BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS FOR UNIVERSITY EXAM, 2023

TIPS FOR THE EXAM

07/02/2023

Dear Student,

You should prepare for your BC semester exam through the following steps:

Step 1 : Go through all PPTs unit-wise once.
Step 2 : Read the notes sent herewith once quickly.
Step 3 : Focus on each section one after another :

A : (Must-Read Notes)
B/C: (Blank Filling &Short Answer Questions: 2x10 nos. =20 marks)
D:(Answers of medium length – 6x8 nos.=48 marks)
D (Long Answers: 16x2 no. = 32 marks)

You should study the sections at least twice before the final study for the BC exam .

You must manage your time in the exam hall properly to score good marks. You must complete a short answer question in 3 ½ minutes, a medium long answer in 10 minutes, and a long answer in 30 minutes. This way your performance will average out to a good score.

Wish you an excellent performance in Business Communication Paper.

Bijoy Bal

PS : A hard copy of these Notes is available in the library for Xeroxing as a hard copy may be more convenient for the purpose of exam. preparation.

CONTENTS

SECTION - A

MUST-READ NOTES

1. Group Discussion:

Group discussion (GD) is basically an interactive oral process. Here, the exchange of ideas, thoughts, and feelings takes place through oral communication. Each member of the group listens to other members as well as gives his or her views orally. He or she has to use clear language, persuasive style, and has to use voice and gesture effectively. This means that participants need to be proficient in oral communication in order to take effective part in a group discussion.

GD is a group process, that is, it involves both person-to-person as well as person-to-group interactions. Every group member has to develop goal-oriented or group oriented interaction. Effective interactions in discussion should lead to unification between the activities of individuals as a work team, and towards the achievement of common group goals. A participant should be concerned with the ego needs of other participants, unity of the group, and the overall objectives of the discussion.

GD is systematic. Each participant knows the topic in advance and has the opportunity to use his/her experience and knowledge to understand and analyse the topic. The exchange of ideas in GD takes place in a systematic and structured way. The participants are seated face-to-face and each participant gets an opportunity to express his/her views and comment on the views expressed by other members of the group. A formal speech making or group procedure may follow in order to ensure optimal participation.

GD is a purposeful and goal-oriented activity. The goals or objectives of a discussion are generally decided before the discussion takes place. This means that each participant is usually aware of the purpose or purposes of the discussion in advance. A GD may help achieve group goals as well as individual needs. Group goals are common and shared by each participant whereas individual needs may be the personal goals of the members of the group.

To conclude, we may define group discussion as a form of systematic and purposeful oral process characterised by the formal and structured exchange of views on a particular topic, issue, problem, or situation for developing information and understanding essential for decision making or problem solving.

Group Discussion and Debate

Group discussion differs from debate in nature, approach, and procedure. Debates are intended to advocate a particular point of view while GDs raise a particular issue for a positive exchange of views. Unlike debate, which is competitive in nature, GD is basically a cooperative group process. A debate follows a limited approach because the speaker must argue either in favour or against a given point of view. On the other hand, in GD the approach is not limited to the support of a single point of view.

Although both debate and GD are formal situations, debate is more formal in procedure than GD. In order to ensure that all facts, viewpoints, suggestions, or solutions are considered before a decision is taken, a flexible procedure is followed in GD. Moreover, decision in a debate depends on voting while a GD is designed to reach group consensus.

Importance of Group Discussion Skills

The ability to take effective part in GD is one of the most important skills that contribute to professional success. Whether one is a student, a job seeker, a professional engineer, or a company executive, one needs effective GD skills. A student may have to take part in academic discussions, student meetings, group deliberation, interactive classroom sessions, or selection GDs for admission to professional courses. A job seeker may be required to face selection GDs as part of the selection process. Professionals in different fields also have to take part in professional meetings and discussions. All these situations

Group discussions aid in problem solving, decision making, and personality assessment.

require the ability to make a significant contribution to group deliberation and help the group in the process of decision making.

The importance of GD has increased in recent times due to its increasing role as an effective tool in (a) problem solving, (b) decision making, and (c) personality assessment. In most of the organisations, companies, and institutions, group discussion aids in problem solving and decision making. When a problem situation arises, the concerned people discuss it. They exchange their perceptions about the problem and its possible solutions. The alternative solutions are discussed and analysed and the best option is chosen by the group. Similarly, whenever there is a need to take a decision in a particular case, the matter is first discussed by a group of people and the different aspects are analysed, interpreted, and evaluated. This leads to effective decisions.

GD is also used as a technique for personality assessment of candidates for job selection or admission to professional courses. Groups of six to eight members are formed, and are given a topic to discuss within a limited time (generally 30 to 45 minutes). The given topic may be an opinion, a problem or a case. The members of the selection committee closely evaluate the different skills reflected by the candidates and those who reflect leadership qualities and emerge as natural group leaders are normally shortlisted for a personal interview.

Thus, all of us need effective GD skills. It can do wonders for us and may ensure academic success, popularity and power in our organisation, a job offer that we always waited for, or admission to a course that is going to change our life. Therefore, it is important to be able take part in a GD effectively and confidently. Participants should know how to persuade their group members, how to reflect confidence while speaking, how to reflect leadership qualities, and how to make the group achieve its goals. They should have the ability to take initiatives during a discussion, present their personal views in an effective way, develop their ideas logically, analyse and respond to the views expressed by other members, and emerge as the natural leader of the group.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Effective group discussions achieve group goals and aid in decision making. However, a large number of group discussions end without a group consensus. It is therefore, important to know the characteristics that make a group discussion successful. Successful group discussions share some or all of the following features:

Successful GDs share some or all of the seven features: agreement on group goals, goal oriented interaction, agreement on procedures, cooperative and friendly atmosphere, use of effective communication techniques, equitable distribution of participation, and shared leadership.

Agreement on Group Goals An effective GD begins with a purpose, which is shared and understood by all the group members. As the participants know why they are taking part in the discussion, they can concentrate better and can be more active in realising the group goals. They can smoothly work from a general purpose to specific goals. Moreover, the agreement on group goals brings clarity and provides direction to the group.

Goal Oriented Interaction Successful discussions motivate group members to have goal oriented interaction. Effective GD members are not only aware of the group goals but also work towards the attainment of these goals. As they are more interested in achieving these group goals than promoting their personal interests, they develop and promote meaningful interactions that aid in implementing the purpose of the discussion.

Agreement on Procedures Participants of a successful GD develop procedures to guide them. They decide how they will organise the presentation of individual views, how an exchange of the views will take place, and how they will reach a group consensus. In order to ensure attainment of group goals, they may develop norms of interaction. If the participants of a GD fail to do so, there may be anarchy and the more assertive and aggressive members might dominate and monopolise the entire discussion. This may make the entire process meaningless.

Cooperative and Friendly Atmosphere An important characteristic of successful GDs is the development of a cooperative, friendly, and cordial atmosphere where disagreements do exist but they do not lead to serious conflicts. Members cooperate with each other as they understand and appreciate different points of views and try to pool them together in order to develop group consensus. There may be direct but goal-oriented confrontation as each member presents his/her points of view as well as reservations and differences. However, these different positions, opinions, ideas, and approaches enrich the process of discussion and broaden the horizon of the group.

Use of Effective Communication Techniques The success of a GD depends on an effective use of communication techniques. Effective GD members keep the channels of communication open and speak clearly and precisely using simple words, short sentences, correct articulation, and appropriate pronunciation. They are direct and specific and try to avoid and check barriers to group communication. Moreover, they use non-verbal communication tactfully and interpret the body language of other participants. As they are active team listeners, they encourage others to speak.

Equitable Distribution of Participation An effective GD ensures an equitable distribution of participation by all. Each member is important and no one is allowed to dominate or monopolise the discussion. As optimal participation by all is the group-goal, members encourage each other to participate. Reluctant and shy members are drawn into the discussion.

Shared Leadership There is generally no elected or formal leader in a GD. The leadership functions are shared and performed by the various members of the group. As there is a willingness on the part of each participant to reach to a group consensus, they come forward to perform leadership tasks such as starting the discussion, keeping the discussion going, encouraging non-participants to speak, making periodic summaries, checking the group progress, and so on.

SELECTION GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Group discussion has emerged as an effective and potentially powerful technique for evaluating personality traits of candidates for job selection or admission to professional courses. The GD test occupies a major position in the employment procedure of nearly all industrial concerns, public limited organisations, and multinational companies. More than any other selection method, GD tests are relied upon for making hiring decisions. These selection GDs may vary from a brief discussion on a simple topic to an exhaustive interactive discussion of a controversial issue or an actual company problem. However, they all intend to evaluate the depth and range of the candidate's knowledge, his or her ability to orally present that knowledge in a convincing manner, and his/her effective group communication, leadership, and team management skills.

There are four major areas of evaluation in selection GDs: subject knowledge, oral communication skills, leadership skills, and team management.

Subject Knowledge

As all participants must possess a thorough understanding of the topic on which they are supposed to speak, subject knowledge is the first requirement of effective participation in a group discussion. Participants need to have a fair amount of knowledge on a wide range of subjects. They should know all about national and international affairs, burning social and economic topics, scientific and environmental issues, key newsmakers, controversial topics, and a lot more. Although a GD test is not designed to assess the ability of the candidate's general awareness of the environment around him or to test his knowledge of current events, he/she is expected to be aware of such matters of everyday observation or experience as may be expected of an educated person. People with depth and range of knowledge are always sought after in dynamic companies and organisations.

The topics for GD tests may include interesting and relevant ideas pertaining to society, culture, polity, economy, scientific and technical research; social, economic, political or environmental problems; controversial issues; or case studies. The best way to keep one abreast of latest events and national as well as international developments is to read daily newspapers, good magazines and periodicals, watch news bulletins and informative programmes on television. Moreover, we should use the Internet to improve our knowledge about recent developments in different areas. The World Wide Web is a vast database of current authentic materials that presents information in multimedia form and reacts instantly to a user's input.

Subject knowledge also implies the ability to analyse facts or information in a systematic way to correlate them with personal experiences and exposure. It is this ability to analyse existing knowledge and assimilate new ideas that can give birth to bright and brilliant ideas and schemes. In all group discussions, people with ideas carry the day. A person putting forward new ideas that may work, will be accepted as the natural leader of the group. During a selection GD, participants are supposed to analyse the topic and give their interpretation of it. Examiners will evaluate each person's contribution to the discussion or the ideas put forward by them based on its relevance to the topic, original approach, and wide perspective.

Oral Communication Skills

The participants in a group discussion must possess not only subject knowledge but also the ability to present that knowledge in an effective way. As the exchange of ideas in a group discussion takes place through speech, one of the prerequisites of success in group discussion is the ability to speak confidently and convincingly. Infact, a vital part of every successful group discussion is high quality oral communication. The members of the selection committee closely evaluate the oral communication skills of the candidates. They generally assess the oral competence of a candidate in terms of team listening, appropriate language, clarity of expression, positive speech attitudes and adjustments, clear articulation, and effective non-verbal communication.

Listening Skills As all comments during a group discussion must be heard and understood, listening skills are probably one of the most important communication skills that one needs in order to be successful in a GD. When a person takes part in a group discussion, he/she cannot contribute to the stated purposes of the communication unless he/she is listening properly. By participating as an active listener, he/she may contribute effectively to the groups deliberations. Moreover, active participation as a listener in a group and its discussions and deliberations make a person a successful leader because a good leader is a good listener.

Appropriateness of Language During a GD, the selection panel judges a candidate's grasp of language and ability to use appropriate words and expressions. Appropriateness of language demands that there should be no errors of grammar, or usage and there is precision in the use of words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. Participants must be certain that they are expressing their ideas precisely and exactly so that their listener is able to understand them without confusion and misunderstanding. They should be simple and concise, avoiding difficult words, unfamiliar phrases, or flowery language.

Clarity of Expression Clarity is the art of making your meaning clear to your audience. The secret of clear expression is clear thinking. Sloppy, illogical, or incomplete thinking may cause lack of clarity during a GD. A confused person is likely to confuse others. So, it is essential to think clearly and positively. In addition, direct, clear and specific language should be used during a GD, rather than roundabout constructions, indirect expressions, exaggeration, artificial eloquence, and ornamentation in speech.

Positive Speech Attitudes The selection panel also evaluates speech attitudes and adjustments. Is the participant a responsible group communicator or a careless speaker? Is he/she mature and dignified or immature and apologetic? Is he/she positive towards his/her listeners or antagonistic to them? Is he/she a relaxed speaker or a tense one? Is he/she sincere to other speakers or just indifferent? The examiners closely watch these aspects. So, it is important to reflect positive speech attitudes and adjustments during a GD.

Clear Articulation The quality of a person's voice and articulation plays an important role during a GD. A participant can easily impress the other members of the discussion group as well as the selection panel if he/she has a cheerful voice with good articulation. Avoid a slow or weak voice, a monotonous tone, and indistinct articulation. Do not speak too fast. Be slow, clear, and distinct.

Non-verbal Clues As non-verbal clues such as eye contact, body movements, gestures, facial expressions, and so on can speak louder than words, examiners closely watch the non-verbal behaviour of candidates. They generally evaluate the body language cues of candidates to determine personality factors such as nervousness, cooperation, frustration, weakness, insecurity, self-confidence, defensiveness, and so forth. So, it is important to be careful while using non-verbal messages. However, one should recognise the power of non-verbal messages and use them effectively. A person's body language must reflect his/her self-confidence, cooperation, positive attitude, openness of mind, and sincerity.

Leadership Skills

A candidate's success in a GD test will depend not only on his/her subject knowledge and oral skills but also on his/her ability to provide leadership to the group. The examiners evaluate a candidate's unique set of personal skills, which allow him/her to prove himself/herself as a natural leader in a GD. Thus, it is necessary to reflect the qualities of leadership in order to create the right impression on one's examiners. Adaptability, analysis, assertiveness, composure, self-confidence, decision making, discretion, initiative, objectivity, patience, and persuasiveness are some of the leadership skills that are tremendously useful in proving oneself as a natural leader in a GD.

Leadership functions during a GD include initiative, analysis, assertiveness, self-confidence, objectivity, patience and composure, persuasiveness, and motivation.

In every group discussion, there is an element of leadership. We can define leadership in GD on a functional basis. Thus, anything that contributes to goal achievement can be considered a leadership function. Although leadership functions are shared in GD, each participant should try to be the first one to perform the function whenever a need arises. Leadership functions during a GD include the following:

Initiative Initiative is a vital element that forms the basis of leadership during a GD. As there is no formal leader to conduct the discussion, someone in the group has to take the initiative to perform the required leadership function. A person can display his/her ability to take appropriate initiative by performing the following leadership functions:

- initiate the proceedings of the discussion;
- create an atmosphere in which members feel free to participate;
- promote positive group interactions;
- point out areas of agreement and disagreement;
- clarify points when required;
- keep the discussion on the right track; and
- lead the discussion to a positive and successful conclusion within the time allotted.

Analysis The ability to analyse a situation, a problem, or a condition is the mark of a successful leader. Those who lack an analytical bent of mind and rational thinking cannot be successful in a GD. A leader should be able to analyse the given topic for discussion in order to develop his/her own point of view. His/her capacity to analyse the subject in a convincing manner and present all the facts logically can help in carrying the rest of the group with him/her. Moreover, the leader should listen carefully to each participant in order to analyse his or her opinions and views. A positive analysis of all the views, suggestions, proposals, and solutions exchanged during the discussion ı lead to the identification of common elements that may form the basis of group consensus.

Assertiveness A leader has to be bold and assertive without being offensive, aggressive, and rigid. If a person is mild and weak, he/she will be too eager to give up in the face of opposition and obstacles. In fact, a weak, submissive, and passive person can never be successful as a group leader. Assertiveness is a desirable leadership quality that can make a person successful during a GD. If one is assertive, one can tackle obstacles and handicaps effectively. Assertiveness can help in bringing order to a chaotic group, encourage balanced participation, deal with conflict effectively, and lead the discussion to a positive end. By taking a firm stand, an assertive leader can control members of the group who are more interested in sabotaging the discussion rather than contributing to its success. It is always desirable that the leader does not take a rigid stand but he/she must be able to assert himself during a GD.

Self-confidence Self-confidence is the hallmark of a leader. Selection experts and examiners always look for a candidate with a strong but realistic level of confidence. So, it is important to remember to talk with confidence and self-assurance. A participant's confidence will not only impress the examiners but also help him/her lead the group and instill confidence in each of its members. A leader can tackle problems with confidence and find workable solutions with ease. However, he/she should avoid being boastful and pretending that he/she knows everything and has a solution for every problem. He/she should not forget that overconfidence causes failures whereas under-confidence leads to lack of productivity.

Objectivity Objectivity is the quality of being impartial, rational, and factual. In order to be successful as a group leader, one needs to view a situation or a problem dispassionately and objectively. In other words the leader's approach should be systematic, scientific, and realistic. As group discussion is an exchange of views and opinions on a specific topic, there would be conflicting views and heated arguments. The leader should not become sentimental because if he/she gets emotional and excited, his/her ideas may get jumbled and arguments will become dogmatic and self-appointed. The leader can overcome opposition by adopting a logical, rational, and practical viewpoint, and utilising concrete and foolproof illustrations and examples. As he/she should be rational rather than emotional, irrational ideas and emotional bias should not influence him/her. A leader's ideas and arguments should be fully backed by relevant facts and figures, this will give validity and appeal to his/her arguments.

Patience and Composure Patience is the key to successful leadership in GD. A successful leader never loses his cool and is not easily provoked. Even in the face of extreme provocation, the leader keeps a patient profile. So, during the GD it is essential to keep one's cool and not get provoked. Handling a group of heterogeneous elements requires a lot of patience and composure. It is always difficult to bring a group of people together to discuss an issue amicably because a few in the group would try to monopolise the group and create problems. In such a condition, if the leader wants to bring the discussion to a successful conclusion, he/she has to tackle the situation with tact and patience. His/her ability to keep cool and maintain his/her composure despite provocation will help bring together people with different temperaments and strike a consensus in the GD.

GROUP DISCUSSION STRATEGIES

As group discussion is a systematic and purposeful oral process characterised by the formal and structured exchange of views on a particular topic, issue, problem, or situation, it should be well planned and well conducted. Seven strategies have been described here for participating in group discussions.

Getting the GD Started

As mentioned before, there is generally no elected or formal leader in a GD. So, there is no one to get the GD started. In a selection GD, the group, which may consist of six to ten persons, is given a topic to discuss within 30 to 45 minutes. After announcing the topic, the total GD time, and explaining the general guidelines and procedures governing the GD, the examiner withdraws to the background leaving the group completely free to carry on with the discussion on its own without any outside interference.

Use appropriate strategies for effective participation in group discussions.

In the absence of a designated leader to initiate the proceedings of the discussion, the group is likely to waste time in cross talks, low-key conversations, cross-consultations, asides, and so on. The confusion may last until someone in the group takes an assertive position and restores the chaos into order. It could be you.

In order to get the GD started, the assertive, natural leader will have to remind the group of its goal and request them to start the discussion without wasting time. A few examples of the opening lines are given below:

- Well friends, may I request your kind attention? I am sure all of us are keen to begin the GD and complete it within the allotted time. Let me remind you that we have only thirty minutes to complete the task. So, let us get started.
- My dear friends, may I have your attention please? As you all know, we have to complete the discussion in 45 minutes and we have already used up five minutes. I think we should start the discussion now.
- Hello everybody. I am sorry to interrupt but I have something very important to say. We are here to discuss the topic — "Reduction of IIM fees is a retrograde step"—and the time given to us is just 30 minutes. Let us begin, shall we?
- Hello friends! May I have your kind attention for a few seconds, please? I am sure you will agree that we are here to exchange our views on the reservation policy of the government and we have to complete the discussion within 35 minutes. As we have already used up more than five minutes, we should begin the discussion now. Shall we start?

Once the GD has been successfully initiated, the leader should propose the procedures to be followed during the discussion. The procedures may include time management, order of speaking, length and nature of individual contributions, and nature of group interactions. It is very important to follow a plan that includes time for every individual speaker as well as for the exchange of views, suggestions, and solutions. All members of the group should be in agreement on these pertinent items. While trying to get the GD started, the leader should attempt to create an atmosphere in which all members feel free to participate.

Contributing Systematically

The success of a group discussion depends on systematic contribution by each member of the group. In order to make systematic contributions to the group deliberations, all the group members should understand the process of reflective thinking. They should be able to identify the stage of the discussion (that is, individual stage, where each member has to systematically present his or her views without any disturbance; or group interaction stage, where members have to exchange views and opinions in order to reach to a group consensus) and contribute accordingly. When a participant makes a contribution, he/she should ensure that his/her contribution

- relates to what has previously been said by other members,
- focuses on the theme of the discussion,
- deals with the specific point under consideration,
- is directed towards the overall objective of the GD, and
- is as per the requirement of the particular stage of discussion.

Moreover, contributions must reflect the depth of understanding and knowledge of the subject as well as the participant's ability to analyse it. Each participant must see the topic from his/her perspective so that his/her background and personal experiences give it a new interpretation, which may prove valuable to the group for taking a decision.

Creating a Friendly Cooperative Atmosphere

Creating an atmosphere conducive to positive discussion is the responsibility of each member of the group. A friendly, cooperative atmosphere encourages effective and positive deliberations that lead to successful conclusion. Although a GD is a serious and formal occasion, there is no need to make it too serious and boring. It is desirable to make it an enjoyable experience for all. Members of a group discussion can do much to create a conducive and friendly atmosphere. The following suggestions may be helpful in this regard:

- All participants should help the group to make the discussion lively and pleasurable.
- Participants should develop a consensus regarding group standards early in the discussion.
- In order to maintain friendly attitudes, participants should demonstrate a sense of fair play by treating others as they would like themselves to be treated.
- Participants must conduct themselves with decorum and dignity.
- All participants must show interest in what others say.
- Every participant should make sure that other members feel free to express their views, opinions, comments, and feelings.
- Members must be kept informed of their own progress and they should be appreciated for contributing effectively to the group goals.
- Participants should avoid being too formal with each other.

Moving the Discussion Along

A GD without a leader may drift without a proper direction. A leader should ensure that the GD moves along the right direction so that it is able to complete the task within the fixed time limit. He/she should make sure that every member of the group gets some time to present his/her views and no one member monopolises the discussion. No one should be allowed to do all the talking because the purpose of a GD is to exchange views, and not to hear just one person. If someone tries to take too much time, the leader may politely thank the aggressive member but firmly ask him/her to give the next person a chance to speak.

It is very important to avoid any digression that may sidetrack the group. The leader may volunteer to avoid digressions and bring order out of chaos by requesting the members to see reason and come to the point. The following are some examples of how to do this:

- I do understand your point but I think we should stick to the main subject at hand.
- I see what you mean but it would be better if we limit our discussion to the given subject.
- That is all well said but I do not find a link between what you want to say and the subject in hand. Could you please return to the main point?
- That is not the main point under discussion. Let us come to the main subject.

The leader may use other techniques to keep the GD on the right track. He/she can emphasise the point that everyone has to keep the objectives of the GD in mind and adhere to the time schedule. He/she may summarise or clarify the points already put forward by the group members and thereby focus their attention on the main objective of the GD and keep the discussion from slowing down.

Promoting Optimal Participation

As the success of a GD largely depends on the involvement of each member of the group, the leader should promote optimal participation. As every member has a resource potential that can be used to make the discussion successful, the leader should encourage non-participants to speak. With patience, restraint, and proper motivation, he/she can inspire even the shy and reluctant members to give their views on the given subject. It will not only reflect his/her leadership qualities but also lead the discussion to a successful conclusion. Leaders may find the following suggestions quite helpful in this regard:

- Make each member feel that his or her contribution is necessary to make the discussion successful.
- Encourage each member to make his or her maximum contribution.
- Recognise members of the group who have not talked and request them to express their views.
- When a member makes a contribution, the leader may request the non-participating members to comment on it.
- Direct some relevant questions related to the topic to reticent members.
- Try to control talkative members.
- Make talkative members take responsibility for getting non-participants to speak.
- Avoid pushing the GD too fast, and take care of slow speakers.

Handling Conflict

One important aspect of participating in any group discussion is dealing with conflict. As a group always tends to be heterogeneous, conflict is natural in any group activity and may sometimes be desirable for the success of a group process. Expect differences of opinions during a GD but do not let these conflicting opinions go against the basic purpose of a GD. Do not be a silent spectator when two or more people are in conflict. Although conflict resolution is a complex art, a leader needs to remember just a few simple tips in order to handle conflict during a GD. The following suggestions will help leaders deal with conflict during a GD:

- Maintain a friendly attitude and try to create an atmosphere in which people respect conflicting opinions as they feel free to express their opinions and expect others to talk freely. This will generate goodwill and take care of conflicts within the group.
- Strictly follow the discussion procedure that has been decided earlier in the discussion.
- Avoid conflicts between persons and not conflict between ideas.
- Clarify conflicting statements given by group members so that they do not lead to personal differences.
- Provide positive guidance to the group by making occasional summaries.
- When two people are in conflict, they should both be encouraged to express themselves completely and then their views can be summarised. This will satisfy the egos of both the group members.
- Help establish an attitude of critical objectivity.

Effecting Closure

In the absence of a designated leader to close the discussion formally, the group is likely to continue until the examiner announces that the time is over. Every member has to see that the GD ends with positive conclusions within the given time limit. In order to complete the GD within the allotted time, the leader has to remind the group of its goal and request them to reach to a group consensus. He/she should do the following himself/herself or get them done by other group members in order to develop group consensus:

- Summarise the progress made by the group.
- Put forward the common points of agreement.
- Indicate the differences that need to be resolved.
- Review decisions/suggestions/views already decided.

Once the closure of a GD is successfully initiated, the leader may propose the consensus views, if any. It is not essential that every GD ends with a consensus but every GD must end with some positive conclusion. The leader must emphasise the points of agreement in order to indicate a common viewpoint regarding the topic.

BUSINESS PRESENTATIONS

Oral presentations differ from other forms of oral communication such as speeches and debates. Although speeches and presentations share several common features, there is a thin dividing line between the two. Speeches are intended to celebrate an occasion, to felicitate a person, to welcome or bid farewell to someone, or to inaugurate a function, while oral presentations raise a particular issue for discussion.

Importance of Presentation Skills

We may not all be professional public speakers but we may have to make a presentation at some point of time or the other. Whether one is a student, a professional engineer, an academician, or a business executive, one may have to make oral presentations in front of one's colleagues or professional peers. A professional student may be required to make presentations in the form of progress reports, student seminars, research presentations, and so on. Professionals in different fields, including scientists and engineers, have also to make oral reports, present seminars, deliver project presentations, or present a proposal orally. Similarly, business executives may have to introduce a new product that their company has launched, to present a new sales plan that they want others to know about, or they may just have a brilliant idea that they would like to share with their colleagues.

Thus, of the many skills that contribute to professional success, none is more important than the ability to communicate orally in front of a group of people. Business people rank oral presentation skills among the most important factors responsible for their success. Oral presentation is a tool of professional and business interaction. Infact, in some organisations, institutions, or universities, recruitment is made on the basis of a selection process, which involves oral presentation in the form of seminar presentation, short lectures, business presentations or some other form of oral presentation.

A good presentation can do wonders for a person; it may help in getting a lucrative job offer from the company he/she always wanted to join, he/she may get a big business deal or the promotion he/she had been waiting for. The list is long. On the other hand, a poor presentation of ideas not only reduces the professional image of the person presenting it, but may result in major business or personal loss.

Therefore, the ability to deliver an effective presentation is essential for all of us. We should know how to present our ideas in a persuasive way, how to make our audience interested in our presentation, how to use appropriate visuals during our presentation, and how to reflect confidence while speaking. A person making a presentation should have the ability to begin his presentation in an effective way, develop his/her ideas logically and conclude his/her presentation with something memorable. He/she needs to understand the basic elements of an effective presentation—the 4 Ps, that is, Plan, Prepare, Practice, and Perform.

PLANNING THE PRESENTATION

An oral presentation is the formal, structured, and systematic presentation of a message to an audience and it involves conveying a lot of information in a limited time. It should, therefore, be planned well in advance so that the material is delivered effectively. Planning the presentation is, thus, the most important element. It helps the presenter

Planning a presentation involves defining the purpose, analysing the audience, analysing the occasion, and choosing a suitable title.

- know the audience;
- stimulate the interest of the audience;
- be sensitive to the needs and expectations of the audience;
- strike up interaction with his/her immediate audience in as many ways as possible;
- know his/her purpose;
- analyse the occasion;
- fit the material to the time at his/her disposal; and
- select and narrow a topic for his/her presentation.

Planning an oral presentation, thus, involves purpose identification, audience analysis, analysing the occasion, and the process of selecting and narrowing the topic of presentation. The following suggestions will help in planning well:

I. Define the Purpose

Planning a presentation should start by defining its purpose. What is the purpose of this presentation? This is the most important question that needs to be answered in order to make a presentation focused, with clear objectives. A general purpose as well as a specific purpose should be identified. General purposes include:

- To inform—to share information
- To persuade—to change behaviour, attitude, belief, values, and so on
- To demonstrate—to help listeners know how to do something

Identifying the specific purpose of a presentation involves identifying an observable measurable action that the audience should be able to take, and using one idea that matches audience needs, knowledge, expectations, and interests. It should focus on audience behaviour and restate the speech topic.

Study the following examples:

- At the end of my presentation, the audience will be able to describe three advantages of using HP PrecisionScan LT software.

(Informative presentation)

- At the end of my presentation, the audience will believe that the HP PrecisionScan LT is the best scanning software.

(Persuasive presentation)

- At the end of my presentation, the audience will be able to use HP PrecisionScan LT software.

(Demonstrative presentation)

2. Analyse the Audience

The desired results cannot be achieved from a presentation unless the person making the presentation knows his/her audience well. Audience analysis is an integral part of the process of oral presentation. It includes identifying audience characteristics, analysing audience needs and expectations, and identifying factors for getting and maintaining audience attention.

> Lenny Laskowski, *an international professional speaker and an expert on presentation skills, has used the word A-U-D-I-E-N-C-E as an acronym, and has defined some general audience analysis categories that all surveys should include. The 'acronym' is reproduced below:*
>
> ***A_udience**—Who are the members? How many will be at the event?*
> ***U_nderstanding**—What is their knowledge about the topic I will be addressing?*
> ***D_emographics**—What is their age, sex, educational background, and so forth?*
> ***I_nterest**—Why will they be at this event? Who asked them to be there?*
> ***E_nvironment**—Where will I stand when I speak? Will everyone be able to see me?*
> ***N_eeds**—What are the listener's needs? What are my needs as a speaker? What are the needs of the person who wants me to speak?*
> ***C_ustomised**—How can I custom fit my message to this audience?*
> ***E_xpectations**—What do the listeners expect to learn from me?*

Identify Audience Characteristics In order to know the audience, the presenter needs to identify their basic characteristics. He/she should try to gather as much background information about his/her listeners as he/she can—their age, gender, social, economic and educational background, religion, political affiliations, profession, attitudes (likes and dislikes), beliefs (true and false), and values (good and bad). If these audience characteristics are identified, he/she will be much better equipped to plan and prepare his/her presentation effectively.

Analyse Audience Needs and Expectations Those who will attend and listen to the presentation have their needs and expectations. They will be there for a reason. If the presenter wants them to listen to him/her, he/she has to understand and respond to their needs and expectations. For this he/she should ask the following questions:

- Why will they listen to me?
- Who asked them to be there?
- Is their attendance compulsory?
- What are their interests?
- What ideas or experience do I have that the audience may like to hear?
- What are their needs?
- What do they expect?
- How do my objectives meet audience needs?

Answers to these questions will help him/her make appropriate modification in his/her presentation to suit his/her audience. The presentation must be audience oriented, dealing with the topic from their perspective. The presenter may not change his/her ideas and facts for his/her audience but he/she may change the way he/she conveys them. He/she may tell them what he/she wants to tell but in a way that appeals to them.

Recognise Factors for Getting and Maintaining Audience Attention Once the characteristics, needs, and expectations of the audience have been identified, factors that meet the needs of the listeners should be determined. Listeners will be more interested in the presentation if it meets their requirements. As a result, they will listen more attentively, understand what is said, and remember the key points of the presentation. The presenter needs to consider the following specific questions in this context:

- How can I relate my presentation to the needs and expectations of my audience?
- What should I do to ensure that my audience remembers my main points?
- What style will appeal to my audience?
- What are the changes that I should make?
- Have I incorporated ways of encouraging my listeners to give feedback and share information that will make my presentation more effective?
- Have I planned strategies for dealing with listeners' communication apprehensions?
- How will I handle hostile listeners or those who are disruptive?

Moreover, more informed decisions can be made about how to best adapt to the varying moods of listeners and how to tap their curiosity, interest, and motivation. Perhaps the best rule to remember in identifying factors for getting and keeping audience attention is to remain flexible. A blend of methods and alternatives to accommodate listeners' perceptions may be the best approach to audience analysis.

3. Analyse the Occasion

The occasion on which the presentation is to be made should be analysed in order to understand the nature of the event or communicative situation. Several aspects of the event like its background, the people involved, the organisations or associations linked to the event, and so on need to be considered. Here are some relevant questions.

- Is my presentation part of a larger event like a national/international seminar with a central theme, or just an internal conference where I am supposed to present my views on a particular topic?
- Am I familiar with the procedures of the event?
- Who are the sponsors?
- Who are the other speakers?
- What is the venue?
- What is the duration of my presentation?

Infact, thinking through the answers to some of these questions ahead of time may ensure that the presentation is effective.

4. Choose a Suitable Title

Generally, a title has to be chosen for the presentation. The title gives the audience the first glimpse of the presentation and they forms their first impressions. Therefore, it is essential that the title is appropriate and conveys the essence of the message. A vague, misleading, and fussy title may confuse the audience.

The process of choosing a title may begin by first identifying a topic. The choice of the topic depends on the occasion, the audience, the type, and purpose of the presentation. A list of topics may be compiled, including potential topics like social, economic, political, technological and environmental problems (for example, poverty, unemployment, overpopulation, corruption, crime, inflation, AIDS epidemic, and so on.); ideas regarding society, education, business and economy, government, technological systems, and so forth, and reactions to debatable issues (for example, universal civil code, Article 370, politics and religion, and abortion). When all the possible topics have been noted, the choices can be evaluated and an appropriate topic may be chosen.

After a suitable topic has been selected for the presentation, it should be narrowed down as per the focus of the presentation in order to phrase a clear, complete, specific, and focused title. In this process, the nature of the general and specific purposes of the presentation as well as audience expectations and rhetorical sensitivity may be considered. For example, if the selected topic is 'pollution', it may be narrowed to any of the following:

- Vehicular pollution hazards in New Delhi (local focus)
- Pollution of the Ganges (national focus)
- CFC's and ozone depletion (international focus)

PREPARING THE PRESENTATION

Once the presentation has been planned, it is time to begin preparing for it. Preparing well is the key to success. Making an oral presentation—whether a seminar presentation, an oral report, a project presentation, or a business presentation—is easier when it is prepared it in a systematic manner. Being prepared helps the presenter

- deal with speech anxiety effectively;
- develop the required confidence;
- seek precise and relevant examples and illustrations; and
- check for accuracy, redundancies, and cliches.

Preparing for a presentation involves developing the central idea and main points, gathering relevant supporting material, and planning visual aids.

Develop the Central Idea

The central idea of the presentation is its core idea or thesis statement. It should be a complete declarative sentence that captures the essence of the message. The following are the characteristics of a central idea:

- It restates the presentation topic.
- It is a simple audience-centered idea.
- It is a one-sentence summary of the presentation
- It focuses on the content of the speech.
- It uses specific language.

Preparing for a presentation involves developing the central idea and the main points, gathering supporting material, and planning visual aids.

Develop the Main Ideas

Develop the main ideas for the presentation. The presenter may make a logical division of the central idea, establish reasons for the idea being true, or support the central idea with a series of steps. Choosing one of these techniques will largely depend on the topic of the presentation as well as its objectives. Study the following examples:

- Logical division of the central idea
  Example: Central idea: Unemployment in India
  Logical divisions: A. Types B. Causes C. Solutions
- Establishing reasons for the central idea being true
  Example: Central idea: Education in India needs to be restructured
  Establishing reasons: A. Reason 1 B. Reason 2 C. Reason 3
- Supporting the central idea with a series of steps
  Example: Central idea: Indo-Pak Relations can be improved
  Series of steps: A. Strategy 1 B. Strategy 2 C. Strategy 3

Gather Supporting Material

One of the most difficult aspects of preparing a presentation is gathering relevant supporting information. Information that will be used in the presentation should be carefully selected. This will depend on the scope and length of the presentation.

While gathering supporting information a systematic approach should be adopted. First, the presenter should gather all his/her thoughts on the subject and then recall related information from his/her personal knowledge and experience. Thereafter, several research resources such as the Internet, library resources, personal interviews, and discussion with experts, colleagues, and special interest groups should be consulted. A list of material to be included in your presentation should be made. The supporting material gathered may include facts, examples, definitions, quotations, and so on.

An outline of the collected material is developed, and reworked until it is in good order. After that, the first draft is written and revised as required. It is important to check for accuracy, redundancies, and cliches. The style of the presentation should be informal, preferably using everyday language and avoiding technical terms and statistics.

Plan Visual Aids

Using appropriate visual aids will increase the effectiveness of presentations. Good visuals may serve the following purposes.

- ***They Serve as Speech Notes:*** Visual aids may be used as notes to emphasise and clarify the main points of the presentation. Each visual aid may contain a main idea. Effective titles may be used to convey the main message of the visual aid.
- ***They Give Confidence:*** Using good visuals might increase the presenter's self-confidence because they refresh his/her memory, establish his/her credibility, and show that he/she has planned, is well-prepared, and is professional.
- ***They Help Focus on the Theme of the Presentation:*** Visuals help the presenter to focus on the theme of the presentation and concentrate on the objectives of his/her presentation. He/she may use effective visuals to highlight the central idea of his/her presentation.
- ***They Increase Audience Interest:*** Interesting and relevant visual aids make the audience more interested in what is being said. They may force even a hostile and demotivated audience to pay attention.
- ***They Give Clarity and Precision:*** Visuals make the presentation easy to understand and remember.

Any of the following types of visual aids may be used.

A. *Three-Dimensional Visual Aids*

(a) Objects
(b) Models
(c) People

B. *Two-Dimensional Visual Aids*

(a) Drawings
(b) Photographs
(c) Slides
(d) Maps
(e) Graphs
  - Bar graphs
  - Pie graphs
  - Line graphs
  - Picture graphs

(f) Charts
(g) Overhead transparencies
(h) Computer generated presentations
(i) Chalkboard

The following suggestions will help in planning and using visual aids effectively:

- Relevant visual aids must be chosen. The visual aids should match the message. Using a visual that does not match with what is being said is distracting and may confuse the audience.
- The presenter must be familiar with his/her visual aids and rehearse his/her presentation with using the visual aids.
- Computer software programs such as PowerPoint and Corel Presentations may be used to enhance the effectiveness of the presentation. However, special care must be taken while designing electronic presentations or multimedia presentations because making the presentation overly dependent on electronic visuals may create certain handicaps.
- Handouts may be distributed, that is, charts, presentation abstracts, summaries, brochures, pamphlets, outlines, and so on, in order to complement the presentation.
- While using overhead transparencies, eye contact should be maintained with the audience.
- Visual aids must be introduced before actually showing them.

ORGANISING YOUR PRESENTATION

After the central idea as well as the main ideas have been developed, relevant supporting material has been gathered, and appropriate visual aids have been planned, the message has to be organised and structured. Good organisation is essential for effective presentation. The key to good organisation is the repetition of the main ideas of your message. Just remember the three Ts:

Your presentation should be organised into three distinct parts: introduction, body, and conclusion.

Tell the audience what you are going to tell.
Tell it.
Tell them what you have told.

Divide the presentation into three distinct parts: the introduction, body, and conclusion.

Introduction

The opening of the presentation should convince the audience to listen to it. It has five functions:

- Get the audience's attention
- Introduce the subject
- Give the audience a reason to listen
- Establish the credibility
- Preview the main ideas

Get Audience Attention The speaker needs to get the attention of his/her audience and hold it until the end of his/her talk. Listeners form their first impression of the presentation quickly, and first impressions matter. Therefore, the opening should capture their attention. Audience attention may be captured in several ways. These techniques include using any one of the following:

- ***Startling Statement/Statistics*** Say something surprising or unexpected, or give statistics that surprises the audience.
- ***Anecdote*** Tell a short entertaining account of an event, a short story.
- ***Questions*** Ask some interesting questions. The question should be rhetorical with an obvious answer.
- ***Quotations*** Start the presentation with a relevant quotation that throws light on the central idea of the presentation.
- ***Humour*** Start the presentation with a humorous reference.

Introduce the Subject A statement of the central idea should be included in the introduction. In simple and direct language the audience has to know what the presentation is about.

Give the Audience a Reason to Listen Audience attention should be drawn to the topic of the presentation by showing them how the topic affects them directly. Giving relevant statistics can motivate the audience.

Establish the Credibility The speaker's credibility should be established early in a speech. He/she should be able to convince the audience that he/she is worth listening to. The speaker should be well prepared, appear confident, and strike a rapport with the audience by narrating personal experiences relevant to the topic.

Preview the Main Ideas The audience should be told what they are going to listen to. The preview to the presentation should be given towards the end of the introduction. The preview should include a statement of the central idea and mention the main points of the presentation.

Remember the acronym
KISS
(KEEP IT SIMPLE AND SHORT)
Your audience will understand a simple message easily.

SHORT
Your audience may concentrate better if your message is short.

Body

The body contains the main content of the presentation. Most people fail to make an effective presentation simply because they try to convey so much information and include so many ideas. The speaker may be tempted to include so many points in his/her presentation but it is advisable to focus on a few main ideas, two to four. Each main point should be supported by appropriate details but not excessive data. This will spoil the presentation because it may confuse the audience. In short, the *mantra* is to use a few main points with relevant supporting details. The speaker should concentrate on each main point and use appropriate transitions to indicate a change of point as the audience may not be able to differentiate between the main points and minor points. He/she should ensure that his/her information is accurate, complete, and relevant.

As the body of the presentation is structured, the speaker should choose the sequence he/she will follow from among any of the following organisational patterns:

- Sequential
- General to specific
- Specific to general
- More important to less important
- Less important to more important
- Categorical
- Problem and solution
- Contrast and comparison

REHEARSING THE PRESENTATION

The speaker, having planned, prepared, and organised a presentation well, may feel confident about delivering it without any rehearsal. However, it is important to rehearse the presentation properly because it will give him/her more confidence and avoid any distraction and deviation during actual presentation. Moreover, it will make him/her familiar with his/her message and will give sufficient time to make positive changes in the presentation. Therefore, before giving a presentation, it should be practised several times.

Rehearsal should be planned and conducted properly and systematically.

Before rehearsing a presentation it is necessary to answer a few pertinent questions. Who will the audience be? How many rehearsals are necessary? What would the methods of rehearsal be? Where should rehearsals be held? Should delivery notes be used while rehearsing? What should the duration of each rehearsal be? The answers to these questions depend on the topic, the speaker's familiarity with the topic, his/her oral communication skills, and objectives.

Specific computer software designed to help with rehearsal of presentations may be used. The presentation graphics package will help concentrate on key points, which may be displayed on the screen. There would be timing and pacing indicators that would help in maintaining an appropriate delivery rate and pauses for effectiveness. However, using computer software for rehearsals may make one computer-dependent.

The following suggestions will help in rehearsing the presentation in a proper and planned way.

Plan the Rehearsal Rehearsals should be planned well in advance, leaving sufficient time between the rehearsal and the actual presentation so that there is enough time to make the required modifications in the presentation. A rehearsal is an opportunity to review and revise the presentation. Hearing oneself speak may also give some new ideas to make the presentation more effective.

Rehearse Before a Live Audience Rehearsals should be held before a live audience, involving them in the presentation. This helps in analysing their reactions and responding to them appropriately, in preparation for the actual presentation. Friends, classmates, colleagues, or roommates can make up the audience. Their responses, comments, and suggestions on your presentation help point out weaknesses and improve the presentation.

Timing During Rehearsal While rehearsing a presentation, particular attention should be paid to timing. Although the rate of delivering the presentation may vary according to the communicative situation, delivery technique and style of speaking, a rate that varies between 120 to 180 words per minute is ideal. The speaker may be tempted to talk too quickly in presentations. However, to be effective he/she should speak slowly and pause appropriately between important points. This speed should be maintained during rehearsal too.

Recreate the Presentation Environment Rehearsal is essential in order to experience the actual presentation. The main purpose of rehearsals is to help learn to make the presentation with confidence in a natural and spontaneous way. The speaker should be his/her natural self while doing rehearsing, and keep practising until he/she is confident of delivering the presentation smoothly.

IMPROVING DELIVERY

Once the presentation has been planned, prepared, organised and rehearsed properly and systematically, it can be delivered. What is important is said in a presentation but how it is said is more important. It is essential to improve delivery in order to give effective presentations. Improving delivery involves understanding several delivery methods, choosing an appropriate method, and controlling and reducing stage fear.

The way a presentation is delivered does influence the way listeners will respond to the message. Thus, the most important element of a presentation is the speaker's performance. It involves choosing an appropriate delivery technique, using speech notes, and deciding the non-verbal behaviour.

There are three delivery methods: the memorising method, reading method, and the outlining method.

Choosing Delivery Methods

There are three basic methods of delivery: the memorising method, reading method, and the outlining method. A speaker may choose a method of delivery that suits his/her content, style, and objectives.

Memorising Method Some people prefer the memorising method, that is, they memorise the entire presentation and present it from memory. This method may be used if the speaker has stage fear and is very nervous about giving the presentation. Learning what one intends to say word for word may develop the required confidence in the person. However, this method has its disadvantages. First, the speaker may forget something in the middle of his/her talk preventing him/her from continuing his presentation. This could be disastrous. Moreover, if the entire presentation is memorised, it may not sound spontaneous and natural creating monotony in the presentation. Finally, if the speaker concentrates more on what he/she is saying, he/she may not be able to involve the audience in his/her presentation.

The following are some suggestions to use the memorising method effectively:

- Plan, prepare, and write out the presentation.
- Do not memorise the entire presentation. Instead, the significant parts of the presentation, such as the opening part, the attention-catching statements, central idea, the main points, and important illustrations should be memorised.
- Rehearse thoroughly before giving the presentation and keep a set of notes ready for reference.
- Try to be flexible and spontaneous.

Reading Method The reading method may be used to deliver presentations, that is, the presentation is written out and delivered by reading from the manuscript. This method is useful while presenting a technical paper or report that may contain complex technical information or statistical data. This method of delivery helps control nervousness during presentation because there is no danger of forgetting anything in the middle of the talk. This gives the speaker confidence. However, specific techniques will have to be used to involve the audience and avoid monotony.

The following suggestions will be helpful in using the reading method effectively:

- Prepare a full script of the presentation. Use capitals, spacing, and underlining to break out important parts and highlight significant points.
- Before giving the presentation, rehearse it before a live audience. Learn to look at long stretches of your presentation so that you may establish eye contact with the audience.
- Use non-verbal signals (that is, facial expressions, gestures, body movements, and so on) and voice modulation in order to maintain the interest of the audience.
- Adopt a conversational tone. Use personal expressions and short sentences.

Outlining Method Presentations may also be given with the help of delivery notes. This is the most effective delivery method as the notes will make the speaker familiar with his/her message and give him/her confidence. He/she is able to establish eye contact with his/her audience because he/she only has to glance at his/her notes for a while and can then concentrate on his/her audience. Moreover, he/she can afford to be flexible and spontaneous. However, the notes should be prepared carefully because the success of the presentation largely depends on the quality and type of delivery notes.

The following suggestions will help use the "notes" method effectively:

- Plan and prepare the presentation carefully and write notes or outlines that contain all the important points, transitions, and illustrations. Use capitals, spacing, and underlining to show important transitions.
- Rehearse the presentation using the outlines. Systematic practice helps develop the required confidence.
- While delivering the presentation notes, the speaker should glance down at each main point, look up at his/her audience, maintain eye contact with them, pause for a moment and then explain the point.
- The speaker should try to be comfortable with the way he/she phrases his/her ideas. He/she may look at the examples and illustrations, but should not pick up the words from his/her notes and just repeat them.
- In order to sound spontaneous and natural, he/she should use the notes just as starting points.

Handling Stage Fright

Everyone who has faced an audience and has made a speech or presentation must have experienced stage fright. Perhaps one of the most difficult things that need to be handled during a presentation is one's first encounter with stage fright. Whenever we are faced with a frightening situation we find difficult to handle, our body responds. This response is in terms of extra energy to deal with the situation. As a result, the heartbeat quickens, breathing becomes more rapid, the mouth becomes dry, blushing occurs, palms sweat, and several other physiological changes occur. We become nervous or anxious and suffer from stage fright. Infact, even very good speakers experience some degree of stage fright when they have to give a presentation before an audience. So, some degree of stage fright is quite normal. However, it is important to learn to handle stage fright and use the extra energy positively to improve presentation delivery.

The following strategies can be used to control and reduce stage fright:

- **Concentrate on the Three Ps: Planning, Preparation and Practice** As discussed earlier, presentations should be well planned, thoroughly prepared, and rehearsed repeatedly. Knowing the purpose, audience, and occasion helps to reduce speech anxiety. Effective preparation familiarises the speaker with his/her message and thus reduces stage fear. Knowing the introduction, body and conclusion well in advance gives the speaker the confidence to control his/her speech anxiety. Finally, practice makes one perfect, if the presentation is well rehearsed. There is nothing to fear and there may be little or no stage fright at the time of presentation because the speaker is familiar with the situation.

3. E-mail Writing

We need effective e-mail writing skills because e-mail can be an important communications channel between us and our peers, subordinates, superiors, other colleagues, customers, and several other people we interact with regularly. We may have to write a number of e-mail messages everyday. As e-mails are faster than letters and memos, they are used for quick transmission of information and ideas. They serve several purposes, which may include:

- conveying routine information, such as new products or services being introduced, new policy changes, introduction of new procedures, new market strategies being followed, and so on;
- requesting information or additional resources;
- inviting the reader to business meetings, conferences, seminars, workshops, or symposiums;
- containing proposals or requests for proposals;
- seeking explanations or clarifications;
- describing problems;
- persuading the reader to take an action; and
- giving feedback, suggestions, or recommendations.

Advantages of E-mail

The advantages of using e-mail include speed, low cost, quick distribution, flexibility, easy attachments, and easy upward communication.

Speed Speed is the main advantage of using e-mail. Unlike regular mail, which may take days or even weeks to reach its destination, e-mail reaches its destination instantaneously. A message can be sent quickly to anyone anywhere in the world. Distance is immaterial. Just type the name/names and e-mail address/addresses of the recipient and click the mouse on the send button, and your message goes.

Low Cost Low cost is yet another advantage of using e-mail. As sending e-mail does not involve printing and copying, it is less expensive than any other channel of communication (that is, postal mail, telephone, fax etc.). Ten e-mail messages may be sent in ten minutes and the cost could be as low as five rupees. Moreover, the size of the message or the distance to the recipient does not affect the cost.

Quick Distribution E-mail makes distribution quick and easy. Messages can be sent to more than one person at the same time. There is no wasting of time and no repetition.

Flexibility E-mail allows complete flexibility during composing and drafting. While using e-mail, the sender may edit, revise, modify, and redesign his/her message without printing and copying it. He/She can easily reshape e-mail messages before sending them. Moreover, he/she has the flexibility to receive or compose e-mails as per his/her convenience.

Easy Attachments It is easy to attach files, photographs, clippings, drawings, video clips, sound recordings, and so on to an e-mail. For example, resumes, scanned copies of testimonials, transcripts, and other documents can be attached to job application e-mail.

Easy Upward Communication E-mail is less formal and structured than letters and memos. It is normally in the form of a private dialogue, where the sender wants to say something and expects a response to the message. Thus, e-mail promotes easier upward communication. While using e-mail the sender need not worry about a formal and fixed style of communication. He/She may follow the norms of any set pattern of writing and is free to choose any style or pattern that suits the content.

Characteristics of Successful E-Mail Messages

Professionals need to use e-mail frequently. Infact, the use of e-mail for business and professional communication purposes continues to expand due to its tremendous advantages. It has become the most common professional communication medium. It is replacing printed memos in several organisations by playing a more important role in the dissemination of ideas and information. Good e-mail messages share certain characteristics, which include conciseness, accuracy, clarity, conversational tone, and single theme.

Five characteristics that distinguish successful e-mail messages are conciseness, accuracy, clarity, conversational tone, and a single theme.

Concise Conciseness is the most important characteristic of a successful e-mail message. An e-mail should not contain unnecessary information. Unnecessary explanations, repetitions, wordy expressions, and exaggeration should be avoided. Ideas should be organised in such a way that the e-mail makes its point with the fewest words possible. The reader may not be interested, or have the time, in a very long and detailed message.

Correct Accuracy is crucial to successful e-mail writing. Correct format and structure should be used. Correct e-mail addresses should be written. Messages may bounce if incorrect e-mail address is written. The content of the e-mail should also be checked for factual accuracy. E-mail messages should be edited for spelling, punctuation, and grammar mistakes.

Clear E-mails should be simple and clear. An unclear and vague e-mail may be immediately deleted. Simple, familiar, direct and specific words, appropriate linkers, and transitional signals should be used to form short sentences and paragraphs.

Conversational Tone The tone of e-mail messages are usually formal but conversational. It is better to use a tone which gives a personal touch to e-mails. However, one should avoid being too informal or emotional. The challenge is to maintain professionalism without being too formal. Although first person pronouns (that is, I, we) and conversational contractions (you'll, he'll, she'll, can't, don't, doesn't, etc.) may be used, standard writing techniques should be used and professional writing conventions followed.

Single Theme A successful e-mail message deals with only one topic. In order to be purposive, you need to focus on a single theme. Develop a single theme logically, subordinating related ideas.

4. <u>BUSINESS REPORTS</u>

NATURE AND SIGNIFICANCE

Whether a person is a low-profile public servant in a government organisation or a high-profile business manager in a multinational company, almost everyone may be asked to write reports at some point of time or the other. Professionals such as administrators, scientists, business executives, and engineers have to write reports for different purposes. A scientist may have to write a technical report that provides scientific data, whereas the sales manager of a company may need to prepare weekly sales reports to answer questions about how effectively sales targets are being achieved. Reports are important because in most organizations executive decision making is based almost entirely on them.

Reports may vary from a one-page informal trip report summarising the events of a business trip to a 250-page formal annual report of an organisation. They may be presented orally, electronically, or in written form. They may also vary in form, content, approach, and purpose. It is, thus, difficult to provide a specific but comprehensive definition of the term 'report'. The literal meaning of the word 'report' is 'a formal or official statement, as of results of an investigation or matter referred' or just ' a statement of facts'.

A report is a formal document written for a specific audience to meet a specific need. It may contain facts of a situation, project, or process; an analysis and interpretation of data, events, and records; inferences or conclusions drawn from objective data; or suggestions and recommendations. Although reports may include a

A report is a factual and systematic account of a specific business or professional activity.

variety of topics and objectives, they all help in the process of decision making by answering questions and determining ways to improve certain situations. As a common type of communication used during work, reports reinforce, prompt, motivate, and persuade the readers to act. Reports normally move in an upward direction and are used to communicate to the senior levels in an organisations.

Reports help in the analysis of a condition, situation, or a problem for an effective solution.

The importance of reports for any professional lies in the fact that a number of business decisions and research conclusions are made on the basis of information presented or recommendations made in reports. By helping in dissemination of ideas, views, and suggestions, reports develop information and understanding essential for effective decision making.

Thus, reports serve several purposes, which may include:

- presenting data;
- describing problems and suggesting solutions;
- discussing and analysing data;
- recording events and happenings;
- analysing a situation or a condition; or
- giving feedback, suggestions, or recommendations.

Students will be called upon to write project reports, seminar reports, progress reports, research reports, dissertations or theses. Moreover, effective report writing skills are necessary in order to be successful at the workplace. As a person advances in his/her chosen career, he/she may be called on to prepare different kinds of reports more often and more effectively. Periodic operating reports, situational reports, informational routine reports, investigative reports, feasibility reports, compliance reports, and so on are some of different kinds of reports that may have to be prepared.

TYPES OF REPORTS

As summarised in Fig. 25.1, reports can be classified as informational and analytical, according to their functions, as routine or special, as per periodicity, as oral and written, according to their communicative form, and as formal and non-formal, based on their nature, scope, and length. Each of these are now discussed briefly.

Informational, analytical, routine, special, oral, written, formal, and non-formal reports are some of the important types of reports.

Informational and Analytical Reports

An informational report presents facts of a case, problem, condition, or situation without any analysis, interpretations, or recommendations. The function of the writer of an informational report is to collect, compile, and organise facts for the readers. He/she is just a compiler who has to present the data as objectively as possible. In order to write an informational report, relevant information should be gathered and presented in a systematic and organised way. Examples of informational reports include conference reports, seminar reports, trip reports, and so on.

Unlike an informational report, an analytical report presents data with interpretation and analysis. The report writer analyses the facts of a case, problem, condition, or situation objectively and puts forward his/her conclusions, inferences, and recommendations. Apart from presenting the facts objectively, the writer must reflect a broader understanding of the subject in order to comment on various aspects related to the report. In order to write an analytical report, the writer should be able to evaluate information and make appropriate inferences. Examples of analytical reports include project reports, feasibility reports, market research reports, and so forth.

Routine and Special Reports

All organisations, including companies, institutions, government departments, and research establishments, depend on routine reports for various management decisions. As routine reports are usually prepared on a periodic basis, that is, daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly, or annually, they may also be called periodic reports. The contents of routine reports may vary from simple production information to complex marketing or research data. Routine reports may be informational or analytical depending on the purpose. Examples of routine reports include daily production reports, monthly sales reports, annual reports, and so on.

Unlike a routine report, a special report is prepared and presented to convey special information related to a single condition, situation, problem, or occasion. Special reports do not contain routine or repetitive information as they are the result of specific circumstances. Some of the most important decisions in an organisation may be taken on the basis of the information contained in special reports. For example, a company might launch a new product based on a report analysing the market demand and presence of competing products in the market. Special reports could be either informational or analytical. Examples of special reports include inquiry reports, research reports, thesis, dissertation, and so forth.

Table 25.1 **Types of Reports**

Criteria	*Types*	*Description*	*Examples*
Function	Informational	Objective presentation of data without analysis or interpretation	conference reports, seminar reports, trip reports
	Analytical	Presentation of data with analysis and interpretation	project reports, feasibility reports, market research reports
Periodicity	Routine	Presentation of routine information	daily production reports, monthly sales reports, annual reports
	Special	Presentation of specific information related to a single condition, situation, problem or occasion	inquiry reports, research reports, thesis, dissertation
Communicative Form	Oral	Face-to-face presentation of information	accident reports, sales reports, joining reports, conference reports
	Written	Presentation of information in written form	project reports, progress reports, research reports
Nature, scope and length	Formal	Long reports with elaborate description and discussion	annual reports, thesis, project reports, technical reports
	Non-formal	Short reports	laboratory reports, daily production reports, trip reports

Oral and Written Reports

Oral reports are informal and face-to-face presentations of information. Examples may include oral reporting of accidents, sales, production, joining, and so on. Oral reports are useful for presenting brief

FORMATS OF REPORTS

As listed in Table 25.2, there are four common formats of reports, that is, printed forms, letter format, memo format, and manuscript format. The choice of format can be mde according to the nature, length, scope, and function of the report, and type of audience.

Table 25.2 **Formats of Reports**

Format	*Description*
Printed forms	Forms prepared to record for repetitive and routine data
Letter format	Short informal reports to be communicated to someone outside an organisation
Memo format	Short informal reports to be communicated to someone within an organisation
Manuscript format	Formal reports printed on plain paper

Printed Forms

Printed forms are generally used to collect routine information. For example, a company may keep printed forms for recording daily production or monthly sales. Similarly, an organisation may use printed forms for trip reports, conference reports, laboratory reports, inspection reports, confidential performance reports, and so on. Using a printed form is quite simple because the person filling it is just required to fill in the blanks, or tick against the listed items. Detailed descriptions or discussions need not be provided.

There are four formats of reports: printed forms, letter format, memo format, and manuscript format.

There are three main advantages of using printed forms for reporting. Firstly, they are systematic and make for easy reading. The readers can easily locate and identify important information. Secondly, they are more objective and factual with little scope for the writer to be subjective about the content. There is no subjective interpretation of the material used in the report. Facts are recorded quite objectively. Finally, they save time. It is less time consuming to prepare a report in printed form than preparing reports in other formats. Figure 25.3 gives an example of a report in printed form.

TOUR REPORT

Report on Participation in Professional Conference

Office order No. 14789/2005 dated 04-01-2005

Name of the officer:	Kumar Abhishek
Designation:	Senior Marketing Manager
Address:	Regional Office, Syndicate Consultancy Services Pvt. Ltd. Nayadeep, Andheri (W), Mumbai-53
Name of the conference:	Emerging concepts in Sales and Marketing
Name of the Organiser:	Indian Management Association
Place of Conference:	Hotel Tajmahal, Mumbai
Duration of Conference:	January 14 – January 18, 2005
Organisation of Conference:	
(a) Sponsors of the Conference:	1. Tata Consultancy Services 2. Air Sahara 3. Reliance Industries 4. Indian Airlines
(b) Number of Participating companies:	25
(c) Number of sessions:	12
(d) Number of presentations:	32

Date: 27the January, 2005

Signature: Kumar Abhishek

Fig. 25.3 **Printed Form**

Letter Format

The letter format may be used for short reports that have to be communicated to someone outside an organisation. A letter format contains all the elements of a letter along with some additional sections such as illustrations, references, and so on. Headings may be used in a letter report. The letter format may be used for informational, analytical, routine, special, or non-formal reports. For example, there is an accident on the shop floor in a company and report has to be sent to the insurance company. Other examples of the letter format include evaluation reports, feasibility reports, survey reports, legal reports, and so on. Figure 25.3 shows an example.

ALPHA CONSULTANCY PVT. LTD.
C-21/12, Ring Road, Delhi-110 052
www.alphagroup.com

January 31, 2005

Mr G Ravi Kiran
Chief Safety Officer
NDP Limited, NDPL Building
37-D, Jawaharlal Nehru Road, Kolkata-700 071

SUBJECT: MINE INSPECTION REPORT

Dear Mr Ravi Kiran:

The Alpha Consultancy team inspected the AP section of the IV Seam in NDP Colliery to collect various parameters to determine the Rock Mass Rating (RMR) of the roof. A detailed description regarding different locations visited is given below:

Location J: 10LW/ID near Main Dip

Slips were found.

Location K: 7 LW/IR

Junction was observed for its stability. It was found that the roof was intact with a single wooden prop at the centre.

Location L: Drift from IV to V seam

A downthrow fault was observed. The roof rocks were studied for RMR determination. The roof was found to be dry.

The inspection team included Dr Suresh Patra, Dr Seema Biswas, Mr Animesh Kumar and Mr Mohan Srivastave, all senior consultants at Alpha Consultancy.

We at Alpha Consultancy believe that the findings of the team will help you go ahead with your plan to modernise the support system with permanent roadways.

Sincerely,

Sd/-
A P Khemka
General Manager

Fig. 25.4 Letter Format

Memo Format

The memo format can be used for short reports that have to be communicated within an organization. A memo format should contain all the elements of a standard memo. In addition, it may contain a few extra sections. Like a report in the letter form, a memo report should contain headings for easy reading and reference. The memo format may be used for all types of reports, that is, informational, analytical, routine, special, or non-formal. An example has been given in Fig. 25.5.

Innova Solutions Pvt Ltd
Interoffice Memorandum

Date: February 3, 2005

To: Ms. Kavita Kashayap
Director (Sales)

From: Afsar Ali Haider
Chief Training Manager

Subject: INTER- ISPL MEET ON TELEMARKETING STRATEGIES – A

REPORT

Sales managers from all 24 Regional offices of ISPL in India got together between 15 – 20th January 2005, to share their experiences of the use and effectiveness of telemarketing strategies (TMS) in India and to discuss the future plan of action of ISPL in India. There were sessions on Sales Training courses run in the ISPL Regional offices and the activities of the training centres at various parts of India. Sessions were also conducted on TMS materials produced in different ISPL training centres in India and each representative participant received sets of materials produced by the Corporate training centre in Mumbai.

Eminent sales trainers like Mr Anup Khandelwal, Dr N K Das, Ms Savitha Kumar, Coordinator ISPL TMS Scheme, and Mr Naveen Goswami, Coordinator, ISPL Training Centre Scheme, enlightened the participants through their speech and subsequent workshops. The workshops were highly interactive, and the participants actively participated in the deliberations. The question-answer sessions were particularly very interesting. The level of interest and commitment of the participants was remarkable. The meet was very enlightening and successful.

Recommendations

- Many such interactive meetings are necessary to enliven our capacity as sales promoters and to find some tentatvie solutions to some of the common problems that ISPL sales managers in India face.
- The Corporate Training Centre in Mumbai should be asked to produce similar TMS materials for sales trainees of ISPL.
- A few seminars and workshops on telemarketing strategies should be organised by the regional offices.

Memo Format

Manuscript Format

The manuscript format can be used for long and formal reports. These reports are divided into sections and sub-sections, each with a clear heading. These headings and sub-headings are organised in a logical sequence. While preparing a report in manuscript form, the writer needs to be careful about its structure and elements. A structured report will help in thinking clearly and deciding where to put each fact or idea. It also makes reading easy and helps the readers find the information they need. The manuscript format is discussed in detail in the next section.

WRITING STRATEGIES

Whether one has to write a short informal report or a long formal report, one needs to adopt effective writing strategies. As reports are systematic attempts to discuss problems, situations, or conditions and stimulate thinking or action in individuals and groups, a systematic plan of writing should be followed.

Report writing strategies include analysing the problem and the purpose, determining the scope, determining the needs of the readers, gathering material, organising information, preparing the rougn draft, revising, and writing the final draft.

The following steps will help in organising and presenting the report systematically.

1. Analyse the problem and purpose
2. Determine the scope of the report
3. Determine the needs of the audience
4. Gather all the information
5. Analyse and organise the information
6. Write the first draft
7. Revise, review, and edit
8. Write the final draft

Analyse the Problem and Purpose The process of writing an effective report begins with an objective analysis of the problem that is to be discussed and the objectives of writing the report. In other words, the following two questions need to be answered before beginning to write a report:

1. What do you want to present or discuss in the report?
2. Why do you want to present it?

Answers to these questions will help in identifying the problem that led to the writing of the report and determining the purpose of the report. The problem may be written down in the form of a statement. Expressing the problem in words will provide clarity of purpose and help in writing the report systematically.

Defining the purpose of the report will give it direction and make it focused. Identifying the specific purpose of a report involves identifying an observable measurable action that the readers would do after reading the report. The writer's purpose should match the audience's needs, knowledge, expectations, & interests. It should focus on audience behaviour and restate the theme of the report.

Determine the Scope of the Report In order to keep the report precise and to the point, the amount of information gathered should be limited to the most essential and important facts. It is important to define a reasonable scope of the report. By determining the scope of the report, the writer will be able to decide what should be covered in it, and gather appropriate background information and supporting data. The scope of the report should be narrowed down and made specific so that a reasonable length is maintained.

Determine the Needs of the Audience When a report is being planned, the writer should know who will eventually read it. However, many report writers ignore their readers. A report will be effective only if the writer is able to connect his/her purpose with the interests and needs of his/her readers. When planning a report, the writer should think from his/her readers' perspective. He/she should avoid making false assumptions about his/her readers and should strive to be practical and rational. The following questions are relevant in this context.

- Who is the audience? (age, education, subject knowledge, professional affiliation, status, preferences, biases, attitudes, interests, language level, and so on.)
- How is the report relevant to the audience?
- What is in it for the audience?
- What does the audience expect from the report?
- How much background information will the audience need?

Answers to these questions will provide essential information about the readers that will help the writer to make important decisions about the content, the nature of information that he/she needs, and the level of language that he/she should use in his/her report.

Gather All the Information Once the problem and purpose has been analysed, the scope is defined, and the audience has been analysed, the writer is ready to gather information. As he/she knows what he/she is looking for, he/she may not find it very difficult to gather information. He/she may gather information through primary sources (discussions, interviews, observation, surveys, questionnaires, experiments, and so on) or secondary sources (Internet, reports, books, journals, dissertations, magazines, pamphlets, newspapers, and so on) However, it is important to ensure that the information is accurate, bias free, current, and relevant.

Analyse and Organise the Information Once the information has been gathered, the report writer needs to analyse and organise it. Analysis of information involves evaluating the information objectively, making comparative analyses of different sets of information for obtaining new ideas, and interpreting facts and figures for their relative importance. Organising the information involves using an appropriate logical pattern to arrange the information in the report (Refer to Chapter 2). Before actually organising the information, an outline may be prepared by choosing the central idea, main ideas, the major supporting ideas, and developing the details.

Writing the First Draft Once the outline has been prepared and the organisational pattern of the report has been decided, the first working draft can be written. While writing the first draft, the following points must be remembered:

- Focus on the scope and purpose of the report.
- Simple and direct language should be used but perfect expression should not be overstressed.
- A computer should be used for preparing the report.
- The draft should be written rapidly.

Reviewing and Revising Once the rough draft of the report has been written, it should be reviewed, edited, and revised in order to improve the quality of its content and presentation. Reviewing is the process of analysing whether the report achieved its purpose, whereas editing involves correcting its format, style, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Revision focuses on improving the content and language of the report.

Writing the Final Draft Once the rough draft of the report reviewed and revised, the final draft can be composed. When writing the final draft, the following points should be taken care of:

- The report should be simple, clear, concise, direct, and readable.
- Appropriate words, short sentences and meaningful paragraphs should be used.
- Appropriate linking devices should be used.
- Graphic highlighting techniques to improve readability and comprehension should be applied.
- Important points should be emphasised.

5. The Reading Skill – A Summary

DEVELOPING READING SKILLS

(for comprehension with speed)

Reading is visual decoding and processing of information. The purpose of Reading is to extract meaning from a text.

READING STRATEGIES :

1. **Previewing :**

   Previewing refers to reviewing titles, section heading and photo captions to get a sense of the structure and content of a reading text.

2. **Predicting** :

   Predicting as a reading strategy means using knowledge of the subject matter to make predictions about the content.

3. **Skimming :**

   While skimming, a reader makes a quick survey of the text to get its main idea or its gist.

4. **Scanning :**

   Scanning refers to the activity of glancing rapidly through a text to search for a specific piece of information.

5. **Guessing from context :**

(a) Word attack skill : Using prior knowledge of the subject and the ideas in the text as clues to the meaning of unknown words.

(b) Text-attack skills : Getting the overall meaning and the ideas presented in the text through

   (i) Structural clues (e.g., the position of the word in the sentence and its relationship with the other words in the sentence)

   (ii) Morphological information (e.g., the prefix *un-* is the clue that it is opposite in meaning to the word 'happy')

   (iii) Contextual leads (e.g. Discourse markers such as but, because although etc. tell us how words,sentences or ideasare related to each other in a reading text.)

6. **Extensive Reading :**

   Extensive reading is done when we read longer texts, usually for our own pleasure. This is a fluency activity, mainly involving global understanding.

7. **Intensive Reading :**

   Intensive reading refers to reading shorter texts to extract specific information. This is an accuracy activity involving reading for detail.

8. **Inferring :**

   We infer when we come to a conclusion about a question by relating ideas from different parts of a text. Inferring is a sub-skill used to reason out something new, based on what is already given in a text.

9. **Paraphrasing :**

   It means stopping at the end of a paragraph/section of a text to check comprehension by restating the information and ideas in one's own language.

10. **Avoidance of Faulty Reading Habits :**

(a) Sub-vocalising : Forming the sounds of words on the lips and even murmuring them aloud.

(b) Finger pointing : Finger moves from word to word while one reads a text.

(c) Regressive Eye-movement : Eyes move back to check previous words instead of steadily moving forward.

Basic Steps to Efficient Reading :

1. Before reading, be clear about the purpose of reading a particular text.
2. Then decide how deeply to study the material.
3. Read actively : Highlight or underline key information and take notes as you progress.
4. Know how to adjust your reading speed to the reading purpose.
5. Go for concept mapping when you have finished reading.

SECTION – B

I. Fill in the blanks with the right words:

1. The process of recovering meaning from a message with the help of a code is known as ___________.
2. Spoken and written communications involve the use of different ___________.
3. The process of communication is incomplete, if the Sender does not receive any ___________ from the Receiver.
4. The 'Skull-and-crossbones' sign carries the meaning '___________.'
5. When a filter is very powerful, it becomes a ___________ and blocks communication.
6. An ___________ listener tries to evaluate the message from the point of view of the speaker.
7. ___________ describes a situation where so many different messages are received that the Receiver is unable to cope with the information.
8. Reading is a ___________ process.
9. ___________ is a conscious intellectual activity involving hearing with attention and understanding the message.
10. Distraction is classified as a ___________ barrier to communication.
11. ___________ is the study of space as a message system.
12. The study of the importance of time and its application is known as ___________
13. The process of Active Listening includes decoding, understanding, ___________, and responding to the message.
14. 'Clearing the throat off and on' while speaking indicates the speaker's___________.
15. ………………………….. refers to communication through voice, tone, pitch and tempo of the speaker.
16. If someone's eyebrows are raised and eyes are wide open, it indicates that the person is ___________.
17. Crossed arms indicate that the person ___________.
18. A ___________ is a system of symbols used for the purpose of communicating messages.
19. The term 'signal' is used to refer to ___________ messages.
20. Empathic listening takes into account the speaker's thoughts and ___________.
21. A video without sound track is an example of ___________ communication.
22. ___________ are typed symbols that communicate emotional nuances.

23. You are talking with someone, and he starts scratching his chin. This means that he ___________what you are saying.
24. ___________ refers to the process of converting an idea into a message.
25. ___________ requires that the sender should add some new information to what the receiver already knows.
26. Style- formal or informal – refers to a variety of language according to the ___________.
27. The communication between the Marketing Manager and the Production Manager of a company is an example of ___________ communication.
28. The flow of information between persons at different levels in a company, such as the Training supervisor and the Marketing Manager is known as ___________ communication.
29. The rising or falling tone is marked on the ___________ syllable in the utterance.
30. The process of Active Listening includes decoding, ___________ and responding to the message.
31. In order to have an over-view of a long text, you need to apply the reading skill of ___________.
32. For most Americans, the intimate space is under ___________ inches.
33. The reverse flow of information from the receiver to the sender is known as ___________.
34. The ___________ requires that every message should communicate some new information.
35. When we read short texts for detailed information, we practise _________ reading.
36. ___________ is a technique that involves changing the language of a text matter without changing its meaning.
37. A ___________ message is preferable when you want to present extensive and complex data.
38. Talking on a cellphone to a vendor is an example of ___________ communication.
39. Giving ___________ information is one of the demerits of the grapevine.
40. In a word, the member of vowel sounds is equal to the number of ___________.
41. Emoticons are best examples of the ___________.
42. Actions that are in present progressive are expressed through the use of ___________ verbs.
43. Speaking and writing are known as ___________ skills. On the other hand, listening and reading are known as ___________ skills.
44. Communication which takes place between peers at the same level in an organization is described as ___________ or lateral communication.
45. Body language can be ___________ or ___________.
46. "Fat chance he has of getting the prize". Here the style used by the speaker is ___________.

47. ‘Global comprehension’, or the ability to get the ‘overall’ meaning of a text, requires the subskill of ___________.

48. ___________ involves searching the text for a specific piece of information.
___________ houses and caterers by Dabbawallahs.

49. The different sentences in a paragraph should be logically connected by a common thread of meaning. This feature is called ___________.

50. When a verbal message and a non-verbal message clash, the receiver tends to believe the ___________ message.

ANSWER KEY TO BLANKS

1. decoding	2. channels	3. feedback	4. danger	5. barrier
6. empathic	7. information overload	8. decoding	9. Listening	10. Physical
11. Proxemics	12. Chronemics	13. Evaluating	14. nervousness	15. Paralanguage
16. surprised	17. lacks confidence/ is defensive	18. code	19. non-verbal	20. feelings
21. non-verbal	22. Emoticons	23. does not believe	24. Encoding	25. The Information Gap Principle
26. situation	27. horizontal	28. diagonal	29. last stressed	30. evaluating
31. skimming	32. 18	33. feedback	34. Information Gap Principle	35. intensive
36. Paraphrasing	37. Written	38. external	39. incomplete	40. syllables
41. sign language	42. dynamic	43. productive; receptive	44. horizontal	45. voluntary; involuntary
46. informal	47. skimming	48. scanning	49. cohesiveness	50. non-verbal
51.	52.	53.	54.	55.

A. Fill in the blanks with the right words:

1. The delivery methods of a presentation include__________, __________, and __________.
2. A good presenter needs to analyze the audience and identify their ………………..
3. The focus of a presentation is on…………………. the listeners to buy the ideas that are shared.
4. The introduction gives an………………… of a presentation and help the audience know the subject and focus of the presentation.
5. …………………….. should be used to present numerical and statistical data in a presentation.
6. To arouse and sustain audience interest, the presenter should maintain……………….. during the presentation.
7. Using various devices such as………………….. and internal summaries enables the presenter to maintain a smooth flow during the presentation.

8. …………………….. is the most important aspect of body language during presentations.
9. The letters which arouse the reader's interest and induce him or her to act as directed are called…………………….. letters.
10. Visual aids increase the audience………………………… in a presentation.
11. In an oral presentation, you can have…………………………. interaction, which is not available in case of a written report.
12. A letter in which all items of form begin on the left margin is said to be in the ……………………….. format.
13. In the……………… format for a business letter, all parts except the dateline, the complimentary close and the signature begin at the left margin.
14. The salutation and the complimentary close are omitted in the ………………….format of a business letter.
15. In a business letter, the ………………….. is typed above the inside address.
16. In all business letters, the standard complimentary close is ………………………..
17. A business letter is said to have……………………. , if ideas are logically ordered in a coherent way.
18. ……………………….. refers to the quality of giving only relevant information in the fewest possible words.
19. Letters that please the receiver are called ………………………… letters.
20. Memos are used for ………………communication whereas business letters are meant for people outside the organization.
21. In a business memo, the name of the addressee (To) comes ……………….. the name of the writer(From).
22. E-mails are usually written in a …………………. style.
23. Unlike in a letter, there is no formal closing in a …………… .
24. In a résumé, the career objective is written as a one-sentence focused statement expressing the candidate's career goals in relation to ………………..
25. The purpose of the covering letter sent with a résumé is to get employers interested enough to …………………
26. A chronological résumé organizes the candidate's past employment record and education in ………………………… order.

30. In telephone conversations, one should use ……………… for making a request.
31. An ____________________orients the audience by alerting them to the upcoming points and an ____________________ helps the audience to stay oriented by providing a one sentence summary during the delivery of a presentation.
32. The ____________________ resume format is primarily used by experienced candidates whereas a __________________resume is very appropriate for fresh graduates.
33. ________________ presentations are planned, rehearsed and delivered with the help of outlines on slides but ______________ presentations are unexpected, off-the-cuff talks.

34. Three major letter formats commonly used are _____________ , _____________ and Semi-Block format.

36. A document attached to a business letter is known as an ________.

37. In a business letter, the first paragraph tells the ________ of the letter.

38. If you are writing a business letter to Mr. AbhisekRanasingh, the salutation will be written as __________ .

39. A __________ letter conveys an unpleasant message.

40. In a good-news letter, the pleasant message is announced in the ________ paragraph.

41. In a public speech the audience consists of various kinds of people, while the audience in a business presentation is __________ .

42. Business executives in various geographical locations can have a meeting by using __________ .

43. The introduction gives an __________ of the presentation and helps the audience know the subject and focus of the presentation.

44. __________ presentations are planned, rehearsed and delivered with the help of outlines on slides, but ________ presentations are unexpected, off-the-cuff talks.

45. In business, when you fail to recall the name of a person you have met earlier, you can ask him or her for his/her__________ .

46. Business associates from other countries can be put at ease by speaking to them in ____________.

47. Letters that please the receiver are called _________.

48. Modern business letters are usually written in _________style.

51. When the members of a group agree to support and commit to the decision of the group, they have reached ____________.

52. The __________ resume style is primarily used by the candidates who have breaks in their employment history.

53. In a presentation, the speaker maintains a smooth flow of ideas by using _________.

54. The inside address in a business letter gives the name and address of the_________.

55. The quality of giving only the relevant information in the fewest possible words in a piece of writing is known as _________.

56. Memos are used for _________ communication in a business organization.

57. A functional resume emphasizes ______ rather than the candidates education and job experience.

59. A concise business letter avoids __________ words.

60. A correct business letter follows the standard rules of __________ .

61. A __________ is a letter of introduction attached to or accompanying another document such as a résumé or curriculum vitae.

63. __________ refers to performance anxiety caused by the requirement to perform in front of an audience.

64. The group discussion evaluates the candidate's __________ .

65. When making a request in business telephone calls, you should always use the __________ form .

67. We can conduct meetings with associates around the world through __________ .

68. Team problem-solving primarily requires managers to be good at __________.

69. __________ is the official written record of the meetings in an organization.

70. A list of items to be discussed in a meeting is called the ________ of the meeting.

ANSWER KEY

1. nenaorizing, reading, outlining 2. needs 3. persuading 4. overview 5. visual aids 6. eye contact 7. transitional devices 8. Eye contact 9. persuasive 10. interest 11. two-way 12. Block 13. Modified Block 14. Simplified 15. Dateline 16. yours sincerely 17. coherence 18. conciseness 19. good-news 20. internal 21. above 22. conversational 23. memo/e-mail 24. the job applied for 25. read the resume	26. reverse chronological 30. the interrogative form 31. Overview, internal summary 32. Functional, Chronological 33. Power Point, impromptu 34. full block, modified block 36. enclosure 37. purpose 38. Dear Mr. Ranasingh 39. bad-news 40. first 41. homogeneous 42. video conferencing 43. overview 44. Power Point, impromptu 45. business card 46. their language 47. good-news 48. Block	51. consensus 52. Functional 53. transitional devices 54. receiver 55. conciseness 56. internal 57. skills 59. unnecessary 60. grammar and usage 61. cover letter 63. stage fright 64. interpersonal skills 65. interrogative 67. video conferencing 68. interpersonal skills 69. Minutes 70. Agenda

SECTION C : SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

Module – I

Q 1. Define communication.

Ans. Communication may be defined as "the sharing or exchange of information, ideas and feelings between persons or groups through a common language or code of symbols."

Q 2. What are the differences between general communication and business communication?

Ans. The first difference between General Communication (GC) and Business Communication (BC) is that BC is restricted in scope and is a subset of GC. Secondly, BC is more purposeful and persuasive than GC. Thirdly,formal language is generally used in BC, whereas in GC, the situation determines whether formal or informal language is to be used. Finally, a piece of business communication is logically organized and strictly follows the appropriate format such as a memo, a letter, or a report. In general communication, there is less need for structuring.

Q3 What are important factors in the process of communication ?

Ans. The important factors involved in the process of communication are :

1. Sender
2. Code
3. Message
4. Medium/ Channel
5. Receiver
6. Feedback

Q4. Why is communication crucial in an organization ?

Ans. : Communication is of crucial importance in an organization because :

i) It is essential for successful and smooth running of the organization through communication of goals, policies and instructions and creation of a healthy, conductive environment;
ii) Communication failures can affect productivity and lead to organizational sickness;
iii) Communication is essential for performance of various managerial functions.

Q5. Why is feedback important in the process of communication?

Answer: Feedback refers to the reverse flow of information from the Receiver to the Sender. Through feedback, the Receiver indicates to the Sender whether and how far the sender's message has been received and understood. Without feedback, communication becomes one-sided and thus loses the qualities of 'sharing' and completeness.

Q6. What do you mean by the 'grapevine'? How is it useful in internal business communication?

Answer : Informal channels of communication existing within an organization are called the 'grapevine'. Informal channels develop by themselves without planning, in situations where the employees meet and talk.

An informal communication network is useful in the following ways:

a. It is speedy and spontaneous in comparison with formal communication.
b. It is multidirectional; it can flow in any direction.
c. It strengthens the social relations in an organization.
d. It supplements formal communication in an organization.

Certain matters which are difficult to communicate through formal channels can be easily and effectively communicated through the grapevine. For example, feedback on the feelings of employees towards executives regarding a particular decision can easily be obtained through informal channels.

Q7. "The grapevine cannot be completely eliminated from organizations." Explain.

Ans. The grapevine refers to the informal communication channels in an organization. It exists in all workplaces, and it is an informal extension of the formal system of organizational communication. In a way, it is a corrective to the management's information system. The gap in formal communication is filled by informal gossip circulated among employees who form relationships.

Since the grapevine

(i) Satisfies a deep-seated human need to share information,
(ii) Gives psychological satisfaction to the participants, and
(iii) Fills a gap in formal communication,

it cannot be completely eliminated from organizations.

Q8. What are the characteristics of horizontal communication? Mention its advantages.

Answer : Horizontal communication refers to the flow of information and ideas between persons of equal rank either of the same or different departments in a company. Horizontal communication can also take place between professional peer groups working at the same level in the company hierarchy.

The following are the advantages of horizontal communication:

a. It is less formal and structured than downward or upward (vertical) communication.
b. It creates mutual trust and understanding among different departments and solves interdepartmental problems.
c. It facilitates co-operation and co-ordination among different individuals and departments in an organization.

Q9. What are the characteristics of diagonal communication? What are its merits?

Answer : Diagonal communication takes place when persons in an organization interact with each other irrespective of their hierarchical status and established reporting relationships. For example, the Production Manager talking with a salesperson to get his opinion on customer preferences is an example of diagonal communication. The merits of diagonal communication are:

- **a.** It facilitates quick decisions.
- **b.** It builds an atmosphere of trust and co-operation.
- **c.** It boosts the morale of the bottom-level employees.

Q10. "Listen not only with your ears, but also with your eyes." Explain.

Ans.: 'Listen not only with your ears, but also with your eyes'. This means that while listening to a person, one should have eye contact with the speaker. The advantage is that the listener can know the real feelings and intentions of the speaker who is delivering a particular verbalmessage.

Q11. What is Oculesics ?What is the significance of Eye Contact as non-verbal communication?

Ans.: Oculesics is the study of the ways eyes are used during a communication exchange. This includes eye contact and the avoidance of eye contact. Eye contact is an effective tool for indicating attention and interest, for influencing others, for or regulating interaction, and establishing dominance. Through eye contact, a speaker captures the audience's attention and convinces the listeners of his sincerity and confidence. The avoidance of eye contact can signal a lack of confidence or honesty. It can also help maintain psychological distance. This is the significance of Eye Contact as non-verbal communication.

Q12. Mention two ways in which non-verbal communication helps managers to interact with their subordinates effectively.

Ans.: Firstly, non-verbal communication as a general rule takes place unconsciously. While interacting with subordinates, a manager can know from their non-verbal cues their true attitudes and feelings. For example, an employee's yawn can show that he is bored by what the manager is speaking, even though he may say that the manager's talk is interesting.

Secondly, non-verbal communication is more suitable than words in some situations. For example, it is often easier to point to an object than to describe it. Body movement is a silent means of communication and can be used in interactions when the manager is multi-tasking, *e.g.* when the manager is taking a phone call as well as looking for the soft copy of a document on his laptop.

Q13. What non-verbal message does 'Proxemics' convey about a person?

Ans.: Proxemics is the study of use of personal space. Personal space is the space you place between yourself and others during communication. One's physical distance communicates mental attitudes. As the distance decreases, the degree of intimacy increases. A distance of 1 – 4feet is considered ideal for most social interactions. However, most business transactions require a standard distance of 4 feet between two persons.

Q14. How would you interpret the following non-verbal cues sent by others?

(i)Yawning:(ii)Keeping silent after a question or remark(iii)Drooping shoulders(iv)Raised eyebrows(v)Standing off(vi)Clearing the throat off and on

Answer :

i. *Yawning:* Disinterest, boredom
ii. *Keeping silent after a question or remark*: Uncertain, Reserving one's response, Lack of confidence.
iii. *Drooping Shoulders*: Lack of confidence, Timidity.
iv. *Raised eyebrows*: Surprise, sudden understanding.
v. *Standing off*: Absence of the desire to interact; feeling alienated.
vi. *Clearing the throat off and on*: Nervousness.

Q15. Differentiate between hearing and listening.

Answer. Listening involves hearing with total attention. Hearing is an involuntary physical act of receiving sound waves on the ear-drum and transferring them to the brain. On the other hand, listening is a conscious intellectual act involving conscious efforts to hear with attention and understand the message.

Q16. What is 'Active Listening '?

Answer : Active listening refers to listening with a purpose, while passive listening is purposelesslistening which leads to poor understanding the message.Active listening demands that the listener should enter every interaction with a strong desire to understand the other person's point of view. He or she should not allow personal feelings, likes and dislikes to influence the listening activity. He or she should suspend judgment until thelistening process is complete. Active listening is a 4 step process that includes sensing, decoding, evaluating, and responding.

Thus, active listening is purposeful, attentive, bias-free, and therefore, effective.

Q17. How is Critical listening different from Content listening ?

Ans. : The purpose of content listening is only to receive information. An example of content listening is listening to the highlights of the company's performance during the CFO's live talk on the intranet. There is no scope for evaluation and judgement in content listening. On the other hand, in critical listening one has to analyze the situation and the speaker and focus on the logical aspects, implications, and the intention of the speaker. For example, when a salesperson gives a product demo and talks about only the merits of the product while undermining competitors, the listener has to move into critical listening.

Q18. What qualities of speech do you miss in written communication?

OR What are the advantages of oral communication?

Ans. : In written communication, we miss the following qualities of speech. These are the merits of Oral Communication.

i) Immediate feedback
ii) Speed of transmission
iii) Body language
iv) Time-saving method of group communication

Q19. What do you mean by 'Clear Articulation' ?

Answer: 'Clear articulation' refers to the correct pronunciation of the sounds and words of a language. Clear articulation of English sounds and words primarily requires a non-native speaker to correctly pronounce its 24 consonants and 20 vowels. An effective speaker should also master the patterns of speech rhythm that comes from correct stress and intonation. The basic requirement for clear articulation is a neutral accent free from Mother Tongue Interference.

Q20. What does 'Voice Quality' refer to ?

Answer: 'Voice Quality' refers to the set of features that distinguishes one voice from another. One's voice cannot be totally changed, but there is a need to refine the quality of one's voice after identifying its weak points (such as too low, or too harsh). One's voice can be trained for impact by cultivating sensitivity to sounds through ear-training and by practicing voice modulation according to the meaning and intent of the message. The ideal voice is a deep and resonant voice.

Q21. What rules of etiquette would you follow while using your cell phone?

Ans.: Some rules of etiquette to follow while using a cellphone are:

a. Keep your voice low when using your cellphone in a public place so that you do not disturb others' activities.

b. Avoid receiving calls during meetings.

c. Keep the duration of the call as short as possible.

MODULE - II

Q22. What are the differences between an efficient reader and an inefficient reader ?

Ans.: The following are the differences between an efficient reader and an inefficient reader.

An efficient reader	An inefficient reader
1. Always reads for ideas	1. Tries to read words
2. Reads by word-groups	2. Reads word by word
3. Adjusts reading speed to the reading purpose.	3. Reads every text at a slow speed.
4. Sets the purpose of reading right in the beginning.	4. Reads every text casually without a purpose.
5. Uses different subskills of reading according to need.	5. Reads every text in the same way.

Q23. How is 'Skimming' different from 'Scanning' ?

Answer: Both 'Skimming' and 'Scanning' are subskills of Reading. Skimming is a moresophisticated skill than scanning. It refers to the process of reading a text in order to get its main idea. It is a rapid reading technique that prepares the reader for detailed reading. As the main objective of skimming is tounderstand the central idea and the main points of a text, the readerneeds to use a reading strategy that involves fast reading and quick analysis.

On the other hand, scanning refers to the subskill of locating specific information in a text as quickly as possible. While trying to look for a word in a dictionary or looking for a telephonenumber in thedirectory, we scan and look for specific information. Scanning is an important rapid glancing technique for searching a specific piece of information.

Q24. What are the main reading faults ? How can you correct them ?

Ans. :The three main reading faults are :

1. Sub-vocalizing : Forming the sounds of words and even murmuring them aloud.
2. Finger-pointing : Moving the finger from word to word while reading.
3. Regressive eye movement : Moving back the eyes to check previous words instead of steadily moving forward.

For correction of these reading faults, a reader can aim at speed reading by taking in a group of words in one eye span and keeping the mind alert for smart comprehension.

Q25. Why is the subject line of an e-mail important? If you are writing back and forth to the same person on the same topic, should you use the same subject line over and over again?

Ans.: The subject line of an e-mail is important because while browsing mail, a manager has to pick and choose which mails to read on the basis of the subject line.

For the first few responses, the same subject line offers a convenient link. But too many messages with the same subject line become confusing. After a few responses, the subject line can be changed to keep focus on the latest message.

Q26. What are the basic parts of a Business memo?

Ans.: The basic parts of a memo are:

a. Date
b. Receiver's name and designation(To)
c. Sender's name and designation(From)
d. Subject
e. Body of the memo
g. Signature of the sender

Q27. Some employers prefer a chronological resume instead of a functional resume. Why?

Ans.: Some employers prefer to see a chronological resume instead of a functional resume, because:

a. They are familiar with the chronological format and can easily find the required information;
b. It highlights growth and career progression; and
c. It highlights employment continuity and stability.

Q28. How is a Chronological resume different from a Functional resume?

Ans.: The differences between a chronological resume and a functional resume are as follows:

a. In a chronological resume the educational qualifications and the work-experience sections dominate and are placed immediately after the career objective. A functional resume, on the other hand, emphasizes a list of skills and accomplishments and puts education and work-experience in subordinate sections.
b. The chronological resume is appropriate if your career and employment history show continuity. In contrast, the functional resume is appropriate if you lack continuous academic progress or continuous employment.

Q29. What should be your objective while writing a job application?

Ans.: Like a resume, a job application is a form of self-advertisement.

It should have a style that projects confidence, and it should impress a potential employer on your suitability and merits for the job. Finally it should ensure your getting a call for interview.

When a letter of application is sent along with a resume, the purpose of the application is to get the employer interested enough to read the resume. Then the purpose of the resume is to get the employer interested enough to call you for an interview.

Q30. Why should you include Hobbies, Interests and extracurricular activities in your resume?

Ans.: Hobbies, interests, and extra-curricular activities show that the person has a variety of interests in life and that he is a stable extrovert and therefore, can be expected to possess developed people skills.

Q31. What is the purpose of a Report introduction?

Ans.: The purpose of a Report introduction is to state the purpose of the report, to give background information on the issue / problem under investigation, and to furnish the Terms of Reference.

Q32. "Audience analysis is a very important part of any effective report writing". Explain.

Ans.: A report will be effective only if the report writer is able to connect his purpose with the interests and needs of his readers. While planning a report, the writer should know:

(a) Who are the audience? What is the audience profile: age, education, status, knowledge, etc.?

(b) How is the report meaningful to the audience?

(c) What does the audience expect from the report?

(d) How much background information will the audience need?

Q33. Fill in the blanks with verb forms suggesting future activity:

i. We hear the price of onions <u>will go up</u> (go up) by three rupees per kilo next week.
ii. There is a low pressure and <u>we are going to have</u>(have) heavy rain in the next few days.
iii. The Olympic Games <u>starts</u> (start) in Beijing next month.
iv. My daughter wants to become a singer. She <u>is joining</u> (join) the SangeetMahavidyalaya next month.
v. If you neglect your studies, you <u>will fail</u> (fail) in the exam.
vi. The Prime Minister <u>is to leave</u> (leave) for New York in an hour. He <u>will address</u> (address) the United Nations General Assembly tomorrow.
vii. The company's directors have taken a decision. The new factory <u>is going into</u> (go into) production next month.
viii. The train is running late. I don't know when it <u>will leave</u> (leave) for Howrah.

Q34. Complete the conversation between two friends below, using appropriate tags.

Pinki : You don't really want to come with me any more, ___________ ?

Nira : Of course I do. But I need a bit of time for myself sometimes.

Pinki : You get plenty of time for yourself, ____________ ?

Nira :Pinki, you know how fond I am of you, I've told you that many times, _________ ?

Pinki : Yes, you have. And you're quite happy, ___________ ?

Nira : why are we arguing ? There's nothing to argue about, ____________ ?

Pinki : You can't ever look at things from my point of view, ____________ ?

Q35. Correct the errors.

a) One of the pupils in our class <u>own</u> a laptop.**(owns)**
b) Ten grams <u>are</u> the smallest quantity they sell.**(is)**
c) Some people dislike traveling by sea, as it <u>make</u> them sea-sick.**(makes)**
d) Ill news <u>travel</u> fast.**(travels)**
e) A lot of time <u>have</u> been wasted.**(has)**
f) The owners of all these houses is selling them away.
g) She makes lovely chicken curry, isn't it ?
h) Why you haven't spoken to him yet ?
i) There is no trees in his village.

Q36. Change into the passive.

1. The boys have broken the window.
2. Someone stole my purse.
3. They will lock these gates at 10 p.m.

4. People use a thermometer for measuring temperature.
5. The Air Chief gave the pilot a medal.
6. She didn't expect anyone to blame me.
7. I need to redecorate my house.
8. People believe that he is dishonest in his dealings.

Q37. How do verbs of state differ from event verbs ?

Ans. : In terms of meaning, verbs are classified as verbs of state (= stative verbs) and event verbs (=dynamic verbs). The verbs which describe actions are called event verbs or dynamic verbs. For example, <u>run, throw, fight, write</u>, etc. express actions and are therefore, dynamic verbs. There are certain other verbs, such as <u>be, become, seem, like, love, see, hear,</u> etc. which describe a state, and are called stative verbs. It is noteworthy that stative verbs cannot normally be used in the continuous form, whereas there is no such restriction in the case of dynamic verbs :

✓ *He is writing a letter now*
* *She is loving him.*
✓ *She loves me.*

MODULE – III

Q38. Why are presentation skills important for a business executive?

Ans.: Oral Presentations have become a routine activity for a business executive in today's world for sharing ideas and influencing people's actions. As the executive's career progresses, the presentation skills become even more important as they rely more on their ability to sell their ideas and plans. Failure to professionally present one's work, one's ideas or one's company may significantly affect the company's reputation, and will most certainly affect the executive's ability to achieve his/her career goals.

Q39. How is a business presentation different from a public speech?

Ans.: A business presentation is more focused than a public speech. The audience of a presentation is generally homogeneous in terms of professional interest and knowledge, whereas the audience of a public speech is mostly heterogeneous. The interaction in a presentation is far more than in a public speech, because the audience in a presentation wishes to understand the topic thoroughly, whereas the audience of a public speech aims at a general understanding of the topic. In these ways, a business presentation is different from a public speech.

Q40. Identify the two primary reasons why you should limit your scope in Oral presentations?

Ans.: Firstly, an Oral presentation is made in specific and limited time duration, *e.g.* 30 minutes. This would necessitate narrowing down the scope so that the presentation can be completed in time. Secondly, the presentation would lack focus and depth, if not limited in scope. This would be a source of dissatisfaction for the professional audience of the presentation. These are the two primary reasons why the scope of a presentation should be limited.

Q41. How do rehearsals before a presentation help the presenter?

Ans.: Rehearsals before a presentation help the presenter to:

- Co-ordinate speech with visual projections,
- Know if the information has been properly edited,
- Check the duration and make adjustments in time, and
- Reduce stage fright.

Q42. What is a presentation? How is it different from a written report?

Ans.: An oral presentation is a participative two-way communication process in which there is a formal and structured presentation of a message using visual aids. It is purposeful, goal-oriented as well as audience-oriented.

An oral presentation is different from a written report as follows:

a. It is less formal.
b. It is mainly meant to be heard, while a written report is meant to be read.
c. There is no scope for face-to-face interaction in case of a written report. In an oral presentation, interaction forms an integral part.

Q43. What is an impromptu presentation?

Ans.: An impromptu presentation is a presentation made unexpectedly on the spot without preparation and demanded by a situation.

For example, when a manager has started giving a presentation on a project he comes to realize that the audience has no background knowledge of the project, and so he has to make an impromptu presentation on the background before coming to the prepared presentation.

Q44. What factors should one consider before collecting information for an oral presentation?

Ans.: Before collecting information for an oral presentation, one should consider the following factors:

1. Purpose of the presentation
2. Audience profile
3. Venue and Time for the presentation
4. Title of the presentation

Q45. How can you use visual aids for maximum impact in your oral presentation?

Ans.: In order to use visual aids for maximum impact in an oral presentation, one should:

a. Give an introduction before showing a slide.
b. Match the slide with the oral message you are delivering.
c. Avoid filling a slide with too many words or images.
d. Plan the graphics according to the main points.

Q46. List four ways to overcome your anxiety while making an oral presentation?

Ans.: To overcome anxiety during an oral presentation:

a. Concentrate on 3 P’s: Planning, Preparation and Practice.
b. Set realistic goals for the presentation.
c. Avoid negative thoughts about your performance.
d. Speak slowly.

Q47. List the visual aids which would be most effective in a presentation.

Ans.: The visual aids that can be effective in a presentation are:

1. Handouts,
2. Power Point Slides on LCD projector, and
3. Video clips

Q48. Why should we use visual aids in a presentation?

Ans.: We should use visual aids in a presentation because

1. They can serve the purpose of speech notes, and raise our confidence level;
2. They increase audience interest; and
3. They add to the clarity and precision of the presentation

Q49. How should a presenter handle questions from the audience?

Ans.: A good presenter treats questions from the audience as an important part of the presentation. Questions help the speaker to:

- further clarify the points
- add new information
- demonstrate his or her knowledge.

Questions can be motivated by different reasons, ranging from rivalry or jealousy to genuine curiosity. In all situations, however, the speaker should be composed, polite and honest. Even meaningless questions or questions meant to embarrass the speaker have to be answered calmly and politely.

Finally, the speaker should exhibit a sense of honesty in answering questions. If he or she does not know the answer, it is best to admit it – nobody is expected to know everything.

Q50. How can a candidate become the leader in a GD?

Ans.: A candidate can become the leader in a group discussion by

a. Initiating the discussion;
b. Listening to the others patiently and attentively and practising empathy;
c. Being an active and interested participant;
d. Bringing the discussion on track when it has moved away from the topic;
e. Encouraging the shy members to express their views;
f. Resolving conflicts among the members quickly; and
g. Summarizing the group's point of view on the topic in the end.

Q51. How do you put forward your views in a group discussion?

Ans.: During a group discussion we should not interrupt a member in the middle of his/her argument. We should wait till (s)he is about to finish and then get into the discussion, saying, "Excuse me" or "I agree with you there, and I want to add a point", or " I think, we can look at the topic from a different angle," etc.

Q52. What is consensus in a group discussion?

Ans.: A consensus in a group discussion means that all members of the group have come to have a common viewpoint regarding the topic under discussion and are in complete agreement.

Q53. How can you prepare well for a GD?

Ans.: In order to give a good account of oneself in a Group Discussion, one should

i) Build up an extensive knowledge base by reading daily newspapers, and business and news magazines;
ii) Develop an analytical way of thinking; and
iii) Master the art of discussion and people skills.

Q54. Mention some non-functional behavior patterns in GD.

Ans.: Some non-functional behavior patterns in GD are:

1. Speaking too much and trying to monopolize the discussion
2. Interrupting a group member in the middle of a sentence
3. Making fun of group members
4. Engaging in sub-group conversations
5. Losing temper.

Q55. What are the differences between GD and Debate ?

Ans. : Group discussion is a non-formal systematic exchange of information, views and opinions in a group about a topic for a limited duration. A Debate is a form of argumentative speech on a topic.

Debates are intended to advocate a particular point of view while GDs raise a particular issue for a positive exchange of views leading to a consensus. Unlike debates which are competitive in nature, GD is a co-operative group process. Thirdly, a debate follows a limited approach because the speaker must argue either in favour of or against a given point of view. On the other hand, in GD the approach is not limited to supporting a single point of view.

SECTION - D

ANSWERS OF MEDIUM LENGTH

Module – I

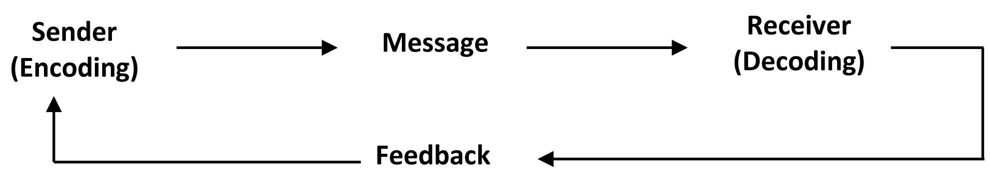
Q1. Define 'communication'. Explain the process of communication through a diagram depicting the essential components of the process.

Or

"Communication is a circular process." Explain.

Ans.: The word 'communication' is derived from the Latin word 'communicare' which means 'to share'. Thus, Communication can be defined as "the sharing or exchange of information, ideas and feelings between two persons or groups through a common language or code of symbol.''

Process of Communication



The process of communication involves decisions and activities by the two persons involved, the sender and the receiver.

The **sender** begins the process of communication. The sender has to be clearabout the **purpose** (or goal or object) of the communication and about the target audience (or receiver) of the communication; that is, the sender decides why and to whom to send a message. Conscious or intended communication has a purpose. We communicate because we want to make someone do something or think or feel in a certain way, that is, influence the person.

The source has to decide what information to convey, and create the **message** (or content) to be conveyed by using words or other symbols which can be understood by the intended receiver. The process of putting the idea into symbols is called encoding; in order to **encode,** the sender has to select suitable symbols which can represent the ideas, and can be understood by the receiver.

The sender also chooses a suitable **channel or medium** (mail, telephone, face-to-face talk) by which to send the message. The choice of the medium depends on several factors such as urgency of the message, availability and effectiveness of a medium, and the relation between the two communications. The choice of the medium/channel also influences the shape of the message.

Finally, the sender tries to note the effect of the message on the receiver; he checks whether the receiver has got the message, how the receiver has responded to the message and whether he has taken the required action; this information about the receiver's response is called **feedback**.

Sender's functions make up half the process of communication. The functions of the sender are:

1. Being clear about the purpose and goal of the communication
2. Finding out about the understanding and needs of the target audience.
3. Encoding the required information and ideas with symbols to create the message to suit the receiver/audience
4. Selecting the medium to send the message
5. Making efforts to get feedback

The **receiver** becomes aware that a message has arrived when he perceives it with his senses(he may see, hear,feel,etc.). The receiver attends to the message and interprets it. The process of translating the symbols into ideas and interpreting the message is called **decoding**. Interpreting is a complex activity; it involves using knowledge of the symbols and drawing upon previous knowledge of the subject matter. The receiver's ability to understand, level of intelligence, values and attitude, and relation with the sender will influence his creation of meaning.

If the sender and the receiver have a common field of experience, the receiver's understanding of the message will be closer to what the sender intended.

The receiver also feels a reaction to the message; this reaction may be conscious or unconscious.It may cause some change in the receiver's facial expression. The message definitely leads the receiver to think. The receiver may take some action, if required. He may also reply to the message. The reaction, the response and the reply together form the **feedback**.

The receiver's functions complete one cycle of the process of communication. The functions of the receiver are:

1. Attending to the received message, that is, listening, reading or observing
2. Decoding the received message
3. Interpreting and understanding the meaning of the message
4. Responding to the message
5. Giving feedback to the sender of the message

Thus, communication is a 5-step process in which (i) the sender hasan idea and encodes this idea into a message, and (ii) the message is transmitted through speech, writing or body language. As the next step (iii) this message is received, decoded and understood by the receiver. (iv) After understanding the message, (v) the receiver encodes a response, and Finally sends appropriate feedback to the sender. This completes one cycle of the process of communication. Usually communication continues between the original sender and the original receiver who take turns and co-operate with each other throughout the process of communication.

Q2. What do you mean by the grapevine in an organization ? Discuss its usefulness.

Ans. :Informal communication networks are known as the grapevine of an organization. They are vital in any hierarchical structure. Obviously, a formal structure is quite rigid and indicates who is responsible for what and who communicates formally to whom. The informal structure is not exactly structured or documented in any organization, but it grows from the self-groupings and interactions that people naturally form. For example, information communication happens around water coolers, in lunch rooms or company canteens, and wherever employees get together.

Within such informal structure, however, a lot of communication occurs but itis mostly unplanned, oral interactions in organisations. Many such communications, operational or non-operational, are of personal nature. All human beings are social animals. Whenever they come in contact with each other there will be incidental exchange of feelings and information. Such personal communication is a part of the work situation and is integral with the working lives of men and women. Now, the problem comes as to what extent such personal communication should be permissible at workstations.

Significantly the informal system of communication can be as important as the formal process in fulfilling the goals of the organisation. In fact, informal channels, spring up by virtue of communication interests between people in organisations, caused by work, social or outside relationships. Not surprisingly, the late Mr. Dhirubhai Ambani (founder of one of India's largest business and industrial conglomerate, Reliance Industries Ltd.) had made a startling comment about the usefulness of the informal channel. He said, "If I plant a rumour I'll get a reaction within a day. If I send a formal memo, it takes three weeks to get a response, that too after a few reminders."

The advantages of 'the grapevine' are :

i) Speedy transmission of information
ii) Quick and genuine feedback value
iii) Employees' psychological satisfaction
iv) Generation of new ideas.

Disadvantages

- There can be half-truths and misinformation.
- Moves in an erratic manner without firm direction.
- No responsibility is fixed for anyone either as senders or receivers.
- Message changes according to motive of persons involved in the process.
- Difficult to exercise any check in the free flow of messages.

When information is introduced into the grapevine, it tends to travel quickly because it is not restricted by any structural constraint. Managers who stay in touch with the informal networks can use them strategically to expedite decision making in the right perspective. Prof. Keith Davis who made extensive research on organisational grapevine pointed out, "if properly guided, it (the grapevine) can build teamwork, company loyalty, and the kind of motivation that makes people want to do their best."

Q3. "The Grapevine can be used for the management's benefit." How?

In the larger perspective , grapevine is often described as the barometer of public opinion. Therefore, in the organisational framework howsoever well structured or disciplined it is—the importance of grapevine is a well recognised truth. Its advantages

- Grapevine acts as a safety valve in time of stress and threat, and provides emotional relief to all those who are a part of the grapevine.
- It can raise the morale in times of difficulties at the personal or group levels.
- Functions in addition to official channels of communication with the distinct advantage of greater speed of transmission.
- Provides much needed feedback to the management when many other channels have dried up.
- If properly used and efficiently handled, the management of an organisation can turn it into a constructive tool.

Effective Use of the Grapevine

Management can use it as a constructive tool in the following ways :

1. Keep the employees well-informed about policy matters and future plans and prospects to check speculation.
2. Organize group activities to enhance knowledge, skills and self-worth.
3. Follow open-door policy without an eye on popularity.
4. Identify leaders and win their confidence.
5. Associate them with the decision- making process.
6. Plant desirable stories in the interest of the organization

How far is it desirable or possible to put a break or control rumours within an organisation? No organisation can ever stop the grapevine fully, and so managers should concentrate on stopping only those rumours which become malicious or destructive. To cut rumours short, disseminate the information that people need or want without delay. Provide full facts clearly and accurately. Additionally, official communication channels must be kept open. Encourage more direct interaction.

Managers must attempt to identify actions or situations which might lead to grapevine. Then, management should hold organised group activities at which key opinion moulders, influential employees and management officials meet to discuss and combat the identified causes and disseminators of the rumours. As counter measures,managers should feed the grapevine with actual information and seek to get the facts through the informal channels of communication.

Q4. What are the features of good conversations ?

Briefly suggest ways to improve your conversational skill.

Ans. A conversation is an informal oral exchange of feelings, opinions and ideas between two or more persons. Conversing is an essential interpersonal skill that helps to build a pleasing personality and receive friendly co-operation in social and professional situations.

<u>Characteristics of Good Conversations</u>

- *Conversations are better structured*—Conversations are better structured than a casual talk, especially if there is an agenda in place. However, a conversation may drift away from the agenda and tends to go beyond what you wish to discuss. If conversations are meant to discuss important topics—for example, whether the services of an employee should be terminated, and you as the employee's manager are in conversation with the HR team—it is better to arrange for a moderator who can control the flow of the conversation.
- *All the key people must be involved*—There is no point in having a conversation without involving the key people—the decision-makers and the key input givers. The conversation will be meaningless if they are not involved.
- *Conversations must be risk-free*—People will express themselves only when they feel that they are risk-free. So, if you want a conversation in which the participants do not feel inhibited, you should provide them with a risk-free environment. Often, people feel that a frank and fair conversation could pose a threat to their job or position and that is probably the reason why they fear to freely express their views.

How to Converse Well

Conversation is an art that tests your innate ability to engage people in front of you in a meaningful dialogue. You will need to practise this skill over years. If you are in a business, profession, or role where your job is dependent on conversations, you will have to sharpen your conversational skills to impress the diverse and interesting people you deal with.

Here are a few guidelines that will help you with your conversations:

Learn more about the other person—In a formal conversation, it is good to know the person to whom you are speaking—that is, being aware of this person's likes, dislikes, and aspects that are related to work and those that are not .

For example, imagine that your client has told you in your first meeting that his or her daughter is studying law. You may probably ask about the client's daughter casually in the next conversation. Knowing an individual beyond the immediate business concerns helps build a rapport. A word of caution: when you are trying to know people, make sure you do not get too personal or offensive. For example, people of some nationalities are very reserved on family-related issues and would not want to discuss them with someone relatively unknown to them.

Include all key people—Another key point that you should keep in mind while you are conversing is to ensure that all the people necessary for the discussion are included in the conversation. A conversation in which the key people are missing is a waste of time.

During conversations you will be making requests. Ensure that you are clear about what you want. Similarly, when another person is making a request, say 'yes 'or 'no'. Many people have the habit of being non-committal as they find it extremely difficult to say 'no' upfront. Do not be vague by using words such as 'Let us see'.

Conversations form the grounds for good negotiations, and you will be a good negotiator only if your ability to converse is well-developed.

AVOID ARGUMENTATION :

We all have our individual views and opinions. When people have differences of opinion, minor conflicts occur. When these conflicts escalate, the conversations turn into arguments.

Arguments stem not only from smaller conflicts but also occur for many other reasons—clash of egos, fight for visibility in the organization, differences of opinion, personal conflicts, forced changes, and invasion of personal space. Arguments are often an extension of conversations, and when ideas clash, a war of words results.

It is important to channelize arguments in the right directions, and in some cases, we need to gracefully exit arguments as they may turn bitter.

Here are a few tips to help you during arguments:

- Try to understand the other person's opinion or point of view. Accept the fact that all of us are different.
- Do not argue to counter each other's point. Arguments for the sake of arguing are dangerous and do not lead us anywhere.
- Try and build your case, backed by suitable data points. Ensure that you argue with the hard facts with you rather than with emotions.
- Never lose your calm. At least one of the persons engaged in an argument has to remain silent and calm. Understand when to exit an argument.

- Never try to use an undue advantage that you have over the other person in an argument—for example, in an argument between you, as the manager, and your subordinate, you should not take advantage of your position as this may make the other person retreat.
- Never push your opinions on the other person. If you do, it will leave a scar on the relationship. People will not like to be associated with you.
- Accept that you may also make a mistake. Do this gracefully and correct your mistake rather than arguing just for the sake of doing so.

In situations at our workplace, we argue when things go beyond our control. It is often our ego that forces us to argue. Sometimes, arguments in organizations take the form of power play and people try to demonstrate their superiority. Arguing only with emotions will not lead you anywhere and will make it tough for you to take the right decision and also leave a bitter feeling amongst people. Remember that you may win an argument, but you may lose the relationship forever. Understand this fact, and plan your exit, when you find that the argument is not taking you anywhere.

Apply the Three Cs

The final key to becoming a great conversationalist is to practise the friendship factor. The friendship factor is based on the three Cs—*care*, *courtesy*, and *consideration*.

You must have heard what is generally quoted to emphasize empathy in human behaviour—'People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.' It is rightly said that whenever you show another person that you genuinely care about him/her, you come across better as a conversationalist and as a friend. Moreover, courtesy is a magic quality that makes people want to be around you. All good conversationalists make others feel calm and comfortable in their presence. They never do or say anything that could hurt or offend the other person in any way. Moreover, if we respect others and are considerate towards them, we are respected and considered highly by other people. Whenever you treat another person as an important and worthwhile human being, you give them a feeling that you value them. This attitude helps you become not just a better human being, but also a better conversationalist.

Be Fluent while Speaking

Fluency is a much desired attribute of a good conversationalist. Therefore, be fluent while talking to others. Apart from good listening and regular practice at conversations, having a good vocabulary also helps you attain fluency in your expression. So, be a good reader and try to learn more and more words in order to express yourself effectively and successfully.

Q5. Prepare a set of Power Point slides on "Cell Phone Etiquette " .

Ans. : For a 15-minute presentation, the following are the ten power point slides on the topic 'Cell phone Etiquette'. It is assumed that each slide, apart from the 'Title' slide and the last 'Thank You' slide, will take 1.5 minutes on average for explaining.

Slide -1

CELL PHONE

ETIQUETTE

'A Presentation by X'

Slide - 2

Importance

- Mobile phones have become an indispensable for modernliving.
- However, we should keep in mind some important rules of mobile etiquette for good businessrelationship.

Slide -3

- Use a cell phone ring tone which is neither loud nor annoying.

Slide - 4

- Take or make your calls without disturbingothers.

Slide -5

- When calling on a cell phone, be brief and to thepoint.

Slide - 6

- Talk in lower tones so as not to bother individuals around you. Do notshout.

Slide - 7

Turn your phone off when you are at a public event/ performance.

Slide - 8

- Keep in mind the fact that you can message a text instead of calling or receiving a call on your cellphone.

Slide-9

- Avoid inappropriate topics of chat and inappropriatepictures for your cell phone address book.

Slide-10

Don't use your phone while driving or attending a meeting. Put it in the silent mode.

Thank you

Module – II

Q6. Briefly state the important rules of Netiquette.

Answer:

Netiquette refers to the formal rules of correct and polite behaviour in respect of e-mails. Some basic rules of Netiquette are as follows :

1. Avoid all capital letters.
   Capital letters are reading aids that signal a reader about sentence beginnings, proper nouns, and acronyms such as ASAP. Generally they are used to emphasize the important parts of a text. However, writing a whole word or sentence in caps shows unprofessionalism and lack of e-mail etiquette. Writing in all capital letters is equivalent to shouting in e-mail language.
2. Provide an informative subject line.
   If you want your e-mail to be read and have the desired impact, make the subject line specific and compelling. Create an effective informative subject line that allows people to determine priorities from their in-box list.

3. Revise the e-mail before you hit 'send'.
   This is absolutely necessary as you might have inadvertently typed words which do not convey your message properly or which may hurt the feelings of the recipient.

4. Respect the copyright on extracts and quotes.
   E-mail communication must abide by copyright laws. Be certain to give credit for quoted material and seek permission to use copyrighted text or graphics from printed and electronic sources.

5. Do not make changes in the message being forwarded.

   Unless you inform the reader that editing has occurred, do not alter a message you are forwarding or reposting, and be sure to ask permission of the sender before forwarding it.

6. Allow cool-off time for a flame.
   Sending a negative message that contains insulting and critical comments is called a flame. Allow cool-off time before sending a flame, or any emotional or angry message.
7. Finally, respond to a message as early as you can.

Q.7. What are the important things to remember while video-conferencing ?

OR

Write some important rules to maximize the effectiveness of video-conferencing.

Video-conferencing entails the transmission of images (Video) and speech (Audio) back and forth between two or more physically separate locations. It is used for business meetings, interviews, and urgent interactions facilitating quick decision-making. Used effectively, video conferencing gives significant benefits of increased productivity and reduced costs for a business organization.

Some of the ways to maximize the effectiveness of video-conferencing are as follows:

1. Room Dynamics : Blue colour should be used as background colour on the wall facing the camera. Curtains should be drawn and doors kept shut while conducting the conference. Lighting should come from overhead, and there should be no bright light behind the participant.

2. Microphones : The microphone should be positioned at an equal distance of about 2 – 3 feet from all participants. One should avoid moving the microphone while conferencing because movement sounds are amplified by the microphone.

3. Clothes and colours:Colours of clothes that work well in video conferences are blue, pink and green. Avoid white and black and stripes.

4. Call preparation : Familiarize yourself with the room, the equipment and its operation. Arrive in advance to check if everything works: from dial-up connection to camera, lighting, and seating arrangements.

5. Meeting etiquette : In a video conference, a protocol may be agreed upon regarding asking participants to raise their hand to speak or ask a question so that people do not talk over each other.

6. Speaking : Wait for the image of the other person and your own image to appear on the screen before beginning the discussion. First introduce yourself and your team. Always try to speak clearly and slowly. Direct your message or question by specifying the person you are addressing. Maintain face-to-face connection as much as possible. And finally, plan for a 10-minute break every 50 minutes.

Q8. Explain the features of a good Business Report.

Answer :

There are some inherent features that make a report good and worthwhile to read. A good Business Report should be accurate, objective, well-structured, and complete.

1. Accuracy : A good report should be accurate in the information and data it presents. The information must be correct and backed by data.
2. Objectivity : The analysis of the data and information must be bias-free and impartial as the primary purpose of a report is to help make a decision. If the decision is taken on wrong data or wrong analysis, it will certainly harm the interests of the organization.
3. Structure : There are four formats of a Business Report, namely, Printed Form, Memo, Letter, Manuscript. Firstly, a report should be submitted in the proper format according to its length and level of formality. If it is a routine informational report, the Printed Form format is suitable. A short report meant for someone inside the company is best put into the Memo format. A short report to an outsider requires the Letter format. The Manuscript format is reserved for long formal reports.
   Moreover, the parts of a good report must be presented in logical sequence. For example, a short formal report must have the following sequence : Title, Terms of Reference, Procedures, Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations.
4. Completeness : The report must be complete in terms of its presentation and logical flow. If all the required data, illustrations and explanations are provided in the report, it will help the reader to take an informed decision.

Thus, a good report exhibits the four features of accuracy, objectivity, structure, and completeness.

Q9. "Time and tense are not the same". Explain.

Answer :

Time is an essential element in states, actions and events expressed by the verb. The finite verb in a sentence tells us when an action or event takes place withreference to the time of speaking or writing. The time of speaking is Now or the present. We look backwards from the point NOW into the past or look forwards from that point into the future.

Examples :

Sunitahas a headache (now).

Sunitahad a headache (yesterday).

Sunitawill have a headache (tomorrow).

Thus, time which is an element of our experience has three divisions : present, past and future.

The term 'tense' refers to the different forms which a verb takes to indicate 'time reference'. Tense is not time, although it refers to time. Time is something that exists outside language. Even if human beings did not have language, time would still exist, although we would have no means of talking about it. Different languages found different ways of talking about time. In languages such as English, Hindi, Oriya etc., verbs are mainly used (along with adverbs) to talk about time. Verbs take different forms when they are used to refer to actions or events taking place in different 'periods' of time, and it is these forms of verbs that we call tense.

Tense is a grammatical marker on the verb. In English, there are only two such markers – Present and past. In English, there are only two tenses through which we can express actions and events happening in all these three divisions of time.

Examples :

We like ice-cream very much.

We liked ice-cream very much.

English does not have a future tense. The speakers of English use the present tense forms to express future actions and events.

Examples :

It is going to rain tomorrow.

We will visit you next Sunday.

Q10. Write a short note on "Subject Verb Concord".

Ans. : Concord refers to the agreement of the verb with the subject in a sentence. The finite verb must agree with the person and number of the subject of the sentence.

For example :

I am a student.

He is a student

He comes to college every day.

They are angry

Below are some important exceptions to this general principle of subject verb concord :

- **A group noun is treated as plural when it refers to its members.**

1. ***The committee are divided in their opinions.***
2. ***The audience were very noisy.***

- **Two nouns joined by and are treated as singular when they refer to a single thing:**

- *Bread and butter is my favourite breakfast.*
- *Law and order is very important for a fair election.*
- *Slow and steady wins the race.*

- **When two nouns are joined by or/ either….. or, the number of the verb is determined by the number of the last noun:**

- *Either the workers or the directoris to blame for the strike.*
- *Either the director or the workers are to blame for the strike.*

- **'They' is used as the pronoun for everyone/ everybody:**

  Everyone thinks they know everything.

- **If two nouns are joined by along with/together with, the number of the first noun determines the number of the verbs:**

  The man along with his wife is coming here.

  The boys together with their teacher are coming here tonight.

Module - III

Q11. Explain the features of a good business presentation.

Answer :

A good business presentation should have the following features.

1. Planning : A good presentation should be well-planned and targeted to its audience. It must be based on audience analysis so that the presentation can fulfil audience expectations and can be positioned for proper impact.

2. Structure : The structure of a presentation needs to be understandable and memorable. Listeners expect a logical pattern among the ideas presented for clear understanding. Memorable presentations arouse positive sentiments but they also depend on memorable phrasing and quotations.

3. Visual aids : A good presentation always uses visual aids, such as PPTs, handouts, and flipcharts. Educational psychology has shown that people learn easily and quickly when multiple channels are used to present the information to be learned.

4. Right content : The ideas in a good presentation should be appropriate for the audience. The presentation will fail if the ideas are too difficult or too easy.

5. Preparation and Mastery : The listeners will perceive the presenter as credible and knowledgeable if she displays signs of preparation and mastery of the subject.

6. Lively Delivery : In a lively presentation, the presenter is convinced about the message, and therefore, there is passion in his voice. The dress and gestures of the presenter should draw attention to the presentation rather than to him. The presenter needs to maintain eye contact with the whole audience, indicating confidence and ease.

Q12. How important is body language in business presentations ? How would you give the right kind of message through your body language ?

Inall formats of oral communication, non-verbal aspects assume great importance and have great impact on the audience. In business presentations, the non-verbal aspects including body language have crucial importance as they can make or mar the presentation in spite of substantial content.

Non-verbal Elements : Your appearance, facial expressions, eye contact, postures, and gestures – all communicate your interest, enthusiasm, dynamism, intention, and confidence to your audience. Whatever the occasion, the following tips with help you to use non-verbal cues effectively during your presentation :

- *Appearance*. Though appearance is important in any setting, how you dress is even more important when you stand in front of an audience for delivering a message. However, dressing effectively does not always mean dressing up. If the occasion calls for casual attire, an overly formal appearance can be inappropriate.
- *Posture*. The best stance for delivering a presentation is relaxed, but firm. Your feet should be planted firmly on the ground, and spaced at shoulder'-width. Your body should face your audience with your head upright, turning naturally to look at them.

Moving about can add life to your presentation and help you release nervous energy. You can move towards the visual aids, walk away from them, return to your original position, and then approach your audience.

You may have observed that many business presentations are delivered in small groups of 5-6 employees or potential customers. On such occasions, you may have to remain seated during the presentation. Sit up straight and lean forward since lounging back in your chair indicates indifference. Sit naturally in a posture that reveals your dynamism and interest, much as you sit while conversing with your friends.

Gestures : People are more likely to pay attention to what we are showing them from the stage, rather than what we are telling them. So, our words and our body language must be in sync. Gestures should enhance – not distract from --- the message. Remember these helpful hints during your next presentation :

- Gesture in your personal power zone. It is the length of your arm span, out in front of you and above your head. The gestures may feel 'big' at first, but they will look natural to your audience.
- Refrain from pointing at your audience.

- Resist the temptation to stick your hands in your pockets or behind your bank. Your audience may think you are hiding something from them.

Eye Contact : Whether you are proposing an innovative, new product line, reassuring your employees about the effects of recent budget cuts, or trying to explain to your customers that your company is not involved in a scandal, your impression on the audience can determine your ultimate success. The impression that brings in success is possible to cultivate only when you talk directly to your audience, sharing your involvement and sincerity.

Make real, rather than desultory, eye contract with individuals in your audience, as if you are talking one-on-one with each person for three to five seconds. Divide the room into quadrants and alternate your focus to avoid favouring one side of the room (a common tendency among amateur presenters). If the audience is too large for you to make eye contact with each one, select a few people in different parts of the hall, making eye contact with each one for a few seconds.

Vocal Elements : Your voice can serve as an important tool to support your verbal message. How you sound is as important as how you look or what you say. Your vocal elements, namely, the tone, pitch, rate, and volume reflect your attitude about yourself, your message, and your audience. Try the following tips to help you use your vocal elements to enhance the impact of your presentation.

- Speak with enthusiasm and sincerity.
- Adjust the volume of your voice.
- Avoid disfluencies or vocalized pauses.
- Use your optimal pitch.
- Avoid fast delivery.
- Use silence and pauses effectively.
- Articulate each word clearly.

A speaker making a presentation can give the right kind of message and make an impact by following the instructions listed above.

SECTION – E
LONG ANSWERS

Q1. <u>NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION :</u>

Define non-verbal communication. Briefly describe the different forms of non-verbal communication.

Ans. Verbal communication refers to the communication which occurs with the help of words. On the other hand, non-verbal communication is communication without the use of words.

It is the transmission of messages by some medium other than speech or writing. Thus, Non-verbal communication refers to the transfer of meaning by body language, sign language, space, time, and paralinguistic features of speech.

Aspects of Non-Verbal Communication

I. KINESICS: Body language or Kinesics refers to the movement of a part of the body, or movement of the whole body. Our body movement includes our head, eyes, shoulders, lips, eyebrows,neck,legs, arms, fingers, hands, posture, and gestures. Together these pieces can convey if we are comfortable, unhappy, friendly, anxious or nervous.

(i)**Facial Expression:** Face is the primary site for expressing emotions. It reveals both the type and the intensity of feelings. Facial expressions are usually a reliable indicator of the speaker's innerfeelings. A wide range of meanings can be communicated by facial expressions. These are happiness, sorrow, fear, anger, surprise disgust, interest, confusion and determination.

(ii)**Eye-contact:** Eyes are especially effective for indicating attention and interest, influencing others, regulating interaction, and establishing dominance. Eye contact has a cultural dimension.For example, in the USA, lack of direct eye contact connotes distrust or dishonesty and that the speaker is hiding information, whereas in many Asian countries eye contact is a sign ofdisrespect.

(iii) **Posture:** The body position of a person conveys a variety of messages.The posture of straightback expresses confidence and readiness to face challenges.Closed Postures, with features suchas folded arms and crossed legs, indicate a closed personality and lack of confidence. A leaning posture towards the speaker conveys the listener's interest and attention, while leaning backawayfromthe speaker means that the listener is disinterested and bored. Legs alsocommunicate non-verbal messages. A person shifting from one leg to another while standingexpresses nervousness.One needs to keep the legs still in interviews and meetings. One should never cross legs in formal settings.

(iv) **Gesture:** Gestures refer to movement of arms, hands and fingers. Many gestures have a specific and intentional meaning, for example, a wave of the hand means hello or good-buy. Most of us,when talking with our friends, use our hands to describe an event or an object. Ideally, a person's gestures should flow with the vocal channel so as to enhance the effect of verbal communication.

Arms give away clues as to how open and receptive a person is in an interaction. Keeping arms out on the side of the body or behind the back shows that the person is not scared to take on whatever comes his way and that he meets things "full frontal". In general terms, the more outgoing you are, the more you use your arms with big movements. When you want to be seen in the best possible light, you should avoid crossing the arms.

Palms slightly up and outward are seen as a mark of an open and friendly person.On the other hand, palm down gestures are generally interpreted as indicative of a dominant and aggressive person.

Conscious gestures made with fingers are known as emblems. Examples of emblems are the thumb-and-index-finger gesture that signals 'Okay', or the thumbs-up gesture expressing 'You win'.

II. HAPTICS:

Haptics or communication by touch is an important form of non-verbal communication. Although used most frequently during greetings and departures, touching may occur in a variety of circumstances, including a conversation. Touching comes in the form of pats, hugs and handshakes.

Touch is an important way to convey warmth, comfort and reassurance.

It is now well accepted that people greet each other and introduce themselves to one another with a handshake. A firm handshake with upright and vertical hands is the desirable kind, as it shows confidence and keenness. On the other hand, a limp handshake suggests inferiority feelings, and a 'bone-crusher' handshake suggests aggressiveness and a desire to dominate.

III. PROXEMICS: A fascinating area in non-verbal communication is that of proxemics or space relationship. Indians, Russians, Italians and Middle East people maintain smaller distances while making interpersonal communication. In contrast, Americans, Englishmen and Germans tend to maintain bigger interpersonal distances.

Edward Hall defines four primary distance zones by American standards:

(i) Intimate zone(up to 18 inches)
(ii) Personal zone (18 inches to 4 feet)
(iii) Social zone (4 feet to 12 feet)
(iv) Public zone (more than 12 feet)

Intimate distance is considered appropriate for familiar relationships, and it indicates closeness and trust. Personal distance of 4 feet is the most comfortable distance during business interactions and social functions. The Social zone is used during interactions with strangers and occasional visitors. Public zone is used in situations such as a public speech where two-way communication is not desirable or possible.

IV. CHRONEMICS: Chronemics refers to the use of time as a message system, including punctuality, amount of time spent on a job, and waiting time. Coming in time to office reveals your interest, sincerity and serious attitude towards work. Similarly, being scrupulous about our use of time on the job creates a positive impression about us with our superiors and colleagues.

V. PARALANGUAGE: Language deals with what is said; paralanguage deals with how it is said. Just as we can communicate various attitudes through our gestures and postures, we can express emotions and feelings with the help of different aspects of speech such as voice, tone, inflection, pitch, volume and tempo.

When we receive a call and hear 'Hello', we are able to make out the gender as well as the socio-linguistic and educational background of the caller. We can also identify whether it is a known voice or an unfamiliar voice. None of these meanings are contained in the word 'Hello'. These are all derived from paralinguistic features of the voice.

Tone: Tone is used to convey an attitude. It can be direct, commanding, harsh, soft, gentle, comforting, etc.

Inflection: Voice inflection is the way we change the tone of our voice to emphasize key words. The variation is caused by stressing or stretching a word or phrase and by pausing before a word or phrase.

Stressing: I've got a BIG project.

Stretching: I've got a b – i – g project.

Pausing: I've got ……. a big project.

Pitch: Pitch refers to the rise and fall in tone. Pitch variation allows an oral message to acquire dynamism. It helps to remove the monotony of speech and also make the articulation persuasive. People in higher positions in an organization use high-pitched voice as compared to their subordinates. A high pitch characterizes a person who is emotionally charged, for example, when he is angry.

Volume: Maintaining an adequate volume of the voice is crucial for creating the right kind of impact on an audience. The speaker who speaks at a low volume is likely to be seen as someone lacking confidence and conviction. On the other hand, a speaker whose volume is too high may be seen as arrogant or boorish.

Tempo: Tempo refers to the rate of speaking – the number of words we utter per minute. Speaking too fast shows the speaker's lack of confidence. If the pace of speaking is too slow, the audience loses interest and feels bored. A speaker should, therefore, use a pace that is fast enough to keep the audience interested and to show the speaker's confident knowledge of the subject.

VI. PERSONAL APPEARANCE:

Although an individual's body type and facial features impose limitations, most people are able to control their attractiveness to some degree. Grooming, clothing, accessories, 'style'-all modify a person's appearance. If our goal is to make a good impression, we should adopt the style of the people we want to impress.

It may be noted in conclusion here that some non-verbal cues or expressions are culture-specific, whereas there are a few universal non-verbal cues. For example, direct eye contact in Asian cultures is regarded as disrespectful, whereas it is taken as a sign of confidence in western cultures. However, pointing a finger at someone is taken as an insulting gesture in almost all cultures.

Q2. How is listening important for a professional?Briefly discuss the barriers to listening and the strategies for improving the listening skill.

Ans. : Listening is the communication skill we use most frequently. Recent surveys have established its importance. 45% of the time of a business professional is spent in listening. Employees come to a manager with inquiries, suggestions, proposals, comments and complaints. This requires effective listening on the part of the manager. The higher a manager is in the corporate ladder, the more time he/she spends in listening to others. The managers who are rated most highly by their subordinates are good listeners. However, most professionals are poor listners. This is why effective listening is very important for business professionals.

Listening is the process of receiving and interpreting the spoken word. Listening begins with physical hearing or sensing of the oral message. Once the listener is able to recognize the sound patterns, he or she has to decode and interpret the message. After the message has been decoded and interpreted, its truth value and significance are evaluated, and an appropriate response is given by the listener. Thus, the process of listening consists of sensing, decoding, evaluating, and responding.

Barriers to Listening

If we want to improve our listening skill and achieve effective listening, we need to be aware of the major barriers to effective listening. They are :

1. Physical barriers
2. Perceptual Barriers
3. Speaker-related Barriers
4. Listener-related Barriers
5. Linguistic Barriers
6. Cultural Barriers

1. Physical barriers : Environmental distractions and disturbances can easily disturb the process of listening. Noise, physical discomfort or odd time for interaction can become barriers to listening. For example, when a person tries to listen to someone on a running train or in a crowded market, several distractions disturb the listening process. If we want to avoid physical noise during the process of listening, we need to ensure that all channels remain free from noise for the duration of interaction.

2. Perceptual Barriers : These barriers result from the differing perceptions of the speaker and the listener. The perceptual barriers are of the following kinds.

(a) Frames of reference : People perceive the words according to their frame of reference. Although the speaker may want to convey a particular meaning which seems clear from his point of view, it is the listener's individual frame of reference which determines the actual meaning assigned to the message by the listener. Thus, different frames of reference can lead to miscommunication.

(b) Experiences and expectations : Expectations are based on an individual's personality and her experiences in similar situations. Thus, the listener's background can lead her to indulge in 'selective' listening - taking the 'desired' parts and ignoring the 'undesired' parts of the message. She may try to add, subtract, or colour the message according to her experiences and expectations.

(c) Relationship with speaker : The relationship between speaker and listener can become a barrier to listening. Subordinate employees will pay close attention to a powerful and trustworthy superior while they would attach little importance to listening attentively to a superior with low credibility or little authority. Similar is the case of teacher-student and parent-child interactions.

Another common barrier to listening is 'egotism' or self-centred attitude of the participants. If the speaker / listener thinks that his ideas are more important and that he is always right and the other person is wrong, then his mind is closed for the other person's message. As a result, there will be no listening.

3. Speaker-related Barriers : The following are the main listening barriers related to the speaker.

(i) The speaker may speak **too fast** for the listener to understand **or too slow** for the listener to lose interest. Research in speech perception has arrived at one consistent finding : the best aid to understanding is to use normal speaking speed with a few extra pauses.

(ii) The loudness of the voice of the speaker may be a cause of the listener's annoyance and a barrier to effective listening.

(iii) The speaker's mannerisms (habitual peculiarities) and body language may make the listener apathetic and distracted.

(iv) If there is information overload in what the speaker is saying, the listener has difficulty in processing the information and in retaining attention. As a result listening can become ineffective.

4. Listener-related Barriers

(i) Disinterest : The listener considers the subject of discussion or conversation to be uninteresting and has developed unwillingness to listen right from the beginning.

(ii) Internal rehearsing : The listener in this case is pretending as if (s) he is listening attentively. But in actuality(s) he is waiting to jump in and make his own point without listening to the speaker.

(iii) Interrupting : The listener's impatience and frequent interruptions of the speaker is a big barrier to effective listening.

(iv) Premature judgement : Before the speaker has completed what (s)he wants to say, some listeners jump to conclusions, and thus fail to get the speaker's point.

(v) Listening for a point of disagreement : A listener who loves argumentation very often listens to what the speaker is saying only to find out a point of disagreement and to start an argument. This is an example of 'selective' listening which is a strong barrier to effective listening.

(vi) Multi-tasking : Doing more than one thing while listening is a big distraction. Thus, multi-tasking when one is supposed to be listening is a barrier to listening and can discourage the speaker to continue speaking.

5. Linguistic Barriers : Incorrect message decoding by the listener is a frequent barrier in oral communication. If the listener hears something in a language which (s)he does not understand, e.g. difficult words, jargon, technical terms or ambiguous expression, then a communication breakdown will take place.

Differences between the listener's mother-tongue and English in respect of individual sounds and use of stress and intonation can cause difficulties in spoken-word recognition. Of these 3 components in word recognition, stress is often reported to be the most problematic in listening.

6. Cultural Barriers : Globalisalization has forced business organizations, with their operations extending beyond local or regional boundaries, to employ people from different countries and cultural backgrounds.

The cultural differences among the employees of trans-national corporations come down to different values and different approaches to listening. For an example, a European or American values time very highly and therefore likes to be quick in talking as well as listening - to business matters. While interacting with Asians, (s) he finds it difficult to listen effectively as Asians spend a lot of time in small talk or tea while talking business matters. Similarly, cultural differences influence the communicator's attitude about silence which is taken as a major part of listening. Europeans or Americans often feel uncomfortable with long silence, whereas the Japanese, the Chinese and the Koreans regard silence as an important part of communication.

Thus, inter-cultural differences can be a potent barrier to listening.

Apart from these six kinds of barriers to listening, certain wrong assumptions regarding communication can lead to poor listening :

(a) that it is the speaker's responsibility to make the listener listen effectively;

(b) that listening is a passive activity in which the listener absorbs information and ideas like a sponge;

(c) that talking people are dominant and powerful, while listening people are weak and powerless.

STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING THE LISTENING SKILL

Most of us are poor listeners and active listening requires efforts. But the good news is that we can improve our listening skill. Research at the university of Minnesota shows that individuals who receive training in listening improve their listening skill by 25% to 40%. We can achieve similar results if we think strategically about listening and make a few simple deliberate choices as follows :

(a) Decide what your goals are for the interaction :

Skilled listeners think about the purpose of their interaction and act accordingly. The purpose of oral communication in a business organization include :

(i) To exchange information

(ii) To build working relationships

(iii) To arrive at a decision

(iv) To feel good

(v) To make someone feel good

(b) Be aware of your options during the interaction :

If you have the purpose of the interaction in mind, you can then choose when to talk and when to listen during the conversation, when to clarify and when to listen attentively. Good listeners always consciously make a decision when to talk and when to listen. This awareness helps one to keep control over one's listening and speaking.

There are a few effective suggestions on when to speak and when to listen :

(i) Don't assume that you have to talk more : Very often, one who listens more influences the interaction more. So one must stop talking more and then try to listen more.

(ii) Show your interest in the interaction : If the listener gives the impression that (s)he is listening to understand rather than to oppose, this will create a friendly climate for information exchange and co-operation.

(iii) Remove distractions : Certain activities such as playing with a pencil or pen, shuffling papers, looking at the watch and multi-tasking by the listener distract the speaker. In order to get better input from the speaker, the listener should stop doing such things and focus fully on the speaker's words.

(iv) Empathize with the speaker : If the listener places him or her in the speaker's position and looks at things from his or her point of view, (s)he has a better chance to improve his listening ability.

(v) Ask questions : While interruptions by the listener should be avoided, positive interventions by the listener are desirable. The listener should ask appropriate questions at the right opportunity to elicit more information and clarify doubts. In fact, most speakers would welcome this as it not only provides feedback but also provides an opportunity to clarify the message and correct misunderstandings. Asking questions also tells the speaker that the listener has interest and involvement in the communication process.

(vi) Refocus, when the conversation lags : When the conversation seems to become uninteresting for some reason, it is for the listener to ask the other person questions that will again make the conversation warm, or to talk more about a relevant topic and invite the other person to talk about it.

(vii) Concentrate on contents and listen for signposts : Bring your total focus on the contents of the speaker's input and be aware of the signposts for his / her organization of ideas such as "To begin with ...", "Secondly ...", "On the other hand...", "In conclusion...", etc.

(c) Avoid negative feelings and attitude

(i) Guard against your personal biases interfering with your understanding.

(ii) Refrain from argumentation and criticism.

(iii) Avoid impatience : Patience is an important attribute of good listening. The listener should wait for the speaker to complete his or her part of the talk and avoid derogatory or cynical comments. Every speaker has a train of thought, and gestures of impatience on the part of the listener may disturb the speaker's train of thought.

(iv) Don't lose your temper : Good listening calls for the right temperament. Even if the listener thinks that the speaker is not right, this does not give him or her a right to instant reaction and bad tempers.

The above three strategies with their sub-points, if adopted, has every chance of improving one's listening skill.

Q3. Discuss the important aspects to be considered while planning for a business presentation.

Ans.: An oral presentation is a form of oral communication. It is a participative two-waycommunication process characterized by the formal and structured presentation of a message, using visual aids. It is purposeful and goal-oriented, and communicates a message to an audience in a waythat brings about the desired change in their understanding or opinion. There are five stages in giving an effective presentation, such as:-
1. Planning 2. Preparing 3.Organizing 4.Rehearsing 5. Delivering

PLANNING THE PRESENTATION

An oral presentation is the formal, structured, and systematic presentation of a message to an audience and it involves conveying a lot of information in a limited time. It should, therefore, be planned well in advance so that the material is delivered effectively. Planning the presentation is, thus, the most important element. It helps the presenter

- know the audience;

- stimulate the interest of the audience;
- be sensitive to the needs and expectations of the audience;
- strike up interaction with his/her immediate audience in as many ways as possible;
- know his/her purpose;
- analyze the occasion;
- fit the material to the time at his/her disposal; and
- select and narrow a topic for his/her presentation.

Planning an oral presentation, thus, involves purpose identification, audience analysis, analysing the occasion, and the process of selecting and narrowing the topic of presentation. The following suggestions will help in planning well:

1. Define the Purpose

Planning a presentation should start by defining its purpose. What is the purpose of this presentation? This is the most important question that needs to be answered in order to make a presentation focused and give it clear objectives. A general purpose as well as a specific purpose should be identified. General purposes include:

- To inform—to share information
- To persuade—to change behaviour, attitude, belief, values, and so on
- To demonstrate—to help listeners know how to do something

Identifying the specific purpose of a presentation involves identifying an observable measurable action that the audience should be able to take, and using one idea that matches audience needs, knowledge, expectations, and interests. It should focus on audience behaviour and restate the speech topic. Study the following examples:

- At the end of my presentation, the audience will be able to describe three advantages of using HPprecision Scan LT software.(*Informative presentation*)
- At the end of my presentation, the audience will believe that the HP Precision Scan LT is the bestscanning software.(*Persuasive presentation*)
- At the end of my presentation, the audience will be able to use HP Precision Scan LTsoftware. (*Demonstrative presentation*)

2. Analyze the Audience

The desired results cannot be achieved in a presentation unless the person making the presentation knows his/her audience well. Audience analysis is an integral part of the process of oral presentation. It includes identifying audience characteristics, analyzing audience needs and expectations, and identifying factors for getting and maintaining audience attention.

Identify Audience Characteristics

In order to know the audience, the presenter needs to identify their basic characteristics. He/she should try to gather as much background information about his/her listeners as he/she can—their age, gender, social, economic and educational background, religion, political affiliations, profession, attitudes (likes and dislikes), beliefs (true and false), and values (good and bad). If these audience characteristics are identified, he/she will be much better equipped to plan and prepare his/her presentation effectively.

Analyze Audience Needs and Expectations

Those who will attend and listen to the presentation have their needs and expectations. They will be there for a reason. If the presenter wants them to listen to him/her, he/she has to understand and respond to their needs and expectations. For this he/she should ask the following questions:

- Why will they listen to me?
- What are their interests?
- What ideas or experience do I have that the audience may like to hear?
- What are their needs?
- What do they expect?
- How do my objectives meet audience needs?

Answers to these questions will help the presenter to make appropriate modification in his/her presentation to suit the audience. The presentation must be audience oriented, dealing with the topic from their perspective. The presenter may not change his/her ideas and facts for his/her audience but he/she may change the way he/she conveys them. He/she may tell them what he/she wants to tell but in a way that appeals to them.

Recognize Factors for Getting and Maintaining Audience Attention

Once the characteristics, needs, and expectations of the audience have been identified, factors that meet the needs of the listeners 'Should be determined. Listeners will be more interested in the presentation if it meets their requirements. As a result, they will listen more attentively, understand what is said, and remember the key points of the presentation. The presenter needs to consider the following specific questions in this context:

- How can I relate my presentation to the needs and expectations of my audience?
- What should I do to ensure that my audience remembers my main points?
- Have I incorporated ways of encouraging my listeners to give feedback and shareinformation that will make my presentation more effective?
- How will I handle hostile listeners or those who are disruptive?

Moreover, more informed decisions can be made about how to best adapt to the varying moods of listeners and how to tap their curiosity, interest, and motivation. Perhaps the best rule to remember in identifying factors for getting and keeping audience attention is to remain flexible.

3. Analyze the Occasion

The occasion on which the presentation is to be made should be analyzed in order to understand the nature of the event or communicative situation. Several aspects of the event like its background, the people involved, the organizations or associations linked to the event, need to be considered. Here are some relevant questions.

- Is my presentation part of a larger event like a national/international seminar with a central theme, or just an internal conference where I am supposed to present my views on a particular topic?
- Am I familiar with the procedures of the event?
- Who are the sponsors?
- Who are the other speakers?
- What is the venue?
- What is the duration of my presentation?

In fact, thinking through the answers to some of these questions ahead of time may ensure that the presentation is effective.

4. Choose a Suitable Title

Generally, a title has to be chosen for the presentation. The title gives the audience the first glimpse of the presentation and they form their first impressions. Therefore, it is essential that the title is appropriate and conveys the essence of the message. A vague, misleading, or fussy title may confuse the audience.

The process of choosing a title may begin by first identifying a topic. The choice of the topic de-pends on the occasion, the audience and purpose of the presentation. A list of titles may be compiled. When all the possible titles have been noted, the choices can be evaluated and an appropriate title may be chosen.

After a suitable topic has been selected for the presentation, it should be narrowed down as per the focus of the presentation in order to phrase a clear, complete, specific, and focused title. In this process, the nature of the general and specific purposes of the presentation as well as audience expectations and rhetorical sensitivity may be considered. For example, if the selected topic is 'pollution', it may be narrowed to any of the following:

- Vehicular pollution hazards in New Delhi (local focus)
- Pollution of the Ganges (national focus)
- CFC's and ozone depletion (international focus)

Thus, the four important aspects to be considered while planning for a presentation are purpose, audience, occasion and title of the presentation. The next steps are Preparing (collecting information and ideas), Organizing the ideas for slides in sequence, and Rehearsing for an effective presentation.

Q4. COMMUNICATION NETWORK IN AN ORGANIZATION:

"Whether an organization is small or large, it is communication that binds the organization together." Discuss in detail the flow of communication in an organization in the light of the above statement.

OR

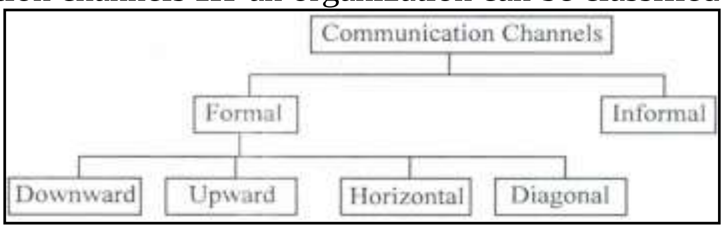
"A free flow of information ensures the success of an organization." Elaborate this statement in the light of the flow of communication in an organization.

Ans.: Communication is the life-blood of an organization. As life will come to an end without blood circulation in the human body, similarly an organization will become defunct without circulation of information and ideas among its managers and employees. Thus, an efficient communication network is vital for successful functioning of an organization. Such a communication network consists of various channels of communication in the organization.

Channel refers to the direction of transmission of messages within an organization. First of all, there are formal and informal channels of communication. **Formal Communication Channels** are those channels which are designed by the management to channelize the flow of communication along the formal structure of the organization. Such communication flow is created along official positions to ensure regular, smooth, orderly, accurate and timely flow of information.

Informal Communication in an organization takes place outside the official channels. It is spontaneous and unofficial. It has no set directions. The informal communication channels in an organization are also called the grapevine, as they extend in various directions like a grapevine.

The communication channels in an organization can be classified as follows:



Formal Communication

Formal channels are structured and predictable. In the rational organisation formal channels are orderly and there are chains of command. Policy information flows downward to inform and transactional information flows upward to inform management of progress. The advantages and disadvantages of formal communication are broadly as under:

Advantages

- Seeks to achieve goals using the most efficient means of communication.
- Responsibility at each level of hierarchy is fixed.
- Ensures direct contact between the sender and the receiver of the message.

Disadvantages

- Managers are more concerned with rules, directives, jurisdiction and the like which tend to increase the workload.
- As in bureaucracy, long line of superiors causes delay and consequent frustration.
- No premium is placed on simplifying decisions and ensuring human relationship factors.
- Cares only for limited, organizationally relevant behaviour rather than on the larger social, cultural and technological context of the surrounding environment.

Formal channels consist of the following four categories according to the direction of the flow of communication.

(i) **Downward Communication:** Downward communication refers to the flow of information from the superiors to subordinates in an organization. A communication from the general manager of a company to the branch managers is an example of downward communication. Downward communication is essential for the efficient functioning of an organization.

The first problem associated with downward communication is that information is quite often lost or distorted in its journey down the chain of command. It is time consuming; the more the levels, the more chances of delay or dilution of information.

(ii) **Upward Communication:** Upward communication is the flow of information in an organization from lower levels to higher levels. As an example, when a Marketing Manager submits a report of a market survey to the Vice President (Marketing), (s)he is using the upward channel to communicate. The main purpose of upward communication is to provide feedback and suggestions on different areas of organizational functioning.

The upward flow of communication often creates a psychological problem. Generally the higher-ups do not like to be 'told' by their subordinates or to take their suggestions. As a result, the employees may feel let down and reluctant to participate in upward communication.

(iii) **Horizontal Communication:** In horizontal communication, messages flow among members of the same work group or among managers at the same level belonging to different departments or divisions. The communication between the Marketing Manager and the Production Manager is an example of horizontal communication. The purpose of horizontal communication is to facilitate co-ordination and harmony among work groups or departments in an organization.

Horizontal communication takes place mostly during committee meetings or conferences where peers interact with one another and take decisions or prepare inter-departmental reports. This channel of communication is necessary for inter-departmental conflict resolution and co-ordination.

(iv) **Diagonal Communication:** Diagonal communication takes place when employees in an organization communicate with one another beyond hierarchical status and established reporting relationships. The Production Manager (higher level) communicating with salesmen(bottom-level employees) of the marketing department to get their suggestions is an example of diagonal communication. Diagonal communication is the result of the growing realization of fraternity and common concerns in the corporate sector. It promotes trust and co- operation among managers and employees and expedites work.

On the downside, however, diagonal communication can encourage indiscipline and power-play among employees. It can also create coteries or favoured groups around a power – loving manager to the detriment of the organization.

Informal Communication:

Informal communication networks are vital in any hierarchical structure. Obviously, a formal structure is quite rigid and indicates who is responsible for what and who communicates formally to whom. The informal structure is not exactly structured or documented in any organization, but it grows from the self-groupings that people naturally form. All human beings are social animals. Whenever they come in contact with each other there will be incidental exchange of feelings and information. Such personal communication is a part of the work environment and is integral to the working lives of men and women. Such informal communication channels in an organization are called 'the grapevine' because they extend in all directions like a grapevine.

Advantages

- Speed of communication is faster than formal means.
- It is multi-dimensional.
- Recipients of the message react more quickly.
- It can supplement the existing formal channels of communication.

Disadvantages

- There can be half-truths and misinformation.
- Moves in an erratic manner without firm direction.
- No responsibility is fixed for anyone either as senders or receivers.
- Message changes according to motive of persons involved in the process.
- Difficult to exercise any check in the free flow of messages.

Significantly the informal system of communication can be as important as the formal process in fulfilling the goals of the organisation. In fact, informal channels, spring up by virtue of communication interests between people in organisations, caused by work, social or outside relationships. Not surprisingly, the late Mr. Dhirubhai Ambani (founder of one of India's largest business and industrial conglomerate, Reliance Industries Ltd.) had made a startling comment about the usefulness of the informal channel. He said, "If I plant a rumour I'll get a reaction within a day. If I send a formal

When information is introduced into the grapevine, it tends to travel quickly because it is not restricted by any structural constraint. Managers who stay in touch with the informal networks can use them strategically to expedite decision making in the right perspective. Prof. Keith Davis who made extensive research on organisational grapevine pointed out, "if properly guided, it (the grapevine) can build teamwork, company loyalty, and the kind of motivation that makes people want to do their best."

Q5. You are the Sales Manager of a Pharmaceutical company. The demand for your products is declining due to competition from other companies. Prepare a report for your boss explaining the reasons and possible ways to overcome the problems.

Charak Remedies Pvt. Ltd.,
Mancheswar Industrial Estate
Bhubaneswar.

TITLE: **A report on decline in demand for Pharmaceutical Products.**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Director (Sales) in his memo of 1st. May 2018, requested me to:

(a)Investigate the reasons for the fall in demand for our pharmaceutical products in January-April,2018.

(b)Suggest corrective steps in the light of the findings.

PROCEDURE:

1. The sales records for the period January-April,2018 were compared with those for the second half of 2017.
2. Recent products of other companies comparable to our Pharmaceutical products and their sales records were inspected.
3. One hundred and five customers were interviewed near different medicine shops.
4. The pharmacy shop managers(27) and sales assistants(80) were consulted.
5. Our sales staff (25) were interviewed.

FINDINGS:

1. A study of the sales records shows that sales fell from a monthly average of 8% (second half of 2017) to an average of 5% during the period January-April, 2018.

2. The sale of comparable products of other companies increased by 4% during January-April,2018.

3. The customers (105) generally perceived our products as inferior in quality to the products of branded companies. This view was reinforced by poor packaging of our products.
4. The pharmacy shop managers and sales assistants said that they had to dispense medicines according to the doctors' prescriptions, and our products were prescribed by a few doctors only.
5. Our sales staff has been reduced to 25 from the original 40 since 1^{st} January,2018 and therefore, our contact with doctors and medicine shops has been reduced.

CONCLUSIONS:

The decline in sale of our products has been caused by:-

(a) poor packaging, and

(b) lack of adequate sales staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. We need to change and improve the packaging to bring it at least to the level of packaging of our competitors.
2. The sales staff should be increased to the original 40, so that we can have frequent contacts with doctors and pharmacy shop managers and influence them to have a preference for our products.
3. We can think of ways of motivating the pharmacy shop managers to use a corner of the shop for exhibiting our major products.

Date: 20 Feb. 2023 (*Signature*)………………………..

Sales Manager

Q6. How important is the Resume in the whole recruitment process? What are the strategic points in the Resume that require special attention by candidates?

Ans.: A Resume is a brief record of one's personal history and qualifications, which is typically prepared by an applicant for a job. It shows show the candidate's education, work experience and achievements have prepared him for the job applied for.

Few people are actually hired on the basis of their Resumes alone. However, many people are *not hired* because of their poorly written Resumes. Applicants are generally hired on the basis of their performance during the interview.

Thus the purpose of the Resume is to get you an interview, and the purpose of the interview is to get you a job. It must, however, be remembered that the Resume is crucial in advancing you beyond the large mass of initial applicants and into the much smaller group of potential candidates invited to an interview.

Strategic points about the Resume

1. *Resume Length:* A recruiter typically spends less than one minute to look up each Resume and decide whether to call the candidate for interview or to screen him out. Therefore, most managers prefer a one-page Resume for the entry-level positions, with a two-page Resume being reserved for higher-level positions.
2. *Resume Format:* Your Resume must be attractive and easy to read. Choose a simple font style in one or two different sizes. Use a simple format, with lots of white space, short paragraphs and a logical organization. And your resume should be free from errors in content, spelling and grammar.
3. *Resume Content:* Every Resume must give the following information about the candidates:
    - Name, address, telephone number, and E-mail ID.
    - Career Objective
    - Educational qualifications
    - Job experience: employing company, dates of employment, and job responsibilities
    - Special aptitudes and skills.

    Therefore, the standard parts of a Resume include Heading, Career Objective, Education, Work Experience, Special Skills and Abilities, Activities and Interests, Achievements, and References, which may be called strategic points in a Resume.

    The following is a brief discussion of each of these strategic points.

    *Heading:*The heading of a resume includes contact information, which contains the applicant's name, full postal address with pin code, telephone number with area code, and e-mail address.

    Career Objective: Career objective is a special part in a resume. It occurs just above the main experience and education parts. The resume should include the applicant's career objective, which should be tailored to the position he/she is seeking. It should be a specific one-sentence focused statement expressing his career goals in relation to the targeted position. It should convey his/her motivation and interest in the job he/she is seeking. The following are some examples:

    (a) *To obtain a challenging position in a large software consulting organization providing business consulting, application development, and product engineering services, where understanding and experience of business process modelling and organizational change management to suit customer needs can be used to achieve set targets.*

(b) *To work as a product architect in an innovative software company where I will be able to use my experience in the areas of product and system architecture with expertise in enterprise applications.*

*Education:*In this part of the resume, specific details regarding the applicant's education and professional training must be included. The name and location of the school / college / university / institute attended, dates of attendance, major areas of study, degrees/certificates received should be mentioned. The applicant's grade point average/class/division may also be mentioned. Relevant training programmes, special courses, seminars and workshops that the applicant might have completed, attended, or conducted should also be included. Reverse chronological order is used to list educational information that is, starting from the most recent educational information.

Work experience: This part of the resume should provide a brief and specific overview of the applicant's work and professional experience. As prior work experience is a vital part of any hiring decision, the applicant must draft this part of the resume very carefully. If he/she has impressive work experience relevant to the position he/she is seeking, it makes more sense to mention it before providing the educational information.

Work experience should be given in reverse chronological order, by listing the most recent employment first. Title of the position, employer's name or name of the organization/company, location of work (town, state), dates of employment, and important Job responsibilities, activities, and accomplishments should be included. Emphasis should be placed on those aspects of the applicant's experience and employment achievements that illustrate his/her capabilities and positive personality traits such as motivation, willingness to learn, positive attitude, confidence, ability to get along with others, and communication and interpersonal skills.

Special Skills and Abilities: In this part of the resume, the applicant's special skills, abilities and aptitudes that are of significance and of direct relevance to the job applied for are listed. Examples of learned skills include computer programming, computer processing, data processing, foreign languages, machinery operation, consulting, drafting, technical writing, and so on. It is necessary to be selective and specific, highlighting only those skills and talents that are relevant to the targeted job.

Activities and Interests: Extra-curricular, co-curricular, professional activities, and hobbies and interests must be mentioned. These activities must show that the applicant is a dynamic and energetic person who can accept challenges. Companies prefer such people.

Achievements: The applicant's achievements, accomplishments, and awards distinguish him from the rest. They convince the employer that he/she is an achiever and therefore, worth hiring. This part should include scholarships, fellowships, awards, distinctions, commendations, certificates, or anything that shows achievement or recognition.

References: Some employers need references from persons who know the applicant's work or professional competence through formal and professional interaction with him / her. When applying for a solicited position where the employer wants references, the names of two persons who can give letters of recommendations or references should be mentioned. These persons may be the applicant's previous employer, teacher, immediate supervisor, research guide or colleague. The name of the reference must be mentioned, and his or her designation and full contact address with telephone number and e-mail address should be given.

While preparing a Resume, one should carefully include these strategic prints and follow the principles of clarity, honesty and preciseness in providing information.

Q7. How would you plan and prepare for writing a business report?

Ans.: Whether one has to write a short informal report or a long formal report, one needs to plan and adopt effective strategies. As reports are systematic attempts to discuss problems, situations, or conditions and stimulate thinking or action in individuals and groups, a systematic plan of writing should be followed.

The following steps will help in organizing and presenting the report systematically.

1. Analyze the problem andpurpose
2. Determine the scope of thereport
3. Determine the needs of theaudience
4. Gather all theinformation
5. Analyze and organize theinformation
6. Write the firstdraft
7. Revise, review, andedit
8. Write the finaldraft

Analyze the Problem and Purpose

The process of writing an effective report begins with an objective analysis of the problem that is to be discussed and the objectives of writing the report. In other words, the following two questions need to be answered before beginning to write a report:

1. What do you want to present or discuss in thereport?
2. Why do you want to presentit?

Answers to these questions will help in identifying the problem that led to the writing of the report and determining the purpose of the report. The problem may be written down in the form of a statement. Expressing the problem in words will provide clarity of purpose and help in writing the report systematically.

Defining the purpose of the report will give it direction and make it focused. Identifying the specific purpose of a report involves identifying an observable measurable action that the readers would do after reading the report. The writer's purpose should match the audience's needs, knowledge, expectations, & interests. It should focus on audience behaviour and restate the theme of the report.

Determine the Scope of the Report

In order to keep the report precise and to the point, the amount of information gathered should be limited to the most essential and important facts. It is important to define a reasonable scope of the report. By determining the scope of the report, the writer will be able to decide what should be covered in it, and gather appropriate background information and supporting data. The scope of the report should be narrowed down and made specific so that a reasonable length is maintained.

Determine the Needs of the Audience

When a report is being planned, the writer should know who will eventually read it. However, many report writers ignore their readers. A report will be effective only if the writer is able to connect his/her purpose with the interests and needs of his/her readers. When planning a report, the writer should think from his/her readers' perspective. He/she should avoid making false assumptions about his/her readers and should strive to be practical and rational. The following questions are relevant in thiscontext.

- Who make the audience? (age, education, subject knowledge, professional affiliation, status, preferences, biases, attitudes, interests, language level, and soon.)
- How is the report relevant to theaudience?
- What does the audience expect from thereport?
- How much background information will the audienceneed?

Answers to these questions will provide essential information about the readers that will help the writer to make important decisions about the content, the nature of information that he/she needs, and the level of language that he/she should use in his/her report.

Gather All the Information

Once the problem and purpose has been analyzed, the scope is defined, and the audience has been analyzed, the writer is ready to gather information. As he/she knows what he/she is looking for, he/she may find it very easy to gather information. He/she may gather information through primary sources (discussions, interviews, observation, surveys, questionnaires, experiments, and so on) or secondary sources (Internet, reports, books, journals, dissertations, magazines, pamphlets, newspapers, and so on) However, it is important to ensure that the information is accurate, bias free, current, and relevant.

Analyze and Organize the Information

Once the information has been gathered, the report writer needs to analyze and organize it. Analysis of information involves evaluating the information objectively, making comparative analyses of different sets of information for obtaining new ideas, and interpreting facts and figures for their relative importance. Organizing the information involves using an appropriate logical pattern to arrange the information in the report. Before actually organizing the information, an outline may be prepared by putting them under the followingheadings:

- Title
- TermsReference
- Procedures
- Findings
- Conclusions

- Recommendations

Writing the First Draft

Once the outline has been prepared and the organizational pattern of the report has been decided, the first working draft can be written. While writing the first draft, the following points must be remembered:

- Focus on the scope and purpose of thereport.
- Simple and direct language should be used but perfect expression should not beoverstressed.
- A computer should be used for preparing thereport.
- The draft should be writtenrapidly.

Reviewing and Revising

Once the rough draft of the report has been written, it should be reviewed, edited, and revised in order to improve the quality of its content and presentation. Reviewing is the process of analyzing whether the report achieved its purpose, whereas editing involves correcting its format, style, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Revision focuses on improving the content and language of the report.

Writing the Final Draft

Once the rough draft of the report reviewed and revised, the final draft can be composed. When writing the final draft, the following points should be taken care of:

- The report should be simple, clear, concise, direct, andreadable.
- Appropriate words, short sentences and meaningful paragraphs should beused.
- Important points should beemphasized.

These are the steps through which one can plan and prepare for writing an effective Business Report.

Q8. Discuss the Do's and Don'ts of GD. What are the strategies a candidate should follow to prepare for GDs?

Ans.: *I)What is Group Discussion?*

'Group Discussion' is a non-formal, friendly discussion in which all the members comprising the group (usually between 8 and 12) are expected to participate, It is used as a means to assess one's over-all personality. It proceeds by means of a natural, friendly, spontaneous and purposive conversation between the candidates for a job on an interesting but often controversial topic of current importance. The topic is given at the appointed hour, and no time is given for planning- hence the conversation that follows has to be spontaneous, not pre-planned. Within a time- limit of **20-30** minutes, the abilities of the members of the group arc measured in an unobtrusive manner by the examiner who does not actively participate in the discussion.

Unlike a formal debate where one is supposed to speak only for or against the motion, one by one, a group discussion follows an informal approach. **The participants are free to speak in favour of or against the topic, to be neutral, or to explain the merits or demerits.**

II) *<u>How to prepare:</u>*

1) First and foremost, you must try to create an extensive knowledge base by reading newspapers and magazines and listening to talks on the radio and television.
2) Secondly, adopt an **analytical way of thinking**. Note down points in favour of and against an issue, and then come to a decision regarding your stand.
3) Finally, develop the art of discussion. This involves accurate expression of your ideas using appropriate language, and your display of sensitivity to the other members of the group.

III) '*<u>While – discussion' Tips (Do's of GD)</u>*

1. Make an attempt at initiating the discussion. Even if you could not be the first speaker, try to get an opportunity as early as possible. It is absolutelyessential that you talk and express your views. Further, you musttalkas muchas possible, effectively and sensibly, to impress others.
2. Make original points and back them with substantial reasons.
3. If some other member has already made the point you wanted to make, do not worry. Even then, you can either support or oppose the point by sound reasoning, or add some additional information that might have been left out.
4. Listen to the other participants patiently and attentively, and make a mental note of the points they make. If their points are good, readily accept them and advance your reasons, If you find their arguments unacceptable, offer your arguments to refute them.
5. As soon as you find your argument has been refuted by someone else, you musttry to justify your point of view by bringing in fresh ideas or arguments.
6. Show flexibility in your views. Don't hesitate to accept criticism. If someone points to flaws in your argument, do not feel offended or insulted. Instead, change your original opinion willingly, if proved wrong.
7. Be considerate to the feelings of the others in the group. A friendly discussion requires co-operation, not confrontation. You need not shoutatothers. You must use polite language throughout. Your helpful, accommodative and encouraging attitude will surely be appreciated by the evaluator.
8. Be an active and interested participant. Remain cheerful, smiling, and alive to whatever is going on in the group.
9. While speaking, address the whole group, making eye-contact with each participant in turn.

iv) *Some Don'ts*

1. Don't try to monopolize the discussion.
2. Don’t interrupt a participant in the middle of an argument.
3. Don't make fun of any participant even if his arguments are illogical.
4. Don't engage yourself in sub-group conversations.
5. Avoid being frivolous and expressing irrelevant ideas.
6. Don’t get emotional and criticize others without valid arguments.
7. Never ever lose your temper.

Best of Luck