

Ability Enhancement Course

CS-12: MODERN INDIAN LANGUAGE

Objective:

- To enable students to develop basic proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening in the target language.
- To introduce students to the script or writing system used in the language.

Prerequisites:

- Knowledge of communication and interpersonal skills
- Interest to develop language proficiency

- **What is a role play exercise?**

A role play exercise is a simulation of a work-related scenario that allows you to demonstrate your skills and abilities in a realistic setting.

If you're participating in an assessment centre, you may be asked to take part in a role play exercise. During a role play exercise, you'll be given a specific role to play, such as a customer service representative or a team leader. You'll then be presented with a scenario or problem to solve, such as dealing with an unhappy customer or resolving a conflict between team members.

The assessment centre is a great way to assess how you deal with difficult situations and awkward encounters. Traditionally interviewers would have to rely on asking the candidate how they would respond in fictional situations, but now with role-play exercises, the employer can actually see how you perform for real (well, simulated reality).

What competencies does a role play exercise assess?

The specific competencies being tested will vary depending on the role you are applying for, as employers will require different skills for different roles. However, there will be common competencies across all roles, here are some common competencies that role play exercises may assess:

- **Communication:** The ability to communicate effectively, listen actively, and understand others' perspectives.

- **Problem-solving:** The ability to identify and analyse problems, generate solutions, and make sound decisions.
- **Adaptability:** The ability to adjust to new situations, be flexible, and think creatively.
- **Leadership and Assertiveness:** The ability to influence and motivate others, manage conflicts, and make tough decisions. And the ability to express your opinions, needs, and wants in a confident and effective manner, while also considering the needs of others.
- **Interpersonal skills:** The ability to build relationships, work collaboratively, and manage interactions with others.
- **Customer service:** The ability to handle difficult customers, manage complaints, and provide effective solutions.
- **Resilience:** The ability to handle pressure, cope with setbacks, and maintain a positive attitude.
- **Goal achievement:** The ability to set and achieve goals, monitor progress, and take action to overcome obstacles.

A role play exercise provides assessors with an opportunity to observe how you apply these competencies in a realistic work scenario, and to assess your suitability for the job or role you're applying for.

PRO TIP

Find out what the main competencies that are required for the role you're applying for. Keep these in mind throughout the role-play exercise so that you can showcase these as well as your other strengths.

What to expect from a role play exercise?

Before you start, you can expect to receive instructions or guidelines for the scenario, which may include background information about the situation, the role you are to play, and the goals of the exercise. These instructions may also provide some degree of flexibility or room for improvisation, allowing you to bring your own ideas and approach to the scenario.

PRO TIP

Use this time to pre-empt possible arguments the role player might use, and their possible responses. Make sure you understand the brief and think about strategies for achieving the outcome your fictional character wants. Before you start get your mind into character, otherwise you will appear flustered. You will have to interact with another person or multiple people during the role-play exercise. This interaction may involve verbal communication, non-verbal cues, and body language. Depending on the scenario, the interaction

may be collaborative or adversarial, requiring you to navigate challenging or conflictual situations.

You will be evaluated based on your performance during the role-play exercise. The evaluation may include feedback on your communication skills, problem-solving abilities, decision-making, emotional intelligence, and other relevant competencies. In some cases, the evaluation may also include a self-assessment or reflection, allowing you to gain insight into your own strengths and areas for improvement.

To summarise, in a role-play exercise can expect to engage in a simulated interaction with another person, receive instructions or guidelines for the scenario, be evaluated based on your performance, and gain insight into your strengths and areas for improvement. While the exercise may be challenging, it can also provide a valuable learning opportunity and help you to develop your skills and competencies in a practical context.

What is an example of a role play exercise?

Some examples of what you might have to do are:

- Placate a customer who is angry about a failed product, but you have been instructed not to issue a refund because they didn't follow the operating instructions.
- Encourage a colleague to pull their weight in a shared project.
- Negotiate a pricing position.
- Placate an angry supplier who can't understand why his company has been dropped for another.

The role player will also be given a brief they have to follow, often trying to reach an outcome different to the one your brief gives. The challenge is to negotiate your way to an amicable resolution in this fictional situation.

Whilst the situation is fictional, don't pretend you are someone you are not. The assessors are interested in your ability, not your acting skills.

The role player's brief will be to push you into challenging situations but not to outright provoke you. They will deliberately be awkward but they will also respond well to tactful, sympathetic negotiation – the theory goes, just like in real life. The role player will have to be equally recalcitrant to every candidate to make it fair. In many ways the role play exercises are more difficult for the actor than for the candidate!

Imagine you will have to work with the role play characters again, that way you'll be much more focused on winning them round instead of arguing with them.

Role-play exercise advice

Here are some tips and recommendations to help you to prepare for your role-play exercise and help ensure you are ready:

- **1. Try to stay relaxed:** Your ability to work under pressure and to perform on the spot is a key competency which the role-play exercise is assessing. It is therefore imperative that you do not let nerves get in the way of maximum performance. Small to moderate amount of nervousness can hone ones skills and keep you sharp, but serious anxiety will impair your performance, and will put off graduate recruiters. Recruiters know how nerve racking these exercises can be, particularly to graduates, and they will be expecting a certain amount of anxiety, so don't be concerned about mild to moderate nervousness. Just remember to breathe, to listen, to take your time and think thoroughly before answering.
- **2. Assume the role and get in character:** One of the hardest parts of role-play exercises is taking the exercise seriously and really committing to character. Ensuring that during the exercise, you take the role seriously, get in character and psych yourself up before hand, helping you to assume the role more readily. The more in character you are, the more naturally and professionally you will act and seem, impressing recruiters with a higher performance and expressing your commitment to the exercise, and therefore the organisation. Similarly it's important to consider the other person in the role-play as their respective role, i.e. if they are playing a customer, treat them and consider them a customer as much as possible, try to forget this is an exercise and act as if this was the real thing.
- **3. Research the role:** This is an essential and obvious necessity before undertaking a role-play exercise and assessment centre in general. Ensuring you know the key competencies looked for by the company, the skill set needed for the role and background of the organisation itself. Armed with this knowledge, you will more effectively assume you're given role in the exercise, and impress the recruiter with a more convincing and professional performance.
- **4. Emphasise the key competencies:** Depending on the role, certain competencies will be more important and are highly sought after in

candidates. For example, in a sales role candidates should try and emphasise their persuasion skills by using their charisma and influence. For a customer service role, interpersonal and conflict management skills should be emphasised by utilising patience, empathy and building rapport.

- **5. Time keeping:** Ensure that an appropriate pace is kept throughout the exercise. You shouldn't put yourself in a position where you need to rush, or where you need to slow down because you have been working too quickly. Keep an eye on the time, and pace yourself appropriately, but do not let the clock hinder your performance, and do not be seen "clock watching", check the time rarely and discretely.

PRO TIP

Walk into the role play exercise positive and cheery; you want to project a positive attitude to what might be a fractious conversation. Start with social pleasantries and try to establish rapport with the role player instead of taking a hard line from the off. You will score marks for reducing the friction and keeping the situation amicable. You will also come across well if you end the role play exercise by reaffirming anything you think you agreed with the role player. It's all too easy to shy away from bringing up contentious issues again, but before you leave the room you want to consolidate all that hard bargaining you did.

Tips for getting into character

Ensuring you are in character is a vital aspect of the role-play, as without committing to the role, you will not take the exercise seriously. Here are some tips for getting into character, and adopting the mindset of the role you are assuming:

- **1. Adopt the character before the exercise:** Begin to think and act like your character well before the start of the exercise, this means that when the exercise begins, the "psyching" process has already finished. Having spent 10-20 minutes acting, behaving and thinking like your target role will help the exercise run more naturally than if you had only just got into character at the start.
- **2. Confirming when the exercise begins:** Ensuring you know exactly when the exercise has started can avoid awkwardness, and put your mind at ease. Knowing exactly when the exercise has begun will help you stay in character as you will not need to worry going in and out of character more than you need to, allowing a more natural flow in the exercise.

- **3. But also be yourself:** Don't try and complicate matters by adopting a whole new alter ego. Just imagine that you have the job which you are role-playing, and other than that you are exactly the same person. This is not an audition for an acting job, you just need to role-play a particular role in a particular situation. Although assuming the responsibilities, mindset and objectives of the role is critical, you do not need to pretend to be a different person, and trying to do so will make the exercise feel unnatural, hampering performance.

PRO TIP

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Key takeaways

Here are the key takeaways for guidance on the role-play exercise at assessment centres:

- The role-play exercise evaluates how well candidates can handle workplace situations and interact with others.
- Candidates should research the company and the role they are applying for to help them prepare.
- Listening and communication skills are essential for success during the exercise.
- Candidates should aim to build rapport with the role-play partner and demonstrate empathy and understanding.
- Remaining calm and professional, even in stressful situations, is important.
- Candidates should anticipate and prepare for potential questions from the audience.
- Rehearsing with a friend or colleague (if possible) can provide helpful feedback and improve the presentation.

By following these tips, candidates can increase their chances of success during the role-play exercise and demonstrate their abilities to potential employers.

- **What is Group Discussion?**

Group discussions (GD) are essential to many selection processes, job interviews, and academic evaluations. In a [group discussion](#), participants are expected to exchange their ideas and opinions on a particular topic while demonstrating communication, interpersonal, and leadership skills.

Group Discussions are a crucial aspect of the interview processes across organizations. But what is a group discussion? How many types of group discussions do you need to know about and what is the process involved?

Group Discussion- Definition and What is it about?

A Group Discussion, often abbreviated as GD, is a popular evaluation technique used by employers during the recruitment process.

It is a structured conversation involving a group of individuals, usually between 6 to 15 participants, who gather to discuss a specific topic or problem.

The primary goal of a group discussion is to assess a candidate's ability to communicate, collaborate, and present their ideas effectively within a group setting.

Group discussions play a crucial role in assessing not just an individual's knowledge but also their interpersonal skills, teamwork, and ability to think on their feet.

What do you mean by group discussion?

A group discussion is when a group of people come together to talk about a specific topic or issue. Each person in the group takes turns sharing their thoughts, ideas, and opinions on the topic. The goal of a group discussion is to have an open and constructive conversation where everyone can contribute their perspective. It's a way for people to exchange ideas, learn from each other, and come up with solutions to problems. Group discussions are often used in academic settings, job interviews, and business meetings.

What is a Group Discussion About?

1. Testing	Communication	Skills
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One of the key objectives of a group discussion is to evaluate a candidate's communication abilities. Participants are expected to

express their thoughts clearly, concisely, and logically.

2. Effective verbal communication, including listening to others and responding thoughtfully, is a critical skill that employers seek in potential employees.

3. **Teamwork** and **Leadership**

Group discussions help employers identify how well candidates can work in a team. It's not just about presenting your views but also about listening to others, acknowledging their perspectives, and fostering a collaborative environment.

Additionally, it offers a chance for employers to observe emerging leaders who can guide the discussion and maintain order within the group.

4. **Problem-Solving** and **Decision-Making**

In many group discussions, participants are presented with a problem or a case study to discuss. This assesses their problem-solving and decision-making skills under pressure. Employers are keen to identify candidates who can analyze situations, think critically, and propose effective solutions in real time.

5. **Knowledge** and **Awareness**

Group discussions often revolve around current affairs, social issues, or industry-related topics. Being well-informed and having a good understanding of these subjects can give candidates an advantage.

Employers look for candidates who can contribute meaningful insights and stay updated with relevant information.

6. **Time** and **Management**

Group discussions are typically time-bound, so time management is another skill being tested. Candidates must make their points and engage in the discussion while adhering to time constraints.

7. **Convincing** and **Persuasive** **Skills**

Participants may need to persuade others to accept their point of view during a group discussion. Being persuasive, yet respectful, is a valuable skill in a professional setting.

8. **Handling**

Pressure

Group discussions can be challenging, especially when participants have differing opinions and the clock is ticking. How candidates handle stress, maintain composure, and continue to contribute constructively is closely observed.

What happens in a GD round?

A GD is an informal discussion in which candidates with similar academic qualifications or related educational backgrounds, discuss a topic. So, it is sometimes called a 'leaderless discussion'. The topic of discussion is generally provided by a panelist or a group of panelists. An ideal GD process has been described below:

- You will sit in a room with 6-12 participants
- You will be judged by a moderator/panelist
- You will be given a topic by the panelist
- You will be given a time slot (5 to 10 minutes) to think and frame your points
- You will be given a time slot (15 to 30 minutes) to discuss the topic with your group
- To stop you from speaking beyond your individual time limit, your GD panelist might intervene.
- Your panelist might signal the group (by ringing a bell) to end the GD round.

Importance of Group Discussions

Group discussions (GDs) are a critical component of job interviews, serving as a dynamic platform to assess a candidate's interpersonal skills, communication abilities, and problem-solving acumen.

GDs simulate real-world professional scenarios, allowing employers to evaluate how well individuals collaborate and contribute within a team environment.

GDs are important in a Job Interview as they:

- Assess communication skills.
- Evaluate teamwork and collaboration.
- Tests problem-solving abilities.

- Identifies leadership potential.
- Gauges knowledge and awareness.
- Measures time management.
- Observe persuasive skills.
- Evaluate adaptability and flexibility.
- Assesses stress management.
- Provides insight into personality and interpersonal dynamics.

What Are The Types Of Group Discussions?

Group discussions come in various formats, each designed to assess specific skills and qualities in participants. Different types of group discussions include:

Topic-based Group Discussion

In a topic-based GD, participants are given a specific subject or theme to discuss.

This type is often used in academic settings, where students are asked to share their views on a given topic.

It can also be used in job interviews to evaluate the candidate's knowledge and ability to articulate their thoughts.

Case Study Group Discussion

In this type of GD, participants are presented with a real or hypothetical scenario or case study.

They must analyze the situation, identify issues, and propose solutions. Employers use this format to assess problem-solving abilities and decision-making skills.

Role-Play Group Discussion

Role-play GDs involve participants assuming specific roles or characters and discussing a scenario or problem as if they were the people they're representing.

It's an effective way to evaluate empathy, creativity, and the ability to think from different perspectives.

Structured Group Discussion

Structured GDs are more formal and controlled. Participants may take turns speaking, and the discussion follows a predetermined agenda or set of questions.

This format is common in academic settings and research-related discussions.

Debate Group Discussion

A debate-style GD involves participants taking opposing sides on a given topic and presenting arguments to support their position.

This type assesses participants' ability to construct logical arguments, counter opposing viewpoints, and communicate persuasively.

Fishbowl Group Discussion

In a fishbowl discussion, a smaller group of participants sits in the center and discusses a topic while the larger group observes.

This format is often used for training and development purposes, allowing observers to learn from the discussion in progress.

Group Problem-Solving Discussion

Participants work together to solve a complex problem or challenge. This type assesses teamwork, collaboration, and the ability to collectively find solutions.

Controversial Group Discussion

In a controversial GD, participants are given a contentious or polarizing topic to discuss.

This format is designed to evaluate how well candidates can handle sensitive or provocative subjects and communicate respectfully.

Brainstorming Group Discussion

Participants engage in a brainstorming session to generate ideas and solutions related to a specific topic or problem.

This type assesses creativity, ideation, and the ability to contribute to a collective idea pool.

Interview Panel Group Discussion

In some job interviews, candidates are asked to participate in a group discussion with other applicants.

This format helps assess interpersonal skills, adaptability, and the ability to handle group dynamics under interview conditions.

Online Group Discussion

With the rise of remote work and virtual interviews, online group discussions have become more common.

Participants engage in discussions through video conferencing or text-based platforms, which may have their unique dynamics and challenges.

These various types of group discussions allow employers and educators to evaluate a wide range of skills and qualities, making it a versatile tool for assessing candidates and students in different contexts.

Each type serves a specific purpose, and the choice of format depends on the goals of the evaluation.

When is the best time to speak in a group discussion?

You can't wait to get a chance to speak in a GD but you can also not get aggressive or speak over others. So when exactly is it your turn?

Speak first!

If you are a dynamic person by nature and you feel confident about your knowledge on the topic (provided by the moderator), then don't waste time. Initiate the action!

I wanted to go first, but someone else did. What now?

If you feel your opinion differs from that of the group's initiator, react by opposing his/her move mildly. Put forth new ideas and give the group discussion a fresh dimension.

I had a great idea but it just got stolen.

This is your chance to hook onto others' ideas. Thank them for bringing the point into the picture and supporting their idea with substantial facts and/or data points.

I don't have any points to make. What to do?

Do not be a bystander. You can conclude the GD with a kickass summary.

If you have no clue about the GD topic on the table, keep noting important points presented by fellow participants.

Remember, speaking last in a GD leaves a great impression on the moderator. So you haven't lost the battle yet!

Bottomline: Be proactive, not reactive.

Which Skills are Evaluated in Group Discussions?

Group discussions (GDs) serve as a comprehensive assessment tool, evaluating a diverse set of skills and qualities in participants.

In a GD, candidates are observed for their communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and leadership abilities.

Here are ten key skills assessed in a group discussion and how they are evaluated:

1. **Communication Skills:** GDs gauge a candidate's ability to articulate thoughts clearly and effectively, ensuring that they convey their ideas coherently and listen attentively to others.
2. **Teamwork:** Candidates need to collaborate, respect others' viewpoints, and create a cooperative atmosphere within the group, demonstrating their capacity to work as part of a team.
3. **Leadership:** Emerging leaders can guide the discussion, maintain order, and encourage participation without dominating the conversation.
4. **Problem-Solving:** Participants must analyze issues, propose practical solutions, and make informed decisions, showcasing their problem-solving abilities.
5. **Knowledge and Awareness:** Being well-informed on relevant topics allows candidates to contribute meaningful insights and exhibit their awareness of current affairs or industry-specific matters.

6. **Time Management:** Adhering to time constraints while contributing to the discussion demonstrates effective time management skills.
7. **Persuasive Skills:** Candidates may need to persuade others to accept their viewpoints respectfully, highlighting their ability to influence and convince.
8. **Stress Management:** GDs can be challenging, evaluating how candidates handle stress and maintain composure under pressure.
9. **Critical Thinking:** The ability to think critically and analyze information is assessed when candidates evaluate complex issues or scenarios.
10. **Adaptability:** Demonstrating flexibility in adjusting to the dynamics of the group discussion and adapting to changing circumstances reflects adaptability and openness to different perspectives.

Tips To Be Successful In A Group Discussion

Participating effectively in a group discussion can be a valuable skill, whether in a job interview, academic setting, or other group situations.

To succeed in a group discussion, consider the following tips:

1. **Understand the Purpose:** Begin by understanding the goal of the discussion, whether it's to assess your knowledge, problem-solving abilities, or communication skills.
2. **Research the Topic:** If possible, research the topic beforehand to have a basic understanding. Being informed will help you contribute meaningfully.
3. **Active Listening:** Pay attention to what others are saying. Active listening allows you to respond thoughtfully and build upon others' points.
4. **Initiate and Contribute:** Don't wait for your turn to speak; initiate the discussion when appropriate. Contribute relevant and concise points.
5. **Respect Others:** Treat fellow participants with respect and courtesy. Avoid interrupting and acknowledge their viewpoints, even if you disagree.

6. **Speak Clearly and Confidently:** Articulate your thoughts clearly and confidently. Maintain good eye contact and use appropriate body language.
7. **Structure Your Thoughts:** Organize your ideas logically before speaking. Use a clear structure, such as introducing your point, providing examples, and concluding.
8. **Use Evidence and Examples:** Support your arguments with facts, examples, or anecdotes to strengthen your position.
9. **Avoid Jargon and Overuse of Filler Words:** Use plain language, and minimize the use of jargon, slang, or filler words like "um" and "uh."
10. **Stay on Topic:** Keep the discussion focused on the main subject and avoid going off on tangents.
11. **Handle Criticism Gracefully:** If someone challenges your viewpoint, respond with composure and respect, defending your position rationally.
12. **Stay Calm under Pressure:** Group discussions can be intense; remain calm, maintain composure, and avoid getting flustered.
13. **Practice Beforehand:** If possible, practice group discussions with peers or mentors to refine your skills and gain confidence.
14. **Reflect and Learn:** After the discussion, reflect on your performance and identify areas for improvement. Learning from each experience is essential.
15. **Dress Appropriately:** In a formal setting, dress professionally to make a positive impression.

Success in a group discussion is not only about what you say but also how you interact with others. By practicing these tips and continuously improving your skills, you can excel in group discussions and make a positive impression on assessors or fellow participants.

Common Mistakes to Avoid in a GD Round

Here are some mistakes to avoid in your next GD round:

Deviating from the subject:

Focus on your points alone and do not let other candidates push you out of the topic. Be poised and stay calm if they try to agitate you.

Losing neutrality and making personal attacks:

Maintain your calm and keep your debate down to earth. This is just an interview round, not a war.

Focusing on quantity rather than quality:

As discussed previously, gather your thoughts and give them a structure mentally before speaking.

Dominating too much:

Do not sound bossy and snub everyone with snide remarks or too many points. This will only fetch negative marks.

Quoting too many facts and figures:

Mentioning quotations and facts is a good way of scoring points. But don't go overboard with them. Maintain a balance while you speak.

Analyzing a topic poorly or starting in haste:

Listen carefully, think, and then speak. Speak first only if you are confident about the topic. Don't be in a hurry to start first. You may end up speaking rubbish.

Staying tight-lipped:

This is an interactive round to check your communication skills within a group. So, speak up to add value to the GD round.

Common Topics of Group Discussion

Group discussions can cover a wide range of topics, and they often reflect issues relevant to the context in which they are conducted, whether in interviews, academic settings, or group assessments.

Here are 30 common topics for group discussions:

1. Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability
2. Impact of Social Media on Society
3. The Role of Technology in Education
4. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

5. Challenges Faced by the Healthcare System
6. Artificial Intelligence and its Implications
7. Globalization and its Effects on Local Economies
8. Mental Health Awareness and Stigma
9. Youth Unemployment and Skill Development
10. Online Privacy and Data Security
11. The Education System and its Relevance
12. The Pros and Cons of Remote Work
13. Impact of Social Networking on Relationships
14. Cyberbullying and Online Harassment
15. Economic Inequality and Poverty Alleviation
16. Sustainable Energy Sources and Conservation
17. The Role of Youth in Politics
18. Cultural Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace
19. Healthcare Accessibility and Universal Healthcare
20. The Ethics of Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare
21. Youth and Civic Engagement
22. The Impact of Mass Media on Society
23. Challenges Faced by the Education System during the Pandemic
24. Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture
25. Corporate Social Responsibility
26. Ethical Consumerism and Sustainable Products
27. Space Exploration and Colonization
28. Immigration Policies and Integration
29. The Role of Sports in Promoting Health
30. Public Transportation and Urban Mobility

How long does a typical group discussion last?

The duration of a GD can vary but usually lasts between 15 to 30 minutes. It may be shorter or longer, depending on the context.

- **What is Presentation?**

A Presentation Is...

- A presentation is a means of communication that can be adapted to various speaking situations, such as talking to a group, addressing a meeting or briefing a team.
- A presentation can also be used as a broad term that encompasses other 'speaking engagements' such as making a speech at a wedding, or getting a point across in a video conference.
- To be effective, step-by-step preparation and the method and means of presenting the information should be carefully considered.
- A presentation requires you to get a message across to the listeners and will often contain a '*persuasive*' element. It may, for example, be a talk about the positive work of your organisation, what you could offer an employer, or why you should receive additional funding for a project.

The Key Elements of a Presentation

Making a presentation is a way of communicating your thoughts and ideas to an audience and many of our articles on communication are also relevant here, see:

Consider the following key components of a presentation:

Context

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

- When and where will you deliver your presentation?

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

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

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

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

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

- Will the presentation be to a small group or a large crowd?
- Are you already familiar with the audience?

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

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

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

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

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

Presenter

- The role of the presenter is to communicate with the audience and control the presentation.
- Remember, though, that this may also include handing over the control to your audience, especially if you want some kind of interaction.

Audience

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

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

Message

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

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

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

Reaction

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

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

See our page: Effective Speaking for more information.

Method

How will the presentation be delivered?

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

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

Impediments

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

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

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

- **Which are the things to be kept in mind while giving a power presentation?**

1. Show your Passion and Connect with your Audience

It's hard to be relaxed and be yourself when you're nervous.

But time and again, the great presenters say that the most important thing is to connect with your audience, and the best way to do that is to let your passion for the subject shine through.

Be honest with the audience about what is important to you and why it matters.

Be enthusiastic and honest, and the audience will respond.

2. Focus on your Audience's Needs

Your presentation needs to be built around what your audience is going to get out of the presentation.

As you prepare the presentation, you always need to bear in mind what the audience needs and wants to know, not what you can tell them.

While you're giving the presentation, you also need to remain focused on your audience's response, and react to that.

You need to make it easy for your audience to understand and respond.

3. Keep it Simple: Concentrate on your Core Message

When planning your presentation, you should always keep in mind the question:

What is the key message (or three key points) for my audience to take away?
You should be able to communicate that key message very briefly.

Some experts recommend a 30-second ‘elevator summary’, others that you can write it on the back of a business card, or say it in no more than 15 words.

Whichever rule you choose, the important thing is to keep your core message focused and brief.

And if what you are planning to say doesn’t contribute to that core message, don’t say it.

4. Smile and Make Eye Contact with your Audience

This sounds very easy, but a surprisingly large number of presenters fail to do it.

If you smile and make eye contact, you are building rapport, which helps the audience to connect with you and your subject. It also helps you to feel less nervous, because you are talking to individuals, not to a great mass of unknown people.

To help you with this, make sure that you don’t turn down all the lights so that only the slide screen is visible. Your audience needs to see you as well as your slides.

5. Start Strongly

The beginning of your presentation is crucial. You need to grab your audience’s attention and hold it.

They will give you a few minutes’ grace in which to entertain them, before they start to switch off if you’re dull. So don’t waste that on explaining who you are. Start by entertaining them.

6. Remember the 10-20-30 Rule for Slideshows

This is a tip from Guy Kawasaki of Apple. He suggests that slideshows should:

- Contain no more than 10 slides;
- Last no more than 20 minutes; and
- Use a font size of no less than 30 point.
- This last is particularly important as it stops you trying to put too much information on any one slide. This whole approach avoids the dreaded ‘Death by PowerPoint’.

As a general rule, slides should be the sideshow to you, the presenter. A good set of slides should be no use without the presenter, and they should definitely contain less, rather than more, information, expressed simply.

If you need to provide more information, create a bespoke handout and give it out after your presentation.

7. Tell Stories

Human beings are programmed to respond to stories.

Stories help us to pay attention, and also to remember things. If you can use stories in your presentation, your audience is more likely to engage and to remember your points afterwards. It is a good idea to start with a story, but there is a wider point too: you need your presentation to act like a story.

Think about what story you are trying to tell your audience, and create your presentation to tell it.

- Finding The Story Behind Your Presentation

To effectively tell a story, focus on using at least one of the two most basic storytelling mechanics in your presentation:

- Focusing On Characters – People have stories; things, data, and objects do not. So ask yourself “who” is directly involved in your topic that you can use as the focal point of your story.

For example, instead of talking about cars (your company’s products), you could focus on specific characters like:

The drivers the car is intended for – people looking for speed and adventure
The engineers who went out of their way to design the most cost-effective car imaginable

A Changing Dynamic – A story needs something to change along the way. So ask yourself “What is not as it should be?” and answer with what you are going to do about it (or what you did about it).

For example...

Did hazardous road conditions inspire you to build a rugged, all-terrain jeep that any family could afford?

Did a complicated and confusing food labelling system lead you to establish a colour-coded nutritional index so that anybody could easily understand it?

To see 15 more actionable storytelling tips, see Nuts & Bolts Speed Training’s post on Storytelling Tips.

8. Use your Voice Effectively

The spoken word is actually a pretty inefficient means of communication, because it uses only one of your audience’s five senses. That’s why presenters tend to use visual aids, too. But you can help to make the spoken word better by using your voice effectively.

Varying the speed at which you talk, and emphasising changes in pitch and tone all help to make your voice more interesting and hold your audience’s attention.

9. Use your Body Too

It has been estimated that more than three quarters of communication is non-verbal.

That means that as well as your tone of voice, your body language is crucial to getting your message across. Make sure that you are giving the right messages: body language to avoid includes crossed arms, hands held behind your back or in your pockets, and pacing the stage.

Make your gestures open and confident, and move naturally around the stage, and among the audience too, if possible.

10. Relax, Breathe and Enjoy

If you find presenting difficult, it can be hard to be calm and relaxed about doing it.

One option is to start by concentrating on your breathing. Slow it down, and make sure that you’re breathing fully. Make sure that you continue to pause for breath occasionally during your presentation too.

If you can bring yourself to relax, you will almost certainly present better. If you can actually start to enjoy yourself, your audience will respond to that, and engage better. Your presentations will improve exponentially, and so will your confidence. It's well worth a try.

- **What is Communication?**

The English word 'communication' is derived from the Latin communis, which means common sense. The word communication means sharing the same ideas. In other words, the transmission and interaction of facts, ideas, opinions, feelings, or attitudes. Communication is the essence of management. The basic function of management (planning, planning, staffing, supervision and management) cannot be done effectively without effective communication. Communication is a two-way process that involves transferring of information or messages from one person or group to another. This process goes on and includes a minimum of one sender and receiver to pass on the messages. These messages can either be any ideas, imagination, emotions, or thoughts. Communication is a Latin word that means "to share". There are different modes of communication available today. These include emails, chats, WhatsApp, skype (conference calls), etc. Effective communication makes people's work easier and smoother.

Communication Process

Communication is an ongoing process that mainly involves three components namely. sender, message, and recipient. The components involved in the communication process are described below in detail:

Sender: The sender or contact generates the message and transmits it to the recipient. He is the source and the first contact

Message: It is an idea, knowledge, opinion, truth, feeling, etc. produced by the sender and intended for reference.

Encoding: The message produced by the sender is encrypted in a symbolic way such as words, pictures, touches, etc. before transfer.

The media: This is how the coded message is conveyed. The message can be conveyed orally or in writing.

Recording: It is a process of modifying the signals sent by the sender. After recording the message is received by the recipient.

Recipient: You are the last person in the chain and the message you sent was sent. If the recipient receives the message and understands it correctly and acts on the message, only then the purpose of the communication is achieved.

Answer: Once the recipient confirms to the sender that you received the message and understood it, the communication process is complete.

Noise: Refers to any restrictions caused by the sender, message or recipient during the communication process. For example, incorrect telephone connection, incorrect coding, incorrect recording, careless recipient, incorrect understanding of message due to discrimination or inappropriate touch, etc.

• **Listening Skills: Definition, Importance and How To Practice**

Practicing good listening skills is an important part of succeeding in the workplace. Effective listening can help you interpret information accurately, form positive relationships and develop new skills. Understanding the types of listening and how to become a better listener can help you form effective communication habits and apply them in your professional life. In this article, we define listening skills, discuss their importance, talk about some of the types of skills that improve listening and offer steps to help you practise good listening.

What are listening skills?

Listening skills are skills that contribute to your ability to accurately receive information when communicating with others. These skills are an important part of effective communication in the workplace. Developing good listening habits can help to ensure you understand the information correctly, interpret messages accurately, and optimize your conversations and communications for efficiency.

Why are listening skills important?

Developing skills that can help you become a better listener is important for several reasons, including:

Building relationships

Good listening can help you build and maintain positive relationships in the workplace. Showing interest when communicating with others can help you build trust and develop long-term, mutually beneficial professional relationships. Good listening can help you prevent misunderstandings between coworkers, perform your duties accurately and anticipate the needs of your customers.

Learning new skills

Effective listening is an important way to help you learn new skills. In order to accurately follow directions, it may be beneficial to develop skills and habits that contribute to the quality of your listening. By listening closely to the advice, guidance and directions of your mentors or supervisors, you may be able to learn new skills and advance your range of capabilities.

Performing effectively

Listening intently can help you accurately follow directions. By following directions exactly, you may be able to improve your performance in the workplace. By listening closely to directions, guidelines and requirements, you may be able to avoid errors and improve your processes.

Types of listening skills

Below are four types of listening that can help you become a better listener:

Deep listening

Deep listening occurs when you're truly committed to understanding the speaker's perspective and message. Deep listening includes paying attention to verbal and non-verbal cues in order to gain a full understanding of the speaker's experiences, thoughts, feelings and objectives. This type of listening is especially useful when building relationships, establishing trust and fostering rapport with coworkers, customers, clients or vendors.

Full listening

Full listening includes trying to fully comprehend the practical content of a speaker's message. This type of listening often involves active listening skills, like paraphrasing and asking clarifying questions. Full listening can be particularly helpful when interpreting directions, learning new material or developing new skills.

Critical listening

Critical listening involves using logic and reasoning to separate opinion and fact when listening to a speaker's message. Critical listening usually involves using your previous knowledge or experiences to identify factual content in communication. Critical listening can be especially important in professions that use persuasive speaking, debating or investigatory skills.

Therapeutic listening

Therapeutic listening is a more intimate type of listening that often involves receiving information from a speaker about their challenges or emotional situations. In the workplace, this type of listening is often an important part of succeeding in a career that deals with sensitive topics or emotional discussions. Therapists, doctors and counsellors often benefit from developing their therapeutic listening abilities.

How to practise active listening skills

Active listening is a combination of techniques that include careful listening, observation and non-verbal clues. Below are seven skills that can help you improve your active listening abilities:

1. Limit distraction

An important part of active listening is limiting distraction so you can gather all the necessary information and details of your speaker's message. Limiting distraction could mean putting your phone away before entering into a conversation, having important conversations in a quiet, private space or allowing yourself a brief pause to ensure you fully understood the message of your speaker before responding.

2. Practice objectivity

Practising objectivity and ensuring you receive all information without bias can help you remain open to the messages and perspectives of your speaker. Even if you have a strong opinion about the topic of conversation, setting aside your opinions in order to receive your speaker's message without judgement can help you consider new possibilities and innovative perspectives.

3. Reflect

Reflecting refers to mirroring your speaker's message in order to convey that you understand their message. Reflecting can help assure speakers of your

comprehension and can indicate your engagement in the conversation. This type of active listening skill can be especially helpful when engaging in therapeutic communication. For example, if your speaker says, "I'm tired of working late to make up for others who don't complete their tasks," you could say, "It sounds like you're feeling frustrated and overlooked."

4. Clarify

An important part of active listening is asking questions when you need clarification. Clarifying aspects of the conversation can indicate you're intently listening and provide you with an opportunity to confirm your understanding. To clarify, you may use specific, simple questions that require a "yes" or "no" as a response or you may ask more general, open-ended questions that require more elaboration from your speaker.

5. Summarise

Restating key themes and summarising content is an effective skill that can contribute to your ability to practice active listening. In the workplace, summarising can help both parties confirm they understand next steps and responsibilities. To summarise, consider offering a brief statement that describes the primary message or key theme of your speaker's message.

6. Use body language

Using body language to demonstrate your level of engagement is another important part of active listening. You can use your body language to indicate your understanding by nodding, making eye contact and responding with appropriate facial expressions. Body language may be especially important for professionals who use therapeutic listening to complete their daily duties.

7. Share

Sharing involves expressing your own thoughts, feelings and experiences to relate to your speaker. This active listening technique can help you contribute to the conversation and align expectations for the next steps, deliverables and responsibilities. You can also use sharing to offer suggestions for improvement, build trust and maintain positive workplace relationships.

8. Give your full attention

Distractions can make it difficult to focus on the things a speaker is telling you. In order to become a good listener, limit as many distractions as possible and provide the speaker with your undivided attention. This includes silencing your phone, turning off your computer and avoiding the urge to multitask by checking emails or giving your attention to other tasks. This can help you focus on the speaker and make sure that you are taking in everything

that they are saying. Managing your time correctly can also help you make sure that you can limit distractions while you are listening.

9. Pace the conversation

Being a good listener often includes opening a dialogue and allowing for a conversation to start between you and the speaker. Pace the conversation by determining the goal of the speaker's message and evaluating their body language to decide when it is appropriate for you to respond with your own input. Instead of rushing to fill silences, provide time for the speaker to finish their thoughts and acknowledge their message accordingly. This will also give you the time to absorb their message and process what they are saying before it is time for you to respond.

10. Ask meaningful questions

Once it is time to open up a dialogue, the questions you ask should be meaningful and establish your investment in the speaker's message. Ask questions that can help both you and the speaker reflect on what they said as well as elaborate any points that may need extra clarification. The questions might help the speaker remember other things they wanted to say or open up a new line of dialogue that will be worth exploring.

11. Recall previous information

Recalling information that the speaker has already discussed as well as summarising the points they made in your responses can help you become a more effective listener. Doing this will not only show the speaker you understand what they said, but it will also ensure that they can clarify any misunderstandings and confirm the key points they discussed.

• What Is Public Speaking?

Public speaking is the art of conveying information to an audience through oral presentation. It is an act of communication and dates back to the times of ancient Greece. The purpose or intention of public speaking varies and can include informing, motivating, celebrating, entertaining, and persuading. Public speaking involves a presenter (the person speaking) and an audience (the people listening). Public speaking is, simply, an oral presentation or speech delivered to a live audience. It is generally a formal or staged event—although impromptu speeches are a common occurrence—and can be a defining career moment. For example, you may think you're attending a client meeting only to find yourself called on to explain a procedural or technical point being discussed. Or you may be sitting in a management

meeting thinking you are just there to observe when you are asked to elaborate on an aspect of the supporting research and analysis or defend your recommendations.

Several specific elements of public speaking include:

1. the speaker
2. the message
3. the audience
4. the channel
5. the effect(s)

The **speaker** refers simply to the person who is presenting, and the **message** is the content being presented. The **audience** is the intended recipient of the message. These three elements are sometimes referred to as who, what, and whom. The **channel** is the medium used to share the message--it is how the message gets sent. The **effect** is the result of the message having been sent and received. The effect is not necessarily consistent with the speaker's goal.

Public speaking is a more formal type of communication as opposed to [small talk](#) or other informal conversations. Public speaking requires preparation and organization.

1. Know your audience.

You're more likely to feel comfortable presenting to an audience if you know who they are. That way, you can craft your message in a tone that resonates with them, perhaps using humor to ease the tension.

Start by assessing your audience's level of understanding of the topic you plan to discuss. This will determine the amount of background to give and whether you should aim to be more professional or casual.

As you're speaking, stay aware of the group's reactions. Adjust accordingly so you can connect with them throughout your presentation.

2. Practice, practice, practice.

Even the most seasoned public speaker needs practice to be effective. Give a mock presentation of your speech in advance, so you can determine if you've organized the information cohesively and clearly.

It may help to talk out loud to an imaginary audience or in front of a mirror, but it's even more effective to practice with the help of a supportive co-worker, friend, or family member as an audience.

3. Use feedback to your advantage.

Whether you're practicing or giving a presentation, ask for feedback. This constructive criticism could include specific examples that you can use to improve for future presentations.

If your friends point out that you say "umm" or "you know" too much, make sure that you're not taking the feedback personally. Integrate their comments into future presentations and thank your friend or team for giving you invaluable feedback.

4. Make it your own.

Connecting with an audience can be easier when you add your own personality or flair. Let your personality shine through as you convey your message, whether you are a naturally funny or empathetic person. Be authentic and appropriate—use humor when it can enhance your work, rather than detract from it.

If you use a PowerPoint presentation while speaking, make sure you're not reading from it word for word but using images or videos to bring your presentation to life. You may want to add your contact information at the end of the presentation so people can follow up with you afterward.

5. Connect with a personal story.

Personal stories or anecdotes can enhance your presentation. When TED Talk Speakers take the stage, they often begin with a short anecdote about their childhood or personal experience. This structure helps them connect with the audience, share their passion for what they're about to discuss or explain their expertise.

To add this kind of personal touch to your presentation, make sure what you share has a direct connection with the topic at hand.

6. Make eye contact.

Making eye contact with your audience can actually help you feel more at ease because you'll get a sense of whether they understand what you're saying or need to clarify further. Practicing your speech or presentation beforehand can help you feel more comfortable making eye contact.

As they say, much of effective communication relies on body language. Moving your gaze around the room can help your audience feel more engaged, which in turn will make you feel more confident.

7. Use the stage to your advantage.

Before the presentation, know where you'll be speaking. Check that your PowerPoint presentation works with the provided equipment. Make sure you know how the room will be set up. Ask about time constraints, whether people will be eating during your talk, and what kind of microphone you'll be using.

When you're on stage, own the space. Walk to different areas to make eye contact with other people in the audience. Be aware of your body language. Let your arms hang loosely. Stand with excellent posture, with your back straight. Smile.

8. Calm your nerves.

It's normal to still find yourself overcome with nerves at some point in your presentation, despite your preparation. When this happens, take a deep breath. No one's expecting you to be perfect.

Instead of thrusting your hands in your pockets or playing with your hair, think of ways to cope with your nerves beforehand. You might make sure to exercise that morning or meditate for five minutes before speaking.

9. Record yourself speaking.

Co-workers and friends can help provide feedback, but you can also evaluate yourself while speaking. When you speak in front of a group, set up your phone to record yourself and watch it later. You may be surprised by your nervous habits or awkward phrasing. You might find new ways to improve the readability of your PowerPoint slides.

If you're giving a presentation on Zoom, ask your audience if you can record the meeting. Use this technology to improve your skills to be even more effective next time and avoid ruminating on mistakes. Stay positive.

10. Make a lasting impression with a strong conclusion.

Just as experts encourage speakers to grab their audience's attention within the first 30 seconds of their presentations, it's also wise to create a solid ending to any presentation. This closing can include things like:

- A call to action that encourages listeners to take the next step
- A memorable quote that inspires or illustrates a point from your presentation
- A personal story that demonstrates why this issue is so important to you
- A summary of the most important takeaways

Remember to thank the audience for their time once you conclude your presentation. If there is time, you can invite questions and answer them from the stage, or prompt them to follow up with you afterward.

The importance of developing your public speaking skills.

Public speaking skills are helpful for growth in your career but also in everyday life. Here's some ways developing strong public speaking skills can benefit you:

- Strengthen team-building and collaboration
- Share your ideas and offer solutions to work-related problems
- Earn esteem with employers and co-workers alike
- Create connections that can lead to new professional opportunities

The benefits of these skills transfer easily to other areas of your life. You can improve your relationships along with your professional success by developing clear and effective communication.

It can take time to improve public speaking skills. The key to confidence is a willingness to embrace the temporary feeling of discomfort that comes with developing any new skill.

