UNIT- I Workplace Communication

Communication- Importance, functions of communication, types of communication, Definition of Communication, Process of Communication Shanon Weaver model, Features- 7Cs of writing and ABCs; 7Cs of Writing Clear, Concise Correct, Consideration, Courteous Concrete, Complete; Gateway to Effective Communication, Types: Formal, Informal (Grapevine), interpersonal skills, Flow of Communication: Vertical, Diagonal, Horizontal
Barriers of communication: Physical, Language and Semantic, Socio-Psychological, Organizational, dimensions of communication upward downward; Small talk and Rapport Building for positive behavior, social skills advantages, Do's and Don'ts
Technical writing: difference between general and technical writing, Dissertation/Thesis/scientific Article/Technical Paper, essay Writing, Précis writing-do's and Don'ts- Read and understand the prompt, plan, use and cite sources, write a draft, make strong argument, respond to prompt, proofread
Paragraph writing- Types and Constituents, methods Inductive Deductive; Exposition; Linear; Interrupted; Spatial, Chronological, post-writing; Diction, Syntax, Tangibles, Connectors for Argumentative and Expository Writing
Reading strategies- Five Pillars of Reading- phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension strategies. Using Prior Knowledge/Previewing, Predicting, Identifying the Main Idea and Summarization, Questioning, Making Inferences,
Visualizing, narrative strategy- Story Maps, Retelling, predication, answering comprehension questions, techniques skimming, scanning, SQR3 method, churning and assimilation

Communications is fundamental to the existence and survival of humans as well as to an organization. It is a process of creating and sharing ideas, information, views, facts, feelings, etc. among the people to reach a common understanding. Communication is the key to the Directing functions of management. The word communication has been derived from the Latin word 'communicare' that means 'to share'.Communication may be defined as interchange of thought or information between two or more persons to bring about mutual understanding and desired action. It is the information exchange by words or symbols. It is the exchange of facts, ideas and viewpoints which bring about commonness of interest, purpose and efforts. According to *Keith Davis*,'The process of passing the information and understanding from one person to another."Communication is something so simple and difficult that we can never put it in simple words," says *T.S. Mathews*. But we do need a definition to understand the term. In his book Communication in Business, *Peter Little*defines communication as follows: "Communication is the process by which information is transmitted between individuals and / or organizations so that an understanding response results." Another very simple definition of 'communication' has been provided by *W.H. Newman and C.F. Summer Jr*: "Communication is an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions, or emotions by two or more persons."

DEFINING COMMUNICATION

Th e word *communication* is derived from the Latin *communis*, which means "common". It refers to a natural activity of all humans, which is to convey opinions, feelings, information, and ideas to others through words (written or spoken), body language, or signs. George Vardman defi nes eff ective communication as "purposive symbolic interchange resulting in workable understanding and agreement between the sender and the receiver". 1Th is interchange of information, ideas, and thoughts may occur via diff erent modes: words (oral and written), signs, and gestures.

Emphasizing the processes of telling, listening, and understanding involved in the act of communicating with other people, Keith Davis2 says that communication **is "the transfer of information and understanding from one person to another person.** It is a way of reaching others with facts, ideas, thoughts and values. It is a bridge of meaning among people so that they can share what they feel and know. By using this bridge, a person can cross safely the river of misunderstanding that sometimes separates people."

Purpose Of Communication

For **instruction**: The instructive function unvarying and importantly deals with the commanding nature. It is more or less of directive nature. Under this, the communicator transmits with necessary directives and guidance to the next level, so as to enable them to accomplish his particular tasks. In this, instructions basically flow from top to the lower level.

For **integration**: It is consolidated function under which integration of activities is endeavoured. The integration function of communication mainly involves to bring about inter-relationship among the various functions of the business organization. It helps in the unification of different management functions.

For **information**: The purposes or function of communication in an organization is to

inform the individual or group about the particular task or company policies and proceduresetc. Top management informs policies to the lower level through the middle level. In turn,the lower level informs the top level the reaction through the middle level. Information canflow vertically, horizontally and diagonally across the organization. Becoming informed orinform others is the main purpose of communication.

For **evaluation**: Examination of activities to form an idea or judgement of the worth of task is achieved through communication. Communication is a tool to appraise the individualor team, their contribution to the organization. Evaluating one's own inputs or other'soutputs or some ideological scheme demands an adequate and effective communicationprocess.

For **direction**: Communication is necessary to issue directions by the top management ormanager to the lower level. Employee can perform better when he is directed by his senior. Directing others may be communicated either orally or in writing. An order may becommon order, request order or implied order.

For **teaching**: The importance of personal safety on the job has been greatly recognized. Acomplete communication process is required to teach and educate workers about personalsafety on the jobs. This communication helps the workers to avert accidents, risk etc. andavoid cost, procedures etc.

For **influencing**: A complete communication process is necessary in influencing others orbeing influenced. The individual having potential to influence others can easily persuadeothers. It implies the provision of feedback which tells the effect of communication.

For **image building**: A business enterprise cannot isolate from the rest of the society. Thereis interrelationship and interdependence between the society and an enterprise operating inthe society. Goodwill and confidence are necessarily created among the public. It can bedone by the communication with the different media, which has to project the image of thefirm in the society. Through an effective external communication system, an enterprise hasto inform the society about its goals, activities, progress and social responsibility.

For **employees orientation**: When a new employee enter into the organization at that time he or she will be unknown to the organization programs, policies, culture etc. Communication helps to make people acquainted with the co-employees, superior and withthe policies, objectives, rules and regulations of the organization.

Importance and purpose of communication
Just as communication is vital for our existence in civilizes society, so also it is essential for functioning of organization. So without communication there would be no organization.Needless to say, communication is the ingredient that makes organization possible. It is the vehicle through which the basic management functions are carried out. Managers direct through communication; they coordinate through communication; and they staff, plan, and control through communication. Virtually all actions taken in an organization are preceded by communication.

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1.4 Dimensions of Communication

In an organization, communication flows in 5 main directions-

1. Downward
2. Upward
3. Horizontal /Lateral
4. Diagonal
5. Grapevine Communication

1.4.1 Downward Communication: Communication that flows from a higher level in an organization to a lower level is a downward communication. In other words, communication

from superiors to subordinates in a chain of command is a downward communication. This communication flow is used by the managers to transmit work-related information to the employees at lower levels. Employees require this information for performing their jobs and for meeting the expectations of their managers. Downward communication is used by the managers for the following purposes –
☐ Providing feedback on employees' performance.
☐ Giving job instructions.
☐ Providing a complete understanding of the employees' job as well as to communicate them how their job is related to other jobs in the organization.
☐ Communicating the organizations mission and vision to the employees.
☐ Highlighting the areas of attention.

Organizational publications, circulars, letter to employees, group meetings etc are all examples of downward communication. In order to have effective and error-free downward communication, managers must:
☐ Specify communication objective.
☐ Ensure that the message is accurate, specific and unambiguous.
☐ Utilize the best communication technique to convey the message to the receiver in right form

Upward Flow of Communication: Communication that flows to a higher level in an organization is called upward communication. It provides feedback on how well the organization is functioning. The subordinates use upward communication to convey their problems and performances to their superiors.
The subordinates also use upward communication to tell how well they have understood the downward communication. It can also be used by the employees to share their views and ideas and to participate in the decision-making process.Upward communication leads to a more committed and loyal workforce in an organization because the employees are given a chance to raise and speak dissatisfaction issues to the higher levels. The managers get to know about the employees' feelings towards their jobs, peers, supervisor and organization in general. Managers can thus accordingly take actions for improving things.
Grievance Redressal System, Complaint and Suggestion Box, Job Satisfaction surveys etc all help in improving upward communication. Other examples of Upward Communication are - performance reports made by low level management for reviewing by higher level management, employee attitude surveys, letters from employees, employee-manager discussions etc.
1.4.2 Lateral / Horizontal Communication: Communication that takes place at same levels of hierarchy in an organization is called lateral communication, i.e., communication between peers, between managers at same levels or between any horizontally equivalent organizational member. The advantages of horizontal communication are as follows:
☐ It is time saving.
☐ It facilitates co-ordination of the task.
☐ It facilitates co-operation among team members.
☐ It provides emotional and social assistance to the organizational members.
☐ It helps in solving various organizational problems.
☐ It is a means of information sharing.
☐ It can also be used for resolving conflicts of a department with other department or conflicts within a department.

1.4.3 Diagonal Communication or crosswise communication: Communication that takes place between a manager and employees of other workgroups is called diagonal communication. It generally does not appear on organizational chart. For instance - To design a training module a training manager interacts with an Operations personnel to enquire about the way they perform their task. The Accounts people of an organization visiting different employees in various departments for their IT calculation, bonus for workers etc. fall under diagonal communication.

1.5 Channels of communication

A breakdown in the communication channel leads to an inefficient flow of information. Employees are unaware of what the company expects of them. They are uninformed of what is going on in the company.

This will cause them to become suspicious of motives and any changes in the company. Also without effective communication, employees become department minded rather than company minded, and this affects their decision making and productivity in the workplace.

Eventually, this harms the overall organizational objectives as well. Hence, in order for an organization to be run effectively, a good manager should be able to communicate to his/her employees what is expected of them, make sure they are fully aware of company policies and any upcoming changes.

Therefore, an effective communication channel should be implemented by managers to optimize worker productivity to ensure the smooth running of the organization.

1.5.1 Formal Channels of Communication

The messages which are circulating on regulated, preset channels, of an organization are creating the formal communication. The content of the communication is related to the organization's activity, to the work and to anything which is related to those. The formal communication can consist in verbal messages, nonverbal messages, written, under the shape of letters, telephone messages, radio messages, printed, internal notes. Even some gestures can consist in formal communication. The messages are transmitted by the authorized ones: on official channels, these arrive to the ones who need to react, to people or machines which need to know the content of these messages.

Usually, all formal communications are recorded and kept in the organization's evidence. Are retained copies of these by the transmitter, by the receiver, by all of the desks from the organization which need to know and keep the information. Examples of formal communications are given by work commands, reports and financial evidence, reports over sells / inventory, statements referring to the company's policies, post descriptions, etc.

The formal communication network is formed out of formal channels, created by setting a formal system of responsibilities according to the hierarchical structure of the organization. The perfect network is the one which contains communication channel from bottom up, downwards and horizontally. Often the direction of horizontal communication is missing or it is inefficient and in this way the accuracy of the information decreases. The situation is appearing because of the lack of permanent circulation of the information between departments, although this is vital for the organization in conditions of existent competition, or the lack of specialists in organizational communication.

The number of communication channels available to a manager has increased over the last 20 odd years. Video conferencing, mobile technology, electronic bulletin boards and fax machines are some of the new possibilities.As organizations grow in size, managers cannot rely on face-to-face communication alone to get their message across. A challenge the managers face today is to determine what type of communication channel should they opt for in order to carryout effective communication.

In order to make a manager's task easier, the types of communication channels are grouped into three main groups: formal, informal and unofficial.

☐ A formal communication channel transmits information such as the goals, policies and procedures of an organization. Messages in this type of communication channel follow a chain of

command. This means information flows from a manager to his subordinates and they in turn pass on the information to the next level of staff.

☐ An example of a formal communication channel is a company's newsletter, which gives employees as well as the clients a clear idea of a company's goals and vision. It also includes the transfer of information with regard to memoranda, reports, directions, and scheduled meetings in the chain of command.

☐ A business plan, customer satisfaction survey, annual reports, employer's manual, review meetings are all formal communication channels.

1.5.2 Informal Channels of Communication

Informal communication arises out of all those channels that fall outside the formal channels and it is also known as grapevine. It is established around the societal affiliation of members of the organization. Informal communication does not follow authority lines as in the case of formal communication.

Informal communication takes place due to the individual needs of the members of an organization and subsists in every organization. Normally, such communication is oral and may be expressed even by simple glance, sign or silence. Informal communication, is implicit, spontaneous multidimensional and diverse. It often works in group of people, i.e. when one person has some information of interest; he passes it on to his informal group and so on.

An organization can make efficient use of informal channels to fortify the formal channels of communication. It acts as a valuable purpose in expressing certain information that cannot be channeled via the official channels. It satisfies the people desires to identify what is happening in the organization and offers an opportunity to express dreads, worries and complaints. Informal communication also facilitates to ameliorate managerial decisions as more people are involved in the process of decision-making.

Inspite on many advantages, informal communication has certain disadvantages. Informal communication contains facts, deceptions, rumors and unclear data. The informal channels of communication may transmit completely imprecise information that may harm rather than help an organization. In addition, it is impossible to fix the responsibility for its origin or flow of information. However, for the efficient working of any organization both formal and informal communications are required.

An example of an informal communication channel is lunchtime at the organization's cafeteria/canteen. Here, in a relaxed atmosphere, discussions among employees are encouraged. Also managers walking around, adopting a hands-on approach to handling employee queries is an example of an informal communication channel. Quality circles, team work, different training programs are outside of the chain of command and so, fall under the category of informal communication channels.

1.5.3 Grapevine Communication (Informal Communication)

Grapevine is an informal channel of business communication. It is called so because it stretches throughout the organization in all directions irrespective of the authority levels. Man as we know is a social animal. Despite existence of formal channels in an organization, the informal channels tend to develop when he interacts with other people in organization. It exists more at lower levels of organization. Grapevine generally develops due to various reasons. One of them is that when an organization is facing recession, the employees sense uncertainty. Also, at times employees

do not have self-confidence due to which they form unions. Sometimes the managers show preferential treatment and favour some employees giving a segregated feeling to other employees. Thus, when employees sense a need to exchange their views ,they go for grapevine network as they cannot use the formal channel of

communication in that case. Generally during breaks in cafeteria, the subordinates talk about their superior's attitude and behaviour and exchange views with their peers. They discuss rumours about promotion and transfer of other employees. Thus, grapevine spreads like fire and it is not easy to trace the cause of such communication at times.

Example of Grapevine Network of Communication

1. Suppose the profit amount of a company is known. Rumour is spread that this much profit is there and on that basis bonus is declared.
2. CEO may be in relation to the Production Manager. They may have friendly relations with each other.

Advantages of Grapevine Communication

1. Grapevine channels carry information rapidly. As soon as an employee gets to know some confidential information, he becomes inquisitive and passes the details then to his closest friend who in turn passes it to other. Thus, it spreads hastily.
2. The managers get to know the reactions of their subordinates on their policies. Thus, the feedback obtained is quick compared to formal channel of communication.
3. The grapevine creates a sense of unity among the employees who share and discuss their views with each other. Thus, grapevine helps in developing group cohesiveness.
4. The grapevine serves as an emotional supportive value.
5. The grapevine is a supplement in those cases where formal communication does not work.

Disadvantages of Grapevine Communication

1. The grapevine carries partial information at times as it is more based on rumours. Thus, it does not clearly depicts the complete state of affairs.
2. The grapevine is not trustworthy always as it does not follows official path of communication and is spread more by gossips and unconfirmed report.
3. The productivity of employees may be hampered as they spend more time talking rather than working.
4. The grapevine leads to making hostility against the executives.
5. The grapevine may hamper the goodwill of the organization as it may carry false negative information about the high level people of the organization.

A smart manager should take care of all the disadvantages of the grapevine and try to minimize them. At the same time, he should make best possible use of advantages of grapevine.

1.6 Functions of communication

The most basic functions of communication in an organization are to inform, control, motivate and emotional expression.

1.6.1. Information

An organization needs a vast amount of information to function and operate a business. The top management would require timely and accurate information for the various departments to make effective decisions. Information is dispersed throughout an organization through

written or verbal communication. A human resources representative or business owner may send out a memo explaining a change in the company's health plan. A business meeting may be used as a way to communicate a new office procedure. A webinar allows a company to conduct a meeting over the Internet with employees or customers who cannot attend in person. The idea of informing within an organization is to provide data and information so that employees can effectively complete their job. Information ensures that an employee is aware of the rules and procedures of an organization. It also eliminates job uncertainty for workers when they are fully informed.

1.6.2 Control

The management of any organization will always have plans with long, medium or long termobjectives for the months and years ahead. To achieve these objectives, the daily & monthly activities must proceed as planned in order to achieve the objectives for the period.Communication acts to control member behavior in several ways. Organizations have authority hierarchies and formal guidelines that employees are required to follow. When employees, for instance for instances are required to first communicate any job related grievance to their immediate boss, to follow their job description, or to comply with company policies, communication is performing a control function. But informal communication also controls behavior. When work groups tease or harass a member who produces too much (and makes the rest of the group look bad) they are informally communicating with, and controlling the member's behavior. A company uses communication as a way to maintain control over employees and their work environment. Written human resources policies and procedures dictate how employees are permitted to act in the workplace. Job descriptions outline the parameters of an employee's job functions. Performance reviews control whether an employee receives a raise or attains a promotion.

1.6.3 Motivation

Managers use communication to motivate workers to achieve peak performance. By clarifying the expectations of employees and providing incentives for meeting or exceeding expectations, communication can help companies reach specific objectives. For example, by communicating to salespeople that they'll receive a 10 percent bonus if they reach their annual sales goal, it helps the company reach its overall sales goals. Communication fosters motivation by clarifying to employees what is to be done, how well they are doing and what can be done to improve performance if it's subpar. We saw his operating in our review of goal-setting and reinforcement theories. The formation of specific goals, feedback on progress toward the goals, and reinforcement of desired behavior all stimulate motivation and require communication.

1.6.4. Emotional Expression and Interdependence

Emotional appeal is when emotions or arguments are used to persuade others instead of facts or logic. Organizations can use emotional appeals when delivering bad news. Last year, the CEO spoke to the entire company at an emergency meeting. He explained how devastated he was over the need to have a corporate downsizing. He used emotion to explain that it was better for the overall security of the company to eliminate some positions. For many employees, their work group is a primary source for social interaction. The communication that takes place within the group is a fundamental mechanism by which members show their
frustration and feelings of satisfaction. Communication therefore provides release for the emotional expression of feelings and for fulfillment of social needs.

Communications Process

SHANNON AND WEAVER MODE OF COMMUNICATION

The Shannon and Weaver Model of Communication is a mathematical theory of communication that argues that human communication can be broken down **into following**

Key concepts: sender, encoder, channel, noise, decoder, receiver, feedback

Sender (Information source) – Sender is the person who makes the message, chooses the channel and sends the message. Sender is the source i.e. the one who starts the communication

Message
It is the idea, information, view, fact, feeling, etc. that is generated by the sender and is then intended to be communicated further.

Encoder (Transmitter) –Encoder is the sender who uses machine, which converts message into signals or binary data. It might also directly refer to the machine. The message generated by the sender is encoded symbolically in the form of **verbal, nonverbal, written, digital, visual like written letters, email, pictures, body language, etc. before it is being conveyed.**

Channel –Channel is the medium used to send message.
Decoder (Receiver) – Decoder is the machine used to convert signals or binary data into message or the receiver who translates the message from signals.

Receiver (Destination) –Receiver is the person who gets the message or the place where the message must reach. The receiver provides feedback according to the message.

Noise –Noise is the physical disturbances like environment, people, etc. which does not let the message get to the receiver as what is sent.

3. Encoding

4. Media
It is the manner in which the encoded message is transmitted. The message may be transmitted orally or in writing. The medium of communication includes telephone, internet, post, fax, e-mail, etc. The choice of medium is decided by the sender.

5. Decoding
It is the process of converting the symbols encoded by the sender. After decoding the message is received by the receiver.
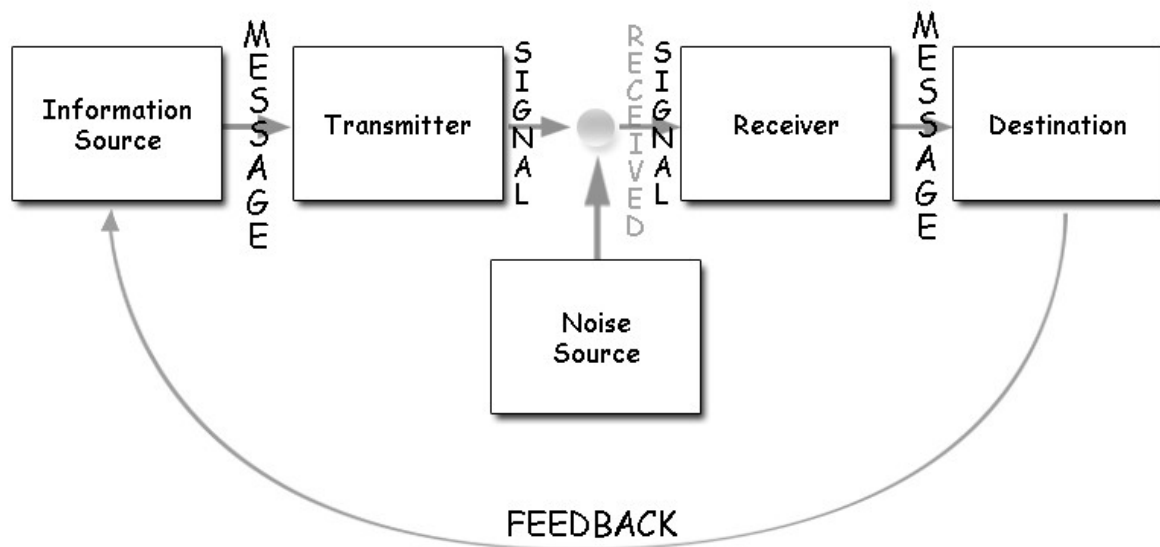
6. Receiver
He is the person who is last in the chain and for whom the message was sent by the sender. Once the receiver receives the message and understands it in proper perspective and acts according to the message, only then the purpose of communication is successful.

7. Feedback
Once the receiver confirms to the sender that he has received the message and understood it, the process of communication is complete.

8. Noise
It refers to any obstruction that is caused by the sender, message or receiver during the process of communication. For example, bad telephone connection, faulty encoding, faulty decoding, inattentive receiver, poor understanding of message due to prejudice or inappropriate gestures, etc.

The sender encodes the message and sends it to the receiver through a technological channel like telephone and telegraph. The sender converts the message into codes understandable to the machine. The message is sent in codes through a medium.

The receiver has to decode the message before understanding it and interpreting it. The receptor machine can also act as a decoder in some cases. The channel can have noise and the receiver might not have the capacity to decode which might cause problems in communication process.

Here, for instance, brain might be the sender, mouth might be the encoder which encodes to a particular language, air might be the channel, another person's ear might be the receptor and his brain might be the decoder and receiver.

Similarly, air is the channel here, the noise present in his environment that disturbs them is the noise whereas his response is the feedback. There were only 5 components when the model was made. Noise was added later.

LINEAR MODEL OF COMMUNICATION

The linear communication model is easy to remember if you think about it in terms of a line. A line is straight, typically with a starting point and ending point. In this linear communication model, the communication being put out happens in a straight line, coming from a sender to a receiver. In this model, each component plays its own role:
- The sender prepares the message
- The message is the information being conveyed
- The message is encoded, or converted, to fit the channel being used
- Various channels (email, radio, television, etc.) deliver the message
- The receiver decodes and reviews the message

This model of communication is also impacted by two other components: the **absence of feedback**, meaning the receiver is not able to immediately respond, and **noise**, anything that can cause a disruption in the way the message is received or understood.

Functions of Communication

1. The Basis of Co-ordination
The manager explains to the employees the organizational goals, modes of their achievement and also the interpersonal relationships amongst them. This provides coordination between various employees and also departments. Thus, communications act as a basis for coordination in the organization

2. Fluent Working
A manager coordinates the human and physical elements of an organization to run it smoothly and efficiently. This coordination is not possible without proper communication.

3. The Basis of Decision Making
Proper communication provides information to the manager that is useful for decision making. No decisions could be taken in the absence of information. Thus, communication is the basis for taking the right decisions.

4. Increases Managerial Efficiency
The manager conveys the targets and issues instructions and allocates jobs to the subordinates. All of these aspects involve communication. Thus, communication is essential for the quick and effective performance of the managers and the entire organization.

5. Increases Cooperation and Organizational Peace
The two-way communication process promotes co-operation and mutual understanding amongst the workers and also between them and the management,This leads to less friction and thus leads to industrial peace in the factory and efficient operations.

6. Boosts Morale of the Employees
Good communication helps the workers to adjust to the physical and social aspect of work. It also improves good human relations in the industry. An efficient system of communication

enables the management to motivate, influence and satisfy the subordinates which in turn boosts their morale and keeps them motivated.

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Information An organization needs a vast amount of information to function and operate a business. The top management would require timely and accurate information for the various departments to make effective decisions. Information is dispersed throughout an organization through written or verbal communication. A human resources representative or business owner may send out a memo explaining a change in the company's health plan. A business meeting may be used as a way to communicate a new office procedure. A webinar allows a company to conduct a meeting over the Internet with employees or customers who cannot attend in person. The idea of informing within an organization is to provide data and information so that employees can effectively complete their job. Information ensures that an employee is aware of the rules and procedures of an organization. It also eliminates job uncertainty for workers when they are fully informed.

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Are Your Communications FAIR?

Facts (How factual is your communication?)

• Have you presented the facts correctly?

• Have you presented all the relevant facts?

• Have you presented any information that would be considered misleading?

• Have you used the facts in a reasonable manner to arrive at your conclusions

and recommendations? Would your audience agree with your reasoning?

Access (How accessible or transparent are your motives, reasoning, and information?)

• Are your motives clear, or will others perceive that you have a hidden agenda?

• Have you fully disclosed how you obtained the information and used it to

make your case?

• Are you hiding any of the information or real reasons for making certain

claims or recommendations?

• Have you given stakeholders the opportunity to provide input in the decisionmaking

process?

Impacts (How does your communication impact stakeholders?)

• Have you considered how your communication impacts all stakeholders?

• Have you thought about how your communication will help or even hurt

others?

• How could you learn more about these impacts?

Respect (How respectful is your communication?)

• Have you prepared your communication to recognize the inherent dignity and

self-worth of others?

• Would those with whom you are communicating consider your

communication respectful?

• Would a neutral observer consider your communication respectful?

Types of Communication

1. Formal Communication

Formal communications are the one which flows through the official channels designed in the organizational chart. It may take place between a superior and a subordinate, a subordinate and a superior or among the same cadre employees or managers. These communications can be oral or in writing and are generally recorded and filed in the office.

Formal communication may be further classified as Vertical communication and Horizontal communication.

Vertical Communication

As the name suggests flows vertically upwards or downwards through formal channels. Upward communication refers to the flow of communication from a subordinate to a superior whereas downward communication flows from a superior to a subordinate.
Application for grant of leave, submission of a progress report, request for loans etc. are some of the examples of upward communication. Sending notice to employees to attend a meeting, delegating work to the subordinates, informing them about the company policies, etc. are some examples of downward communication.

Horizontal Communication

Horizontal or lateral communication takes place between one division and another. For example, a production manager may contact the finance manager to discuss the delivery of raw material or its purchase.

2. Informal Communication
Any communication that takes place without following the formal channels of communication is said to be informal communication. The Informal communication is often referred to as the 'grapevine' as it spreads throughout the organization and in all directions without any regard to the levels of authority.
The informal communication spreads rapidly, often gets distorted and it is very difficult to detect the source of such communication. It also leads to rumors which are not true. People's behavior is often affected by the rumors and informal discussions which sometimes may hamper the work environment.

However, sometimes these channels may be helpful as they carry information rapidly and, therefore, may be useful to the manager at times. Informal channels are also used by the managers to transmit information in order to know the reactions of his/her subordinates.

Barriers to Communication
The communication barriers may prevent communication or carry incorrect meaning due to which misunderstandings may be created. Therefore, it is essential for a manager to identify such barriers and take appropriate measures to overcome them. The barriers to communication in organizations can be broadly grouped as follows:

1. Semantic Barriers
These are concerned with the problems and obstructions in the process of encoding and decoding of a message into words or impressions. Normally, such barriers result due to use of wrong words, faulty translations, different interpretations, etc.
For example, a manager has to communicate with workers who have no knowledge of the English language and on the other side, he is not well conversant with the Hindi language. Here,

language is a barrier to communication as the manager may not be able to communicate properly with the workers.

2. Psychological Barriers

Emotional or psychological factors also act as barriers to communication. The state of mind of both sender and receiver of communication reflects in effective communication. A worried person cannot communicate properly and an angry recipient cannot understand the message properly.

Thus, at the time of communication, both the sender and the receiver need to be psychologically sound. Also, they should trust each other. If they do not believe each other, they cannot understand each other's message in its original sense.

3. Organizational Barriers

The factors related to organizational structure, rules and regulations authority relationships, etc. may sometimes act as barriers to effective communication. In an organization with a highly centralized pattern, people may not be encouraged to have free communication. Also, rigid rules and regulations and cumbersome procedures may also become a hurdle to communication.

4. Personal Barriers

The personal factors of both sender and receiver may act as a barrier to effective communication. If a superior thinks that a particular communication may adversely affect his authority, he may suppress such communication.

Also, if the superiors do not have confidence in the competency of their subordinates, they may not ask for their advice. The subordinates may not be willing to offer useful suggestions in the absence of any reward or appreciation for a good suggestion.

Physical or Environmental Barriers

Physical barriers are those barriers which are caused due to some technical defects in the media used for communication and/or due to certain disturbances in the surrounding environment.

Often, the term 'noise' is used as a blanket term to refer to the physical barriers in general. But noise, in its literal sense, is also one of the factors that give rise to the physical barriers during the process of communication.

Besides noise, wrong selection of medium, lack of acoustics, poor lighting, frequent movements of hands, fiddling with a pen, or even serving of tea during an important conversation- all of these are also responsible for creating physical barriers in the communication process.

Noise

Noise is the first major barrier to communication. Communication is distorted by noise that crops up at the transmission level.

The meaning attributed to the word 'noise' in the field of Communication is derived from the realm of Physics. In Physics, noise refers to "a disturbance, especially a random and persistent disturbance, which obscures or reduces the clarity of a signal".

The modern-day connotation of the word 'noise' is "irrelevant or meaningless data" as is apparent from its usage in the field of Computer Science.

For example, the noise of the traffic around a school obstructs the smooth flow of information between the teacher and the students. It makes oral communication difficult. Similarly, poor

signal or static while talking over the cell phone or while using the public address system or while watching TV also distorts the sound signals and disrupts communication. Bad weather conditions may also sometimes interfere with the transmission of signals and may lead to breakdown of the communication channels.

As discussed above, noise is not only the disruption of sound signals, but it also includes all the barriers that may arise at any of the various stages of communication. In a broad sense, it denotes semantic barriers, perceptional barriers as well as psychological barriers.

Time and Distance
Time and distance may also obstruct the smooth flow of information. Today, because of technological advancements, we have faster means of communication available to us and this in turn has made the world a smaller place. But at times, these means of communication may not be easily accessible because of unavailability or due to technical/technological problems. This may lead not only to a physical but also a communication gap between the transmitter and the receiver.
Time differences between people living in two different countries may affect communication between them. Even people working in different shifts in the same organization may also face problems in communicating effectively.
Improper seating arrangement in a classroom or in a conference hall may also act as a barrier to effective communication as it is difficult to maintain eye contact with one's audience.

Wrong Choice of Medium
This can also create a barrier to effective communication. For example, if an expert uses charts or graphs or PowerPoint presentations to orient the illiterate workers or volunteers to a new method of working, they are bound to be ill-equipped to infer any information or instructions from such sophisticated presentations.

Surroundings
Adverse weather conditions affect not only the means of communication, but also have an impact on the sender and the receiver of the message. When two people have to communicate with each other under extreme weather conditions, whether too hot or too cold, their surroundings does have a direct repercussion on the effectiveness of the exchange that takes place between them.
Thus, environmental factors determine people's mood and also influence their mental agility and thereby their capacity to communicate effectively. Extreme heat and humidity make people either hyper or listless and thus cause immense stress which in turn affects clear thinking and the attitude of the communicator; whereas, extreme cold weather induces laziness and also impedes the ability to think clearly and respond sharply, thereby causing communication failure.

Physiological Barriers
Physiological barriers are related to a person's health and fitness. These may arise due to disabilities that may affect the physical capability of the sender or the receiver. For example, poor eyesight, deafness, uncontrolled body movements, etc.
Physical defects in one's body may also disrupt communication. While communicating, a person uses–
his vocal (speech) organs to produce sound/speech

his hand and fingers to write

his ears to take in the spoken words

his eyes to absorb the written words

Flawless functioning of these body organs is inevitable for effective communication to take place. In case of any defect in any of these organs, the successful completion of communication will be difficult to accomplish.

Speaking can be adversely affected by stammering, fumbling, utterance of improper sounds due to defective vocal organ/s, etc.

Semantic or Language Barriers

Semantics is the systematic study of the meaning of words. Thus, the semantic barriers are barriers related to language. Such barriers are problems that arise during the process of encoding and/or decoding the message into words and ideas respectively.

Both the oral and the written communication are based on words/symbols which are ambiguous in nature. Words/symbols may be used in several ways and may have several meanings. Unless the receiver knows the context, he may interpret the words/symbols according to his own level of understanding and may thus misinterpret the message.

The most common semantic barriers are listed as under:

a. Misinterpretation of Words

Semantic problems often arise because of the gap between the meaning as intended by the sender and that as understood by the receiver. This happens when the receiver does not assign the same meaning to the word/symbol as the transmitter had intended.

Words are capable of expressing a variety of meanings depending upon their usage, i.e. in the context in which they are used. The association between the word/symbol and the meaning assigned to it is of arbitrary nature.

For example, the word 'yellow' when used as an adjective can have multiple connotations depending upon its usage. Words have two levels of meaning- literal (descriptive) and metaphorical (qualitative). 'Yellow', besides being a primary colour, also stands for 'freshness', 'beauty', 'sickness', 'decay', etc. Hence, the receiver is free to interpret it in any of these ways based on his own imagination and experience.

But for communication to be perfect, it is essential that the receiver must assign to it the same meaning which the sender had in his mind while encoding the message. Therefore, there is always a possibility of misinterpretation of the messages. Mostly, such problems arise when the sender does not use simple and clear words that can convey the exact meaning to the receiver.

b. Use of Technical Language
Technical or specialized language which is used by people or professionals who work in the same field is known as jargon. Such technical language can be a barrier to communication if the receiver of the message is not familiar with it. For example, in the computer jargon, 'to burn a CD' means 'to copy the data on a CD'. To a layman, the word 'burn' may have a very different connotation.

c. Ambiguity
Ambiguity arises when the sender and the receiver of the message attribute different meanings to the same words or use different words to convey the same meaning. Sometimes, wrong and speculative assumptions also lead to ambiguity. A sender often assumes that his audience would perceive the situation as he does or have the same opinion about an issue or understand the message as he understands it, and so on. All such assumptions may turn out to be wrong and cause communication failure.

Personal Barriers
Communication is interpersonal in nature. Thus, there are certain barriers that are directly linked to the persons involved in the communication process, i.e. the sender and the receiver, which influence the accurate transfer of the message. These are called personal barriers.
Personal barriers have to do with the age, education, interests and needs or intentions that differ from person to person.
In any business organization, the attitude of the superiors and the subordinates play a vital role in determining the success of communication. If the superiors have a hostile attitude, then there are chances that they may filter the information or manipulate the message, sometimes intentionally, in order to achieve certain selfish motives.Many superiors are not open to suggestions and feedback as they presume that their subordinates are not capable of advising them. Also, they often tend to keep too busy with work and do not pay much attention to communication. Due to this, the downward flow of information within the organization is badly affected and this in turn leads to poor performance.

Emotional or Perceptional Barriers
Emotional or perceptional barriers are closely associated with personal barriers. Personal barriers arise from motives and attitudes whereas emotional or perceptional barriers have an added dimension that includes sentiments and emotions as well.
If the receiver does not evaluate the information with an open mind, i.e. objectively, his judgment/evaluation would be colored with his biases and/or his emotions, thus inducing him to read too much into a message. This would interfere with the exact transfer of information and cause misinterpretation.
Such a barrier may also emerge at the time of encoding the message. Over enthusiasm on the part of the sender may lead him to invest his message with meaning/s which he may actually not have intended to.

Indolence, apathy, or the tendency to procrastinate, either on the part of the sender or the receiver, also lead to withholding of important information thus creating a barrier. Extreme emotions like euphoria, excitement, anger, stress, depression, etc. also get in the way of effective communication. All these factors may create biases in the mind of the sender or the receiver.

Socio-Psychological Barriers

Socio-psychological barriers can also be considered as one of the offshoots of the personal barriers, akin to the perceptional barriers. We need to study it as a subcategory of personal barriers because a person's attitude is shaped not only by his instincts and emotions, but also by his approach towards and his interaction with the people around him, and hence the need for this fine distinction between the personal, the perceptional and the socio-psychological barriers.

b. Difference in Perception

Moreover, in a communication situation, the communicators have to deal with two aspects of the reality- the one as they see it and the other as they perceive it. The mind filters the message i.e. the words/symbols/ signs and attributes meaning to them, according to individual perception. Each individual has his own distinctive filter, formed by his/her experiences, emotional makeup, knowledge, and mindset which s/he has attained over a period of time. Because of this difference in perceptions, different individuals respond to the same word/symbol/sign based on their own understanding of the situation and ascribe meaning to it on the basis of their unique filter. At times, this difference in perception causes communication gap, i.e. distortion, in the message. In face-to-face communication, this gap can be easily eliminated as there is immediate feedback. But in written communication, the semantic gap between the intended meaning and the interpreted meaning remains unidentified, as the feedback is delayed or sometimes there is no feedback at all.

c. Prejudices

Besides, a person with deeply ingrained prejudices is very difficult to communicate with. He is not responsive to discussion or to new ideas, information, viewpoints and opinions. He has a closed mind and tends to react antagonistically, thus ruling out all possibilities of communication. An unreceptive mind can, hence, be a great barrier in communication. To overcome this barrier, people should be receptive of new ideas and must learn to listen considerately with an open mind.

e. Information Overload

Furthermore, information overload leads to poor retention and causes information loss. So, whenever there is some important information to be conveyed, the communicators must use

the written channel of communication.On the basis of the above discussion, we may thus conclude that the socio-psychological factors do have a profound impact on the effectiveness of communication.

Cultural Barriers

Cultural differences give rise to a great deal of complexity in the encoding and the decoding of messages not only because of the difference in languages, but also because of plenty of culture-specific assumptions at work in the mind of the sender as well as the receiver.People belonging to different cultures may attach different meanings to words, symbols, gestures, and behaviour or they may perceive each others' social values, body language, attitude to space distancing and time, social behaviour and manners, etc., i.e. the entire culture in general, very differently depending upon their own standards, attitudes, customs, prejudices, opinions, behavioral norms, etc., i.e. their own distinct culture.

Thus, cultural barriers arise when people belonging to different cultures insist on preserving their cultural identities and at times, judge the other cultures as inferior to their own.

Organizational Barriers

Organizational structure greatly influences the flow of information within an organization. Some major organizational barriers are as follows:

a. Goal Conflicts

There may be goal conflicts within the organization between the superiors and the subordinates, among people working in the different departments, among the colleagues, etc. This may create a hostile atmosphere within the organization and can lead to serious communication breakdown.

b. Organizational Policies

These are also to a great extent responsible for determining the kind of rapport that people working in the same organization share with each other. If the organizational policy is such that it restricts the free flow of information in all directions then communication would not be successful. In some organizations, there may be rules to restrict the flow of certain messages and this may deter employees from conveying those messages, however important they may be.

If an organization favours the open door policy, the subordinates would not feel shy or reluctant to approach their superiors directly. But in the organizations where the formal channels of communication have to be strictly adhered to, the superiors and the subordinates share an awkward relationship. They experience a lot of discomfiture while interacting with each other. Because of this, the objective of communication may never be accomplished.

c. Organizational Hierarchy

The hierarchical structure of the organization may also impede the flow of information and this can cause delay in taking decisions. When the message passes along the chain of

command in an organization, there are chances of filtering and distortion of the message at almost every level before it reaches the intended receiver. Thus, the hierarchical structure of the organization is also one of the important factors that may create a barrier to effective communication.

1.9.1 Filters in Business Communication

What is Filtering?

Filtering is altering the interpretation of the message by applying certain influences or biases. The receiver will filter the message according to their experience and as a result the interpretation of the message can be very different from what was intended.The consequence of filtering is that there can be misunderstanding which can lead to an unexpected response.

For example, the project manager may ask a team member if the document has been completed. The team member may interpret this as asking whether it has been written, and not whether it has also been reviewed and signed off.

Causes of Filtering

Some of the common areas that cause filtering are:

• **Language**: the receiver interprets the message based on their translation of the language to thoughts and ideas.

• **Culture**: of the recipient and their understanding of the culture of the environment they are in (the workplace, the organisation, the industry, the local area and country).

• **Semantics**: the receiver interprets the message based on their understanding of the meaning of the words used.

• **Knowledge base**: the receiver utilises a different knowledge base on which to interpret the message.

• **Implication**: the interpretation of the message may be based on assumptions. An extreme example of implication is sarcasm, where the opposite of what is meant to be interpreted is said

5 types of filters:
1. Distractions.
2. Emotional states.
3. Beliefs and expectations.
4. Differences in style.
5. Self-protection.

Distractions:

☐ When you say something to your partner do you have his/her attention?

☐ External things like noisy kids, a hearing problem, or background noise can be a problem.

☐ Internal factors are such things as preoccupation, feeling tired, planning what else is to be done that day, etc.

☐ Make it easier to pay attention to your partner. Ask for their attention.

Emotional states:

☐ Moods greatly affect communication.

 Studies have shown that we tend to give people more benefit of the doubt when we're in a good mood and less when we're in a bad mood.

 When we're in a bad mood we are more likely to perceive whatever our partner says or does more negatively no matter how positive he/she is trying to be.

 Don't use a filter such as a bad mood as a reason to treat your partner badly.

 Talking about how you feel may be the best first step in starting a conversation, especially if is about important matters.

Beliefs and expectations:

 Many studies have shown that we tend to see what we expect to see in others and in situations.

 It takes humility to recognize and admit that you do this.

 It has been shown that expectations not only affect what we perceive but can influence the actual behavior of those around us. For example, if you believe that someone is an extrovert, he is more likely to sound like an extrovert when talking with you, even if that person is normally introverted. We "pull" behavior from others consistent with what we expect.

 This is one reason why old habits and feelings and patterns of communication come back with full force during holidays when we are with the family we grew up in.

 We can easily get into "mind reading", thinking that we know what someone else means or wants.

Differences in style:

 One person may be more expressive and one more reserved.

 Styles are determined by many influences including culture, gender, and upbringing. For example, in one family it may be very normal to raise one's voice when making a point and in another raising one's voice was never done. When people from these two varied backgrounds marry, for one to raise his/her voice may be perceived by the other as threatening.

 In other families there may have been many conversations going on at once around the dinner table while in other families to talk while someone else is talking is considered rude.

 All families develop spoken as well as unspoken rules for conversing, caring, making decisions, and otherwise relating to each other. The key is to become aware of the unspoken and therefore assumed rules that you have grown up with and learn to adapt them to living in your current family.

Self-protection:

 This filter comes from the fear of rejection we struggle with in marriage.

 Fear is the big enemy of secure and warm attachment. It will stop us from saying what we truly feel or want. Even simple statements such as, "Would you like to go see that new movie?" can reflect a fear of rejection. Instead of saying it directly, "I want to go see that new movie; want to go?" we often hide our desire because speaking of it reveals more of who we are and increases the risk of rejection.

 Movies may not matter so much as do feelings, desires, expectations.

7 C's of Communication

Definition: The 7 C's of Communication is a checklist that helps to improve the professional communication skills and increases the chance that the message will be understood in exactly the same way as it was intended.

To have effective communication, one should keep the following 7 C's of communication in mind:

1   Clear: The message should be clear and easily understandable to the recipient. The purpose of the communication should be clear to sender then only the receiver will be sure about it. The message should emphasize on a single goal at a time and shall not cover several ideas in a single sentence.

2   Correct: The message should be correct, i.e. a correct language should be used, and the sender must ensure that there is no grammatical and spelling mistakes. Also, the message should be exact and well-timed. The correct messages have a greater impact on the receiver and at the same time, the morale of the sender increases with the accurate message.

3   Complete: The message should be complete, i.e. it must include all the relevant information as required by the intended audience. The complete information gives answers to all the questions of the receivers and helps in better decision-making by the recipient.

4   Concrete: The communication should be concrete, which means the message should be clear and particularly such that no room for misinterpretation is left. All the facts and figures should be clearly mentioned in a message so as to substantiate to whatever the sender is saying.

5   Concise: The message should be precise and to the point. The sender should avoid the lengthy sentences and try to convey the subject matter in the least possible words. The short and brief message is more comprehensive and helps in retaining the receiver's attention.

6   Consideration: The sender must take into consideration the receiver's opinions, knowledge, mindset, background, etc. in order to have an effective communication. In order to communicate, the sender must relate to the target recipient and be involved.

7   Courteous: It implies that the sender must take into consideration both the feelings and viewpoints of the receiver such that the message is positive and focused at the audience. The message should not be biased and must include the terms that show respect for the recipient.

Informal Communication or Grapevine: Meaning, Characteristics, Advantages and Limitations

Meaning of grapevine or informal communication:
Informal communication is also known as grapevine communication because there is no definite route of communication for sharing information. In this form of communication, information converges a long way by passing from one person to another person leaving no indication from which point it started. This is quite similar to the vine of grapes. It is also difficult to find out the beginning and the end of the grapevine.
When an organization does not follow any prescribed or official rules or procedures of the organization is called *informal communication*. The basis of informal communication is spontaneous relationship among the participants.
Informal communication system is the opposite system of ***formal communication***. In this system the communication is made without following any predetermined rules of policy. Informal communication plays a vital role to operate the organization's activities. When the employees cannot understand the subject matter of the communication, they can discuss with their authority anywhere about the matter as like in the dining table or in the play ground or in the club. Some definitions of informal communication are as follows:
*According to Bartol and Martin, Informal communication is the takes place without **regard to hierarchical or task requirements."***
According to Bovee and his associates, "Informal communication is the flow of information without regard for the formal organizational structure, hierarchical or reporting relationship."
So, grapevine or informal communication is the process of spontaneous exchange of information between two or more person at different status without following any prescribed or official rules, formalities and chain of command in the organizational structure.

Informal communication refers to interchange of TOOLKIT-5 information unofficially. This communication is based on informal relations (like friendship, membership of the same club, the same place of birth, etc.) and, therefore, is free from all the organisational formalities.

The exchange of informal messages usually takes place on the occasion of community meals, social occasions, parties, etc. On such occasions, the superiors gather such information from their subordinates as may be difficult to get through formal communication. Such communication includes comments, suggestions, etc.

Under this, communication takes place through gesticulation, moving of head, smiling and by remaining quiet. For example, a superior wants to complain against his subordinate to his higher officer and at the same time he is afraid of giving it in writing. This can be conveyed to the higher officer through informal communication, say during the course of a conversation.

Informal communication is also called grapevine communication because there is no definite channel of communication. Under it some information passes through many individuals and covers a long distance making its origin obscure. This is exactly like a grapevine where it is difficult to find the beginning and the end.

Characteristics of grapevine or informal communication:

The important features or characteristics of *grapevine or informal communication* are as follows:

1. **Single Standard:**

In this form of communication, a person says something to a trustworthy person who, in turn, passes on the information to another trustworthy person and in this way a chain starts moving. This creates a sort of chain which has been shown in diagram. The signs of cross shown at the top and bottom of the diagram show that the chain can move up and down both ways up to any extent.

2. **Gossip Chain:**

In this form of communication, a person communicates something to a number of persons during the course of a gossip. A particular person in an organisation knows something specific that happens to be interesting. He tells this thing to all the members of his group and some other people also. Normally, such information is not related to the job.

For example, two employees of the organisation are going in for a love marriage and some particular person has got this information, he passes on this information to a large number of people. Gossip chain thus begins.

3. **Probability:**

In this form of communication, a person remains indifferent about the fact as to whom he should pass on the information. There are numerous people around him. He passes on the information randomly to somebody around him. Those who get the information also have many people around them.

4. **Cluster:**

In this form of communication, a person tells something to selected individuals. Those who receive the information further pass it on to another set of selected individuals.

In this way, this chain moves on. In every organisation some people have good liaison with other persons. Such people pass on the information to persons of their choice with the purpose of getting some favour from them.

5. **Un-official channel of communication**: Since an informal communication network does not follow any rules or formalities. So, it is an unofficial channel of communication.

6. **Not controlled by management**: The grapevine is not controlled by management. The grapevine is mainly controlled by the employees themselves. As employees control the grapevine information, sometimes the information may be accurate and sometimes the information may be inaccurate.
7. **More reliable information**: Most employees perceive and believe that the grapevine contains more reliable information than the information received from upper management. What employees may or may not realize is that many times the grapevine contains false information.
8. **Flexibility**: Informal communication is more flexible than formal communication because it is free from all type of formalities.
9. **Oral way of communication**: Informal communication technique more uses oral way of communication rather than written communication.
10. **Rapid communication**: Informal communication transmits very fast. Especially miss-inflation or rumor spread rapidly to others is the organization.
11. **Distortion of meaning**: Something the meaning and the subject matter of the information is distorted in this system.
12. **Influential**: Informal communication is very much influential type of communication is distorted in this system.
13. **Free form accountability**: The exchange of message in *informal communication* is free from accountability to the authority or top executives of the organization.
14. **Spontaneous**: Informal communication is the process of spontaneous exchange of information between two or more person at different status within the organizational structure.
1.15. **Multidirectional**: Informal communication is multidirectional in nature. The grapevine may be largely available to simply serve the interests of the people it involves. Many times, employees use the grapevine to begin rumors that serve their own interests, with little regard to the people they affect.
16. **Formation through Social Relations:**
This communication is born out of social relations who mean that it is beyond the restrictions of the organisation. No superior-subordinate relationship figures therein. A more sociable superior can gather much information through this channel.
17. **Two types of Information:**
Through this communication, information about the work and the individual can be collected.
18. **Uncertain Path:**
Since it is beyond the restrictions of the organisation, it follows no definite channel. Like a grapevine, it moves in a zigzag manner.
19. **Possibility of Rumour and Distortion:**
Responsibility for the true or false nature of communication does not lie on any individual and, therefore, not much attention is paid to its meaning while communicating. Consequently, the rumours keep floating.
20. **Quick Relay:**
Informal communication makes news spread like wildfire. Not only this, people start adding something of their own which sometimes changes the real meaning of the communication.

Advantages: Informal or grapevine communication
The informal channel of communication has the following advantages:

(1) Fast and Effective Communication:
Under this communication, the messages move fast and their effect is equally great on the people.

(2) Free Environment:
Informal communication is done in a free environment. Free environment means that there is no pressure of any office-big or small. The reactions of the employees can easily be collected.

(3) Better Human Relations:
Informal communication saves the employees from tension. Freedom from tension helps the establishment of better human relations. This also affects the formal communication.

(4) Easy Solution of the Difficult Problems:
There are many problems which cannot be solved with the help of formal communication. There is more freedom in informal communication which helps the solution of difficult problems.

(5) Satisfying the Social Needs of the Workers:
Everybody wants good relations with the high officers at the place of his work. Such relations give satisfaction to the employees and they feel proud. But this can be possible only with the help of the informal communication.

Limitations: Informal or grapevine communication
The defects or limitations of the informal communication are as under:

(1) Unsystematic Communication:
This communication is absolutely unsystematic and it is not necessary that information reaches the person concerned.

(2) Unreliable Information:
Most of the information received through this communication is undependable and no important decision can be taken on its basis.

Communication functions at workplace

Promote the concept of morning meetings at workplace. Morning meetings help you interact with your team members on an open platform where everyone has the liberty to express his/her views. Communicate with your team members and help them plan their day. Let them come out with their problems. Walk up to their workstations once or twice in a day.

☐ **Increase your listening skills**. A good listener is always a good communicator. It is really important to listen to the other person carefully before speaking. Interrupting a conversation breaks the momentum and the message loses its impact.

☐ **Working in a team leads to effective managerial communication**. Employees working in isolation hardly interact with their fellow workers and superiors. Make sure your team members discuss things amongst themselves and work together. Instruct them to keep you in the loop as well. The employees must mark a cc to their immediate reporting managers to keep them updated of the latest developments at the workplace.

☐ **Master the art of writing emails**. Also train your team members how to write an official mail. There is a huge difference between a personal and official mail. The subject line needs to be relevant for people to open the mail.

☐ Do not call your team embers one by one for any kind of communication. Address them together.

☐ **Think before you speak**. Make sure whatever you communicate is relevant. Avoid using complicated words and terminologies in your speech. The message has to be clear and precise for effective managerial communication. Be straightforward and communicate clearly as to what you expect out of your team members.

☐ **No communication is complete unless the message is understood clearly by the recipients**. There should be absolutely no room for confusion in effective communication. Once you are through with your speech, give some time to your team members for them to ask whatever they have not understood.

<u>**Workplace Interpersonal Skills**</u>
- Understanding Social Communication in Workplace Environment
- Employee Feedback: Assess Employee Performance and Satisfaction
- Simulation

► Humour in Communication – Use of 'Puns'

►Entertainment and Communication (Infotainment)
- Infotainment and Social Media
- Entertainment in Journalism

► Social Networking

<u>**Understanding Social Communication in Workplace Environment**</u>

When working with colleagues and customers from a variety of cultural groups, it is essential to use effective and culturally sensitive communication techniques. Communication can be verbal or non-verbal.

Effective communication techniques in a cross-cultural setting include:
- **Active listening**: an essential part of effective communication. Elements of active listening include the following:
    o concentration
    o interpreting the message being communicated
    o providing accurate feedback to the sender of the message
    o showing empathy and interest in what is being said
    o not interrupting when the other person is speaking
    o maintaining eye contact
    o using open body language
- **Effective questioning techniques:** the use of open, closed and reflective questions can be an effective way to identify the needs and wants of both customers and colleagues. Simple closed questions require a "yes" or "no" answer. Questions such as "Would you like the concierge to take your bags to your room?" is a good example of a closed question. By asking such a question you are able to determine the immediate needs of your customer. An open question allows the customer to provide more information. For

example, a waiter asking a customer "Do you have any special dietary requirements?" allows the customer to provide specific information regarding their needs. Reflective questions are used to clarify information and allow you to ensure you have obtained all the facts you need. Paraphrasing is an excellent example of reflective questioning. For example, reading an order back to a customer.

- **Appropriate body language:** the vast majority of our communication is carried out non-verbally. If our body language does not reflect what is being said, confusion can arise. For example, nodding your head while telling a customer or colleague that what they need is not available will create confusion.
- **Appropriate speech**: using formal and informal language is essential in any working environment. Appropriate speech includes aiming your language at the audience and minimising the use of jargon or slang when speaking to a customer from a socially different background; this can often create confusion and lead to misunderstandings. The use of formal language such as using proper titles, for example "Mr" and "Mrs" is essential when dealing with external customers. Using formal greetings for example, "good morning" or "good evening" helps to give communications with external customers a professional tone.
- Communication with internal customers (colleagues) can be less formal, but should be appropriate to the conversation. The use of slang can still create confusion and misunderstanding, so it is essential to minimise its use. It is also important to be culturally sensitive when working with colleagues from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Barriers to effective communication in a socially diverse workplace

Barriers to effective communication are a common cause of cross-cultural misunderstandings. Barriers to effective communication include:

- **Bias and stereotyping:** bias is prejudice either for or against a person or group compared with another. Stereotyping is making assumptions regarding a person's background due to appearance or membership of a particular cultural group.
- **Lack of empathy:** empathy is the ability to put yourself in another person's situation in order to understand the feelings of the other party. A lack of empathy will show in conversations with customers, and create a potentially unwelcoming situation for a customer or colleague who is struggling with language and cultural barriers.
- **Negative subtext:** can occur when what you are saying does not correspond with the body language you are using.
- **Ethnocentrism:** is the belief that one culture is superior to another and has no place within the hospitality industry. When working with colleagues and customers from culturally diverse backgrounds, all workers should be culturally aware and be prepared to engage with colleagues and customers from all backgrounds, regardless of personal beliefs.

Methods for overcoming barriers to communication

- Greet all customers with the appropriate methods of verbal and non-verbal communication. Open body language, active listening and limiting colloquialisms and jargon will make a customer feel comfortable and limit communication barriers.
- Staff training in positive communication is essential. Methods of greeting, the acknowledging and farewelling of customers should be uniform across an establishment and language should be clear, concise, courteous and culturally sensitive.

- All staff should be aware of words, phrases and gestures that are universally understood. Staff should also make use of universally understood signs such as no smoking, toilets or telephone.

In this brief article on grapevine communication, we are going to take a look at some of the advantages and disadvantages of grapevine communication.

Advantages of grapevine communication

1. The first advantage of a grapevine communication is the fact that **information through this channel is extremely fast**. Many have said of grapevine communication to be one of the fastest forms of communication. It spreads faster than wild fire.
2. Another advantage of grapevine communication is that **it tends to bring a sense of unity among employees of an organization when they meet to share and discuss certain issues.** Experts say that because of the nature of grapevine communication, **it enhances group cohesiveness in many organizations** all over the world.
3. Grapevine communication is an informal mode of communication but it **plays an instrumental role in aiding the formal methods of communication in every organization**.
4. In organizations or **establishments where formal communications do not function properly, grapevine communication comes to the rescue**. Information through grapevine ends up being the only way employees can get any information about things going on around them.

Disadvantages of Grapevine communication

1. Grapevine information **since it is largely based on rumors tends to carry along with it partial information** which ends up not giving the real state of affairs in an organization.
2. Information received through grapevine **might not be true.**
3. Another great disadvantage of grapevine communication is the fact **that it can damage an organization's goodwill.** For instance imagine a situation where lower ranking employees of an organization begin peddling false information about people at the top. This action can gradually destroy the goodwill of the organization.
4. The fourth disadvantage with grapevine communication is one that is common in many organizations all over the world. This is when employees become unproductive thanks to grapevine. Grapevine communication **can make organizations lose a lot of money because thanks to grapevine employees spend work hours talking about the latest rumor circulating around them.** It delays work and drains energy. The organization pays dearly for this.
5. Grapevine communication **cannot be relied on because it is not trustworthy. If not managed properly, it can have serious implications.**

Small Talk:

In most English-speaking countries, it is normal and necessary to make "small talk" in certain situations. Small talk is a casual form of conversation that "breaks the ice" or fills an awkward silence between people. Even though you may feel shy using your second language, it is sometimes considered rude to say nothing. Just as there are certain times when small talk is

appropriate, there are also certain topics that people often discuss during these moments. The hardest part about making small talk is to know how to start a conversation.

Small Talk: Who, What, Where, When, Why?

WHO makes small talk?

People with many different relationships use small talk. The most common type of people to use small talk are those who do not know each other at all. Though we often teach children not to talk to strangers, adults are expected to say at least a few words in certain situations (see where). It is also common for people who are only acquaintances, often called a "friend of a friend", to use small talk. Other people who have short casual conversations are office employees who may not be good friends but work in the same department. Customer service representatives, waitresses, hairdressers and receptionists often make small talk with customers. If you happen to be outside when the mailman comes to your door you might make small talk with him too.

WHAT do people make small talk about?

There are certain "safe" topics that people usually make small talk about. The weather is probably the number one thing that people who do not know each other well discuss. Sometimes even friends and family members discuss the weather when they meet or start a conversation. Another topic that is generally safe is current events. As long as you are not discussing a controversial issue, such as a recent law concerning equal rights, it is usually safe to discuss the news. Sports news is a very common topic, especially if a local team or player is in a tournament or play-off or doing extremely well or badly. Entertainment news, such as a celebrity who is in town, is another good topic. If there is something that you and the other speaker has in common, that may also be acceptable to talk about. For example, if the bus is extremely full and there are no seats available you might talk about reasons why. Similarly, people in an office might casually discuss the new paint or furniture. There are also some subjects that are **not** considered acceptable when making small talk. Discussing personal information such as salaries or a recent divorce is not done between people who do not know each other well. Compliments on clothing or hair are acceptable; however, you should never say something (good or bad) about a person's body. Negative comments about another person not involved in the conversation are also not acceptable: when you do not know a person well you cannot be sure who their friends are. You do not talk about private issues either, because you do not know if you can trust the other person with your secrets or personal information. Also, it is not safe to discuss subjects that society deems controversial such as religion or politics. Lastly, it is not wise to continue talking about an issue that the other person does not seem comfortable with or interested in.

WHERE do people make small talk?

People make small talk just about anywhere, but there are certain places where it is very common. Most often, small talk occurs in places where people are waiting for something. For example, you might chat with another person who is waiting for the bus to arrive, or to the person beside you waiting to get on an aeroplane. People also make small talk in a doctor's or dentist's waiting room, or in queues at the grocery store. At the office, people make small talk in elevators or lunchrooms and even in restrooms, especially if there is a line-up. Some social events (such as a party) require small talk among guests who do not know each other very well. For example, you might talk to someone you do not know at the punch bowl, or at the poolside.

It is called "mingling" when people walk around in a social setting and talk to a variety of people.

WHEN do people make small talk?
The most common time for small talk to occur is the first time you see or meet someone on a given day. For example, if you see a co-worker in the lounge you might say hello and discuss the sports or weather. However, the next time you see each other you might just smile and say nothing. If there is very little noise, that might be an indication that it is the right time to initiate a casual conversation. You should only spark up a conversation after someone smiles and acknowledges you. Do not interrupt two people in order to discuss something unimportant such as the weather. If someone is reading a book or writing a letter at the bus stop it is not appropriate to initiate a conversation either. Another good time to make small talk is during a break in a meeting or presentation when there is nothing important going on. Finally, it is important to recognize the cue when the other person wants the conversation to stop.

WHY do people make small talk?
There are a few different reasons why people use small talk. The first, and most obvious, is to break an uncomfortable silence. Another reason, however, is simply to fill time. That is why it is so common to make small talk when you are waiting for something. Some people make small talk in order to be polite. You may not feel like chatting with anyone at a party, but it is rude to just sit in a corner by yourself. After someone introduces you to another person, you do not know anything about them, so in order to show a polite interest in getting to know them better, you have to start with some small talk.

Examples of Small Talk: Conversation Starters

Talking about the weather	• Beautiful day, isn't it? • Can you believe all of this rain we've been having? • It looks like it's going to snow. • It sure would be nice to be in Hawaii right about now. • I hear they're calling for thunderstorms all weekend. • We couldn't ask for a nicer day, could we? • How about this weather? • Did you order this sunshine?
Talking about current events	• Did you catch the news today? • Did you hear about that fire on Fourth St? • What do you think about this transit strike? • I read in the paper today that the Sears Mall is closing. • I heard on the radio today that they are finally going to start building the new bridge. • How about those Reds? Do you think they're going to win tonight?

At the office	• Looking forward to the weekend? • Have you worked here long? • I can't believe how busy/quiet we are today, can you? • Has it been a long week? • You look like you could use a cup of coffee. • What do you think of the new computers?
At a social event	• So, how do you know Justin? • Have you tried the cabbage rolls that Sandy made? • Are you enjoying yourself? • It looks like you could use another drink. • Pretty nice place, huh? • I love your dress. Can I ask where you got it?
Out for a walk	• How old's your baby? • What's your puppy's name? • The tulips are sure beautiful at this time of year, aren't they. • How do you like the new park? • Nice day to be outside, isn't it?
Waiting somewhere	• I didn't think it would be so busy today. • You look like you've got your hands full (with children or goods). • The bus must be running late today. • It looks like we are going to be here a while, huh? • I'll have to remember not to come here on Mondays. • How long have you been waiting?

Building Rapport:

Rapport is a state of harmonious understanding with another individual or group that enables greater and easier communication. In other words rapport is getting on well with another person, or group of people, by having things in common, this makes the communication process easier and usually more effective.

Sometimes rapport happens naturally, you '*hit it off*' or '*get on well*' with somebody else without having to try, this is often how friendships are built. However, rapport can also be built and developed by finding common ground, developing a bond and being empathic.

Rapport is important in both our professional and personal lives; employers are more likely to employ somebody who they believe will get on well with their current

staff. Personal relationships are easier to make and develop when there is a closer connection and understanding between the parties involved – i.e. there is greater rapport.

The first task in successful interpersonal relationships is to attempt to build rapport. Building rapport is all about matching ourselves with another person. For many, starting a conversation with a stranger is a stressful event; we can be lost for words, awkward with our body language and mannerisms. Creating rapport at the beginning of a conversation with somebody new will often make the outcome of the conversation more positive. However stressful and/or nervous you may feel the first thing you need to do is to try to relax and remain calm, by decreasing the tension in the situation communication becomes easier and rapport grows.

<u>**Break the Ice:**</u>

When meeting somebody for the first time some simple tips will help you reduce the tension in the situation enabling both parties to feel more relaxed and thus communicate more effectively:

- Use non-threatening and 'safe topics' for initial small talk. Talk about established shared experiences, the weather, how you travelled to where you are. Avoid talking too much about yourself and avoid asking direct questions about the other person.
- Listen to what the other person is saying and look for shared experiences or circumstances - this will give you more to talk about in the initial stages of communication.
- Try to inject an element of humour. Laughing together creates harmony, make a joke about yourself or the situation/circumstances you are in but avoid making jokes about other people.
- Be conscious of your body language and other non-verbal signals you are sending. Try to maintain eye contact for approximately 60% of the time. Relax and lean slightly towards them to indicate listening, mirror their body-language if appropriate.
- Show some empathy. Demonstrate that you can see the other person's point of view. Remember rapport is all about finding similarities and '*being on the same wavelength*' as somebody else - so being empathic will help to achieve this.

Make sure the other person feels included but not interrogated during initial conversations, as you may feel tense and uneasy meeting and talking to somebody new, so may they. Put the other person at ease, this will enable you to relax and conversation to take on a natural course.

Building Rapport: Establishing Bonds

Building bonds...

Rapport is the ability to enter someone else's world, to make him feel that you understand him, that you have a strong common bond – Motivational speaker Tony Robbins.

Have you ever known someone who has a knack for connecting with people? No matter who this person meets, he or she manages to create a sense of trust and understanding within a matter of minutes.

We can intuitively believe that this is a natural gift – either you can build rapport like this, or you can't. However, this isn't correct: developing rapport is a skill that anyone can learn, and then use.

And it doesn't matter what industry you're in or what position you hold – knowing how to build rapport can bring you countless opportunities. After all, when you have rapport with someone, that person wants to help you succeed!

So what is rapport? And how you can learn the skills needed to build it? We'll examine all of this, and more, in this article.

About Rapport:

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines rapport as "relation characterized by harmony, conformity, accord, or affinity."

Put simply, you have rapport with someone when there is mutual liking and trust. Once you've established rapport with a person, he or she is far more likely to be open with you and share information, buy your product, recommend you to others, or support your ideas. And when someone has established rapport with you, you're likely to do the same.

Why Build Rapport?

Building rapport is a skill that you can use anywhere.

For instance, you can use rapport to:

- Create a positive connection with new or existing team members.
- **Build good relationships** with clients or suppliers.
- Break the ice with new colleagues or with your boss when you start a new job.
- Get support for your ideas and proposals.

In short, establishing rapport with people can open doors, create opportunities, and lead to excellent relationships.

Tip:

Rapport is similar to trust, and you can often **build trust** and rapport simultaneously. However, building rapport focuses more on establishing a bond or connection.

Building Honest Rapport

Clearly, you can build rapport honestly, or you can use it cynically.

Good team working, for example, depends on good relationships. Honest rapport-building is great for developing these, and it benefits everyone.

However, if you're building rapport to sell someone something that they wouldn't otherwise want, or that will do them harm, then this is cynical and manipulative. Watch out for this type of rapport-building – you may encounter it often!

How to Build Rapport

1. Find Common Ground

Think of how comfortable you might feel if, while living thousands of miles from where you grew up, you met someone from your hometown. That sense of connectedness creates an instant rapport between two people!

When you meet someone new, do your best to find something you have in common. Use open-ended questions to discover some personal information about the person: perhaps you attended the same school or university, have the same favorite vacation spot, grew up in the same city, know the same people, or root for the same sports team.

Remember, any common ground can help establish rapport – it can even help to have an interest in someone's life or hobbies, or to share similar beliefs and values.

Tip:

It's important to be sincere here; don't make up an interest in something just to create rapport. Not only can this seem desperate; it can dent your credibility!

2. Focus on Your Appearance

How you dress is a key component of **making a great first impression** and establishing rapport with someone. Your appearance should help you connect with people; not create a barrier.

For instance, imagine you're a sales rep calling on a plant supervisor. You're dressed in a well-tailored, expensive suit. Meanwhile, the supervisor has been working out on the floor all day; he's dressed in jeans, a worn flannel shirt, and work boots. The difference in your appearance is likely to make him feel uncomfortable and perhaps even slightly resentful.

A good rule of thumb is to dress just a little bit "better" than the people you're about to meet. Whenever possible, find out about this in advance. If you arrive and see that you're overdressed, you can quickly "dress down" by taking off your jacket or tie and by rolling up your shirtsleeves.

3. Be Empathic

Empathy is about understanding other people by seeing things from their perspective, and recognizing their emotions. Once you achieve this, it's easier to get "on their level."

To be **more empathic** , develop your **emotional intelligence** so that you can understand others better. You can also use **Perceptual Positions** – a technique for seeing things from other people's perspectives.

4. Use Mirroring

Mirroring is when you adjust your own body language and spoken language so that you "reflect" that of the person you're talking to.

For example, law enforcement professionals apply the mirroring technique when interviewing witnesses, especially those who have been through a traumatic experience. They might mirror the victim's body language, and adjust the volume and tone of their voice to match the victim's.

To use mirroring:

- Carefully watch the person's **body language**, including gestures and posture. If the person is sitting down with both hands folded, then copy the person's posture. As the person grows more comfortable with you, he or she may relax and sit back: mirror this change in posture as well.
- Mirror the other person's language. If he or she uses simple, direct words, then you should too. If the person speaks in technical language, then match that style if appropriate. When you respond, you can also reiterate key words or phrases that he or she used.
- Copy the other person's speech patterns, such as vocal tone and volume. For instance, if he or she speaks softly and slowly, then lower the volume and tempo of your voice. (**Research** by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) suggests this is the most effective way to establish rapport. It's very subtle, but it makes the other person feel comfortable and, most importantly, it makes them feel that they're being understood.)

Tip 1:
While mirroring is useful in building rapport, don't match every word and gesture. Also, do this on a subtle level – being too overt can be counterproductive.
Tip 2:
Clearly, mirroring can be a very difficult skill to master. Consider using **role playing** to practice it.

5. Don't Forget About the Basics

In developing rapport with others, you should also use the tried-and-true basics of **good communication** :
- Shaking hands firmly (in cultures where this is acceptable).
- Looking people in the eye.
- Smiling.
- Holding your head up and maintaining good posture.
- Asking open-ended questions.
- Being sincere.
- Facing the other person instead of looking at your computer screen or mobile device.

These basic tenets form the foundation of great communication, and it's hard to establish good rapport without them.
Tip 1:
Although there will be times when you will need to build rapport with someone quickly, it's best done as part of a longer-term relationship.
Tip 2:
It's important to use your best judgment when applying these techniques – as we've already mentioned, using these techniques incorrectly or dishonestly can actually stop you building rapport with people.
Re-establishing Rapport
Once rapport has been lost, rebuilding it takes time.
First, confront why you lost the rapport in the first place. Be **humble** and explain honestly and simply what happened. If you need to apologize, do so.
Next, focus on ways of repairing any broken **trust** . Make an extra effort to put in extra work if you need to, and keep your word. Transparency and showing a genuine concern for the other person's needs will go a long way in rebuilding trust and reestablishing rapport.

<u>Key Points</u>
You build rapport when you develop mutual trust, friendship, and affinity with someone.
Building rapport can be incredibly beneficial to your career – it opens doors and helps establish good relationships with clients, colleagues, and team members.
To build rapport, use the following strategies.

- Find common ground.
- Focus on your appearance.
- Be empathic.
- Mirror the other person.
- Don't forget about the basics.

Building rapport is best done in the long-term. But you can use these strategies to build it quickly, if you need to.

Technical Writing Skills

Writing skills are an important part of communication. Good writing skills allow you to communicate your message with clarity and ease to a far larger audience than through face-to-face or telephone conversations.You might be called upon to write a report, plan or strategy at work; write a grant application or press release within a volunteering role; or you may fancy communicating your ideas online via a blog. And, of course, a well written CV with no spelling or grammatical mistakes is essential if you want a new job.

5.1 Types of Writing

There are four types of writing or four writing styles that are generally used. Knowing all these four different types of writing and their usages are important for any writer. A writer's style is a reflection of his personality, his unique style, his voice and his way to approach his audience and readers.

5.1.1 Expository Writing:
Expository writing is a subject-oriented writing style, in which the main focus of the author is to tell you about a given topic or subject, and leave out his personal opinions. He furnishes you with relevant facts and figures and does not include his opinions. This is one of the most common type of writing styles, which you always see in text books and usually "How – to" articles, in which the author tells you about a given subject, as how to do something. Examples of expository writing include encyclopedia entries, news reports, instruction manuals, informative essays, and research papers.

5.1.2 Descriptive writing:
Descriptive writing is a style of writing which focuses on describing a character, an event or a place in great details. It is sometimes poetic in nature in which the author is specifying the details of the event rather than just the information of that event happened. It is often poetic in nature and it describes places, people, events, situations or locations in a highly-detailed manner.

5.1.3 Persuasive Writing:

Persuasive writing, unlike 'Expository Writing', contains the opinions, biasness and justification of the author. Persuasive writing is a type of writing which contains justifications and reasons to make someone believe on the point the writer is talking about. Persuasive writing is for persuading and convincing on your point of view. It is often used in complain letters, when you provide reasons and justifications for your complaint; other copywriting texts, T.V commercials, affiliate marketing pitches etc. are all different types of persuasive writing, where author is persuading and convincing you on something he wants you to do and/or believe.Persuasive writing is equipped with reasons, arguments and justifications. Here the author takes a stand and asks you to believe his point of view.It often asks for a call or an action from the readers.

5.1.4 Narrative Writing:

Narrative writing is a type of writing in which the author places himself as the character and narrates you to the story. Novels, short stories, novellas, poetry, biographies can all fall in the narrative writing style. Simply, narrative writing is an art to describe a story. In narrative writing, a person, being a narrative, tells a story or event. It has characters and dialogues in it and based on definite and logical beginnings, intervals and endings.Narrative writing often has situations like disputes, conflicts, actions, motivational events, problems and their solutions. Narratives usually progress chronologically, and must have a clear beginning, middle and end. Short stories, novels, personal narratives, anecdotes, and biographies are all examples of narrative writing.

5.2 Importance of writing

Writing is the primary basis upon which your work, your learning, and your intellect will be judged—in college, in the workplace, and in the community. It expresses who you are as a person. Writing is portable and permanent. It makes your thinking visible. This skill helps you move easily among facts, inferences, and opinions without getting confusedand without confusing your reader. It also fosters your ability to explain a complex position to readers, and to yourself. Writing helps you refine your ideas when you give others feedback. Writing requires that you anticipate your readers' needs and also demonstrates your intellectual flexibility and maturity. You can evaluate the adequacy of your argument through this. It stimulates you to extend a line of thought beyond your first impressions or gut responses. Writing equips you with the communication and thinking skills you need to participate effectively in democracy. Finally it is an essential job skill.

5.3 Style of Writing

There are many characteristics of good writing. Five of the most important are parallel structure, conciseness, sentence variety, correct spelling and grammar, and effective paragraphing.

☐ Parallel Structure

Use parallel or consistent structure when writing sentences and paragraphs. For example, avoid mixing forms of verbs in the same sentence. If you use the -ing form of a verb in a list,

use the -ing form for all verbs in the list. Similarly, avoid switching from active to passive voice in a series of clauses. When you read your sentences out loud, you should hear a rhythm being repeated--if something breaks the rhythm, check to see if you need to improve the sentence's parallel structure. The following sentences illustrate this concept:

Poor example: Mrs. Jones is trustworthy, dependable, and *she pays close attention to details*.
Improved: Mrs. Jones is trustworthy, dependable, and *detail-oriented*.
Poor example: Please keep track of your hours, turn in your timesheet, *and keeping a copy for your records is also important*.
Improved: Please keep track of your hours, turn in your timesheet, *and keep a copy for your records*.

☐ Conciseness

Sentences should be written concisely, since needless words and fillers distract readers from your message.

1. **Eliminate opening fillers such *as there are, I would like to bring to your attention,* and *this is to inform you that*.**
Too wordy sentence: This is to inform you that health insurance rates will increase effective next month.
Improved: Health insurance rates will increase effective next month.

2. **Eliminate wordy phrases from your writing.**
Wordy Phrases Concise Substitutes
due to the fact that because
regardless of the fact that although
in regard to about
in the near future soon

3. **Don't turn verbs into wordy phrases.**
Wordy Phrases Concise Verbs
give consideration to consider
give a recommendation recommend

conduct a discussion discuss

4. Eliminate redundancies. The two words in the left column have the same meaning, so only one word is needed.

Redundancies Concise Substitutes

perfectly clear clear

exactly identical identical

dollar amount amount

☐ Sentence Variety

Effective writers add interest to their writing by using all four types of sentences-simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex.A sentence is classified according to the number of independent and/or dependent clauses it contains. An independent clause is a group of words with a subject and verb that could stand alone as a complete sentence. Dependent clauses can't stand on their own as complete sentences, because their meaning depends upon the independent clause in the sentence.

A **simple sentence** such as *John loaded the software* contains just one independent clause. A **compound sentence** contains two independent clauses*: John loaded the software, and Mary installed the hard drive.* A **complex sentence** contains both an independent clause and a dependent clause. For example, *After the installation was complete, the computer was rebooted* is an example of a compound sentence. Finally, a **compound-complex sentence** contains at least two independent clauses and one dependent clause. Because they are so long, compound-complex sentences should be used sparingly. *After the installation was complete, the computer was rebooted, and the IT department successfully completed the upgrade* is an example of a compound-complex sentence.

John loaded the software, and Mary installed the hard drive. John went to lunch after finishing the job, but Mary skipped lunch to keep working. John started a new project after lunch, and Mary finished installing the hard drive later that afternoon.

Notice how much more interesting the paragraph becomes when we vary the sentence types: John loaded the software, while Mary installed the hard drive. John finished and went to lunch, but Mary kept working, finally finishing the hard drive installation later that afternoon. John started a new project after lunch.

☐ Correct Spelling and Grammar

Strong grammatical skills lend credibility to your writing. They also enhance the readability of your documents, since misspelled words and grammatical errors distract readers from your message.

Run-On Sentences are independent clauses joined together without punctuation or a coordinating conjunction. *The manager hired Rahul for the position Ashok was transferred to the main office* is an example of a run-on sentence.

Sentence Fragments are incomplete sentences. To be complete, a sentence must have a subject and a verb, and it must make sense. *Because Human Resources hired twenty people* is an example of a sentence fragment. Although it contains a subject and a verb, the sentence doesn't make sense since the word *because* indicates the sentence is dependent on another clause to complete its meaning. The following sentence would be considered complete: *Because Human Resources hired twenty people, new office furniture had to be ordered.*

Read your document twice-once for grammar, and once for word meanings, comprehension, and flow. Reading the document out loud can also help you to identify errors and evaluate the tone of your document.

 Effective Paragraphing

1. **Cover one subject per paragraph**, and begin each paragraph with a topic sentence stating what the subject is about. Focusing on just one clearly stated subject in each paragraph helps readers understand your message.

2. **Link ideas together by repeating words in sentences**. For example, look at both of these paragraphs, and see how repeating the words *campaign* and *cost* in the second paragraph makes the paragraph more coherent by linking ideas together.

Example:

Without repeating words: John suggested an aggressive marketing campaign for the new product. Direct mailings will be sent to all households in the target market, and this will be very costly. Additional funds were set aside for marketing this year by the corporate office.

With repeating words: John suggested an aggressive marketing campaign for the new product. *The campaign* will involve direct mailings to all households in the target market, and will be very costly. *The high cost* will be partially offset by the additional funds set aside for marketing this year by the corporate office.

5.4 Writing Process

Writing is a process that is made up of several different elements: Pre-Writing, Organization, Writing, Revising, and Editing. However, these different elements overlap with one another; they aren't separate stages. Successful writers are constantly going through these different elements. Skillful writers continually remind themselves of this process, and they constantly monitor their writing, re-engaging themselves with their work. Every writer follows his or her own writing process. Often the process is a routine that comes naturally and is not a step-by-step guide to which writers refer. Being conscious of your own writing process is especially helpful when you find yourself struggling with a particularly tricky piece. Here are five steps towards creating or identifying your personal writing process.

☐ Prewriting

Find Your Idea Ideas are all around you. You might draw inspiration from a routine, an everyday situation or a childhood memory. Alternatively, keep a notebook specifically devoted to catching your ideas as they come to you. Your own imagination is the only limit to finding your source of inspiration.

Build on Your Idea Two of the most popular methods of fleshing out your idea are free writing and brainstorming. Free writing means writing every idea that comes into your head. Do not stop to edit your mistakes, just let the ideas flow. Or, try brainstorming. If you're on a computer, try a manual process first to help you visualize your narrative: write your idea in the center of the page and work outwards in all of the different directions you can take your story.

Plan and Structure Piecingthe puzzle together comes next. It's time to sort through your ideas and choose which ones you will use to form your story. Make sure you keep your notes even after your book is published – there may be the seeds for your next story as well.

☐ Writing

Now you have your plan and you're ready to start writing. Remember, this is your first rough draft. Forget about word count and grammar. Don't worry if you stray off topic in places; even the greatest writers produce multiple drafts before they produce their finished manuscript. Think of this stage as a free writing exercise, just with more direction. Identify the best time and location to write and eliminate potential distractions. Make writing a regular part of your day.

☐ Revision

Your story can change a great deal during this stage. When revising their work, many writers naturally adopt the A.R.R.R. approach:

Add: Have you given your readers all the information they need to make sense of your topic? If not, go back to your draft that you kept for additional information and any additional details.

Rearrange: Consider the flow, pacing and sequencing of your topic. Would the sequence be better served if some of the events occur in a different order?

Remove: After making additions to your topic, how is your word count now? Are your readers experiencing information overload? You may need to eliminate passages that don't quite fit.

Replace: The most effective way to revise your work is to ask for a second opinion. Do you need more vivid details to help clarify your work? Is one scene contradicting another? Ask friends or fellow writers to take a look and give you feedback, and if something isn't working rewrite it and replace it.

☐ **Editing**

It's time to fine tune your manuscript line by line. Check for repetition, clarity, grammar, spelling and punctuation. Editing is an extremely detailed process and its best when performed by a professional.

Review questions:

1. What does the term 'communication' imply? Why is effective communication vital in today's world?

2. Counseling, instructing, giving orders, persuasion are some of the purposes of communication . Discuss.

3. What are barriers to communication? Do you remember any case of poor communication? Specify what went wrong in the case that resulted in poor communication.

4. How does a receiver influence the sender's communication skills? Substantiate your answer with appropriate examples. Whether an organization is small or large , it is communication that binds the organization together. Discuss in detail the formal flow of communication in an organization in the light of the above statement.

Paragraph Writing for Technical

Paragraph Writing for Technical: Definition

The etymon of the word paragraph is basically rooted in the Greek language, composed of two fragments, viz., paragraphos meaning "written alongside" and graphein meaning "to write" respectively. In the Middle Ages, it carried the connotation of a sign U,and, now, it has undergone a considerable semantic change and has become a paramount segment of any kind of writing. According to J.E. Morris, "A paragraph is a unit of coherent ideas studded in various sentences.""* Theodore A. Sherman says, "The function of a paragraph is to group together sentences that concern the same topic and combine to form a thought unit."[4] "A paragraph should embody," write Charles William Strong and Donald Edison, "one stage of the development of an idea. The standard paragraph begins with a topic sentence, a sentence that tells the reader what idea is to be developed in the paragraph. The idea is developed by logical division into its parts, by definition, by analogy with similar ideas, by comparison or contrast with other ideas, or by giving concrete examples of the idea.

Thus a paragraph is a combination of many sentences in the form of an independent unit, pregnant with meaning, having to borrow a sentence from Aristotle, the old Greek philosopher, though spoken of in respect of a tragedy, "a beginning, middle, and an end." In technical writing, which is now chiefly objective and which has very little to do with the fond likes or the visceral dislikes or the hubiristic arrogance of a writer, paragraph writing is of vital significance. However, where sentences alone in themselves form paragraph, objectivity is in itself bound to emerge. But such independent single sentence paragraphs rarely occur.

In any form of concerted and sustained writing such as essay, treatise, thesis, reports, etc., every paragraph epitomises a minutia of a big idea or complex theory. Every paragraph stands as a cog in a vast machine and helps the reader understand the complete idea bit by bit. Generally speaking, a paragraph has three inseparable constituents; first, a topic sentence that stands as a minor for the whole idea in the paragraph; second, connectives, which

create proper subordination of ideas and clauses; and third, development, which includes the facts in a logical manner.

Methods: Inductive, Deductive, Chronological, Spatial, Linear and Interrupted

A technical writer is naturally expected to have much artifice and expertise to write effectively. Proper paragraphing is one of the devices which help him achieve this goal. Some quite feasible and well-known methods frequently used to organise a paragraph on logical and scientific lines run as under:

- Chronological method
- Spatial method
- Inductive method
- Deductive method
- Linear method
- Interrupted method

Chronological method implies exposition or organization of a paragraph in such a way as tells the historical background of an idea; spatial method stands for a detailed description of some idea; inductive method proceeds from a particular case to a general conclusion; deductive method tells about an object starting from a general proposition to its particular consequences; linear method deals with a case in a family-root-pattern; and, interrupted method skips over a detailed presentation of the past and exclusively deals with the synchronizing event.

Diction, Syntax, Tangibles, Connectors for Argumentative and Expository Writing: While organising a paragraph, proper care is also to be taken of other aspects, which not only embellish it but also make it meaningful and logical. Punctuation and syntax, diction, tangibles, connectors and classification are such essential aspects of a sentence as require an assiduous practice to write a paragraph. Good punctuation is vital to all good writing ; and for technical writing, it is paramountry needed, for it classifies the relationship between ideas is intimately linked with the use of connectives—conjunctions, prepositions, and other segments that closely bear this proximity, as has been made sufficiently clear in the preceding chapter. Syntax deals with the structure of sentences in to simple, compound and complex pattern, parallel structure, introductory elements, restrictive modifiers, dangling modifiers (modifying wrong words), agreement and voice, already dealt with in foregoing account. For diction, a technical writer should inevitably follow the Fowlerian prescription, viz., *CFS:*

c—prefer concrete to abstract word;

f—prefer familiar to the far-fetched word;

s—prefer short to the long word;

s—prefer single to the indirect expression. But the above Fowlerian prescription is not sufficient to write effectively. In addition to the above, one has to know the following formula also:

C J' W wherein

c—avoid cliches (dead words);

j—avoid jargons;

j—avoid jingles (tongue twisters);

w—avoid wrong words. Tangibles are composed of the following:

O C P E wherein

o—objectivity

c—coherence;

p—pace;

e—emphasis. For achieving the desired effect of tangibles, constant practice of writing is needed on the part of the students.

In a chiselled and poised type of technical and scientific writing, connectors serve as an embellishing device. They become of different kinds as and when they are used in different situations. However, in their normal position, such connectors as—namely, specially, haplessly, eventually etc., are **illustrative connectors**; while, whereas etc., are **contrastive connectors**; hence, therefore, thereby etc., are **consequential connectors**; likewise, similarly etc., are **connectors of contrast**; equally, indeed, in fact etc., are **emphatic connectors**; in spite of, after all, yet, however, nevertheless etc., are **connectors of contrast**; shortly, presently, permanently etc., are **connectors of time**; and firstly, secondly, thirdly, finally etc., are **enumerative connectors**. Students are advised to use them accurately and meaningfully.

Dissertation/Thesis/scientific Article/Technical Paper

Dissertation/Thesis/scientific Article/Technical Paper:

A lot of problem is faced by the students while completing or writing their dissertation/ thesis and other assignments. Even at the tertiary level, a significant thing one may note is that very few students pay proper attention to the obvious techniques of thesis and assignment writing. Essays, articles, reports, proposals, tutorial papers, dissertations and theses are written not only by the students but also by the professionals. There may be a difference of opinion regarding the level of technical style suitable for thesis and assignment writing. But there cannot be any difference of opinion regarding the fundamental techniques or mechanics of thesis and assignment writing. However, due observance of the fundamental techniques or mechanics such as planning, format, use of quotations, footnotes, tables and figures, referencing, appendices, editing, revaluation and final draft are some of the technical things that are essentially needed for thesis and assignment writing. A technical report or essay, thesis or dissertation, even excluding the variety of style or diction, cannot be said to be of satisfactory kind, if the above-cited fundamentals are not given due weightagc. In the words of Prof. Theodore A. Sherman, "It would be foolish to pretend that there is an easy way of organizing a complex mass of facts and uleas, and equally foolish to maintain that such a result may he accomplished by only one method.

Assignments and theses writing are the two distinct kinds of writing which entail specific techniques. Assignments may include essay, paragraph, tutorial paper, abstract, report, proposal etc., and for each of them, techniques vary from the techniques of thesis and dissertation writing. Whereas essay writing needs more detailed treatment than that of a paragraph, tutorial paper, abstract or proposal, report writing needs entirely a different technical and scientific setting. Likewise a dissertation is less detailed a treatment than a thesis writing; and, hence each of them requires a different kind of technical treatment. In a word, assignments and theses writing may require different types of technical formalities of format and set-up, yet there are some fundamentals common to all. These basic or fundamental facts create coherence and organic unity both in an assignment and in a thesis.

PLANNING THE THESIS/DISSERTATION/ARTICLE/PAPER/ASSIGNMENT

The first problem to be encountered with during the course of preparing an assignment is the planning of the assignment. For this, one has to learn the use of dictionary and then he has also to weigh his problem through all these stages:

- **Analyse and Compare**—Consider the pros and cons of the problem; its inter relationship with other problems; and then compare it with other similar objects or problems.
- **Contrast and Define**—The second stage is of making a subtle contrast of your problem or topic or essay with others and then try to define it.
- **Describe and Discuss**—Now give an account of the problem and discuss it in proportioned details, making specific paragraphs.
- **Enumerate and Evaluate**—List other similar problems and then try to make a fair and untraced judgment of your own.
- **Examine and Illustrate**—Examine critically the problem and then try to illustrate it. Draw a picture, or prepare a table or supply figures wherever necessary.

Limiting the Problem

An equally important point to remember while preparing an assignment is to limit the problem. According to Jonathan Anderson *(et. al.), "The mistake of casting the net wide is an understandable one because a common reaction when starting an assignment is to wonder how one is possibly going to write the required number of words.* So one has to limit one's problem or assignment taking into consideration all the main points relevant and logical. But it does not mean that the points should unnecessarily be reduced. For instance, if you are writing about *'Space Technology'or 'the Armament Race',* you will have to decide, in the very beginning, as to how many words you are going to write. These topics are so engaging and controversial that you can write a lot about them. But it would be quite prudent on your part to limit your problems only to a few points quite relevant to your discussion. The following may he your guide-points:

'Space Technology' can be outlined as under:

- What do we mean by space technology?
- Its past historical development.
- Its present status.
- Space technology and human welfare
- Space technology and world peace

Likewise *the Armament Race'* can be outlined as under:

- What do we mean by the Armament Race?
- The origin and necessity of the Armament Race
- The role of the super powers
- The role of the philanthropist
- The future of humanity

Reading Skills

4.1 Purpose of Reading

Reading is purposeful. The way you read something will depend on your purpose. You read different texts in different ways. In everyday life, you usually know why you are reading, you have a question and you read to find the answer. You usually know your way around your favourite newspaper, so if you want to know the sports results, you go straight to the correct page, or if you want to know what is on television tonight, you go straight to the television page.

You do not start on the first page. When you read a novel, it is different. You start at the beginning and slowly move towards the end. In academic reading, you need to be flexible when you read - you may need to read quickly to find relevant sections, then read carefully when you have found what you want. General efficient reading strategies such as scanning to find the book or chapter, skimming to get the gist and careful reading of important passages are necessary as well as learning about how texts are structured in your subject.

According to the new concept, reading is a complex, active process of constructing meaning — not skill application.[3]

The act of constructing meaning is:

- Interactive — it involves not just the reader but also the text and the context in which reading takes place[4]
- Strategic — readers have purposes for their reading and use a variety of strategies and skills as they construct meaning[5]
- Adaptable — readers change the strategies they use as they read different kinds of text or as they read for different purposes[6]

Reading Comprehension Strategies

1. **Activating and Using Background Knowledge**

This strategy requires readers to activate their background knowledge and to use that knowledge to help them understand what they are reading. Background knowledge is made up of a person's experiences with the world (including what he or she has read), along with his or her concepts for how written text works, including word identification, print concepts, word meaning, and how text is organized. Research has established that readers' existing knowledge is critical in determining their ability to comprehend what they read.[2]

One of the most important contributions made by cognitive scientists to the understanding of how comprehension works is **schema theory**.[3] This theory is based on how people organize and activate their knowledge.

According to **schema theory**, as people learn about the world, they develop a large network of knowledge structures, or schemas, with each schema connected to many others. These schemas grow and change as a person acquires new information through experience and reading. For example, a very young child's schema for dog might contain only her or his understanding of the family pet — something white, furry, and fun to play with. As the child gains more experiences with a variety of dogs in a variety of settings, the dog schema will expand and be refined. It may connect to other schema — types of dogs; colors of dogs; foods dogs eat; places where dogs stay when the family is on vacation; dangerous dogs; who veterinarians are; and locations of important dog shows.

When they applied schema theory to reading comprehension, cognitive scientists found that good readers constantly connect their background knowledge to the new knowledge they encounter in a text. In fact, they appear to activate a schema as soon they begin to read. The initial schema then activates others, thus directly affecting how readers understand and react to a text.[4]

Schemas that are related to text organization are especially important to comprehension. Having knowledge of a text's organization improves students' understanding of that text.[5]

2. **Generating and Asking Questions**

This strategy involves readers asking themselves questions throughout the reading of a text. The ability of readers to ask themselves relevant questions as they read is especially valuable in helping them to integrate information, identify main ideas, and summarize information. Asking the right questions allows good readers to focus on the most important information in a text.[6]

Generating good questions may also lead readers to focus on problems with comprehension and to take actions to deal with these problems.[7]

3. Making Inferences

This strategy requires readers to evaluate or draw conclusions from information in a text. Authors do not always provide complete descriptions of, or explicit information about a topic, setting, character, or event. However, they often provide clues that readers can use to "read between the lines"-by making inferences that combine information in the text with their background knowledge.

It has been shown that when readers are taught how to make inferences, they improve their abilities to construct meaning. Indeed, research indicates that the ability to make inferences is crucial to successful reading.[8]

4. Predicting

This strategy involves the ability of readers to get meaning from a text by making informed predictions. Good readers use predicting as a way to connect their existing knowledge to new information from a text to get meaning from what they read.[9] Before reading, they may use what they know about an author to predict what a text will be about. The title of a text may trigger memories of texts with similar content, allowing them to predict the content of the new text. During reading, good readers may make predictions about what is going to happen next, or what ideas or evidence the author will present to support an argument. They tend to evaluate these predictions continuously, and revise any prediction that is not confirmed by the reading.

5. Summarizing

This strategy involves the ability of readers to pull together, or synthesize information in a text so as to explain in their own words what the text is about. Summarizing is an important strategy because it can enable readers to recall text quickly. It also can make readers more aware of text organization, of what is important in a text and of how ideas are related.[10]

Effective summarizing of expository text may involve such things as condensing the steps in a scientific process, the stages of development of an art movement, or the episodes that led to some major historical event.

Effective summarizing of narrative text can involve such things as connecting and synthesizing events in a story line or identifying the factors that motivate a character's actions and behavior.

6. Visualizing

This involves the ability of readers to make mental images of a text as a way to understand processes or events they encounter during reading. This ability can be an indication that a reader understands a text. Some research suggests that readers who visualize as they read are better able to recall what they have read than are those who do not visualize.[11]

Visualizing is especially valuable when it is applied to narrative texts. In reading narratives, readers often can develop a clear understanding of what is happening by visualizing the setting, characters, or actions in the plot. However, visualizing can also be applied to the reading of expository texts, with readers visualizing steps in a process or stages in an event or creating an image to help them remember some abstract concept or important name.[12]

7. Comprehension Monitoring

This involves the ability of readers to know when they understand what they read, when they do not understand, and to use appropriate strategies to improve their understanding when it is blocked.[13] Comprehension monitoring is a form of metacognition. Good readers are aware of and monitor their thought processes as they read. In contrast, poor readers "just do it."[14]

The strategies employed by good readers to improve understanding are called "repair" or "fix-up" strategies. Specific repair strategies include rereading, reading ahead, clarifying words by looking them up in a dictionary or glossary, or asking someone for help.[15]

In general, good readers use a variety of strategies such as the ones just discussed to construct meaning as they read. However, not all good readers use the same strategies; good readers tend to develop and practice those strategies that are most useful to them. Further, good readers are flexible in their strategy use: they switch from strategy to strategy as they read; they use different strategies with different kinds of texts.

The point is, because good readers have conscious control of their strategy use, they are able to make decisions about which strategies to use and when to use them. Most good readers do this with little or no explicit strategy instruction. Most students, however, can benefit greatly from organized, explicit instruction that teaches them to use specific strategies for understanding text. The good news is that specific comprehension strategies can be taught and learned - and that their deliberate use by readers improves comprehension.[16]

The Behaviours of a Good Reader

1 Reading aloud is about being able to say words without making mistakes.

2 I always read from the start of the book to the end.

3 I can hear different voices when characters are talking.

4 I usually read in my head.

5 I can create pictures in my head of the characters, the setting and the action.

6 If I don't understand a word I try to guess what it might mean.

7 When I read, it sometimes makes me change my mind about something.

8 Sometimes I just flick through a book if I am looking for something special.

9 When I read, I ask myself questions about the text.

10 If I don't understand something I just keep on reading.

11 I often wonder what might happen next.

12 Sometimes I start reading from the back of the book.

A Reader will:

✔ choose to read when given a choice of activities

✔ listen to stories with focus

✔ use different strategies to understand text

✔ avoid distractions

✔ exchange ideas and interpretations with other readers

✔ reflect upon their own reading habits

✔ find it difficult to analyse the strategies they use because the strategies used to comprehend meaning have been practised regularly and rigorously until they are automatic

✔ If they don't understand: re-read; identify the problem; find out.

Using Context Clues in Reading

(Below are suggestions of strategies pupils may use to access text and gain more of an understanding of what they read)

a) Read the word again

b) Look at the start sound/letter

c) Look at the shape of the word

d) Read the illustrations around the text
e) Read to the end of the sentence
f) Read to the end of the paragraph
g) Break up the word
h) Sound it out
i) Chop into syllables
j) Look at the end of the word
k) Say out loud what you think it is
l) Think of a word family
m) Look for smaller words inside the word
n) Look at the length of the word
o) Look at the title of the text
p) Look at the headings in the text
q) Look at how the text is set out
r) Look at the features of the text
s) Cover parts of the word
t) Does it remind you of another word/text/etc?
u) Does it have many long descriptive sentences or short, focussed sentences?
v) Chunk text to break up the reading or to re- read to ensure greater understanding
w) Makes notes as you go (could be something you think is important/difficult vocabulary)

Strategies for Reading Comprehension: Narrative Text
Narrative text tells a story, either a true story or a fictional story. There are a number of strategies that will help students understand narrative text.

1. **Story Maps**

Diagram the *story grammar* of the text to raise awareness of the elements the author uses to construct the story. Story grammar includes:

- **Setting:** When and where the story takes place (which can change over the course of the story).

- **Characters:** The people or animals in the story, including the protagonist (main character), whose motivations and actions drive the story.
- **Plot:** The story line, which typically includes one or more problems or conflicts that the protagonist must address and ultimately resolve.
- **Theme:** The overriding lesson or main idea that the author wants readers to glean from the story. It could be explicitly stated as in Aesop's Fables or inferred by the reader (more common).

2. Retelling

Asking students to retell a story in their own words forces them to analyze the content to determine what is important. Teachers can encourage students to go beyond literally recounting the story to drawing their own conclusions about it.

3. Prediction

Teachers can ask readers to make a prediction about a story based on the title and any other clues that are available, such as illustrations. Teachers can later ask students to find text that supports or contradicts their predictions.

4. Answering Comprehension Questions

Asking students different types of questions requires that they find the answers in different ways, for example, by finding literal answers in the text itself or by drawing on prior knowledge and then inferring answers based on clues in the text.

Strategies for Reading Comprehension: Expository Text

Expository text explains facts and concepts in order to inform, persuade, or explain.

5. The Structure of Expository Text

Expository text is typically structured with visual cues such as headings and subheadings that provide clear cues as to the structure of the information. The first sentence in a paragraph is also typically a topic sentence that clearly states what the paragraph is about.

Expository text also often uses one of five common text structures as an organizing principle:

- Cause and effect
- Problem and solution
- Compare and contrast
- Description
- Time order (sequence of events, actions, or steps)

Teaching these structures can help students recognize relationships between ideas and the overall intent of the text.

6. Main Idea/Summarization

A summary briefly captures the main idea of the text and the key details that support the main idea. Students must understand the text in order to write a good summary that is more than a repetition of the text itself.

K-W-L

There are three steps in the K-W-L process (Ogle, 1986):

1. What I **K**now: Before students read the text, ask them as a group to identify what they already know about the topic. Students write this list in the "K" column of their K-W-L forms.

2. What I **W**ant to Know: Ask students to write questions about what they want to learn from reading the text in the "W" column of their K-W-L forms. For example, students may wonder if some of the "facts" offered in the "K" column are true.
3. What I **L**earned: As they read the text, students should look for answers to the questions listed in the "W" column and write their answers in the "L" column along with anything else they learn.

After all of the students have read the text, the teacher leads a discussion of the questions and answers.

Graphic Organizers

Graphic organizers provide visual representations of the concepts in expository text. Representing ideas and relationships graphically can help students understand and remember them. Examples of graphic organizers are:

Tree diagrams that represent categories and hierarchies

Tables that compare and contrast data

Time-driven diagrams that represent the order of events

Flowcharts that represent the steps of a process

4.2 Techniques for good comprehension

4.2.1 Skimming and Scanning

Skimming is used to quickly identify the main ideas of a text. When you read the newspaper, you're probably not reading it word-by-word, instead you're scanning the text. Skimming is done at a speed three to four times faster than normal reading. People often skim when they have lots of material to read in a limited amount of time. Use skimming when you want to see if an article may be of interest in your research.

There are many strategies that can be used when skimming. Some people read the first and last paragraphs using headings, summarizes and other organizers as they move down the page or screen. You might read the title, subtitles, subheading, and illustrations. Consider reading the first sentence of each paragraph. This technique is useful when you're seeking specific information rather than reading for comprehension. Skimming works well to find dates, names, and places. It might be used to review graphs, tables, and charts.

Scanning is a technique you often use when looking up a word in the telephone book or dictionary. You search for key words or ideas. In most cases, you know what you're looking for, so you're concentrating on finding a particular answer. Scanning involves moving your eyes quickly down the page seeking specific words and phrases. Scanning is also used when you first find a resource to determine whether it will answer your questions. Once you've scanned the document, you might go back and skim it.

When scanning, look for the author's use of organizers such as numbers, letters, steps, or the words, first, second, or next. Look for words that are bold faced, italics, or in a different font size, style, or color. Sometimes the author will put key ideas in the margin.

4.2.2 Structure of Text

The term "text structure" refers to how information is organized in a passage. The structure of a text can change multiple times in a work and even within a paragraph. Readers are often required

to identify text structures on state reading tests. Therefore, it is important that they are given exposure to the various patterns of organization. There are seven commonly used patterns of organization involved in the structure of text. They are **Cause and Effect, Chronological, Compare and Contrast, Order of Importance, Problem and Solution, Sequence and Process and Descriptive.**

<u>The National Reading Panel</u>, using decades of research has identified five critical areas of reading instruction:
- **Phonemic Awareness**
- **Phonics**
- **Fluency**
- **<u>Vocabulary</u>**
- **Comprehension**

What Is Phonemic Awareness?
Phonemic awareness is the ability to focus on and manipulate individual phonemes in spoken words. In linguistics, a phoneme is the smallest unit of speech that distinguishes one word element from another. All words are made up of a sequence of individual sounds called phonemes. Phonemic awareness is a subset of the broader category of phonological awareness, which is one's conscious awareness of and ability to "play with" the sound structures in oral language.
Good readers are remarkable at manipulating the sounds in words with automaticity. This is what Dr. David Kilpatrick calls "phoneme proficiency." When students get skilled and automatic with phoneme manipulation, it allows them to do two things remarkably well:
- Teach themselves new words; and
- Anchor words into their sight word memory (orthographic lexicon) for effortless retrieval

Did you know, that there are six layers of phonemic awareness: phoneme isolation, blending, segmenting, addition, deletion, and substitution? Did you also know, that you can improve your students' ability to read unfamiliar words without showing them a single printed letter? Read our blog, <u>"The Six Layers of Phonemic Awareness: Improve Students' Reading Using Their Ears."</u>

What Is Phonics?
Phonics is the study of the systematic relationship between the sounds we hear in words and the letters that spell them, or to say it more technically, the systematic relationships between phonemes and graphemes. Phonics teaches the alphabetic principle, which is the relationships between letters, and spoken language sounds. When children understand the alphabetic principle, they understand that spoken words are composed of individual sounds and that letters represent those sounds. Reading development is dependent on an understanding of the alphabetic principle. This "understanding" allows children to apply these sound-spelling relationships to both familiar and unfamiliar words. It's crucial for orthographic mapping and word-level fluency. Understanding phonics allows students to "decode." Decoding is the act of sounding out words using phonics and the ability to apply knowledge of letter-sound relationships, and letter patterns so that you can correctly pronounce written words. Successful decoding occurs when a student uses phonics concepts to accurately read a word.

Did you know, that the sound /k/ can be spelled as c, k, ck, or ch? That's phonics! Phonics includes concepts such as phonemes, graphemes, short & long vowel sounds, segmenting and blending phonemes, the six syllables types including closed and open syllables, digraphs, trigraphs, 2-sound blends, vowel-consonant-e (VCE), syllabication, and so much more. **Educators, to learn more about phonics and the alphabetic principle, join us on a complimentary seat for our Science of Reading Virtual Workshop.>>**

What Is Fluency?
Fluency is the ability to read with speed, accuracy, and proper expression. When students cannot recognize words accurately and automatically, fluency suffers, and in turn, reading comprehension is often compromised. Fluent readers read with automaticity, without struggling to decode each word. When students read with 98% accuracy their fluency and confidence increase. This results in higher reading engagement and better comprehension.
Did you know, that learning to decode and read accurately is essential to reading fluently? Once a student learns to decode and has a strong foundation in phonemic awareness and phonics, they can begin to practice fluency? Then once a student can decode, they can build words into their sight word memory and store them for accurate and effortless recognition. This is called orthographic mapping. The subskills that drive efficient orthographic mapping are phoneme proficiency, automatic phoneme-grapheme recognition, and frequent and distributed practice.

What Is Vocabulary?
Reading Vocabulary is all the words that a student needs to recognize and understand when reading, and it is a part of a complex cognitive process of acquisition. There are three types of vocabulary words:
- Tier 1 Vocabulary Words - These are basic words that are used by most students in everyday conversation like cat, dog, chair, teacher, etc...
- Tier 2 Vocabulary Words - These are more complex contextual words that students encounter in text and that often need direct instruction like adequate, adjacent, ambiguous, and assimilate.
- Tier 3 Vocabulary Words - These are genre, subject, or domain-specific, low-frequency words. For example, in mathematics, words like numerator, quadrilateral, quartile, rhombus, and trapezoid are Tier 3 words.

Did you know, that reading comprehension is reliant on knowing 98% of the words in the text? Limited vocabulary plays a huge role in poor reading comprehension. Unfortunately, 64% of students are locked into a cycle of reading failure. Building a strong vocabulary is an essential component of ensuring reading comprehension, as well as verbal and auditory fluency.

What Is Comprehension?
Comprehension is the understanding and interpretation of what is read. It is a complex neurological process that allows readers to understand what they are reading. There are five types of comprehension:
- Lexical comprehension is the understanding of key vocabulary in the text.
- Literal comprehension is finding meaning as you read the text by asking questions like who, what, where, and when.
- Interpretative comprehension is inferring meaning in the text by asking what if, why, and how questions.

- Applied comprehension is relating the text to a student's existing opinion or knowledge, and then asking them to support their opinions logically.
- Affective comprehension is the ability to understand the various aspects of the plot, motive, and characters in the story.

Comprehension is the whole point of reading, but without the solid foundations of instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary it is incredibly difficult to achieve strong comprehension.

Did you know, that to be able to accurately comprehend written material, students must first be able to decode what they read, understand the vocabulary of what they are reading, and then make connections and think critically about what they have read.

Kilpatrick, D. A. (2016). Equipped for reading success: A comprehensive, step-by-step program for developing phonemic awareness and fluent word recognition. Syracuse: Casey & Kirsch. https://www.equippedforreadingsuccess.com/
National Reading Panel. A Closer Look at the Five Essential Components of Effective Reading Instruction: A Review of Scientifically Based Reading Research for Teachers. US Dept of Ed, 2004 Learning Point Associates,
2004 https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED512569.pdf

4.2.3 Structure of Paragraph
A paragraph consists of several sentences that are grouped together. This group of sentences together discussesone main subject. Paragraphs have three principal parts. These three parts are the topic sentence, body sentences, and the concluding sentence. We will also talk briefly about details in paragraphs.

A topic sentence usually comes at the beginning of a paragraph. It is usually the first sentence in a formal academic paragraph. Not only is a topic sentence the first sentence of a paragraph, but, more importantly, it is the most general sentence in a paragraph. What does "most general" mean? It means that there are not many details in the sentence, but that the sentence introduces an overall idea that you want to discuss later in the paragraph. The second and third sentences are called supporting sentences. They are called "supporting" because they "support," or explain, the idea expressed in the topic sentence. Of course, paragraphs often have more than two supporting ideas. In formal paragraphs you will sometimes see a sentence at the end of the paragraph which summarizes the information that has been presented. This is the concluding sentence. You can think of a concluding sentence as a sort of topic sentence in reverse.

☐ **Topic Sentence:** states the topic and your view about the topic

☐ **Supporting Sentences:** provide support for your topic sentences

☐ **Concluding Sentence:** brings the paragraph to a close

Benefits of Exercise
Topic Sentence
Contrary to what many out of shape people may think, exercise is not a waste of time.
Supporting Point 1
First of all, exercise conditions and strengthens the body's most important muscle, the heart. A stronger heart provides increased energy and stamina.
Supporting Point 2
Exercise also changes the way people look. Muscle tone develops and posture improves as the body becomes stronger.
Supporting Point 3
When people look better and feel better, their self-esteem increases and they feel more confident.
Supporting Point 4
Finally, the fitness gained through exercise helps fight off illness and disease.
Concluding Sentence

Exercise is not just for kids and athletes. Following a regular exercise routine pays off, both physically and mentally.

4.2.4 Essentials of effective Reading

Reading is an astoundingly complex cognitive process. While we often think of reading as one singular act, our brains are actually engaging in a number of tasks simultaneously each time we sit down with a book. There are five aspects to the process of reading: phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, reading comprehension and fluency. These five aspects work together to create the reading experience.

Phonics

Phonics is the connection between sounds and letter symbols. It is also the combination of these sound-symbol connections to create words. If you think about it, letters are arbitrary. There is nothing innately bed-like about the written word "bed". It is simply the collection of letters and corresponding sounds that we agree constitute the word "bed".

Phonemic Awareness

Phonemic awareness is closely related to phonics because both involve the connection between sounds and words. While phonics is the connection between sounds and letters, phonemic awareness is the understanding that words are created from phonemes (small units of sound in language). These may seem like the same thing, but there is a subtle difference in the two. Phonics is used only in written language because it involves letters. Phonemes are sounds only. While they can be represented using letters, they can also be simply the auditory sounds of words. Phonemes are most often learned before a child begins to read because they are centered on the sounds of language rather than written words.

Vocabulary

In order to read words we must first know them. Imagine how frustrating and fruitless it would be to read this article if all of the words were unfamiliar to you. Vocabulary development is an ongoing process that continues throughout one's "reading life". Knowing the exact meaning of the word in a text always helps to understand the entire paragraph easily. Context clues provide another method for discovering new words. Context clues are the "hints" contained in a text that help a reader figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Context clues are basically any item in the text that points to the definition of a new word.

Fluency

Fluency is a reader's ability to read with speed, accuracy and expression. Thus it requires the reader to combine and use multiple reading skills at the same time. While fluency is most often measured through oral readings, good readers also exhibit this skill when they are reading silently. Fluency is intimately tied to comprehension. A reader must be able to move

quickly enough through a text to develop meaning. If he is bogged down reading each individual word, he is not able to create an overall picture in his mind of what the text is saying. Even if the reader is able to move rapidly through a text, if he cannot master the expression associated with the words, the meaning of it will be lost.

Reading Comprehension

Comprehension is what most people think reading is. This is because comprehension is the main reason why we read. It is the aspect of reading that all of the others serve to create. Reading comprehension is understanding what a text is all about. It is more than just understanding words in isolation. It is putting them together and using prior knowledge to develop meaning. Reading comprehension is the most complex aspect of reading. It not only involves all of the other four aspects of reading, it also requires the reader to draw upon general thinking skills. When a reader is actively engaged with a text, he is asking and answering questions about the story and summarizing what he has read.

SQRRR or SQ3R is a reading comprehension method named for its five steps: survey, question, read, retrieve, and review. The method was introduced by Francis P. Robinson, an American education philosopher in his 1946 book Effective Study.

1 Survey ("S") The first step, survey or skim, advises that one should resist the temptation to read the book and instead first go through a chapter and note the headings, sub-headings and other outstanding features, such as figures, tables, and summary paragraphs. This survey step only takes 3–5 minutes, but it provides an outline or framework for what will be presented. The reader should identify ideas and formulate questions about the content of the chapter.

2 Question ("Q") Generate questions about the content of the reading. For example, convert headings and sub-headings into questions, and then look for answers in the content of the text. Other more general questions may also be formulated:
   a. ◦   What is this chapter about?
   b. ◦   What question is this chapter trying to answer?
   c. ◦   How does this information help me?
   d. ◦   The Question step again only takes 3–5 minutes to complete, but it will motivate the reader to seek answers to the questions.

3 Read (R^1) Use the background work done with "S" and "Q" in order to begin reading actively. This means reading in order to answer the questions raised under "Q". Passive reading, in contrast, results in merely reading without engaging with the study material.

4 Retrieve (R^2) The second "R" refers to the part known as "Retrieve." The reader should try to retrieve from memory what was learned in the same manner as telling someone else about the information. It is important that the reader use his/her own words in order to formulate and conceptualize the material. Try recalling and identifying major points (heading/subheadings) and answers to questions from the "Q" step. This recital step may be done either in an oral or written format and is related to the benefits of retrieval

(<u>testing effect</u>) in boosting long-term memory for the material.

5   Review (R³) The final "R" is "Review." Once you reach the end of the passage, say back to yourself what the point of the whole passage is – again, using your own words. You may then repeat the process on the second set of questions.

ERRQ

Estimate, Read, Respond, and Question (ERRQ) is a reading
strategy that involves students' questioning of text to gain
meaning. They respond to the information by reacting to it and forming a question about it.

Students have to Estimate how far they can read and still remember, Read the selected number of paragraphs, Review by writing a note or retelling to a friend, and then write a Question based on what they read or want to know. This technique is designed to add new information to what one already knows.