BUSINESS COMMUNICATION NOTES FOR UNIVERSITY EXAM 2018

TIPS FOR THE EXAM

08.12.2018

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 (Short Answer Questions: 2x10 no. =20 marks)
B (Long Answer Questions: 16x2 no. = 32 marks)
C (Answers of medium length: 6x8 no. = 48 marks)

You should study the sections at least twice before the final study for the BC exam on 29th Dec 2018.

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 Managerial 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 preparation.

SECTION A : 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 purposeless listening 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 the listening 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 the directory, 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.

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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, run, throw, fight, write, etc. express actions and are therefore, dynamic verbs. There are certain other verbs, such as be, become, seem, like, love, see, hear, 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.

B. 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 of disrespect.

(iii) **Posture:** The body position of a person conveys a variety of messages. The posture of straight back expresses confidence and readiness to face challenges. Closed Postures, with features such as 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 back away from the speaker means that the listener is disinterested and bored. Legs also communicate non-verbal messages. A person shifting from one leg to another while standing expresses 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-way communication 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 way that 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 HP precision Scan LT software. (*Informative presentation*)
- At the end of my presentation, the audience will believe that the HP Precision Scan LT is the best scanning software. (*Persuasive presentation*)
- At the end of my presentation, the audience will be able to use HP Precision Scan LT software. (*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 share information 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 depends 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

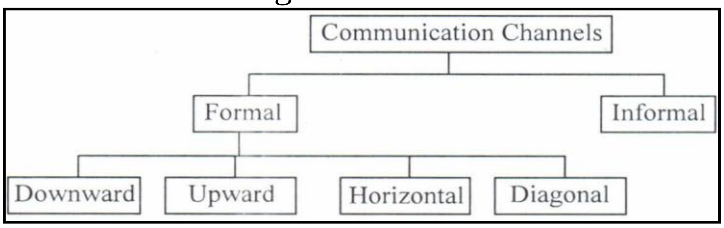
"A free flow of information ensures the success of an organization." Elaborate this statement in the light of the flow of communication in an organization.

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.
- Better relations are established.
- Solutions to problems are easily found.
- System is more effective as a rational mechanism for improving organisational performance.

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 memo, it takes three weeks to get a response, that too after a few reminders."

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.**

<u>TERMS OF REFERENCE</u>

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.

<u>PROCEDURE:</u>

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.

<u>FINDINGS:</u>

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 1st 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: 29 December 2018. (*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 and purpose
2. Determine the scope of the report
3. Determine the needs of the audience
4. Gather all the information
5. Analyze and organize the information
6. Write the first draft
7. Revise, review, and edit
8. Write the final draft

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 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 make 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 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 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 following headings:

- Title
- Terms Reference
- 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 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 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, and readable.
- Appropriate words, short sentences and meaningful paragraphs should be used.
- Important points should be emphasized.

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)<u>What is Group Discussion?</u>*

'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 absolutely essential that you talk and express your views. Further, you must talk as much as 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 must try 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 shout at others. 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) *<u>Some Don'ts</u>*

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.

ANSWERS OF MEDIUM LENGTH(6 marksx8)

Module – I

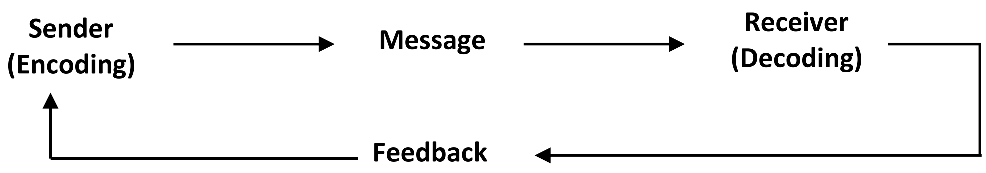
Q1. Define ‘communication’. Explain the process of communication through a diagram depicting the essential components of the process.

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 it is 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.

Characteristics of Good Conversations

- *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 modern living.
- However, we should keep in mind some important rules of mobile etiquette for good business relationship.

Slide - 3

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

Slide - 4

- Take or make your calls without disturbing others.

Slide - 5

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

Slide - 6

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

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 cell phone.

Slide - 9

- Avoid inappropriate topics of chat and inappropriate pictures 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

Slide - 11

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 with reference 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 :

Sunita has a headache (now).

Sunita had a headache (yesterday).

Sunita will 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 ?

In all 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.

Best of Luck