



EFFECTIVE TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Chapter 5: Technical Communication -I

Daily work life conversations –

1. How to making a request (for example – asking for new equipment) –

- **Identify your goals** - Having a clear sense of your goals before conversing with your supervisor can help you present your request coherently. Consider brainstorming your goals and writing down notes. You might also choose to discuss your approach with a trusted mentor if it makes sense in your situation.
- **Be flexible** - Try to remain flexible when you ask your supervisor for something. If multiple solutions might work, for example, considering one of these alternatives might help you while also meeting your company's needs. A willingness to consider new ideas might also help foster a more mutually beneficial dialogue.
- **Remember your company's mission (how your request will affect the business)** - Framing your request as a benefit to your company might make your request more persuasive. Try reviewing your business's mission statement and thinking about specific ways your request could help meet those goals. Consider using language that mirrors the words and phrases in your company's mission statement.
- **Practice active listening** - Active listening can be a valuable way to connect with your audience when making a request. This means hearing the other person's ideas and being sure to understand them before contributing your own thoughts fully. Verbal affirmations and non-verbal indicators such as nodding and leaning toward the speaker can help them feel heard and possibly make them more likely to agree to your request.
- **Be mindful of body language** - If you are making your request in person, body language can help you make a persuasive impression on your supervisor. Using good posture can help project confidence, for example. A wide stance and uncrossed arms can also communicate a sense of openness and goodwill, which might also be helpful in your request.
- **Ask questions** - There is a possibility your supervisor's first response to your request might be a version of "not yet." Ask clarifying questions to determine how to make progress toward fulfilling your request. Try asking questions about alternatives or solutions close to what you hoped to achieve
- **Know your audience** - Different supervisors may respond well to other kinds of persuasive strategies. Be sure to consider your own supervisor's communication style and preferences when making your request. For example, if your supervisor prefers formal dialogue, you may wish to set up a meeting with them and bring an



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outline of your main points. If your supervisor prefers casual conversation, you might choose to start an impromptu discussion instead. Being attentive to your audience's preferences can be a powerful way to show consideration, which might make them more likely to grant your request.

- **Name your concerns** - It is normal to have worries or even fears when you want or need to ask your supervisor for something. Naming your problems can help you feel more empowered and take steps to feel more confident. For example, you might worry that your supervisor will dismiss your request. Naming this concern as, perhaps, fear of rejection can help you turn that fear into an opportunity. In this case, you might ask yourself what will happen if your supervisor declines your request and the next steps you will take.
- **Leverage reciprocity (what you will give back if the request is approved)** - People commonly feel an urge to return favors and display kindness toward those who are kind to them first. This tendency is called reciprocity. You can use reciprocity to your advantage by explaining your successes and how you have benefited the company before making your request.
- **Use linguistic strategies** - Persuasive speaking and writing are also known as rhetoric. Three common ways of leveraging rhetoric are emotional appeals, logical appeals and appeals to credibility. Here are some ways you might use these strategies when asking your supervisor for something.
- **Appeal to emotion** - Depending on your supervisor's personality, using emotion might help you make a case for your request. For example, if your supervisor prefers somewhat informal communication, using tasteful humor could help put them in a good mood, which might positively impact your request.
- **Appeal to logic** - In a business setting, appeals to logic are often successful as well. Consider using data and statistics to explain why your request will benefit the company and yourself.
- **Appeal to credibility** - Establishing yourself as a trustworthy, credible individual can also help when you want to request something from your supervisor.

2. How to give instructions –

- **Don't assume they know what you mean** - You know what they say, that assumption is the mother of all mistakes! Don't be the fool that assumes people know what you mean. Whist most people in your office or business will be intuitive and switched on, they are not mind readers. An imperative when delivering clear instructions is to not assume the recipient knows what you mean, and this can be



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for anything from industry acronyms to who to contact in different departments or organizations. It will only take you a few seconds more to explain the details.

- **Be clear and specific** - Everyone loves a waffle (dripping in maple syrup please) but no one likes waffle in conversation and especially not in an email or when it is a set of instructions. Whilst you don't want to ramble on in your set of instructions (that would be a waste of your time and to be honest, they'd switch off after a while) you do want to ensure that your instructions are clear, specific and concise. Personally I prefer not to butter it up, and would rather get straight to the point on what needs to be actioned or delivered, rather than making the instructions too flowery, which will only confuse.
- **Give time frames** - Do not confuse matters by not being specific with your time frames and deadlines. What you consider as "soon" might be very different from your colleagues. If you think "soon" is the next couple of hours, yet your staff who you have instructed considered it to be in a few days then this communication is going to have serious implications in any business or project!
- **Give examples** - Whenever possible, make sure you give examples. This will be especially beneficial if they are new to the role, or if they haven't carried out the task before. This will help to add clarity to your instructions and help form a clearer picture of what it is you mean and want.
- **Give alternative** - When delivering your instructions it is worth considering giving some alternatives just in case your preferred option of instruction is not viable or available.
- **Set boundaries** - Once a task is set, the instructions should be clear enough that further confirmation and clarification is not needed (however saying this it is obviously best to seek clarification if unsure!) If this rings true with you then you need to make sure that your instructions are clear so that they are certain what they are doing and don't feel the need to keep coming back with questions. As with tip 5, setting boundaries is very important, especially if you cannot think of alternatives at the time then boundaries might work.
- **Get clarification** - Before you let your staff loose on the basis of your instruction, it wouldn't hurt to seek clarification from them to ensure that they understand what the task at hand is and what is expected. You could simply ask at the end if there are any questions but the one issue with that is that it is all too easy to just simply say "no". Either they might think they understand or they might even be too shy to ask! Perhaps ask them to recap on what is required, or what the priorities/objectives are so that you can ensure what you've said is what's been heard!



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3. How to asking for help and suggestion at work?

- **Create a list of things you tried and potential solutions** - Your coworkers and supervisors may be more likely to help you if you have tried to resolve the issue and have some possible solutions you can try. Doing so shows that you have tried to manage the challenge on your own and gives your colleague a place to start when they offer suggestions. Having these prepared as you approach your colleagues for assistance also shows your competence and problem-solving skills while giving them insight into the kind of issue you are having.
- **Consider your timing** - When you ask for help, you can check with your coworker or manager to see if they have a moment to assist. You can let them know if it is or isn't an emergency and ask if they can schedule a time to meet with you. You can decide how to contact your colleague based on the urgency of the situation as well. For example, you can call them or send a work chat if you need a more immediate response, or send an email if you have more time to wait for a reply.
- **Carefully choose who you ask** - When you are considering who to ask for help, you should choose someone who has expertise with your problem. They might know how to find the answer to your question or be familiar with the tools you are using. When you approach them for assistance, you can tell them that you appreciate their knowledge and experience. Doing so can help build a collaborative relationship and help them feel acknowledged for their skills.
- **Be specific in your request** - Being specific in your request helps your colleague or supervisor know what you are expecting from the conversation and what you are trying to solve. This kind of specificity gives your coworker context and a starting point for collaboration and lets them know how much time they have to answer.
- **Use a collaborative approach** - When you approach your colleagues and supervisors with a collaborative mindset, you show them that you are engaged in the problem-solving process. Your coworkers will likely appreciate the communication, and you are often more likely to remember the solution when you work it out together. This collaboration may also lead to developing new processes that can prevent a similar problem from happening later on.
- **Be available to help** - There will likely be a time when your coworker needs help solving a problem, too. When you help your colleagues, you are contributing to a work environment centered on teamwork. You also build goodwill with your team, which can help them be more inclined to help you in the future.



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4. How to asking for permission at work?

- Create a list of requirements
- Consider your timing
- Carefully choose who you ask
- Be polite and respectful
- Use a collaborative approach
- Be available to help

Negotiation Skills

Negotiation –

- According to Cambridge dictionary, negotiation is the process of discussing something with someone in order to reach an agreement with them.
- Negotiation is usually used to sign business deals and contracts. But in fact, we do negotiation all the time in our professional and personal lives. We bargain when we are buying something, particularly expensive and that is negotiation.
- Ex. We negotiate for salary or other benefits at the time of our recruitment and we also negotiate for increment in our jobs.

Explain - Negotiation process -

- Negotiation happens in various stages. The first stage is information exchange. Both parties exchange information of what they can offer and what is their expectation.
- In second stage discussion of alternatives are done. Where both parties try to present different proposals according to their comfort.
- Third and final stage is the closing, meaning here both the parties either come to an agreement or decide not to go for the deal at all.
- Though these 3 stages talk about a deal, one must understand that it's not only a business deal, but also about personal life negotiations.

Explain and enlist types of negotiation style

Accommodating –

- As the name suggests, the negotiator has an inclination towards solving the problem of the other party and maintain personal relationships with their business associates.
- They do not bargain aggressively.



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- Their offers may not be in their best interest and they yield to other's demands.
- Pleasant and more comfortable for both parties.
- They value friendship over other means.

Avoiding –

- sometimes people do not negotiate unless necessary
- Try to avoid confrontation aspect of negotiating
- Have reserved behavior and do not express their own will, rather they insist on agreement

Collaborating –

- collaborators like to solve difficult problems creatively.
- They enjoy negotiations.
- Value the concerns and interest of the other parties.
- Approach Is creative and innovative, and they see the situation objectively.
- Their choices are guided by principles of fairness, professional standards, tradition or moral standards.

Competing –

- some people enjoy negotiations because it provides them opportunity to win.
- They usually neglect the concern of other and their relationship with them as it may lead them to lose the bargain.
- Such negotiators often says the last word and do not give opportunity to the others to negotiate further.
- These negotiators usually bargain strategically and their only objective is to win.

Compromising –

- these negotiators close the deal quickly by looing at the interests of all parties involved.
- They are useful when the time is limited
- But sometimes there is a chance of suffering loss in a hurry to close the deal.

How to do negotiation

Preparation –

- Having proper knowledge about the thing – product or a project and the party is very important
- It is also important to ask questions to find out the needs of the other party.
- Try to learn about the strengths and weaknesses of the other party.

Have a plan –

- You must be clear about your own expectation from the negotiation.



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- Be clear about what you want and stick to it.
- At the same time, don't be too unrealistic in keeping your expectations.
- You must also keep the margins, expectations and limitations of the other party.
- Keeping unrealistic expectation will lead to “No Deal”

Body language –

- Your body language must not show aggressiveness or any other negative emotion.
- Think and reply objectively rather than becoming personal.
- Also observe the body language of the other party.
- You can exactly tell at which point the other party is comfortable and at which point he/she wants to say “No”, if you are able to observe the body language minutely.

Go for win-win solution –

- Always try to go for win win solutions where both the parties are happy with the deal.
- When a collaborative negotiation happens there is always a win win solution.
- If one of the parties is very competitive and it might happen that one of the parties will quickly lose interest in the deal.
- If one of the parties is submissive, then you will end with a win-lose or lose-win solution where there is compromise at one end and so the contribution of compromising party is less towards the deal even in the future courses of action

Make a written deal or contract –

- If there is a deal or a contract or if the decision of negotiation has an effect in the future course of actions, then it is important to note down each and every point according to what you have agreed upon during negotiation.
- There may be different aspects for example prices, number of products, warranty, delivery time, etc. which you may have agreed upon during your discussion and they all need to be noted down on a piece of paper to avoid misunderstanding.
- At last, a deal must be formalized and signed by all stakeholders.

Critical and Creative thinking in communication

Critical thinking –

- The process of objective analysis and evaluation of an idea or a situation, in order to form a judgment is called critical thinking.
- While thinking critically, listener do a careful examination of different aspects of the issue with good amount of reasoning and evidences.
- Here the goal is not to accept or reject, but rather to evaluate the entire issue objectively.



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- While doing critical thinking we do not get emotional and weigh each point judiciously.

How to develop critical thinking –

- To be able to think critically you must develop a mind of curiosity as it helps in getting into the details of an issue and presents you with many arguments and evidences and you are able to evaluate them all to come to a judgement.
- Seeking and questioning the idea at hand helps in digging out more information and makes easier to weigh each one against the other.
- Have an open mind with humility to be able to accept if you were wrong in your judgement. This helps you in accepting new and better ideas.

Advantages of critical thinking –

- It leads to creativity
- It helps in seeing every aspect with objectivity leading to successful decisions and actions.
- It improves your comprehension skills
- It gives you a wide horizon of thoughts and helps you introspect everytime.
- It helps you focus on facts and evidences rather than opinions
- It enhances your communication with everyone around you as you are person who sees things objectively and based on facts.

What is Creative thinking?

- “Thinking out of the box” is the mantra for success these days.
- Being able to think different from others or thinking creatively is very important for everyone.
- The inventions, innovations and solutions in the world are all products of creative thinking.

Why everyone needs to think creatively?

- We all possess the same information of whatever ideas are established in the world till now. That means offered with similar problems and issues, most of us can think in the same way and either come up with same solution or submit to the problem. But this is a threat to human dignity.
- Our dignity as humans lies in being different – it depends on what we can generate from the same information.



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- Creative thinking helps us gain an edge over other. It is that quality which gives solution to many problems of humankind.
- Being creative does not mean being weird, but It means thinking divergent.

Why we don't think creatively?

- As we all know we have boundary i.e. we know how things are and how they have been since years. So we think they cant be otherwise.
- There is a risk of failure. What if the idea doesn't work?
- You have to give up the security of belonging, because when you think differently, you have to leave the crowd.
- The “out of the box” has an infinite space and direction. There is no preset line of thought that you can hold onto, because you are trying to be creative which means no one has thought about it till now. And due to this whenever you think out of the box, you feel like getting back inside and accept what it is.

How can one think creatively?

- Once you have decided to go out of the box, just try to go far and discover as many alternatives as possible.
- Thinking creatively does not mean coming up with a completely new idea. You can use combinations of two or more existing ideas. Sometimes, the application of an existing idea in a completely different manner brings about innovation.
- Be open minded.
- Don't look for correct answers because it takes you back to the existing thoughts as you will try to weigh all your new alternatives in context with existing ideas.
- Assess the value of new idea as this is an undiscovered territory.