision support system (DSS), via a custom-designed user interface, for example, a stock analyzer.

- It is a design tool that asks the user questions and provides answers and reports.

- In a more elaborate realization, an Excel application can automatically poll external databases and measuring instruments using an update schedule.

- It can analyze the results, make a Word report or PowerPoint slide show, and e-mail these presentations on a regular basis to a list of participants.

- Excel supports charts, graphs, or histograms generated from specified groups of cells. The generated graphic component can either be embedded within the current sheet, or added as a separate object.
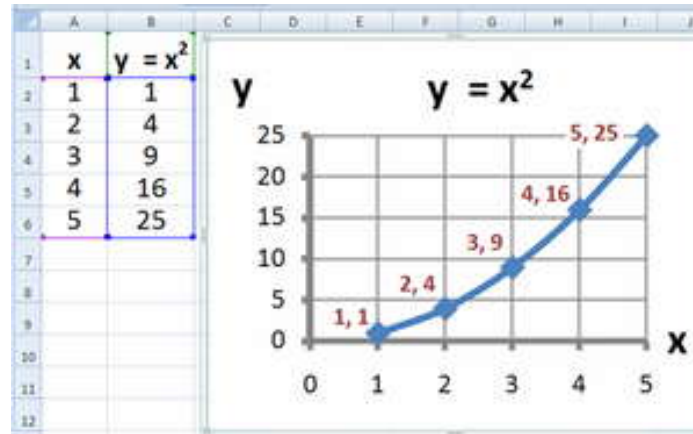
- These displays are dynamically updated if the content of cells changes. For example, suppose that the important design requirements are displayed visually; then, in response to a user's change in trial values for parameters, the curves describing the design change shape and their points of intersection shift, assisting the selection of the best design.

5.9 Power of Using Excel

- Excel became the first spreadsheet to allow the user to define the appearance of spreadsheets (fonts, character attributes and cell appearance).

- It also introduced intelligent cell precomputation, where only cells dependent on the cell being modified are updated (previous spreadsheet programs recomputed everything all the time or waited for a specific user command).

- Excel also introduced extensive graphing capabilities.

- Excel introduced auto-fill, the ability to drag and expand the selection box to automatically copy cell or row contents to adjacent cells or rows, adjusting the copies intelligently by automatically incrementing cell references or contents.

- Excel compromises many user edge tweaks over the earliest electronic spreadsheets; however, the principle remains the same as in the original spreadsheet software, VisiCalc: the program displays cells organized in rows and columns, and each cell may contain data or a formula, with relative or absolute references to other cells.

- Excel 2.0 was released a month before Windows 2.0, and the installed base of Windows was so low at that point in 1987 that Microsoft had to bundle a run-time version of Windows 1.0 with Excel 2.0. Excel 2.0 for Windows, which was modeled after its Mac GUI-based counterpart, indirectly expanded the installed base of the then-nascent Windows environment. Unlike Microsoft Word, there never was a DOS version of Excel.

- Excel is extensively used; it has been attacked by crackers. While Excel is not directly exposed to the Internet, if an attacker can get a victim to open a file in Excel, and there is an appropriate security bug in Excel, then the attacker can get control of the victim's computer. UK's GCHQ has a tool named TORNADO ALLEY with this purpose

5.10 How Excel Works

An Excel document is called a Workbook. A workbook always has at least one Worksheet. Worksheets are the grid where you can store and calculate data. You can have many worksheets stored inside a workbook, each with a unique worksheet name.

Worksheets are laid out in columns (vertical) and rows (horizontal). The intersection of any given row and column is a cell. Cells are really where you enter any information. A cell will accept a large amount of text, or you can enter a date, number,

or formula. Each cell can be formatted individually with distinct border, background color, and font color/size/type.
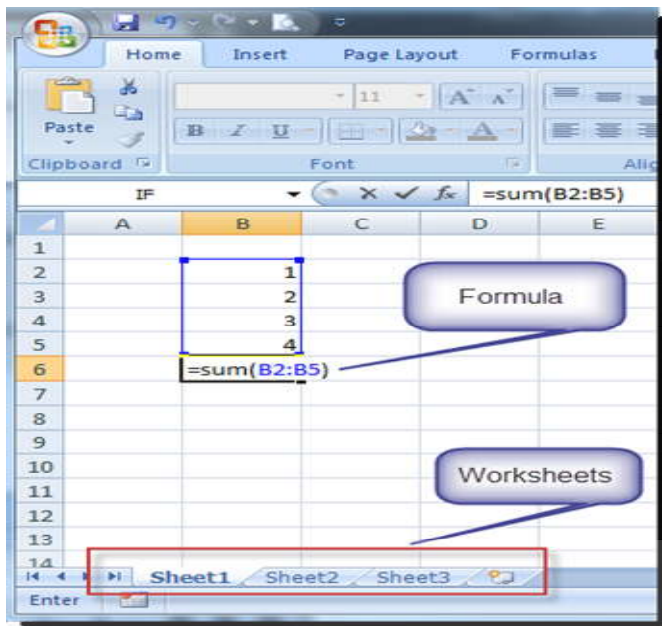

- **Excel Formulas:** You can create simple and complex formulas in Excel to calculate just about anything. Inputs to a formula may be other cells, the results of other formulas, or just straight-forward math (5*2+3). Excel includes a formula library for calculating things like Net Present Value (NPV), standard deviation, interest payments over time, and other common financial and mathematic formulae. Excel's formula bar includes a feature to help you search for a formula you need, and also helps you select the appropriate cells in your workbook to calculate the formula.
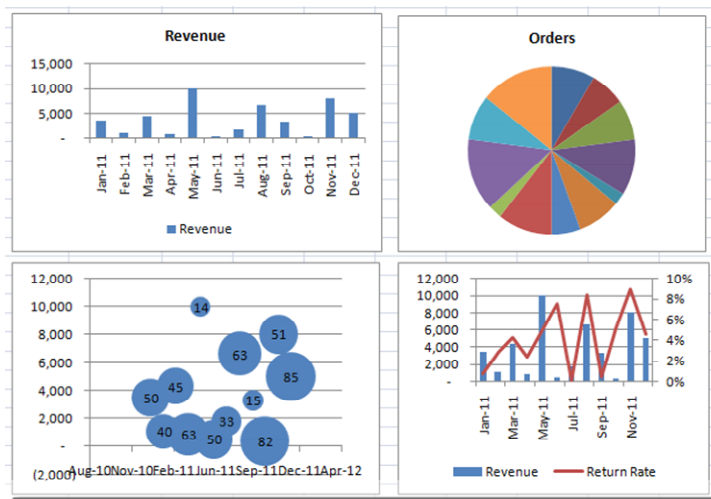
- **Excel Charting:** Excel offers a wide array of charts to visualize data. They range from simple line graphs to bubble and radar charts. Excel has two main tools for charting: standard charts and pivot charts. A standard chart is relatively static one you create it. As you change data in your spreadsheet, related cells will refresh the chart to show the new updates. A pivot chart is more dynamic, allowing you to "slice-and-dice" your data in several different ways by choosing which columns contain the information you want to group by, or apply mathematical operations (sum, count, average, find the maximum, etc).

Notes
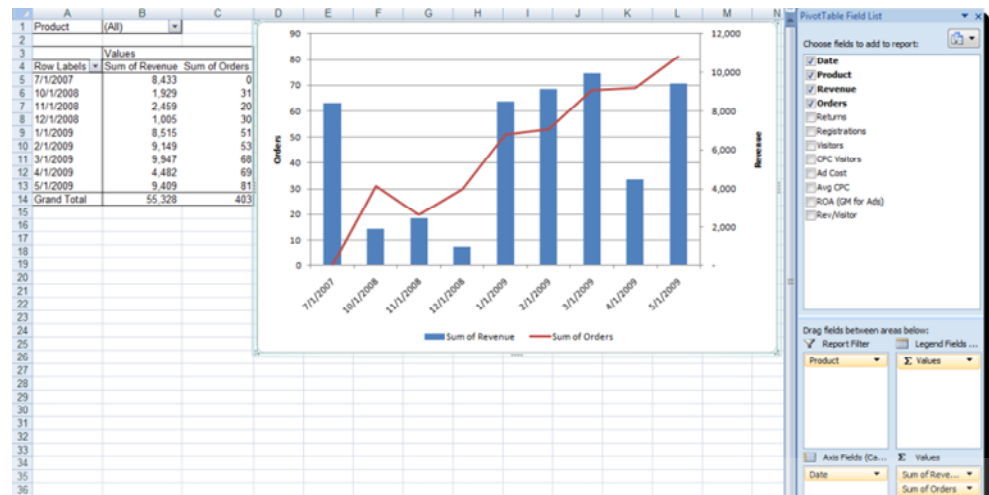
- **Keyboard Shortcuts:** Scrolling is the enemy. Nobody wants to waste their whole day scrolling to the bottom of a spreadsheet. Here are a few keyboard shortcuts that will save time:

  ❖ CTRL + down arrow: To get to the bottom row of your data set

  ❖ CTRL +up arrow: To get the top row of your data set

  ❖ CTRL + right arrow: To get to the last column of your data set

  ❖ CTRL + left arrow: To get to the first column of your data set

  ❖ CTRL + Home: To get to the first cell (top left) in your data set

  ❖ CTRL + End: To get to the last cell (bottom right) in your data set

  ❖ Bonus: Holding SHIFT down while using any of the above shortcuts will select that entire range

5.11 Criticism of Using Excel

- **Statistical functions:** The accuracy and convenience of statistical tools in Excel has been criticized, as mishandling missing data, as returning incorrect values due to inept handling of round-off and large numbers, as only selectively updating calculations on a spreadsheet when some cell values are changed, and as having a limited set of statistical tools. Microsoft has announced some of these issues are addressed in Excel 2010.

- **Excel MOD function error:** Excel has issues with modulo operations. In the case of excessively large results, Excel will return the error warning *#NUM!* instead of an answer.

- **Date problems:** Excel includes January 0, 1900 and February 29, 1900, incorrectly treating 1900 as a leap year. The bug originated from Lotus 1-2-3, and was purposely implemented in Excel for the purpose of compatibility. This legacy has later been carried over into Office Open XML file format. Excel also does not support dates before 1900.

- **Filenames:** Microsoft Excel will not open two documents with the same name and instead will display the following error:

  ❖ A document with the name '%s' is already open. You cannot open two documents with the same name, even if the documents are in different folders. To open the second document, either close the document that is currently open, or rename one of the documents.

  ❖ The reason is for calculation ambiguity with linked cells. If there is a cell ='[Book1.xlsx]Sheet1'!G33, and there are two books named "Book1" open, there is no way to tell which one the user means.

● **Numeric precision:**

Excel maintains 15 figures in its numbers, but they are not always accurate: the bottom line should be the same as the top line.

1. Despite the use of 15-figure precision, Excel can display many more figures (up to thirty) upon user request. But the displayed figures are *not* those actually used in its computations, and so, for example, the difference of two numbers may differ from the difference of their displayed values. Although such departures are usually beyond the 15th decimal, exceptions do occur, especially for very large or very small numbers. Serious errors can occur if decisions are made based upon automated comparisons of numbers (for example, using the Excel *If* function), as equality of two numbers can be unpredictable.

2. In the figure the fraction 1/9000 is displayed in Excel. Although this number has a decimal representation that is an infinite string of ones, Excel displays only the leading 15 figures. In the second line, the number one is added to the fraction, and again Excel displays only 15 figures. In the third line, one is subtracted from the sum using Excel. Because the sum in the second line has only eleven 1's after the decimal, the difference when 1 is subtracted from this displayed value is three 0's followed by a string of eleven 1's. However, the difference reported by Excel in the third line is three 0's followed by a string of *thirteen* 1's and two extra erroneous digits. This is because Excel calculates with about half a digit more than it displays.

3. Excel works with a modified 1985 version of the IEEE 754 specification. Excel's implementation involves conversions between binary and decimal representations, leading to accuracy that is on average better than one would expect from simple fifteen digit precision, but that can be worse. See the main article for details.

4. Besides accuracy in user computations, the question of accuracy in Excel-provided functions may be raised. Particularly in the arena of statistical functions, Excel has been criticized for sacrificing accuracy for speed of calculation.

5. As many calculations in Excel are executed using VBA, an additional issue is the accuracy of VBA, which varies with variable type and user-requested precision.

5.12 Summary

Numerous hundred million copies of Microsoft PowerPoint are roiling out tons of slides each year. Slideware may benefit speaker's outline their dialogues, but suitability for the speaker can be demanding to both content and audience. The standard PowerPoint presentation lifts format over content, revealing an attitude of commercialism that turns everything into a sales pitch. Of course, data-driven conferences/ seminars/ meetings are nothing new. Years before today's slideware, presentations at companies such as IBM and in the military used bullet lists shown by overhead projectors. But the format has become universal under PowerPoint, which was created in 1984 and later acquired by Microsoft. PowerPoint's assertive style seeks to set up a speaker's supremacy over the audience.

Thee use excel for a variety of purposes. Analyzing site trends, forecasting traffic, charts, dashboards, and slide shows; you name it, we use excel for it.

5.13 Check Your Progress

Multiple Choice Questions

1. PowerPoint is a competent slide manager and projector.
   (a) Incomplete statement
   (b) Not a justified statement
   (c) False
   (d) True

2. A …………………. is more dynamic, allowing you to "slice-and-dice" your data in several different ways?
   (a) Excel charting
   (b) Excel formulas
   (c) pivot chart
   (d) worksheet

3. Is it important to always to respect your audience?
   (a) Incomplete statement
   (b) True
   (c) False
   (d) Not a justified statement

4. PowerPoint presentation lifts format over ………………….
   (a) Content
   (b) Conversation
   (c) Dialogue
   (d) Window display

5. PowerPoint initially named "……………………, was created by Forethought Inc.
   (a) Displayer
   (b) Demonstrator
   (c) Broadcaster
   (d) Presenter

6. ………………. became very popular on CP/M systems, but on MS-DOS systems it lost popularity
   (a) Multiplan
   (b) Decision support system (DSS)
   (c) custom-designed user interface
   (d) none of above

7. The Windows version of Excel supports programming through Microsoft's ……..
   (a) GUI
   (b) MTR
   (c) VBA
   (d) OLE objects

8. Security bug in Excel, then the attacker can get control of the victim's computer. UK's GCHQ has a tool named ……………… with this purpose
   (a) TORRANT
   (b) TORNADO ALLEY

(c) BUG ALLEY

(d) EX-BUG

9. Excel includes a formula library for calculating things like Net Present Value (NPV), standard deviation, interest payments over time, and other common financial and mathematic formulae.

(a) Incomplete statement

(b) Not a justified statement

(c) False

(d) True

10. Excel will return the error warning ……..instead of an answer

(a) #ERROR!

(b) #WRONG!

(c) #FALSE!

(d) #NUM!

5.14 Questions and Exercises

1. Discuss the Basic operation of Microsoft Excel

2. Explain the history behind the development of Microsoft Excel.

3. Discuss the usage PowerPoint Presentations & its Impact on the business communication.

4. How to Make a Simple & basic PowerPoint Presentation?

5. What are the style tips of using PowerPoint presentation?

6. Discuss the criticism of using power point presentation

7. Explain the power of using Microsoft excel.

8. Discuss how excel works?

9. Discuss the criticism of using excel.

10. Explain the steps involved in launch of the PowerPoint Program

5.15 Key Terms

● **Visual Basic for Applications** (VBA): It is a programming language based on Visual Basic which adds the ability to automate tasks in Excel and to provide user-defined functions (UDF) for use in worksheets. VBA is a powerful addition to the application and includes a fully featured integrated development environment (IDE)

● **Easter egg** Easter eggs are secret responses that occur as a result of an undocumented set of commands. Videogame cheat codes are a specific type of Easter egg, in which entering a secret command will unlock special powers or new levels for the player. An Easter egg is found on all Microsoft Windows operating systems before XP

● **Pivot Tables**: Excel pivot tables are very useful and powerful feature of MS Excel. They can be used to summarize, analyze, explore and present your data

● Multi-threading recalculation (MTR):

● GUI:

● OLE objects:

● Decision Support System (DSS)

Notes

Check Your Progress: Answers

1. (d)
2. (c)
3. (b)
4. (a)
5. (d)
6. (a)
7. (c)
8. (b)
9. (d)
10. (d)

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