

**COMMUNICATION for
MANAGEMENT & BUSINESS**

(ABM-505)

**Lecture Notes
(Study material)**

Compiled by

Dr Prashant Shrivastava

PhD(Ag), MDBA(Marketing)

and

Dr (Mrs) Anupama Verma

PhD(English), MBA(Business Management)

**Institute of Agri Business Management
Jawaharlal Nehru Krishi Vishwa
Vidyalaya
Jabalpur(M.P)**

ABM 505 COMMUNICATION FOR MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS

Objective

The course aims to make students proficient in written as well oral communication. The focus will be on business related communication.

Contents

UNIT – I

Introduction to communication, Communication process, Barriers to Communication, Effective Communication, types of communication in organisations viz. Downward, Upward, Horizontal, Static Vs dynamic.

UNIT - II

Non-Verbal Communication, Communication through clothes/ colours / space/ symbol, Body language and etiquettes, Interpersonal Communication, Self-concept and communication, Assertive Communication.

UNIT - III

Types of business writing viz, Newsletters, Reports, Folders, Fact Sheets, Press release; Readership and writing style - human aspects of writing.

UNIT - IV

Meetings - Planning for meeting, tips for chairing, opening, progress & ending, Behavior of ordinary members, the character of business meeting, Energies for meetings, Group discussions, brain storming sessions and presentations.

UNIT - V

Handling personal communication - Letters, dictation, reading, problem-solving, listening skills, self-talk, self - reflection, steps to personal creativity, public speaking.

Suggested Readings

Bovee. 2008. Business Communication Today. 7th Ed. Pearson Edu.

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UNIT-I

Introduction to communication-

The purpose of communication is to get your message across to others clearly and unambiguously. Doing this involves effort from both the sender of the message and the receiver. And it's a process that can be fraught with error, with messages often misinterpreted by the recipient. When this isn't detected, it can cause tremendous confusion, wasted effort and missed opportunity.

In fact, communication is only successful when both the sender and the receiver understand the same information as a result of the communication. By successfully getting your message across, you convey your thoughts and ideas effectively. When not successful, the thoughts and ideas that you convey do not necessarily reflect your own, causing a communication breakdown and creating roadblocks that stand in the way of your goals – both personally and professionally.

Origin

The word 'communication' comes from the Latin word *communis* which means common. This implies that when we communicate, we are trying to establish 'commonality' with someone through a message. Communication, then, is a conscious attempt to establish commonality over some idea, fact, feelings and the like, with others. In essence, it is a process of getting a source and a receiver tuned together for a particular message or a series of messages.

Definitions

1. Communication is anything that conveys meaning, that carries a message from one person to another. – *Brooker*.
2. Communication is the mutual interchange of ideas by any effective means. – *Thayer*.
3. Communication in its simplest form is conveying of information from one person to another. – *Cyril L Hudson*.

4. Communication is the act of making one's ideas and opinions known to others. – *Fred. G. Meyer*.
5. Communication is the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another. – *Keith Davis*.
6. Communication is a process by which two or more people exchange ideas, facts, feelings or impressions in ways that each gains a common understanding of meaning, intent and use of message. – *Leagans*.

Functions of Communication

Lee Thayer, a prominent management thinker has divided the functions of communication into the following four categories :

1. **The information function** :It serves to provide knowledge to the individuals who need guidance in their actions. It also fulfils the workers' desires for awareness of things that affect them.
2. **The command and instructive function** : This function makes the employee aware of his obligations to the formal organisation and provides him with additional guidance on how to perform his duties adequately.
3. **The influence and persuasive function** : This function motivates, directs and guides the employees to act and influence the behavior and attitudes of the people through arguments and persuasion.
4. **The integrative function** : Communication, if properly handled, integrates the activities and efforts of the workers. As a result, they move in a single desired direction and the whole organization becomes a well-knit system.

Characteristics/ Nature/ Features of communication

1. Communication involves plurality of persons.
2. Existence of a message.
3. Communication is a continuous process.
4. Communication is a two way process.
5. Communication is a universal process.
6. Communication is a social process.
7. Communication may be written, oral or gestural.
8. Communication may be formal or informal.

9. Communication may be vertical, horizontal or diagonal.
10. Primary purpose is to motivate a response.
11. Communication is unavoidable.

Communication process

Communication is the process by which messages are transferred from source to receiver. In other words it refers to the process of transferring an idea, skill or aptitude from one person to the other accurately and satisfactorily. Failure to communicate successfully has bothered many well intentioned people.

Communication is essentially a five step process and the five steps are also known as the **elements of communication**. The **Sender/ source (S)** has an idea that becomes a **message (M)**, the message is transmitted via communication **channels (C)**, the **receiver (R)** receives the message which causes the receivers to change an existing behavior pattern or **effect (E)** on the receiver. This is also known as the SMCRE Communication model which was given by *Rogers and Shoemaker* (1971).

1. **Source** :It is the point of origin of the message. The person who starts the process of communication is also called the communicator. The communicator decides what message is to be sent, how to treat it, what channel to use and which receivers to reach.
2. **Message** :A message is the information a communicator wishes his audience to receive, understand, accept and act upon. The message may be information, instructions or orders.
3. **Channel** :It is anything used by a communicator of messages to connect him with the intended receivers. It may be a letter, meeting, radio, newspaper, television etc through which the communicator reaches the receivers.
4. **Receivers** :Receivers are the intended audience of messages. They are the consumer of the messages. (By acting on the messages the receiver is likely to gain economically or socially.) The communicator should identify and aim his messages towards his intended audience.

- 5. Effect :**Effect is the response by the audience to the messages received by them. This may be some kind of mental or physical action. The action should be viewed as a product of the communication process.

Barriers to Communication

The term barrier means hurdle, hindrance or obstacle. Thus, barriers to communication imply hurdles or obstacles on the way of transmission of message from the sender to the receiver. In practice, there exist several barriers in communication which render it ineffective. They generate confusion, conflict and misunderstanding in the organization by creating bottlenecks, delays and distortions of information.

Types of Barriers

1. Physical and Mechanical Barriers

- a.) **Noise** – Noise is the disruption or interference in communication process anywhere along the process of communication. Noise can be sound of someone coughing, a truck driving by or two people talking nearby. All such noises lead to miscommunication and steps need to be taken to minimize them.
- b.) **Distance** – Long distance between the senders and the receivers can also obstruct effective communication.
- c.) **Time** – It refers to the reaching of message on time. If an important message reaches late, it is sure to effect communication.
- d.) **Information overload** – It refers to excessive transmission of information.
- e.) **Physical barriers** – Outdated machines and equipments may produce excessive noise leading to physical barriers to communication to communication.
- f.) **Use of words with different meanings** – Words used in communication may convey different meanings to different people. For example, the word tube may mean a fluorescent tube, cycle tube or a water tube.
- g.) **Denotations and Connotations** – The literal meaning of the word is known by its denotative meaning. It just names the object without suggesting positive and negative qualities. Pen, book, chair, table and

computer are some examples of denotative words. On the other hand connotative words like honest, punctual, competent and cheap arouse qualitative judgements. Some of these words like honest and competent have positive connotations. But other words like cheap and selfish have negative connotations.

2. Language or Semantic Barriers

a.) **Unclear message** – Lack of clarity and precision in a message makes it badly expressed. Poorly chosen and empty words and phrases, careless omission, bad organization of ideas are some of the faults found in this case.

b.) **Words or Symbols with different meanings** – A word may have several meanings. For example the word value may be used in the three different senses-

(1) The value of this book is Rs 200/-.

(2) We value our customers.

(3) The value of learning computer skills lies in the fact that jobs in industry are highly demanding.

c.) **Technical words or jargons** – It is often found that specialists and technical personnel tend to use the technical language of their respective fields.

d.) **Faulty translation** – Sometimes the instructions originally drafted in one language (e.g. English) need to be translated to the language understood by the workers (e.g. Hindi).

e.) **Unclear assumptions** – Sometimes messages are based on certain assumptions which are subject to different interpretations.

f.) **Body language and gestures** – If the verbal communication is not matching with the body language, the listener may get confused and misunderstand the meaning.

3. Socio-Psychological Barriers

a.) **Differences in perception** – Perceptual barriers may arise due to differences between individuals in the way they perceive, organize and understand their environment.

b.) **Differences in attitude** – People differ with regard to attitudes and opinions which often interfere with communication.

- c.) **Emotions** – How the receiver feels (emotion) at the time of receipt of information influences effectively how he interprets the information.
- d.) **Inattention** – Communication has no impact on those who are unable or unwilling to listen attentively.
- e.) **Closed minds** – One of the assumptions implicit in the communication process is that both the receiver and the sender have open minds, which enable them to process information in an uninhibited manner.
- f.) **Premature evaluation** – Some people form a judgement before receiving the complete message. Such premature evaluation prevents effective communication.
- g.) **Distrust** – It arises out of ill considered judgements or illogical decisions or frequent countermanding of the original communication by the communicator.
- h.) **Resistance to change** – It is a general tendency of human beings to maintain status quo. Thus resistance to change is an important obstacle to effective communication.
- i.) **Cultural differences** – Cultural differences are faced when managers deal with people of different cultures.

4. **Organisational Barriers**

- a.) **Status relationships** – Status refers to the regard and attitude displayed and held towards a position by the members of the organization. Organisation structure creates a number of status levels among the members of the organization.
- b.) **One-way flow** – Where the flow of feedback from the receiver or the listener is blocked understanding will suffer. In fact one way communication in some situations is not communication at all.
- c.) **Complex organization structure** – Complex organization structure creates problems because communication may breakdown at any level of supervision due to faulty transmission in order to overcome these difficulties.
- d.) **Rigid rules and regulations** – Organizational rules and regulations affect the flow of communication by prescribing the subject matter to be communicated and also the channel through which these are to be communicated.

- e.) **Distance barriers** – If both the communicator and communicatee are at distant places the communicatee fails to get immediate clarification required. Thus distance acts as a barrier to communication.
- f.) **Physical barriers** - Communication becomes ineffective due to physical factors such as noise pollution of machines, vehicles and environment.
- g.) **Mechanical barriers** - Any defect in the equipment used for communication may distort the impressions.

5. Personal Barriers

- a.) **Attitude of superiors** - The attitude of superiors towards communication in general or in any particular direction affect the flow of information in different directions.
- b.) **Lack of confidence in subordinates** – Superiors generally perceive that their subordinates are less competent and capable and that they are not able to advise superiors.
- c.) **Insistence of proper channel** – One of the basic features of superiors' exercising of the authority is that they wish to remain in communication links and they do not like any type of bypassing in communication.
- d.) **Ignoring Communication** – Sometimes superiors consciously and deliberately ignore the communication from their subordinates to maintain their importance.
- e.) **Filtering of information** - Sometimes, the sender intentionally screens the information for passing only such information which will look favourable to the receiver.

Effective Communication

Effective communication is the key of sure success in all the areas of human life. The increasing specialization and the expansion and complexity of today's trade fare have also brought about a revolution in the systems of communication. The businessman who wants to survive in the competition has to develop his communicating skills. He must know how to communicate with the help of new and speedy technical devices of communication. The efficient management executives spend more than ninety per cent of their time in communication. Their efficiency depends on their skills and effectiveness of communicating with others.

He has to communicate with other traders and dealers for purchase and sale of goods and services. He has to communicate with his superiors in order to decide the objectives and directives. He has to communicate with his subordinates in order to get their cooperation and improve the productivity. For transmitting effective oral or written messages, certain principles must be followed. These principles advocated by Francis J. Bergin provide guidelines for choice of content and style of presentation adapted for the purpose by the receiver of the message. They are also called “**Seven C’s**” of effective communication. They are :

1. **Completeness** – Every communication must be complete in itself. Incomplete messages keep the receiver guessing, create misunderstanding and delay actions. Messages must offer complete and relevant information in order to become effective. Incomplete information makes it necessary to begin another cycle of communication to issue clarification.
2. **Conciseness** – In business communications, you should be brief and be able to say whatever you have to say in fewest possible words without sacrificing the other qualities. A concise message is complete without being wordy.
3. **Correctness** – The term correctness as applied to business messages means right level of language and accuracy of facts, figures and words. If the information is not correctly conveyed, the sender will lose credibility.
4. **Concreteness** – of message is an essential requirement of effective communication. It means being specific, definite and vivid rather than vague and general. Concrete expressions create visual images that are easy to register. So instead of vague, generalized statements, give definite facts.
5. **Clarity** – The message must be put in simple terms to ensure clarity. Words must mean the same thing to the receiver as they do to the sender. Complex issues must be compressed into themes, slogans or stereotypes that have simplicity and clarity. Your language should consist of simple words and short sentences.
6. **Consideration** – Consideration means preparing the message with the intended receiver in mind. In order to communicate effectively, the sender should think and look from the receiver’s angle. He should adopt a humane approach and understand the emotions and sentiments of the receiver.

7. **Courtesy** – or politeness stems from sincere you-attitude. It is not merely politeness with mechanical insertions of “please” and “thank you”, although applying socially accepted manners is a form of courtesy.

Types of Communication in organizations viz Downward, Upward, Horizontal, Static Vs Dynamic.

Communication moves in an organization in many directions so that it helps in its smooth working. An organization is structured to have several levels of executives, where there are more individuals at the lower levels and the numbers decrease as one moves upwards. Conceptually, it could be compared to a pyramid that has a large number at its base and smaller one at the apex. The authority and supervisory functions of the executives also increase as one climbs to the upper levels.

From the point of view of the direction of flow of information, communication may be either **vertical** or **horizontal**. **Vertical communication** may move both **downward** as well as **upward**. **Horizontal communication** is also known as lateral or sideward communication. Besides, there may be **diagonal communication** in organizations which may cut across the vertical lines in the organization structure.

Downward Communication

The transfer of message or the flow of information from the top level of an organization to the lower level is referred to as downward communication. For example communication from a Managing Director who is the top most functionary of an organization to the operative employees at the lower level represents the downward flow. The purpose of downward communication is to communicate policies, procedures, programmes, objectives and to issue orders and instructions to the subordinates. A major part of the formal communication takes in the form of downward communication. Downward communication can take place through verbal or written orders and instructions, notices, circulars, letters, memos, posters, periodicals, publications, group meetings etc.

Downward communication is the flow of information from higherst to lowest level in the organizational hierarchy. Managers use it to accomplish a variety of key organizational functions and objectives as follows:

- To clarify and build support for the organization mission,
- To instruct, direct, query or reward employees,
- To explain policies, rules, regulations and codes of practices,
- To provide feedback from management, and
- To share information about the organization's health and about key elements in the external environments.

Upward Communication

On the other hand upward communication is the flow of information from lower to higher levels in the organization. Managers encourage upward communication to perform the following important functions:

- To gather valuable information,
- To give employees the opportunity to air grievances,
- To find out when employees are ready for information from management,
- To get feedback from the employees in the forms of reports, complaint, suggestions, advice, etc., and
- To get information about work problems.

It represents the transfer of message or flow of information from lower levels to higher levels of the organization. For example the communication from the operative employees who are at the lower level to the Managing Director of an organization. The purposes of upward communication are to keep the superiors informed about the progress of the work and difficulties faced in executing orders, suggest measures for improvement, communicate grievances and create a feeling of belongingness through participation. Upward communication can take the form of activity reports, suggestions, recommendations, grievances, etc.

Horizontal or Lateral Communication

It refers to the transmission of information among persons of the same level and status in an organization. It generally takes place among departmental heads who are responsible for different functional areas of the business. It is also known as sideward or lateral communication. Horizontal communication is essential for achieving coordination in the enterprise. The methods used in horizontal communication are generally limited. They take the form of memoranda, letters and the personal face-to-face contacts, telephonic contacts etc. informal contacts among the departmental heads play an important role in informal communication.

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UNIT-II

Non-Verbal Communication

Non-verbal means not involving words or speech. Thus, non-verbal communication refers to the wordless messages received through gestures, signs, body movements, facial expressions, tone of voice, colour, time, space and style of writing and choice of words.

It is human beings alone who have evolved the language of words to convey our thoughts in a structured manner. Still, in moments of excitement we tend to convey our feelings and emotions of joy, love, anger and hatred by smiling, shouting, frowning or using other wordless clues. Such non-verbal expressions of feelings come spontaneously. However, at times, we can deliberately lace our words with expressive tones, gestures and facial expressions to heighten and modify the meaning of our words.

Some non-verbal message usually accompanies a verbal message. The verbal and the non-verbal together form the total meaning of the message communicated. In addition to the words uttered by the speaker, there is also usually something unsaid and implied, so to fully understand the message, the listener should pay attention to body language and non-verbal signals.

The term non-verbal communication was introduced by psychiatrist Jurgen Ruesch and author Weldon Kees.

According to Raymond and John, all communication that involve neither written nor spoken words but occur without use of words are termed as non-verbal communication.

Features of Non-Verbal Communication

1. It is an indication of delivering of message through attitude and emotions.
2. Non-verbal cues are often considered as reliable.
3. Non-verbal communication is informative in nature.
4. It is an expression of feelings.

5. It makes the message effective.

Importance of Non-Verbal Communication

1. Reliability-Facial expressions, emotions (like happiness, grief, anger etc), gestures etc are more reliable and make the communication process more effective.
2. Easy and Fast- Body language can easily and instantly convey the message without verbal communication.
3. Time saving- Non-verbal communication is time saving.
4. Efficient – In this process no complicated process is involved and makes the process efficient.
5. Prompt feedback- Response easily comes through body postures.

Types of Non-Verbal Communication

1. **Kinesics** or body language-The word kinesics comes from the root word *kinesis*, which means “movement,” and refers to the study of hand, arm, body, and face movements. It refers to the use of gestures, head movements and posture, eye contact, and facial expressions as nonverbal communication.
2. **Proxemics** or Space Language- It is defined as the use and perception of one’s social and personal space, such as in seating and spatial arrangements. Proxemics is the study of human use of space and the effects that population density has on behaviour, communication, and social interaction. Proxemics is one among several subcategories in the study of nonverbal communication.
3. **Chronemics** or Time Language-Chronemics is the study of the role of time in communication. It is one of several subcategories of the study of nonverbal communication. Time perceptions include punctuality, willingness to wait, and interactions. The use of time can affect lifestyle, daily agendas, speed of speech, movements, and how long people are willing to listen.
4. **Haptics** or Touch-Haptics means by which people and other animals communicate via touching. Touch is an extremely important sense for humans; as well as providing information about surfaces and textures it is a

component of nonverbal communication in interpersonal relationships, and vital in conveying physical intimacy. Socially acceptable levels of touching varies from one culture to another. In the Thai culture, touching someone's head may be thought rude.

5. **Paralanguage** -Various acoustic properties of speech such as tone, pitch and accent, collectively known as prosody(paralanguage), can all give off nonverbal cues. Paralanguage may change the meaning of words. Prosody may reflect various features of the speaker or the utterance like the emotional state of a speaker; whether an utterance is a statement, a question, or a command; or whether the speaker is being ironic or sarcastic; or emphasis, contrast, and focus.
6. **Oculesics** or eye contact- The study of messages sent by the eyes is called oculusics. Throughout history we have been preoccupied with the eye and its effects on human behavior. We associate eye movements with a wide range of human emotions, from modesty and naiveté to wonder and terror. One important area of research is concerned with eye contact (mutual glances, visual interaction, gazing or the line of regard). We make more eye contact when we look at something rewarding to us. Eye contact communicates interested and friendly involvement with another/others.

Communication through clothes/ colours/ space/ symbol.

Communication through clothes- Clothing is an inseparable part of the human body. Through clothing, a person makes a first step in non-verbal communication to the world. Clothing not only shows our appearance, but also represents our interior world. We draw attention with the help of clothing. Through our apparel we establish communication with others, express acceptance or rejection, or collective attitudes in relation to understanding of something that is likeable, sociable, or moral, etc. Clothes can represent aesthetical/designed costume. Behind it a person can hide his/her face. If observed in this way, clothing can be used as a mediator between person and his/her environment/society. The clothing could help a person to achieve a defined goal. Clothing is a specific manifestation of person's identity and society, individual and collective, and the identification of an individual or group. The clothing is defined as a shelter, cover, and capsule for the body. Clothing is associated with the meaning in private and public space, and it represents the relationship between person/ personality through dressing, which is

tied with one's surroundings/environment. A person with clothing stands out with national, wealth, and status background, and within it, certain attitudes and affinities can be pointed out towards specific cultural, professional, artistic, and distinct lifestyles.

Communication through colours.

Colour talks both to and about us. The colours we surround ourselves with and the colours we wear affect us both physically and emotionally. For example, research has found that when a person is exposed to pure red for extended periods, the nervous system is excited, and blood pressure, respiration rate, and heart rate rise. In contrast, when the person is similarly exposed to dark blue, a calming effect occurs, and blood pressure, respiration, and heart rate fall. Colour may help compel us to move more quickly or slowly, help us relax, or cause us to become agitated. People who regularly wear red tend to be more active, outgoing, and impatient than those who avoid the colour.

Colours play significant role in branding as a dominant nonverbal code in advertising communication. The first attraction while viewing an advertisement is probably the colours and colour combination used in its production. Sometimes, particular colour is associated with product/service and becomes the descriptive and associative element. Copy writers pay serious attention to the use of colours when planning their brand because of the significant role of colour in advertising. Colour has the power of vividly imprinting on the viewers' memory, something it is attached to. Apart from aesthetics, colours in advertising helps in promoting brands by constructing perception in the minds of consumers, such that, through colour, viewers can identify, remember and get prompted on products and services.

Colours do not evoke the same meanings in all cultures. For example, whereas in the United States and European countries brides routinely wear white, in Asian countries white is the colour of mourning and so not considered suitable for weddings. In India, if a bride wears white, at least a touch of another colour is usually added. In Ghana blue signifies joy; in Iran it has negative connotations. In the United States yellow suggests caution or cowardice; in China it represents wealth. Korean Buddhists reserve the colour red for writing a person's name upon his or her death.

Communication through space.

Our use of space and distance also reveals how we feel about ourselves and what we think of others. As with kinesics and paralinguistics, space and distance communicate. Generally, we use physical proximity and distance to signal either desire to communicate or disinterest in communicating. The closer we stand, the greater the chances are that we like one another. Proximity or lack of it also indicates how dominant or submissive we are in a relationship. The more dominant we feel, the more likely we are to move closer to another; in contrast, the more submissive we feel, the less likely we are to decrease our interaction distance. Perceptions of friendliness or unfriendliness and extroversion or introversion, as well as our privacy and social contact needs, are also reflected in our spatial relationships. As we study how we use space and distance to communicate, keep in mind that a gap may exist between the messages we intend to send using space and distance and the messages that others actually receive and interpret. The father of proxemics research, Edward T. Hall, coined the term proxemics to indicate that “proximity” influences human interaction. The word itself refers to how we use the personal space around us as we interact with others as well as how we structure the space around us in our homes, offices, and communities (territory).

Spatial Relationships: Near or Far.

Hall identified four distances that distinguish the kinds of interactions we have and the relationships we share during them (it should be noted that Hall’s research involved only white Americans):

Intimate distance - Contact to 18 inches.

Personal distance - 18 inches to 4 feet.

Social-consultative distance - 4 to 12 feet.

Public distance - 12 feet to the limit of sight.

Communication through symbols.

Non-verbal symbols,(such as pictures,signs,gestures,and systematic patters,and words),bothreceptive and expression communications,are meant to represent an

event, person, place, or thing without utilizing verbal communications. Symbols can be either concrete or abstract means of communication.

Symbols have been used all the way back to primitive times, and are still a popular media form of nonverbal communication in today's civilization. We use different types of symbols through pictures, signs, colors, shapes, hand gestures, and so on to communicate. It is important to examine the nonverbal symbols in order to understand what they mean, what they look like, and how they sound. We use symbols on our daily commutes with signs point us to "Take a U turn" or "Go Left". When a traffic light turns green, we know it is our turn to go. We use symbols in maths, such as "+" means to add, and "=" means equal to. Going into public venues, we are likely to see symbols tell us which is the women's restroom and which is the men's restroom. We are "told" where people are not allowed to smoke, and where those with a handicap are able to park. We even express ourselves through symbols. Simple non-verbal symbols could be the "hitchhikers thumbs" or moving our thumb and index finger into a circle, for an "O.K" sign. Hearing and visually impaired individuals rely on symbols and signs in order to communicate. Symbols or signs can be complete as well, such as American and British sign language, which are nonverbal signs meant to translate to a verbal translation. Symbols and signs are an essential part in communication.

Types of non-verbal symbols

Concrete Symbols

Nonverbal symbols can be concrete communication. When a symbol is concrete, it means that the symbol is similar enough that a person would have no trouble knowing what the symbol means.

Example:

If a sign like this was on a door, such as in store or restaurant most people would assume that it was a unisex bathroom

Body language and etiquettes

Body language is nonverbal communication that involves body movement. "Gesturing" can also be termed as body language which is absolutely non-verbal means of communication. People in the workplace can convey a great deal of information without even speaking; through nonverbal communication. Not all of our values, beliefs, thoughts and intentions are communicated verbally. In an ongoing communication, most of those are communicated non-verbally. In Non-verbal communication, our human body expresses our feelings and intentions through conscious and unconscious movements and postures, accompanied by

gestures, facial expressions, eye contacts and touch. This collectively forms a separate language of the body within the ongoing communication. This is called Body Language.

How Does the Body Speaks?

Our human body speaks through the conscious and unconscious movements and postures, hand gestures, facial expressions, eye movements and touch. Each of these physical movements of the body parts could be seen as separate words and can be interpreted differently by other human beings within a given context of communication.

Why is Body Language Important?

Since interpretations of body language differ from people to people and cultures to countries it is important to learn about them. Body language alone comprises of 55% of total communication whereas spoken words comprise of 7% and tone of voice comprise 38%.

Concept and Definition of Etiquette

Most of the etiquette experts agree that proper etiquette begins by showing respect for others, being honest and trustworthy, putting others at ease, and showing kindness and courtesy to others. Only after that should you focus on the details of specific situations. The word "etiquette" comes from the French word "estique," meaning to attach or stick. The noun "etiquette" describes the requirements of behaviors according to conventions of society.

It includes the proper conduct that is established by a community for various occasions, including ceremonies, court, formal events and everyday life.

The short definition at Merriam-Webster.com is "the rules indicating the proper and polite way to behave." The full definition is "the conduct or procedure required by good breeding or prescribed by authority to be observed in social or official life."

Etiquette is a set of customs and rules for polite behaviour, especially among a particular class of people or in a particular profession.

Etiquette includes a wide range of behaviors, including kindness, consideration, elegance, style, and decorum.

Interpersonal Communication

There are many kinds of communication. We distinguish one type of communication from others based on the number of persons involved, the formality of the interaction, and the opportunity to give and receive feedback. For example, since intrapersonal communication occurs when you think or talk to yourself, it requires only a single communicator—you! In contrast to intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication is the ongoing, ever-changing process that occurs when you interact with another person, forming a dyad, which is defined as two people communicating with each other. Both individuals in a dyad share the responsibility for determining the nature of a relationship by creating meaning from the interaction. Thus, anytime we communicate with another person, whether a friend, parent, coworker, or employer, we are communicating interpersonally. It is very common for communicators to use digital media to get their messages across to one another or the public by blogging, texting, tweeting, Instant messaging, e-mailing, or posting in a social networking site such as Facebook.

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION TAKES TWO

First, let's consider the quantitative aspects of our interpersonal interactions. The fact that interpersonal communication takes two people means that it is indivisible. Without the second person, interpersonal communication is impossible. Thus, the parties to interpersonal communication are a duo: a couple, a pair, or perhaps adversaries. From an interpersonal perspective, even groups of three or more individuals are viewed as composites of dyads, effectively serving as the foundations for separate pairings and potential coalitions. Without a dyad, a relationship does not exist, and without a relationship, there is no interpersonal communication. This means that if one person withdraws from the relationship, then that relationship terminates—at least for the time being or until the connection between them is reestablished. The qualitative aspect of interpersonal communication is another story. We measure the quality of an interpersonal relationship along a continuum, with “intimate communication” at one end and “impersonal communication” at the opposite end. The more personally we interact with another person, the more “interpersonal” our relationship becomes. When we engage in interpersonal communication, our goal is to treat one another as genuine

persons, not as objects, and to respond to each other as unique individuals with whom we create a distinct relational culture, not as people merely playing roles. The more personal a relationship becomes, the more interdependent the two people become, sharing thoughts and feelings with each other. Our lives become interconnected, especially when contrasted with how we relate to persons with whom we are uninvolved and to whom we don't reveal much about ourselves. We develop personal relationships because of the intrinsic rewards we derive from them; we find them emotionally, intellectually, and perhaps even spiritually fulfilling. In contrast, we have impersonal relationships usually because of the extrinsic rewards they offer, such as maintaining professional working relationships with others to help us reach our goals. Which kinds of relationships do you have more of, those that are impersonal or those that are personal in nature?

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION IS A LIFELONG PROJECT

The effectiveness of interpersonal relationships depends on the extent to which we practice and exhibit interpersonal skills. While we may be born communicators, we are not born with effective interpersonal skills—those we need to learn. Nor are effective skills static; the same techniques may not work for all people in all situations. The culture of each person, his or her gender, the environment, and the individual's goals will determine how that person approaches and processes interpersonal communication.

Self-concept and communication

Self-concept refers to the totality of a complex, organized, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence. Parental upbringing, continuous failure, depression and internal self-critic are factors that influence the development of one's self-concept. A positive self-concept can be developed through behave objectively in knowing oneself, always appreciate oneself, be friend to oneself and always have a positive and rational thinking.

A positive self concept can contribute to good academic achievement by student's optimistic personal expectations about himself or herself. There are a variety of ways to think about the self. The most widely used term is self-concept and generally refers to the totality of a complex, organized, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence.

There are a several different components of self-concept: physical, academic, social, and transpersonal. The physical aspect of self-concept relates to that which

is concrete: what we look like, our sex, height, weight, etc.; what kind of clothes we wear; what kind of car we drive; what kind of home we live in; and so forth. Our academic self-concept relates to how well we do in school or how well we learn. There are two levels: a general academic self-concept of how good we are overall and a set of specific content-related self-concepts that describe how good we are in math, science, language arts, social science, etc. The social self-concept describes how we relate to other people and the transpersonal self-concept describes how we relate to the supernatural or unknowns.

Self-concept (physical, personal, moral and ethic, behavior, social satisfaction and identity), interpersonal communication skills and academic performance can be considered as three separate components. It is easy to assess a student's academic performance through the grade achieved in tests and examinations. However, assessing a student's self-concept which involves feelings and perceptions of an individual is much more subjective and thus a more difficult task. Interpersonal communication skills of an individual are easier to assess as a student's ability to communicate can readily be determined by the way he interacts with his teachers and peers. However, it is not an easy task to assess the level of interpersonal communication skills of a student as the interaction between students and their peers and students and their teachers occurs only in the classroom in the school.

It is essential for an individual to acquire interpersonal communicational skills to communicate, discuss and exchange ideas effectively with his teachers and peers. With the current trends in the school system, which emphasizes the student's ability to express him in the teaching and learning process, it is mandatory that a student acquire interpersonal communication skills. A student who lacks interpersonal communication skills will not only experience problems communicating but also during the learning process as discussion forms the very basis of today's teaching and learning process. This inadequacy will indirectly erode a student's confidence and self-concept thus affecting his academic performance.

Assertive Communication.

Assertive Communication is a style in which individuals clearly state their opinions and feelings, and firmly advocate for their rights and needs without violating the rights of others. These individuals value themselves, their time, and their emotional, spiritual, and physical needs and are strong advocates for themselves while being very respectful of the rights of others.

Assertive communicators will:

- ♣ state needs and wants clearly, appropriately, and respectfully

- ♣ express feelings clearly, appropriately, and respectfully
- ♣ use “I” statements
- ♣ communicate respect for others
- ♣ listen well without interrupting
- ♣ feel in control of self
- ♣ have good eye contact
- ♣ speak in a calm and clear tone of voice
- ♣ have a relaxed body posture
- ♣ feel connected to others
- ♣ feel competent and in control
- ♣ not allow others to abuse or manipulate them
- ♣ stand up for their rights.

The impact of a pattern of assertive communication is that these individuals:

- feel connected to others
- feel in control of their lives
- are able to mature because they address issues and problems as they arise
- create a respectful environment for others to grow and mature.

The assertive communicator will say, believe, or behave in a way that says:

- “We are equally entitled to express ourselves respectfully to one another.”
- “I am confident about who I am.”
- “I realize I have choices in my life and I consider my options.”
- “I speak clearly, honestly, and to the point.”
- “I can’t control others but I can control myself.”
- “I place a high priority on having my rights respected.”
- “I am responsible for getting my needs met in a respectful manner.”
- “I respect the rights of others.”
- “Nobody owes me anything unless they’ve agreed to give it to me.”
- “I’m 100% responsible for my own happiness.”

Assertiveness allows us to take care of ourselves, and is fundamental for good
mental health and healthy relationships.

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UNIT-III

Newsletters

What is a Newsletter?

A newsletter is a tool used by businesses and organizations to share relevant and valuable information with their network of customers, prospects and subscribers. Newsletters give you direct access to your audience's inbox, allowing you to share engaging content, promote sales and drive traffic to your website.

Additionally, email campaigns are also easy to measure, which means you can track your progress and make meaningful adjustments that lead to more wins.

Newsletters are a cornerstone of any email marketing strategy. Enterprises and small businesses alike can gain extremely valuable benefits from developing a monthly newsletter. To maximize your results, you need to ensure that your newsletter is tailored to reach targeted recipients.

Three Pillars of a Great Newsletter: Design, Content and Value

Every great newsletter starts with design. Without a sleek, responsive design strategy, it won't matter how great and compelling the content is. Your newsletter should be easy to navigate and have clear calls to action that drive readers back to your website where they can engage with your conversion landing pages. Key elements of an eye-catching newsletter include:

- **Headers:** Like the glossy pages of a magazine, your newsletter should have a masthead that reflects your branding and encourages your audience to keep reading.
- **Logos:** Your brand logo should set the tone of the color scheme and remind readers who is responsible for valuable content in their inbox.
- **Imagery:** Depending on your brand, your newsletters should contain either vibrant photos, vivid illustrations or a combination of the two.
- **Content layout:** Using headers and subheadings will ensure that readers can easily navigate the newsletter and understand the content at a glance.
- **Personalized content:** When possible, include personalization elements such, as addressing the newsletter to each subscriber by name. You'll need to

connect your customer relationship management (CRM) data to make that possible.

The content within your newsletter should be highly relevant to your audience and it should provide immediate value. That means the content needs to help your readers in some way, whether that's by keeping them informed on the latest industry trends and news or by providing tips and insights on a specific topic.

Reports

1. What is a business report?

Organisations need accurate, timely, objective and concise information to make effective decisions. One way they can obtain such information is from a business report. This document can be defined as “an organised presentation of information to a specific audience for the purpose of helping an organisation achieve an objective” (Bowman & Branchaw, 1988, p. 12).

While business reports share similar characteristics, they also need to be customised for their particular purpose. An informal report may be a brief summary while longer reports follow a more complex and formal structure.

Informal reports may feature:

- letter or memo format
- minimal use of headings and visual aids
- personal pronouns and contractions
- a length from a few paragraphs up to five pages
- content primarily for internal audiences.

More formal reports however tend to have:

- a more standard format organised into separate sections
- front and back matter (sections) along with the body of the report
- a greater number of headings (including subheadings) and visual aids
- third person pronouns and no contractions or slang
- a length from five pages to several hundred
- content designed for internal and/or external audiences.

2. How do I write a business report?

There are several major steps typically involved in writing a business report. These include:

- 1) planning (including determining the scope and target audience)
- 2) researching, organising, evaluating and analysing your information sources
- 3) drafting the body section
- 4) devising conclusions and recommendations based on the findings
- 5) further drafting and editing/proofreading.

You need first to consider exactly what you have been asked to do - that is - the overall purpose of your report. Carefully considering the assessment task and related criteria should help you clarify:

- your objective and readership
- what information you need
- the format and level of detail required.

From this, prepare an outline (including a working title and the overall structure of the report, including the major and supporting ideas). Start on your draft early so you can develop your ideas (editing can come later).

What is the Purpose of a Business Report?

A business report is an evaluation of a particular issue, set of circumstances, or financial operations that relate to the performance of a business. Its main purpose is to communicate relevant information succinctly and efficiently. It is often written in response to an executive of the company, and often takes the form of a memo with the report attached.

Example 1:

A company manager who is concerned about undue wastage in the packaging department might request the OIC of the Packaging Department to look into the issue and to submit a report that highlights the problems and recommends solutions. While most business reports focus on existing issues, they can also be predictive in nature.

Example 2:

A manager might commission a report that evaluates the current use of computer technology in a company, and which recommends how the company might best

position itself so that it can benefit from any future developments in computer technology.

The Format of a Business Report

A business report is written in an abbreviated style that allows the reader to navigate the report quickly, and identify key elements. It makes use of headings, sub-headings, bullet points, diagrams and tables, to communicate the relevant information. Business reports can range from brief one-or-two page reports, to reports of a hundred pages or more. However, any business report that you are asked to write for assignment purposes will probably run around four or five pages. It will usually include the following five elements:

- Table of Contents
- Executive Summary
- Body
- Findings/Recommendations
- Conclusion

Table of Contents

The table of contents should be arranged according to the headings and subheadings of your report (University of Newcastle, 2016). NOTE: the title of each part below also indicates what % of your word count should be dedicated to each section.

Executive Summary (10% of word count)

- Briefly state the purpose of the report.
- Briefly describe the methodology used to investigate the issue (for example, you may have conducted interviews, circulated a questionnaire, or carried out independent research).
- List the key points and findings found in the report.

Body (40% of word count)

- Provide details of the evaluation process.
- Describe in detail the methodology used to investigate the issue.
- Identify particular issues that impacted the evaluation.
- Include any relevant tables and/or diagrams.

Key Findings/Recommendations (40% of word count)

- Identify and discuss/describe the key findings.
- Make your recommendations.

Conclusion (10% of word count)

- Summarise your findings and relate back to original issue that has given rise to the report.

Folders

A folder is a single piece of paper folded once or twice, and, when opened, the material presented is in sequence.

The preparation of a folder and Audio Visual Aids

- the points regarding leaflet preparation holds good for folder also.
- in addition, consider making your folder attractive by using photographs, line drawings, coloured paper, and inks.
- the front page of the folder should contain a title, a single photograph. and the details of your extension organization.
- print the folder on heavier paper than the leaflet with 1:1% size width to length ratio.

Every Folder Should:

1. Define who you are

Whether through a recognizable logo, name, or title, recipients should immediately recognize the folder's point of origin. Place this information somewhere the audience will notice it (typically front-and-center on your folder's cover).

2. Entice the audience to look inside

A folder is of not much use if audiences don't feel the need to explore its contents. You can use a range of techniques to compel recipients to open your folder, such as a written teaser on the cover, a graphic that suggests an opening motion, or an unusual die-cut closure to encourage interaction.

3. Direct the audience to contact information

Provide your reader with a way to seek you out for business or further discussion. Phone numbers, web URLs, or other means of contact should be placed where the recipient is most likely to find them.

Fact Sheets

According to Cambridge dictionary fact sheet is-

a written document containing information for the public:

a document containing detailed information about a product or service:

A **factsheet**, **fact sheet** or **fact** file is a single page document containing essential information about a product, substance, service or other topic. Factsheets are frequently used to provide information to an end user, consumer or member of the public in concise, simple language.

A printed presentation of data, that shows the most important or relevant facts in a simple and easy-to-read manner.

A fact sheet, factsheet or one-sheet is a presentation of data in a format which emphasizes key points concisely. The layout is simple and often standardized, e.g. using a table, bullet points and/or headings, and is usually on a single printed page. Fact sheets often contain product information, technical data, lists, statistics, answers to common questions, educational material, or how-to, "do-it-yourself" advice. They are sometimes a summary of a longer document.

What is a Fact Sheet? (Definition)

A fact sheet, also known as a factsheet and fact file is a one-sheet document, usually, a **single page long**, which comprises information and data about a company, startup, organization, or the product or service they provide.

A fact sheet lists all the key information, facts, and figures around a particular topic, in a visual manner, with the help of files, charts, images, etc.

Fact sheets often contain company overview, product information, statistics, technical data, FAQs, lists, "how-to" pages, educational material, and so on.

The one thing you should take special care of while creating fact sheets is to make them clear, crisp, and concise. They are usually displayed in a visual format to emphasize key information.

Why create a fact sheet?

Here are some ways fact sheets are used by companies:

- **Product or service** fact sheets can be made for the sales and marketing teams to distribute to clients, partners, or prospects.
- A startup fact sheet can be made as an introduction for **investors**.
- Fact sheets can be made for **internal reporting**. For example, the finance department can create fact sheets for the company's Q3 earnings and distribute it internally or to shareholders.
- **Organization** fact sheets for human resources.
- Fact sheets as marketing material and sales enablement content.
- PR and **media relationship** fact sheets can provide journalists with all the information they need to write about you.

Fact sheets are necessary for all size companies and have a **multitude** of use-cases.

However, before creating a fact sheet, you should always be crystal clear about the **purpose** of creating it and its intended audience. Only then you will be able to create an informative fact sheet that your readers will pay attention to and enjoy.

Things to know before writing a Fact Sheet

There are a few things one must keep in mind before creating a fact sheet. These include:

- A fact sheet should preferably be a **single page long**.
- The information mentioned in the fact sheet should be **brief and concise**.
- Since visual information is easy to grasp, a fact sheet should be **visually appealing** comprising tables, charts, graphs, and bullet points.
- Fact sheets should be easily **readable**.
- Add a clear **call to action** at the end (a phone number, your email address, your social media links, etc).

Importance of a Fact Sheet

Now that you have some idea about a fact sheet, it's time to teach you the importance and the role it plays in the success of a business:

1. Saves time:

Facts sheets are usually one page long. Therefore, they help save a lot of time for the reader by providing them all key information (without missing out on vital information) on a single page.

Since fact sheets are made to be visual first, a reader can **quickly skim** through a lot of information and facts quickly and easily.

For example, If you are creating a fact sheet for investors, they would greatly **appreciate** your effort of summarizing all the key information on a single page and helping them save their most important asset, i.e. time.

2. Easy to read:

As we've mentioned before, fact sheets comprise lots of **white spaces**, bullet points, and bold headings.

On top of that, they are usually very visual in nature with key information presented using tables, graphs, and charts which are easy to read and grasp.

3. Cheap to produce:

And lastly, since fact sheets are only a page long, they are **don't take much of your resources**. They act as cost-effective PR material or sales enablement tools.

Steps for creating a fact sheet:

Keep in mind the following steps while creating your fact sheet:

1. Add a header

The header acts as the title of your fact sheet. You can add a bold heading along with a striking image to get your audience's attention from the get-go.

2. Include company description

Start off your fact sheet with your company's name and a short description of what it's about. Add some basic information about your company like your office locations, the total number of employees, year of establishment, industry, etc. Feel free to add any other crucial information about your product, service, or company.

3. Talk briefly about your sheet's vision and mission

Explain in a line or two, what your company stands for, why it exists, and what are its plans for the future. This can also be a good spot to add your company's slogan or tagline.

4. Explain Your company's founding story

Include your founding story of how the business was started, who started it, and why they started it.

5. Describe products and services

Describe your core offering and business activities. Who it is for, and why it's better than the alternative. Make use of graphs, images, and tables to show key metrics, features, and comparisons.

6. Include milestones

This is an important part of your fact sheet. Include major milestones and accomplishments. Include sales milestones, expansion milestones, funding rounds, etc. List down all the major milestones using bullet points, to make them easy to review.

Some additional information you can include in your fact sheet includes:

- **Core Values**
- **Key Metrics**
- **Customer Segments**
- **Leadership**

You can then end the fact sheet by giving your **contact** information like a phone number, email address, and social media profiles for your audience to connect with you.

Press release-

Dictionary meaning of press release-

noun

1. an official statement issued to newspapers giving information on a particular matter.

A **press release** is an official statement delivered to members of the news media for the purpose of providing information, an official statement, or making an announcement. A press release is traditionally composed of nine structural elements, including a headline, introduction, body, and other information. Press releases can be delivered to members of the media physically on paper and electronically.

A special example of a press release is a **communiqué** (*/kə'mju:nikeɪ/*), which is a brief report or statement released by a public agency, typically after a high-level meeting of international leaders.

Using press release material can benefit media corporations because they help decrease costs and improve the amount of material a media firm can output in a certain amount of time. Due to the material being pre-packaged, press releases save journalists time, not only in writing a story, but also the time and money it would have taken to capture the news firsthand.

Although using a press release can save a company time and money, it constrains the format and style of distributed media. As well, press releases are biased towards the organization which ordered them. In the digital age, consumers want to get their information instantly which puts pressure on the news media to output as much material as possible. This may cause news media companies to heavily rely on press releases to create stories.

What is a press release?

A press release, also referred to as a media statement or news release, is a brief news story written by a public relations professional and distributed to a broad range of media outlets.

- When writing a press release, the language employed should be clear, precise and error-free. Press releases should be very readable: overly formal or unnecessarily flowery language should be avoided.
- A press release is not simply a marketing tool to help companies boost sales. Rather, it is a fact-based news article that should answer the “5W1H questions” (who, what, when, where, why and how) in its first paragraph.
- The key message of a press release, which is typically conveyed in its headline and subhead, should be written in an engaging manner so as to pique the interest of members of the media or other target audiences.

A press release is a communications tool used to convey information to news outlets about a particular subject. Ideally, these outlets will publish the information provided. Frequently used in a public-relations context, press releases are generally intended to raise awareness about the subject among a particular target audience. They can also be used to raise brand awareness or increase the online visibility of a company or individual. Press releases often come in the form of alerts posted on social media.

Basic characteristics of a press release

- Press releases are quite short, typically consisting of a single page (**between 350 and 500 words**). Anything more than this is generally considered too long.
- All the important information about the press release (**5W1H**) must be provided in the first paragraph, and the details can be shared in the subsections of the press release. In terms of content hierarchy, the flow of a press release is like a **reverse pyramid**
- Press releases are generally used to provide information about a particular subject or to make important announcements to a target audience.
- Press releases are not intended to serve as advertisements, and should be both **objective** and **facts-based**. Therefore, overtly subjective words or phrases should be meticulously avoided.
- Numerical data (**statistics, figures, ratios**, etc.) should also be prominently featured so as to attract the attention of readers and maximize exposure of the topics being presented.
- All **relevant dates** and **contact information** should be included in the press release. Editors and would-be publishers should always know how to reach you if they require additional information.
- These simple-but-effective types of communication typically follow a standard press release format or press release template.
- Additional material (visuals, etc.) about the news or topic should be shared. It is important to note that the publication rate of news content supported by visuals is **45 percent higher** than content without any images.

The purpose of a press release

A press release is a news article or news story distributed to journalists, editors and/or other media contacts to inform them about a particular subject with a view to raising that subject's media profile. In a well-written press release, the subject (such as an organization, entity, small business or brand) will be well-represented and its message conveyed, clearly, concisely and objectively. Since a press release is not about boosting corporate sales, consumer-focused language should not be employed. Ultimately, press releases are intended to convey newsworthy information, such as upcoming events, personnel changes, new corporate strategies, etc. Good press release distribution should ensure that the information is sent to the most important and relevant media outlets with the aim of reaching as many readers as possible.

Press releases can be regularly distributed to members of the media on a weekly or monthly basis. They are often used to raise awareness about an important

upcoming event, in hopes of drawing members of the press and/or other target audiences. Since press releases are essentially news articles, they should adhere to basic journalistic principles of objectivity. The text should contain newsworthy information about new trends, upcoming events, or any other important development that might be of interest to the target audience. They should be written in a style so as to attract the reader's attention (especially that of journalists and editors) and should always contain information not available elsewhere.

Readership and writing style -

Readership may refer to:

- the group of readers of a particular publication or writer, their target audience
- the total number of readers of a particular newspaper or magazine
- the occupational position of a reader, particularly as an academic rank

Readership is a calculation based upon the average number of people who read an individual copy of the publication. The number is an estimate of how many hands a copy of a **newspaper** goes into. The theory is that though a household subscribes to a publication, it is read by multiple people in that household.

What are the elements of writing style?

What are the essential features of polished writing? What traits or characteristics of language distinguish accomplished writing from merely competent writing?

If I could teach only five elements of writing style, I would select these:

1. Economy of language.

Treat every word as precious. When readers encounter writing in which every word counts, they are more alert to its meaning and more attentive to its sound.

You can achieve economy of language by using three techniques: Avoid wordy phrases (change “until such time as” to “until”), omit meaningless modifiers (change “general consensus” to “consensus”), and prefer action verbs to nouns (change “take under consideration” to “consider”). Each technique enables you to say the same thing in fewer words, and – as a general rule – more concise writing is more emphatic writing.

Concise writing doesn’t require that you make every sentence short, but that you make every word count.

2. Precise word choice and colorful vocabulary.

Use the best, most exact word to capture your meaning. Readers judge your style by your adeptness and agility in matching language to thought.

Change “His performance will affect our image” to “His carelessness will undermine our credibility.” Convey your disapproval of meaningless modifiers by describing them not as “qualifiers that weaken our language” but – as E. B. White does in “The Elements of Style” – as “the leeches that infest the pond of prose, sucking the blood of words.”

3. Specific, concrete, vivid detail.

As Joseph Conrad advises, don’t tell your reader; show your reader.

Don’t just tell your reader, “Susan works hard”; show your reader: “Last month Susan came in at 6:00 a.m. every day to help complete the internal

audit on time.” Don’t just tell your reader, “Morale is declining”; show your reader: “This year grievances increased by 14%, and employee turnover by 8%.”

Precise language and vivid detail go hand in hand.

4. Pleasing sound, rhythm, and variety.

Attend to sound as well as substance. Create rhythm and emphasis by balancing the components of your sentence, as Samuel Johnson did when he wrote, “What is written without effort is in general read without pleasure.”

Enliven your style by varying the length and structure of your sentences: “For particular emphasis, follow a long sentence with a short sentence, or even a fragment. Like this.”

It’s not just what you say, it’s how emphatically, beautifully, and memorably you say it.

5. Discernable voice, tone, or point of view.

Write with personality. As Patricia Westheimer advises in *The Executive Style Book*, in all but the most formal writing, “Write the way you speak – conversationally and naturally.”

Change “It is imperative that we commence now” to “Let’s get started.”
Change “Attached please find your budget worksheets” to “Well, it’s your favorite time of year again.”

In forming an opinion of your style, your readers react to the person they perceive behind the words – your character, personality, individuality, and sense of humor – as much as to the words themselves.

Now that I have identified five elements of style, you might ask, why does style matter? Why don’t we settle for clarity and correctness?

In its broadest sense, style is the writer’s ability to manage language in a way that produces a desired effect and that elicits from the reader a desired response. In this way, style enables writer and reader to connect.

In business writing, style is the writer’s ability to create a desired

impression, not only of the writer but also of the writer's company or organization. In business writing, style has special significance: It conveys image.

That's why style is so important.

Types of Writing Styles

Paragraphs and essays can be written in different types or styles. A writer will choose a type depending on what he or she wishes to accomplish, what sort of material is to be discussed, and what kind of effect s/he wants to have on the reader. Generally speaking, there are four types of writing styles, though normally these types are mixed together.

Narrative: The narrative paragraph or essay tells a story, just like a narrator in a play (though it should be a true story, unlike a short story or a play). Narrative writing is best used to illustrate the "personal developmental path" a person (often yourself) has taken to reach a particular point in his/her life. As a result, it is normally written in a first person point of view. True narrative writing is unusual, because it is demanding. A narrative must have a conflict that is overcome. This is the core of any narrative form of writing, be it a paragraph, an essay, or a story). In an essay, it usually means a single incident/anecdote, where the narrator experiences some brief challenge that is met and (hopefully) survived. This "overcoming" should in turn lead to some form of understanding. Simply describing or explaining one's surroundings is not a narrative. You need a (brief) establishment of setting, an explanation of the challenge, and the resolution of this challenge. In other words, you need a plot.

Descriptive: Descriptive writing paints a picture. In its pure form, nothing much happens. "Description" tells us what something looks like, feels like, tastes like, sounds like or smells like - without action or events. It doesn't explain a relationship or a process beyond oneself; it focuses on one's immediate subjective perceptions. Thus, descriptive writing connects the outer world with our inner feelings. It is usually concerned with creating a verbal picture of what we experience and feel at one moment, and it will use many rich and vivid adjectives and adverbs. So, as a writer, you should make the reader long to smell the rich essence of the trees, the haunting call of the wolves, or the rank odour of the sewer... if that's what you're writing about! Descriptive paragraphs and essays are usually written in the first

person point of view, and are much more emotional and personal than expository writing. It should be said that you will rarely write a purely descriptive passage. Normally speaking, descriptive writing is mixed in with other styles as a supplement.

Expository: Expository writing "exposes" or explains things about a subject. It is also sometimes called "information writing" because it gives information about a person, place, thing, relationship or idea. To accomplish that, it is best developed by the use of clear reasons, facts and statistical information, cause and effect relationships, or examples. Since expository paragraphs are factual, they are written without emotion and usually written in the third person. Nevertheless, you can use "I" in your expository writing if the focus is on external, neutral descriptions and explanations, rather than personal feelings (personal feelings move you into "descriptive writing"). Indeed, expository paragraphs and essays are sometimes confused with descriptive writing, because both can spend a lot of time describing things. But again, the big difference is that expository description tends to focus on external objects, situations and processes, in order to explain something in a neutral, matter-of-fact manner. Descriptive paragraphs, on the other hand, tend to focus on our emotional responses as we perceive the world at one point in time.

Persuasive: This type of writing is probably the most common form of writing at the university level. Persuasive (or argumentative) writing attempts to convince the reader that the point of view or course of action recommended by the writer is valid. To accomplish this, the writer must develop a limited topic which is well defined and debatable, and has more than one side. It is important that the author understand other sides of the topic so that the strongest information to counter the others can be presented. You may present these opposing points of view, but they must be summarized at the beginning and then quickly refuted (to refute something means to show it is false or not particularly important). If you're not sure how to do this, then simply stick to your side of an argument. While persuasive writing attempts to prove your point of view, it's usually written in an objective, third person point of view; such a stance helps demonstrate your objectivity. It should be noted that "argumentative" writing is said by some to be more rational and empirical (i.e. based on facts), whereas "persuasive" writing will often use emotional appeals to manipulate the reader's sympathy. However, most writing experts view the two terms as synonymous; few essays are so coldly dispassionate that they will not use

strong and loaded language to win an argument, and analytic facts are always a good way to persuade the reader of one side over another.

Human aspects of writing.

Seven Ways of Becoming More Human Writers

We have to learn to become human or post-academic writers. Becoming is not just a matter of evolving. It's more a case of wanting to become, of trying to turn into something different, unless we believe we are caterpillars naturally metamorphosing into butterflies. I suggest seven ways of becoming human writers of human texts for human readers. "Seven" is, of course, a magic number (see Miller, 1956) and might help in (miraculously) transforming academicist into post-academics. The seven processes I suggest as part of the story of helping us become more human as writers are

1. *adopting a human stance,*
2. *revealing a human perspective,*
3. *developing a human voice,*
4. *improving ourselves as human storytellers,*
5. *learning more about the human craft of post-academic writing,*
6. *enjoying our serious and playful manifoldness as human creatures, and continuing our human conversations.*

Of course, these are overlapping processes.

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UNIT-IV

Meetings

The dictionary meaning of **meeting** is-

noun

plural noun: **meetings**

1. an assembly of people for a particular purpose, especially for formal discussion.
2. a situation when two or more people meet, by chance or arrangement.

Meetings: Types, Purpose, Advantages and Disadvantages!

A meeting is a coming together of (generally) three or more people to exchange information in a planned manner and discuss issues set out before them to arrive at decisions, solve problems, etc.

A meeting can be formal or informal. As regards a formal meeting there is set rules for convening it and conducting it, with a written record of its proceedings. It requires a notice which is a call, an invitation to attend it.

It has an agenda or list of things to deal with, and the outcome is systematically written in the form of minutes. An informal meeting can be without any written notice, for instance a staff union meeting in the lunch room to discuss a picnic.

A meeting has a convener who calls it and a leader or chairperson who directs it.

Types of meeting:

Meetings are broadly of three types:

(i) **Informative**, where the purpose is to give information to the participants about a new scheme, product, etc.

(ii) **Consultative**, in which the members are consulted to solve a problem.

(iii) **Executive**, in which decisions are taken by those empowered to do so.

In practice, most of the meetings serve more purposes than one. Some additional classifications of meetings are – meeting for negotiation purpose, meeting for giving instructions, etc.

Purpose of a meeting:

The purposes of holding meetings are listed here in a skeleton form:

To reach a common decision/agreement

To solve a problem

To understand a situation, exchange ideas and experiences

To inform, explain, present ideas

To give and get feedback on new ideas

To give training

To plan and prepare for action

To resolve differences and misunderstandings

To generate enthusiasm and seek cooperation

To review past performance and evaluate it

To create a feeling of continuity and solidarity in a body's working.

In this mechanical age, union is strength, and united work is done by means of meetings. It is estimated that worldwide, millions of meetings are conducted every day, and their number and usefulness is on the rise.

That is why although many negative remarks are made about the use of meetings; on the whole we find that meeting is a useful device of collective decision-taking and action.

Advantages of Meetings:

(i) Save time:

Since one can meet a number of people at a time interactively, a meeting can save time.

(ii) Addressing groups:

One can divide the audiences according to their background and need, and address them group by group.

(iii) Cope with information explosion:

New technology and new regulations are coming thick and fast. Meetings enable us to cope with this situation.

(iv) Social and emotional support:

Members get personal support from each other when they meet and exchange ideas.

(v) Feeling of being consulted:

Members get the feeling that they have been consulted and this is useful in getting their intelligent and willing cooperation.

(vi) Democratic functioning:

Democracy aims at achieving all people's welfare by all people's involvement. This is possible through meetings.

(vii) Idea development:

Ideas are systematically cross-fertilized, analyzed and improved by a group

(viii) Defusing troublemakers:

By the collectivity of constructive forces, troublemakers can be isolated in a meeting and positive action got going. The opponents of a plan get a forum to voice their opposition, which can be overcome before a group of supportive people.

(ix) Bolder decisions:

Collectively we can take more adventurous decisions because of united strength.

(x) Various interest groups represented:

In a meeting many interest groups can be represented and minorities can also be given due attention.

(xi) Preventing mistakes:

A meeting helps to avoid mistakes by a collective and many-angled focus on issues.

Disadvantages:

1. Time-consuming:

Meetings require a number of people to come together at the same time and place. This costs time because other work has to be set aside for the sake of the meeting.

2. Inability to arrive at a decision:

Just as “two heads are better than one,” it is also true that “too many cooks spoil the soup.” Multiplicity of views and personal stubbornness of members may prevent a meeting from taking a decision which a chief executive may take alone.

3. Lack of seriousness:

Many meetings suffer from the drawback that members come unprepared and feel that the others will do the thinking and talking. They feel they can take a free ride. “Everybody’s job is nobody’s job.”

4. Inexpert chairing:

Just as an airplane is steered by a pilot, a meeting is piloted by the chairperson. His lack of skill and personal failings/biases may fail a meeting.

5. Expensive:

Meetings are expensive to arrange – they require a place, paperwork, prior communication, and travelling by the attendees.

6. Open to disruption:

A meeting is prone to being disrupted by an element that is opposed to its objective. There are times when one passenger's refusal to adjust himself delays the entire flight. The same applies for meetings. The spirit of give-and-take may be missing in some participants.

Planning for meeting

Identify the purpose of the meeting

Do you need to make a decision, solve a problem, rally the troops, or inform your team about a new initiative? Clarifying the purpose of your meeting is the first and most important planning step—this will drive all of the other elements of your prep.

Make sure you *really* need a meeting

Don't pile on another meeting without thinking about other ways to accomplish your goal first. It's better not to meet if:

- you don't have time to prepare
- another method of communication would work just as well
- you're dealing with a sensitive topic or a personnel issue that would be better handled one-on-one
- you need to solicit a number of individuals' opinions

Develop a preliminary agenda

Lay out a sequence for the meeting. Plan time for a brief introduction to provide context, and for a discussion of next steps at the end. Decide how much time to devote to each item and what order makes sense. The longer your meeting, the

harder it will be for people to remain focused, so it's wise to underestimate how much your group can cover in the allotted time.

Select the right participants

Consider who can help you accomplish your goal and who will be affected by the meeting's outcome. Identify key decision makers, people who are knowledgeable about (or have a stake in) the topic at hand, those who need to be informed in order to do their jobs, and anyone who will be required to implement decisions made. What about size? Keep problem solving meetings small (around 8 people). Include more people for brainstorming (as many as 18). If you're providing updates or rallying the troops, be as inclusive as you want to be. But remember: time is money. Be conscious of the ripple effects your meeting can have on people's time across the organization—and only invite those who absolutely have to be there.

Assign roles to participants

Giving participants a specific role to play can increase focus and engagement. Consider the following roles:

- A **facilitator** guides the discussion, making sure all sides of the issue are raised (this is a good job for someone who is developing leadership skills and practicing neutrality).
- A **scribe** captures key ideas and decisions and distributes notes (this gives shy people a way to participate.)
- A **timekeeper** helps move the discussion along efficiently.
- A **contributor** keeps the discussion lively and on track.
- An **expert** shares knowledge on particular issues. One advantage: You can ask an expert to attend just part of the meeting, keeping their contribution focused.

Decide where and when to hold the meeting and confirm availability of the space

The meeting space helps to set the tone. Do you want your meeting to be informal and intimate? Choose a small room and set the chairs up in a circle. Formal and rigorous? A conference room will probably work best. Will participants be attending virtually? Make sure your equipment allows everyone to hear, participate, or see people in the room (if using video conference).

Send the invitation and preliminary agenda to key participants and stakeholders

Make sure attendees know the purpose of the meeting. Consider sending a personal invitation in addition to a calendar invite—or chatting in person with the invitee—If there's a chance the invitation will go unnoticed or if you want to make sure that a key participant will attend.

Send any reports, pre-reading, or requests for materials that may require preparation from participants

Send out any pre-reading a day or two in advance of your meeting and make it clear that participants are expected to review materials before they arrive. Also, be prepared to highlight key takeaways from the reading for those who haven't had time to comply.

Identify the decision-making process that will be used in the meeting

Choose a decision-making method ahead of time to ensure that you leave your meeting with a clear outcome.

- **Majority vote** allows every voice to be heard and is generally viewed as fair—but be aware that it may be difficult for some to declare their opinion publically.
- **Group consensus** allows participants to share their expertise and enhances the chance for buy-in from all parties.
- **Leader's choice** is usually the fastest approach, so is most appropriate in a crisis. The risk is that some ideas will go unheard. As a result, you may need to work harder to get skeptics on board, especially during implementation.

Identify, arrange for, and test any required equipment

Decide if you'll be using collaboration or productivity tools (like GoogleDocs, a screen-sharing service, or an audio recording device) during your meeting. Confirm and check the meeting space and set up or test any necessary equipment ahead of time. This step seems like a no-brainer, but sometimes it's hard to make time for logistical details—and you don't want to waste any of your carefully planned meeting troubleshooting technology issues. If you're struggling, ask for help from a colleague who's used the equipment before (or enlist an IT services representative).

Finalize the agenda and distribute it to all participants

If the agenda has changed, distribute the final version to participants. Make sure you're ready to lead the discussion for each agenda item or that you've assigned items to appropriate attendees.

Follow up with invitees in person, if appropriate

Check in with people who haven't responded to your invitation or who need to be in the room in order to have a productive meeting. If you've assigned roles, verify that attendees understand the parts they will play.

Prepare yourself

Have you drafted and practiced your presentation, printed handouts, and taken care of any other last-minute details? Doing the work to prepare will boost your confidence and set you up for a successful meeting.

Tips for chairing

The Role of the Chairperson

In a more formal meeting, the chairperson will outline the purpose of the meeting and remind members why they are there.

In such a meeting there is little need to refer to this procedure as this is implicit in the established etiquette, namely:

- The chair controls the meeting.
- All remarks are addressed through the chair.
- Members do not interrupt each other.
- Members aim to reach a consensus.
- A vote is taken if consensus is not reached.
- The majority wins the vote.
- All members accept the majority decision

Tips for chairing a meeting

1. First, Know the Purpose of the Meeting
2. Be Prepared
3. Outline the Agenda
4. Take Minutes
5. Give Everyone a Voice
6. Keep Things Moving
7. Ask for Questions
8. Determine a Clear Outcome
9. Email the Minutes

1. First, Know the Purpose of the Meeting

Before you set out to chair the meeting, you need to know the reason for having it in the first place.

It is paramount that you understand the purpose of the meeting well before it takes place and any other preparations begin. If you don't know the purpose of the meeting, you'll prepare for it in the wrong way and the outcome will be too far removed from what needed to be achieved.

That doesn't sound very effective, does it?

Understanding the main purpose of the meeting will help you to keep everything on track and focused on a clear, definable goal. This, ultimately, allows you to be able to determine the success of the meeting which is one of the most important aspects of a meeting.

2. Be Prepared

Once you understand why you're chairing the meeting in the first place, you'll need to prepare every aspect in advance.

This means writing a meeting agenda based on the purpose you defined beforehand as well as other preparations, such as making sure any visual presentations are set up and tested in advance and ensuring any food or beverages are ready for the start of the meeting.

The time you spend in the preparation stage of the meeting is so important for ensuring the meeting runs smoothly and the attendees have everything they need to contribute ideas and opinions. Great preparation helps to prevent any easily preventable interruptions.

Fail to prepare; prepare to fail.

3. Outline the Agenda

Make sure that every attendee understands, as you do, the purpose of the meeting and in what order each topic will be raised.

By getting everyone on the same page from the outset of the meeting, you allow every member to understand its structure. This can help to avoid interruptions when attendees want to bring up a point related to a topic that will be covered later on.

4. Take Minutes

Once the meeting has begun, I recommend you take notes and minutes. Not only does this make everyone feel as though their input is being listened to, but it means you aren't relying on memory after the meeting.

If you don't take notes and try to recall the key events of a meeting by memory, you risk forgetting, and therefore omitting, important details from whatever outcome the meeting has.

When in a collective, it can be difficult to assign responsibility to a particular individual for ensuring each aspect of the meeting is actioned or, at least, followed up. This responsibility falls on you as the chair of the meeting and it's your role to take minutes at each stage of the meeting.

If you fail to take comprehensive notes, not only does this mean that aspects of the meeting aren't followed up on, but, perhaps more importantly, it means that

attendees will be less likely to provide input in future meetings if they see their ideas are forgotten about as soon as the meeting is over.

5. Give Everyone a Voice

By this stage, you should have prepared everything correctly so that every attendee has a chance to contribute to the meeting. Everyone should feel they have an equal part in the meeting and silly oversights, like not having enough chairs, might inhibit someone from feeling included.

When someone is voicing their opinion or sharing an idea, it is your responsibility to ensure that he or she is heard. This means not allowing any interruptions in your meetings.

Meetings are more effective when everyone feels their voice is heard and their opinions are valued. By giving each attendee time to clearly make their point without being cut off, you give the meeting its best chance of success. Interruptions occur in informal conversations, not effective meetings.

6. Keep Things Moving

You have to ensure that every topic in your agenda is covered in the time allocated for the meeting. Dwelling on a point for too long will mean that you don't give other topics the time they deserve and will lead to an ineffective meeting.

This is, perhaps, where the efficiency of your chairing will most come to fruition. Keep one eye on your agenda and another on the clock (but not at the same time). Make sure you have time to cover everything you need to in order to achieve the meeting's purpose.

7. Ask for Questions

Once every point has been covered, you can open the meeting up for questions. As mentioned, it's important to stick to the agenda that you set out before the meeting to keep things moving and ensure each point is touched upon. However, this

doesn't mean that you can't allow the meeting to stray away from the agenda once every point is covered.

Don't think that chairing and effective meeting means you can't accept input that falls outside of your agenda. What this doesn't mean, however, is allowing the meeting to become sidetracked by questions as soon as they arise. If someone has a question during an unrelated part of the meeting, ask them to note it down to be brought up at the end. Outlining the meeting agenda at the beginning will minimise the number of questions arising about topics that will be covered later on.

By allowing questions at the end, you ensure that every team member is clear about what has been covered and what needs to be actioned.

8. Determine a Clear Outcome

The purpose of any meeting is to, in the end, determine a successful outcome. So, the best way to ensure you've chaired an effective meeting is to try to determine a clear outcome that can be taken forward by your team.

Take a look at the purpose of the meeting you wrote down beforehand. Did you achieve this? Great, then it was a successful meeting. If you didn't achieve what you set out to achieve then, clearly, you haven't chaired an effective meeting and you'll likely need to chair another one.

Try to keep the purpose down to a single sentence for a specific goal so that, when you come to determine the outcome, you can be sure if it had been achieved.

9. Email the Minutes

The best way to be sure every point is minuted and actioned is to email out the minutes to all attendees of the meeting. This enables them to be able to double-check that the points they raised have been noted. If they haven't, they have the opportunity to alert you to what you might have missed.

Sending out the meeting minutes is also a way of keeping the meeting in people's minds as a document to refer to long after the meeting has adjourned. Having access to the minutes means attendees are better able to action their assigned tasks following the conclusion of the meeting.

Opening, progress & ending a meeting.

Opening Meetings

- Always start on time; this respects those who showed up on time and reminds late-comers that the scheduling is serious.
- Welcome attendees and thank them for their time.
- Review the agenda at the beginning of each meeting, giving participants a chance to understand all proposed major topics, change them and accept them.
- Note that a meeting recorder if used will take minutes and provide them back to each participant shortly after the meeting.
- Model the kind of energy and participant needed by meeting participants.
- Clarify your role(s) in the meeting.

Progress of meeting

When discussion is underway, it is the chairperson's responsibility to ensure that it continues to flow smoothly by involving all members present and by not permitting one or two people to dominate the meeting. Summarising by the chairperson during meetings can:

- Indicate progress, or lack of.
- Refocus discussion that has wandered off the point.
- Conclude one point and lead into the next.
- Highlight important points.
- Assist the secretary if necessary.
- Clarify any misunderstanding.

The chairperson should *pace* the meeting, ensuring it runs to time. If the planning has been properly executed, this should not prove to be a problem.

Closing Meetings

- Always end meetings on time and attempt to end on a positive note.
- At the end of a meeting, review actions and assignments, and set the time for the next meeting and ask each person if they can make it or not (to get their commitment)
- Clarify that meeting minutes and/or actions will be reported back to members in at most a week (this helps to keep momentum going).

At the end of a meeting, the chairperson should remind members what they have achieved and thank them for their contributions. Finally, the time and date of the next meeting should be arranged.

Behavior of ordinary members

The Role of the Members

While it is the role of the chairperson to run the meeting, the participation of all members is also fundamental to the success of the meeting.

To ensure an effective meeting, all participants should:

- Undertake any necessary preparation prior to the meeting.
- Arrive on time.
- Keep an open mind.
- Listen to the opinions of others.
- Participate.
- Avoid dominating the proceedings.
- Avoid conflict situations.
- Avoid side conversations which distract others.
- Ask questions to clarify understanding.
- Note down any action agreed upon.
- After the meeting, undertake any agreed action and brief others as appropriate.

The character of business meeting

10 Characteristics of Effective Business Meetings

by Elizabeth Wright

Here are ten fundamental concepts that characterise effective business meetings.

- 1) Definition: Business meetings are a business activity where select people gather to perform work that requires a team effort.
- 2) Business meetings, like any business event, succeeds by planning, characterised by focus, governed by structure, and finally controlled by a budget.
- 3) So, short meetings free people to work on the essential activities that represent the core of their jobs. In contrast, long sessions prevent people from working on critical tasks such as planning, communicating, and learning.
- 4) Additionally, three things guarantee an unproductive meeting specifically: poor planning, lack of appropriate process, and hostile culture. Effective leaders attend to all of these to create an effective meeting.
- 5) Also, productive meetings require sharing control and making commitments.
- 6) Furthermore, the ultimate goals of every meeting are agreements, decisions, or solutions. In conclusion, meetings held for other reasons seldom produce anything of value.
- 7) Also, unprepared participants will spend their time in the meeting preparing for the meeting.
- 8) Most importantly, It is better to spend a little time preparing for solutions than to spend a lot of time fixing problems.
- 9) Put another way meetings are an investment of resources and time in as much as they should earn a profit.
- 10) Finally, a chair will lead the meeting in the room. And if it's your meeting, you want it to be your chair.

Energies for meetings

Low energy, boring, waste of time. What do these 3 words conjure up for you? Likely most of you answered – meetings! What if we could get all of our meetings off to a positive, high-energy, anything but boring start? Today, we'll focus on the benefits of perking your group up right from the start for your daily/weekly recurring team meetings. Our focus will be on quick and easy ways to do this for groups of 4-15 people.

The Problem

People attend meetings reluctantly often because they are fully engaged and overwhelmed with other projects. The last thing they want to do is interrupt their productive time focused on a more urgent issue so they can attend a boring, unproductive meeting. They also may be reluctant to deal with a meeting that always runs the same way and rarely honors what they need at that moment to be at their productive best or, it might be their fifth meeting of the day.

The Benefits of Solving Low-Energy Meetings

If your team members are able to switch their brains quickly from the work they came from before the meeting to the current meeting topics, this will help ensure that really good ideas and solutions surface for the topics at hand. You want people to be at their best for the meeting. The more positive people are, the more productive and engaged they are. This is a fact that neuroscientists have measured. So what if you as the leader (or as a participant) could influence the start of your meetings to move from a low energy, low productivity to a high energy productivity? The result would be that you'd spend less time in the meeting, people would volunteer for action items more readily, and it would give a boost to everyone's energy for the rest of their workday. The key to doing this is to connect people to each other as competent, fun and interesting human beings.

How to Solve This Problem

I know I said in an earlier blog "Just Say No to Icebreakers", but in this blog I give what might seem like a contradictory suggestion to this. I am actually going to suggest using icebreakers for the important reason of connecting people to both the purpose, content and people of the meeting. Below I offer six ways to do this. Three are rather simple ways and three are less simple. Some might appear risky to you and them. You need to tell your team why you are doing this! That will make the difference between willing participants and unwilling ones. In most cases, you are doing this to refire their brains, to make them engage their brains with the content and their fellow participants in a more interesting way, and to make the meeting more productive. You can always ask them, "Are you willing to try something for five minutes which will make this meeting and you more productive?"

Easy "Refire" the Brain Techniques

1. Going Well – Ask everyone to go around the table and share one thing that is going well in their lives or at work. Give them about 30 seconds each. This is a quick way to raise brain serotonin levels by focusing on something positive and

taking their minds away from the problem they were just solving. Source: Reevaluation Counselling/ Appreciative Inquiry/ Interpersonal NeuroBiology/ Emotional Freedom Technique.

2. Mind Reader – Each participant tries to read someone else’s mind by asking yes or no questions. If their fellow participant answers yes, you keep asking them questions. If they answer no, you move on to someone else in the meeting. Example: “Do you love playing sports?” – “Yes”. “Do you love playing soccer?” – “Yes”. “Do you love playing goalie?” – “No”. Move on to the next person. Don’t limit the topics. Encourage them to ask about really different topics so you get laughter going. Again, this will create a positive emotional state for them and ensure a more productive jump-starting of the brain on challenging topics. Source: Quick Meeting Openers for Busy Managers.

3. Metaphoric Pictures – Display postcards from different places or photos of many different scenes on the table. Ask people to choose one at random and share on one of these questions: How does this picture remind you of something we do well as a team? Or, how does this picture tell us what’s going on with a current project or one of our meeting topics? Or, what about this picture lets us know what you need from us to be productive in this meeting? Source: Adapted from many techniques including “Picture This”.

More Difficult

1. Index Card Questions – Each person gets one index card and a pen. Ask them to write one question they would like answered by the others about one of the meeting topics or about other team members. Have people form teams of 3 people and everybody attempts to answer the 3 questions that have been written by the people in the group. Change groups once or twice. If you focus on questions around the meeting topics, it helps people prepare themselves mentally for the topics at hand in a kinesthetic, engaging way. If you focus on more personal questions, it can help people get to know each other, laugh, and raise the positive emotional state of everyone in the room. Source: Adapted from Quick Meeting Openers for Busy Managers.

2. Fun Focused Conversation – Let people know that you are going to ask them a series of questions for the next 5 minutes. Get everyone to answer the first question so that all voices are heard early in the meeting. After that, take 1-3 answers per question. 1) How many minutes have you spent in meetings this week? 2) How many of those minutes have you found to be a good use of your time? 3) What would you need in this meeting to make it go much better than most of your meetings this week? 4) Of these suggestions, given the time we have today, which

one shall we implement? Source: Adapted from the ToP Focused Conversation Method.

3. Brain Gym – This one might feel very risky. But if you watch this video and explain the benefits of this series of movements, you can usually get almost anyone to do it. These simple exercises integrate the left and right brain and whole body system for increased productivity, enhanced learning and greater well being. It helps to have fun, upbeat music to do it. Source: Adapted from Brain Gym International / Educational Kinesiology / Dr. Carla Hannaford.

Group discussions

What is a Group Discussion?

Group discussion is an important activity in academic, business and administrative spheres. It is a systematic and purposeful interactive oral process. Here the exchange of ideas, thoughts and feelings take place through oral communication. The exchange of ideas takes place in a systematic and structured way. The participants sit facing each other almost in a semi-circle and express their views on the given topic/issue/problem.

Group discussion elicits the views of all participants and evolves a consensus through active and intense interaction. Even if somebody is passive, and somebody else is indifferent, it is the responsibility of other participants to involve them in the discussion in order to elicit their views on the topic before arriving at a conclusion. Often, introverted people keep the best views to themselves; a sensitive leader among the participants will not only note this but also gently persuade them to come out. Overall, the purpose and aim of group discussion is to elicit views from all and then arrive at a consensus. Consensus is the collective agreement on an issue after successive stages of conflict, agreement, disagreement, negotiation, and reconciliation. This is done through a very intense and interactive process.

How does Group Discussion differ from a Debate?

Debate is competitive in nature while group discussion is a co-operative group process. In a debate, a speaker can speak either 'for' the topic or 'against' the topic whereas in a GD, the speaker can express both. The final decision or result in a debate depends on voting while in a GD, the group reaches group consensus.

Definition of group discussion

According to GULLY - "Discussion takes place when a group of individuals come together face to face and exchange information or take decisions on a group problem.

To bring out the best in you and to create the desired impact , you need to adhere to some Do's and Don'ts in Group Discussion. **These Do's are:**

- Listen to others attentively; you may even take brief notes.
- Enter the discussion at an early stage.
- Communicate with confidence.
- Make sure that your contributions are focused on the given topic.
- Try to speak something new which has not been said by the earlier speakers.
- If you find that any participant is not making her/his viewpoint clear, ask pertinent questions.
- Even when you oppose a view point, use dignified language.
- Try to make your contributions take the centre point for the discussion.
- If the discussion is going out of focus, try to point this out and bring it back on track.

- Use positive body language. Example, looking into the other person's eyes when listening or speaking.
- Remain confident and interested throughout, whether you are speaking or not speaking.
- Conclude each argument at the right time and in the right manner.
- Collaborate instead of compete.

The Don'ts of Group Discussion are-

- Don't appear or feel restless when someone is speaking.
- Don't keep silent for a long time; the selectors are there to hear you speak.
- Don't exhibit negative body language. Example, shaking your leg when speaking.
- Don't use abusive or objectionable language or gestures.
- Don't interrupt others when they are speaking.
- Don't impose your views upon others.
- Don't get irritated or lose temper if someone disagrees with you.
- Don't deviate from the subject given for discussion.
- Don't take anything personally.
- Don't give instructions to others in the group.
- Don't speak for the sake of speaking.

Types of Group Discussion

We will classify group discussions based on the following:

- **Method of conduct**
- **Nature of topic**

Based on the Method of Conduct

Bases on the method of conduct, group discussions can be further classified into the following:

(i) Structured Group Discussion: In this type of group discussion, the topic is given to the participants by the selectors and a time-frame is allotted to complete the discussion. This is the most commonly followed technique for a group discussion.

(ii) Unstructured Group Discussion: In unstructured group discussions, unlike in the case of structured group discussions, the candidates themselves decide the topic with mutual consent. This formal method of group discussions is rarely used.

(iii) Role Play: In this type of group discussion, the candidates are given specific roles to play in the backdrop of a given situation. Within the framework of their role, the participants have to solve the problems inherent in the situation given to them.

(iv) Group Discussion with a Nominated Leader: Generally, no-one is nominated as leader of a group discussion and all participants are treated as equal. But in this type of a group discussion, a person is nominated as a facilitator or a leader of the group. He may summarize the discussion or solutions discussed at the end of the group discussion. Sometimes the leader is nominated by the group members themselves.

Based on Nature of the Topic

Group discussions can also be categorized based on the topic allotted for the discussion to the participants. There are three kinds of topics-controversial topics, abstract topics and case study topics.

Examples of such topics include ‘Should the examination system be scrapped’ or ‘How ethical is cloning?’.

(i) Abstract Topics: There is a growing trend of assigning abstract topics, that is, topics which are vague or unclear. These topics enable the evaluators to evaluate the creative ability of the candidates. Every candidate can have his own interpretation of the topic. Some such topics are ‘Zero’, ‘One and one make eleven’.

(ii)Controversial Topics: These are topics which are controversial and which have the potential to generate an argument. Such topics generally make the

discussion lively as arguments and counter arguments are presented. This gives the evaluators more opportunities to evaluate the candidates.

(iii) Case Study Topics: Here, a situation is provided to the participants which may depict a problem faced by the organization or the managers. Participants need to analyze the situation and think of various alternatives to solve the problem. This kind of a group discussion tests the ability of the candidate to think of solutions keeping the situational factors and constraints in mind.

Important Ingredients for Success in Group Discussions

There are certain important traits which are essential for being a successful participant in a group discussion. These include:

(i) Positive Personality: Group discussions are an effective tool for assessing the overall personality of the candidate. Personality includes not only one's external appearance but also the traits one possesses. Thus, during group discussions the dressing style, speaking style, attitude towards others, presentation style, and so on, are evaluated. During the twenty-five-thirty minutes one has, one needs to create a favorable impression on the evaluators. A pleasing personality makes a favorable impression giving one an edge over the others.

(ii) Communication Skills: The key to an effective group discussion lies in the ability to communicate effectively through both one's verbal and non-verbal skills. One needs to express the ideas and opinions logically and with clarity. Brilliant ideas and sound knowledge are of little use unless they are expressed properly. One needs to possess good oratory skills with a sound vocabulary. Besides being a good speaker, one needs to be a good listener because in group discussions one needs to speak keeping in mind what has been or is being said by others.

(iii) Sound Knowledge and Awareness Level: The participants' knowledge and general awareness is another major ingredient for a successful group discussion. The participant needs to have originality in his/her ideas, that is, he should hold his own viewpoint and have considerable depth of knowledge. Lack of knowledge and ideas may lead to repetition and monotony. This is not a desirable and may go against one's success.

(iv) Ability to Coordinate: The participant's ability to coordinate the team and work in harmony with others is another ingredient for success in group discussions. Cooperation and positive contribution towards the discussion are vital. One must display the ability to take control of the discussion without operating to be dominating.

Advantages of Group discussions: A group discussion has the following advantages:

1. More Rational Decision: The Group can produce more rational decisions because of deep understanding and application of many minds in comparison to a single mind.

2. More Means: The group can pull together better resources. The joint resources of the group would be superior to the resources of an individual.

3. Division of Labour: The group decision may lead to division of labour. People specializing in different fields will contribute their expertise separately to achieve a better goal. In group discussions, the process of sharing of views helps to eliminate errors of judgement.

4. Commitment: Group discussion results in commitment as it gives a feeling of involvement and acceptance of the decision.

5. Increase in Knowledge: Group discussion increases the knowledge and understanding of the participants. They exchange ideas, views, opinions and discuss the same at length. There is practically no chance of ambiguity.

6. Solution for Complex Problems: Modern organisations face sufficiently complex problems. Their solution calls for group discussion wherein persons with different abilities express their valued opinions.

7. Encouragement of Democratic and Innovative Thinking: All members enjoy full freedom and opportunity to express their opinion in group discussion. As a result of it, development of democratic and innovative thinking get encouraged.

Limitations of Group Discussions: A group discussion also suffers from certain limitations:

1. Delay: Group discussion take time to be arranged and to take decisions.

3. **Conflicts:** The members whose views are not accepted may feel offended. Personal conflicts and rivalry may obstruct proper and timely decision.

Brain storming sessions

What is Brainstorming?

In a nutshell, brainstorming is one of the most creative ways of problem-solving in which we work on ideas. We can either come up with a new idea or build on an existing idea as well. Since there is no rule of thumb in brainstorming, it can be applied individually or in a group.

- Firstly, a goal is defined to understand what the main purpose of brainstorming is.
- Once we have an end-goal to achieve or a problem to solve, various challenges that come along are explored.
- Furthermore, different aspects of the problem or situation are explored and we list down ways to overcome the challenges.
- There is no structure in brainstorming, and no idea is considered wrong. All ideas are noted during the brainstorming sessions, and some can even be clubbed together.

Let's consider that you need to work on a marketing plan for your brand. Firstly, you will define its objective and the vision of the brand. Subsequently, you will work on other things like the promotional strategy, what the customers think, the pricing, and what your competitors are doing. After considering all these things in mind, you can come up with a new and exciting marketing plan.

What is the Main Purpose of Brainstorming?

Now when you know what does brainstorming means, let's dive in a bit and understand what the main purpose of brainstorming is. **The concept of brainstorming was developed by Alex Faickney Osborn in 1942** while working in his advertising firm, BBDO. The goal of brainstorming was to come up with new ideas without criticizing any thought. Here's what you can achieve with brainstorming.

- Its main purpose is to solve a problem creatively or innovatively.

- Brainstorming also emphasizes on improving our ideation process and elevates the creative thinking of individuals.
- One of the major objectives of brainstorming is to withhold criticism and welcome all sorts of ideas to the table.
- Idea association is another objective of brainstorming as it encourages us to club ideas or work on existing ideas.
- Lastly, it believes in getting a brand new perspective towards a problem that can introduce tons of new ideas for it.

What are the Benefits of Brainstorming?

The following are some of the significant benefits of brainstorming that make it so popular and universally known.

- It helps us break the monotonous way of problem-solving and gives a new perspective to the same situation.
- Since brainstorming works in all ways, it focuses on different ideas to provide a holistic solution.
- Students are often taught to do brainstorming, and it encourages self-learning and better understanding.
- It is also an extremely beneficial tool to improve teamwork and to get ideas of an entire group together.
- When it comes to list-building or fixing a deadlock, brainstorming helps a lot by getting the input of a group.
- As there are no right or wrong rules in brainstorming, people from different domains can do it without any technical issues.

Types of Brainstorming

Majorly, brainstorming is done in two ways – individually or in a group. Though, when it comes to how we brainstorm on topics, it can be of the following types:

Analytics Brainstorming

In this, we analyze the present situation from a different perspective and mostly use tools to assist us. Mind mapping, reverse brainstorming, SWOT analysis, Five Whys, Gap Filling, and Diverse Analysis are some of its major subtypes.

Quiet Brainstorming

This is mostly done when members are not able to meet, so that they can share their ideas in the best possible solution, via collaborative brainstorming, brain-netting (online brainstorming), slip writing, etc.

Role Play Brainstorming

In this, we intentionally think from the perspective of someone else (like customers or competitors). Reverse thinking, role storming, or figure storming are some of its major instances.

Presentations.

A **presentation** conveys information from a speaker to an audience. Presentations are typically demonstrations, introduction, lecture, or speech meant to inform, persuade, inspire, motivate, build goodwill, or present a new idea/product. Presentations usually require preparation, organization, event planning, writing, use of visual aids, dealing with stress, and answering questions. “The key elements of a presentation consists of presenter, audience, message, reaction and method to deliver speech for organizational success in an effective manner.” The term can also be used for a formal or ritualized introduction or offering, as with the presentation of a debutante. Presentations in certain formats are also known as keynote address. Interactive presentations, in which the audience is involved, are also represented more and more frequently. Instead of a monologue, this creates a dialogue between the speaker and the audience. The advantages of an interactive presentation is for example, that it attracts more attention from the audience and that the interaction creates a sense of community.

Visual Elements of an Effective Presentation

A presentation program is commonly used to generate the presentation content, some of which also allow presentations to be developed collaboratively, e.g. using the Internet by geographically disparate collaborators. Presentation viewers can be used to combine content from different sources into one presentation. Some of the popular presentation products used across the globe are offered by Apple, Google and Microsoft.

Microsoft PowerPoint and Google Slides are effective tools to develop slides, though Google Slides allows groups to work together using Google Drive to update each account as it is edited. Content such as text, images, links, and effects

are added into each of the presentation programs to deliver useful, consolidated information to a group. Visual elements add to the effectiveness of a presentation and help emphasize the key points being made through the use of type, color, images/videos, graphs, layout, and transitions.

Typography

According to the journal, "Prepare and Deliver an Effective Presentation," effective presentations typically use serif fonts (e.g. Times New Roman, Garamond, Baskerville, etc.) for the smaller text and sans serif fonts (e.g. Helvetica, Futura, Arial, etc.) for headings and larger text. The typefaces are used along with type size to improve readability for the audience. A combination of these typefaces can also be used to create emphasis. The majority of the fonts within a presentation are kept simple to aid in readability. Font styles, like bold, italic, and underline, are used to highlight important points.

Colors

It is possible to emphasize text and still maintain its readability by using contrasting colors. For example, black words on a white background emphasize the text being displayed but still helps maintain its readability. Text that contrasts with the background of a slide also enhances visibility. Readability and visibility enhance a presentation experience, which contributes to the effectiveness of it. Certain colors are also associated with specific emotions and the proper application of these colors adds to the effectiveness of a presentation through the creation of an immersive experience for an audience.

Images/Videos

Large images relevant to the presentation attract an audience's attention which in turn can clarify the topics within the presentation. Using pictures sparingly helps support other presentation elements (e.g. text). Short videos are used to help the presenter reinforce their message to the audience. With the additional reinforcement that images and videos offer, the effectiveness of a presentation is further maximized.

A presentation is a means of communication that can be adapted to various speaking situations, such as talking to a group, addressing a meeting or briefing a team.

A presentation can also be used as a broad term that encompasses other 'speaking engagements' such as making a speech at a wedding, or getting a point across in a video conference.

To be effective, step-by-step preparation and the method and means of presenting the information should be carefully considered.

A presentation requires you to get a message across to the listeners and will often contain a '*persuasive*' element. It may, for example, be a talk about the positive work of your organisation, what you could offer an employer, or why you should receive additional funding for a project.

Consider the following key components of a presentation:

Context

Ask yourself the following questions to develop a full understanding of the context of the presentation.

- **When and where will you deliver your presentation?**

There is a world of difference between a small room with natural light and an informal setting, and a huge lecture room, lit with stage lights. The two require quite different presentations, and different techniques.

- **Will it be in a setting you are familiar with, or somewhere new?**

If somewhere new, it would be worth trying to visit it in advance, or at least arriving early, to familiarise yourself with the room.

- **Will the presentation be within a formal or less formal setting?**

A work setting will, more or less by definition, be more formal, but there are also various degrees of formality within that.

- **Will the presentation be to a small group or a large crowd?**

- **Are you already familiar with the audience?**

*With a new audience, you will have to **build rapport** quickly and effectively, to get them on your side.*

- **What equipment and technology will be available to you, and what will you be expected to use?**

In particular, you will need to ask about microphones and whether you will be expected to stand in one place, or move around.

- **What is the audience expecting to learn from you and your presentation?**

Check how you will be 'billed' to give you clues as to what information needs to be included in your presentation.

Presenter

The role of the presenter is to communicate with the audience and control the presentation.

Remember, though, that this may also include handing over the control to your audience, especially if you want some kind of interaction.

Audience

The audience receives the presenter's message(s).

However, this reception will be filtered through and affected by such things as the listener's own experience, knowledge and personal sense of values

Message

The message or messages are delivered by the presenter to the audience.

The message is delivered not just by the spoken word (**verbal communication**) but can be augmented by techniques such as voice projection, body language, gestures, eye contact (**non-verbal communication**), and visual aids.

The message will also be affected by the audience's expectations. For example, if you have been billed as speaking on one particular topic, and you choose to speak on another, the audience is unlikely to take your message on board *even if you present very well*. They will judge your presentation a failure, because you have not met their expectations.

Reaction

The audience's reaction and therefore the success of the presentation will largely depend upon whether you, as presenter, effectively communicated your message, and whether it met their expectations.

As a presenter, you don't control the audience's expectations. What you can do is find out what they have been told about you by the conference organisers, and what they are expecting to hear. Only if you know that can you be confident of delivering something that will meet expectations.

Method

How will the presentation be delivered?

Presentations are usually delivered direct to an audience. However, there may be occasions where they are delivered from a distance over the Internet using video conferencing systems, such as Skype.

It is also important to remember that if your talk is recorded and posted on the internet, then people may be able to access it for several years. This will mean that your contemporaneous references should be kept to a minimum.

Impediments

Many factors can influence the effectiveness of how your message is communicated to the audience.

For example background noise or other distractions, an overly warm or cool room, or the time of day and state of audience alertness can all influence your audience's level of concentration.

As presenter, you have to be prepared to cope with any such problems and try to keep your audience focused on your message.

Presentation skills can be defined as a set of abilities that enable an individual to: interact with the audience; transmit the messages with clarity; engage the audience in the presentation; and interpret and understand the mindsets of the listeners. These skills refine the way you put forward your messages and enhance your persuasive powers.

The present era places great emphasis on good presentation skills. This is because they play an important role in convincing the clients and customers. Internally, management with good presentation skills is better able to communicate the mission and vision of the organization to the employees.

Importance of Presentation Skills

Interaction with others is a routine job of businesses in today's world. The importance of good presentation skills is established on the basis of following points:

- They help an individual in enhancing his own growth opportunities. In addition, it also grooms the personality of the presenter and elevates his levels of confidence.
- In case of striking deals and gaining clients, it is essential for the business professionals to understand the audience. Good presentation skills enable an individual to mold his message according to the traits of the audience. This increases the probability of successful transmission of messages.
- Lastly, business professionals have to arrange seminars and give presentations almost every day. Having good presentation skills not only increases an individual's chances of success, but also enable him to add greatly to the organization.

How to Improve Presentation Skills

Development of good presentation skills requires efforts and hard work. To improve your presentation skills, you must:

- **Research the Audience before Presenting:** This will enable you to better understand the traits of the audience. You can then develop messages that can be better understood by your target audience. For instance, in case of an analytical audience, you can add more facts and figures in your presentation.
- **Structure your Presentation Effectively:** The best way to do this is to start with telling the audience, in the introduction, what you are going to present. Follow this by presenting the idea, and finish off the presentation by repeating the main points.
- **Do a lot of Practice:** Rehearse but do not go for memorizing the presentation. Rehearsals reduce your anxiety and enable you to look confident on the presentation day. Make sure you practice out loud, as it enables you to identify and eliminate errors more efficiently. Do not memorize anything as it will make your presentation look mechanical. This can reduce the degree of audience engagement.

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UNIT-V

Handling personal communication –

Personal communication

Personal communications may be private letters, memos, emails, personal interviews or telephone conversations. Personal communications are only cited in text and are not included in the reference list, as the information is unable to be retrieved by others.

Personal Communications include private letters, memos, emails, personal interviews, telephone conversations, and similar resources.

The main differences between Personal Communication and Mass Communication are as follows:

Personal Communication

It's the communication between person to person.

It provides necessary communication between two people making man a social animal.

We have letters, e-mails, SMSs, telephone and mobile phone facilities which also includes STD and ISD services.

Mass Communication

It's the communication among masses.

It provides entertainment as well as creates awareness among the masses.

It includes radio, television, newspapers, magazines, books, films, etc.

Letters - meaning

noun

a written, typed, or printed communication, sent in an envelope by post or messenger.

"he sent a letter to Mrs Falconer"

a written or printed communication addressed to a person or organization and usually transmitted by mail.

What is a Letter?

A Letter is a written piece of communication serving a purpose of the writer. A letter is usually written with the purpose to either provide information, convey a message, request for a task to be done or to report about a situation. Over the years, letter writing has also been an intimate part of people's life. It was used as a means for creating a lovely relationship between people leaving far apart.

As the communication technology evolved, the importance of letters in the routine communication reduced. However, it is still the mode of communication for official purposes. In addition to that, letters are also used as means to judge the communication ability of the writers. Letters comes in a variety of tones. Hence, it clearly indicates the writer's response and thought process in every situation. There are organizations which consider letter as a means for judging a candidate's psychological thought process and communication skills. This document discusses various types of letters that are being used in the routine communication as well as in competitive exams & interviews.

Letter Writing

A letter is a written message that can be handwritten or printed on paper. It is usually sent to the recipient via mail or post in an envelope, although this is not a requirement as such. Any such message that is transferred via post is a letter, a written conversation between two parties.

Now that E-mails (Advantages and disadvantages) and texts and other such forms have become the norm for communication, the art of letter writing has taken a backseat. However, even today a lot of our communication, especially the formal kind, is done via letters. Whether it is a cover letter for a job, or the bank sending you a reminder or a college acceptance letter, letters are still an important mode of communication. That is why it is important that we know the intricacies of letter writing.

Types of Letters

Let us first understand that there are broadly two types of letter, namely Formal Letters, and Informal Letters. But then there are also a few types of letters based on their contents, formalities, the purpose of letter writing etc. Let us have a look at the few types of letters.

- **Formal Letter:** These letters follow a certain pattern and formality. They are strictly kept professional in nature, and directly address the issues concerned. Any type of business letter or letter to authorities falls within this given category.
- **Informal Letter:** These are personal letters. They need not follow any set pattern or adhere to any formalities. They contain personal information or are a written conversation. Informal letters are generally written to friends, acquaintances, relatives etc.
- **Business Letter:** This letter is written among business correspondents, generally contains commercial information such as quotations, orders, complaints, claims, letters for collections etc. Such letters are always strictly formal and follow a structure and pattern of formalities.
- **Official Letter:** This type of letter is written to inform offices, branches, subordinates of official information. It usually relays official information like rules, regulations, procedures, events, or any other such information. Official letters are also formal in nature and follow certain structure and decorum.
- **Social Letter:** A personal letter written on the occasion of a special event is known as a social letter. Congratulatory letter, condolence letter, invitation letter etc are all social letters.
- **Circular Letter:** A letter that announces information to a large number of people is a circular letter. The same letter is circulated to a large group of people to correspond some important information like a change of address, change in management, the retirement of a partner etc.
- **Employment Letters:** Any letters with respect to the employment process, like joining letter, promotion letter, application letter etc.

Types of Letter Writing

Letter writing can be classified into two types:

1. Informal Letters
2. Formal Letters

Candidates in the examination can be asked to write a 150- 200 word letter on either type mentioned above. Let us understand both the types of letters in detail.

Informal Letter

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

Formal Letters

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

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

Letter Writing Format

In general, everyone needs to be aware of the format of letter writing, more so candidates appearing for examinations. A letter is composed of different elements that change depending upon its nature. The format for both the types of letters is given below.

Letter writing format of Formal Letter

A formal letter must adhere to the prescribed format. The letter writing format of a formal letter is as mentioned below:

1. Sender's address
2. Date
3. Receiver's address
4. Subject
5. Salutation

6. Body of the letter
7. Complimentary closure
8. Signature line: sender's name, signature and designation

- Sender's address: One of the most essential components, also known as the return address. It is the mailing address of the sender. The address and contact details of the person sending the letter are written here.
- Date: Immediately after the sender's address comes the date on which the letter is written. Candidates, while writing the letter in the exam, can follow any of the formats to write the dates: DD/MM/YY OR MM/DD/YY.
- Receiver's address: The corresponding address, i.e. the address of the recipient of the mail is written here. Candidates must start with the receivers' designation followed by the name of the organization and then the full address, Pincode and country (if the information is known).
- The subject: This highlights the aim of writing the letter. The subject of the formal letter should be very brief (6 to 8 words) and must be preceded by the word 'Subject'. The receiver, through the subject, understands the purpose of the letter at a glance.
- Salutation: This is a customary greeting to the recipient of the letter. If the name of the recipient is known, the salutation starts with 'Dear' followed by Mr/Mrs/Miss, etc. If the person is unknown or even the gender is not known the recipient can be addressed as Dear Sir/Dear Madam.
- Body: The most important element of any letter. It furnishes the reason behind writing the letter. For formal letters, candidates should use short, clear, logical paragraphs to state the subject matter. The body of the letter is generally divided into 3 paragraphs:
 1. Introduction that states the main point.
 2. Middle part: Supporting points and details to justify the need and importance of letter writing.
 3. Conclusion: Request for some action or what is expected.
- Complimentary Closure: This is to end the letter with respect in a polite manner such as 'Yours faithfully', 'Yours sincerely', etc.
- Signature Line: This is the last part where the sender of the letter signs off with his first or last name. The signature line may also include a second line for the title or designation of the sender.

Candidates writing formal letters in the exam must remember the following pointers.

- Use of colloquial words, short forms, slang language and abbreviations are restricted.
- The letter must be to the point, precise and clearly indicating the message.
- The subject line is very important in Formal Letters.

Letter writing format of Informal Letters

Candidates writing informal letters need to follow the below-mentioned format.

1. Address
2. Date
3. Salutation
4. Body of the letter
5. Sender's name and signature

1. Address: The sender's address is important in informal letters. Since informal letters are personal letters and sent to acquaintances or people who are known, the receivers' address is only mentioned on the envelope carrying the letter.
2. Date: Same as in a formal letter format.
3. Salutation in informal letters can be Dear/Dearest/ Hi/Hello followed by the first name/nickname of the recipient.
4. Body: The body in the informal letters can be long and detailed containing diverse feelings, experiences, advice, news, etc.
5. Sender's name and signature are the same as in the formal letters.

Important pointers of Informal letter

1. The subject line is not required in an Informal Letter.
2. No prescribed format has to be strictly followed.
3. The usage of language must be friendly and casual.
4. The letter can have extra information, as per the sender's choice.

Important Tips for Good Letter Writing

Candidates appearing for competitive exams are encouraged to follow the below-mentioned tips to write a good letter in the examination and fetch good marks.

- Candidates must be able to identify the type of letter they will write. For example: writing a letter to the Principal asking for leave is a formal letter, but writing a letter to the Principal to catch up after a long time would be an informal letter.
- Opening and closing of letters must be in the correct manner. Formal letters must open and close in a professional manner while informal letters can be directly addressed to the person with greetings. Even closing the letters is significant. Formal letters always end respectfully and impersonally, whereas informal letters may end with a more personal touch.
- In formal letters, making clear the purpose of the letter immediately is important. Candidates writing formal letters must make sure to get to the point as soon as possible.
- A letter is always supposed to be considerate and polite. It is essential to use polite words and civil language in all types of letters, be it formal or informal. Even if the letter is about any complaint, the point must be made in a careful and courteous manner.
- The length of the letter also holds relevance. In formal letters, the matter should be expressed to the point, precise and short, while the length of the personal or informal letter depends on the message and the relation to the recipient.

Letter of Complaint

Complaints(letters) are usually written to business firms, water supply boards,telecommunication boards, electricity boards, sewerage boards and several other organizations. Their purpose is to remind the people of these firms about their defective products or poor services. It is extremely important to provide all the details in your complaint letter as the information can be further used for verification.

The letter should demand immediate response, quicker decision or positive action in order to resolve the complaint as soon as possible. The message conveyed in the complaint letter should be direct and credible.

Qs. Write a letter to the Post Master, General Post Office, Pithoragarh complaining of late delivery of letters. You are Mohit/Mona of Takana, Pithoragarh.

Ans.

Friends Colony, Takana

Pithoragarh

11 November, 2017

The Post Master
General Post Office
Pithoragarh

Subject: Complaint regarding late delivery of letters

Sir,

This is to bring to your kind notice that the beat postman of our area is not performing his duties well. He never delivers our letters, money orders, parcels etc. on time. He visits only once a week and delivers the letters of the whole week that day. As a result of his careless attitude towards duties, we often get deprived of the important information of marriage, death, etc. of our relatives and friends.

Several times people could not reach on time to attend the interview or join service due to the negligence on the part of the postman. We have repeatedly requested him to be regular and deliver the letter on time but he pays no heed to our requests.

I sincerely request you to personally enquire into the matter and take immediate action for the redressal of our grievances.

Yours faithfully

Mona
(A resident of Friends Colony)
Takana

Letter to the Editor

Newspapers, weeklies and magazines play an important role in shaping public opinion, public minds and decisions about many national and international issues because they have a large number of readers. Writing letters to the editors is a great way to engage with a topic you are passionate about and to influence public opinion. These letters are written to shape public opinion, to share information and ideas, to increase awareness, to advocate your cause or to start community

conversation. It is a written way of talking to a newspaper or magazine. It takes a position for or against an issue or simply inform or both.

Qs. Write a letter to the Editor of “The Times of India”, Delhi expressing your concern over the increase in the rate of road accident, rash driving and overcrowded road transport. You are Priya/Priyanshu living at B-47 Avas Vikas, Mayur Vihar, New Delhi.

Ans.

B-47 Avas Vikas
Mayur Vihar New Delhi

13 November, 2017

The Editor
The Times of India, New Delhi

Subject: Increasing cases of road accidents, rash driving and overcrowding

Sir

Through the columns of your esteemed newspaper, I wish to express the anguish of the general public over the increasing number of road accidents, cases of rash driving and the problem of overcrowding in the buses.

The bus drivers have no regard for the traffic rules. They drive vary rash under the influence of liquors. They even jump the red light signals installed on the roads.

Still the private bus operators stop at unauthorized stops. The uncontrollable speed and race with other buses is the main cause of accidents. They even overtake the other buses for picking up more passengers. The conductors pack their buses to suffocation. As a result, ladies and old people are unable to get into the buses.

It requires stricter watch on the part of the traffic police. More traffic police should be employed to check the violations of the traffic rules. Proper road signals and road marks should be marked. The surprise check by traffic police in civil dress can play an effective role in booking the culprits.

Yours truly

Priyanshu

Job Applications

Job applications are usually written in reply to advertisements. They require a formal and precise treatment. Job application is an opportunity to highlight your most relevant qualifications and experiences enhancing your resume and increasing your chances of being called for an interview.

Qs. You are Nandini/Navin. You have seen an advertisement for the post of an English teacher in Rani Public School, Dehradun. Write a letter in response to the advertisement applying for the post. Give your detailed bio-data also.

Ans.

99 Rajpur Road
Dehradun

15 December, 2017

The Manager
Rani Public School
Dehradun

Subject: Application for the post of an English teacher

Sir

I would like to apply for the post of an English teacher that you have advertised in "AmarUjala" of 10 December, 2017.

I have the required qualification. I was happy to note that you do not insist on experience.

If selected, this would be my first job. I am a sincere, honest and hardworking person.

I am friendly and have good communication skills. I am enclosing my bio-data for your kind perusal and favourable consideration.

Yours truly

Nandini

Encl.: Bio-data

Bio-data

Name : Nandini
Father's name : Sh. V. K. Tiwari
Date of Birth : 07 October, 1992
Gender: Female
Marital Status : Unmarried
Permanent Address : 99 Rajpur Road, Dehradun

Educational Qualifications :

Examination	Board/ University	Subjects	Year	Division
High School	U K Board	Hindi, English, Math, Science, Social Science	2007	First
Intermediate	U K Board	Hindi, English, History, Economics, Political Science	2009	First
B.A.	Garhwal University	English, History, Economics	2012	First
M.A.	Garhwal	English Literature	2014	First

B.Ed.	University Garhwal University	All Compulsory Subjects	2016	Theory-First, Practical- First
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Languages Known : Hindi and English

Hobbies : Reading, Writing and Music

References :i) Sh. VK Dixit, Principal, Govt. Model School, Dehradun
ii) Smt. Rajni Pal, Principal, AK Secondary School, Vikas Nagar, Dehradun

Dictation – meaning

noun

1. 1.
the action of dictating words to be typed, written down, or recorded on tape.
"the dictation of letters"
2. 2.
the action of giving orders authoritatively or categorically, **or reinforce reading and writing continuously.**

In the Longman dictionary of Applied Linguistics (2002:157) dictation is defined as a technique used in both language teaching and language testing in which a passage is read aloud to students or test takers, with pauses during which they must try to write down what they have heard as accurately as possible. Davis and Rinvolucri (2002) defines dictation as decoding the sounds of [English] and recoding them in writing. In the nineteenth century dictation was used extensively in teaching foreign language in conjunction with the grammar-translation method (Stansfield, 1985).

Nation (2009) considers dictation a valuable language-focused teaching and learning technique. The most common advantages are: dictation can help students to diagnose and correct grammatical errors; it ensures attentive listening and trains students to distinguish sounds; it helps to learn punctuation and develop aural comprehension. Wilson (2003) claims that an excessive focus on meaning, either through extra vocabulary learning or additional listening practice, will not necessarily solve the listening comprehension of many students.

According to Miller (2003), more than forty percent of our daily communication is spent on listening, thirty-five percent on speaking, about sixteen percent on reading, and only nine percent on writing. Yet listening remains one of the least understood processes in language learning in spite of its critical role in communication and language acquisition. Dictation is considered as one of the techniques used in mainly to develop listening skills.

Dictation helps to develop four language skills in an integrative way and short term memory. Therefore dictation should be taken more seriously not just for its own sake, but as the basis for comprehending the whole language.

As far as business communication is concerned dictation refers to the letters etc that are dictated by senior managers to their secretaries/ assistants/ stenographers in order to save time in writing / typing. These dictations are often taken in short hand by stenographers who are trained to take dictations in short hand which is then converted into the common dialect. Similarly Judges/ senior advocates/ senior administrative officers in public sector also have stenographers/ secretaries/ assistants who are given dictations of letters which are then typed for communication purpose.

Reading

Reading is typically an individual activity, done silently, although on occasion a person reads out loud for other listeners; or reads aloud for one's own use, for better comprehension. Before the reintroduction of separated text in the late Middle Ages, the ability to read silently was considered rather remarkable.

Major predictors of an individual's ability to read both alphabetic and non-alphabetic scripts are oral language skills, phonological awareness, rapid automatized naming and verbal IQ.

As a leisure activity, children and adults read because it is pleasant and interesting. In the US, about half of all adults read one or more books for pleasure each year. About 5% read more than 50 books per year. Americans read more if they: have more education, read fluently and easily, are female, live in cities, and have higher socioeconomic status. Children become better readers when they know more about the world in general, and when they perceive reading as fun rather than another chore to be performed.

Reading vs. literacy[edit]

Reading is an essential part of literacy, yet from a historical perspective literacy is about having the ability to both read and write.

And, since the 1990s some organizations have defined literacy in a wide variety of ways that may go beyond the traditional ability to read and write. The following are some examples:

- "the ability to read and write ... in all media (print or electronic), including digital literacy"
- "the ability to ... understand ... using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts"
- "the ability to read, write, speak and listen"
- "having the skills to be able to read, write and speak to understand and create meaning"
- "the ability to ... communicate using visual, audible, and digital materials"
- "the ability to use printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential". It includes three types of adult literacy: prose (e.g., a newspaper article), documents (e.g., a bus schedule), and quantitative literacy (e.g., using arithmetic operations a in product advertisement).

10 Benefits of Reading: Why You Should Read Every Day

1. Mental Stimulation

Studies have shown that staying mentally stimulated can slow the progress of (or possibly even prevent) Alzheimer's and Dementia, since keeping your brain active and engaged prevents it from losing power.

Just like any other muscle in the body, the brain requires exercise to keep it strong and healthy, so the phrase "use it or lose it" is particularly apt when it comes to your mind. Doing puzzles and playing games such as chess have also been found to be helpful with cognitive stimulation.

2. Stress Reduction

No matter how much stress you have at work, in your personal relationships, or countless other issues faced in daily life, it all just slips away when you lose

yourself in a great story. A well-written novel can transport you to other realms, while an engaging article will distract you and keep you in the present moment, letting tensions drain away and allowing you to relax.

3. Knowledge

Everything you read fills your head with new bits of information, and you never know when it might come in handy. The more knowledge you have, the better-equipped you are to tackle any challenge you'll ever face.

Additionally, here's a bit of food for thought: should you ever find yourself in dire circumstances, remember that although you might lose everything else—your job, your possessions, your money, even your health—knowledge can never be taken from you.

4. Vocabulary Expansion

This goes with the above topic:

The more you read, the more words you gain exposure to, and they'll inevitably make their way into your everyday vocabulary.

Being articulate and well-spoken is of great help in any profession, and knowing that you can speak to higher-ups with self-confidence can be an enormous boost to your self-esteem. It could even aid in your career, as those who are well-read, well-spoken, and knowledgeable on a variety of topics tend to get promotions more quickly (and more often) than those with smaller vocabularies and lack of awareness of literature, scientific breakthroughs, and global events.

Reading books is also vital for learning new languages, as non-native speakers gain exposure to words used in context, which will ameliorate their own speaking and writing fluency.

5. Memory Improvement

When you read a book, you have to remember an assortment of characters, their backgrounds, ambitions, history, and nuances, as well as the various arcs and subplots that weave their way through every story. That's a fair bit to remember, but brains are marvelous things and can remember these things with relative ease.

Amazingly enough, every new memory you create forges new synapses (brain pathways) and strengthens existing ones, which assists in short-term memory recall as well as stabilizing moods. How cool is that?

If you want to learn more about how to increase brain power, boost memory and become 10x smarter, **check out this technique!**

6. Stronger Analytical Thinking Skills

Have you ever read an amazing mystery novel, and solved the mystery yourself before finishing the book? If so, you were able to put critical and analytical thinking to work by taking note of all the details provided and sorting them out to determine “whodunnit”.

That same ability to analyze details also comes in handy when it comes to critiquing the plot; determining whether it was a well-written piece, if the characters were properly developed, if the storyline ran smoothly, etc.

Should you ever have an opportunity to discuss the book with others, you’ll be able to state your opinions clearly, as you’ve taken the time to really consider all the aspects involved.

7. Improved Focus and Concentration

In our internet-crazed world, attention is drawn in a million different directions at once as we multi-task through every day.

In a single 5-minute span, the average person will divide their time between working on a task, checking email, chatting with a couple of people (via gchat, skype, etc.), keeping an eye on twitter, monitoring their smartphone, and interacting with co-workers. This type of ADD-like behaviour causes stress levels to rise, and lowers our productivity.

When you read a book, all of your attention is focused on the story—the rest of the world just falls away, and you can immerse yourself in every fine detail you’re absorbing.

Try reading for 15-20 minutes before work (i.e. on your morning commute, if you take public transit), and you’ll be surprised at how much more focused you are once you get to the office.

Additional information: if you find staying focus hard and re trying to improve your focus, it's possible **you've been doing it wrong**.

8. Better Writing Skills

This goes hand-in-hand with the expansion of your vocabulary:

Exposure to published, well-written work has a noted effect on one's own writing, as observing the cadence, fluidity, and writing styles of other authors will invariably influence your own work.

In the same way that musicians influence one another and painters use techniques established by previous masters, so do writers learn how to craft prose by reading the works of others.

9. Tranquility

In addition to the relaxation that accompanies reading a good book, it's possible that the subject you read about can bring about immense inner peace and tranquility.

Reading spiritual texts can lower blood pressure and bring about an immense sense of calm, while reading self-help books has been shown to help people suffering from certain mood disorders and mild mental illnesses.

10. Free Entertainment

Though many of us like to buy books so we can annotate them and dog-ear pages for future reference, they can be quite pricey.

For low-budget entertainment, you can visit your local library and bask in the glory of the countless tomes available there for free. Libraries have books on every subject imaginable, and since they rotate their stock and constantly get new books, you'll never run out of reading materials.

If you happen to live in an area that doesn't have a local library, or if you're mobility-impaired and can't get to one easily, most libraries have their books available in PDF or ePub format so you can read them on your e-reader, iPad, or your computer screen.

There are also many sources online where you can download free e-books, so go hunting for something new to read!

There's a reading genre for every literate person on the planet, and whether your tastes lie in classical literature, poetry, fashion magazines, biographies, religious texts, young adult books, self-help guides, street lit, or romance novels, there's something out there to capture your curiosity and imagination.

Step away from your computer for a little while, crack open a book, and replenish your soul for a little while.

Reading techniques

In order to read effectively, you need to use different reading techniques for different purposes and texts. You should always read for a clearly defined purpose.

Skimming

Skimming will help you grasp the general idea or gist of a text. You might quickly read the table of contents, the headings or the abstract. You could also read the first and last paragraphs and the first and last sentence of each paragraph in a relevant section.

Scanning

Scanning allows you to locate precise information. You might identify a key terms or expressions which will alert you to where your subject is being addressed. You could then run your eyes over a text looking for these.

Detailed reading

Detailed reading allows you to critically consider aspects of the text. This may involve close reading of the entire text, or of important sections of the text.

Revision reading

This involves reading rapidly through material with which you are already familiar, in order to confirm knowledge and understanding.

Stages in reading a text

It is important to break down the reading process into the following stages:

Before reading get an overview of the text:

- skim the table of contents, headings and subheadings
- read the introduction and conclusion
- scan the relevant sections to locate where your topic is discussed

During reading closely follow the development of the ideas in the text:

- read actively - write in the margins, highlight phrases, take note of important points
- don't forget to examine diagrams and figures as they are information-dense
- read critically - ask yourself questions; for example, Is the argument logical? Is it biased? Is there enough evidence to support the author's conclusions?

After reading think over what you have read. Make a brief summary of the main ideas and concepts in the text.

Problem Solving

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.”

It is worth also considering our own view of what a problem is.

We are constantly exposed to opportunities in life, at work, at school and at home. However many opportunities are missed or not taken full advantage of. Often we are unsure how to take advantage of an opportunity and create barriers - reasons why we can't take advantage. These barriers can turn a potentially positive situation into a negative one, a problem.

Are we missing the 'big problem'? It is human nature to notice and focus on small, easy to solve problems but much harder to work on the big problems that may be causing some of the smaller ones.

It's useful to consider the following questions when faced with a problem.

Is the problem real or perceived?

Is this problem really an opportunity?

Does the problem need solving?

Problem solving skills are highly sought after by employers as many companies rely on their employees to identify and solve problems.

A lot of the work in problem solving involves understanding what the underlying issues of the problem really are - not the symptoms. Dealing with a customer complaint may be seen as a problem that needs to be solved, and it's almost certainly a good idea to do so. The employee dealing with the complaint should be asking what has caused the customer to complain in the first place, if the cause of the complaint can be eliminated then the problem is solved.

In order to be effective at problem solving you are likely to need some other key skills, which include:

- **Creativity.** Problems are usually solved either intuitively or systematically. Intuition is used when no new knowledge is needed - you know enough to be able to make a quick decision and solve the problem, or you use common sense or experience to solve the problem. More complex problems or problems that you have not experienced before will likely require a more systematic and logical approach to solve, and for these you will need to use creative thinking.
- **Researching Skills.** Defining and solving problems often requires you to do some research: this may be a simple Google search or a more rigorous research project.
- **Team Working.** Many problems are best defined and solved with the input of other people. Team working may sound like a 'work thing' but it is just as important at home and school as well as in the workplace.
- **Emotional Intelligence.** It is worth considering the impact that a problem and/or its solution has on you and other people. Emotional intelligence, the ability

to recognise the emotions of yourself and others, will help guide you to an appropriate solution.

- **Risk Management.** Solving a problem involves a certain amount of risk - this risk needs to be weighed up against not solving the problem.
- **Decision Making.** Problem solving and decision making are closely related skills, and making a decision is an important part of the problem solving process as you will often be faced with various options and alternatives.

Problem Solving Process

1. Define the problem

Diagnose the situation so that your focus is on the problem, not just its symptoms. Helpful problem-solving techniques include using [flowcharts](#) to identify the expected steps of a process and [cause-and-effect diagrams](#) to define and analyze [root causes](#).

The sections below help explain key problem-solving steps. These steps support the involvement of interested parties, the use of factual information, comparison of expectations to reality, and a focus on root causes of a problem. You should begin by:

- Reviewing and documenting how processes currently work (i.e., who does what, with what information, using what tools, communicating with what organizations and individuals, in what time frame, using what format).
- Evaluating the possible impact of new tools and revised policies in the development of your "what should be" model.

2. Generate alternative solutions

Postpone the selection of one solution until several problem-solving alternatives have been proposed. Considering multiple alternatives can significantly enhance the value of your ideal solution. Once you have decided on the "what should be" model, this target standard becomes the basis for developing a road map for investigating alternatives. [Brainstorming](#) and team problem-solving techniques are both useful tools in this stage of problem solving.

Many alternative solutions to the problem should be generated before final evaluation. A common mistake in problem solving is that alternatives are evaluated as they are proposed, so the first acceptable solution is chosen, even if it's not the

best fit. If we focus on trying to get the results we want, we miss the potential for learning something new that will allow for real improvement in the problem-solving process.

3. Evaluate and select an alternative

Skilled problem solvers use a series of considerations when selecting the best alternative. They consider the extent to which:

- A particular alternative will solve the problem without causing other unanticipated problems.
- All the individuals involved will accept the alternative.
- Implementation of the alternative is likely.
- The alternative fits within the organizational constraints.

4. Implement and follow up on the solution

Leaders may be called upon to direct others to implement the solution, "sell" the solution, or facilitate the implementation with the help of others. Involving others in the implementation is an effective way to gain buy-in and support and minimize resistance to subsequent changes.

Regardless of how the solution is rolled out, feedback channels should be built into the implementation. This allows for continuous monitoring and testing of actual events against expectations. Problem solving, and the techniques used to gain clarity, are most effective if the solution remains in place and is updated to respond to future changes.

Stages of Problem Solving

Effective problem solving usually involves working through a number of steps or stages, such as those outlined below.

Problem Identification:

This stage involves: detecting and recognising 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, which leads to the second phase.

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.

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 organisations different people will have different expertise in different areas and it is useful, therefore, to hear the views of each concerned party.

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 analyse 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.

Listening Skills

1.What Is Listening?

- Listening is the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages in the communication process.
- Listening is the key to all effective communication, without the ability to listen effectively messages are easily misunderstood.
- Listening is one of the most important skills you can have.
- An active process of getting information and ideas.
- “Listening is the process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to what is spoken.

- Listening is not just about being Quiet while someone else is speaking.
- Listening is with the Mind.
- Listening is Hearing with the senses.
- Listening is conscious.
- To improve our interpersonal & oral exchange.

Just Listening to words is not enough; a good Listener has to pay attention to the non-verbal communication of the speaker.

2.Process of Listening

I-Receiving

- Is the intentional focus on hearing a speaker's message.
- This stage is represented by the ear because it is the primary tool involved with this stage of the listening process.

II- Understanding

- In the understanding stage, we attempt to learn the meaning of the message, which is not always easy.
- Deciding what the message means to you.

III- Remembering

- Remembering begins with listening; if you can't remember something that was said, you might not have been listening effectively.
- However, even when you are listening attentively, some messages are more difficult than others to understand and remember. Highly complex messages that are filled with detail call for highly developed listening skills.

IV-Evaluating

- The fourth stage in the listening process is evaluating.

- Evaluation of the same message can vary widely from one listener to another.
- The stages two, three, and four are represented by the brain because they are the primary tools involved with these stages of the listening process.

V- Responding

- Responding—sometimes referred to as feedback—is the fifth and final stage of the listening process.
- Your reaction to the message. It can be emotional and intellectual.
- For example, you are giving positive feedback to your instructor if at the end of class you stay behind to finish a sentence in your notes or approach the instructor to ask for clarification. The opposite kind of feedback is given by students who gather their belongings and rush out of the door as soon as class is over.
- This stage is represented by the lips because we often give feedback in the form of verbal feedback; however, you can just as easily respond nonverbally.

3.Importance of Listening

- By Listening we show that we are serious
- By Listening we display respect to other's view point
- Listening helps us to learn
- Listening helps us to adapt and understand
- Listening helps us to empathize

4.Why Listening is Important?

- To avoid communication errors.
- Helps to learn something new.
- It is the key to success.

5.Basic Types of Listening

- Active listening
- Selective listening
- Emphatic listening
- Ignoring listening

A/ Active Listening

- Understanding all things
- Proper interaction.
- Proper feedback

B/ Selective Listening

- We remember only
- Selective portion.
- Topic is not to our liking

C/ Empathetic listening

- When we listen empathetically, we go beyond sympathy to seek a truer understand how others are feeling.
- This requires excellent discrimination and close attention to the nuances of emotional signals. When we are being truly empathetic, we actually feel what they are feeling.

D/ Ignoring Listening

- Not listening at all
- Is pretty insulting to others.
- It can lead to strained relations.

6.Barriers to effective listening

Some common barriers in the process of listening are listed below.

- 1.Pre-judgments about the speaker .
- 2.Assuming that the speaker is going to give some unimportant information.
- 3.Arriving late for a speech, presentation or lecture.
- 4.Judging the speaker by his/her mannerisms, voice, appearance, accent, etc.
- 5.Lack of concentration/interest.
- 6.Avoiding listening to difficult, boring or complex information and selectively listening only to what is considered interesting.
- 7.Speaker or listener being distracted by disturbances.

7. How To Listen Effectively?

1. Stop Talking – Be Silent
2. Show Interest
3. Empathize
4. Ask Questions
5. Maintain Eye Contact
6. Take notes
7. Listen Creatively
8. Put Your Entirety
9. Send feedback
10. Avoid or eliminate distraction

11. Try to gather information about the topic to develop interest and familiarity.

8. Benefits of Effective Listening

- Enhances productivity
- Improves relations
- Avoids conflicts
- Improves understanding
- Improves negotiation skills
- Adds to your Image & Personality

Effective Listening

A good listener will listen not only to what is being said, but also to what is left unsaid or only partially said.

Effective listening therefore involves observing body language and noticing inconsistencies between verbal and non-verbal messages, as well as just what is being said at any given moment.

For example, if someone tells you that they are happy with their life but through gritted teeth or with tears filling their eyes, you should consider that the verbal and non-verbal messages are in conflict. Maybe they don't mean what they say.

Listening is therefore not just a matter of using your ears, but also your eyes. There are ten principles behind really good listening.

Ten Principles of Effective Listening

1. Stop Talking

Don't talk, listen.

When somebody else is talking listen to what they are saying, do not interrupt, talk over them or finish their sentences for them. **Stop, just listen.**

When the other person has finished talking you may need to clarify to ensure you have received their message accurately.

2. Prepare Yourself to Listen

Relax.

Focus on the speaker. Put other things out of mind. The human mind is easily distracted by other thoughts – what's for lunch, what time do I need to leave to catch my train, is it going to rain – try to put other thoughts out of mind and concentrate on the messages that are being communicated.

3. Put the Speaker at Ease

Help the speaker to feel free to speak.

Remember their needs and concerns. Nod or use other gestures or words to encourage them to continue.

Maintain eye contact but don't stare – show you are listening and understanding what is being said.

4. Remove Distractions

Focus on what is being said.

Don't doodle, shuffle papers, look out the window, pick your fingernails or similar. Avoid unnecessary interruptions. These behaviours disrupt the listening process and send messages to the speaker that you are bored or distracted.

5. Empathise

Try to understand the other person's point of view.

Look at issues from their perspective. Let go of preconceived ideas. By having an open mind we can more fully empathise with the speaker. If the speaker says something that you disagree with then wait and construct an argument to counter what is said but keep an open mind to the views and opinions of others.

6. Be Patient

A pause, even a long pause, does not necessarily mean that the speaker has finished.

Be patient and let the speaker continue in their own time, sometimes it takes time to formulate what to say and how to say it. Never interrupt or finish a sentence for someone.

7. Avoid Personal Prejudice

Try to be impartial.

Don't become irritated and don't let the person's habits or mannerisms distract you from what the speaker is really saying.

Everybody has a different way of speaking - some people are for example more nervous or shy than others, some have regional accents or make excessive arm movements, some people like to pace whilst talking - others like to sit still.

Focus on what is being said and try to ignore styles of delivery.

8. Listen to the Tone

Volume and tone both add to what someone is saying.

A good speaker will use both volume and tone to their advantage to keep an audience attentive; everybody will use pitch, tone and volume of voice in certain situations – let these help you to understand the emphasis of what is being said.

9. Listen for Ideas – Not Just Words

You need to get the whole picture, not just isolated bits and pieces.

Maybe one of the most difficult aspects of listening is the ability to link together pieces of information to reveal the ideas of others. With proper concentration, letting go of distractions, and focus this becomes easier.

10. Wait and Watch for Non-Verbal Communication

Gestures, facial expressions, and eye-movements can all be important.

We don't just listen with our ears but also with our eyes – watch and pick up the additional information being transmitted via non-verbal communication.

Self talk

Self-talk is your internal dialogue. It's influenced by your subconscious mind, and it reveals your thoughts, beliefs, questions, and ideas.

Self-talk can be both negative and positive. It can be encouraging, and it can be distressing. Much of your self-talk depends on your personality. If you're an optimist, your self-talk may be more hopeful and positive. The opposite is generally true if you tend to be a pessimist.

Positive thinking and optimism can be effective stress management tools. Indeed, having a more positive outlook on life can provide you with some health benefits. For example, one 2010 study shows optimists have a better quality of life

If you believe your self-talk is too negative, or if you want to emphasize positive self-talk, you can learn to shift that inner dialogue. It can help you be a more positive person, and it may improve your health.

Why is it good for you?

Self-talk can enhance your performance and general well-being. For example, research shows self-talk can help athletes with performance. It may help them with endurance or to power through a set of heavy weights.

Furthermore, positive self-talk and a more optimistic outlook can have other health benefits, including:

- increased vitality
- greater life satisfaction
- improved immune function
- reduced pain
- better cardiovascular health
- better physical well-being
- reduced risk for death
- less stress and distress

It's not clear why optimists and individuals with more positive self-talk experience these benefits. However, research suggests people with positive self-talk may have mental skills that allow them to solve problems, think differently, and be more efficient at coping with hardships or challenges. This can reduce the harmful effects of stress and anxiety.

How does it work?

Before you can learn to practice more self-talk, you must first identify negative thinking. This type of thinking and self-talk generally falls into four categories:

- **Personalizing.** You blame yourself for everything.
- **Magnifying.** You focus on the negative aspects of a situation, ignoring any and all of the positive.
- **Catastrophizing.** You expect the worst, and you rarely let logic or reason persuade you otherwise.
- **Polarizing.** You see the world in black and white, or good and bad. There's nothing in between and no middle ground for processing and categorizing life events.

When you begin to recognize your types of negative thinking, you can work to turn them into positive thinking. This task requires practice and time and doesn't develop overnight. The good news is that it can be done. A 2012 study shows even small children can learn to correct negative self-talk.

What are some examples?

These scenarios are examples of when and how you can turn negative self-talk into positive self-talk. Again, it takes practice. Recognizing some of your own negative self-talk in these scenarios may help you develop skills to flip the thought when it occurs.

Negative: I'll disappoint everyone if I change my mind.

Positive: I have the power to change my mind. Others will understand.

Negative: I failed and embarrassed myself.

Positive: I'm proud of myself for even trying. That took courage.

Negative: I'm overweight and out of shape. I might as well not bother.

Positive: I am capable and strong, and I want to get healthier for me.

Negative: I let everyone on my team down when I didn't score.

Positive: Sports are a team event. We win and lose together.

Negative: I've never done this before and I'll be bad at it.

Positive: This is a wonderful opportunity for me to learn from others and grow.

Negative: There's just no way this will work.

Positive: I can and will give it my all to make it work.

How do I use this on a daily basis?

Positive self-talk takes practice if it's not your natural instinct. If you're generally more pessimistic, you can learn to shift your inner dialogue to be more encouraging and uplifting.

However, forming a new habit takes time and effort. Over time, your thoughts can shift. Positive self-talk can become your norm. These tips can help:

- **Identify negative self-talk traps.** Certain scenarios may increase your self-doubt and lead to more negative self-talk. Work events, for example, may be particularly hard. Pinpointing when you experience the most negative self-talk can help you anticipate and prepare.
- **Check in with your feelings.** Stop during events or bad days and evaluate your self-talk. Is it becoming negative? How can you turn it around?
- **Find the humor.** Laughter can help relieve stress and tension. When you need a boost for positive self-talk, find ways to laugh, such as watching funny animal videos or a comedian.
- **Surround yourself with positive people.** Whether or not you notice it, you can absorb the outlook and emotions of people around you. This includes negative and positive, so choose positive people when you can.
- **Give yourself positive affirmations.** Sometimes, seeing positive words or inspiring images can be enough to redirect your thoughts. Post small reminders in your office, in your home, and anywhere you spend a significant amount of time.

When should I seek support?

Positive self-talk can help you improve your outlook on life. It can also have lasting positive health benefits, including improved well-being and a better quality of life. However, self-talk is a habit made over a lifetime.

If you tend to have negative self-talk and err on the side of pessimism, you can learn to change it. It takes time and practice, but you can develop uplifting positive self-talk.

Self – reflection

Socrates famously said, “The unexamined life is not worth living.”

And while this dictum is certainly true, self-reflection is not necessarily an easy thing to practice. We live in an incredibly fast-paced world. Our mobile phones are constantly buzzing, social media is infinitely calling, and Netflix always has something new to binge on.

Taking the time for reflection is a bit of a lost art. Most of us, unfortunately, are living unexamined lives.

This shouldn't be the case. Few things are more valuable than self-reflection.

But what exactly is self-reflection? And what are some simple ways to practice it?

What Is Self-Reflection? A Self-Reflection Definition

Simply put, self-reflection (also known as “personal reflection”) is taking the time to think about, meditate on, evaluate, and give serious thought to your behaviors, thoughts, attitudes, motivations, and desires. It's the process of diving deep into your thoughts and emotions and motivations and determining the great, “Why?” behind them.

Personal reflection allows you to analyze your life from both a macro and micro level. At a macro level, you can evaluate the overall trajectory of your life. You can see where you're headed, determine whether you're happy with the direction, and make adjustments as necessary.

At a micro level, you can evaluate your responses to particular circumstances and events. Geil Browning, Ph.D., talks about personal reflection like this:

"Reflection is a deeper form of learning that allows us to retain every aspect of any experience, be it personal or professional — why something took place, what the impact was, whether it should happen again — as opposed to just remembering that it happened. It's about tapping into every aspect of the experience, clarifying our thinking, and honing in on what really matters to us."

Practicing self-reflection takes discipline and intentionality. It requires pressing pause on the chaos of life and simply taking the time to think and ponder about your life, which is not an easy thing for many people to do. But it's an incredibly valuable practice.

The Importance of Self-Reflection

Without self-reflection, we simply go through life without thinking, moving from one thing to the next without making time to evaluate whether things are actually going well. We don't pause to think. To analyze. To determine what is going well and what isn't working. The unfortunate result is that we often get stuck.

For example, a lack of personal reflection may lead us to stay in a job we don't like or a relationship that isn't going well.

A lack of reflection causes us to simply keep running, trying to keep up with things even if things aren't going well. We feel like we're simply trying to keep our heads above water. We end up doing the same things over and over again, even if those things aren't producing the results we had hoped for.

The Benefits of Self-Reflection

Yes, taking time for self-reflection can be difficult. It can be challenging to take the necessary time to step back and reflect on what truly matters. Nevertheless, there are numerous wonderful benefits of self-reflection and we should all make time for it.

It Allows You to Gain Perspective

Emotions can cloud your judgment and you can lose sight of what truly matters. Some things seem bigger and worse than they truly are.

Self-reflection allows you to take a step back and gain perspective on what matters and what can be ignored. It allows you to process events and achieve clarity on them.

It Helps You Respond More Effectively

Most of the time, we simply react to whatever circumstances come our way. This can lead to us saying and doing things we regret. When we're in a reactive mode, we don't take the necessary time to consider our actions and words.

Personal reflection allows you to consider the consequences of your words and actions. It also enables you to consider the best, most effective, most helpful way to act in a given situation.

It Promotes Learning and Understanding

When we go through life without pausing to think and reflect, we don't learn or gain a deeper understanding of life. We simply move from one thing to the next, never pausing to consider what valuable lessons we might learn.

Self-reflection, on the other hand, enables us to evaluate and process what we've experienced. It allows us to think deeply and ponder the meaning of our circumstances, emotions, and motivations. It enables us to live holistic, integrated, and healthy lives.

Self-Assessment Sample

So how exactly do you perform self-reflection? How do you appropriately and helpfully reflect on yourself and your life?

One easy way to perform this self-reflection exercise is to use a journal (an [online journal](#) or [print journal](#)). Simply write out these questions and then take your time to thoughtfully answer them. Make sure that you don't rush. Pause and ponder. Think deeply about what truly matters to you.

First, determine the period of time you plan to look back on. Do you want to look back on the last week? Last month? Last year? Last 5 years?

Then, begin by taking stock of what actually happened during this period. If you already keep a journal, this step will be easier for you, and perhaps a solid reminder of the value of keeping a journal.

Take a look through your planner, journal, and photos, and list out the highlights and lowlights.

Stuck? Here are a few tips:

- Did you travel anywhere this year?

- Experience any personal or family milestones?
- What changed in your relationships, work, or passion projects?

Look back at your new list of highlights and lowlights try and see if there are any patterns.

Do your highlights generally involve certain people in your life? Or any specific activities?

It can be difficult to revisit lowlights, but it is also a great way to find peace and growth.

For each lowlight, ask yourself: Was this within my control?

- **If yes**, ask yourself what you may do differently next time.
- **If no**, ask yourself how you may find peace with it.

Write down both the highlights and lowlights in your journal, then take time to reflect. What things do you want to accomplish over the next month, year, and five years? What do you want to change about your life? What things can you improve on?

Taking the time to walk through this exercise will help bring clarity and perspective to your life.

A Guided Self-Assessment

Looking back at your chosen time period, rate yourself on a scale of -5 to +5 on each of the following six areas of your life.

After selecting a number, write what made you feel that way. Expressing the emotions and feelings that you have, is a great way to have a deeper and more meaningful reflection.

- **Mind** - Do you feel clear-headed, engaged, and intellectually challenged?
- **Body** - Does your body feel healthy, nourished, and strong?
- **Soul** - Do you feel at peace and connected to the world around you?
- **Work** - Do you feel interested in and fulfilled by your work?

- **Play** - Do you feel joyful? Are you engaging in activities that bring you joy?
- **Love** - Do you feel positive about the relationships in your life?

Don't rush through this self-assessment. Take the necessary time to reflect on each area of your life. If you rush, you'll miss out on the value of self-reflection.

When Should You Practice Self-Reflection?

There are a number of times when self-reflection is particularly helpful. First, it can be useful to do it for a few minutes each week. You don't have to go through all of the questions or take hours to do it. Focus on what has been on your mind that particular week.

It can also be helpful to practice self-reflection as an end of month personal review and end of year personal review.

In other words, at the end of each month and year, do an in-depth personal review of your life. Look back over the previous days and months and analyze your life. This practice will provide you with a helpful perspective and ensure that you are living life to the fullest.

Don't Live An Unexamined Life

When we fail to reflect on our lives, we lose perspective, get caught up in things that don't matter, and often lose sight of the things that are most important. Socrates was right when he said that the unexamined life isn't worth living.

Don't live an unexamined life. Practice self-reflection today.

Steps to personal creativity

Personal creativity, as defined here, means the ability of an individual to create new, relevant ideas and perspectives. Today very little attention is given to developing the creative thinking skills of individuals within organizations.

Developing personal creativity involves the following four elements:

- understanding the process of creative thinking,

- identifying blocks to creative thinking and the skills individuals can use to increase creative response,
- using methods to get fresher ideas and solutions more often, and
- identifying a personal creative drive and life-long creative vision that will help individuals achieve their personal and professional goals.

"Innovation is often given complex definitions. We prefer the simple one: 'New Ideas that Work.'" -- Geoff Mulgan, Chief Executive of the National Endowment for Science Technology and Arts

Do you think you are a creative person? If yes, you should know most people never benefit from being creative. True creative people have a developed ability to use and observe all of their resources, senses, and knowledge to help them succeed. So take the time to "sharpen your blade," because there is a long road ahead.

There are two hindrances that can stop your creativity. They are your external and internal barriers. Things that limit your imagination or inspiration are internal barriers and examples of external obstacles are weak expression or presentation skills.

Steps to Develop Creativity

1. Stop depending on others.

Start learning to use your own resources. Look around for what you do have and how you can make the best use of those resources. This will be a little tough in the beginning, but with time, you will adjust.

This doesn't mean you will be alone and that you may disobey superiors. This just means you can build a learning capacity -- learning from others. It means making proper interactions and creating your own resources.

2. Dream, think, and create.

You have to believe you have an amazing mind full of thoughts and ideas. You need to express them. Tell them to others and see what they say. Some of your ideas may seem funny to you, or inappropriate, but that doesn't matter. It's been said a man is as big as his/her dreams. So, don't stop dreaming and when it's time to give shape to your dreams, express your best approach.

3. Surround yourself with excellence.

Pablo Picasso said, "Good artists copy, great artists steal." That means, good people learn from better people, and better people learn from the best. You can't develop your creativity when you're surrounded by those who keep on discouraging and distracting you. So have some real talented people around you, and learn from them. This is not only about surrounding yourself with talented people, it's about knowledge. Don't limit yourself. Always study and experience a variety of new things. This can propel your creativity forward.

4. Look for some non-value-added jobs.

Include in your daily schedule, hour or more to listen to your hobbies. It can be gardening, collecting souvenirs, painting or anything you like. Maybe these things aren't going to benefit you financially, but it will definitely help wake up your creativity.

5. Fight your fear of failure.

The fear that you might make a huge mistake or fail in your efforts to do something new, can paralyze your creativity. You need to remember mistakes will always be there -- these are simply part of the creativity process. Many great minds struggle with fear of failure, but they never gave up and they kept trying until they succeeded.

However, to overcome your fear of failure; analyze every potential outcome, make a contingency plan and think about the worst possible scenario. This will help you to regain confidence and start over with full confidence.

6. Expand your comfort zone.

People are often stuck in their comfort zone and afraid to try new things in life. That can be a huge problem because when we have the same routine -- our creativity will just die. We need to change things and allow different adventures to boost our creativity.

You don't need to climb the highest mountain, but you can do some simple things like going to visit a nearby city, talk to a stranger, read a book from genre that you never read.

7. Keep your stress away -- enjoy life.

Don't let yourself to be down about your failures or stressed out. Take a long drive by yourself, hang out with your friends and family or just go to the movies! All these things will help you get back on track.

When we are feeling down, our creativity is stuck inside us and it hard to think of any new idea in that state of mind. That is why it's important to fight it and just enjoy life.

Public Speaking

Public speaking is important in both business, education, and the public arena. There are many benefits to speaking in public whether you're an individual or a business.

A Public Speaking Definition

What is public speaking? Basically, it's a presentation that's given live before an audience. Public speeches can cover a wide variety of different topics. The goal of the speech may be to educate, entertain, or influence the listeners. Often, visual aids in the form of an electronic slideshow are used to supplement the speech. This makes it more interesting to the listeners.

A public speaking presentation is different from an online presentation. The online presentation is available any time. A public speech is typically limited to a specific time or place. Online presentations often use slideshows. Or they use pre-recorded videos of a speaker. This includes recordings of a live public speaking presentation).

Because speaking in public is done before a live audience, you need to consider some special factors. We'll touch on those shortly. Now you've got an understanding of the meaning of public speaking so let's take a quick look at the history of (and the importance of) public speaking.

A History of Public Speaking

What is the history of public speaking? And why is public speaking important?

There's a good chance that there's been public speech, in one form or another, as long as there've been people. But most public speaking experts involved with public speaking in business communication, trace the origins of modern public speaking back to ancient Greece and Rome.

Of course, those societies didn't have slideshows to help with public speech. But they did have a need for speaking in public. As a result, they developed public speaking methods that are still studied today.

The ancient Greeks used public speech primarily to praise or persuade others. At one point, all Greek citizens had the right to suggest or oppose laws during their assemblies. This resulted in a need for skilled public speakers. Speaking in public became a desirable skill and was taught. Public speaking in the time of the Greeks was called rhetoric.

Later, when Rome came to power, speaking in public was used during the Roman senate sessions. The Romans adopted the public speaking rhetoric methods of the Greeks. In fact, most public speaking teachers of the time were Greek

The Latin style of public speaking was popular in the U.S. and Europe until the mid-20th century. After World War II, a less formal and more conversational speaking style of speaking became popular. Also, electronic tools became available to enhance public presentations. Towards the end of the 20th century, those electronic tools migrated to the computer. They evolved into the computer software tools. PowerPoint, is one of those tools that we know and use today.

Don't be fooled, though. Even though today's public speeches are less formal, they still need to be well organized. More on that, later. Now let's take a look at the importance of public speaking.

The Importance of Public Speaking

If you ask most people, they'll probably say they don't like public speech. They may even admit to being afraid of it since fear of public speaking is a very

common fear. Or they may just be shy or introverted. For those reasons, many people avoid speaking in public if they can. If you're one of those people who avoid speaking in public, you're missing out.

Over the years, public speaking in communication has played a major role in education, government, and business. Words have the power to inform, persuade, educate, and even entertain. And the spoken word can be even more powerful than the written word in the hands of the right speaker.

Whether you're a small business owner, or a student, you'll benefit from improving your public speaking skills. Some benefits to speaking in public include:

- improves confidence
- better research skills
- stronger deductive skills
- ability to advocate for causes
- and more

Speaking in public is especially important for businesses to market their offers. This allows them to get their message in front of potential customers. Sales people and executives are often expected to have good public speaking skills.

How to Become Better at Public Speaking (5 Quick Tips)

Okay, so now you understand the benefits of public speaking. You might be a little more interested in the topic. Still, you might think it's not for you. Maybe you gave a speech once and it didn't go well. Maybe you're afraid of speaking in public. Or maybe you think you don't have a natural ability for giving speeches.

The truth is that speaking in public is a skill. And you can learn any skill. While some people may have more natural speaking ability than others, anyone can learn to be a better public speaker. It just takes some know-how and some effort.

To help you become better at giving public speeches, we'll take a look at these five areas:

1. writing the speech
2. overcoming a fear of speaking

3. practicing the speech
4. preparing your presentation slide designs
5. giving the speech

We'll start with writing the speech.

1. Write an Effective Speech

The first thing you'll want to do is work on writing a well-organized, engaging speech. Because even a great speaking voice or a great deal of charisma isn't enough if your material isn't any good.

2. Overcome the Fear of Speaking

Fear of public speaking is very real and can hold you back if you let it. If you don't feel confident when giving your speech, your listeners may pick up on that. This can make your presentation less effective. Fortunately, there are some techniques to help manage the fear of speaking in public. They also help you become more confident.

3. Practice the Speech

Even if you're not afraid of speaking in public, practice helps you give a more effective speech. If you're in a rush, you may be tempted to skip practicing your speech to save time. While skipping practice may seem like a good idea, it's really not.

Practicing your speech improves your public presentation skills. It also increases your familiarity with the presentation. As a result, your speech will go smoothly.

4. Prepare Your Presentation Slide Designs

Your slide design needs to be on point. You'll want to make sure it looks professional and is easy to read. Luckily, you can find plenty of modern and professional presentation templates on Envato Elements and GraphicRiver. Learn how to get your ideas formed into a powerful presentation that'll move your audience.

Don't forget to make good use of tools like PowerPoint, Google Slides, or Keynote. The right template for your slide deck can make a huge difference in your presentation.

5. Give the Speech

You've written a good speech. You feel more confident about giving a speech in public, and you've practiced. You're ready to actually give the speech. There are some tips and tricks you can use on the day of your speech to make it go more smoothly, though. Remember, you're giving a presentation before a live audience at a specific place and time. So, you've got some concerns about the speaking venue that those who give online presentations don't have to worry about. Some common concerns for public speakers include:

- Will the audience be able to hear me?
- Does the venue have the equipment I need?
- Are there enough seats for all my listeners?

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