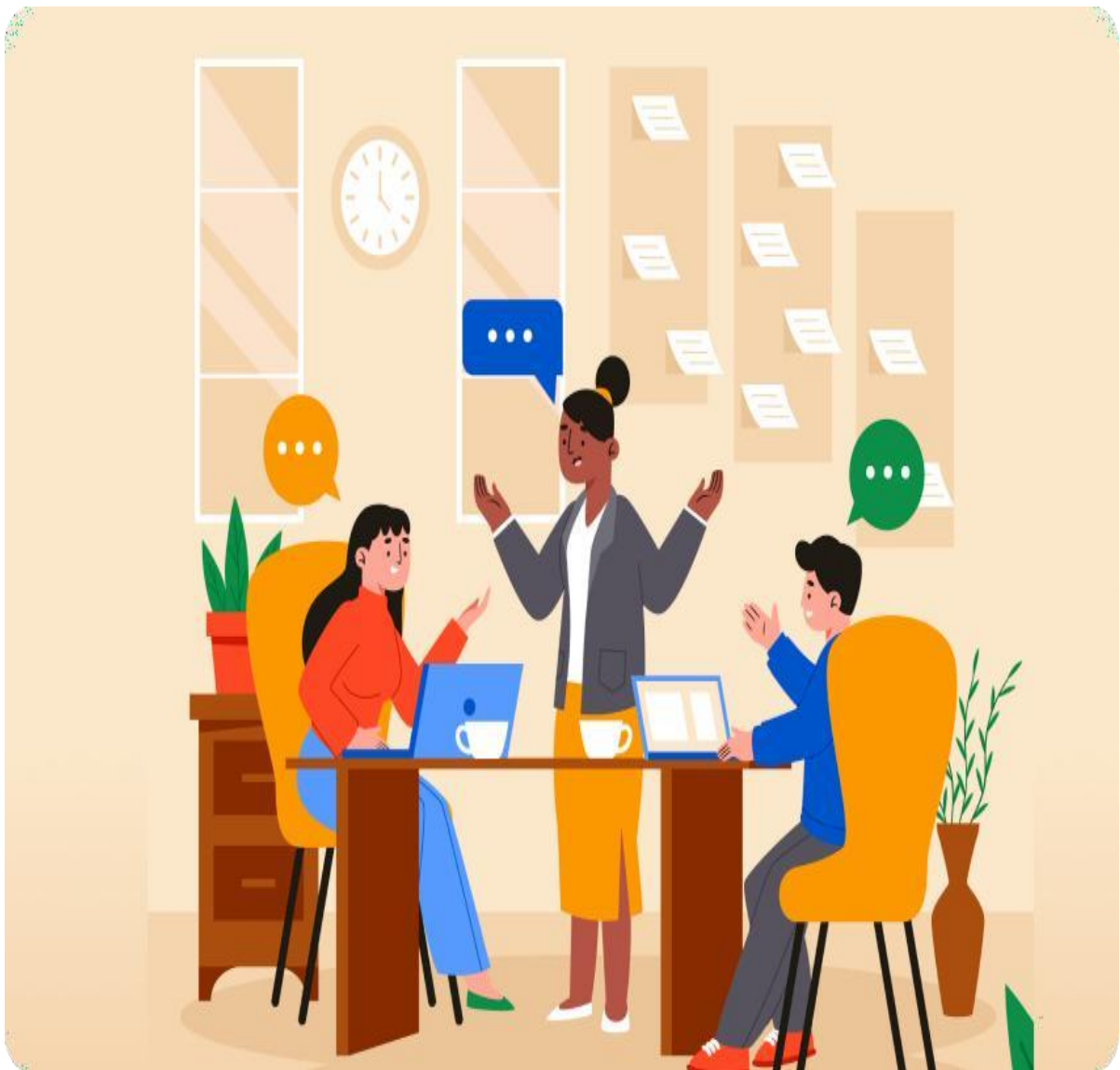


DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS



PEV-301 VERBAL ABILITY

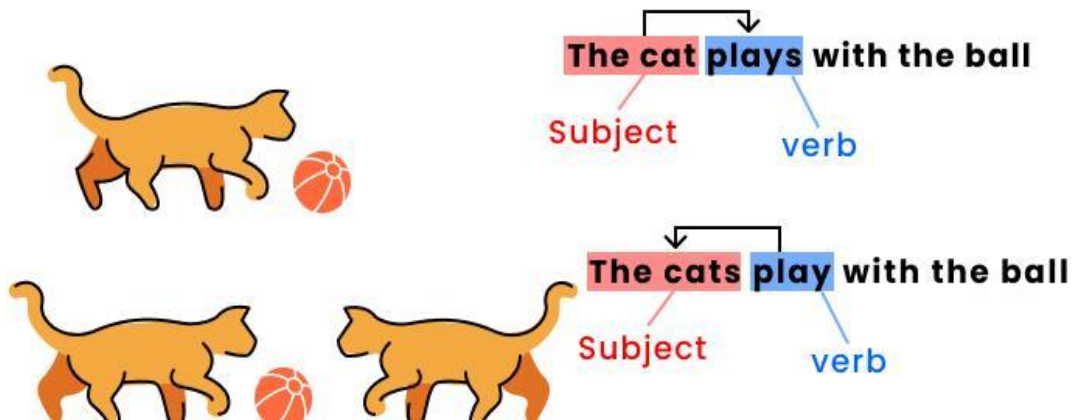
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UNIT 1

Subject-Verb Agreement and Error Identification

Subject – Verb Agreement



INTRODUCTION

Agreement in general refers to harmony. In the case of the topic called Subject Verb Agreement, it refers to the verb agreeing with the subject in number and form of the subject.

Subjects must agree with verbs.

Singular subjects need singular verbs; plural subjects need plural verbs. **In grammar, number refers to the two forms of a word:** singular (one) or plural (more than one).

Subject-Verb Agreement means that subjects and verbs must always agree in number.

What is a subject?

The subject is the part of a sentence or clause that commonly indicates (a) what it is about, or (b) who or what performs the action (that is, the agent). Often it appears at the beginning of the sentence. In a sentence, every verb must have a subject. If the verb expresses action—like sneeze, jump, bark, or study—the subject is who or what.

Example: The baby cries when he is hungry

Subject- Baby

What is a Verb?

A verb can show action -- either mental or physical action. It can also show state of being. In grammar, number refers to the two forms of a word: singular (one) or plural (more than one).

A verb agrees with its subject in number.

The baby cries when he is hungry

Verb-cries

Let us look into the following rules:

Basic Rule: A singular subject (she, Bill, car) takes a singular verb (is, goes, shines), whereas a plural subject takes a plural verb.

Example: The list of items is/are on the desk.

If you know that list is the subject, then you will choose is for the verb.

Rule 1. A subject will come before a phrase beginning with of. This is a key rule for understanding subjects.

The word of is the culprit in many, perhaps most, subject-verb mistakes.

Hasty writers, speakers, readers, and listeners might miss the all-too-common mistake in the following sentence:

Incorrect: A bouquet of yellow roses lend color and fragrance to the room.

Correct: A bouquet of yellow roses lends . . . (bouquet lends, not roses lend)

Rule 2. Two singular subjects connected by or, either/or, or neither/nor require a singular verb.

Examples:

My aunt or my uncle **is** arriving by train today.

Neither Suraj nor Akash **is** available.

Either Suraj or Akash **is** helping today with stage decorations.

Rule 3: If one subject is singular and the other is plural, and the words are connected by the words "or," "nor," "neither/nor," "either/or," or "not only/but also," use the verb form of the subject that is nearest the verb.

Examples:

Neither the plates nor the serving bowl goes on that shelf.

Neither the serving bowl nor the plates go on that shelf.

This rule can lead to bumps in the road. For example, if I is one of two (or more) subjects, it could lead to this odd sentence:

Awkward: Neither she, my friends, nor I am going to the festival.

If possible, it's best to reword such grammatically correct but awkward sentences.

Better:

Neither she, I, nor my friends are going to the festival.

OR

She, my friends, and I are not going to the festival.

Rule 4. As a general rule, use a plural verb with two or more subjects when they are connected by 'and'.

Example: A car and a bike are my means of transportation.

But note these exceptions:

Exceptions:

Breaking and entering is against the law.

The bed and breakfast was charming.

In those sentences, breaking and entering and bed and breakfast are compound nouns. (Bread and milk, Rice and curry, Bread and butter)

Rule 5a. Sometimes the subject is separated from the verb by such words as along with, as well as, besides, not, etc. These words and phrases are not part of the subject. Ignore them and use a singular verb when the subject is singular.

Examples:

The politician, along with the newsmen, is expected shortly.

Excitement, as well as nervousness, is the cause of her shaking.

The Mayor, with his assistant, **is** present in the room.

Rule 5b. Parentheses are not part of the subject.

Example: Joe (and his trusty mutt) **was** always welcomed.

Rule 6. In sentences beginning with here or there, the true subject follows the verb.

Examples:

There are four hurdles to jump.

There is a high hurdle to jump.

Here are the keys.

Rule 7. Use a singular verb with distances, periods of time, sums of money, etc., when considered as a unit.

Examples:

Three miles **is** too far to walk.

Five years **is** the maximum sentence for that offense.

Ten dollars **is** a high price to pay.

BUT

Ten dollars (i.e., dollar bills) **were** scattered on the floor.

Rule 8. With words that indicate portions—e.g., a lot, a majority, some, all—Rule 1 given earlier in this section is reversed, and we are guided by the noun after of. If the noun after of is singular, use a singular verb.

If it is plural, use a plural verb.

Examples:

A lot of the **pie** has disappeared.

A lot of the **pies** have disappeared.

A third of the **city** is unemployed.

A third of the **people** are unemployed.

All of the **pie** is gone.

All of the **pies** are gone.

Some of the **pie** is missing.

Some of the **pies** are missing.

Rule 9. A Collective noun such as group, jury, family, audience, population, committee, company, council, army, police, society, board, cabinet, department, family, public, government, organization, team, club, crowd, minority, class, takes a singular verb when the collection is thought of as one whole; plural verb when the individuals of which it is composed are thought of;

Examples:

All of my **family** has arrived.

Most of the **jury** is here.

A third of the **population** was opposed to the bill.

Rule 10. The word ‘were’ replaces was in sentences that express a wish or are contrary to fact:

Example: If Joe **were** here, you'd be sorry.

Shouldn't Joe be followed by was, not were, given that Joe is singular? But Joe isn't actually here, so we say were, not was. The sentence demonstrates the **subjunctive mood**, which is used to express things that are hypothetical, wishful, imaginary, or factually contradictory. The subjunctive mood pairs singular subjects with what we usually think of as plural verbs.

Examples:

I wish it **were** Friday.

In the first example, a wishful statement, not a fact, is being expressed; therefore, were, which we usually think of as a plural verb, is used with the singular it. (Technically, it is the singular subject of the object clause in the subjunctive mood: it was Friday.)

Rule 11: When the plural noun is a proper name for single objects or collective unit, it must be followed by a singular verb.

Example: **Darts** is a popular game in England.

Rule 12: Some nouns which are singular in form, but plural in meaning take a plural verb. (cattle, gentry, vermin, peasantry, artillery, clergy, alphabet, Offspring, information)

Examples: “I need all **information** to process the case” said the police Inspector.

The **police** are getting wise and keeping the file shut.

Rule 13: Two nouns qualified by each or every, even though connected by and, require a singular verb. If one of the words "each," "every," or "no" comes before the subject, the verb is singular.

Examples: No **smoking** or **drinking** is allowed.

Every **man** and **woman** is required to check in. **Every girl** and **every boy** was given a packet of chocolate.

Rule 14: Some nouns which are plural in form, but singular in meaning, take a singular verb. (Mathematics, classics, ethics, athletics, innings, gallows, economics, poetry, news, measles, news, mumps, electronics, tactics, physics)

Example: Mathematics is an interesting subject.

Rule 15: None, though properly singular, commonly takes a plural verb.

Example: None of the boys are studying in the class.

Rule 16: When (Not only-but also) is used to combine two subjects, the verb agrees with the subject close to it.

Examples: Not only Raj, but also his brothers were arrested.

Not only he but also his sister was eating.

Rule 17: The number/A number used as singular as well as plural

Examples: A number of students are found there.

The number of people living in streets has reduced.

Rule 18: In sentences containing the words one of, the verb is chosen as follows:

Example: One of the pencils is missing from my bag.

Rule 19: The title of books or magazines are considered singular and take singular verbs.

Example: The Hindu still has wide circulation.

Rule 20: When gerunds are used as the subject of a sentence, they take the singular verb form of the verb; but, when they are linked by and, they take the plural form.

Example: Singing and playing flute are my hobbies.

Rule 21: Two infinitives separated by and take a plural verb.

Example: To run and to read **are** my two favorite “Free-time” activities.

Rules Recap

Subject	Example	Form	Usage
Compound Noun	Bread and butter, Rice and dal	Singular	Bread and butter is what I have for my breakfast
	Jack and Jim, Cheese and Oregano,	Plural	Jack and Jim are friends
Plural Nouns	A pair of Spectacles, A pair of pliers	Singular	A pair of my pants is missing
	Spectacles, Scissors, Pliers, Tweezers, Pants, Trousers, Police	Plural	My pants are missing
Collective nouns “UNISON”	Committee, Orchestra, Band, Jury, Class, Crowd, Team	Singular	The jury has given its verdict
	Members of the jury	Plural	The members of the jury have given their verdicts
Nouns ending with an ‘s’	Measles, Mathematics, News, Aesthetics	Singular	Economics is an interesting subject
	Assets, Earnings	Plural	Economics of the project are very doubtful (Financial/ Economic situation)
Uncountable Nouns	Sand, Air, Water, Data (Datum), Information, Machinery	Singular	Information is processed data.

Combined with Conjunctive phrases	As well as, together with, along with, as long as, in addition to	Verb takes the form of the MAIN subject to it	The politician along with his party men is participating in a rally
			The party men along with their leader are participating in a rally
Combined with Correlative conjunction “PROXIMITY RULE”	Neither...nor, Either...or, Not only...but also Conjunction ‘Or ‘ also follows the same rule	Verb takes the form of the subject closest to it	Either his friends or he is to be present in the class.
			Either he or his friends are to be present in the class.
Negative and Positive compound subject	A, not B	Verb takes the form of POSITIVE subject	It is the chairman, not the students, who decides the code of conduct
			The students, not the teacher, are worried about the CA
Indefinite pronouns	SOMEONE (Someone/Somebody, Anyone, No one, Everyone)	Singular	Everyone in this session is receptive

	FABS (Few, All, Both, Several)	Plural	All of you are receptive
	None, Most, Some, Half of, x% of, a third of	Both	Some points of the lecture are interesting Some part of the lecture is interesting
Infinitives and Gerunds	To + Verb form is infinitive To sing, to dance, to cook, to read, to listen Verb + ing form is Gerund Singing, Dancing, Cooking	Singular	To sing is my passion Singing is my passion
		Plural (Compounded infinitives or gerunds)	To cook multiple cuisines and to play guitar are my hobbies Cooking multiple cuisines and playing guitar are my hobbies
Subject	Example	Form	Usage
Measurements	Time, Distance, Speed, Currency, Weight	Singular	Two days of off in the weekend is insufficient
			Ten kilos of rice is required to cook for fifty people

			1000 kilometers is a very long distance
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Errors based on tenses

Tenses are a way of describing the time frame of a verb. There are three main tenses-present, past, and future. Each one has different forms to show how the time frame relates to the speaker.

Confusion Between Past and Perfect Tenses

1. Present Perfect Tense – Understanding the Basics

Present Perfect is formed using has or have followed by the past participle of the verb.

It is used to express actions that happened at an unspecified time before now.

It is also used for actions that have an impact on the present moment.

Common time expressions include already, just, yet, ever, never, recently, so far, since, and for. It is also used for life experiences and for actions that started in the past and continue to the present.

Example: I have completed my assignment.

Example: She has lived in Delhi for ten years.

2. Past Simple Tense – Understanding the Basics

Past Simple is formed using the second form (V2) of the verb.

It is used to talk about actions that occurred at a definite or specific point in the past.

It is used when the time of action is known, mentioned, or clearly implied.

Common time expressions include yesterday, last week, last year, in 2019, on Monday, two days ago, when I was ten.

Example: I visited the museum yesterday.

Example: They left the party at 10 PM.

3. Differences in Usage – Present Perfect vs Past Simple

Present Perfect is used for indefinite time; Past Simple is used for definite time.

Present Perfect focuses on the result or present relevance; Past Simple focuses on the action and when it happened.

Present Perfect is often used when the time is not mentioned; Past Simple is used when the time is clearly stated.

4. Signal Words to Identify the Tenses

Present Perfect signal words include just, already, yet, ever, never, so far, since, for, recently, and lately.

Past Simple signal words include yesterday, last night, last month, two days ago, in 2012, when I was a child, at 8 PM.

5. Error Pattern One – Using Present Perfect with Specific Past Time

Incorrect: I have seen that movie yesterday.

Correction: I saw that movie yesterday.

Incorrect: She has gone to the office at 9 AM.

Correction: She went to the office at 9 AM.

Present Perfect should never be used with time expressions that indicate a specific or completed past time.

6. Error Pattern Two – Using Past Simple with Indefinite Time

Incorrect: I met her before.

Correction: I have met her before.

Incorrect: He went to Canada once.

Correction: He has gone to Canada once.

When the exact time is not mentioned and the sentence refers to experience or result, Present Perfect is preferred.

7. Comparing the Two Tenses – Real-Life Usage

Present Perfect: I have never eaten sushi.

Past Simple: I ate sushi last night.

Present Perfect: She has written three books.

Past Simple: She wrote three books in 2020.

8. Use of "For" and "Since" with Present Perfect

Use "for" with durations. Example: I have lived here for five years.

Use "since" with specific starting points. Example: He has worked here since 2018.

Do not use "for" or "since" with Past Simple.

Incorrect: I lived here since 2018.

Correction: I have lived here since 2018.

9. Negative Forms of the Tenses

Present Perfect Negative: has or have not + past participle

Example: She has not finished her homework.

Past Simple Negative: did not + base form of the verb

Example: She did not finish her homework.

The verb in Past Simple negative returns to base form, not past form.

10. Questions in Present Perfect and Past Simple

Present Perfect: Have you ever been to Paris?

Past Simple: Did you go to Paris last summer?

Present Perfect focuses on whether the action has happened at any time.

Past Simple focuses on the time when it happened.

11. Life Experience vs Specific Event

Present Perfect: I have worked in three companies. (Experience, no time mentioned)

Past Simple: I worked at Infosys in 2019. (Specific job, specific time)

Present Perfect emphasizes experience, growth, or the impact of an action.

Past Simple emphasizes historical facts or completed events.

12. Confusing Time Expressions

Today can be used with both tenses depending on context.

Present Perfect: I have spoken to him today. (Today is not over)

Past Simple: I spoke to him earlier today. (The event is considered completed)

Expressions like this week, this year, or this month require judgment.

Present Perfect: I have attended two seminars this week. (Week is ongoing)

Past Simple: I attended two seminars this week. (Week is considered complete in context)

13. Summary of the Differences

Present Perfect refers to actions that are relevant to the present moment and do not mention a specific past time.

Past Simple refers to actions that are completed and occurred at a definite time in the past.

Using Present Perfect with **specific time expressions** like yesterday, last week, or in 2005 is incorrect.

Using Past Simple when **time is indefinite or when talking about life experience** without mentioning time is not preferred.

Tabular Overview of Key Differences

Feature	Present Perfect	Past Simple
Time Reference	Unspecified or general	Specific and definite
Verb Form	has/have + past participle	Past form (V2)
Action Completed	Often still relevant	Fully completed in the past
Common Time Expressions	just, already, yet, ever	yesterday, last week, ago
Life Experience	I have visited London	I visited London in 2020
Duration/Continuity	I have lived here for 5 years	I lived there for 5 years
Relevance to Present	Yes	No

Confusion Between Past Perfect and Past Simple

1. Past Perfect Tense – Understanding the Basics

The Past Perfect tense is formed using had + past participle of the verb. It is used to indicate that one action occurred before another action in the past. It sets a clear timeline, showing which action happened first.

Example: She had left before I arrived.

This means she left first, and I arrived later.

It is especially useful when describing past events that are not in chronological order or when context alone isn't sufficient to show the sequence.

2. Past Simple Tense

Past Simple uses the second form of the verb (V2) to talk about actions completed in the past at a definite time.

Example: She left before I arrived.

Here, the order may be unclear unless inferred from logic.

3. Differences in Usage – Past Perfect vs Past Simple

Use Past Perfect for the action that happened first.

Use Past Simple for the action that happened later.

Past Perfect often acts as the backstory in narration.

4. Signal Words

Past Perfect: before, after, already, by the time, when (for earlier action)

Past Simple: when, then, later, yesterday, etc.

5. Error Pattern One – Using Past Simple for Both Actions

Incorrect: I ate dinner when he arrived. (Unclear who came first)

Correct: I had eaten dinner when he arrived. (Eating happened first)

6. Error Pattern Two – Using Past Perfect Unnecessarily

Incorrect: I had gone to the market yesterday.

Correct: I went to the market yesterday.

(Past Perfect isn't needed when there's no second past event for comparison)

7. Comparing with Real-Life Usage

Past Perfect: By the time the train arrived, we had already left.

Past Simple: The train arrived at 6 PM. We left at 5 PM.

8. Negative Forms

Past Perfect: had not + past participle (He hadn't seen the message.)

Past Simple: did not + base verb (He didn't see the message.)

9. Questions

Past Perfect: Had you already left when I called?

Past Simple: Did you leave before I called?

10. Summary

Use Past Perfect to show that something happened before another past event. Avoid it when there's no time sequence to express.

Feature	Past Perfect	Past Simple
Time Reference	Two past actions (earlier one)	One-time past action
Verb Form	had + past participle	Verb in V2
Use	To show sequence	To report past event
Example	I had left before he came.	I left at 5 PM.

Confusion Between Present Perfect and Present Perfect Continuous

1. Present Perfect Continuous

Formed using has/have + been + verb-ing, this tense is used to express an action that started in the past and has continued up to now, possibly still happening.

Example: She has been studying for three hours.

It emphasizes duration or continuity rather than completion.

2. Present Perfect

Used for actions completed at some point before now or that still affect the present.

Example: She has studied French. (She may not be doing it now, but she knows it)

3. Differences in Usage

Present Perfect: focuses on completion or result.

Present Perfect Continuous: focuses on ongoing action or time duration.

4. Signal Words

Present Perfect: just, already, ever, never, since, for

Present Perfect Continuous: for, since, lately, recently, all day, all morning

5. Error Pattern

Incorrect: I have studied here since two hours.

Correct: I have been studying here for two hours.

(Duration = continuous)

6. Real-Life Examples

Present Perfect: He has cleaned the house. (The result is visible)

Present Perfect Continuous: He has been cleaning the house all morning. (Ongoing process is emphasized)

7. Negative Forms

Present Perfect: hasn't/haven't + past participle

Present Perfect Continuous: hasn't/haven't been + verb-ing

8. Questions

Present Perfect: Have you finished the report?

Present Perfect Continuous: Have you been working on the report?

9. Summary

Use Present Perfect Continuous when the activity and its duration are important. Use Present Perfect when the completion and effect are the focus.

Feature	Present Perfect	Present Perfect Continuous
Focus	Result, impact	Duration, continuity
Form	have/has + V3	have/has been + V-ing

Example	I have painted the room.	I have been painting the room.
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Confusion Between Future Simple and Future Perfect

1. Future Simple

Formed using will + base verb, used to describe a decision at the moment of speaking, a promise, or a future fact.

Example: I will call you tonight.

2. Future Perfect

Formed using will have + past participle, used for actions that will be completed before a specific future time.

Example: By 8 PM, I will have finished my homework.

3. Differences in Usage

Future Simple: general prediction, spontaneous decision.

Future Perfect: action completed before another future time or event.

4. Signal Words

Future Simple: tomorrow, next week, in 2025

Future Perfect: by, before, by the time, in two hours

5. Error Pattern

Incorrect: I will finish the project by 5 PM. (Acceptable, but Future Perfect is clearer)

Correct: I will have finished the project by 5 PM. (Emphasizes completion before 5 PM)

6. Real-Life Examples

Future Simple: She will arrive at 7.

Future Perfect: She will have arrived by 7.

7. Negative Forms

Future Simple: will not + base verb (He won't come)

Future Perfect: will not have + past participle (He won't have come by 5)

8. Questions

Future Simple: Will you come tomorrow?

Future Perfect: Will you have arrived by then?

9. Summary

Use Future Perfect to emphasize completion before a future moment. Use Future Simple for general future facts.

Feature	Future Simple	Future Perfect
Time Focus	Future moment	Completion before future time
Form	will + base verb	will have + past participle
Example	I will eat at 8.	I will have eaten by 8.

Future Perfect vs Future Continuous

1. Future Perfect Tense: Definition & Usage

The Future Perfect Tense is formed using will have + past participle. It is used to indicate that an action will be completed before a specific point in the future.

Structure:

Subject + will have + past participle + (time expression)

Common Time Expressions:

by then, by tomorrow, by next week, before Monday, by the time...

Example (Technical Context):

By the time the code review begins, the team will have fixed the critical bugs.

2. Future Continuous Tense: Definition & Usage

The Future Continuous Tense is formed using will be + present participle (-ing). It describes an action that will be in progress at a certain time in the future.

Structure:

Subject + will be + verb-ing + (time expression)

Common Time Expressions:

at 5 PM, this time tomorrow, during the meeting, next month...

Example (Technical Context):

At 5 PM tomorrow, the developers will be debugging the final module.

3. Comparison Table: Future Perfect vs Future Continuous

Feature	Future Perfect	Future Continuous
Verb Structure	will have + past participle	will be + verb-ing
Time Focus	Completion before a point in future	In-progress action at a point in future
Use Case	Deadline-based projections	Scheduled ongoing activities
Technical Application	Status reporting, delivery confirmation	Progress monitoring, live demos

4. Common Errors and Corrections

Error: Using Future Continuous instead of Future Perfect

Incorrect: By next Friday, we will be submitting our thesis.

Correct: By next Friday, we will have submitted our thesis.

Explanation:

The action (submission) is expected to be completed by a certain time. Use Future Perfect for that.

Error: Using Future Perfect when Future Continuous is correct

Incorrect: At 10 AM tomorrow, the QA team will have tested the product.

Correct: At 10 AM tomorrow, the QA team will be testing the product.

Explanation:

At 10 AM, the testing will still be in progress, not completed—so Future Continuous is appropriate.

4. Questions and Negatives

● Future Perfect Question:

Will you have completed the security audit by 6 PM?

● Future Continuous Question:

Will you be attending the hackathon tomorrow?

- **Future Perfect Negative:**

We won't have resolved the database issue before the client demo.

- **Future Continuous Negative:**

He won't be participating in the session due to a conflict.

Past Continuous vs Past Perfect Continuous

1. Past Continuous: Definition & Usage

The Past Continuous Tense describes an action that was in progress at a specific time in the past.

Structure:

Subject + was/were + verb-ing

Example:

At 3 PM yesterday, we were troubleshooting the application.

2. Past Perfect Continuous: Definition & Usage

The Past Perfect Continuous Tense is used to describe an action that was happening over a period in the past before another past event.

Structure:

Subject + had been + verb-ing

Example:

We had been troubleshooting the issue for two hours before the manager joined the call.

3. Comparison Table: Past Continuous vs Past Perfect Continuous

Feature	Past Continuous	Past Perfect Continuous
Verb Structure	was/were + verb-ing	had been + verb-ing
Time Focus	Action in progress at a past time	Action ongoing before another past event
Use Case	Single past moment, background context	Duration + sequence in the past
Technical Application	Progress update	Tracking efforts before a result/interrupt

4. Common Errors and Corrections

Error: Using Past Continuous when Past Perfect Continuous is needed

Incorrect: We were debugging the system for hours before the patch was applied.

Correct: We had been debugging the system for hours before the patch was applied.

Explanation:

The debugging process began before another past action (patch applied)—Past Perfect Continuous is correct.

Error: Using Past Perfect Continuous incorrectly for short or one-time past actions

Incorrect: At 10 AM, she had been meeting the team.

Correct: At 10 AM, she was meeting the team.

Explanation:

No prior duration is specified. The focus is on the time when the meeting was occurring—so Past Continuous fits.

5. Questions and Negatives**● Past Continuous Question:**

Were you attending the client meeting yesterday at 4 PM?

● Past Perfect Continuous Question:

Had they been running tests on the updated model before the report was generated?

● Past Continuous Negative:

We weren't testing the device when the issue occurred.

● Past Perfect Continuous Negative:

They had not been following the protocol consistently before the error was flagged.

Present Perfect Continuous vs Present Perfect**1. Present Perfect Tense**

Definition:

The Present Perfect Tense describes an action that happened at an unspecified time in the past or started in the past and continues up to the present. The focus is often on the result or completion.

Structure:

Subject + has/have + past participle

Common Signal Words:

just, already, yet, ever, never, since, for, recently, so far

2. Present Perfect Continuous Tense

Definition:

This tense describes an action that started in the past and is still continuing or has recently stopped but has a visible effect in the present. The focus is on the duration or continuity of the activity.

Structure:

Subject + has/have been + verb-ing

Common Signal Words:

since, for, lately, recently, all day, for hours

Feature	Present Perfect	Present Perfect Continuous
Verb Structure	has/have + past participle	has/have been + verb-ing
Focus	Result or completion	Duration or ongoing action
Time Reference	Past actions affecting present	Activity started in past and still ongoing
Ended or Continuing?	May be completed	Likely still happening

3. Common Errors and Corrections

Error 1: Using Present Perfect instead of Present Perfect Continuous

Incorrect: We have worked on this module since morning.

Correct: We have been working on this module since morning.

Why?

The action is ongoing and the focus is on duration, so Present Perfect Continuous is required.

Error 2: Using Present Perfect Continuous when action is completed

Incorrect: I have been uploading the documents. (but the documents are already uploaded)

Correct: I have uploaded the documents.

Why?

The action is finished and result-focused—use Present Perfect.

4. Questions and Negative Forms

Present Perfect

Q: Have you completed the assignment?

Neg: I haven't finished the report yet.

Present Perfect Continuous

Q: Have you been attending the AI workshop this week?

Neg: She hasn't been contributing to the project regularly.

Unnecessary Shifts in Tense

One of the most frequent and confusing errors in writing is the unnecessary or illogical shift in verb tense within a sentence or paragraph. Tense indicates the time of action, and maintaining consistency in tense is crucial for clear, coherent communication. When a writer changes tenses without a valid reason—such as shifting from past to present or future within the same sentence or idea—the timeline becomes muddled, making it difficult for the reader to follow the sequence of events. Tense consistency means using the same verb tense across related parts of your sentence or paragraph unless a shift in time is logically required.

Maintaining proper verb tense is essential for:

- Clarity: Your reader understands when actions happened.
- Coherence: Your ideas flow smoothly and logically.
- Professionalism: It improves the overall tone and credibility of your writing.

An unnecessary shift in tense occurs when a sentence or passage changes from one verb tense to another without a logical reason. Tense shifts can break the narrative flow, confuse readers, and often indicate a lack of grammatical control.

For example:

1. She was walking to the market and sees a puppy.

- Here, the tense suddenly shifts from past continuous ("was walking") to present simple ("sees") without any contextual reason. This abrupt change not only disturbs the timeline but also makes the sentence grammatically incorrect.

Corrected version:

She was walking to the market and saw a puppy.

- Explanation: Both verbs describe actions in the past, so they must match in tense. "Was walking" sets the narrative in the past, and "sees" must also shift to past: "saw." This ensures tense consistency.

2. She had completed the assignment and submits it yesterday.

➤ Here,

"Had completed" = Past Perfect Tense: Describes an action that was completed before another action in the past.

"Submits" = Present Simple Tense: Refers to current or habitual action, which doesn't match the past context.

"Yesterday" = Time marker for the past: Demands use of Past Tense for both actions.

Corrected Version:

She had completed the assignment and submitted it yesterday.

Rule Applied:

When both actions occurred in the past and one action was completed before the other, use Past Perfect for the first and Simple Past for the second action.

3. I will call you when he will arrive.

➤ In time clauses (introduced by when, before, after, as soon as, until, etc.), we do not use future tense even if the action is in the future. Instead, **use Simple Present Tense to refer to a future action.**

Corrected Version:

I will call you when he arrives.

Maintaining consistent tense throughout a piece of writing is important because it provides the reader with a stable sense of time and helps them understand when events are taking place. If a story begins in the past tense, the events within that story should generally remain in the past unless there is a clear shift in the timeline.

For example,

- If a writer begins a narrative with, "Last summer, we went to the mountains," all subsequent events from that trip should be described using past tense verbs such as "hiked," "cooked," or "explored."
- Changing the tense midway to present—e.g., "We hike up the trail and cook by the campfire"—creates confusion and inconsistency, unless the present tense is being used deliberately for stylistic effect, such as in vivid storytelling or dramatic narration.

However, **not all tense shifts are incorrect**. In fact, some shifts are not only acceptable but also necessary to accurately convey changes in time or perspective. These are known as **purposeful tense shifts**.

For instance,

- In academic or literary analysis, it is common to use the present tense when discussing the content of a text, even if the text itself was written in the past.
- A sentence such as “Shakespeare explores themes of ambition in Macbeth” uses the present tense “explores” because the literary work continues to exist and be relevant, regardless of when it was written.
- If the writer then shifts to describing a personal experience, they may say, “When I read the play in high school, I found the character of Macbeth deeply disturbing.”
- In this case, the shift from present to past is acceptable because it marks a transition from discussing an ongoing truth about the text to recalling a specific event in the writer’s past.

Another acceptable context for shifting tenses is when writers include flashbacks or transitions between different time periods.

For example,

- In a story that begins in the present—“She stands on the balcony, staring at the skyline”, the writer may shift to the past to indicate a memory: “Ten years ago, she had stood in the same place, thinking of the future.”
- Here, the past perfect tense “had stood” appropriately marks an event that occurred before the current moment. Such shifts are not only grammatically correct but also necessary for conveying temporal relationships among events.

Tips to Avoid Unnecessary Tense Shifts

- Identify the time frame of your writing before you begin.
- Check the verb tenses in each sentence during revision—especially if you’re telling a story or explaining a sequence of events.
- Read aloud to spot tense changes that don’t make sense.
- Ask: “Are these actions happening at the same time?” If yes, keep the tense the same.
- Understand signal words such as “now,” “then,” “before,” “after,” “at that time,” and “currently”.

Incorrect Verb Forms

Using the correct verb form is essential for constructing grammatically accurate sentences. One of the most common errors learners make is using the wrong form of a verb, especially when dealing with irregular verbs in perfect tenses and passive voice. These mistakes typically arise when the base form, past simple, or past participle of a verb is used incorrectly or interchangeably.

Understanding Verb Forms

English verbs usually have three main forms:

- Base Form (present tense – used with subjects in the present, or after modals like “can,” “should”): go, do, eat, write
- Past Simple (used for actions completed in the past): went, did, ate, wrote
- Past Participle (used in perfect tenses and passive voice): gone, done, eaten, written
- Present participle/gerund (e.g., going, eating, seeing)

For regular verbs, the past simple and past participle are usually the same (e.g., work – worked – worked), but irregular verbs change forms unpredictably, requiring memorization and practice.

3. Irregular Verb Confusions

Irregular verbs pose a unique challenge because their past and past participle forms are not predictable and must be memorized. Incorrect use can significantly change the meaning or render the sentence ungrammatical.

Examples of Commonly Confused Irregular Verbs:

Base Verb	Past	Past Participle	Incorrect Usage	Correct Usage
Drink	Drank	Drunk	He has drank it.	He has drunk it.
Break	Broke	Broken	She has broke it.	She has broken it.
Choose	Chose	Chosen	They have chose us.	They have chosen us.
Speak	Spoke	Spoken	We have spoke already.	We have spoken

				already.
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4. Errors with Passive Voice

Errors in passive voice construction are often the result of misunderstanding the verb form required after a form of the verb “be.” passive voice is used when the focus is on the receiver of an action rather than the doer. It is constructed by combining a form of the verb “be” (such as is, are, was, were, has been, had been, etc.) with the past participle of the main verb.

For example,

The sentence “The document is write by the author” is **incorrect** because “write” is the base form of the verb, which cannot follow “is” in a passive construction.

The **correct form should be** “The document is written by the author,” where “written” is the past participle form of “write.”

Passive constructions require the use of the correct past participle form after a form of “be” (is, are, was, were, been, etc.).

Incorrect: The document is write by the author.

This sentence is incorrect because “write” is the base form.

Correct: The document is written by the author.

“Written” is the correct past participle of “write.”

More Correct Passive Sentences:

The book was read by millions.

The car has been repaired.

The reports were submitted on time.

This pattern must be followed consistently in all tenses when forming the passive voice.

For instance, in the past simple passive, the structure would be “was/were + past participle”.

Example:

- “The book was read by millions.” Here, “was” is the past form of “be,” and “read” is the past participle (which has the same spelling as the base form but a different pronunciation).
- In the present perfect passive, the structure becomes “has/have been + past participle,”
Example: “The car has been repaired.”
- Similarly, for a plural subject in the past tense, we use “were + past participle,” as seen in “The reports were submitted on time.”

All of these examples follow the same grammatical rule: the verb “be” in its appropriate form is followed by the correct past participle of the main verb.

Mismatches with Time Expressions

1. Understanding Time Expressions and Their Matching Tenses

- Time expressions provide clues about the correct tense to be used in a sentence.
- Choosing the wrong tense for a time expression is a frequent source of grammatical error.
- Below is a list of common time expressions and the tenses they typically require:

Time Expression and Matching Tense(s)

Yesterday, last night, last year, two days ago → Simple Past

Just, already, yet, ever, never, recently → Present Perfect

For, since → Present Perfect or Present Perfect Continuous

By the time → Past Perfect or Future Perfect

When, while → Simple Past or Past Continuous depending on context

2. Common Errors Related to Time Expressions

- Incorrect: He has seen the movie last night.

Explanation: "Last night" is a specific time in the past, so Present Perfect is incorrect.

Correction: He saw the movie last night.

- Incorrect: I was working here since 2010.

Explanation: "Since 2010" implies an action that started in the past and continues till now.

Use Present Perfect Continuous.

Correction: I have been working here since 2010.

- Incorrect: They have left by 5 PM.

Explanation: "By 5 PM" in this context indicates a point before another action in the past.

Use Past Perfect.

Correction: They had left by 5 PM.

3. Tips to Use Tenses with Time Expressions Correctly

- Always ask whether the time is specific or general.

- If the time is clearly defined and in the past, use the Simple Past.
- If no time is mentioned or if the result is still relevant, use the Present Perfect.
- If the action is still ongoing and time is mentioned using "for" or "since", use Present Perfect Continuous.

➤ Examples of Correct Usage:

Present Perfect: I have already eaten.

Past Simple: I ate at 8 PM yesterday.

Present Perfect Continuous: I have been studying since morning.

Maintaining Consistency Across Clauses and Sentences

Tense consistency refers to maintaining the same verb tense throughout a clause, sentence, or paragraph unless there is a clear and logical reason to shift the tense. This consistency is crucial because it helps the reader follow the timeline of events easily. When tenses are inconsistent, readers may become confused about the sequence or timing of actions, which weakens the clarity and effectiveness of communication.

Examples of Tense Consistency

Consistent: He woke up, brushed his teeth, and left for work.

All verbs are in the past tense, making the sequence easy to follow.

Inconsistent: He woke up, brushes his teeth, and left for work.

"Brushes" is in present tense while the other verbs are in past tense. The switch is jarring and grammatically incorrect.

Acceptable Tense Shifts

Shifting tenses is acceptable only when different actions occur at different times.

For example,

When describing a completed action followed by another:

Correct: After she had finished dinner, she went for a walk.

Explanation: "Had finished" (Past Perfect) happened before "went" (Simple Past).

When describing a general truth within a past narrative:

Correct: He explained that the sun rises in the east.

Explanation: "Rises" is a universal truth, so the Present Simple is appropriate even in a past context.

➤ **Recommended Sentence Structures for Tense Consistency**

Type of Action and Recommended Tense Usage

- Sequential Actions: Use Simple Past for all actions

Example: He opened the door, stepped outside, and looked around.

- Simultaneous Actions: Use Past Continuous for both actions

Example: He was reading while she was cooking.

- One action before another: Use Past Perfect for the earlier action, and Simple Past for the later one

Example: He had already left when I arrived.

- Present actions happening together: Use Present Continuous for all verbs

Example: She is cooking and watching TV at the same time.

Common Faulty Patterns and Corrections

- Incorrect: She is cooking and watched TV.

Explanation: Mixing present continuous and simple past is grammatically incorrect.

Correction: She is cooking and watching TV.

- Incorrect: I have finished the task and met the client.

Explanation: "Have finished" is Present Perfect, but "met" is Simple Past.

Correction: I have finished the task and have met the client.

- Incorrect: He had gone to the market and buys groceries.

Explanation: "Had gone" is Past Perfect, while "buys" is Present Simple.

Correction: He had gone to the market and bought groceries.

Checklist for Maintaining Tense Consistency

- Check all verbs in a sentence or paragraph to ensure they align in tense unless a timeline shift is clearly intended.
- Use Simple Past for historical narration or past event sequences.
- Use Present Perfect only when the result matters in the present or the time is not mentioned.

- Use Past Perfect only when one past action occurred before another.
- Use Present Continuous or Past Continuous when two actions are happening at the same time.

Errors Based On Modifiers

Modifier Placement

A modifier is a word, phrase, or clause that adds detail, description, or emphasis to another word or group of words in a sentence. Modifiers enhance clarity and precision by answering questions like Which one?, What kind?, How many?, How?, When?, and Where? Modifiers should appear next to the word they describe. If not, the sentence may still be grammatically complete but logically flawed. Modifier errors are especially problematic in academic, technical, and formal writing, where clarity and precision are essential.

1. Misplaced Modifiers

Definition:

A misplaced modifier is a descriptive word, phrase, or clause that is incorrectly positioned in a sentence, so it seems to modify the wrong word or group of words. While the sentence may be grammatically correct, its meaning becomes unclear, confusing, or unintentionally funny.

Think of It Like This:

Imagine you're putting a label on a box, but you accidentally stick it on the wrong one. Now, everyone thinks the contents of Box A are in Box B. That's what a misplaced modifier does: it attaches a description to the wrong part of a sentence.

If the description isn't close to what it's describing, it leads to misinterpretation.

A misplaced modifier is a modifier that is placed too far from the word or words it modifies. Misplaced modifiers make the sentence awkward and sometimes unintentionally humorous.

Incorrect: She wore a bicycle helmet on her head that was too large.

Correct: She wore a bicycle helmet that was too large on her head.

Notice in the incorrect sentence it sounds as if her head was too large! Of course, the writer is referring to the helmet, not to the person's head. The corrected version of the sentence clarifies the writer's meaning.

Look at the following two examples:

Incorrect: They bought a kitten for my brother they call Shadow.

Correct: They bought a kitten they call Shadow for my brother.

In the incorrect sentence, it seems that the brother's name is Shadow. That's because the modifier is too far from the word it modifies, which is kitten.

Incorrect: The patient was referred to the physician with stomach pains.

Correct: The patient with stomach pains was referred to the physician.

The incorrect sentence reads as if it is the physician who has stomach pains! What the writer means is that the patient has stomach pains.

Misplaced Modifier Errors:

Incorrect Sentence	Why It's Wrong	Corrected Version
She served sandwiches to the children on paper plates.	Sounds like children are on plates.	She served the children sandwiches on paper plates.
He only listens to music when he studies.	"Only" modifies the wrong word.	He listens to music only when he studies.

Tip

Simple modifiers like only, almost, just, nearly, and barely often get used incorrectly because writers often stick them in the wrong place.

Confusing: Tyler almost found fifty cents under the sofa cushions.

Repaired: Tyler found almost fifty cents under the sofa cushions.

2. Dangling Modifiers

Definition:

A dangling modifier is a word or phrase that modifies a word not clearly stated in the sentence. The modifier is left "dangling" because there's no logical subject to attach to.

Think of it like this:

The sentence is "dangling" a description, but hasn't told us who or what is being described.

A dangling modifier is a word, phrase, or clause that describes something that has been left out of the sentence. When there is nothing that the word, phrase, or clause can modify, the modifier is said to dangle.

Incorrect: Riding in the sports car, the world whizzed by rapidly.

Correct: As Jane was riding in the sports car, the world whizzed by rapidly.

In the incorrect sentence, riding in the sports car is dangling. The reader is left wondering who is riding in the sports car. The writer must tell the reader!

Incorrect: Walking home at night, the trees looked like spooky aliens.

Correct: As Jonas was walking home at night, the trees looked like spooky aliens.

Correct: The trees looked like spooky aliens as Jonas was walking home at night.

In the incorrect sentence walking home at night is dangling. Who is walking home at night? Jonas. Note that there are two different ways the dangling modifier can be corrected.

Incorrect: To win the spelling bee, Luis and Gerard should join our team.

Correct: If we want to win the spelling bee this year, Luis and Gerard should join our team.

In the incorrect sentence, to win the spelling bee is dangling. Who wants to win the spelling bee? We do!

Example:

Hoping to impress the teacher, the homework was completed early.

Problem: The homework can't hope to impress anyone.

There is no clear subject doing the hoping.

Corrected:

Hoping to impress the teacher, I completed the homework early.

Dangling Modifier Errors

Incorrect Sentence	Why It's Confusing	Corrected Version
After reading the book, the movie seemed dull.	The movie didn't read the book.	After reading the book, we thought the movie seemed dull.
To get good grades,	To get good grades,	To get good grades,

studying regularly is required.	studying regularly is required.	studying regularly is required.
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Tip

The following three steps will help you quickly spot a dangling modifier:

- Look for an -ing modifier at the beginning of your sentence or another modifying phrase: Painting for three hours at night, the kitchen was finally finished by Maggie. (Painting is the -ing modifier.)

- Underline the first noun that follows it:

Painting for three hours at night, the kitchen was finally finished by Maggie.

- Make sure the modifier and noun go together logically. If they do not, it is very likely you have a dangling modifier.

- After identifying the dangling modifier, rewrite the sentence.

Painting for three hours at night, Maggie finally finished the kitchen.

3. Ambiguous Modifiers

Definition:

An ambiguous modifier is a word, phrase, or clause that is placed in such a way that it can modify more than one element in a sentence. This causes confusion because the reader can't tell which word or phrase the modifier is supposed to describe.

Think of It Like This:

Imagine two people raising their hands at the same time when a question is asked—one of them is supposed to answer, but it's unclear who. That's what happens with ambiguous modifiers: they leave the reader unsure about what exactly is being described.

Even though the sentence may be grammatically correct, its meaning is vague or unclear due to the positioning of the modifier.

Why It Happens:

Ambiguous modifiers typically occur in complex sentences or sentences with prepositional phrases, time phrases, or descriptive phrases.

Writers often add modifiers without placing them immediately next to the word they intend to describe.

Example:

She said last night her roommate was rude.

Did she say it last night, or was the roommate rude last night?

Clarified Option 1:

She said last night that her roommate was rude. (She said it last night)

Clarified Option 2:

She said that her roommate was rude last night. (The roommate was rude last night)

Common Ambiguous Modifier Errors

AMBIGUOUS SENTENCE	CLARIFIED OPTION 1	CLARIFIED OPTION 2
He watched the dog with binoculars.	He watched the dog with binoculars.	He watched the dog with binoculars.
I saw the girl with a telescope.	I saw the girl with a telescope.	I saw the girl with a telescope.
They met the professor who was late at 10 AM.	They met the professor who was late at 10 AM.	They met the professor who was late at 10 AM.

Why This Matters in Academic Writing

Misplaced, dangling, and ambiguous modifiers can:

1. Obscure your argument or analysis
2. Confuse your reader
3. Weaken your authority as a writer
4. Lead to misinterpretation in formal settings
5. In academic writing, clarity is more important than creativity. Sentences must logically and clearly express your intended meaning.

Final Takeaway

Modifier errors are often subtle, but they can drastically affect how your message is received. Being mindful of word placement and revising for clarity will significantly enhance your writing style. Especially in formal and academic writing, you should aim for precision, not just correctness. When in doubt, restructure your sentence to leave no room for confusion.

Errors based on parallelism

Parallel structure, also known as parallelism, is a grammatical principle that ensures the parts of a sentence that are joined together—whether by conjunctions, commas, or comparison words—are written in the same grammatical form. In simple terms, this means that when you present ideas in a list, compare items, or use correlative conjunctions (like "either...or" or "not only...but also"), each element should match in structure. This balance enhances clarity, improves rhythm, and strengthens coherence in writing. In contrast, when sentence elements are mismatched or inconsistent, it results in what we call faulty parallel structure. Faulty parallelism not only makes a sentence grammatically weak but also distracts the reader, slows comprehension, and can make the writer seem careless or unskilled. For students in professional and technical disciplines mastering parallel structure is crucial for drafting effective emails, project reports, CVs, and academic writing, where clarity and precision are essential.

What is Faulty Parallelism?

Parallelism in writing refers to the structure of a sentence with regards to the way items or actions are listed. In math, parallel lines run alongside each other, matching each other. Similarly, when there are several actions or items listed in a sentence—whether they are written as words, phrases, or entire clauses—they should all be presented using the same pattern or structure. They should match each other.

An example of correct parallel structure would be:

In the meeting, we will discuss establishing our new guidelines, implementing the new system, and planning the holiday party.

In this example, "establishing," "implementing," and "planning" are all gerund phrases (an -ing verb that functions as a noun).

Faulty parallelism, also called faulty parallel structure, is when the list is incorrectly written—when the items are not written in the same way and don't "match."

In the meeting, we will discuss establishing our new guidelines, how to implement the new system, and planning the holiday party.

Here, there are two gerund phrases, "establishing" and "planning," but then there is an infinitive (a verb phrase that includes the word "to" and the verb at its basic, stem level), "to implement," that doesn't match the other

How Does Parallelism Work? – Rules and Tips

The primary idea that you will have to keep in mind when using similar words, phrases and clauses in sentences is that it should be balanced throughout the sentence. Such a balanced arrangement can be achieved by repeating the same syntactic forms and structure. Now, why should the same structure be used throughout? This is a doubt that might arise. Well, it is because all the elements mentioned in the sentence are equally important.

In order to write such sentences, there are a few rules you should follow. Here they are.

- Rule 1: When providing a list of items within a sentence, mention all of them in the same syntactic form.
- Rule 2: When listing out points, make sure they are in the same structure.
- Rule 3: When mentioning a series of actions in a sentence, see to it that all of them are written in the same verb forms.
- Rule 4: If two or more phrases or clauses mentioning similar or contrasting ideas are used in the same sentence, see to it that they have the same syntactic structure.

A common rule when applying parallelism in sentences is the usage of commas to separate similar/contrasting words, phrases and clauses.

When to use Parallel Structure?

Knowing when to use parallelism is as important as knowing how to use it. Read on to learn where and when the parallel structure is applied in sentences.

- When you are connecting two or more phrases or clauses using coordinating conjunctions; **for example**, I will be going to meet my friends in Bangalore and also visit my cousins on the way.
- When you are making use of correlative conjunctions to connect two or more phrases and clauses; **for example**, If you come home early, we can have dinner together.
- When comparing two or more phrases or clauses with words like 'than' and 'as'; **for example**, We would rather lie under the night sky than sleep in a small tent.

- When comparing or listing multiple courses of action in a sentence; **for example**, Online classes and work from home have become the new normal since the dawn of the pandemic.

Faulty Parallelism in Lists and Series

One of the most common places where parallelism breaks down is in lists or series. When you list actions, qualities, or items, each component should have the same grammatical pattern.

For example, **“The developer was responsible for designing the interface, writing code, and to test the software”**

In this sentence, **the third item disrupts the structure**.

"Designing" and "writing" are gerunds (verbs ending in –ing used as nouns), while "to test" is an infinitive. This inconsistency makes the sentence awkward and uneven.

The **corrected sentence** would be: “The developer was responsible for designing the interface, writing code, and testing the software.”

All elements now follow the gerund form, resulting in a clean, professional tone.

Lists are common in job descriptions, CVs, and technical documentation, so using parallel structure makes the message easier to read and more credible. If you're inconsistent, the reader may misunderstand the intent or question your attention to detail—two things you don’t want during a job interview or project pitch.

How to Maintain Parallel Structure with Lists and Series

1. **Step One:** Determine the grammatical element you want to use.

Example: I want to get cake, the cookies, and a piece of pie.

The list in this sentence has three grammatical structures—**a noun** ("cake"), **a definite article and a noun** ("the cookies"), and **an indefinite article and a noun phrase** (a piece of pie).

For this example, we will use a definite article (the) and a noun or noun phrase.

2. **Step Two:** Determine which elements in the list are incorrect.

The first and third elements in the list are incorrect. The middle element ("the cookies") is correct.

3. Step Three: Rewrite the sentence or list so that it maintains parallel structure.

I want to get the cake, the cookies, and the piece of pie.

Parallel structure can sometimes be more difficult to maintain in a numbered or bulleted list. These types of lists are more segmented, making it more difficult to spot errors in parallel structure.

I enjoy:

- jogging in the woods
- classic literature
- meditating
- walks in the park

This list uses three grammatical structures and should be revised so that it maintains parallel structure. We will edit the list so that it uses the present continuous verb form:

I enjoy:

- jogging in the woods
- reading classic literature
- meditating
- walking in the park

TIP: The items in sentences and lists should generally be equally detailed. For instance, "meditating" is less descriptive than the other elements in the list above. The author might consider adding more detail, so it better matches the other elements in the list (e.g. meditating in nature).

Parallelism in Comparisons

Comparisons often involve structures using “than” or “as...as.” In such cases, the two items being compared must follow a similar grammatical form.

Example of Faulty Parallelism in Comparison:

Incorrect: She is more interested in painting than to sculpt.

In this sentence, “painting” is a gerund, while “to sculpt” is an infinitive. This mismatch in grammatical form creates a jarring, unbalanced structure.

Corrected Version:

Correct: She is more interested in painting than in sculpting.

Here, both “painting” and “sculpting” are gerunds, making the comparison smooth and grammatically sound.

More Examples:

Incorrect: He is taller than his brother and having more stamina.

Correct: He is taller than his brother and has more stamina.

In the corrected version, “is” and “has” are both simple present tense verbs, maintaining the parallelism in structure and verb tense.

Note:

In comparisons using more than, less than, as much as, as well as, etc., make sure both parts being compared match in form. This becomes particularly important when you compare activities, roles, or responsibilities.

How to Maintain Parallel Structure in Comparisons

1. **Step One:** Identify the elements being compared. Are you comparing actions, qualities, or people?
2. **Step Two:** Check if both elements use the same part of speech and grammatical form (e.g., noun to noun, verb to verb, phrase to phrase).
3. **Step Three:** Revise the sentence so both elements match in form.

Non-parallel:

The new smartphone is not only faster but also has a better camera.

Parallel:

The new smartphone is not only faster but also more reliable.

(OR) The new smartphone not only runs faster but also has a better camera.

In the corrected versions, each part of the comparison follows a similar structure—either two adjectives (faster, more reliable) or two verb phrases (runs faster, has a better camera).

Parallelism in Paired Constructions

Paired constructions use correlative conjunctions like:

both...and

either...or

neither...nor

not only...but also

whether...or

These pairs signal that what follows each element must match in grammatical structure.

Faulty parallelism in these constructions can make writing feel clumsy or difficult to interpret.

Example of Faulty Parallelism:

Incorrect: She wants not only to travel the world but also learning new languages.

Here, “to travel” is an infinitive, while “learning” is a gerund. The inconsistency makes the sentence grammatically incorrect.

Corrected Version:

Correct: She wants not only to travel the world but also to learn new languages.

Both elements now use the infinitive form (to travel, to learn), making the sentence clear and fluid.

Common Patterns and Fixes in Paired Constructions

Pattern 1: Both...and

Incorrect: He is both a great leader and knows how to inspire people.

Correct: He is both a great leader and an inspiring speaker.

(OR) He both leads effectively and inspires people.

Ensure both halves are the same part of speech (both nouns, both adjectives, or both verb phrases).

Pattern 2: Either...or / Neither...nor

Incorrect: You can either choose to work remotely or working in the office.

Correct: You can either choose to work remotely or choose to work in the office.

(OR) You can either work remotely or work in the office.

Avoid mixing verb forms like “to work” with “working.”

Pattern 3: Not only...but also

Incorrect: She not only dances gracefully but also is singing beautifully.

Correct: She not only dances gracefully but also sings beautifully.

Here, both “dances” and “sings” are in the simple present tense, maintaining parallel structure.

Advanced Tip: Parallelism with Clauses

Sometimes paired constructions involve entire clauses. In these cases, parallelism should be maintained not just in word form, but also in clause structure.

Example:

Incorrect: The candidate who has leadership skills and who can communicate well is preferred over others.

Correct: The candidate who has leadership skills and communicates well is preferred over others.

Here, both clauses begin with “who,” but the verbs (“has” and “communicates”) must follow the same subject logically to keep the flow intact.

⇒ Why Parallel Structure Matters ?

When parallelism breaks down, even subtly, the reader may become confused or distracted. Sentences with faulty parallel structure are often grammatically incorrect and lack the professional polish expected in formal writing. Whether you’re writing essays, project reports, CVs, or emails, parallelism improves readability and reinforces your credibility as a communicator. It also enhances rhythm and balance, making your writing more persuasive and memorable.

Maintaining parallel structure is especially vital when the paired ideas are long or complex. The more elements you compare or coordinate, the more attention you must give to ensuring that grammatical forms remain consistent.

The Impact of Parallelism on Professional and Academic Writing

Maintaining parallel structure is more than just a grammar rule—it is a stylistic choice that reflects clarity, discipline, and structure in thought and communication. In the fast-paced, detail-oriented world of technology and engineering, even small inconsistencies can impact how your communication is perceived.

For instance, when writing a cover letter, if you say, **“I am skilled in Java, can work under pressure, and problem-solving,”** the sentence feels unpolished and lacks flow. The list includes an adjective phrase (“skilled in Java”), a verb phrase (“can work under pressure”), and a noun (“problem-solving”).

Instead, **rephrasing** it as **“I am skilled in Java, experienced in working under pressure, and strong in problem-solving”** not only aligns the structure but also improves readability and fluency.

Academic writing, too, benefits from parallelism, particularly in thesis statements, literature reviews, and summaries, where clarity of argument and flow of logic are essential.

Company Specific Vocabulary

Word	Meaning	Example Sentence
Abash	to embarrass or humiliate	The surprise critique did not abash her; she responded calmly.
Abate	to reduce in severity or intensity	After measures were taken, the delays finally began to abate .
Abdicate	to give up power or responsibility	The troubled CEO chose to abdicate rather than face the scandal.
Aberrant	deviating from what is normal or typical	His aberrant behavior prompted a performance review.
Abet	to aid or abet wrongdoing	She refused to abet the unethical accounting practices.
Abhor	to loathe, hate strongly	Team members abhorred the lack of transparency in decisions.
Abjure	to renounce formally	He publicly abjured his earlier statement after reviewing facts.

Abrogate	to repeal or abolish formally	The board voted to abrogate the outdated policy.
Abscond	to depart secretly and hide oneself	The intern absconded with the confidential data late at night.
Abstemious	moderate in eating or drinking habits	She stayed abstemious at the company party, choosing water.
Accede	to agree or give consent	The department acceded when the CEO requested a revised plan.
Acclaim	high praise	Her presentation garnered acclaim from all stakeholders.
Acclimate	to become accustomed to a new climate or situation	It took him weeks to acclimate to the fast-paced start-up culture.
Acquire	to gain ownership by one's actions	The firm will acquire the smaller competitor by year-end.
Acrimony	bitterness or harshness in speech	Negotiations ended in acrimony , with both sides frustrated.
Acumen	keen insight or shrewd judgment	Her marketing acumen turned the campaign into a success.
Adamant	unyielding; firm in opinion	He was adamant that the product release date would not move.
Adept	highly skilled or proficient	She is adept at managing cross-functional teams.
Adhere	to stick firmly; to follow closely	All team members must adhere to the compliance guidelines.
Admonish	to warn or reprimand firmly	HR admonished the staff about respect during meetings.
Adroit	skillful, clever	His adroit handling of the crisis earned him accolades.
Adulation	excessive praise or admiration	The CEO humbly received the adulation after record profits.
Adversary	opponent; enemy	They treated the competing firm as an

		adversary , not a collaborator.
Advocate	to support or speak publicly in favor of	He advocated for more inclusive workplace policies.
Aesthetic	relating to beauty or visual appeal	The new app's aesthetic design improved user engagement.
Affluent	wealthy, having an abundance of money	The team targeted affluent clients in the premium segment.
Elated	extremely happy or jubilant	The team was elated after winning the innovation award.
Elicit	to draw out a response or reaction	The manager's speech elicited strong support from the staff.
Elucidate	to make clear; to explain	She used charts to elucidate the quarterly results.
Emulate	to imitate with the intent to match or surpass	He hopes to emulate his mentor's success in product strategy.
Enervate	to weaken or drain energy	Long meetings can enervate even the most enthusiastic employees.
Engender	to produce or cause	The CEO's vision engendered trust across departments.
Enigmatic	mysterious, difficult to understand	His enigmatic reply left the team guessing about next steps.
Enumerate	to list out	The HR lead enumerated all the policy changes in her email.
Ephemeral	short-lived	The spike in user traffic was ephemeral , lasting only two days.
Epitome	a perfect example of something	She is the epitome of professionalism in every meeting.
Equanimity	calmness under pressure	Despite the chaos, he handled the crisis with equanimity .
Equivocate	to speak ambiguously to avoid commitment	He tends to equivocate when asked about deadlines.

Eradicate	to wipe out or destroy completely	The IT team worked to eradicate the malware from all systems.
Erratic	unpredictable or inconsistent	His erratic attendance raised concerns with HR.
Erudite	scholarly, well-educated	The erudite professor gave a compelling guest lecture.
Esoteric	understood by only a few; obscure	The finance report contained esoteric terms unfamiliar to most.
Espouse	to support or adopt an idea	The company espouses sustainability in all its operations.
Ethereal	delicate, light, almost otherworldly	The interface had an ethereal design that impressed investors.
Euphemism	a mild expression used in place of a harsh one	"Let go" is a euphemism for being fired.
Exacerbate	to make worse	The delays only exacerbated client dissatisfaction.
Exculpate	to clear from blame or guilt	The evidence exculpated him from the data breach.
Exemplary	outstanding, serving as a model	Her exemplary leadership inspired the entire department.
Exhort	to strongly encourage	The manager exhorted the team to meet the ambitious deadline.
Exonerate	to officially clear from blame	The investigation exonerated the vendor from the contract breach.
Expedite	to speed up the process	We need to expedite approval to meet the launch window.
Iconoclast	a person who attacks traditional beliefs	The new director is an iconoclast with bold ideas.
Idiosyncrasy	a peculiar trait or habit	Her idiosyncrasy of color-coding everything amused her colleagues.

Illicit	forbidden by law or custom	The company faced charges for illicit data collection.
Imbibe	to absorb or take in	New hires must imbibe the company culture quickly.
Imminent	about to happen	The product launch is imminent after final approvals.
Immutable	unchanging over time	The core values of the company are immutable.
Impeccable	faultless; flawless	His presentation style is impeccable.
Implicit	implied though not directly stated	There was implicit trust between the partners.
Incessant	continuing without pause	The incessant notifications distracted the team.
Incisive	clear and direct	Her incisive analysis impressed the board.
Indolent	lazy, avoiding activity	The intern was let go due to indolent behavior.
Ineffable	too great or extreme to be described	The CEO's support created an ineffable sense of loyalty.
Innate	inborn; natural	He has an innate ability to lead under pressure.
Innocuous	not harmful or offensive	Her comment was innocuous but misinterpreted.
Insatiable	impossible to satisfy	The client had an insatiable demand for revisions.
Insolent	showing a rude lack of respect	The employee's insolent response shocked everyone.
Intrepid	fearless, adventurous	The intrepid manager took on risky projects.
Jocular	humorous, playful	His jocular tone lightened the tense meeting.

Judicious	showing good judgment	She made a judicious choice in vendor selection.
Juxtapose	to place side by side for contrast	The designer juxtaposed modern and classic styles.
Keen	eager or enthusiastic	He has a keen interest in data analytics.
Kinetic	relating to motion	The kinetic energy of the team was evident.
Laconic	using few words	His laconic reply ended the debate.
Lament	to express sorrow or regret	She lamented the missed opportunity.
Languid	slow and relaxed	His languid movements suggested disinterest.
Latent	hidden but capable of being activated	There was latent potential in the new intern.
Levity	humor or lightness, especially in serious situations	He added levity to the otherwise serious meeting.
Lucid	clear and easy to understand	Her lucid explanation helped resolve confusion.
Magnanimous	very generous or forgiving	He was magnanimous in accepting the apology.
Malevolent	having or showing a wish to do evil	The virus had a malevolent impact on the system.
Mediocre	average or below expectations	The performance was mediocre at best.
Meticulous	extremely careful and precise	The designer was meticulous with every detail.
Morose	sullen and ill-tempered	He appeared morose after the failed presentation.
Mundane	ordinary, lacking excitement	She was tired of mundane daily tasks.
Myriad	a countless or very great number	There are myriad possibilities with AI integration.

Nefarious	wicked or criminal	The scam involved a nefarious plot to steal data.
Negligent	failing to take proper care	The company was sued for negligent security practices.
Nonchalant	casually unconcerned or indifferent	He remained nonchalant even during the crisis.
Novice	a beginner; someone new to a field	The novice coder needed more guidance.
Nuance	a subtle difference in meaning or expression	She understood the nuance of client preferences.
Obdurate	stubborn; unyielding	The manager was obdurate in rejecting all feedback.
Oblivious	unaware or unconcerned	He was oblivious to the changes in company policy.
Obsolete	outdated, no longer in use	The system is now obsolete and due for replacement.
Onerous	burdensome; involving great difficulty	The audit process was long and onerous.
Opaque	not transparent; hard to understand	The opaque language of the contract raised concerns.
Paradigm	a typical example or model	They shifted to a new business paradigm for growth.
Parsimony	extreme frugality	His parsimony kept the project well under budget.
Perfunctory	carried out with minimal effort	His perfunctory response showed a lack of interest.
Pragmatic	practical and realistic	She took a pragmatic approach to problem-solving.
Precocious	showing early talent or intelligence	The precocious intern impressed the entire team.

Common Industry Jargons

Jargons	Meaning	Example Sentence
Raise the bar	Increase standards	"The new manager has raised the bar for performance reviews."
Circle back	Return to a previous topic or task	"Let's circle back to the budget discussion after lunch."
Move the needle	Make a noticeable impact	"We need a strategy that truly moves the needle."
Drill down	Explore in more detail	"Let's drill down into the Q2 sales data."
On the same page	In agreement	"Let's ensure we're on the same page before execution."
Get the ball rolling	Initiate something	"Let's get the ball rolling on the recruitment plan."
Touch base	Connect briefly to discuss	"Can we touch base tomorrow on the vendor quotes?"
Hit a roadblock	Encounter an obstacle	"We hit a roadblock with legal compliance."
Put something on the back burner	Postpone or deprioritize	"We've put the expansion project on the back burner."
Think outside the box	Be innovative	"We need to think outside the box for marketing this."
Game changer	A transformative element	"AI integration was a game changer for us."
Table the discussion	Postpone the discussion	"Let's table that discussion for next week's meeting."
Take ownership	Be accountable for something	"Please take ownership of the final submission."
Low-hanging fruit	Easy wins or achievable goals	"Let's start with low-hanging fruit in process optimization."
Boil the ocean	Try to do too much at	"Let's not boil the ocean—focus on core

Jargons	Meaning	Example Sentence
	once	metrics."
In a nutshell	Brief summary	"In a nutshell, we exceeded our sales targets."
Walk the talk	Do what one says	"She walks the talk when it comes to employee well-being."
Run it up the flagpole	Test an idea informally	"Let's run this proposal up the flagpole and see who salutes."
Keep your cards close to your chest	Withhold information	"He's keeping his cards close to his chest on the merger deal."
Raise a red flag	Signal a problem	"This error rate raises a red flag on quality control."
Get down to brass tacks	Get to the core issue	"Let's get down to brass tacks in today's meeting."
Take a back seat	Let others lead	"I took a back seat and let the new manager lead the session."
Take something in stride	Handle calmly	"She took the criticism in stride and improved immediately."
Cover all the bases	Be thorough	"We need to cover all the bases before the audit."
Call the shots	Make the key decisions	"He's the one calling the shots on this campaign."
Step up to the plate	Take responsibility	"She stepped up to the plate when the manager resigned."
The ball is in your court	It's your turn to act	"We've submitted the proposal—the ball is in their court now."
In the driver's seat	In control	"With the new investment, we're in the driver's seat."
Dot the i's and cross the t's	Pay attention to detail	"Ensure the report is flawless—dot all the i's and cross the t's."

PRACTICE EXERCISES

1. The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.

I were/ writing/ this poem/ last evening.

- A. I were
- B. writing
- C. This poem
- D. Last evening

2. The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.

The poet / and the author / is awarded / by the President

- A. The poet
- B. by the President
- C. is awarded
- D. and the author

3. The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.

A pack of wolves/were chasing/the deer/in the forest.

- A. A pack of wolves
- B. were chasing
- C. in the forest
- D. the deer

4. The following sentence has been divided into parts. One of them may contain an error.

Select the part that contains the error from the given options. If you don't find any error, mark 'No error' as your answer.

Every Saturday, / the workers gets / their weekly wages

- A. the workers gets
- B. Every Saturday
- C. No error

D. their weekly wages

5. The following sentence has been split into segments. One of them may contain an error. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error. If you don't find any error, mark 'No error' as your answer.

A shop nearby/sell all the goods/of daily use.

A. A shop nearby

B. No error

C. Of daily use

D. Sell all the goods

6. The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.

One of these / boxes have / the portrait / of the heiress.

A. of the heiress

B. One of these

C. the portrait

D. boxes have

7. The following sentence has been divided into parts. One of them may contain an error.

Select the part that contains the error from the given options. If you don't find any error, mark 'No error' as your answer.

Safety measures makes risky activities less risky.

A. risky activities

B. No error

C. Safety measures makes

D. less risky

8. Find the part of the given sentence that has an error in it. If there is no error, choose 'No error'.

Bushfire have created havoc and exacerbated the conditions of animals in the forest

A. Bushfire have created havoc

B. and exacerbated the conditions

C. No error

D. of animals in the forest

9. The following sentence has been divided into parts. One of them may contain an error.

Select the part that contains the error from the given options. If you don't find any error, mark

'No error' as your answer.

People sometimes asks me / why carbon dioxide / is important for the climate

A. is important for the climate

B. why carbon dioxide

C. No error

D. People sometimes asks me

10. Find the part of the given sentence that has an error in it. If there is no error, choose 'No error'.

To treat nightmare disorder, there is a number of medications and therapies.

A. of medications and therapies

B. To treat nightmare disorder

C. there is a number

D. No error

11. Identify the segment in the sentence which contains a grammatical error. If there is no error, then select the option "No error".

Although people had been on watch and/ the watchkeepers were very tired/ everyone were up and buzzing.

A. No error

B. the watchkeepers were very tired

C. everyone were up and buzzing

D. Although people had been on watch and

12. Find the part of the given sentence that has an error in it. If there is no error, choose 'No error'.

Plastic debris in the ocean can become coated with algae and other marine microbes that produces a chemical scent.

A. coated with algae and other

B. marine microbes that produces a chemical scent

- C. Plastic debris in the ocean can become
- D. No error

13. In the sentence identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.

From my experience in mountain climbing I have learn that physical fitness is very important.

- A. I have learn
- B. from my experience
- C. is very important
- D. that physical fitness

14. The following sentence has been divided into parts. One of them may contain an error.

Select the part that contains the error from the given options. If you don't find any error, mark 'No error' as your answer.

The App has been so well-developed / that it anticipate / all the customers' needs

- A. that it anticipate
- B. No error
- C. The App has been so well – developed
- D. all the customer's needs

15. Identify the segment in the sentence which contains a grammatical error.

Apple growers in Himachal Pradesh says they are harvesting a bumper crop this year due to good weather conditions

- A. they are harvesting
- B. Apple growers in Himachal Pradesh says
- C. a bumper crop this year
- D. due to good weather conditions

16. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error. If there is no error, select 'No error'.

Rapid climate warming in/the tundra biome have been linked/to increasing shrub dominance

- A. Rapid climate warming in
- B. No error
- C. the tundra biome have been linked
- D. to increasing shrub dominance

17. Parts of the following sentence have been given as options. One of them may contain an error. Select the part that contains the error from the given options. If you don't find any error, mark 'No error' as your answer.

A significant number of students volunteers each year for environmental projects.

- A. volunteers each year for
- B. No error
- C. A significant number of students
- D. environmental projects

18. The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.

Even though Mahindra & Mahindra warn / consumers not to use low-standard engine oil, / people refuse to read the instructions / and damage their vehicles.

- A. consumers not to use low standard engine oil
- B. people refuse to read the instructions
- C. and damage their vehicles
- D. Even though Mahindra & Mahindra warn

19. Read each sentence given below and find out whether there is an error in it. The error, if any will be one of the parts of the sentence which are marked as 1,2,3 and 4. If there is no error, the answer will be (5) i.e. No error. (Ignore the errors of punctuation, if any).

The Department (1) / assured us that (2) / a series of seminars (3) / were to be arranged.(4)
/ No Error (5)

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. 4
- e. 5

20. Everybody (1) / among (2) / your friends (3) / like playing. (4) / No Error (5)

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3

- d. 4
- e. 5

21. One of the issues (1) / which was (2) / discussed at the meeting (3) / was raised by him.
(4) / No Error (5)

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. 4
- e. 5

22. The manager (1) / as well as (2) / the clerks (3) / were fighting. (4) / No Error (5)

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. 4
- e. 5

23. Not only (1) / the principal (2) / but also the students (3) / was laughing. (4) / No Error
(5)

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. 4
- e. 5

24. Choose the part (A/B/C) of the given sentence that contains an error. If the given sentence does not contain any error, mark 'No error' as the answer. Ignore the punctuation error, if any:
'What time (A) / do their flight (B) to Paris leave? (C) / No error (D)'

- 1. C
- 2. A
- 3. B
- 4. D

25. In the sentence identify the segment which contains the grammatical error.

Raja Ravi Varma was one of the first artist who tried to create a style that was both modern and traditional.

1. to create a style that was
2. Raja Ravi Varma was
3. one of the first artist
4. both modern and traditional

26. The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.

Every / curious child / want to / rip open a toy.

1. rip open a toy
2. want to
3. curious child
4. Every

27. The following sentence has been divided into parts. One of them contains an error. Select the part that contains the error from the given options.

He was / late / for school / and punished.

1. for school
2. and punished
3. late
4. He was

28. Select the segment of the sentence that contains a grammatical error. If there is no error, mark 'No Error' as your answer.

More man than one (A) were killed (B) in the massacre. (C) No error(D)

1. A
2. B
3. C
4. D

29. Which verb would correctly fill in the blank in the following sentence?

Everyone _____ at the carnival.

1. were
2. are
3. is
4. are going to be

30. Neither the project deadlines nor the constant interruptions from meetings _____ the team's productivity.

- A) has affected
- B) have affected
- C) is affecting
- D) was affecting

Directions: The following sentence has been divided into parts. One of them contains a subject-verb agreement error. Choose the part that contains the error.

31. Neither the guests / nor the host / were dressed appropriately / for the party.

1. Neither the guests
2. were dressed appropriately
3. nor the host
4. for the party

32. The lady was furious / to see that no one / were wearing masks / on the road near the shop.

1. The lady was furious
2. on the road near the shop
3. were wearing masks
4. to see that no one

33. Neither the manager / nor the employees was / aware of the / shortage of raw materials.

1. Neither the manager
2. shortage of raw materials
3. nor the employees was
4. aware of the

34. Reva is / one of Gita's best friend / in the class.

1. one of Gita's best friend
2. No error
3. in the class
4. Reva is

35. Neither of them have / any experience / in software development.

1. any experience
2. Neither of them have
3. No error
4. in software development

Directions: Read each sentence to find out whether there is any grammatical/idiomatic error in it. Find out the sentence that has a grammatical or idiomatic error in it. If there is no error then mark the 5th option i.e. No Error.

36. The smartest way to improve your decision-making skills is to learn mental models. (A)/ A mental model is a framework or theory (B). that helps to explain why the world works the way it do. (C)/ Each mental model is a concept that helps us make sense of the world and offers a way of looking at the problems of life. (D)

1. C
2. B
3. A
4. D
5. No error.

37. As schools worldwide struggle with the reopening, the latest data from (1)/ the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme reveals (2)/ that 43 percent of schools around the world lacked access to (3)/ basic handwashing with soap and water in 2019 (4).

- a) 1
- b) 2
- c) 3

- d) 4
- e) No Error

38. The 2019 Nobel Prize in Economics has been given (A)/to three economist whose focus having been (B)/on framing policies by first measuring the outcomes (C)/of alternative interventions on randomly(D)/ chosen samples from the target population. (E)

- 1.By three economists whose focus having been
- 2.To three economist whose focus has been
- 3.To three economists whose focus have been
- 4.To three economists whose focus has been
- 5.None of the above

39. The expansion of National Highway 66 from Karwar to Kundapura (a)/ have impacted many more lives and livelihoods of (b)/ coastal families of Uttara Kannada than estimated, (c)/ in addition to damaging the ecology of the region (d).

- 1.a
- 2.b
- 3.c
- 4.d
- 5.No Error

40. Each spoke on the Ashoka chakra (1)/ symbolize one principle of life (2)/ and also the twenty-four hours in the day, (3)/ which is why it is also called the 'Wheel of Time'.(4)/ No error (5)

- a) 1
- b) 2
- c) 3
- d) 4
- e) 5

41. Identify the part of the sentence that contains an error in subject-verb agreement:
The group / of students / are / waiting in the auditorium.

- A) The group
- B) are
- C) of students
- D) waiting in the auditorium

42. Which change would fix the subject-verb agreement error in the following sentence?

A man in a red coat and a woman in a green dress is sitting on the bench in the park.

- A) Change “a woman” to “the woman”
- B) Change “on the bench” to “at the bench”
- C) Change “is sitting” to “are sitting”
- D) Change “a red coat” to “red coats”

43. Which sentence does not contain a subject-verb agreement error?

- A. All of these contain subject-verb agreement errors.
- B. Neither Robert nor Sally enjoy ketchup as a condiment on their hot dogs and hamburgers.
- C. Robert and Sally enjoys ketchup as a condiment on hot dogs and hamburgers.
- D. Neither Robert or Sally enjoys ketchup as a condiment on hot dogs and hamburgers.

44. Correct the subject-verb agreement error in the following sentence:

Every student need to have a textbook, a notebook, and a pencil.

- A) Every student needs to have a textbook, a notebook, and a pencil.
- B) Every student need to have textbooks, notebooks, and pencils.
- C) All students needs to have a textbook, a notebook, and a pencil.
- D) Each student need to have a textbook, a notebook, and a pencil.

45. Which revised sentence would fix the subject-verb agreement error in this sentence?

The class of undergraduate doctors take its exams in the university's north wing.

- A) The class of undergraduate doctors take their exams in the university's north wing.
- B) The class of undergraduate doctors take its exam in the university's north wing.
- C) The class of undergraduate doctors take their exam in the university's north wing.
- D) The class of undergraduate doctors takes its exams in the university's north wing.

46. Which word needs to be changed to correct a subject-verb agreement error?

One of my neighbors always plant radishes in his garden.

- A) change "his" to "his or her"
- B) change "his" to "their"
- C) change "plant" to "plants"
- D) change "neighbors" to "neighbor"

47. Which sentence does not contain a subject-verb agreement error?

- A) From time to time, everyone make a mistake.
- B) Everyone make mistakes from time to time.
- C) Everyone make their mistakes from time to time.
- D) All of these sentences contain subject-verb agreement errors.

48. Which word creates a subject-verb agreement error in the following sentence?

Every morning, my cousin and my uncle runs five miles before having their breakfast.

- A) breakfast
- B) miles
- C) having
- D) runs

49. The series of complex case studies / presented by the law students / highlight a deep understanding / of constitutional issues.

- A) The series of complex case studies
- B) presented by the law students
- C) highlight a deep understanding
- D) of constitutional issues

50. The committee, along with the student representatives, / are preparing a report / on the new curriculum / for university approval.

- A) The committee, along with the student representatives
- B) are preparing a report
- C) on the new curriculum
- D) for university approval

ERRORS BASED ON TENSES

1. Spot the errors in the following statements and rewrite the corrected version:

- a) I used to having a horse.
- b) I'm used to get up early.
- c) She must has been on holiday.
- d) I wish I am not fat.
- e) When I was in Russia last year, I wish I went to Moscow
- f) The sun is very strong. I wish I didn't leave my sun cream in the hotel
- g) I am not used to do the housework
- h) I've been cutting my finger today
- i) Spinach is said to being very good for your health.
- j) I am knowing all the grammar, but it's difficult to remember.

2. Find the mistakes and correct them.

My first visit to Singapore

My first visit to Singapore was a visit to remember. I go there with my friends Eddy to attend youth conference. We arrived lately to Harbourfront because we did not got an earlier fly. Upon arriving we are very confusing and nervous because there were no one to picks us up. Later we obtain some instructions of how could we get to Expo where the conference were being holded. We was asked to take the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT), but the problem was that it was the first time we go to Singapore and we didn't really knew what to expect.

We walked out of Harbourfront like two silly guy with suitcase. We have no idea where could we find the MRT station. Luckily, I saw Indian security guard and ask them where could we find the nearest MRT. I am quite shock because he spoke very fastly. I hardly catch a single word. Honestly, I do not really understand what did he say, in fact, I just looked to his gestures when he pointed the way we need to go.

We finally manage to find the MRT station after ask some more peoples, but the adventure had not finish yet. When they entered the station, they didn't know what to do. The station were very crowded. After observing what people do, we began to understand the way it works. First, we went to the ticket machine, insert some money and get two oneway tickets. Next, we saw the map posting on the wall and tried to understand them. Then, we tap the

electronic ticket and walked into the waiting area. Finally, our MRT comes and we rode them to the Expo station.

I would loved to say that it is the end of the story, but it isn't. The real problem occur when we want to exit the Expo station. We tap the cards, but we could not passed the gate. I tapped it again, but it didn't worked. My friend saw a small side doors and immediately walk through it. Suddenly an officer appears and calls my friends. We were shocked, embarrassing and afraid of. I nervously explained to hers what has happened. She explained the problem to we. She tells us that the amount of money in our cards were not enough, so we had to pays some more moneys in order to pass the gate. We paid the money and tapped the card again. Before leaving, I said, "Sorry, it is the first time." She smiles and replies, "It's okay."

Finally, we get to Expo where the conference is being held. we felt so relieve when we meet our friends there. We told him about the incident. They bursted into laughter when they hear the story. I often smiled when i remember the incident. I will always remember what happens that day.

3. There is one mistake in each sentence. Find it and correct it:

1. I have had a good time at the disco last night.
2. My English teacher lives in Italy for fifteen years.
3. Have you known your friend since a long time?
4. What will you do when you'll finish university?
5. My husband work in an insurance agency.
6. I didn't liked the concert very much, so I left early.
7. Where you did go last night? I looked everywhere for you.
8. He hasn't a job at the moment but he's looking for one.
9. I hate get up early in the morning, especially when it's raining.
10. It's very nice to have a little sleep after have lunch.
11. I have never tried Japanese food but I would eat it very much.
12. Do you want go to the cinema with me this evening?
13. My parents don't want that I go on holiday by myself.
14. People in Italy must to carry an identity card with them at all times.
15. I'm afraid I don't have the informations that you wanted.
16. I think that being a flight attendant would be a terrible work.

17. Our travel from England back to Italy was very long and tiring.
18. At the station some foreign persons were trying to find a policeman.
19. This is one of the worst disco I've ever been to.
20. My brother works in a shop but he hates your job and wants to find a new one.
21. I can't stand queuing at the post office because it is so boring.
22. At the party I met the boss of my mother, who is really very nice.
23. The table's cloth was very dirty, so I changed it.
24. At the beach I couldn't see the my family anywhere, as it was so crowded.
25. In the meantime, my parents, which were very worried , had called the police.

Use appropriate tense forms in the following blanks:

1. By the time the train arrives, _____waiting at the station for over an hour.
A) have been
B) were
C) had been
D) will
2. If he _____the importance of deadlines earlier, he wouldn't be struggling now.
A) had understood
B) understood
C) understands
D) has understood
3. She _____to complete the documentation before the audit team arrived.
A) was expecting
B) had expected
C) expected
D) had been expecting
4. He behaves as if he _____the project single-handedly.
A) completed
B) completes
C) has completed
D) had completed

5. Not until the project failed _____ the importance of early planning.
A) they realized
B) did they realize
C) had they realized
D) they had realized
6. They will not proceed unless all the components _____ delivered by noon.
A) have been
B) are
C) had been
D) were
7. She insisted that he _____ at the meeting, even though he wasn't invited.
A) is
B) be
C) was
D) will be
8. I _____ English for over a decade by the time I started teaching it.
A) had studied
B) have studied
C) studied
D) was studying
9. If only she _____ more confident, she could have led the seminar.
A) is
B) was
C) had been
D) has been
10. By next month, the company _____ operations in three countries.
A) starts
B) will start

- C) will have started
- D) has started

MCQs on Errors based on Tenses

1. The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.

The team has been working on the proposal / since three hours / but they / haven't completed it yet.

- A) has been working
- B) since three hours
- C) haven't completed
- D) No error

2. The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.

She didn't attend the meeting / because she / has caught a cold / that morning.

- A) didn't attend
- B) has caught
- C) that morning
- D) No error

3. The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.

He was knowing the answer / but / didn't say anything / in class.

- A) was knowing
- B) didn't say
- C) in class
- D) No error

4. The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.

We were watching TV / when the lights / go out / all of a sudden.

- A) were watching
- B) go out

- C) all of a sudden
- D) No error

5. The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.

She has studied French / for two years / but she / can't spoke fluently.

- A) has studied
- B) for two years
- C) can't spoke fluently
- D) No error

6. The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.

I have submitted / the form yesterday / and now / I am waiting.

- A) have submitted
- B) the form yesterday
- C) I am waiting
- D) No error

7. The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.

We will be attending / the workshop / which began / yesterday.

- A) will be attending
- B) the workshop
- C) began
- D) No error

8. Identify the part with a tense error:

The CEO emphasized / that the company has met / all quarterly targets / before the deadline last month.

- A) The CEO emphasized
- B) that the company has met
- C) all quarterly targets
- D) before the deadline last month

9. Identify the part with a tense error:

If they informed us earlier, / we would not have missed / the opportunity / to pitch our idea.

- A) If they informed us earlier
- B) we would not have missed
- C) the opportunity
- D) to pitch our idea

10. Identify the part with a tense error:

When I reached / the seminar hall, / the keynote speaker / gives her opening remarks.

- A) When I reached
- B) the seminar hall
- C) the keynote speaker
- D) gives her opening remarks

11. Identify the part with a tense error:

We were discussing the agenda / when the manager suddenly / has entered the room / and interrupted us.

- A) We were discussing the agenda
- B) when the manager suddenly
- C) has entered the room
- D) and interrupted us

12. Identify the part with a tense error:

The product launch / will be delayed / unless the QA team / didn't resolve the bugs.

- A) The product launch
- B) will be delayed
- C) unless the QA team
- D) didn't resolve the bugs

13. Identify the part with a tense error:

He has been working / on the simulation model / before the data / was even finalized.

- A) He has been working
- B) on the simulation model

- C) before the data
- D) was even finalized

14. **Instructions:** The following sentence is divided into four parts. One part contains a tense-related error. Choose the part with the error.

Although the employees had completed their tasks on time, the manager insists that they redo the report.

- (A) Although the employees had completed
- (B) their tasks on time,
- (C) the manager insists
- (D) that they redo the report

Instructions(15-25): Each of the following sentences is divided into four parts: (A), (B), (C), and (D). One part may contain a grammatical or usage error in tense. Choose the part with the error. If there is no error, select (E).

15. He is serving (A) / under me for (B) / the last several years but (C) / I cannot claim even today that I have understood him thoroughly. (D) / No error (E)

- A) He is serving
- B) under me for
- C) the last several years but
- D) I cannot claim even today that I have understood him thoroughly
- E) No error

16. She never (A) / minds the children (B) / to play (C) / in the garden. (D) / No error (E)

- A) She never
- B) minds the children
- C) to play
- D) in the garden
- E) No error

17. Had (A) / you informed me earlier (B) / I would have certainly purchase (C) / the laptop from you. (D) / No error (E)

- A) Had

- B) you informed me earlier
- C) I would have certainly purchase
- D) the laptop from you
- E) No error

18. He dreads (A) / taking examinations (B) / for fear (C) / of to fail (D) / No error (E)

- A) He dreads
- B) taking examinations
- C) for fear
- D) of to fail
- E) No error

19. My father asked me (A) / where had I (B) / kept my clothes before (C) / taking a dip in the river. (D) / No error (E)

- A) My father asked me
- B) where had I
- C) kept my clothes before
- D) taking a dip in the river
- E) No error

20. If I would be a millionaire (A) / I would not be wasting my time (B) / waiting for a bus. (C) / No error. (D)

- A) If I would be a millionaire
- B) I would not be wasting my time
- C) waiting for a bus
- D) No error

21. There is (A) / no denying (B) / that he enjoys (C) / to listen to the radio. (D) / No error (E)

- A) There is
- B) no denying
- C) that he enjoys
- D) to listen to the radio
- E) No error

22. He seemed (A) / to me (B) / to be the embodiment of strength and courage (C) / far above all the men I saw. (D) / No error (E)

A) He seemed

B) to me

C) to be the embodiment of strength and courage

D) far above all the men I saw

E) No error

23. We will pack not only (A) / the material property (B) / but will also deliver it (C) / to your valued customers. (D) / No error (E)

A) We will pack not only

B) the material property

C) but will also deliver it

D) to your valued customers

E) No error

24. The prisoners walked slowly (A) / for they knew (B) / that as soon as they cross (C) / the gate the jailor would ask them to jog. (D) / No error (E)

A) The prisoners walked slowly

B) for they knew

C) that as soon as they cross

D) the gate the jailor would ask them to jog

E) No error

25. By the time the court issues / its final verdict, / the defendant has already / served ten years in prison.

A) By the time the court issues

B) its final verdict

C) the defendant has already

D) served ten years in prison

26. The company claimed / it will achieve net-zero emissions / by 2030, despite / ongoing environmental violations.

A) The company claimed

- B) it will achieve net-zero emissions
- C) by 2030
- D) despite ongoing environmental violations

27. While the project manager explained / the roadmap, the developers / discuss potential bottlenecks / in implementation.

- A) While the project manager explained
- B) the roadmap
- C) the developers
- D) discuss potential bottlenecks

28. They were believing / that the merger / would result / in long-term gains.

- A) They were believing
- B) that the merger
- C) would result
- D) in long-term gains

29. He will be joining / the team / once the approvals / has been granted.

- A) He will be joining
- B) the team
- C) once the approvals
- D) has been granted

30. She said / she will call me / as soon as / the meeting ended.

- A) She said
- B) she will call me
- C) as soon as
- D) the meeting ended

31. Unless the budget increases, / the expansion / would not be / financially feasible.

- A) Unless the budget increases
- B) the expansion
- C) would not be
- D) financially feasible

32. If she will leave / before the guests arrive, / she might miss / the announcement.

- A) If she will leave
- B) before the guests arrive
- C) she might miss
- D) the announcement

33. The manager said / the process would start / only after / the contracts will be signed.

- A) The manager said
- B) the process would start
- C) only after
- D) the contracts will be signed

34. She will be worked / in the overseas branch / by this time / next year.

- A) She will be worked
- B) in the overseas branch
- C) by this time
- D) next year

35. He has been practicing / for the upcoming match / which is scheduled / to held next month.

- A) He has been practicing
- B) for the upcoming match
- C) which is scheduled
- D) to held next month

36. I didn't recognize her / because she / had worn / a mask.

- A) I didn't recognize her
- B) because she
- C) had worn
- D) a mask

37. She had just settled / into her seat / when the principal / had called her name over the intercom.

- A) She had just settled
- B) into her seat
- C) when the principal
- D) had called her name over the intercom

38. By next month, / the company / starts operations / in three countries.

- A) By next month
- B) the company
- C) starts operations
- D) in three countries

39. The director said / that he / needs to review the script / before approving it.

- A) The director said
- B) that he
- C) needs to review the script
- D) before approving it

40. Select the most appropriate option that can substitute the underlined segment in the given sentence and rectify it. If no correction is needed, select 'No correction required'.

They are launching the new product last month.

- A. was launching
- B. did launched
- C. launched
- D. No correction required

SPOT THE MODIFIER ERROR

1. Walking through the office lobby, the lights flickered unexpectedly.

What is wrong with the sentence?

- A) Nothing is wrong
- B) The verb tense is incorrect
- C) The subject of the modifier is missing
- D) The sentence is in passive voice

2. Tired and exhausted, the mountain was impossible to climb.

- A) Modifier correctly placed
- B) "Tired and exhausted" modifies the mountain
- C) The sentence is in passive voice
- D) All nouns are incorrectly used

3. Spot the sentence with a correct modifier:

- A) Shouting at the top of her lungs, the cat was frightened.
- B) To finish the task quickly, a new approach was needed.
- C) Watching from the window, I saw the train arrive.
- D) Running through the field, the flowers swayed in the breeze.

4. Which version corrects the dangling modifier?

Original: While typing the document, the laptop shut down.

- A) While typing the document, the power cut off.
- B) While the laptop shut down, the document was typing.
- C) While I was typing the document, the laptop shut down.
- D) Typing the document, the laptop stopped working.

5. Select the grammatically correct sentence:

- A) Eager to impress the recruiters, the CV was edited several times.
- B) Sitting under the banyan tree, a snake bit him.
- C) While jogging every day, his stamina increased.
- D) While watching the film, I realized the lighting was poor.

6. Choose the sentence with a misplaced modifier:

- A) The teacher gave homework to the students in the folder.
- B) The report submitted yesterday was reviewed.
- C) They left before the speech began.
- D) The birds flew in the sky above the clouds.

7. Select the best revision for:

Original: While cleaning the closet, old books were found.

- A) While the closet was cleaned, old books were found.

- B) While cleaning the closet, I found old books.
- C) Cleaning the closet, the old books fell out.
- D) Found old books while cleaning.

8. Identify the sentence with an ambiguous modifier:

- A) The boy saw the man with a telescope.
- B) The team celebrated after the match.
- C) She smiled at the teacher politely.
- D) They will come when the show begins.

9. Which of the following has a clear modifier?

- A) Bored and tired, the movie ended.
- B) Jumping from the wall, the injury was serious.
- C) At the age of five, her father gifted her a guitar.
- D) While riding the bike, she listened to music.

10. Choose the revised sentence with corrected modifier:

Original: To win the prize, discipline and effort are necessary.

- A) Discipline and effort are necessary to win the prize.
- B) To win the prize, the athlete practiced.
- C) Winning the prize was through discipline.
- D) To win, they needed prize discipline.

Spot the Error – Modifier Errors (MCQs)

1.

- (A) Running down the street,
- (B) the backpack
- (C) fell off his shoulder
- (D) without warning.
- (E) No error

2.

- (A) Being a perfectionist,
- (B) the final draft

- (C) was edited
- (D) at least five times.
- (E) No error

3.

- (A) While walking through the forest,
- (B) a strange noise
- (C) was heard
- (D) by the hikers.
- (E) No error

4.

- (A) Covered in snow,
- (B) the skiers
- (C) admired the mountain
- (D) from the lodge.
- (E) No error

5.

- (A) After finishing the book,
- (B) the TV
- (C) was turned on
- (D) for some entertainment.
- (E) No error

6.

- (A) Eager to impress the panel,
- (B) the presentation
- (C) was rehearsed
- (D) several times.
- (E) No error

7.

- (A) Having failed the first time,
- (B) a second attempt

- (C) was made
- (D) by the candidate.
- (E) No error

8.

- (A) Nearly,
- (B) everyone in the class
- (C) failed the difficult
- (D) grammar test.
- (E) No error

9.

- (A) Flying over the lake,
- (B) the boat
- (C) looked tiny
- (D) from the plane.
- (E) No error

10.

- (A) At the age of five,
- (B) the piano
- (C) was taught
- (D) to her.
- (E) No error

11.

- (A) An excellent communicator,
- (B) the emails
- (C) he sent
- (D) were always clear and polite.
- (E) No error

12.

- (A) Climbing the ladder,
- (B) the rooftop

- (C) came into
- (D) view quickly.
- (E) No error

13.

- (A) Hoping to get a raise,
- (B) the proposal
- (C) was submitted
- (D) early by Ravi.
- (E) No error

14.

- (A) To improve productivity,
- (B) new computers
- (C) were purchased
- (D) for the team.
- (E) No error

15.

- (A) Without knowing the reason,
- (B) the decision
- (C) was delayed
- (D) by the board.
- (E) No error

16.

- (A) Smiling proudly,
- (B) the trophy
- (C) was lifted
- (D) by the winner.
- (E) No error

17.

- (A) With only five seconds left,
- (B) the final shot

- (C) was taken
- (D) by the player.
- (E) No error

18.

- (A) By working overtime,
- (B) the report
- (C) was submitted
- (D) on time.
- (E) No error

19.

- (A) Unlike last year,
- (B) this year's event
- (C) was more successful
- (D) and better attended.
- (E) No error

20.

- (A) Wearing a bright red tie,
- (B) the interview panel
- (C) immediately noticed
- (D) the candidate.
- (E) No error

Spot the Error – Mixed Modifier Errors

Each of the following questions contains a sentence divided into five parts: (A), (B), (C), (D), and (E). One part may contain an error in the use or placement of a modifier (dangling, misplaced, squinting, or ambiguous). Identify the part that contains the error. If there is no error, choose option (E).

1.

- (A) She almost
- (B) drove her brother

- (C) to the airport
- (D) every day last week.
- (E) No error

2.

- (A) They served sandwiches
- (B) to the children
- (C) on paper plates
- (D) which were soggy.
- (E) No error

3.

- (A) The manager said
- (B) during the meeting
- (C) the report should be revised
- (D) immediately and thoroughly.
- (E) No error

4.

- (A) She handed a toy
- (B) to the child
- (C) that made a loud
- (D) squeaking noise.
- (E) No error

5.

- (A) Barely
- (B) anyone noticed
- (C) the spelling mistake
- (D) on the poster.
- (E) No error

6.

- (A) After reviewing the feedback,
- (B) the summary

- (C) needed improvement
- (D) according to the supervisor.
- (E) No error

7.

- (A) The team almost
- (B) won all their
- (C) matches last
- (D) season.
- (E) No error

8.

- (A) John only
- (B) gave feedback
- (C) on the
- (D) first paragraph.
- (E) No error

9.

- (A) The teacher
- (B) explained the rules
- (C) to the students clearly
- (D) before the game.
- (E) No error

10.

- (A) I almost
- (B) finished all
- (C) the paperwork
- (D) by 6 p.m.
- (E) No error

11.

- (A) Jumping excitedly,
- (B) the puppy

- (C) caught the ball
- (D) mid-air.
- (E) No error

12.

- (A) She wore a dress
- (B) to the party
- (C) that sparkled
- (D) under the lights.
- (E) No error

13.

- (A) Looking through the telescope,
- (B) the mountain
- (C) appeared closer
- (D) than it actually was.
- (E) No error

14.

- (A) Only Rahul
- (B) completed the
- (C) project before
- (D) the deadline.
- (E) No error

15.

- (A) The guests
- (B) were offered
- (C) silverware in plastic wrap
- (D) by the waiters.
- (E) No error

16.

- (A) I told her
- (B) while typing the email

- (C) the file
- (D) was corrupted.
- (E) No error

17.

- (A) By working hard,
- (B) the goal
- (C) was finally achieved
- (D) by the team.
- (E) No error

18.

- (A) The company
- (B) promised to deliver
- (C) only fresh products
- (D) to the customers.
- (E) No error

19.

- (A) The little boy
- (B) fed the dog
- (C) wearing a red cap
- (D) with great delight.
- (E) No error

20.

- (A) While researching online,
- (B) several outdated websites
- (C) were encountered
- (D) by the intern.
- (E) No error

SPOT THE MODIFIER ERROR AND REWRITE

1. Campus Life Rewind

As a first-year student, the university's traditions seemed both fascinating and overwhelming. Sitting on the old stone benches, memories of orientation day came flooding back. Speaking to the dean during the seminar, her achievements were appreciated by the students. Walking to the cafeteria, the smell of fresh bread and brewed coffee comforted him. After studying all night, the exam felt like a mountain to climb. Known for its diverse clubs and workshops, students from every stream find something engaging to do. Packed with students, the library's silence spoke volumes about exam week. Tired and anxious, the study guide was reviewed for the fifth time. When fifteen minutes were left for the paper to end, the invigilator standing near the window looked intimidating.

Tasks:

- **Locate 6 modifier errors (misplaced, dangling, ambiguous).**
- **Reconstruct the paragraph using proper modifier placement.**
- **For each correction, note what the faulty structure implied and how it was misleading.**

2. The Botanical Mishap

Walking into the botanical garden, the scent of roses and jasmine filled the air, calming the visitors strolling under the shade of the trees. Carefully planted by expert horticulturists, the colors of the petals danced in the breeze. Hoping to capture the perfect shot, the camera was quickly pulled out of the bag. After taking a few pictures, the hummingbird flitted past, perched on a bright orange tulip. Despite the noise, sitting silently on the branch, the guide began his explanation about seasonal flowers. While looking through the binoculars, the garden's rare orchids appeared vibrant and mysterious. Covered in pollen, the tourists returned to the main lobby after an hour of exploring. Tired and overheated, the water bottles were passed around.

Tasks:

- **Identify 5 modifier-related errors.**
- **Rewrite the paragraph with corrected modifier placement.**
- **Explain each correction briefly.**

- ✧ Which answer choice best replaces the underlined portion of the following sentence, with respect to grammar and logic?

1. Weighing more than 15,000 tons each, workers used massive tunnel boring machines to dig the tunnel. Each one could cut through the earth at a rate of approximately 15 feet per hour. These machines also collected the spoil, or earth removed by the machines, and sent it out of the tunnel via a long conveyer belt. A concrete lining was also added to the tunnel to prevent it from collapsing. To ensure that the French and British teams would eventually meet in the middle, the tunnel boring machines were steered using lasers.

Choose the answer that best corrects the underlined portion of the passage. If the underlined portion is correct as written, choose "NO CHANGE."

- A. Weighing more than 15,000 tons each, workers dug the tunnel using massive tunnel boring machines.
- B. NO CHANGE
- C. Weighing more than 15,000 tons each, massive tunnel boring machines were used to dig the tunnel.
- D. More than 15,000 tons each, workers used massive tunnel boring machines to dig the tunnel.

2. My childhood was fairly idyllic. I grew up in southern suburbia, we could play outside nearly year round. We almost played outside every day. Our days were filled with bike rides, jumping on the trampoline, playing in the sprinklers, and also imagination games. Countless afternoons were spent in the side yard of our home, where our imaginations were the limit to our fun. One of our favorite games was "Lost Children." Oddly enough, the parents in the game were always deceased or fighting in a foreign war. The source of this game likely stemmed from the books we read.

My mother's old, rusty, orange wheelbarrow was perpetually propped up against the fence, to serve as the base for our makeshift range. The metal braces beneath the wheelbarrow bin provided the perfect resting place for a pair of burners, hastily sketched on a flat board. Old paint buckets became a sink and a stained picnic table was scrubbed to a relative state of cleanliness. Our visitors, who were often kings and queens, were served heaping helpings of

mud and grass pie, possibly adorned with a side helping of flowers. Household chores were far more fun to do in our imaginary world, and we would eagerly sweep and dust our humble home. Even covered in leaves, we loved our outdoor kitchen.

Other days, we would scamper around the neighborhood park, sometimes venturing into the woods to go exploring. One time we borrowed my little sister's wagon and flew down the sides of the ditch. Although we had a grand time my mother was not pleased when she had to replace the broken axle. On adventurous days, we would pretend to be statues on the entrance sign to our neighborhood. But, the most perfect afternoons were spent biking up to the local corner store. With spending money burning a hole in our pockets, we would peruse the convenience store shelves, and after carefully picking our selections, we would pedal home. Our plastic shopping bags hung from the handlebars, rustling in the wind.

The bite of crisp fall evenings would barely phase our childlike fantasies. But, to our dismay, twilight would inevitably seep into our childhood world. Mother would call us in for dinner and a bath, if needed. Tired, beds were welcomed. I would often fall asleep to the gentle rhythm of my mother's voice.

Choose the answer that best corrects the bolded portion of the passage. If the bolded portion is correct as written, choose "NO CHANGE."

- A. Welcomed the beds were.
- B. Tired beds were welcome.
- C. NO CHANGE
- D. Tired, we welcomed our beds.

3. When the patent on Alexander Graham Bell's revolutionary invention, the telephone, expired in 1894 thousands of new firms entered the telecommunication industry. Among them were a collection of profitable companies that merged to form what would later become known as The Bell System. The Bell System had amassed such weight in the industry that in 1933, when Congress passed a law declaring phone service a public utility, the Bell System quickly transformed into a monopoly. Lawmakers enthusiastic supported a series of provisions intended to stimulate competition. Appointed as the nation's sole provider of telecommunication services, widespread criticism about the Bell System began to surface.

The Federal Communications Act has so far been highly effective and the industry has grown tremendously as a result. In fact, for the past three years, the profitability of the largest three telecommunication companies has been greater than the largest three automotive companies. The number of calls provided by the top three companies range from five billion to six billion per day. Today, virtually everyone has made a phone call over the course of their lives. Most people do not know, however, that payment for swaths of electromagnetic wavelengths have become commonplace.

One explanation for such high call volume and large profits is that calls are becoming much less expensive for companies to provide, regardless for many large fixed expenses such as communication towers, base stations, and paying for utility poles. Over the last century, telephones had become an important part of modern society. In fact, the cost of delivering one telephone call today is about a thousandth of the cost in the 1950s. The increasing affordability and abundance of phone calls mark the progress made since the time of Alexander Graham Bell and the Bell System.

Choose the answer that best corrects the bolded portion of the passage. If the bolded portion is correct as written, choose "NO CHANGE."

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. criticism, widespread in its nature, and about the Bell System, began to spread
- C. widespread criticism began to surface about the Bell System
- D. the Bell System became the subject of widespread criticism

4. Jeremy had no luck convincing the members of the orchestral committee about his suggestions. He pleaded, cajoled, was begging, and even threatened the committee at various times, but yet despite being the conductor, he couldnt get them to agree to his requests. Despite many attempts, the committee would not listen to him. In the end, he decided to go through with the Christmas concert despite him not having his favorite composer on the program. Afterward, one of his friends, whom was in the audience, came up and asked him why was there no Handel on the program? "I did try" Jeremy replied "but the committee were unanimously against me. I nearly begged them all day to put one piece on the program. But try as I might I could not get a Handel on it."

Choose the answer that best corrects the bolded portion of the passage. If the bolded portion is correct as written, choose "NO CHANGE."

- A. he could not get the committee to listen
- B. NO CHANGE
- C. the committee would listen to him
- D. he wouldn't listen to the committee

5. As the class entered the museum, Ms. Johnson noticed that two of her students had fallen behind the group. After all of the tickets had been secured, she approached the two girls, saying: "what on Earth is causing you to go so slow?" The taller girl, whose name was Ashley, was the first to respond:

"Veronica and I were just discussing something very private. Nobody can hear what her and I are discussing."

"Well, Ashley, I think that our tour guide, Dr. Mitchell, will be offended by your behavior. You and Veronica should find separate places in the group and you should pay attention to him and me."

The two girls reluctantly joined the rest of the class. Ms. Johnson looked to see if another student was out of their place, but everything seemed to be in order. The tour guide, Dr. Mitchell, introduced himself to the class:

"Hello everyone! My name is Dr. Mitchell. I'm so glad that you have all come to the Museum of Natural History today; I think you'll really enjoy our exhibits, which have been curated with the utmost care. The museum has three distinct types of exhibitions. Permanent exhibitions, temporary exhibitions, and space shows. The permanent exhibition and the space show is always available for viewing, but the temporary exhibition changes seasonally." Having finished his introduction, the permanent exhibition was the first thing that Dr. Mitchell showed to the class.

Choose the answer that best corrects the bolded portion of the passage. If the bolded portion is correct as written, choose "NO CHANGE."

- A. Having finished his introduction, Dr. Mitchell first showed the class the permanent exhibition.
- B. Having finished introducing the permanent exhibition Dr. Mitchell showed the permanent exhibition to the class first.
- C. NO CHANGE
- D. Having finished his introduction, the permanent exhibition was the first thing showed to the class.

✧ **ERRORS BASED ON PARALLELISM**

In the following sentences, find and correct the mistakes based on parallelism.

1. She wants to not only improve her public speaking but also writing more persuasive content
2. Because the media have accused him of doping, because the fans are turning against him, and he asked for more money, the baseball team tried to trade the fading player.
3. The driver sent not only twenty text messages but also received a bunch before he crashed.
4. They traveled to the barren deserts of the Sahara, to the lush jungles of Guatemala, and Antarctica.
5. Putting on her bathing suit, slapping on some sunscreen, and when she had called to Nick, Tina jumped into the pool.
6. The responsibilities of the intern include compiling data, preparing presentations, and he was to assist in daily stand-up meetings.
7. Steve thought that John should go to the parade, but that Tina would go home.
8. The keynote speaker began by sharing a powerful anecdote, proceeded to outline the research findings, and then his suggestions for future innovation.
9. The company's mission includes fostering creativity, ensuring data privacy, and that customer needs are met globally.
10. The report was not only riddled with factual inaccuracies but also lacked clarity, organization, and it failed to offer recommendations.
11. The CEO spoke about innovation in product design, creating a culture of accountability, and how the company should expand globally.
12. To develop a successful product requires understanding user needs, investing in quality materials, and that the marketing strategy must be solid.
13. The policy aims to reduce carbon emissions, promoting renewable energy, and that environmental awareness should increase among the public.

14. The team was praised for its punctuality, discipline, and they managed the crisis with maturity.

15. His strengths are problem-solving, managing time efficiently, and that he can communicate across departments.

✧ **Choose the correct answers for the following questions:**

1. Which sentence has no errors in its parallel structure?

- a) Barking dogs, kittens that were meowing, and squawking parakeets greet the pet shop visitors.
- b) Barking dogs, meowing kittens, and squawking parakeets greet the pet shop visitors.
- c) Dogs that bark, kittens that meow, and parakeets squawking greet the pet shop visitors.
- d) None of the above.

2. Which sentence has no errors in its parallel structure?

- a) During class, Samuel spent his time flirting with Brittney, eating candy, and doodling on the assignment sheet.
- b) During class, Samuel spent his time flirting with Brittney, he ate candy, and doodling on the assignment sheet.
- c) During class, Samuel spent his time to flirt with Brittney, to eat candy, and doodling on the assignment sheet.
- d) All of the above.

3. Which sentence has no errors?

- a) Alex looked everywhere for his math book—under the bed, on his desk, and he searched inside the refrigerator.
- b) Alex looked everywhere for his math book—viewing under the bed, searching on his desk, and inside the refrigerator.
- c) Alex looked everywhere for his math book—under the bed, on his desk, and inside the refrigerator.
- d) None of the above.

4. Which sentence has no errors?

- a) The committee discussed revising the policy, how to allocate funds, and implementing stricter guidelines.
- b) The committee discussed revising the policy, allocating funds, and implementing stricter guidelines.
- c) The committee discussed to revise the policy, allocation of funds, and stricter guidelines.

d) The committee discussed policy revisions, how funds should be allocated, and implementing guidelines.

5. Which sentence has no errors?

- a) The job requires multitasking, attention to detail, and communicating clearly with clients.
- b) The job requires you to multitask, be detail-oriented, and clear communication.
- c) The job requires multitasking, detail orientation, and to communicate clearly.
- d) The job requires to multitask, being attentive to details, and communication clarity.

6. Which sentence has no errors?

- a) The conference featured lectures by Nobel laureates, hands-on workshops, and where startups pitched their ideas.
- b) The conference featured Nobel laureates giving lectures, conducting workshops, and startups that pitched.
- c) The conference featured Nobel lectures, hands-on sessions, and pitch decks from startup founders.
- d) The conference featured lectures by Nobel laureates, hands-on workshops, and startup pitch sessions.

7. Which sentence has no errors?

- a) The intern was asked to update records, handle incoming calls, and she managed the appointment calendar.
- b) The intern was asked to update records, to handle calls, and managing the calendar.
- c) The intern was asked to update records, handle incoming calls, and manage the appointment calendar.
- d) The intern was asked updating records, call handling, and managing the calendar.

8. Which sentence has no errors?

- a) The research was time-consuming, tedious, and demanded accuracy.
- b) The research consumed time, was tedious, and accuracy was important.
- c) The research was taking time, was tedious, and it needed accuracy.
- d) The research consumed much time, was tiring, and needing accuracy.

9. Identify the sentence with no errors of parallelism:

- a) He has demonstrated not only integrity in crisis but also that he can act decisively.
- b) He has demonstrated not only integrity but also decisiveness in action.
- c) He has demonstrated not only being honest but also decisive action.
- d) He has demonstrated not only that he is honest but also decisiveness.

10. Identify the sentence with no errors of parallelism:

- a) The role requires a candidate who is detail-oriented, communicates effectively, and thinking analytically.
- b) The role requires a candidate to be detail-oriented, an effective communicator, and thinks analytically.
- c) The role requires a candidate who is detail-oriented, an effective communicator, and an analytical thinker.
- d) The role requires a candidate who pays attention to detail, effective communication, and analytical abilities.

✧ **A sentence is divided into four parts (A), (B), (C), and (D). Identify the part with a parallelism error. If none, choose (E) “No Error.”**

- 1. (A) Not only did he study hard, (B) but he also, (C) practiced daily, (D) and succeeds often./No Error (E)
- 2. (A) Hiking in the mountains, (B) is more exciting than, (C) to swim in the sea, (D) during summer./No Error (E)
- 3. (A) Not only did he finish early, (B) but he also, (C) helped others, (D) and rests afterward./No Error (E)
- 4. (A) Either the teacher explains, (B) or the students, (C) ask questions, (D) during class./No Error (E)
- 5. (A) Learning new skills is better than, (B) to waste time, (C) on trivial tasks, (D) daily./No Error (E)
- 6. (A) The manager trained employees, (B) assigned tasks, (C) and was evaluating, (D) their progress daily./No Error (E)
- 7. (A) Before leaving, (B) she packed her bags, (C) checked the tickets, (D) and calls her friend./No Error (E)
- 8. (A) The new manager was known for implementing agile methods,(B) minimizing unnecessary steps, (C)and she enforced strict deadlines (D) to boost productivity./No Error (E)
- 9. (A) Studying late, (B) skipping meals, (C) and to neglect sleep, (D) harms students' health./No Error (E)
- 10. (A) The course requires students to read case studies, (B) participate in debates, (C)and analyzing business scenarios (D) using various models./No Error (E)

VOCABULARY

Choose the correct option.

1. Synonym-Based MCQ

Select the word closest in meaning to: **"abate"**

- A. Escalate
- B. Diminish
- C. Intensify
- D. Aggravate

2. Antonym-Based MCQ

Select the word most opposite in meaning to: **"adamant"**

- A. Firm
- B. Unyielding
- C. Flexible
- D. Assertive

3. Contextual Usage – Error Detection

Identify the error in usage of vocabulary:

"The CEO abjured praise and celebrated his team's effort."

- A. abjured is incorrect
- B. praise should be plural
- C. celebrated is redundant
- D. No error

4. Fill-in-the-Blank – Contextual

Despite the media storm, the spokesperson remained calm and handled the situation with _____.

- A. Adversity
- B. Acrimony
- C. Equanimity
- D. Abnegation

5. Meaning-Based Match

Match the word to its meaning:

Espouse

- A. Reject
- B. Encourage
- C. Adopt or support
- D. Publicly shame

6. Sentence Completion – Tone

His _____ remarks during the team meeting defused tension and brought laughter.

- A. morose
- B. jocular
- C. malevolent
- D. taciturn

7. Usage Error Identification

"His intrepid attitude made him avoid every challenge in the project."

- A. "intrepid" is misused
- B. "attitude" is misused
- C. "avoid" should be "face"
- D. No error

8. Sentence Completion – Grammar and Context

To _____ a clear understanding, the analyst used visuals and analogies.

- A. emulate
- B. elucidate
- C. enumerate
- D. extol

9. Opposite in Meaning – MCQ

Choose the word most opposite in meaning to: **"exonerate"**

- A. Convict
- B. Excuse
- C. Absolve
- D. Free

10. Meaning in Context – Fill-in-the-Blank

The proposal was met with _____ from the entire board, reflecting their strong disapproval.

- A. Acclaim
- B. Abetment
- C. Acrimony
- D. Adulation

11. Word Usage in Business Context

"To stay relevant in a dynamic market, outdated strategies must be _____ immediately."

- A. imbibed
- B. abrogated
- C. enervated
- D. extolled

12. One-Word Substitution

A person who attacks or rejects traditional ideas or institutions:

- A. Iconoclast
- B. Advocate
- C. Visionary
- D. Oracle

13. Real-Life Scenario Fill-in-the-Blank

The new intern's _____ grasp of AI tools amazed the entire data team.

- A. latent
- B. mundane
- C. precocious
- D. fluent

14. Error Spotting

"Their response to the crisis was impeccable, marked with confusion and chaos."

- A. "impeccable" is inappropriate
- B. "marked" is used incorrectly
- C. No error
- D. "chaos" is informal

15. Sentence Completion – Idiomatic Use

The founder was known for his _____ generosity, forgiving even the harshest critics.

- A. meticulous
- B. malevolent
- C. magnanimous
- D. reticent

16. Vocabulary Fit – Logical Flow

The engineer's explanation was so _____ that even non-technical staff understood it clearly.

- A. erratic
- B. lucid
- C. opaque
- D. ephemeral

17. Vocabulary Usage – Best Fit

The board was frustrated with the vendor's _____ replies, which lacked commitment.

- A. adamant
- B. laconic
- C. equivocal
- D. kinetic

18. Odd One Out

Identify the word that does NOT belong in the group:

- A. erudite
- B. adept
- C. abstemious
- D. adroit

19. Antonym – Nuanced

Select the antonym of: "**affluent**"

- A. impoverished
- B. affluent
- C. insatiable
- D. perfunctory

20. Application-Oriented Vocabulary

The _____ changes in the app interface led to improved engagement.

- A. opaque
- B. kinetic
- C. ephemeral
- D. aesthetic

21. Vocabulary in Context

The speaker's _____ delivery energized the audience.

- A. kinetic
- B. mundane
- C. obdurate
- D. erratic

22. Fill in the blank – Tone and Register

Although the situation was serious, his touch of _____ helped lighten the mood.

- A. levity
- B. lament
- C. nuance
- D. languid

23. Best fit word – Conceptual understanding

The audit uncovered several _____ data sharing practices that violated compliance rules.

- A. implicit
- B. illicit
- C. esoteric
- D. ineffable

24. Sentence Usage – Ambiguity Detection

"She was oblivious of the changes and continued with her old strategy."

- A. Correct usage
- B. Replace "oblivious" with "innocuous"
- C. Replace "oblivious" with "opaque"
- D. Replace "oblivious" with "immutable"

25. One-word Substitution

A person new to a field or subject:

- A. Iconoclast
- B. Novice
- C. Advocate
- D. Luminary

26. Contextual Completion

The team showed _____ toward the constant client demands.

- A. acumen
- B. insatiable
- C. nuance
- D. equanimity

27. Word Choice

Her _____ design style makes every product visually appealing.

- A. aesthetic
- B. erudite
- C. ambiguous
- D. affluent

28. Vocabulary Fit – Opposite Action

Instead of accelerating the process, the new approval step will _____ it.

- A. imbibe
- B. emulate
- C. enervate
- D. expedite

29. Application Sentence Completion

The company's _____ goals reflected its aggressive global expansion strategy.

- A. pragmatic
- B. insatiable
- C. judicious
- D. lucid

30. Subtle Usage

She used language with great _____, carefully tailoring her message for each stakeholder.

- A. nuance
- B. lament
- C. acumen
- D. euphoria

Unit 2

Storytelling in a Professional Setting



Introduction

Storytelling has long been an integral part of human communication. In the professional world, it becomes a strategic tool—one that allows individuals to connect meaningfully, convey competence, and build credibility. Whether in a job interview, a performance review, or a networking event, the ability to craft and deliver a compelling story can set a candidate apart from others. This unit explores the key elements of effective professional storytelling, especially how to highlight personal achievements and align narratives with organizational goals.

1. Crafting a Memorable Personal Narrative

A **memorable personal narrative** is more than just a chronological retelling of events, it is a thoughtful, purposeful, and emotionally resonant story that highlights your **character**, **competence**, and **capacity for growth**. In professional contexts, these narratives help translate your life experiences into compelling evidence of your readiness for specific roles, responsibilities, or opportunities. Unlike CVs or bullet points, a personal narrative **connects the dots** between what you've done and who you are becoming.

In interviews, workplace discussions, or even in leadership communication, a personal narrative often begins with a **specific situation or challenge** that sets the stage. This is followed by the **actions you chose to take**, detailing how you responded, what decisions you made, and why you made them. The narrative then culminates in a **result or reflection**, where you articulate what you learned from the experience and how it helped you evolve either professionally or personally. This structure not only ensures clarity but also makes the story easy to follow and engaging for your listener.

- **Start with a Clear Purpose:**
Know the goal of your story—what trait, value, or skill do you want to highlight?
- **Use a Simple Structure:**
Follow the "Situation – Action – Result" format to maintain clarity and flow.
- **Draw from Real Experiences:**
Choose specific, meaningful moments that reflect personal or professional growth.
- **Include Emotion and Reflection:**
Emotion makes your story relatable; reflection shows maturity and insight.
- **Align with Your Audience:**
Tailor the narrative to match the role, company, or context you're speaking to.

Lastly, crafting a personal narrative is not just about storytelling; it is an exercise in **self-awareness and professional branding**. It encourages you to look back, identify turning points, and recognize patterns in your growth. When done well, your narrative becomes more than a response to an interview question, it becomes a **signature story** that defines how others perceive you and how you perceive yourself.

- **Structure:** Use the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to build a clear, logical flow.
- **Focus:** Highlight moments that shaped your career, revealed your character, or demonstrated your abilities.
- **Authenticity:** Be genuine. The story should reflect who you are and what matters to you.

Example:

i. Leadership

Skill Highlighted: Taking initiative and leading a team

Context: College group project

"In my second year of college, I was part of a five-member group project on sustainable technology. Initially, our team lacked coordination, and meetings often ended without a clear plan. I realized we needed structure, so I stepped up and suggested creating a shared task board and assigning roles based on each member's strengths. I also volunteered to lead

weekly check-ins. Slowly, team productivity improved, and our project not only met the deadline but also received the highest grade in the class. That experience taught me that leadership isn't about authority—it's about clarity, communication, and consistency."

ii. Resilience

Skill Highlighted: Bouncing back after failure

Context: Internship setback

"During my first internship, I was asked to deliver a data presentation to a client. Despite my preparation, I misinterpreted one dataset, which caused confusion. I felt embarrassed, but instead of avoiding the issue, I owned the mistake. I followed up with the client, clarified the data, and created a revised report. My supervisor appreciated my honesty and problem-solving approach. This experience taught me that setbacks are inevitable, but resilience is in how we respond—and that being transparent can actually build trust."

iii. Creativity

Skill Highlighted: Finding innovative solutions

Context: Campus event planning

"As part of the college cultural committee, I was responsible for increasing attendance at our annual fest. Previous years saw low turnout. I proposed a campaign that used QR codes on posters to unlock teaser videos and discount passes. We also engaged students through daily trivia contests on social media. The campaign created buzz and tripled attendance that year. It showed me how thinking creatively—even within tight budgets—can lead to meaningful engagement and tangible results."

iv. Teamwork

Skill Highlighted: Collaboration and empathy

Context: Hackathon event

"In a 24-hour hackathon, I was part of a four-member team building an app for emergency response. Midway through, one member faced a personal issue and fell behind on their coding task. Instead of blaming, we reassigned roles and worked extra hours to cover for them. In the end, we won second place. But more importantly, I realized that effective teamwork is not just about task completion—it's about supporting one another, especially during stressful times."

v. Adaptability

Skill Highlighted: Adjusting to changing environments

Context: First online semester during COVID-19

"When classes shifted online during the pandemic, I initially struggled with the lack of structure and interaction. To adapt, I created a daily schedule, joined online study groups, and even helped a few classmates with technical issues. Over time, I improved my time management and communication skills. I finished the semester with higher grades than the previous term. That period taught me how to stay flexible, take initiative, and thrive even when the environment suddenly changes."

2. Highlighting Achievements Through Stories

Sharing your achievements through stories makes them more engaging, memorable, and authentic. Instead of simply listing accomplishments like a checklist, storytelling brings depth and context to your experiences. It allows you to showcase not just what you achieved, but how you got there what challenges you faced, what decisions you made, and what strategies you used to succeed. This approach reveals your thought process, resilience, and problem-solving skills. Most importantly, stories humanize your achievements, making it easier for your audience whether it's an interviewer, a colleague, or a client—to connect with you on an emotional level and truly understand the value you bring to the table.

Key Points:

- **Show, Don't Just Tell:**
Go beyond stating facts—describe the situation, the challenge, and how you achieved the result.
- **Emphasize Your Role:**
Make it clear what specific actions you took and how you contributed to the success.
- **Quantify Results:**
Use metrics or tangible outcomes to show real impact (e.g., “reduced processing time by 30%”).
- **Highlight Transferable Skills:**
Link the achievement to qualities like leadership, problem-solving, or teamwork.
- **Keep It Relevant:**
Select stories that align with the goals or values of your audience or employer.

In essence, storytelling transforms your past into a persuasive narrative of potential. It doesn't just say “Look at what I did”; it says, “Here's how I think, grow, and contribute and here's why it matters.” It makes your accomplishments not only more tangible and relevant but also more inspiring and memorable. In a competitive environment where attention spans are short and impressions are everything, a well-told story can leave a mark far deeper than a long list of bullet points ever could.

How to do it:

- Describe the problem or task you faced.
- Share the steps you took to solve it.
- Emphasize results with data: "We reduced delivery time by 25%" or "I helped increase team productivity by 15%."

Examples:

i. Before:

"I led a successful marketing campaign."

After:

"When sales dropped in Q2, I led a new digital campaign targeting younger customers. We tested new messaging, optimized content, and increased sales by 28% in six weeks."

Why this works: It gives context, process, and measurable impact—all in a story format.

ii. Before:

"I worked well with my team during our final project."

After:

"In our final semester project, two team members had conflicting ideas about the direction. I facilitated a brainstorming session to align everyone, encouraged compromise, and helped the team stay focused. We delivered the project on time and received the highest grade in the class."

Why this works: It shows conflict, initiative, leadership, and outcome—more vivid than simply claiming to be a team player.

iii. Before:

"I led a group presentation in class."

After:

"When our group struggled to organize our roles for a class presentation, I created a timeline, delegated responsibilities, and held short prep meetings. Our presentation was not only smooth but praised by the professor for clarity and coordination."

Why this works: It frames a routine class activity as an example of planning, leadership, and initiative.

iv. Before:

"I contributed creative ideas to the campaign."

After:

"While designing our college fest's promotional campaign, I pitched an interactive quiz series for Instagram. The idea boosted engagement by 65% compared to the previous year's posts."

Why this works: The story focuses on creativity, action, and measurable success.

v. Before:

"I contributed creative ideas to the campaign."

After:

"While designing our college fest's promotional campaign, I pitched an interactive quiz series for Instagram. The idea boosted engagement by 65% compared to the previous year's posts."

Why this works: The story focuses on creativity, action, and measurable success.

3. Aligning Stories with Job Requirements

In professional settings, personal stories become truly effective only when they demonstrate your direct relevance to a specific role, in a specific company, at a specific time. Storytelling in this context must be strategic - it's not enough for the story to be interesting; it must be purposeful and aligned with the employer's expectations. The more closely your narrative reflects the skills, values, and challenges outlined in a job description, the more persuasive and impactful it becomes.

Key Strategies to Align Your Story with the Job:

- **Decode the Job Description:**

Treat the job posting as a roadmap. Identify keywords like team player, leadership under pressure, detail-oriented, etc., and understand the traits the employer values most.

- **Select Relevant Experiences:**

Reflect on moments in your academic, internship, or extracurricular life that clearly demonstrate the required skills.

- Example: For a role requiring project management, share how you led a team project, tackled obstacles, and ensured delivery.

- **Illustrate Adaptability When Needed:**

If the role demands flexibility - common in startups or dynamic industries - share a time when you quickly adjusted to new roles, systems, or environments.

- Example: Learning a new tool during a remote internship and applying it within a week.
- **Mirror Company Culture and Values:**
Research company culture through their mission, social media, or employee reviews. Align your story to values like innovation, customer focus, or collaboration.
 - Example: Narrate how you led a brainstorming session that resulted in a creative solution, matching a company's innovation-driven identity.
- **Demonstrate Intentionality and Preparation:**
When your story reflects their needs and language, it signals that you've done your homework. This builds trust and shows you're not just applying randomly.
- **Make the Abstract Concrete:**
Help the employer visualize how your experience can address their specific challenges. Your story should do the connecting - it should transform potential into proof.

In short, relevance is what transforms a story into a strategy. It aligns your experience with the employer's goals, makes your narrative focused and intentional, and positions you as a candidate who not only understands their own strengths; but also understands the job, the company, and how to contribute from day one.

Steps:

- Read the job description carefully.
- Identify 3–5 key competencies (e.g., communication, leadership, problem-solving).
- Choose stories that clearly **demonstrate** those skills.

Example:

1. If a job emphasizes “problem-solving” tell a story where you identified a bottleneck in a process (e.g., during a college fest, project, or internship), proposed a new approach, and successfully implemented a solution that saved time or resources.

“During my internship, I noticed delays in how customer queries were forwarded. I suggested a shared dashboard using Google Sheets, reducing response time by 40%.”

2. If a job emphasizes “leadership” tell a story where you took initiative to lead a team or project, handled responsibilities, and motivated others to achieve a common goal.

“When our project team lost a key member close to the deadline, I reorganized our tasks, delegated roles efficiently, and ensured we submitted the final report on time.”

3. If a job emphasizes “communication skills” tell a story where you had to clearly convey complex information to different audiences or mediate a misunderstanding.

“In my role as a student ambassador, I had to explain university procedures to both students and parents, ensuring clarity while adapting my tone to each group.”

4. Tailoring Language to Company Culture

Understanding the Concept

The way you tell a story in a professional setting should never follow a one-size-fits-all approach. In fact, the same experience or achievement can—and should—be communicated differently depending on the communication style and cultural expectations of the company or organization you are engaging with. Tailoring your language involves adjusting tone, vocabulary, pacing, and emphasis so that your message aligns with the values and communication norms of your audience.

At its core, this practice is not about altering the facts or fabricating details; it's about being intentional with your delivery. An informal, energetic tone may resonate well with a startup that values innovation, creativity, and flexibility. In contrast, the same message might need to be delivered more formally and analytically in a corporate, academic, or government setting that prioritizes structure, hierarchy, and measured outcomes. This level of adaptation demonstrates both cultural awareness and communication intelligence.

Why Tailoring Matters?

In job interviews, presentations, and even email communications, how you speak is just as important as what you say. Employers are increasingly looking for candidates who not only possess technical or functional skills but also show cultural fit. When your communication style mirrors the organization's tone and values, you are perceived as more relatable, competent, and professional.

Tailored communication achieves several important outcomes:

- Shows that you've researched and understood the organization.
- Demonstrates your ability to adapt to new environments.
- Enhances the clarity and impact of your message.
- Builds stronger connections with recruiters, managers, and colleagues.

- Avoids miscommunication or appearing out of sync with workplace expectations.

Identifying Company Culture

Before adapting your language, it's essential to understand the culture of the organization you're addressing. Company culture refers to the shared values, norms, and communication styles that shape how work is done. Different companies reflect different tones—from formal and hierarchical to relaxed and collaborative.

Sources to Understand a Company's Culture:

- The company's **mission and vision statements**
- **Careers** and **About Us** pages on the company website
- Official **blog posts**, press releases, and announcements
- Employee stories and **LinkedIn profiles**
- Company videos, webinars, or keynote talks
- **Social media presence** (Instagram, X/Twitter, LinkedIn tone)
- Language in job descriptions and application instructions

Pay attention to whether the company uses casual or formal language, focuses on innovation or stability, promotes individuality or teamwork, and emphasizes community impact or market performance.

How to Adapt Your Storytelling Style

Let's say you have a core story: you led a team to resolve a customer service issue. Here's how you can tailor that message depending on the organizational culture:

Creative / Design Agency:

"We reimaged the entire customer journey and designed a fresh interface that not only solved the problem but also made the experience more delightful."

Corporate Consulting Firm:

"I conducted a gap analysis of the customer support process and led a team that implemented a structured improvement plan, reducing issue resolution time by 30%."

Nonprofit Organization:

"By listening to the concerns of our beneficiaries and engaging our outreach team, I co-developed a more inclusive and responsive system for addressing complaints."

Tech Startup:

“I noticed users were frustrated, so I prototyped a quick solution over the weekend, got feedback, and shipped a better version by Monday.”

Each version is based on the same event but varies in tone, structure, and vocabulary to match the values and communication preferences of the audience.

Key Techniques to Tailor Language

Use the following techniques to effectively adapt your storytelling to different company cultures:

Tone Matching:

Match the overall formality and energy of the organization (e.g., formal vs conversational).

Vocabulary Alignment:

Use industry-relevant keywords and phrases that the company uses in their content.

Focus Adjustment:

Emphasize outcomes (e.g., metrics, ROI) in corporate settings; emphasize learning, empathy, or creativity in nonprofits or startups.

Verb Choice:

Choose words like collaborated, led, initiated for traditional environments and hacked, bootstrapped, pivoted for informal or tech cultures.

Pacing and Style:

Be concise and structured in formal environments; be narrative and enthusiastic in informal ones.

Example:**1. Talking about innovation:****Startup-friendly:**

“I love experimenting with tools—once built a quick prototype overnight that turned into our MVP.”

Corporate tone:

“I initiated and developed a prototype that evolved into our minimum viable product, contributing to the product roadmap.”

2. On handling failure:**Startup-friendly:**

“We failed fast, learned faster. That campaign tanked, but we pivoted and made something better.”

Corporate tone:

“The initial campaign underperformed, but our team conducted a performance review and successfully iterated on a revised strategy.”

3. Talking about results:**Startup-friendly:**

“We crushed our targets—doubled user signups in two months!”

Corporate tone:

“Achieved a 100% increase in user acquisition within two months through targeted growth strategies.”

5. Balancing Professional and Personal Stories

In professional storytelling, it's important to strike the right balance between showcasing your achievements and revealing the personal experiences that shape who you are. While stories from internships, academic work, or leadership roles display your technical and workplace-related skills, personal stories can powerfully convey your emotional intelligence, adaptability, and character—traits that are just as critical in today's collaborative and dynamic work environments.

Tips for Balancing Professional and Personal Narratives:

- **Use Personal Stories to Highlight Soft Skills:**

Share experiences like volunteering, handling personal challenges, or pursuing hobbies to demonstrate traits such as empathy, resilience, adaptability, or cultural awareness.

- Example: A story about volunteering might reveal your ability to collaborate with diverse groups and solve real-world problems.

- **Link Personal Experiences to Workplace Qualities:**

Make intentional connections between your story and qualities employers seek.

- Example: Climbing a mountain can represent goal-setting, perseverance, and managing setbacks—skills vital for project execution.

- **Keep the Relevance Clear:**

Ensure every personal story circles back to a professional trait or value. Avoid stories that are purely emotional without a clear takeaway.

- **Maintain a Professional Tone:**

Personal doesn't mean unfiltered. Be thoughtful and focused in your storytelling.

- Avoid overly emotional or deeply private content that may feel out of place in an interview or workplace setting.

- **Enhance Relatability Without Losing Focus:**

When framed properly, a personal story can humanize your profile and make you more memorable—just ensure it aligns with the job context.

In essence, the most impactful storytellers are those who can **interweave personal authenticity with professional purpose**—presenting themselves not only as capable workers but also as thoughtful, adaptable, and emotionally aware individuals who bring both skill and character to the table.

Both professional and personal experiences can be meaningful if they show growth, learning, or transferable skills.

Professional stories:

- Internships
- Leadership roles in projects
- Workplace achievements

Personal stories:

- Overcoming personal challenges
- Volunteer experiences
- Moments of character development

Balance:

- Use **professional** stories for core job skills.
- Use **personal** stories to reflect soft skills like empathy, adaptability, or resilience.

Caution: Avoid stories that are too emotional or deeply personal. Stay relevant to the job context.

Example:

i. Personal Story Linked to Resilience and Project Execution

Story:

"During my final year, I had to care for a family member who fell seriously ill while also working on my capstone project. Managing hospital visits, emotional stress, and a tight

academic deadline pushed me out of my comfort zone. I had to create strict time schedules, prioritize ruthlessly, and collaborate remotely with my team to meet our milestones."

Takeaway:

This story demonstrates **resilience**, **time management**, and **collaboration under pressure**, all highly transferable skills in any job that demands multitasking and commitment to results.

ii. Professional Story with a Human Touch

Story:

"While interning at a digital marketing agency, I was put in charge of a client campaign targeting rural communities. I realized that simply translating content wasn't enough. So, I volunteered to interview local users to understand their real concerns and modified our content accordingly, which boosted engagement by 30%."

Takeaway:

Though it's a professional story, it brings in **empathy**, **cultural sensitivity**, and **initiative**—showing not just technical ability, but emotional intelligence and user-centric thinking.

iii. Personal Passion Framed Professionally

Story:

"I once trained for a half-marathon with no prior running experience. It took three months of disciplined early mornings, constant self-monitoring, and mental conditioning. Though unrelated to my field directly, this experience taught me how to set incremental goals, monitor performance, and stay committed to long-term success."

Takeaway:

While personal, this story illustrates **goal setting**, **self-discipline**, and **grit**—qualities employers value in roles that require long-term planning and execution.

6. Mastering Non-Verbal Cues in Storytelling

Non-verbal communication plays a **crucial and often underestimated role** in enhancing the effectiveness of storytelling, particularly in professional settings such as interviews, presentations, or networking interactions. While your words provide the content of the story, it is your **non-verbal cues**—your facial expressions, gestures, eye contact, and body language—that bring the story to life, influencing how your message is perceived and remembered by your audience.

For example, **steady and appropriate eye contact** demonstrates honesty, confidence, and attentiveness. It helps build trust and shows that you are fully engaged in the conversation. Avoiding eye contact, on the other hand, can unintentionally signal nervousness, disinterest,

or lack of confidence. Similarly, **natural hand gestures** can enhance storytelling by emphasizing key points, illustrating concepts, and adding rhythm to your speech. They make your delivery more dynamic and help the listener follow along more easily.

Facial expressions are especially powerful in conveying emotion and should align with the tone and content of your story. A genuine smile when discussing achievements, a look of concern when describing challenges, or an expression of determination during moments of effort—all these visual cues help the listener connect with your experience on a deeper, more human level. Misaligned expressions, such as smiling while talking about a failure, can confuse or disconnect the audience from your message.

Your **body posture** also communicates volumes. Standing or sitting upright with open shoulders signals confidence, readiness, and professionalism. Leaning in slightly while listening or speaking can express interest and engagement. In contrast, slouching, crossing your arms, or excessive fidgeting may suggest discomfort, defensiveness, or lack of preparation.

Together, these non-verbal elements act as **reinforcements** of your verbal storytelling. When your tone, words, and body language are in harmony, your message becomes more persuasive, credible, and memorable. This synergy is especially important during high-stakes interactions like job interviews or public speaking engagements, where making a strong impression goes beyond what you say—it depends heavily on how you say it, and how you **present yourself** as a whole communicator.

Elements to practice:

- **Eye contact:** Shows confidence and trustworthiness.
- **Body posture:** Sit or stand upright; avoid slouching or fidgeting.
- **Gestures:** Use natural hand movements to highlight important points.
- **Facial expressions:** Smile or show appropriate emotion that matches your story.

Why it matters: A confident posture and expressive tone make your story more believable and dynamic.

Tip: Record yourself and review your body language and tone.

7. Adapting Tone and Pacing to the Interview Setting

Tone and pacing are crucial elements of storytelling that affect how your message is received. Regardless of how strong your story is, if your tone feels off or your pacing is poorly

managed, your impact may be diminished. Adapting these elements to suit the interview format—whether in person, panel, or virtual—is key to effective communication.

i. One-on-One Interviews

A conversational yet confident tone works best in this setting. It shows you are both professional and approachable.

Key Points:

- Use a natural, friendly tone without sounding too casual.
- Speak steadily and clearly—avoid rushing or dragging your speech.
- Pause briefly between ideas to give space for understanding and reflection.
- This pacing allows you to stay calm and composed while ensuring clarity.

ii. Panel Interviews

Panel interviews require you to engage multiple interviewers and adapt to group dynamics.

Key Points:

- Distribute eye contact evenly to include everyone in the conversation.
- Maintain a respectful and calm tone, avoiding over-rehearsed delivery.
- Adjust your pacing to allow for follow-up questions and group interaction.
- Use situational awareness to decide when to expand or summarize based on cues from the panel.

iii. Virtual Interviews

Virtual formats demand heightened vocal clarity and visual presence to make up for the lack of in-person cues.

Key Points:

- Speak clearly and articulate your words to ensure you're understood.
- Maintain camera engagement to mimic eye contact and build connection.
- Use slight pauses after key points to account for possible audio delays.
- Adopt a warm and expressive tone to compensate for the screen's limitations.

Ultimately, being able to **adapt your tone and pacing to the formality, setting, and audience** demonstrates a high level of communication awareness and emotional intelligence.

It shows that you not only understand your story but also know how to deliver it in a way that resonates with different listeners. This flexibility enhances your professional presence and ensures your storytelling is both compelling and appropriately framed for the context.

Interviews vary. Your storytelling tone and timing should suit the format.

For one-on-one interviews:

- Maintain a conversational tone.
- Pause to let your story sink in or allow follow-up questions.

For panel interviews:

- Maintain eye contact with all members.
- Don't rush—pace your story and keep it within 1–2 minutes.

For virtual interviews:

- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Avoid monotone delivery.
- Look into the webcam, not your screen, while speaking.

8. Avoiding Overuse of Jargon and Technical Terms

Clear communication is essential when telling professional stories. While demonstrating technical expertise is important, using too much jargon can alienate your audience. The goal is to make your message accessible, especially in interviews, presentations, or cross-functional meetings where not everyone shares your technical background.

i. Understand Your Audience

Tailor your language based on who you're speaking to.

Key Points:

- Consider whether your audience is familiar with technical terms.
- Avoid assuming shared knowledge, especially in cross-departmental settings.
- Choose words that resonate with non-specialist listeners.

ii. Balance Expertise and Clarity

Show your knowledge without overwhelming the audience.

Key Points:

- Don't eliminate technical content—reframe it in simpler terms.
- Replace jargon with plain language when possible.
- Focus on the **impact** of your work, not just the process.

iii. Use Every day Analogies

Analogies and metaphors can make complex ideas relatable.

Key Points:

- Explain databases as “digital filing cabinets” or AI tools as “virtual assistants.”
- Use real-life comparisons to clarify unfamiliar concepts.
- Ensure your analogy enhances understanding, not confusion.

iv. Reframe Technical Descriptions

Translate technical processes into meaningful outcomes.

Example:

- Instead of: “I deployed a BERT-based NLP model...”
- Try: “I created a language tool to help analyze customer feedback and improve service.”

Key Points:

- Focus on results and relevance.
- Show how your work adds value in practical terms.

v. Prioritize Clarity in Cross-Functional Settings

Inclusivity in communication builds better collaboration.

Key Points:

- Use clear, universal language when speaking with non-technical teams.
- Inclusive storytelling increases engagement and buy-in.
- Clear communication reflects leadership and team-oriented thinking.

Ultimately, the ability to **translate complex concepts into simple, meaningful narratives** is what sets effective communicators apart. It shows not just what you know, but how well you can share that knowledge with others—a quality that is essential for leadership, collaboration, and long-term professional success.

Your audience may not share your technical background. Using too much specialized language can confuse or bore them.

What to do:

- **Simplify** terms: Instead of saying “I created a Python-based AI model,” say “I built a program that predicts user behaviour using AI.”
- **Use analogies**: Help the listener understand complex ideas by comparing them to something familiar.
- **Gauge your audience**: Use more technical terms only if you're sure your audience understands them.

9. Engaging the Interviewer with Relevant Anecdotes

Crafting the right story for the right moment is essential in interviews and professional conversations. A relevant anecdote can humanize your experiences and make your strengths resonate more deeply with the listener. When you choose a story that directly reflects the qualities or experiences the interviewer is looking for, it does more than just convey

information—it creates a connection. It allows your audience to see beyond your résumé and visualize how you respond to challenges, collaborate with others, and grow from experiences. The right anecdote not only supports your claims with real-life proof but also adds emotion, authenticity, and memorability to your responses. In high-stakes conversations, such storytelling becomes a powerful tool to leave a lasting, positive impression.

i. Choose Stories That Align with the Role

Make your anecdote purposeful and tailored to the job or question.

Key Points:

- Select experiences that reflect the specific skills or qualities the employer values.
- Avoid generic or off-topic stories, no matter how impressive.
- Match the story to the question or situation for maximum impact.

ii. Keep It Focused and Vivid

Tell a miniature story with a clear structure and takeaway.

Key Points:

- Include a beginning (context), middle (challenge/action), and end (outcome/lesson).
- Keep it brief but rich with relevant details.
- Emphasize a key skill, trait, or lesson learned.

iii. Highlight Real-World Challenges

Choose moments that show growth, adaptability, or leadership.

Key Points:

- Talk about resolving conflicts, navigating uncertainty, or meeting tough deadlines.
- Use real examples to show both technical and soft skills.
- Let your personality and values shine through.

iv. Make It Relatable and Visual

Help the interviewer imagine the scenario.

Key Points:

- Use descriptive language without overloading with jargon.
- Convey emotion and stakes when appropriate.
- Make the listener feel the impact of your actions.

v. Invite Engagement After Your Story

Turn your anecdote into a two-way conversation.

Key Points:

- Conclude with a reflective comment or question.

- Example: “That taught me to stay calm under pressure—how does your team usually handle unexpected changes?”
- Encourages connection and shows you're genuinely interested in the role and team dynamics.

Ultimately, **relevance and engagement** are what allow your story to resonate with your audience. A story that is tailored to the moment and delivered with enthusiasm, clarity, and purpose is far more likely to **spark interest**, foster connection, and leave a positive, lasting impression. When your stories speak directly to the needs of the role and invite the listener into your experience, they not only showcase your qualifications—they also reflect your communication skills, empathy, and readiness to be part of the organization’s narrative.

Relevant anecdotes can be entertaining, educational, and engaging.

Checklist for a good anecdote:

- Is it related to the job or skills needed?
- Does it show how you think or behave?
- Is it concise (1–2 minutes)?
- Does it leave a positive impression?

Example:

"In college, I led a team of four students to design a low-cost water filter. We had zero funding initially, but we pitched our idea at a university event and won seed money. The project taught me resilience and how to communicate ideas persuasively."

10. Demonstrating Growth Through Personal Stories

In professional storytelling, personal narratives that reflect growth or transformation are among the most compelling tools you can use. These stories do more than simply list your achievements—they offer a glimpse into your mindset, values, and evolution over time. By sharing experiences that challenged you or pushed you out of your comfort zone, you reveal important traits such as resilience, adaptability, and self-awareness. Rather than just showcasing a polished end result, growth-oriented stories highlight the process behind your development—how you identified a weakness, learned from failure, and took steps to improve. This depth of insight allows employers or listeners to understand not only what you've accomplished, but more importantly, how you think, how you react under pressure, and who you are becoming as a professional and a person.

Why Growth Stories Matter

- They show how you respond to adversity and adapt over time.
- Employers often look for self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and perseverance.
- Growth-oriented stories make your experiences relatable and authentic.

Start with the Struggle

- Focus on a challenge, failure, or limitation you once faced.
- Examples: poor time management, a missed opportunity, or a leadership misstep.
- Don't just describe the problem—make it the setup for your transformation.

Highlight the Turning Point

- Explain how you reflected on the experience and chose to improve.
- Describe actions you took to change—new habits, strategies, or tools you adopted.
- This is where your personal growth becomes most evident.

Show the Results

- Share the positive outcomes of your change in behaviour or mindset.
- Let the listener see how your experience shaped your future decisions.
- These results add credibility to your story and illustrate your potential.

What It Says About You

- You're not afraid to own mistakes or reflect honestly.
- You have a growth mindset and believe in continuous improvement.
- You bring resilience, adaptability, and humility—qualities highly valued in any role.

In summary, growth narratives are not just stories of overcoming—they are **evidence of your ability to reflect, learn, and rise stronger**, which makes them incredibly persuasive and memorable in any professional context.

Stories that show how you've changed over time demonstrate **self-awareness, resilience, and a growth mindset**.

Structure:

1. Describe a challenge or mistake.
2. Explain what you learned or how you improved.
3. Link it to your current success or strength.

Example:

"Early in my career, I avoided giving negative feedback because I feared conflict. But after attending a management workshop, I practiced giving constructive feedback. Today, my team appreciates open communication, and I've seen better performance as a result."

Why this works: Employers want people who can reflect, adapt, and grow—not just those who are perfect.

Conclusion

Mastering storytelling in a professional context is a dynamic and transformative skill that blends self-awareness, empathy, and strategic communication. It enables individuals to present their experiences not merely as a list of accomplishments, but as meaningful narratives that demonstrate growth, purpose, and relevance. In today's competitive landscape, where CVs often look similar, a well-crafted story can serve as a unique differentiator. It provides context to your journey, highlights the “why” behind your actions, and reveals the values that guide you.

Whether you are a student preparing for campus placements, a professional aiming for a leadership role, or a job seeker navigating interviews, storytelling can serve as the bridge between your past experiences and the future opportunities you're striving for. Stories have the power to humanize your profile, showcase your decision-making abilities, and illustrate how you've responded to challenges or change.

The key lies in aligning your stories with the expectations of the role or organization, carefully selecting experiences that reflect both competence and character. When delivered with clarity, emotional resonance, and professional focus, your stories don't just inform, they inspire. By refining your delivery and emphasizing authentic learning and growth, you position yourself not just as a qualified candidate, but as a thoughtful, reflective, and impactful presence, someone employers remember and want to work with.

PRACTICE EXERCISES:

Exercise 1: Understanding the Purpose of Storytelling in Professional Contexts

Quick Reflection (Write in 2–3 sentences each):

- Think of a time you solved a problem creatively. What was the situation?
- What story do you usually tell when asked “Tell me about yourself”?

Task: Identify a key story from your academic, internship, or personal life that reflects your strengths.

Exercise 2: Crafting a Memorable Personal Narrative (STAR+G Method)

STAR+G Format:

- Situation
- Task
- Action
- Result
- Growth (what you learned)

STAR+G Component	Your Story
Situation	
Task	
Action	
Result	
Growth	

Exercise 3: Aligning Stories with Job Requirements

Job Match Matrix

Pick a job you are applying for. List three key skills from the job description and match a story that demonstrates each.

Skill from Job Description	Your Matching Story (1-2 lines)

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Exercise 4: Tailoring Language to Company Culture

Vocabulary Tuning

Choose one of your STAR+G stories and revise it to match two different company cultures:

1. **Corporate/Conservative (e.g., Banking, Insurance)**
2. **Innovative/Creative (e.g., Startups, Tech)**

Write the opening 3–4 lines of your story in both styles.

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Exercise 5: Balancing Professional and Personal Stories

Story Balance Sheet

Task:

Choose two stories:

- One professional (internship, project, award).
- One personal (failure, travel, volunteering, passion).

Type	Brief story summary	What it tells about you?

Exercise 6: Engaging the Interviewer with Relevant Anecdotes

Anecdote Angle Match

For each quality below, jot down a relevant 3-line anecdote that could fit an interview question.

Quality	Story Snippet (3 lines max)
Teamwork	
Leadership	
Problem-solving	
Adaptability	

Exercise 7: Demonstrating Growth Through Personal Stories

Growth Timeline

Create a mini timeline of 3–5 key experiences in your life that shaped your professional outlook.

Example:

- 2019 – Volunteered at NGO → Learned empathy
- 2021 – Failed coding round → Learned to practice mock interviews
- 2023 – Internship in analytics → Developed structured thinking

Exercise 8:

Answer the following questions

1. Why is storytelling important in a professional interview?

- A. It fills time when you run out of facts
- B. It helps memorize your CV
- C. It showcases your skills and achievements in a relatable way
- D. It replaces the need for formal communication

2. A good personal story in an interview should be:

- A. Long and detailed
- B. Funny and entertaining

- C. Relevant and structured
- D. Focused only on emotions

3. Which of the following is an example of aligning your story with job requirements?

- A. Telling any story that makes you sound impressive
- B. Sharing a story that highlights the skills listed in the job description
- C. Talking about your school memories
- D. Giving a story unrelated to your career

4. Why is it important to practice your story before an interview?

- A. To make it sound rehearsed
- B. To ensure you can memorize every word
- C. To refine clarity, timing, and relevance
- D. To make your story longer

5. What is the STAR method in storytelling?

- A. A way to tell jokes
- B. Structure involving Situation, Task, Action, Result
- C. Sales Technique for Interviewers
- D. Speaking Through Active Reflection

6. The best way to end a story in an interview is to:

- A. Ask for feedback on your performance
- B. Finish abruptly to save time
- C. Say “that’s it”
- D. Summarize the key takeaway or result

7. What makes a story memorable in an interview?

- A. Use of statistics only
- B. Clear structure, emotion, and relevance
- C. Lengthy explanation and emotion
- D. Complex vocabulary

8. What does adapting pacing in storytelling help with?

- A. Repeating key phrases
- B. Rushing to cover everything
- C. Maintaining the listener’s attention
- D. Avoiding pauses

9. What should you avoid when telling a story in an interview?

- A. Irrelevant or overly emotional content

B. Specific role-based skills

C. Chronological order

D. Pausing for effect

10. A story is more persuasive when it includes:

A. Complex vocabulary

B. Exaggeration

C. Facts, outcomes, and personal reflection

D. Only feelings

11. Why is feedback on your storytelling important?

A. To help you avoid speaking again

B. To refine clarity, tone, and relevance

C. To memorize better

D. To change your story completely

12. What kind of stories should you avoid in a professional setting?

A. Stories with unrelated personal drama

B. Stories with lessons learned

C. Stories that show your growth

D. Stories of failure

13. In interviews, storytelling is especially helpful when:

A. You are unsure of your strengths

B. You want to avoid direct answers

C. You want to impress with facts only

D. You need to illustrate qualities like leadership, adaptability, or creativity

14. Why should you avoid jargon in storytelling?

A. It sounds too professional

B. It may confuse non-specialist listeners

C. It helps you sound smarter

D. It wastes time

15. Tailoring your language to company culture means:

A. Speaking only in technical terms

B. Using slang in casual companies

C. Adjusting tone, words, and delivery style

D. Changing your personality completely

Exercise 9:**Personal Storytelling Questions**

1. Can you describe a moment that changed your perspective on life?
 2. Have you ever failed at something? What did you learn from it?
 3. What personal challenge have you overcome that made you stronger?
 4. Tell me about a time when you helped someone. How did it feel?
 5. Who has had the most influence on your life and why?
 6. Describe a time when you took a risk. What happened?
 7. What is one story from your childhood that still stays with you?
 8. How do your values show up in your personal life? Can you share an example?
 9. Have you ever had to make a difficult decision? What guided you?
 10. What experience shaped your confidence the most?
-

Exercise 10:**Professional Storytelling Questions**

1. Can you share a story where you demonstrated leadership?
2. Tell me about a time you solved a problem at work or in a team.
3. Describe a situation when you had to work under pressure. How did you handle it?
4. Have you ever failed in a professional task? How did you respond?
5. Give an example of when your communication skills helped a team.
6. Tell us about a time when you adapted to a major change.
7. Share a moment where you collaborated successfully on a project.
8. What story best shows your ability to take initiative?
9. Describe a professional achievement that you're proud of.
10. How have your personal values influenced your work decisions or behaviour?

Unit3

CV Writing, CV Justification, and Interview Preparation



What is a Curriculum Vitae?

A CV is a short document that gives you a chance to show a prospective employer the best of what you've got. It sells your skills, experience, and shows them you're the right person for the job.

- Making a good impression is important in today's competitive job market. Your CV will be your first contact with employers so it's essential to get it right.
- A mistake-free CV says you're professional and care how you come across (ask a friend to read it through)
- Don't just write out your job description; say how you made a difference at work, or describe a project from college
- Different jobs require different strengths: a little research can help you highlight relevant strengths for a specific role
- Bullet points make it easier to scan for key skills
- Keep it short: no more than two pages

What are core competencies on a CV?

Every job requires a specific skill set, and every job seeker has one. But how do you identify your own unique abilities, the skills and qualifications that make you stand out from the crowd, and how do you showcase them effectively on your CV to catch the attention of a recruiter?

Core competencies are the combination of professional and personal skills that make up your unique experience and expertise. In a nutshell, they're the fundamental professional skills you want to showcase to a potential employer.

Core competencies can include hard skills, qualifications, significant accomplishments, and career highlights, as well as personal and interpersonal skills.

Skills vs core competencies

There is some overlap between skills and core competencies, but in general, core competencies cover a broader range of abilities than your skills. Core competencies include your work history, qualifications, certificates, and education, while your skills section focuses on hard skills.

In other words, your hard skills are part of your core competencies, but your core competencies encompass a wider range of abilities than just your skills.

How to identify core competencies for your CV

1. Consider the job you are applying for. What will you be doing? What skills, qualifications, or experience would you use in the new position?
2. Analyze the job posting. How does it describe the role? What must-have qualifications does it list? These are the things you want to showcase on your CV.
3. Now, make a list of your own skills and abilities. What are you good at? What makes you a good fit for this role in particular? This can include technical skills, personal qualities, qualifications, or previous experience.
4. Strike off anything that isn't relevant to the job you're applying for, such as outdated experience, irrelevant education, or hard skills and qualifications from an unrelated industry.

5. You should be left with a short list of core competencies and transferable skills relevant to the job. These are the competencies that you will highlight and expand on in your CV.

How to tailor your core competencies to each application

To tailor your CV to your current application, scan the job posting or use a keyword finder to identify the required skills for that position.

Don't include all your competencies rather focus on those that **align** with the **job requirements**.

For e.g., for a Web developer profile, following competencies are required

- ✓ Proficient in HTML5, CSS3, JavaScript (ES6+)
- ✓ Experienced with React.js and Bootstrap
- ✓ Backend development using Node.js and Express
- ✓ Database integration with MongoDB
- ✓ Familiar with Git and GitHub workflows
- ✓ Able to create responsive and cross-browser web designs
- ✓ Strong debugging and problem-solving skills
- ✓ Basic knowledge of SEO and web accessibility
- ✓ Good communication and teamwork abilities

HOW TO USE THE JOB POSTING TO TAILOR YOUR RESUME TO A JOB

1. IDENTIFY SKILLS ON THE JOB POSTING

Responsibilities

- Build dashboards to monitor impact, enable execution and analysis of A/B tests; and apply machine learning algorithms to solve business problems
- Perform and present analysis aimed at understanding both potential members and current members (e.g., cohort analysis, funnel analysis, segmentation analysis etc.)

Requirements

- 3+ years experience in a product data science or similar role
- Experience working on an e-commerce platform
- Experience with hypothesis testing, experimental design, and a strong understanding of statistics
- Experience with Segment, Snowflake, Amplitude, Looker, Tableau or comparable platforms
- Strong data visualization skills and ability to present insights from analysis

Example: Data Scientist Job Posting

2. TAILOR YOUR BULLET POINTS

Data Science Manager

- Led the first major effort to A/B test the company's e-commerce sales page and optimize it for customer acquisition; resulted in a 7.5% increase in conversions
- Built Tableau dashboard using data from Amplitude and Segment to visualize core business KPIs (e.g. Monthly Recurring Revenue), saving 10 hours per week of manual reporting work
- Reduced signup drop-offs from 65% to 15% and increased user engagement by 40%, through a combination of hypothesis testing, segmentation analysis and machine learning algorithms

Example: Tailoring Your Work Experience By Using Keywords From the Job Description

3. CUSTOMIZE YOUR SKILL SECTION

Data Visualization/Engineering: Tableau (Advanced), Looker (Experienced), Segment, Amplitude

Techniques: Hypothesis Testing, Recommendation Engines, Customer Segmentation Analysis (Advanced)

Tools and Frameworks: ElasticSearch, Python (Keras, Scikit-learn), Hadoop, Python, Databases (MySQL)

Example of a Skills Section Tailored to the Job

Importance of Including Measurable Accomplishments

Achievements or accomplishments can be anything out of the ordinary that demonstrates how you added value in previous roles. The key to a strong accomplishment is that it can be stated in quantifiable terms. E.g.

- ✓ **“Secured 1st rank in the 6th semester with 9.3 CGPA.”**
- ✓ **“Top 5% performer in Data Structures and Algorithms course.”**
- ✓ **“Awarded merit scholarship for consistent academic excellence.”**

Common Mistakes in the CV

Following are the mistakes to be avoided while drafting a CV:

1. Including a CV objective

A CV objective is a brief statement about what you're hoping to achieve in your career. Instead of including a CV objective, write a professional summary at the top of your CV. A professional summary describes your unique qualifications to show employers how you can benefit their organization as a new employee. If you have limited work experience, you can include your career objectives in your professional summary, but explain how those goals relate to the new job and the company to which you're applying.

2. Describing unrelated work experience

When writing your CV, list work experience that relates to the new position. Providing information about your relevant experience shows employers you have the qualifications to perform relevant tasks well. If you're transitioning to a new industry or position, focus on listing skills or accomplishments that highlight your transferable skills, rather than the job responsibilities you've had in other roles.

For instance, If you're applying to a software developer role but you have experience as a tech support specialist, use your CV to explain how you collaborated with users and teams to troubleshoot software issues and improve system functionality

3. Providing few details

For each job on your CV, include enough details to explain how you were successful in the role. Aim to provide five bullet points about your responsibilities and achievements in your current or most recent position. For all other jobs on your CV, write three bullet points. This level of detail demonstrates your competency and professionalism.

When writing about your work experience, use ***action verbs*** to start each bullet point, followed by the impact or result of each action. You can also use quantitative data, such as percentages and dollar amounts, to provide greater detail in your experience section.

4. Listing irrelevant skills

If a job posting asks for candidates who have experience using specific software, you can list the application as a skill on your CV. Listing relevant skills shows employers you have the technical abilities and character traits to excel in the new position. For example :

For Web Developer

Relevant Technical skills : HTML, CSS, and JavaScript (Frontend Core)

Irrelevant Technical skills : Arduino, Raspberry Pi, Verilog, Circuit Design

5. Using the same CV for all applications

When submitting multiple job applications, customize your CV for each job to show employers why you're the best candidate for that specific role. It's helpful to create a master CV template that you can copy and save as a new document for each job to which you apply.

In a customized CV, you can include specific keywords and phrases from the job description, which can help your CV pass an applicant tracking system (ATS). You can also highlight the skills and experience you have that are directly related to the new role.

6. Having outdated contact information

It's important to ensure the contact information on your CV is up-to-date so employers can contact you. Make sure you provide your current phone number and an email you check often. If you've recently moved, list your new location, including the city and state. Providing the

correct information on your CV ensures a potential employer can contact you to schedule an interview or ask questions about your application.

7. Describing job duties only

In your work experience section, provide information about both your job duties and accomplishments you've had in each role. Your accomplishments are unique endeavors that can help employers understand your value as an employee.

Including accomplishments on your CV can help you distinguish yourself from other candidates, who may have performed similar duties in their past positions. Aim to connect each job duty or task to an achievement that shows hiring managers how your work performance benefited your past employers.

8. Creating a short or lengthy CV

Employers often evaluate candidates quickly, and a lengthy CV may deter them from reviewing your application. Keep your CV to one page in length to highlight the most important details about your experience and skills.

If you've recently graduated, consider adding details about your education, internships, volunteer work or extracurricular activities.

9. Making grammatical or formatting errors

Before submitting your CV to employers, review it carefully for errors in spelling, grammar or punctuation. Sending a clean, well-written CV to employers conveys professionalism and creates a positive impression.

Make sure you've formatted your CV in a logical style with readable fonts and white space. Some common CV fonts include ***Times New Roman, Arial or Georgia***. Avoid using bright colors or graphics to ensure your CV focuses on your skills and qualifications.

10. Using an unprofessional email address

In your CV header, provide a professional email address, such as one with your first and last name or a variation of it. It may be helpful to create a new email you can use solely for

correspondence about your job applications. When you use a professional email address, it helps your CV appear polished and formal.

11. Using jargon or cliches

Using industry terminology, cliches or other repetitive vocabulary may detract from the relevant information you're providing on your CV. Instead, use specific, actionable language to describe your experience and qualifications. Explain your job duties and career achievements using simple language that's easy for hiring managers to understand. Providing information in a clear, concise manner can demonstrate effective communication, which is a valuable skill for many employers.

12. Listing hobbies

You have limited space on your CV to describe your qualifications and attract employers' attention. For this reason, avoid listing hobbies that are unrelated to the new position. If you have hobbies that apply to the role, include them in the appropriate section of your CV.

For example, if you're applying for a teaching position and you enjoy tutoring young children on the weekends, include this information in a section about your volunteer work.

13. Attaching a photo

In general, refrain from including a photo of yourself on your CV. Photos or graphics may affect how ATS software scans your CV. If you work in an industry where CV photos are common, such as acting, you can include your photo in those cases. Research your industry to determine whether it's necessary to add a photo to your CV. Otherwise, you can include your photo on professional networking sites or a professional website, if you have one.

14. Mislabeling the file

It's common to upload a CV on a website or email the document to potential employers. When submitting your application electronically, choose an appropriate CV file name. You can save the file as “your registration number_CV”.

SAMPLE OF A GOOD CV

Ashutosh Kumar

Linkedin: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/ashu2808/>

Email: kumarashutosh6895@gmail.com

Github: <https://github.com/ashu-2808>

Mobile: +91 8340461541

SKILLS

Languages: C++, Python, C, R

Tools/Platforms: MongoDB, Tableau, ETL, Informatica Developer for Data Quality(IDQ), MS SQL Server

Soft Skills: Problem-Solving, Team Player, Project Management, Adaptability

TRAINING

Cipher Schools (Edtech Company)

Jun' 23 – Jul' 23

Data Science using Python

- Performed Exploratory Data Analysis using NumPy and Pandas, leading to a 20% reduction in data preprocessing time.
- Developed, trained, and evaluated various Machine Learning models, including Linear Regression, KNN, SVM, Decision Trees, K-Means, and Ensemble Methods using Scikit-learn, achieving an average accuracy improvement of 15%.
- Employed feature engineering techniques to enhance model performance by 25% for predictive analysis.

PROJECTS

Crop Recommendation System | Python, HTML, ML Predictive Analysis

May' 24

- Preprocessed agricultural datasets using scikit-learn, resolving 100% of missing values and normalizing features, which optimized model performance by 30% and reduced prediction error by 25%.
- Leveraged ML for accurate recommendations based on parameters such as NPK, rainfall, humidity, temperature, and pH; achieved an 85% accuracy rate.
- Created and deployed a web-based application using Flask and integrated HTML, ensuring an intuitive and visually appealing interface, resulting in a user satisfaction score of 90.

Pizza Sales Dashboard | Tableau Desktop, MS SQL Server

Apr' 24

- Analyzed and improved customer satisfaction and loyalty by 50% visualizing key metrics, understanding popular pizza categories and sizes, enabling targeted marketing strategies and personalized promotions.
- Revamped inventory management system by pinpointing top-selling menu items and accurately forecasting demand, cutting wastage by 30% and maintaining optimal stock levels to meet customer needs.
- Positioned the company for future growth and expansion by leveraging data analytics to identify emerging trends and opportunities in the competitive pizza market, contributing to a 15% increase in market share.

Hotel Management System | Java, awt, swing, MySQL(JDBC)

Jun' 23

- Developed a robust hotel management system using Java, enabling efficient and digitalized management of hotel resources, reducing manual workload by 40%.
- Transformed management interface to allow effortless coordination of rooms, employees, drivers, and customers; boosted operational efficiency by 50% with a more compliant and user-friendly system.
- Integrated MySQL database with the application for data storage and retrieval, ensuring data integrity and reducing retrieval time by 20%.

EDUCATION

Lovely Professional University

Bachelor of Technology

Computer Science and Engineering; CGPA: 8.64

Phagwara, Punjab

Aug' 21 – Present

TATA D.A.V School

Intermediate

PCM; Percentage: 86%

Dhanbad, Jharkhand

Mar' 20 – May' 21

TATA D.A.V School

Matriculation

Percentage: 89.2%

Dhanbad, Jharkhand

Mar' 18 – May' 19

Clear and Concise Language in the CV

Using clear and concise language in your CV is essential to communicate your qualifications effectively. Employers typically spend only a few seconds scanning each CV, so it's important to make the content straightforward, impactful and easy to read. With this, it would be easy to grab the attention of the employers.

Why It Matters

- Saves time for recruiters: They can quickly understand your experience and skills.
- Avoids confusion: Eliminates vague or complex wording.
- Projects professionalism: Well-written content reflects strong communication skills.
- Enhances readability: Improves visual flow and engagement.

Tips for Clear and Concise Language

1. **Use simple, direct language** : Avoid long, complicated sentences or unnecessary detail.

Keep each bullet point focused and easy to read.

Examples: Clear

- Led a team of 5 developers to deliver a mobile app in 3 months.
- Increased sales by 20% through targeted marketing campaigns.
- Created user manuals that reduced customer queries by 30%.

Examples: Wordy

- Was the person responsible for leading a group of software developers and overseeing the entire app development process over a period of 3 months.
- Tried various marketing approaches that helped increase the overall sales.
- Created documentation for customers so that they wouldn't call the support team too often.

2. **Use Action-Oriented Language** : Begin each point with strong action verbs that show leadership, problem-solving, or initiative.

Examples of Strong Action Verbs:

- Designed a new onboarding process, reducing training time by 40%.
- Implemented a customer feedback system that improved satisfaction scores.
- Managed logistics for 15 events with zero delays.

Common Weak Verbs to Avoid:

- Worked on the on-boarding process.
- Tried to set up a feedback mechanism.
- Helped with event arrangements.

3. Tailor the Language to the Job Role

Customize the CV language using keywords from the job posting. This improves both relevance and ATS compatibility.

Examples:

- **For a software job:**

Developed scalable backend APIs using Node.js and MongoDB.

- **For a sales job:**

Negotiated and closed deals worth ₹15L+ with B2B clients.

- **For a teaching/training job:**

Delivered over 50 sessions on soft skills and communication for engineering students.

Non-Tailored Examples (Too Generic):

- Worked with software.
- Sold products.
- Taught students.

4. Avoid Personal Pronouns : Don't use pronouns while writing the CV as that CV belongs to you, so it's obvious the information belongs to you.

Correct Examples:

- Designed marketing campaigns for product launches.
- Coordinated with cross-functional teams to ensure timely delivery.
- Trained 10+ interns on Java programming.

Incorrect Examples:

- I designed marketing campaigns.
- My job was to coordinate with teams.
- I trained interns.

5. Don't write generic information:

Replace general statements with precise, measurable accomplishments.

Use the "**What–How–Result**" Formula

What did you do? + How did you do it? + What was the result?

Examples

- Created a digital filing system (what) using Google Workspace tools (how), improving file retrieval speed by 60% (result).
- Improved customer service efficiency (what) by reducing complaint resolution time from 48 to 12 hours(how), achieving 95% accuracy in data entry(result)

Generic Examples:

- Handled customer issues.
- Did data entry tasks.
- Was involved in employee training.

6. Use Formal but Friendly Tone

Keep your tone professional without sounding robotic. Avoid slang or casual language.

Professional Language:

- Collaborated with design and tech teams to launch new features.
- Maintained accurate inventory records using SAP.
- Engaged clients through weekly email newsletters.

Informal Language to Avoid:

- Worked with cool designers to make stuff happen.
- Kept a tab on the stocks.
- Sent out tons of emails to customers.

7. Maintain Consistent Tense and Voice

Use past tense for past roles and present tense for current roles.

Use active voice to show ownership and contribution.

Examples:

- (Past role): Managed project timelines and delivered on schedule.
- (Current role): Lead the content creation team for social media.
- (Active voice): Resolved 95% of customer issues within 24 hours.

Avoid:

- Was managing timelines and delivery.
- Is responsible for content creation.
- Customer issues were resolved by me.

8. Avoid Clichés and Buzzwords

Instead of using overused terms, demonstrate those qualities through your actions.

Show, Don't Tell Examples:

- Led a cross-functional team to complete a ₹10L project under budget. (Shows leadership)
- Collaborated with 3 departments to streamline operations. (Shows team player)
- Took initiative to automate monthly reporting, saving 8 hours per week. (Shows proactive nature)

Cliché Versions to Avoid:

- Excellent leader and motivator.
- Great team player.
- Self-starter with a can-do attitude.

9. Proofread for Grammar and Spelling

Language mistakes can make even the most qualified candidates appear careless.

Examples of Errors to Avoid:

- Manged a team of engineers.
- Resposible for product developement.
- Achived targets and meet deadlines.

Do's

- Always double-check spelling and grammar:
- Managed a team of engineers.
- Responsible for product development.
- Achieved targets and met deadlines.

10. Use Gender-Neutral and Inclusive Language

Avoid assumptions or gendered terms in role descriptions or general statements.

Inclusive Examples:

- Collaborated with team members to complete the project.
- Mentored junior colleagues during the onboarding process.
- Worked with individuals across departments to improve workflow.

Non-Inclusive Examples:

- Collaborated with fellow men on the project.
- Helped new hires (he/she) understand processes.
- Managed a team of guys from different departments.

CV Justification

What is CV Justification?

CV justification refers to the practice of backing up each statement, claim, or skill mentioned in your CV with concrete evidence, specific examples, or measurable outcomes. It's not enough to simply list qualities like “good communicator” or “strong analytical skills”—you need to demonstrate how, when, and where you applied them.

This approach transforms your CV from a generic document to a powerful, credible profile that gives employers confidence in your capabilities.

Purpose of CV Justification

1. To ensure that all information on your CV is truthful and verifiable.
2. To help recruiters see your real impact and not just read a list of vague qualities.
3. To provide context for your skills and experiences.
4. To make your application stand out in a sea of generic CVs.
5. To prepare you for interviews—where you're often asked to justify or elaborate on your CV entries.

Examples of CV Justification

Team Leadership Skill (Generic):

Incorrect: “Good team leader.”

Correct: Justified: “Led a team of 5 students during a National Level Hackathon; coordinated tasks, managed time effectively, and secured 2nd position.”

Communication Skill (Generic):

Incorrect: “Excellent communicator.”

Correct: Justified: “Delivered a seminar on AI in Education to an audience of 100+ students and faculty, receiving positive feedback for clarity and confidence.”

Technical Skill - Python (Generic):

Incorrect: “Proficient in Python.”

Correct: Justified: “Developed a Python-based attendance tracking system as part of a mini project, improving accuracy by 40%.”

❖ Why CV Justification Matters

In today's competitive job market, it's not just about what you claim to have done—it's about what you can **prove**. CV justification plays a crucial role in helping employers separate genuine candidates from those who embellish or copy-paste vague responsibilities.

1. Builds Trust with Recruiters and Hiring Managers

When your CV includes specific examples and evidence for each skill or experience, it creates **trust**. Recruiters appreciate candidates who are transparent and confident enough to back their claims.

Example: Instead of simply writing "Handled social media," say:

"Managed the college fest Instagram page, growing followers from 300 to 1200 in one month through daily content posts and influencer collaborations."

This shows you actually contributed and know what you're talking about.

2. Reduces Chances of Rejection Due to Vague or Misleading Claims

Many CVs are rejected not because candidates lack skills, but because their skills are presented vaguely or without substance. Generic terms like "good communicator" or "hardworking" don't convey **actual ability**.

Example:

Incorrect: “Good at organizing.”

Correct: **"Coordinated a webinar with 5 guest speakers and 150 attendees, overseeing invites, technical setup, and feedback collection."**

This shows you actually organized something significant.

3. Shows Honesty and Career Clarity

CV justification reflects that you are **honest about your journey** and clear about your goals. When your experiences are truthful and connected to your objectives, it sends a strong signal to the employer that you're grounded and self-aware.

Example: "Seeking a role in content writing where I can apply my skills in research and language, developed during my internship at XYZ Media."

This shows clarity in purpose and evidence of relevant experience.

4. Verifies Actual Experiences and Prevents Overstatement

Many applicants tend to **overstate or exaggerate** their roles. Justification keeps your claims **realistic and verifiable**, which is crucial when background checks or interviews dig deeper.

Example:

Incorrect: "Worked on a software project."

Correct: "**Developed a fee management module as part of a team project using PHP and MySQL, tested by 50+ users.**"

You're stating exactly what you did, using specific technologies and giving scope.

5. Highlights Real Achievements, Not Buzzwords

Hiring managers read hundreds of CVs. Buzzwords like "go-getter," "team player," or "innovative" often lose value unless backed with **achievements**. Justification helps shift focus from **what you think of yourself** to **what you've actually done**.

Example:

Incorrect: "Leadership qualities."

Correct: "**Elected as class representative for 3 consecutive semesters; facilitated communication between 60+ students and faculty.**"

This turns a vague trait into a proven track record.

❖ **Common CV Sections to Justify**

In a well-constructed CV, every section should reflect authentic, verifiable information. Justification helps ensure that what you claim aligns with your actual skills, qualifications, and experience.

1. Internships and Work Experience

Internships add strong value but must be justified with details: role, duration, responsibilities, and outcomes. Avoid writing "Interned at ABC Company" without explanation. Mention tools/technologies used and what you accomplished or learned.

Example: “Intern – ABC Tech (6 weeks): Assisted in front-end development using React; contributed to creating three reusable UI components and reduced page load time by 20%.”

2. Projects

Project experience must be specific and results-oriented. Avoid stating just the project title; describe your role, tools used, and the impact or result. Use action verbs and quantify where possible.

Example: “Developed an Android app for event management using Java and Firebase; achieved 200+ downloads on Play Store.”

3. Technical Skills / Software Proficiency

Many candidates list numerous tools and languages they are only vaguely familiar with. This can lead to problems during interviews or technical assessments.

Justification Tip: Only include tools or programming languages you have actually used in projects, labs, or work.

Example: “Python (used in two academic projects), MySQL (used for building student database system), HTML/CSS (used for personal portfolio website)”

4. Certifications and Workshops

These should be genuine and relevant to your field. Always be ready to produce certificates during verification or interviews. Mention what you learned or how it's relevant to your role.

Example: "Completed Google's Data Analytics Certificate on Coursera – Gained proficiency in Excel, SQL, and data visualization tools like Tableau."

5. Soft Skills / Personal Traits

Words like "good communicator", "team player", or "problem solver" should not be listed without evidence or a context. Rather than, show how and where you demonstrated the skill.

Example: "Demonstrated communication skills while conducting a campus orientation for 100+ first-year students as part of the student council."

6. Co-curricular / Extra-curricular Activities

While co-curricular achievements show your holistic development, vague or inflated claims can hurt credibility. Focus on roles, outcomes, and responsibilities. Mention leadership roles, organizational involvement, or recognitions.

Example: "Vice-President – Coding Club: Conducted weekly coding challenges; led a team of 8 to organize a 24-hour hackathon with 150 participants."

7. Educational Background

List your degrees, certifications, and qualifications accurately. These should match your official documents, such as mark sheets, certificates, and transcripts. Highlight relevant coursework or academic achievements, if applicable.

Example: "B.Tech in Computer Science (2021–2025), XYZ University – CGPA: 8.6/10"

"Relevant coursework: Data Structures, Database Management, Web Development"

❖ **Key Techniques to Justify Your CV Content:**

1. Tailoring and Relevance:

- ❖ Target each application: Customize your CV for each role, highlighting the skills, experiences, and achievements most relevant to the job description.
- ❖ Use keywords: Incorporate keywords from the job description to align with employer needs and Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS).

2. Evidence-Based Content:

- ❖ Quantify achievements: Use numbers, percentages, and values to demonstrate your impact and provide scale to your accomplishments, e.g., "Increased sales by 15%," or "Managed a team of 5".
- ❖ Provide context and scope: Briefly explain the purpose of your work, the project's scope, and what you produced or accomplished.

3. Effective Language and Structure:

- ❖ Strong action verbs: Begin bullet points with powerful action verbs to convey impact (e.g., "developed," "managed," "designed," "implemented").
- ❖ Bullet points for conciseness: Use bullet points to present information succinctly and make it easy for recruiters to scan.
- ❖ Concise and clear writing: Avoid excessive detail or jargon; keep sentences short and to the point.

4. Professional Formatting and Presentation:

- ❖ Easy-to-read layout: Employ a clear and organized layout with headings, subheadings, and consistent formatting.
- ❖ Professional fonts: Use standard, readable fonts like Arial or Times New Roman in a consistent size.
- ❖ Adequate white space: Ensure sufficient margins (around 1 inch or 2.5 cm) to make the CV visually appealing and less cluttered.

Reverse chronological order: Present your work experience and education in reverse chronological order to highlight your most recent and relevant achievements first.

Pro Tip: Use the STAR Method

To justify your CV points, use the STAR format:

S – Situation (What was the context?)

T – Task (What were you responsible for?)

A – Action (What did you do?)

R – Result (What was the outcome?)

Example:

“Faced with slow report generation at my internship (S), I was tasked with optimizing the SQL queries (T). I restructured complex joins and indexed tables (A), reducing processing time by 50% (R).”

Types of interviews :

- ✧ **On-Campus Interviews:** Conducted by companies visiting colleges. Typically include aptitude tests, group discussions, and technical/HR rounds. Fast-paced, with multiple companies over a few days.
- ✧ **Off-Campus Interviews:** Applied through job portals, referrals, or company websites. Similar rounds but often more competitive due to larger applicant pools.
- ✧ **Internship Interviews:** Similar to full-time roles but focus more on fundamentals, projects, and learning ability. Coding rounds are usually easier.
- ✧ **Specialized Interviews:**
 - **Machine Learning/DS Roles:** Questions on ML algorithms, statistics, and data processing (e.g., Python, TensorFlow, SQL).
 - **Frontend/Backend Roles:** Focus on specific technologies (e.g., React, Node.js, REST APIs).
 - **SDE (Software Development Engineer):** Heavy emphasis on coding, DSA, and system design.
- ✧ **Hackathons/Coding Competitions:** Some companies (e.g., Google Kickstart, CodeStreet) use these as a screening mechanism.

Interview rounds

The hiring process for Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) students is a multi-stage journey designed to evaluate technical expertise, problem-solving abilities, and cultural fit,

with variations depending on the company and role. Following are the main rounds involved in a hiring process:

1. CV Screening: The process starts with CV screening, where recruiters shortlist candidates based on academic performance, typically expecting a CGPA above 7.5, alongside relevant projects, internships, and technical skills like proficiency in programming languages such as Python, Java, or C++. Extracurricular activities and open-source contributions also weigh heavily.

A concise, tailored CV that aligns with the job description and incorporates relevant keywords is essential to stand out and progress to the next round.

2. Online Assessment (OA) / Coding Round: The next stage is the online assessment or coding round, conducted on platforms like HackerRank, LeetCode, or CodeSignal, lasting 60–120 minutes. This round tests problem-solving through 2–4 coding challenges focused on data structures and algorithms, such as arrays, trees, or dynamic programming, and may include multiple-choice questions on computer science fundamentals like operating systems, databases, or computer networks. Example :

- ✓ 2–4 coding problems (easy to medium difficulty, sometimes hard).
- ✓ Focus on data structures (arrays, strings, linked lists, trees, graphs) and algorithms (sorting, searching, dynamic programming, greedy).
- ✓ Multiple-choice questions on CS fundamentals (OS, DBMS, Networks, OOP).

3. Technical Round:

This focus on assessing a candidate's technical skills and problem-solving abilities. Common in fields like engineering, IT, and computer science, they often involve coding challenges, algorithm questions, or domain-specific technical problems.

Example: A software company like Google conducts a technical interview for a computer science student. The interviewer asks, "Write a Python function to find the longest common substring between two strings." The candidate is given 30 minutes to solve it on a whiteboard or coding platform like HackerRank, explaining their thought process and optimizing the solution.

4. Group Discussion (GD):

In this format, a group of candidates discusses a given topic to assess communication, teamwork, leadership, and critical thinking skills. Topics can range from current affairs to abstract concepts. Companies use GDs to observe how candidates articulate ideas and interact in a group setting.

Example: A consulting firm like BCG organizes a group discussion with 8 candidates. The topic is, "Should companies prioritize sustainability over profitability?"

Each candidate gets 2 minutes to present their views, followed by a 15-minute open discussion where they debate, listen, and summarize points while the recruiter observes leadership and communication skills.

5. Panel Interview(optional):

Conducted by multiple interviewers (e.g., HR, technical lead, and manager), panel interviews assess a candidate from different perspectives. Questions may cover technical, behavioral, and situational aspects, testing the candidate's ability to handle diverse inquiries under pressure.

Example: A candidate interviewing with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) faces a panel of three interviewers: an HR representative, a technical lead, and a project manager. They ask a mix of questions like, "Explain your final-year project," "How do you handle tight deadlines?" and "Why TCS?" to assess technical knowledge, behavior, and company fit.

6. Case Study Interview(Optional):

Common in consulting, finance, and management roles, these involve analyzing a business problem or scenario. Candidates are given a case (e.g., market entry strategy or cost optimization) and must provide structured solutions, often demonstrating analytical and decision-making skills.

Example: In a McKinsey interview, a candidate is given a case: "A retail chain is losing market share due to a new competitor. Propose a strategy to regain customers." The candidate has 20 minutes to analyze data (e.g., sales figures, customer demographics) and present a structured solution, discussing pricing, marketing, and customer retention strategies.

7. Behavioral/Situational Interview/HR Round:

These focus on past experiences or hypothetical scenarios to gauge how candidates handle specific situations. Questions often follow the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to evaluate problem-solving, leadership, and adaptability.

Example:

- ✓ "Tell me about yourself," "Why this company?" or "Describe a challenging project."
- ✓ Behavioral questions (e.g., "How did you handle a team conflict?").
- ✓ Questions about CV, projects, and internships.

How do Companies Assess A Candidate in The Interview?

In any type of interview, companies try to assess a candidate based on these things:

- **Technical Knowledge:** The company wants to assess whether the candidate has good technical knowledge as per his/her experience. This is the most important aspect of any interview since every company wants the most talented candidate.
- **Cultural fit:** Interviewers also assess whether the candidate is fit for the company's culture. Companies assess the candidate by asking the necessary behavioural questions in the interview.
- **Job History:** Has the candidate stayed for past companies for the long term, or does the candidate keep on switching jobs? Companies also tend to favour candidates who have stayed for the long term with past employers.
- **Passion:** Does the candidate seem passionate about the job? If not, the interviewer may not consider that candidate. Every company wants employees who are passionate about growing in their careers.

Things to Avoid in an Interview

When you sit in any kind of interview, do remember to avoid doing the following:

1. Avoid blaming your previous managers, colleagues and companies. This will leave a bad impression on the interviewer and will show you as a person who lacks accountability.
2. Do not go unprepared about the company's background for which you are giving the interview. If you do not know anything, interviewers will feel that you are not interested in learning about the company.

3. Do not fidget with things, as this indicates a lack of self-confidence and concentration.
4. Stop checking time since it shows that you have somewhere more important to go, and you do not give the interview much importance.

THE STAR METHOD

The STAR method is a structured manner of responding to a behavioral-based interview question by discussing the specific situation, task, action, and result of the situation you are describing.



Situation	Describe the situation that you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish. You must describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past. Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. This situation can be from a previous job, from a volunteer experience, or any relevant event.
Task	What goal were you working toward?
Action	Describe the actions you took to address the situation with an appropriate amount of detail and keep the focus on YOU. What specific steps did you take and what was your particular contribution? Be careful that you don't describe what the team or group did when talking about a project, but what you actually did. Use the word "I," not "we" when describing actions.

Result	Describe the outcome of your actions and don't be shy about taking credit for your behavior. What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn? Make sure your answer contains multiple positive results.
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Note : Make sure that you follow all parts of the STAR method. Be as specific as possible at all times, without rambling or including too much information. Oftentimes students have to be prompted to include their results, so try to include that without being asked. Also, eliminate any examples that do not paint you in a positive light. However, keep in mind that some examples that have a negative result (such as “lost the game”) can highlight your strengths in the face of adversity.

Situation (S): Advertising revenue was falling off for my college newspaper, The Review, and large numbers of long-term advertisers were not renewing contracts.

Example :

Situation (S): Advertising revenue was declining for a college newspaper, The Review, and there were concerns about long-term advertiser retention.

Task (T): My goal was to generate new ideas, materials and incentives that would result in at least a 15% increase in advertisers from the year before.

Action (A): I designed a new promotional packet to go with the rate sheet and compared the benefits of The Review circulation with other ad media in the area. I also set-up a special training session for the account executives with a School of Business Administration professor who discussed competitive selling strategies.

Result (R): We signed contracts with 15 former advertisers for daily ads and five for special supplements. We increased our new advertisers by 20 percent over the same period last year.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW

To prepare for a behavioral interview, you can recall recent situations that show favorable behaviors or actions, especially involving course work, work experience, leadership, teamwork, initiative, planning, and customer service.

- Prepare short descriptions of each situation; be ready to give details if asked.
- Be sure each story has a beginning, middle, and an end, i.e., be ready to describe the situation, including the task at hand, your action, and the outcome or result.

- Be sure the outcome or result reflects positively on you (even if the result itself was not favorable).
- Be honest. Don't embellish or omit any part of the story. The interviewer will find out if your story is built on a weak foundation.
- Be specific. Don't generalize about several events; give a detailed accounting of one event.
- Vary your examples; don't take them all from just one area of your life.

How to Showcase Technical skills in the CV

Showcasing your technical skills in an interview requires a strategic blend of preparation, communication, and demonstration. Here's a concise guide to effectively highlight your expertise:

Understand the Role and Tailor Your Skills

- Research the job description and identify the key technical skills required.
- Match your expertise to the role's needs, focusing on relevant tools, programming languages, frameworks, or methodologies.
- **Example:** If the job emphasizes Python and SQL, prioritize projects or experiences using those technologies.

Prepare a Portfolio of Work

- Create a portfolio showcasing projects that demonstrate your technical abilities. Include code samples, GitHub repositories, or live demos if possible.
- Be ready to walk through your code, explaining your thought process, design decisions, and problem-solving approach.
- Highlight measurable outcomes (e.g., "Optimized a database query, reducing runtime by 40%").

Use the STAR Method for Behavioral Questions

- Structure your responses using Situation, Task, Action, Result (STAR) to clearly articulate how you've applied technical skills.

- Example: When asked about a challenging project, describe the situation, your task, the technical actions you took (e.g., debugging a complex issue), and the result (e.g., improved system performance).

Demonstrate Problem-Solving in Real-Time

- Be prepared for technical questions or coding challenges. Practice whiteboard or live-coding problems on platforms like LeetCode or HackerRank.
- Talk through your approach as you solve problems, explaining your logic step-by-step to show clarity and confidence.
- If stuck, show resilience by discussing how you'd debug or seek solutions (e.g., "I'd check the documentation or test edge cases").

Highlight Soft Skills Alongside Technical Expertise

- Technical skills shine brighter when paired with communication, teamwork, or adaptability.
- Example: Discuss how you collaborated with a team to implement a feature or communicated complex technical concepts to non-technical stakeholders.

Ask Thoughtful Technical Questions

- Show curiosity by asking about the company's tech stack, development processes, or challenges.
- Example: "What tools or frameworks does your team use for CI/CD, and how do you handle scalability challenges?"

Practice Explaining Complex Concepts Simply

- Be ready to explain technical concepts in layman's terms, especially for non-technical interviewers.
- Example: If asked about APIs, you might say, "It's like a waiter in a restaurant—taking your request to the kitchen and bringing back the food, connecting systems seamlessly."

Stay Updated and Honest

- Be upfront about your skill level. If you're less experienced with a tool, mention your eagerness to learn and any steps you've taken (e.g., online courses).
- Highlight recent learning, like a new framework or certification, to show you're proactive.

Pro Tip: If the interview includes a live demo or presentation, practice setting up your environment beforehand to avoid technical glitches. Bring a laptop or links to your work for easy access.

Personalising your approach

Personalizing your approach to showcase technical skills for a technical role in an interview requires aligning your preparation and presentation with the specific demands of the position and the company. Following are the tips to effectively highlight your technical expertise for a technical role, building on the general strategies previously outlined:

Deep Dive into the Job Description

- Analyze the job posting for specific technical skills, tools, or technologies (e.g., Python, AWS, React, DevOps practices).
- Prioritize skills mentioned explicitly or implied (e.g., “experience with cloud platforms” likely means AWS, Azure, or GCP).
- Example: For a data engineer role, emphasize ETL pipelines or SQL optimization if listed, using metrics like “Reduced data processing time by 30% using Apache Spark.”

Curate a Technical Portfolio

- Build a portfolio tailored to the role, such as GitHub repositories for a software engineer or a Jupyter Notebook for a data scientist.
- Include 2–3 projects that mirror the role's requirements. For example, for a machine learning role, showcase a model you built with clear documentation and results (e.g., “Achieved 95% accuracy on a classification task”).

- Be ready to demo or explain code during the interview, focusing on challenges you overcame and technical decisions (e.g., “Chose Redis for caching to improve API response time”).

Use the CAR Framework for Technical Achievements

- Frame accomplishments using Context, Action, Result (CAR), which is similar to STAR but emphasizes outcomes, ideal for technical roles.
- Example: “Faced slow API performance (Context). Implemented caching with Redis and optimized database queries (Action), reducing latency by 50% (Result).”
- Quantify results wherever possible to demonstrate impact (e.g., “Increased system uptime to 99.9% by implementing automated monitoring”).

Prepare for Role-Specific Technical Assessments

- Practice coding challenges relevant to the role on platforms like LeetCode, HackerRank, or CodeSignal, focusing on problems aligned with the job’s tech stack (e.g., algorithms for software engineering, SQL for data roles).
- For system design interviews (common in senior technical roles), practice designing scalable systems, like a URL shortener or messaging app, and explain trade-offs (e.g., “Used NoSQL for scalability over relational DB for flexibility”).
- Verbalize your problem-solving process during live coding, showing logical thinking (e.g., “I’ll start by defining edge cases, then optimize for time complexity”).

Tailor Your Narrative to the Company’s Tech Stack

- Research the company’s technology stack via their website, tech blogs, or job descriptions. Check X or GitHub for open-source contributions or tech mentions.
- Align your experience with their tools. For example, if they use Kubernetes, highlight your experience with container orchestration or mention learning it if new.
- Example: “I noticed your team uses GraphQL; I’ve built APIs with Apollo Server, which improved query efficiency for a recent project.”

Showcase Domain-Specific Knowledge

- For specialized roles (e.g., cybersecurity, AI, or DevOps), demonstrate familiarity with industry-specific challenges.
- Example: For a cybersecurity role, discuss securing APIs or mitigating DDoS attacks; for AI, talk about model training or handling imbalanced datasets.
- Use terminology relevant to the domain but avoid jargon overload—explain complex ideas clearly for mixed audiences (e.g., “Federated learning allows models to train on decentralized data, improving privacy”).

Highlight Collaboration in Technical Contexts

- Technical roles often require teamwork. Discuss how you’ve worked with cross-functional teams (e.g., “Collaborated with product managers to define API endpoints”).
- Emphasize tools like Jira, Git, or Slack to show familiarity with development workflows.
- Example: “Led a sprint to integrate a payment gateway, coordinating with QA to ensure zero downtime.”

Ask Role-Relevant Technical Questions

- Show interest by asking about the company’s technical challenges or processes.
- Examples:

For a backend role: “How does your team handle database migrations during high-traffic periods?”

For a data science role: “What’s your approach to A/B testing for model deployment?”

- This demonstrates both curiosity and knowledge of the role’s demands.

Prepare for Non-Technical Interviewers

- Some interviews may involve HR or non-technical stakeholders. Simplify technical explanations without losing substance.
- Example: For a cloud architect role, explain cloud migration as “moving a company’s data and apps to a more flexible, scalable online system, like shifting from a local library to a digital one.”

Stay Honest and Show Growth Mindset

- If unfamiliar with a tool in the job description, admit it but highlight related skills and eagerness to learn.
- Example: “I haven’t used Terraform extensively, but I’ve worked with Ansible for infrastructure automation and am diving into Terraform through tutorials.”
- Mention recent learning, like a course on Coursera or a certification, to show proactivity.

Pro Tip: Create a one-page “cheat sheet” summarizing your top 3–5 projects, including technologies used, challenges solved, and outcomes. Bring it to the interview or share a digital version for quick reference.

Difference between JD-based interviews and Common interviews

JD-Based Interviews

- **Definition:** Interviews tailored specifically to the requirements, skills, and responsibilities outlined in the job description (JD) for a particular role.
- **Focus:**
 - **Highly specific to the role:** Questions directly test the technical skills, tools, and experiences listed in the JD (e.g., proficiency in Python, AWS, or Agile methodologies).
 - Emphasis on how your past work aligns with the role’s needs and the company’s tech stack or processes.
 - Example: For a JD requiring “experience with REST APIs,” you might be asked to code an API endpoint or explain how you optimized one.
- **Structure:**
 - Questions are often customized to the JD’s requirements, including technical assessments (e.g., coding challenges in a specific language) or system design tasks relevant to the role.
 - Behavioral questions focus on experiences that match JD responsibilities (e.g., “Describe a time you implemented a scalable system” for a JD emphasizing scalability).
 - May include role-specific scenarios (e.g., “Design a database schema for our e-commerce platform”).
- **Preparation:**

- Analyze the JD to identify key skills (e.g., “machine learning with TensorFlow” or “CI/CD with Jenkins”).
 - Prepare examples using the CAR framework (Context, Action, Result) that align with JD requirements (e.g., “Optimized a Kubernetes cluster, reducing costs by 20%”).
 - Practice role-specific technical problems (e.g., LeetCode for coding, system design for senior roles).
 - Research the company’s tech stack or processes to tailor responses (e.g., mention experience with tools they use, like Docker or Snowflake).
- **Example Question:** “The JD mentions experience with microservices. Can you walk us through a project where you designed or deployed a microservices architecture?”

Common Interviews

- **Definition:** General interviews that assess a candidate’s overall technical and behavioral competencies, not necessarily tied to a specific job description.
- **Focus:**
 - **Broad and generalized:** Questions test fundamental technical skills, problem-solving, and cultural fit, applicable across various roles.
 - Emphasis on core competencies like coding basics, algorithms, or teamwork, rather than specific tools or frameworks unique to a JD.
 - Example: You might be asked to solve a generic algorithm problem (e.g., “Reverse a linked list”) regardless of the role’s specific requirements.
- **Structure:**
 - Includes standard technical questions (e.g., coding problems on arrays or strings) and behavioral questions (e.g., “Tell me about a time you faced a challenge”).
 - Less focus on niche or company-specific tools; more on universal skills like data structures, debugging, or communication.
 - Often used in early screening rounds or for roles with vague JDs.
- **Preparation:**

- Focus on foundational technical skills (e.g., algorithms, data structures) using platforms like HackerRank or LeetCode.
 - Prepare general behavioral stories using the STAR/CAR framework that highlight problem-solving, teamwork, or adaptability.
 - Less need to research the company’s specific tech stack, but understanding the industry helps.
- **Example Question:** “Write a function to find the maximum sum subarray in an array.”
(Tests general coding skills, not tied to a specific JD tool.)

Key Differences

Aspect	JD-Based Interview	Common Interview
Focus	Specific to JD skills, tools, and responsibilities	General technical and behavioral competencies
Question Type	Role-specific (e.g., “How do you use [JD tool]?”)	Broad (e.g., “Solve this algorithm problem”)
Preparation	Tailor examples to JD; research company tech stack	Master fundamentals; prepare universal stories
Technical Assessment	Tests JD-listed tools (e.g., AWS, React)	Tests core skills (e.g., algorithms, debugging)
Relevance	Directly tied to role’s needs	Applicable to multiple roles or companies

How to Approach Each

1. JD-Based Interviews:

- Map your skills to the JD’s requirements (e.g., if JD lists “GraphQL,” prepare a project example using it).
- Expect questions that mirror the role’s day-to-day tasks (e.g., “How would you optimize a database for our use case?”).

- Show alignment with the company’s tech stack or processes (e.g., “I see you use Jenkins; I’ve set up CI/CD pipelines with it”).
- Example: For a JD requiring “DevOps experience with Kubernetes,” practice explaining a Kubernetes deployment and its impact.

2. Common Interviews:

- Focus on universal technical skills like coding (e.g., sorting algorithms), system design basics, or debugging strategies.
- Prepare versatile behavioral stories that work across roles (e.g., “Led a team to debug a critical issue under a tight deadline”).
- Practice standard problems like “Find the first non-repeated character” or “Explain object-oriented programming.”
- Be ready for generic fit questions (e.g., “Why do you want to work in tech?”).

3. Blending Both for Technical Roles

- Many interviews combine JD-based and common elements, especially in technical roles. For example:
 - Early rounds may use common questions to screen for coding fundamentals or cultural fit.
 - Later rounds dive into JD-specific skills to ensure you can handle the role’s tasks.
 - To prepare:
 - ✧ Master core technical skills (e.g., algorithms, data structures) for common questions.
 - ✧ Tailor 3–5 project examples to the JD, using CAR to highlight measurable outcomes.
 - ✧ Research the company (via X, their tech blog, or GitHub) to anticipate JD-specific questions.

Pro Tip : For JD-based interviews, create a **skills matrix** mapping JD requirements to your experiences. For common interviews, maintain a **core competency checklist** (e.g., algorithms, OOP, teamwork) to ensure you’re ready for broad questions.

How to answer Common interview questions

1. Could you tell me about yourself and describe your background in brief?

Interviewers like to hear stories about candidates. Make sure your story has a great beginning, a riveting middle, and an end that makes the interviewer root for you to win the job.

Talk about a relevant incident that made you keen on the profession you are pursuing and follow up by discussing your education. In the story, weave together how your academic training and your passion for the subject or industry the company specializes in, combined with your work experience, make you a great fit for the job. If you've managed a complex project or worked on an exciting, offbeat design, mention it.

Example: "I come from a small town, where opportunities were limited. Since good schools were a rarity, I started using online learning to stay up to date with the best. That's where I learned to code and then I went on to get my certification as a computer programmer. After I got my first job as a front-end coder, I continued to invest time in mastering both front- and back-end languages, tools, and frameworks."

2. How did you hear about this position?

Employers want to know whether you are actively seeking out their company, heard of the role from a recruiter, or were recommended to the position by a current employee. In short, they want to know how you got to them.

If someone recommended you for the position, be sure to say their name. Don't assume that the interviewer already knows about the referral. You'll probably want to also follow up with how you know the person who referred you. For example, if you and Steve (who recommended you) worked together previously, or if you met him over coffee at a networking event, mention it to give yourself a little more credibility. If Steve works at the company and suggested that you apply for the job, explain why he thought you'd be the perfect fit.

If you sought out the role yourself, be clear about what caught your eye — extra bonus points if you can align your values with the company and their mission. You want to convince the hiring manager that you chose their company, over all other companies, for a few specific reasons.

Lastly, if you were recruited, explain why you took the bait. Did this role sound like a good fit? Does it align with the direction you want to take your career? Even if you weren't familiar with the organization prior to being recruited, be enthusiastic about what you've learned and honest about why you're interested in moving forward with the process.

Example: "I learned about the position through LinkedIn as I've been following your company's page for a while now. I'm really passionate about the work you're doing in X, Y, and Z areas, so I was excited to apply. The required skills match well with the skills I have, and it seems like a great opportunity for me to contribute to your mission, as well as a great next move for my career."

3. What type of work environment do you prefer?

Be sure to do your homework on the organization and its culture before the interview. Your research will save you here. Your preferred environment should closely align to the company's workplace culture (and if it doesn't, it may not be the right fit for you). For example, you may find on the company's website that they have a flat organizational structure or that they prioritize collaboration and autonomy. Those are key words you can mention in your answer to this question.

If the interviewer tells you something about the company that you didn't uncover in your research, like, "Our culture appears buttoned-up from the outside, but in reality, it's a really laid-back community with little competition among employees," try to describe an experience you've had that dovetails with that. Your goal is to share how your work ethic matches that of the organization's.

Example: "That sounds great to me. I like fast-paced work environments because they make me feel like I'm always learning and growing, but I really thrive when I'm collaborating with

team members and helping people reach a collective goal as opposed to competing. My last internship was at an organization with a similar culture, and I really enjoyed that balance.”

4. How do you deal with pressure or stressful situations?

The employer wants to know: Do you hold down the fort or crumble under pressure? They want to make sure that you won’t have a meltdown when the pressure becomes intense and deadlines are looming. The ability to stay calm under pressure is a highly prized talent.

Share an instance when you remained calm despite the turmoil. If it’s a skill you’re developing, acknowledge that and include the steps you’re taking to respond better to pressure in the future. For example, you could indicate that you’ve started a mindfulness practice to help you better deal with stress.

Example: “I realize stressful situation are always going to come up, and I definitely have had to learn how to navigate them throughout my career. I think I get better at it with every new experience. While working on a new product launch at my last company, for example, things were not going according to plan with my team. Instead of pointing fingers, my first reaction was to take a step back and figure out some strategies around how we could we solve the problem at hand. Previously, I may have defaulted to panicking in that situation, so being calm and collected was definitely a step forward and helped me approach the situation with more clarity.”

5. Do you prefer working independently or on a team?

Your answer should be informed by the research you’ve done on the company culture and the job in question. Nevertheless, you should expect that most work environments will have some team aspect.

Many positions require you to work collaboratively with other people on a daily basis, while some roles require you to work on your own. When you answer this question, highlight the best traits of your personality and how they fit the job requirements. It could also be in your interest to answer this question by highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of both situations.

Example: “I enjoy a blend of the two. I like having a team to strategize with, get diverse opinions from, and reach out to for feedback. But I am also comfortable taking on assignments that require me to work independently. I find I do some of my best work when I can focus alone in a quiet space, but I really value collaborating with my teammates to come up with the best ideas.”

6. When you’re balancing multiple projects, how do you keep yourself organized?

Employers want to understand how you use your time and energy to stay productive and efficient. They’re also looking to understand if you have your own system for staying on track with the work beyond the company’s schedules and workflow plans. Be sure to emphasize that you adhere to deadlines and take them seriously.

Discuss a specific instance when you stayed on track. Talk about the importance and urgency of the projects you were working on and how you allocated your time accordingly. Explain how you remain organized and focused on the job in front of you.

Example: “I’m used to juggling projects at my current job where I’m often moving between coding one software program to another. I use the timeboxing technique to make sure they’re all on track, allocating time on my calendar for certain tasks. I’ve found it really helps me prioritize what needs to get done first, and it holds me accountable for the more repetitive day-to-day tasks I’m responsible for.”

7. What did you do in the last year to improve your knowledge?

This question may come up as a result of the pandemic. Employers want to know how people used their time differently. Know that you don’t have to feel scared about answering this question if you didn’t spend your time brushing up on skills or taking courses. We learn from any experience we have.

If you spent time honing your professional skills, you might say the following.

Example: “The extra time on my plate really allowed me to get introspective around where I want to take my career. I read a lot of journals to keep abreast of the latest ideas in my field, and sharpened my skills by taking some online courses, such as...” (and then be specific).

If you chose to work on your personal development, you could say something like the following.

Example: “Like everyone else, I, too, gained some time last year from not having to travel two hours a day to and from work. I decided to spend my time on things I love. So I got back to learning how to play the guitar and journaling. I feel it brought me closer to myself and has been really great for my mental health and productivity.”

8. What are your salary expectations?

Before you walk in for your first interview, you should already know what the salary is for the position you’re applying to. Check out websites such as Glassdoor, Fishbowl, or Vault.com for salary information. You could also ask people in the field by reaching out to your community on LinkedIn.

Employers will always ask this question because every position is budgeted, and they want to ensure your expectations are consistent with that budget before moving forward.

Remember that it’s often better to discuss a salary range rather than a specific number during the interview and leaving room for negotiation. It’s also better to err on the side of caution and quote a slightly higher number as it’s easier to negotiate downward than upward. As a general rule of thumb, I advise not bringing up the questions about salary until your interviewer does or bringing it up too early in the process.

Example: “Based on my skills and experience and on the current industry rates, I’m looking at a salary around \$_____” (then fill in with your desired salary range and rationale).

9. Are you applying for other jobs?

Interviewers want to know if you're genuinely interested in this position or if it's just one of your many options. Simply, they want to know if you're their top choice. Honesty is the best policy. If you're applying for other jobs, say so. You don't have to necessarily say where you're applying unless you have another offer. But they might want to know where in the hiring process you are with other companies. You can also mention that you're actively looking for offers if your interviewer asks.

Example: "I've applied to a couple of other firms, but this role is really the one I'm most excited about right now because..."

10. From your CV it seems you took a gap year. Would you like to tell us why that was?

Gap years are more popular in some cultures than others. In some professions, gap years may have a negative connotation (the industry moves too fast and you're not up to date).

Let your interviewer know that your gap year wasn't about procrastinating over your transition from childhood to adulthood, but that it added value to the confident professional you have become. Based on what part of the world you're in and how common these are, employers are likely looking to hear stories of what you did and how your experiences have benefitted and prepared you for this role.

Provide a short explanation of why you decided to pursue a gap year, then focus on what came out of it that made a positive difference for your future.

Example: "During my last year of high school, I didn't feel ready to choose my educational path, so I took a wilderness course for a few months to sort out my life goals. It may seem a little random, but the time I spent actually helped me develop so many new skills — in the areas of leadership, communication, (etc...). During that time, I realized that I wanted to earn a degree in (state your degree) to align with my passion (say what that is)."

-- **Tip:** To make a winning impression, you'll need to answer each question with poise and passion. But practicing first really helps. Meticulous preparation will allow you to appear confident and in control, helping position you as the ideal candidate when the competition is tough.

PRACTICE EXERCISES

Worksheet 1: Correcting a Vague CV

Objective : Identify and fix vague language and missing details in a CV.

Name: John Smith
Phone: 555-1234
Email: johnsmith@gmail.com

Objective

Want a cool job in business.

Experience

- Worked at a store
- Did some office stuff

Education

- High School
- Some college

Skills

- Good at computers
- Team player

Questions

1. What specific details are missing from the "Experience" section?
2. How can the "Objective" statement be made more professional and targeted?
3. What improvements can be made to the "Education" section to provide clarity?
4. How can the "Skills" section be more specific and relevant to a job?

Task

Rewrite the CV to include specific details, professional language, and a clear structure.
Ensure the CV is tailored to a junior business analyst position.

Worksheet 2: Fixing Formatting Issues

Objective

Identify and correct poor formatting and unprofessional presentation in a CV.

JANE DOE

jane_doe123@yahoo.com | 123-456-7890

WORK : sales @ retail store, 2020-2021, sold stuff, talked to customers
intern, summer 2022, did some projects

EDUCATION : bachelor degree, marketing, state uni, 2023

SKILLS : Communication, hard worker, know ms office

HOBBIES : video games, hiking, netflix

Questions

1. What formatting issues make this CV look unprofessional?
2. Why is the "Hobbies" section problematic, and should it be included?
3. How can the "Work" section be better organized to highlight achievements?
4. What changes would improve the readability of the "Education" section?

Task

Reformat the CV using consistent fonts, proper capitalization, and clear section headings.

Remove irrelevant information and enhance the content for a marketing assistant role.

Worksheet 3: Removing Irrelevant Information

Objective

Identify and remove irrelevant details while adding job-specific information.

Bad CV Example

Name: Alex Johnson

Address: 123 Main St, Anytown

Email: alex.johnson@outlook.com

Summary

I'm a fun person who loves working with people and animals.

Work History

- Pet Store Clerk, 2019-2020: Fed animals, cleaned cages.
- Babysitter, 2018: Watched kids, played games.
- Lemonade Stand, Summer 2017: Made \$50.

Education

- High School Diploma, 2020

Other

- I have two cats.
- I love pizza.

Task

1. Which items in the "Work History" section are irrelevant for a professional job?
2. Why is the "Other" section inappropriate for a CV?
3. How can the "Summary" be revised to align with a customer service role?
4. What relevant details could be added to make the CV stronger?

Revise the CV to focus on skills and experiences relevant to a customer service representative position. Remove inappropriate sections and add professional details.

Worksheet 4: Correcting Grammatical Errors

Objective: Revise a generic CV to align with a specific job description.

name: sarah brown
email: sarah.brown@email.com
phone: 9876543210

objective: i wanna job in tech where i can do coding and stuff.

experience: software intern, tech corp, 2022: i coded some things, help team.
cashier, food mart, 2021: taked money, talk to people.

education: b.s. computer science, university, 2023

skills:

- python, java, c++
- good at problem solving

Identify and fix grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors in a CV.

Questions

1. What grammatical and spelling errors are present in the CV?
2. How can the "Objective" statement be rewritten to sound professional?
3. What improvements can be made to the "Experience" section's language?
4. How should the CV be formatted to correct capitalization issues?

Task

Rewrite the CV to eliminate grammatical errors, improve sentence structure, and use professional language. Tailor it for a junior software developer position.

Worksheet 5: Tailoring a CV to a Job

Objective : Revise a generic CV to align with a specific job description.

Name: Michael Lee

Contact: michael.lee@gmail.com | 555-9876

Work Experience

- Various jobs, 2018-2023: Did different things like sales, admin, and tech support.

Education : Degree, 2017

- ◆ **Skills** : Lots of skills
- ◆ Can learn fast

Job Description (Target Role) Position: IT Support Specialist

Requirements: Experience in troubleshooting hardware/software issues
Familiarity with Windows and Linux systems Strong communication skills

Associate ' s or Bachelor ' s degree in IT or related field

1. Why is the "Work Experience" section too vague for the IT Support Specialist role?
2. What specific details should be added to the "Education" section?
3. How can the "Skills" section be tailored to match the job requirements?
4. What other sections could be added to strengthen the CV?

Task

Rewrite the CV to align with the IT Support Specialist job description. Include specific experiences, skills, and details that match the role's requirements.

SAMPLE BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

Practice using the **STAR Method** on these common behavioral interviewing questions:

1. Tell me about a time when you had to use your presentation skills to influence someone's opinion.
2. Give me a specific example of a time when you had to conform to a policy with which you did not agree.
3. Please discuss an important written document you were required to complete.
4. Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.

5. Tell me about a time when you had too many things to do and you were required to prioritize your tasks.
6. Give me an example of a time when you had to make a split second decision.
7. What is your typical way of dealing with conflict? Give an example.
8. Tell me about a time when you were forced to make an unpopular decision.
9. Please tell me about a time you had to fire a friend.
10. Describe a time when you set your sights too high (or too low).
11. Tell me about a difficult decision you've made in the last year.
12. Give me an example of a time when something you tried to accomplish and failed.
13. Give me an example of when you showed initiative and took the lead.
14. Tell me about a time you were able to successfully deal with another person even when that individual may not have personally liked you (or vice versa).
15. Tell me about a recent situation in which you had to deal with a very upset customer or coworker.
16. Give me an example of a time when you motivated others.
17. Tell me about a time when you delegated a project effectively.
18. Give me an example of a time when you used your fact-finding skills to solve a problem.
19. Tell me about a time when you missed an obvious solution to a problem.
20. Describe a time when you anticipated potential problems and developed preventive measures.

CV Writing : MCQs

1. Which of the following should ideally be included at the top of a CV?

- a) Hobbies and interests
- b) Salary expectations
- c) Personal details (Name, Contact Information)
- d) References

2. Which of these is NOT recommended when writing a CV?

- a) Using bullet points for clarity
- b) Tailoring the CV to the job description
- c) Using one generic CV for all job applications
- d) Keeping the language concise and professional

3. How long should an ideal CV be for most job applications?

- a) 1–2 pages
- b) 4–5 pages
- c) 3–4 pages
- d) As long as needed to include everything

4. Which of the following should be avoided in a professional CV?

- a) Action verbs like “managed,” “developed,” or “led”
- b) Unexplained employment gaps
- c) Quantifiable achievements
- d) Consistent formatting

5. During a CV justification round, the interviewer asks about a skill listed on your CV. What is the best way to respond?

- a) Say it was added just to make the CV look better
- b) Give a vague answer to move on quickly
- c) Provide a clear example of how you used the skill in a real situation
- d) Admit you copied that section from someone else's CV

MCQs on Interview Rounds

1. What is the STAR method used for in interviews?

- a) A way to introduce yourself
- b) A format for answering behavioral questions
- c) A technique to negotiate salary
- d) A strategy for researching a company

2. Which of the following is a behavioral interview question?

- a) “What are your strengths?”
- b) “Tell me about a time you faced a conflict at work.”
- c) “Where do you see yourself in 5 years?”
- d) “Why should we hire you?”

3. What should you avoid doing during an interview?

- a) Asking questions at the end
- b) Researching the company beforehand

- c) Speaking negatively about past employers
- d) Dressing professionally

4. What is typically the main goal of an HR interview round?

- a) To test technical knowledge
- b) To discuss salary and benefits only
- c) To assess cultural fit, communication, and motivation
- d) To assign project tasks

5. What is a good practice at the end of an interview?

- a) Leaving immediately without saying anything
- b) Demanding an immediate answer
- c) Thanking the interviewer and following up with an email
- d) Asking for contact details of all employees

CV BASED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.

1. Why did you choose Computer Science Engineering?
2. Tell me about the most challenging project you worked on.
3. How did you apply [specific technology] in your project?
4. Which programming language are you most comfortable with and why?
5. What challenges did you face while implementing your project, and how did you solve them?
6. How did your internship help you develop your technical and soft skills?
7. What technologies did you use in your internship project?
8. Can you describe a situation where you solved a technical problem during your internship?
9. Which certification do you think is most valuable for a Computer Science Engineer today?
10. Your CV mentions hackathons. What was your role, and what did you learn?

Unit 4

Personal Branding, Elevator's Pitch and Pitching Projects



Personal Branding

Personal branding is the process of creating and managing a distinct, authentic identity that reflects your skills, values, and personality to differentiate yourself in professional and social contexts.

For Engineering students, personal branding involves showcasing technical expertise, problem-solving abilities, and professional qualities to stand out in a competitive field.

It's about intentionally shaping how others perceive you—whether peers, professors, recruiters, or industry professionals—by consistently presenting your strengths, achievements, and unique contributions. A strong personal brand communicates who you are, what you do, and why you're valuable, both online (e.g., LinkedIn, GitHub, personal websites) and offline (e.g., networking events, internships, or classroom interactions).

Building a Strong Online Presence

1. Create a Professional Online Profile on LinkedIn, GitHub and Portfolio Website

- ❖ Build a complete LinkedIn profile with a professional photo, a concise headline (e.g., "CSE Student | Aspiring Software Developer | Skilled in Python & Cloud Computing"),

and a detailed summary highlighting your skills, projects, and goals. Include coursework, certifications, and internships in the experience section.

- ❖ Maintain an active GitHub profile showcasing your coding projects. Use clear READMEs, organized repositories, and consistent commits to demonstrate your technical skills and collaboration.
- ❖ Create a personal website to display your projects, CV, and a blog about your learning journey. Use platforms like GitHub Pages, WordPress, or static site generators like Jekyll.

2. Engage in Online Communities

- ❖ Be enthusiastic contributing to Open Source. Participate in open-source projects on GitHub or GitLab to gain real-world experience and visibility, and start with small contributions like fixing bugs or improving documentation.
- ❖ Join Tech Forums to get exposure . Stay engaged in platforms like Stack Overflow, Reddit (e.g., r/learnprogramming), or Dev.to. Answer questions, share insights, and ask for feedback to build credibility.
- ❖ Share your learning progress, project updates, or tech-related content on platforms like X or Twitter. Use hashtags like #100DaysOfCode or #WomenWhoCode to connect with the tech community.

3. Showcase Projects and Skills

- ❖ Build and share projects that solve real-world problems or demonstrate your technical expertise (e.g., a web app, machine learning model, or automation script). Host them on GitHub or your portfolio site.
- ❖ Write blog posts or articles about your projects, explaining your approach, challenges, and solutions. Publish on Medium, Dev.to, or your personal website.
- ❖ Earn certifications in relevant areas (e.g., AWS, Google Cloud, or programming courses on Coursera) and display them on LinkedIn and your CV.

4. Maintain a Consistent Digital Footprint

- ❖ Ensure all profiles (LinkedIn, GitHub, etc.) reflect a cohesive brand—use similar profile pictures, bios, and themes.
- ❖ Update your LinkedIn and GitHub profiles with new projects, skills, or achievements to stay relevant.
- ❖ Avoid unprofessional content on public platforms, as recruiters often review candidates' online presence.

Building a Strong Offline Presence

1. Networking and Relationship Building

- ❖ **Attend Tech Events:** Participate in hackathons, tech meetups, conferences, or workshops to connect with peers and industry professionals. Prepare an elevator pitch about your skills and goals.
- ❖ **Engage with Professors and Peers:** Build relationships with faculty and classmates through study groups, research projects, or campus clubs. These connections can lead to recommendations or collaborations.
- ❖ **Informational Interviews:** Reach out to alumni or professionals in your desired field for coffee chats or virtual meetings to learn about their career paths and seek advice.

2. Participate in Campus Activities

- ❖ **Join Tech Clubs:** Engage in coding clubs, robotics societies, or IEEE chapters to develop leadership and teamwork skills.
- ❖ **Organize Events:** Take initiative to organize tech talks, coding competitions, or workshops to demonstrate leadership and gain visibility.
- ❖ **Present Projects:** Showcase your projects at college fests, symposiums, or poster presentations to gain recognition and feedback.

3. Gain Practical Experience

- ❖ **Internships:** Pursue internships or co-op programs to gain hands-on experience and build a professional network. Even small startups or local companies can provide valuable learning opportunities.
- ❖ **Freelancing:** Take on small freelance projects (e.g., web development or app creation) to build your portfolio and reputation.
- ❖ **Research Opportunities:** Collaborate with professors or research groups on cutting-edge CSE topics like AI, cybersecurity, or blockchain to enhance your credibility.

4. Develop Soft Skills

- ❖ **Communication:** Practice clear and confident communication in presentations, interviews, or group discussions. Join public speaking clubs like Toastmasters if needed.
- ❖ **Teamwork:** Collaborate on group projects or hackathons to demonstrate your ability to work in teams, a critical skill for CSE roles.

- ❖ **Time Management:** Balance academics, projects, and extracurriculars to show discipline and reliability.

Additional Tips:

- ❖ **Cross-Promote:** Share offline achievements (e.g., hackathon wins or internship experiences) on your online profiles to create a unified brand.
- ❖ **Leverage Offline Connections Online:** Connect with people you meet at events on LinkedIn and follow up with personalized messages.
- ❖ **Document Your Journey:** Share your offline experiences (e.g., conference takeaways or internship lessons) through blog posts or social media to bridge your online and offline presence.

Tips for Success

- ✓ **Be Authentic:** Let your personal brand reflect your genuine interests and strengths, whether it's a passion for AI, web development, or cybersecurity.
- ✓ **Stay Consistent:** Regularly update your profiles and engage with your network to maintain momentum.
- ✓ **Seek Feedback:** Ask mentors, peers, or professors for feedback on your projects, CV, or online profiles to improve continuously.
- ✓ **Stay Updated:** Keep learning about emerging technologies (e.g., quantum computing, Web3) to remain relevant in the fast-evolving CSE field.

By combining a strong online presence with meaningful offline engagement, students can create a powerful personal brand that opens doors to internships, jobs, and long-term career success.

➤ The benefits of personal branding

A personal branding strategy is a way for ambitious people to improve their reputation online.

Personal branding leads to:

- Improve credibility as you showcase your skills and highlight your knowledge.
- Differentiation as you explain what sets you apart from other people in your space and demonstrate your specialties.
- A lasting impression – the more you show off your personal brand, the more you'll give people a way to remember you.
- Connection to your target audience as they begin to understand who you are and what you stand for.

Importantly, personal branding often involves communicating your identity to the right people. Not everyone will resonate with your personal brand, so it's important to decide who you want to connect with before you start your branding process.

ELEVATOR'S PITCH

Elevator Pitch: Making a Lasting Impression in 30 Seconds

What Is an Elevator Pitch?

An **elevator pitch** is a concise, compelling summary of who you are, what you do, and what value you bring—delivered in the time it takes to ride an elevator, typically **30 to 60 seconds**. It is designed to **spark interest**, create a memorable impression, and open doors to further conversation.

Whether used in networking events, interviews, career fairs, or casual introductions, a well-crafted elevator pitch can set the tone for professional success.

Purpose of an Elevator Pitch

- To introduce yourself confidently and professionally.
- To communicate your **skills, strengths, and goals** clearly.
- To demonstrate **preparedness and clarity of thought**.
- To build meaningful connections in a short time.

Structure of an Effective Elevator Pitch

A good pitch should feel natural, not memorized. Here is a suggested framework:

1. Introduction

Start with your name and a brief background.

Example: “Hi, I’m Arjun Mehta, and I’m currently focused on developing innovative solutions in the field of digital marketing.”

2. What You Do or Specialize In

Highlight your area of interest, expertise, or a recent accomplishment.

“Recently, I worked on a campaign that boosted social media engagement by 40% using a data-driven strategy.”

3. Unique Value or Skills

Mention what sets you apart or the value you bring.

“What excites me most is blending creative design with analytics to drive user engagement.”

4. Goal or Call to Action

Conclude with a clear goal or what you’re seeking.

“I’m exploring opportunities where I can contribute to impactful marketing projects and continue learning in a fast-paced environment.”

Tips for Crafting a Strong Elevator Pitch

- **Keep it brief and relevant** – Stick to essential details that match the context.
- **Practice, but don’t memorize** – Sound natural and confident, not robotic.
- **Tailor it to the audience** – Adjust language and focus depending on who you're speaking with.
- **Speak clearly and with enthusiasm** – Tone and body language matter.
- **Be prepared to elaborate** – A pitch should invite conversation, not end it.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Talking too fast or rambling
- Using too much jargon
- Sounding too rehearsed
- Failing to connect to the listener’s interest
- Not ending with a purpose or next step

Elevator Pitch Examples

Example 1 – For a Networking Event

"Hello, I'm Kavya. I've recently been involved in research on sustainable packaging materials. I'm passionate about innovations that reduce environmental impact, and I'm currently looking to collaborate with eco-conscious brands or startups that share this vision."

Example 2 – For an Interview Setting

"Hi, I'm Sameer. Over the past year, I've been working on streamlining workflow automation using Python. I thrive in solving real-world problems with technology and am looking for roles where I can contribute to product development and optimization."

Final Thoughts

An elevator pitch is not just a professional introduction—it's a reflection of **self-awareness, focus, and communication clarity**. With the right balance of confidence, content, and authenticity, it can leave a strong, lasting impression on the right people at the right time.

Strategies of how to Structure and articulate professional ideas in interviews and discussions

1. Understand the Purpose Before You Speak

Before you answer a question or share an idea, ask yourself: What am I trying to convey, and why? Whether it's to explain your experience, suggest a solution, or show leadership skills, knowing your purpose helps you stay focused.

Example: If asked, "Tell me about yourself," don't list your life story. Instead, tailor your answer to highlight your skills relevant to the job.

2. Use the STAR Method for Structured Responses

The STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) helps you give well-organized and impactful answers to behavioral questions.

Example: “In my last job (Situation), I had to reduce customer complaints (Task). I created a new feedback system (Action), which helped reduce complaints by 30% in three months (Result).”

3. Think in Clear Points – Avoid Rambling

Break down your answers into 2–3 main points. Use phrases like “Firstly...”, “Secondly...”, and “In conclusion...” to guide your listener. This keeps your response easy to follow and shows organized thinking.

Example: If asked, “Why should we hire you?” you might say: “Firstly, I bring relevant experience. Secondly, I adapt quickly. And finally, I have a strong track record of results.”

4. Practice Active Listening

Pay full attention when others speak. Acknowledge their points before you respond, and build on their ideas where possible.

Example: In a group discussion, if a teammate suggests using a new tool, you can say: “That’s a great idea. I’ve used that tool before—it could speed up our workflow.”

5. Use Professional Yet Simple Language

Avoid overly technical or complicated words unless they’re necessary. Speak clearly and professionally in a way that any interviewer can understand.

Example: Instead of saying, “I orchestrated the digital transformation of our enterprise ecosystem,” say, “I led the shift to digital tools across departments to improve efficiency.”

6. Support Your Points with Real Examples

Whenever possible, back your statements with specific examples, data, or outcomes. This adds credibility and keeps the listener engaged.

Example: Rather than saying, “I’m good at teamwork,” say, “In my last project, I collaborated with five departments to deliver a campaign that increased sales by 20%.”

7. Be Concise – Value the Interviewer's Time

Answer fully but briefly. Don’t overload your responses with unnecessary details. Stick to the question and elaborate only if asked.

Example: If asked, “What is your biggest strength?”, respond with one main strength and a short example instead of listing five.

8. Keep a Positive and Professional Tone

Even if you're discussing a difficult situation or past failure, maintain a positive tone and focus on what you learned or how you improved.

Example: Instead of saying, "My manager was very difficult," say, "There were some communication challenges, which taught me the value of regular check-ins and clear updates."

9. Prepare Your Key Messages in Advance

Before any interview or discussion, outline the main things you want to communicate—your key skills, achievements, and goals. This helps you stay on track.

Example: Prepare 2–3 success stories from your past work and be ready to apply them to various types of questions.

10. Practice with Mock Interviews or Role-Plays

Practice improves fluency and confidence. Mock interviews with friends or mentors help you get comfortable with your wording and pace.

Example: Record yourself answering common questions like "Tell me about a challenge you faced" and review your clarity and tone.

Professional Conversation



Communication is the bedrock of human civilization. What makes us unique is the ability to have incredibly detailed and productive conversations, which proves crucial in close to every imaginable professional setting.

While you may be fairly adept at knowing how to start a good conversation, more often than not, professional settings are a whole different ball game. Knowing how to start a conversation with a professional is the hard part and might require some practice and experience to master.

How to be a fantastic conversationalist

- **Ask for information:** One of the best ways to strike up a conversation with a professional at a conference, at work, or even an online meeting, is to ask a question seeking information. The question may be extremely simple or even one that you already know.

For example, if you run into a colleague at a conference who you have not yet got the chance to speak to, you could ask them when the chief guest will be making his address.

- **Compliment the person:** Giving someone an appropriate compliment can do wonders to their confidence and brighten their day while at the same time giving the both of you something to talk about.

For example : Telling your colleague that you like the suit/dress they are wearing, which could help you learn how to make conversation with anyone.

- **Comment on a pleasant event/observation:** Another excellent addition to knowing how to begin a conversation is the art of making relevant and pleasant comments. It could be a comment on a football game that took place the night before or something as simple as the weather.

For example, ‘The coffee tastes so much better now that we have a new coffee maker.’

- **Introduce yourself:** Sometimes, the best way to start a conversation is to greet the other person and introduce yourself.

For example – ‘Hey, my name is Emma. I started work on Monday, and I just wanted to introduce myself.’

- **Ask for help:** Asking for help, even with the smallest of tasks, goes a great way in developing a professional rapport with another person.

For example : Would you mind helping me fill this form?

- **Offer help:** One of the best ways to establish a foundation for conversation is to earn someone's trust and respect. This can be achieved by offering help with anything, which shows people that you are genuinely concerned.

For example : Offering to help a colleague put away some old, heavy binders or asking them if they would like a cup of coffee when you are on your way to grab one for yourself.

- **Talk about a shared experience:** If you want to start a conversation with someone and make them feel comfortable, talking about something that the both of you share in common would be the way to go. This could be a shared interest in the local sporting team or a mutual friend.

Example: 'I hope you watched the match last night; the guys were absolutely on top of their game!'

- **Ask for their opinion:** By asking another person for their opinion, you show them that you value their inputs, which could help you make an enriching conversation.

For example : What do you think of the new café that recently opened just down the street.

- **Offer praise when due:** Another excellent way to start up a conversation is to praise the individual for their performance or achievements. If a person in your organization was recognized for their contributions at work or otherwise, appreciate them for their efforts and let them know that you hold them in high regard.

For example : "Great work! Keep it up!"

- **Show them that you are genuinely interested:** People love talking about things that they are passionate about. Express your interest by bringing up topics that the other person is interested in.

For example : You can talk about their favorite dish, a sport they love, or an author they adore.

- **Encourage them to talk about themselves:** If there is one thing most people share, it is the joy that comes from talking about oneself. Individuals naturally like to talk about themselves, their family, their experiences, and therefore, encouraging them to do so is a surefire way to start a good conversation.

Example: ‘I saw a picture of your cat on Instagram the other day. How old is he/she?’

- **Make a simple observation:** If you are in a shared workplace, observe anything unique that you noticed to start a conversation.

For example, you could mention the fresh coat of paint in the conference room or the new computers that were recently installed at the office.

- **Talk about the weather:** If all else fails, there is always the weather to fall back on. You could mention the recent bouts of rain or snow or talk about how sunny it is.

Example: ‘I love the climate today. The sun is a refreshing change from all the rain we have been getting.’

Most interviewers look for conversational cues and judge how you respond to questions under pressure. Being confident, speaking with clarity and respect, and being yourself will help you ace any interview. This is why being a good conversationalist almost surely gives you an advantage at a job interview.

Strategies to improve Professional Conversation :

Improving professional conversation skills involves enhancing clarity, confidence, and connection in workplace interactions.

1. Preparation and Clarity

- ◆ **Know Your Purpose :** Before any conversation, define your goal (e.g., persuading, informing, resolving a conflict). This keeps you focused and concise.
- ◆ **Research Your Audience:** Understand who you're speaking to—colleagues, clients, or executives—and tailor your tone, vocabulary, and content to their needs and expectations.
- ◆ **Organize Your Thoughts:** Use frameworks like STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) for storytelling or PREP (Point, Reason, Evidence, Point) for making arguments clearly.
- ◆ **Practice Key Points:** Rehearse important discussions, especially for presentations or high-stakes meetings, to reduce filler words (e.g., "um," "like") and sound polished.

2. Active Listening

- ◆ **Listen to Understand:** Focus fully on the speaker without planning your response while they talk. Nod, maintain eye contact, and use verbal affirmations like “I see” to show engagement.
- ◆ **Paraphrase and Clarify:** Restate what you heard (e.g., “So, you’re saying...”) to confirm understanding and show respect for their perspective.
- ◆ **Ask Thoughtful Questions:** Use open-ended questions (e.g., “Can you elaborate on that?”) to deepen the conversation and demonstrate curiosity.

3. Effective Verbal Communication

- **Be Concise and Direct:** Avoid jargon or overly complex language. Use simple, precise words to convey your message (e.g., instead of “synergistic optimization,” say “streamlined process”).
- **Adjust Your Tone and Pace:** Speak at a moderate pace, with a calm and confident tone. Avoid monotone delivery by varying your pitch to emphasize key points.
- **Use Positive Language:** Frame feedback or challenges constructively (e.g., instead of “This won’t work,” say “Here’s an alternative approach we could try”).
- **Pause for Impact:** Strategic pauses give others time to process and make you appear thoughtful and deliberate.

4. Nonverbal Communication

- **Maintain Professional Body Language:** Sit or stand upright, avoid crossing arms (which can seem defensive), and use purposeful gestures to reinforce your message.
- **Mind Facial Expressions:** Smile when appropriate to build rapport, but avoid overdoing it in serious discussions. Mirror the other person’s energy subtly.
- **Respect Personal Space:** In in-person settings, maintain an appropriate distance (about 2-3 feet) to ensure comfort.

5. Emotional Intelligence (EQ)

- **Read the Room:** Pay attention to others’ emotions and adjust your approach. For example, if someone seems stressed, offer empathy before diving into business.
- **Manage Your Emotions:** Stay calm under pressure. If you feel frustrated, take a deep breath and focus on solutions rather than reacting impulsively.

- **Build Rapport:** Use small talk strategically to establish trust, like briefly discussing shared interests or acknowledging recent achievements.

6. Adaptability

- **Tailor to Context:** Shift your style based on the setting—formal for boardroom discussions, conversational for team check-ins, or persuasive for client pitches.
- **Handle Conflict Diplomatically:** When disagreements arise, focus on the issue, not the person. Use “I” statements (e.g., “I feel concerned about...”) to avoid sounding accusatory.
- **Be Culturally Aware:** In diverse workplaces, research cultural norms (e.g., directness vs. indirectness) to avoid misunderstandings.

7. Leverage Technology and Tools

- **Master Virtual Communication:** In remote settings, ensure good lighting, clear audio, and minimal background distractions. Engage the camera as if you’re in person.
- **Use Collaborative Tools:** Familiarize yourself with platforms like Slack, Teams, or Zoom to share ideas seamlessly during discussions.
- **Follow Up in Writing:** After verbal conversations, send a concise email summarizing key points or action items to ensure alignment.

8. Continuous Improvement

- **Seek Feedback:** Ask trusted colleagues or mentors for constructive input on your communication style and areas for growth.
- **Record and Review:** If possible, record practice sessions or presentations to analyze your tone, pacing, and body language.
- **Learn from Others:** Observe skilled communicators in your field, noting how they structure arguments, handle objections, or engage audiences.
- **Read and Study:** Books like ‘*Crucial Conversations*’ by Patterson et al. or ‘*Never Split the Difference*’ by Chris Voss offer practical frameworks for high-stakes talks.

9. Specific Scenarios

- **Meetings:** Prepare an agenda, contribute concisely, and avoid dominating the conversation. Summarize action items at the end.

- **Networking:** Have a 30-second “elevator pitch” about yourself, and focus on asking others about their work to build connections.
- **Feedback Sessions:** Use the “sandwich” method—positive feedback, constructive critique, positive reinforcement—to deliver critiques tactfully.
- **Negotiations :** Research your counterpart’s needs, state your position clearly, and aim for win-win solutions by finding common ground.

10. Practice and Consistency

- **Join Groups or Workshops:** Participate in organizations like Toastmasters to practice public speaking and receive structured feedback.
- **Engage Regularly:** Seek opportunities to lead discussions, present ideas, or mentor others to build confidence over time.
- **Reflect Daily:** After conversations, reflect on what went well and what could improve. Keep a journal to track progress.

How to structure spontaneous discussions

Structuring spontaneous discussions in a professional conversation ensures they remain productive, respectful, and focused. Here are effective ways to structure such discussions:

1. ***Set a Clear Objective:*** Quickly establish the purpose of the discussion. State the topic or goal upfront (e.g., “Let’s discuss the project timeline challenges”). This provides direction and keeps the conversation on track.
2. ***Acknowledge and Invite Participation:*** Encourage inclusivity by acknowledging participants and inviting input (e.g., “I’d love to hear everyone’s thoughts on this”). This fosters engagement and ensures diverse perspectives are shared.
3. ***Use a Loose Framework:*** Adopt a simple structure like ‘Problem-Idea-Solution’. Start by identifying the issue, brainstorm ideas, and then narrow down solutions. For example, “What’s the challenge we’re facing? Any initial ideas? Let’s refine those into actionable steps.”
4. ***Actively Listen and Summarize:*** Practice active listening by nodding, paraphrasing, or summarizing key points (e.g., “So, you’re suggesting we adjust the deadline?”). This clarifies ideas and shows respect for contributions.

6. Manage Time and Tangents: Politely redirect off-topic comments (e.g., “That’s a great point, but let’s focus on the budget for now”). Set a loose time limit if needed to maintain efficiency.

8. Close with Action Items: End by summarizing decisions and assigning clear action items (e.g., “John will update the timeline by Friday”). This ensures the discussion leads to tangible outcomes.

10. Follow Up: Share notes or decisions via email or a shared platform (e.g., “I’ll send a recap of our discussion by EOD”). This reinforces accountability and keeps everyone aligned.

Navigating structured and spontaneous discussions requires balancing preparation with adaptability. Structured discussions (e.g., meetings, presentations) follow a clear agenda, while spontaneous discussions (e.g., impromptu chats, debates) demand quick thinking.

A value proposition is a clear and concise statement or demonstration of the unique skills, experiences, and strengths a student offers, tailored to show how they can meet the needs or add value to a specific professional role, company, or industry. It highlights what sets the individual apart and why they are a valuable candidate, often supported by tangible examples of achievements, relevant skills, and a growth-oriented mindset.

How to talk about Value proposition in Professional conversation

Students can effectively communicate their value proposition in professional conversations by focusing on their unique skills, experiences, and potential contributions. Here are key ways to do so, tailored for clarity and impact:

❖ Identify and Articulate Unique Strengths

Highlight specific skills, academic achievements, or extracurricular experiences that set you apart. For example, mention proficiency in tools like Python, project management, or creative problem-solving.

Example: “My coursework in data analytics and hands-on experience with Tableau allow me to uncover actionable insights from complex datasets.”

❖ Connect Skills to the Role or Industry

Tailor your value proposition to the context of the conversation, showing how your skills address the needs of the employer or industry. Research the company or role beforehand to align your strengths.

Example: “Having led a team project to streamline a mock supply chain, I developed skills in process optimization that align with your company’s focus on operational efficiency.”

❖ Showcase Soft Skills and Adaptability

Emphasize transferable skills like communication, teamwork, or adaptability, which are valuable in any professional setting. Use concise anecdotes to demonstrate these.

Example: “Coordinating a university event taught me how to manage diverse teams under tight deadlines, a skill I bring to collaborative work environments.”

❖ Demonstrate Passion and Growth Mindset

Convey enthusiasm for learning and growth, which signals long-term potential. Employers value candidates eager to develop.

Example: “I’m passionate about sustainable design and have been taking online courses to deepen my knowledge, ensuring I stay current with industry trends.”

❖ Use Results-Oriented Examples

Quantify achievements where possible to make your impact tangible. Focus on outcomes from projects, internships, or volunteer work.

Example: “During my internship, I redesigned a marketing campaign that increased social media engagement by 25%.”

❖ Practice a Clear Elevator Pitch

Develop a concise (30-60 second) summary of who you are, what you offer, and why it matters. Practice delivering it naturally to open conversations confidently.

Example: “I’m a computer science student with a focus on AI and a track record of building predictive models for academic projects. I’m excited to apply my skills to help companies leverage data for smarter decisions.”

❖ Leverage Networking Conversations

In informal settings like career fairs or informational interviews, ask questions to show curiosity while subtly weaving in your value proposition.

Example: “I’ve been exploring how AI can enhance customer experiences, like in your recent chatbot initiative. I worked on a similar project—how do you see AI evolving in your work?”

❖ Be Authentic and Confident

Speak genuinely about your experiences and avoid exaggerating. Confidence in your delivery reinforces your credibility.

Tip: Maintain eye contact, use a steady tone, and avoid filler words like “um” or “like.”

❖ Prepare for Common Questions

Be ready to answer questions like “Tell me about yourself” or “Why should we hire you?” with a focus on your value. Structure responses using the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result).

Example: “In a group project (Situation), I was tasked with improving our app’s user retention (Task). I led user testing and implemented feedback-driven updates (Action), increasing retention by 15% (Result).”

❖ Follow Up to Reinforce Value

After conversations, send a thank-you note or email reiterating your key strengths and enthusiasm, tying them to the discussion.

Example: “Thank you for discussing your team’s data challenges. My experience with SQL and data visualization could contribute to solving those efficiently.”

Tips for Success

- ✓ **Research the Audience:** Understand the company, role, or person you’re speaking with to tailor your message.
- ✓ **Practice Active Listening:** Respond to cues in the conversation to show engagement and relevance.
- ✓ **Seek Feedback:** Practice with mentors or peers to refine your delivery.
- ✓ **Stay Updated:** Highlight knowledge of industry trends to show you’re proactive and informed.

By combining these strategies, students can present a compelling value proposition that resonates in professional settings, whether in interviews, networking events, or casual conversations.

Unique Selling Point



Your USP is the one thing that makes you stand out from others with similar qualifications.

A Unique Selling Proposition (USP) for students refers to the distinctive qualities, skills, experiences, or attributes that set them apart from others in academic, professional, or personal contexts. It’s what makes a student uniquely valuable to colleges, employers, or peers. Identifying and articulating a USP helps students stand out in competitive environments like college admissions, job applications, or internships.

A student's USP is a combination of:

1. **Skills:** Specialized abilities (e.g., coding, public speaking, research).
2. **Experiences:** Unique achievements or challenges overcome (e.g., leading a project, volunteering abroad).
3. **Values/Personality:** Core beliefs or traits (e.g., resilience, creativity, empathy).
4. **Passions:** Deep interests that drive their actions (e.g., environmental advocacy, music).
5. **Achievements:** Tangible results (e.g., awards, publications, startups).

The USP should be specific, authentic, and relevant to the context (e.g., a job role, college program, or scholarship)

Talking about USP (Unique Selling Proposition or Unique Strength/Point) is crucial for students during:

- ✓ Interviews
- ✓ Self-introduction
- ✓ CV writing
- ✓ Networking events
- ✓ Presentations or pitches

How can one Identify USP?

1. Self-Reflection:

- Ask: What am I good at? What do others praise me for? What challenges have I overcome?
- Example: A student realizes they excel at simplifying complex ideas for others, a skill honed by tutoring peers in math.

2. Feedback:

- Seek input from teachers, peers, or mentors to identify strengths you might overlook.
- Example: A teacher notes a student's ability to mediate conflicts during group projects.

3. Analyze Achievements:

- List accomplishments and identify what made them possible.
- Example: Winning a science fair might highlight a student's innovative problem-solving.

4. Align with Goals:

- Tailor the USP to the audience (e.g., a college looking for leadership or a tech company seeking coders).
- Example: For a computer science program, a student emphasizes their self-taught Python skills and a chatbot they built

Some more examples:

Example 1: Technical USP (for CSE student)

“One of my USPs is my ability to learn and implement new technologies quickly. For instance, I self-learned React.js and built a responsive portfolio website within two weeks, which helped me win the best project award in my class. This adaptability makes me confident in taking up real-world development challenges

Example 2: Communication Skills USP

“My unique strength is **clear and confident communication**, especially in group settings. During a campus webinar, I hosted a session on cybersecurity for over 200 students and got excellent feedback. This helps me contribute well in team projects and presentations.”

Example 3: Leadership USP

“I bring strong leadership qualities. As the head of the coding club, I organized weekly hackathons and mentored juniors, which improved our participation by 40%. I enjoy motivating others and managing team dynamics effectively.”

Example 4: Problem-solving USP

“I have a knack for **analytical problem-solving**. During our database project, I redesigned our ER model which reduced query execution time by 30%. I believe this mindset helps me bring efficiency wherever I work.”

What Is An Elevator Pitch?

A personal elevator pitch is a brief introduction of yourself. It is named for the amount of time taken to ride an elevator from the bottom to the top of a building, which is roughly 30 seconds or 75 words. While elevator pitches are often associated with pitching ideas or products, they can be just as valuable for entrepreneurs and professionals looking to quickly highlight their skills and experience. This brief pitch can be an effective tool for hiring managers to understand what you bring to the table, showcasing your strengths in an engaging way.

An elevator pitch should:

- Convey your personal brand and what you want to be known for
- Deliver your unique selling points
- Provide appropriate response to the following questions: “Tell me about yourself”, “What do you do?” and “What are you interested in doing next?”

Importance of Having an Effective Elevator Pitch

1 Serves as an Icebreaker

- Helps start conversations during interviews (face-to-face or virtual).
- Allows you to summarize who you are, your background, and your job goals.

2 Useful Beyond Interviews

- Helps introduce yourself in everyday situations like:
Grocery stores, Cocktail parties, Networking events,
- Makes it easy for new contacts to understand why they should consider you for opportunities.

3 Puts You in Control of the Conversation

- Instead of waiting for questions, you lead with clarity.
- Similar to salespeople, you pitch your value confidently.

4 Creates a Positive Impression

- Shows that you know what you want and how to ask for it.
- Impresses interviewers, mentors, or networkers by being clear, assertive, and goal-oriented.

How To Give An Elevator Pitch?

1. Start with a Greeting and Who You Are

Begin with your name, education, or current role.

E.g. "Hi, I'm Rohan Kumar, a final-year Computer Science student at XYZ University."

2. Mention Your Area of Interest or Focus

Talk about what you're passionate about or good at.

E.g. "I'm passionate about full-stack development and love building real-world web apps."

3. Highlight Key Skills, Projects, or Achievements

Back your strengths with specific skills, tools, or a mini success story.

E.g. "I've worked on several projects using React and Node.js, including a time-tracking app that helped freelancers manage their hours efficiently."

4. Share Your Career Goal or What You're Looking For

Be clear about what you want: an internship, mentorship, or job.

E.g. "I'm currently looking for an internship where I can contribute to live projects and grow as a full-stack developer."

5. Finish Confidently

Wrap up with a thank you or invitation to connect further.

E.g. "Thank you for your time — I'd love to connect or share more if you're interested."

Example : Elevator Pitch – Software Developer Student

"Hi, I'm a final-year Computer Science student with a strong passion for building user-friendly and efficient web applications. Over the last year, I've built multiple projects using React, Node.js, and MongoDB, including a personal finance tracker that won second place in our college hackathon. I enjoy solving real-world problems through clean, scalable code, and I'm currently looking for an internship where I can contribute to full-stack development while learning from experienced professionals."

Example : Elevator Pitch – Cyber Security Student

"Hi, I'm a third-year student specializing in Cybersecurity with a keen interest in ethical hacking and digital forensics. I've completed hands-on labs in penetration testing, earned my CEH certification, and recently helped a local startup improve their security posture by conducting a vulnerability scan. I'm actively seeking opportunities where I can apply my knowledge to help organizations stay secure while expanding my skills in threat detection and response."

Developing an elevator pitch- one step at a time makes it simple to create a speech that can be used in any professional situation. Elevator pitches can be helpful as you take them into your next networking event or interview. Your elevator pitch could be the beginning of a new opportunity. Therefore, draft, review, refine and deliver it with confidence.

Pitching projects as per the company needs

Pitching a new project is a critical skill for project management professionals. It involves convincing stakeholders to invest their time, money, and resources into your proposed initiative. Experienced project managers understand the challenges and nuances of this process. As well as its importance. In this article, we will guide the project manager through the art of pitching a new project, providing insights and strategies to succeed. It will delve into the process of preparing for a pitch, creating a persuasive pitch deck, mastering the presentation, building a strong business case, and following up to secure project approval. Each step is vital to the success of the project manager.

Introduction

The Importance of Effective Project Pitching: Project pitching is the first step toward turning your project idea into reality. It's where you lay the foundation for success, secure the necessary resources, and gain buy-in from key stakeholders. A well-executed pitch can be the difference between a project that gets the green light and one that remains on the drawing board.

The Role of Project Managers in Pitching New Projects: Project managers are not just responsible for executing projects but also for initiating them. They need to wear the hats of innovators, strategists, and communicators to create compelling pitches that resonate with decision-makers. Project managers also often have the most in-depth knowledge of the potential project. They are thus best placed to co-ordinate the information necessary to pitch the project.

Preparing for the Pitch

- ❖ **Understanding the Organisation's Goals and Objectives :** Before you can effectively pitch a new project, you must align it with your organisation's strategic goals and

objectives. Start by identifying the overarching mission and vision of your company. How does your project contribute to these objectives? Define the problem or opportunity your project addresses and make sure it aligns with the organisation's mission.

- ❖ **Researching and Analyzing Stakeholders :** Stakeholder analysis is a crucial step in understanding who holds the keys to project approval. Identify key decision-makers and influencers within your organisation. What are their needs, interests, and concerns? Tailoring your pitch to address these factors can significantly increase your chances of success. It is also very helpful to speak to stakeholder in advance of the formal pitch. It is far better to hear their concerns and formulate responses before the formal project pitch. This way you earn their trust and can answer any potential issues in advance.
- ❖ **Developing a Clear Project Concept :** A well-defined project concept is the cornerstone of a compelling pitch. Clearly outline the project's scope and objectives. Craft a vision statement that succinctly describes what your project aims to achieve and why it matters. The project concept should be easy for stakeholders to grasp and rally behind. Use visuals for presentation and discussion. Create written long-form reports for in-depth review.

Creating a Strong Pitch Deck

Crafting an Attention-Grabbing Executive Summary: Your pitch deck should begin with an attention-grabbing executive summary. This brief yet impactful section should provide an overview of your project, emphasising its potential benefits and value to the organisation. Think of it as the elevator pitch for your project. Decision-makers often only have time to read the executive summary.

Outlining the Project Plan: In the body of your pitch deck, detail the project plan. Break it down into phases and provide a timeline. Highlight key milestones and deliverables to give stakeholders a clear picture of what to expect. A well-structured project plan instills confidence in your ability to execute.

Demonstrating the Project's Feasibility: Stakeholders need assurance that the project is viable. Present a realistic budget and resource plan, showcasing how you intend to allocate resources efficiently. Address potential risks and outline mitigation strategies to demonstrate your preparedness. Financial feasibility is always an important consideration. Be sure that the documentation shows financial feasibility as well as potential financial benefit to the company or its stakeholders. Input from the relevant financial departments must be sought beforehand. Their approval is necessary for the project to proceed.

Providing Evidence of ROI and Value: One of the most critical aspects of your pitch deck is demonstrating the return on investment (ROI) and the strategic value your project brings. Use data and projections to quantify the expected ROI and explain how the project aligns with the organisation's long-term goals.

Risk: The pitch document must contain a thorough risk identification, management and mitigation section. Decision-makers are worried about risk and its consequences. The project manager is required to demonstrate that they are able to forecast for certain risks and have plans to deal with these. These mitigation plans should include human resources and finances.

Mastering the Presentation

Tailoring the Pitch to the Audience: Every audience is different. Adapt your pitch content and tone to resonate with different stakeholders. Address their specific concerns, questions, and interests. Tailoring your message shows that you've done your homework and are genuinely invested in their needs. Find out which stakeholders will be present and make sure you understand their interests and personalities.

Using Effective Communication Techniques: Effective communication is essential during your presentation. Deliver your message clearly and concisely. Use visuals and storytelling to engage your audience emotionally. Remember, stakeholders are more likely to support a project that they can connect with on a personal level.

Anticipating and Addressing Objections: Expect objections and be prepared to address them. Anticipate potential pushback and offer well-thought-out solutions and alternatives.

Demonstrating that you've considered objections and have viable answers boosts your credibility.

Encouraging Questions and Feedback: Create an open dialogue during your presentation. Encourage questions and feedback. Demonstrating that you welcome input and collaboration can foster a positive atmosphere and build trust.

The Strong Business Case

Presenting a Compelling Business Case: In addition to the pitch deck, your business case is a critical document for project approval. Explain how your project aligns with strategic objectives, emphasising its positive impact on the bottom line. Highlight how it supports growth, efficiency, or competitive advantage.

Highlighting the Competitive Advantage: Discuss how your project gives your organisation a competitive edge. Analyse market trends and opportunities to showcase why your project is not just valuable but necessary for staying ahead in the industry.

Addressing the Broader Organisational Impact: Consider the broader organisational impact of your project. How will it affect other departments or teams? Acknowledge potential challenges and propose solutions. Demonstrating an understanding of the project's ripple effects can build trust among stakeholders and shows that the project manager is able to deal with big-picture issues effectively.

Promptly Providing Additional Information: After your pitch, be prepared to provide additional information promptly. Address any outstanding questions or requests from stakeholders. Offer more detailed documentation if needed to clarify your project's feasibility and benefits.

Navigating the Decision-Making Process: Understand the approval workflow and timeline within your organisation. Identify potential roadblocks and influencers who can champion your project. Be proactive in navigating the decision-making process, and keep stakeholders informed of progress.

Celebrating the Project's Approval: When your project is approved, celebrate this milestone with gratitude. Acknowledge the support of key stakeholders and prepare for the next steps in project execution. The pitch was just the beginning; now the real work begins.

Conclusion

In the world of project management, pitching a new project is an art that requires a combination of strategic thinking, communication skills, and a deep understanding of your company's goals.

LINKEDIN PROFILE OPTIMISATION

What Is An Optimized LinkedIn Profile?

An optimized LinkedIn profile is one where every part of your personal profile is filled out and shows audiences what you do, who you are, and what you are an expert in. This helps your profile rank higher in LinkedIn searches and builds trust among those who might want to connect or follow you.

Why should you optimize your LinkedIn profile?

- ◆ Helps recruiters understand that you may be open to work, know who you are and your expertise. This can encourage them to reach out to you directly for job opportunities.
- ◆ Makes you stand out if you apply for a job on LinkedIn.
- ◆ Boosts your personal brand and can help you become an influencer.
- ◆ It can help you build relationships with prospects and close deals (social selling).
- ◆ Establishes relationships with customers and creates more trust.

Whether you are looking for a job, sprucing up your profile to participate in your company employee advocacy program, or want to be the next influencer — your LinkedIn profile is key to success.

Tips for optimizing LinkedIn Profile

1. Choose a strong profile pic

When setting up your profile, you want to ensure you upload a strong and clear profile picture. Something that shows your face ensures your networks and recruiters trust who you

are. For best image quality and fitting, ensure your profile picture for LinkedIn is at least *400 X 400 px*.



GOOD



BAD

Also, when you click your picture on your profile, you have some settings to consider for how your image is shown. We recommended doing the option of “All LinkedIn Members” or “Public” to allow search engines to find your profile more easily.

2. Utilize the background photo

While your profile picture is more focused on you, there is also the background image on your profile that you should utilize, as well. This can be related to your work or passions, but also can be more creative about the company you work at currently.

This may also be referenced as the banner image or wallpaper for your profile. Ensure the image is *1584 px wide by 396 high px (4:1 proportion)* for best quality.

3. Be smart with your profile headline

If you are passionate about networking and building a unique personal brand, it pays to be a bit creative and descriptive with your profile headline. In the early days of LinkedIn, it was primarily about the title of your current position and that was usually it. But today it's more important to use the 220 character space to include relevant keywords and descriptive of your expertise.

For example, which of these do you think stands out most and will resonate with recruiters or others in your industry?

Leader At EveryoneSocial | Social Seller

Empowering Sales Leaders With Social Selling | VP of Sales at EveryoneSocial

While both include a keyword, the second one flows much better, is more interesting, and also is descriptive of your current role.

4. Your about section = your story

One LinkedIn profile optimization tip you should focus on is your summary. This is a great place to tell your story in 2,000 characters or less. Utilize keywords and update as often as you need to ensure relevancy and accuracy.

The first 265-275 characters will show before someone will have to click “See More” for the rest of your summary content. Your opening lines should be how you “hook” a profile visitor in that tells who you are, what you care about, and what you aspire to do.

Right after this section, you should consider adding some awesome media you were involved in like documents, links, videos, etc. It’s a great way to show off your expertise and talent along with your summary.

5. Fill out your work experience

While LinkedIn profile optimization is more than just talking about your work experience, you definitely should still fill this section out. How in-depth you want to go with each work experience is up to you, but focus on some of your main achievements.

Some tips when filling this section out:

- Don’t add every previous job, if you have a long work history.
- Focus on the best achievements related to your career.
- Make sure to update consistency, even current jobs when new goals or projects are completed.

6. Show off your education and skills

Another great section to fill out is where you put your education and credentials.

While your overall experience matters in the work field, many recruiters and people in your network may be curious about your education and skills. Plus when you add skills, others in your network may start endorsing those qualities you select, improving your trust factor.

These are the sections on your profile to add your knowledge:

- Education
- Licenses & Certifications
- Skills & Endorsements

Bonus: While not as impactful as it was in the early days of LinkedIn, you could ask for some recommendations. This is useful if you are job hunting especially, but not something worth spending a lot of time on otherwise.

7. Edit your profile URL

One setting that is easy to neglect and overlook when optimizing your LinkedIn profile is your profile URL. You can actually edit that URL to be clean, like your first name and last name. And changing this is super easy to do when you know where to look.

Go to your profile and in the upper right corner, you'll see "Edit public profile & URL." Once the page refreshes, you'll say in the upper right corner and then you can change the URL to something cleaner beyond a bunch of numbers and letters.



Beyond making the LinkedIn profile URL looking clean, it can help search engines index your profile and make it easier for people to find you on the network.

8. Avoid overused buzzwords

You probably have a few in mind that you see overly-used or make you cringe when you see them. These are adjectives that you'll often see on LinkedIn headlines or summaries that add no real value to the profile.

Think of terms like "Experienced, Leader, Expert, Guru, Innovative, Certified, etc.

This doesn't mean that there isn't value in these terms at all in some instances. The problem is just because you use these terms to describe yourself, doesn't mean they are convincing enough to people viewing your profile.

People will see you as an "expert" or "innovative" when you provide value through content, show your work experience off, and when you engage with others. That's where you demonstrate what you are all about, not through utilizing buzzwords all over your profile.

9. Start writing, sharing, & engaging

As you start to clean up your LinkedIn profile, it's time you also start engaging and getting active! There are many ways to do so, even if you aren't into building a massive personal brand.

Start writing! Share insights into things you've learned in your career, expert insights into your industry or job position, and keep providing value. You don't need to post every day, but find the cadence that works for you. It can be a mix of blog posts, text only, video, or image-based content.

The other aspect to being seen on LinkedIn and making connections is engagement. This is interacting with others' content whether a comment, reacting, or resharing. You can tag your network on things (in moderation), too. This is how you boost credibility and reach, plus people love getting engagement and will likely return that on your content, too!

Maintenance Tips :

- ✓ Update your profile monthly with new skills, projects, or certifications.
- ✓ Engage with 3–5 posts weekly to stay visible
- ✓ Request recommendations from professors or internship supervisors annually.

PRACTICE EXERCISES

Personal Branding

1. How would you describe your personal brand as a CSE student, and how does it align with your career goals in [specific field, e.g., software development, machine learning]?
2. What steps have you taken to build a strong online presence, particularly on platforms like LinkedIn or GitHub?
3. Imagine you're at a tech networking event. Introduce yourself in 30 seconds, highlighting your unique strengths as a CSE student.
4. How do you ensure your personal brand reflects both your technical skills and soft skills, such as teamwork or problem-solving?
5. What makes your approach to [specific skill, e.g., coding, system design] unique compared to other CSE students?

Elevator Pitch

6. Deliver a 30-second elevator pitch to a recruiter at [company name, e.g., Google] for a software engineering internship.
7. You're in an elevator with a senior engineer from [company name]. Pitch yourself as a candidate for their team in 20–30 seconds.
8. Craft an elevator pitch that highlights your experience with [specific technology, e.g., React, TensorFlow] and your passion for [specific field, e.g., AI].

Pitching Projects

9. Choose one of your CSE projects (e.g., a web app, ML model). Pitch it to a recruiter as if it's a solution to their company's problem in 1–2 minutes.
10. You're interviewing for a role at [company name]. Describe a project you've worked on, focusing on how it demonstrates your technical skills and problem-solving ability.
11. Walk me through the development process of a recent project. Why did you choose the technologies you used, and what was the impact?
12. Pitch a project you worked on to a non-technical manager, focusing on its business value rather than technical details.

Professional Conversation

13. During a networking event, you're asked, "What do you bring to the table as a CSE student?" How would you respond in 1 minute?
14. A recruiter asks, "Why should we hire you over other CSE students?" Respond by highlighting your unique skills and experiences.
15. Imagine you're discussing a trending tech topic (e.g., generative AI) with a senior developer. How would you contribute to the conversation professionally?

Unit 5

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the act of understanding what you are reading. Reading comprehension is an intentional, active, interactive process that occurs before, during and after a person reads a particular piece of writing. Reading comprehension is one of the pillars of the act of reading. There are two elements that make up the process of reading comprehension: **vocabulary knowledge** and **text comprehension**. In order to understand a text, the reader must be able to comprehend the vocabulary used in the piece of writing. If the individual words don't make the sense, then the overall story will not either.

GENERAL STRATEGIES FOR READING COMPREHENSION

Strategy 1: Skim the Passage

Purpose

Skimming helps you get a quick overview of the passage's central idea, structure, and tone before engaging with the details. It is not a shallow reading but a purposeful method of reading selectively to grasp the passage's framework.

How to Apply

- Read the first and last sentences of each paragraph attentively.
- Focus on topic sentences that introduce new ideas or shifts in perspective.
- Ignore unfamiliar or difficult words during this stage unless they seem central to the theme.
- Identify the overall structure of the passage: chronological, comparative, problem-solution, or cause-effect.
- Make a mental note of how the argument is built and the author's stance.

Benefits

- Saves time during question-solving.
- Builds a mental map of the passage.
- Prepares you to locate information quickly during detailed reading.

Example Passage

In the late 1800s, urban planners in Europe began to experiment with a new concept called “the garden city,” envisioned by Ebenezer Howard. These cities were designed to combine the benefits of rural and urban life, offering green spaces, decentralized industry, and self-contained neighborhoods. Howard’s vision was a reaction to the grim overcrowding and pollution in industrial cities like London. Although the original model was idealistic, cities such as Letchworth and Welwyn in England were partially based on his plans. Over time, however, the concept evolved. By the mid-20th century, “garden cities” in different countries took on diverse forms, often deviating from Howard’s original social goals and becoming suburban enclaves rather than self-sustaining communities. Critics argue that many modern interpretations prioritize aesthetics over functional integration. Despite this, the influence of the garden city is visible in contemporary eco-city initiatives, smart city planning, and urban greening policies. Today, urban planners revisit Howard’s ideas in response to climate change and population density, acknowledging both their relevance and their limitations.

Skimming Analysis

The first paragraph introduces the “garden city” concept and its purpose.

The passage then explains its evolution and modern reinterpretation.

While the tone is largely informative, it includes a subtle critique of how the original intent was diluted.

Skimming allows the reader to understand that the passage addresses both historical development and modern implications of a city-planning model.

Strategy 2: Scanning-Focus on Keywords

Purpose

Certain words and phrases in a passage act as signals that guide the reader toward important information. These include transition words, intensifiers, proper nouns, dates, and cause-effect markers.

How to Apply

- Look for conjunctions and transition markers such as however, therefore, although, and in contrast.
- Identify intensifiers such as significant, crucial, especially, and notably.
- Mark proper nouns and years which often indicate examples or evidence.
- Observe comparative or contrastive structures which show differing viewpoints.
- Use these keywords to navigate the passage when answering questions.

Benefits

- Helps locate important arguments or shifts in the text.
- Improves accuracy in tone-based or inference questions.
- Assists in identifying supporting and opposing viewpoints.

Example Passage

Climate scientists have long warned of the consequences of rising sea levels, but recent satellite data has presented a more urgent picture. According to a 2023 study published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), coastal areas previously deemed safe are now at high risk of flooding. Notably, cities like Jakarta and Miami are sinking due to both natural subsidence and human activities such as groundwater extraction. Moreover, the frequency of extreme weather events, including hurricanes and flash floods, has increased significantly in the past five years. While some policymakers advocate for infrastructure investment, such as sea walls and flood barriers, others emphasize a need for relocation strategies. However, these solutions often clash with socioeconomic realities, especially in developing nations. Despite numerous global conferences, including COP26 and COP28, actionable consensus remains elusive. This fragmented approach highlights the gap between climate science and international policymaking.

Keyword Analysis

- The words “but,” “notably,” “moreover,” and “however” indicate **contrasting or building ideas**.
- **Proper nouns** such as IPCC, Jakarta, and COP26 are useful reference points.
- The phrase “gap between climate science and international policymaking” summarizes the **author's critical perspective**.
- By focusing on keywords, a reader can trace arguments without rereading the entire passage.

Strategy 3: Take Notes

Purpose

Taking brief notes helps reinforce comprehension and provides quick references when answering questions. These notes allow readers to condense complex passages into simplified structures.

How to Apply

- Write short summaries or bullet points for each paragraph, noting the main argument and tone.
- Identify the author's position—supportive, critical, balanced, or biased.

- Note key examples, studies, and shifts in viewpoint.
- Use arrows, dashes, or other visual shorthand to organize your notes efficiently.
- Avoid full sentences; focus on phrases that will help you recall information.

Benefits

- Strengthens understanding and retention.
- Saves time when revisiting parts of the passage.
- Highlights structure and logical flow of the argument.

Example Passage

The debate over genetically modified organisms (GMOs) continues to polarize scientists, policymakers, and consumers alike. Proponents argue that GMOs are crucial for food security, especially in regions facing climate unpredictability. For instance, drought-resistant maize has helped stabilize harvests in sub-Saharan Africa. On the other hand, opponents cite environmental risks and long-term health concerns. The controversy intensified after a 2021 meta-study revealed inconsistencies in safety assessments across different countries. While nations like the United States and Brazil embrace GMO farming, others, such as France and India, maintain strict regulations or outright bans. Interestingly, consumer behavior does not always align with policy—many people unknowingly consume GMO products despite opposing them in principle. The author maintains a balanced tone, acknowledging both the potential and perils of biotechnology, and calls for more globally harmonized research protocols.

Sample Notes

- Main Argument: GMO debate has multiple sides—scientific, political, and consumer-based.
- Proponents: Stress on food security, with African maize as an example.
- Opponents: Focus on risks, call attention to regulation gaps.
- Key Evidence: 2021 meta-study; cross-national differences.
- Tone: Balanced, reflective, evidence-driven.
- Conclusion: Call for standard global research policies.

Strategy 4: Avoid Overreading

Purpose

The goal of reading comprehension is not to analyze literature but to identify, understand, and interpret information accurately. Many students waste time by rereading entire passages or

overanalyzing lines that are not essential for answering the questions. Strategic reading means focusing only on what is necessary.

How to Apply

- Read for intent and structure, not for every word.
- Once you understand the central idea and paragraph function, move on.
- When answering a question, return only to the specific section that contains the relevant detail.
- Avoid excessive re-reading; most answers are located in 1–3 sentences.
- Be mindful of time constraints during timed tests.

Benefits

- Improves speed and efficiency.
- Reduces mental fatigue and confusion.
- Helps prioritize what matters in the passage.

Example Passage

Over the past two decades, the global art market has transformed dramatically due to the rise of online platforms. Initially, galleries and museums were skeptical about showcasing art digitally, arguing that the sensory experience of seeing a piece in person could not be replicated. However, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the digital shift. Art fairs went virtual, and online auctions reached record-breaking numbers. Some critics remain doubtful, suggesting that digitization reduces art to mere content. Yet, others argue it has democratized access, allowing emerging artists from underrepresented regions to reach global audiences. Sotheby's, for instance, reported a 60% increase in online sales in 2021, a trend echoed by independent galleries. While concerns about authenticity and ownership persist, many agree that the digital revolution has irrevocably altered the economics of art.

Application of Strategy

If a question asks, “How did the pandemic influence digital art sales?” you do not need to reread the entire passage. Instead, focus on the sentence: “However, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the digital shift. Art fairs went virtual, and online auctions reached record-breaking numbers.” This directly answers the question. Overreading would waste time and create confusion over unrelated information such as authenticity concerns or democratization debates.

Strategy 5: Predict Answers

Purpose

Before reading the multiple-choice options, attempt to mentally formulate your own answer based on the passage. This preemptive approach prevents distraction by incorrect but tempting answer choices and keeps your focus aligned with the author's original intent.

How to Apply

- After reading the question, return briefly to the relevant portion of the passage.
- Formulate your own brief answer using the passage's wording and tone.
- Then compare your prediction with the given options.
- Eliminate options that are out-of-scope, extreme, or contradictory.
- Trust your prediction if it aligns with one of the choices.

Benefits

- Enhances clarity and confidence while selecting answers.
- Helps recognize misleading or partially correct options.
- Reduces time spent choosing between close or confusing answers.

Example Passage

In recent years, the concept of “digital detox” has gained popularity, especially among young professionals and students. Proponents of digital detox claim that extended screen time causes anxiety, sleep disturbances, and reduced productivity. As a solution, they recommend periodic breaks from devices, advocating for tech-free weekends, nature retreats, and reduced social media use. However, skeptics argue that in a hyper-connected world, complete disengagement is impractical and even counterproductive. A 2022 study from Stanford University found that temporary disconnection did improve focus for some individuals, but it also increased feelings of isolation and hindered communication for others. The report concluded that rather than total avoidance, more balanced and intentional tech use might be a healthier long-term strategy.

Predictive Strategy in Action

- Question: “What solution does the author ultimately support regarding digital detox?”
- Before reading the options, form a prediction based on the last few lines: “Rather than total avoidance, more balanced and intentional tech use.”
- Prediction: The author supports a balanced approach to technology use.
- Now, compare with the choices. If one option says “Encourages complete digital avoidance,” eliminate it. If another says “Supports balanced and mindful technology use,” that is likely the correct answer.

Strategy 6: Answer Wh-Questions First

Purpose

Wh-questions (Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How) typically ask for information that is explicitly stated in the passage. Tackling these questions first builds confidence and provides clarity about key parts of the passage, making it easier to handle more complex or inference-based questions later.

How to Apply

- Scan the passage for proper nouns, numbers, locations, and factual statements.
- Locate the relevant section quickly and extract only the necessary information.
- These questions usually contain direct matches with the passage's wording.
- Answer them before moving on to abstract, inference, or tone-based questions.

Benefits

- Easier to answer with a higher degree of certainty.
- Helps in mentally mapping key points of the passage.
- Builds momentum during exams and saves time.

Example Passage

The Rosetta Stone, discovered in 1799 near the Egyptian town of Rosetta, played a pivotal role in deciphering ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs. Before its discovery, scholars had long struggled to interpret the symbolic language used in tombs and inscriptions. The stone contains the same decree written in three scripts: Greek, Demotic, and hieroglyphic. Since Greek was well-understood, it provided the key to translating the other two scripts. The breakthrough came in 1822 when French scholar Jean-François Champollion successfully identified phonetic hieroglyphs based on comparisons with the Greek text. His work laid the foundation for modern Egyptology. Today, the Rosetta Stone remains one of the most visited artifacts in the British Museum.

Application of Strategy

- Possible Wh-questions:
- Who discovered the Rosetta Stone?
- Where was it found?
- What made the translation possible?
- When was the breakthrough in translation achieved?

Each of these can be answered directly from the text without inference. This clarity helps ease into more interpretive questions such as “Why is the Rosetta Stone significant to historical linguistics?”

Strategy 7: Recognize Question Types

Purpose

Understanding the type of question asked is essential for applying the correct strategy to find the answer. Each question type requires a different level of reading attention—some demand direct recall, while others require critical reasoning or inference.

How to Apply

- Identify the nature of the question: is it factual, inferential, vocabulary-based, or about tone/attitude?
- Match the question type with its required reading strategy.
- For factual questions, return to the specific part of the text.
- For inference and tone questions, read around the target sentence and observe the author’s wording.
- For vocabulary-in-context questions, read the sentence containing the word and one or two sentences before and after.

Benefits

- Helps avoid unnecessary reading or overthinking.
- Provides clarity about what the examiner is testing.
- Increases accuracy by using the right reading lens.

Common Question Types

Type	Focus Area	Strategy
Main Idea	Central theme	Skim intro and conclusion
Detail	Specific fact	Scan and locate
Inference	Implied but not stated	Logical deduction
Tone/Attitude	Author’s perspective or feeling	Check adjective choice, context
Vocabulary in Context	Meaning of word/phrase in passage	Read surrounding lines

Example Passage

While electric vehicles (EVs) have been hailed as the future of sustainable transportation, critics argue that the current production model is not entirely environmentally friendly. For instance, the mining of lithium and cobalt—key materials for EV batteries—raises concerns due to ecological degradation and labor exploitation in some countries. Moreover, the carbon footprint of manufacturing these vehicles remains significant. However, ongoing innovations in battery recycling and second-life energy storage applications show promise. Several manufacturers are now investing in ethical sourcing and closed-loop supply chains to reduce long-term impact. Although the shift to EVs is a step toward reducing emissions, the author cautions against viewing it as a perfect solution and emphasizes a need for systemic reform in production practices.

Application of Strategy

If the question asks:

- “What is the author’s tone?” → Tone/Attitude → Balanced but cautious.
- “Which of the following is a drawback mentioned about EV production?” → Detail → Refer to lithium mining and labor issues.
- “What does ‘closed-loop supply chain’ likely mean in this context?” → Vocabulary in context → A system that reuses/recycles materials to minimize waste.
- Recognizing these types helps tailor the approach for each question.

Strategy 8: Use the Eliminate and Justify Technique

Purpose

When multiple answer options seem plausible, eliminating incorrect choices systematically and justifying the final answer ensures that decisions are evidence-based and accurate. This is especially effective for inference or main idea questions.

How to Apply

- Eliminate options that are factually wrong, out-of-scope, extreme, or contradict the passage.
- Justify the remaining options using evidence directly from the text.
- If two options are close, look for slight exaggeration or distortion in one of them.
- Do not choose an option unless you can justify it from the passage.

Benefits

- Encourages critical thinking and evidence-based reasoning.
- Reduces chances of being misled by distractors.
- Helps clarify subtle differences between options.

Example Passage

In the past decade, artificial intelligence has become increasingly integrated into healthcare systems. From diagnostic imaging to predictive analytics, AI promises faster, more accurate results. Yet, ethical dilemmas persist. The use of patient data in machine learning models often lacks transparency, raising privacy concerns. Furthermore, there is ongoing debate about accountability: if an AI misdiagnoses a condition, who is responsible—the software developer, the doctor, or the institution? Advocates emphasize that AI should be viewed as a tool, not a replacement, and must be regulated to ensure safety and fairness. The author concludes that while the technology is promising, its implementation must be approached cautiously and with clear ethical guidelines.

Application of Strategy

Question: Which of the following best expresses the author's view on AI in healthcare?

- Option A: AI will replace human doctors in the next decade. (Extreme) → Eliminate
- Option B: AI has no ethical implications when properly used. (Contradicts passage) → Eliminate
- Option C: AI offers benefits but needs ethical safeguards. → Justified by the conclusion.
- Option D: The risks of AI outweigh its benefits. (Distorted emphasis) → Eliminate
- Answer: Option C—Justified by both tone and content in the final paragraph.

Strategy 9: Be Wary of Trap Choices

Purpose

Trap choices are incorrect answers designed to look appealing. They may be factually accurate but irrelevant, include extreme or absolute language, or reflect the opposite of what the author said. Recognizing and avoiding these traps can significantly improve accuracy.

How to Apply

- Avoid options with absolute words like always, never, all, or completely unless clearly stated.
- Discard choices that are true but unrelated to the question being asked.
- Watch out for reverse logic—options that misrepresent the author's viewpoint.
- Cross-check with the author's exact words and intent.
- Be cautious of choices that sound logical but are not mentioned or implied in the passage.

Benefits

- Reduces risk of choosing attractive but incorrect options.
- Trains focus on relevance and textual support.

- Helps in inference, tone, and main idea questions where traps are common.

Example Passage

Despite being considered a technological utopia, Silicon Valley faces a growing credibility crisis. Numerous whistleblower reports, rising income inequality, and the spread of misinformation via social media platforms have tarnished the industry's reputation. Several high-profile CEOs have been questioned in congressional hearings, prompting discussions about stricter regulations. Although many companies continue to claim a commitment to ethics and transparency, critics argue that profit motives often override such principles. The author presents a nuanced view, acknowledging the transformative power of technology while highlighting the systemic problems that challenge its credibility.

Application of Strategy

Question: What best describes the author's tone toward Silicon Valley?

- Option A: Entirely critical and dismissive. (Extreme) → Eliminate
- Option B: Unconditionally supportive of tech innovation. (Reverse logic) → Eliminate
- Option C: Balanced, recognizing both potential and problems. → Matches text
- Option D: Concerned only about misinformation. (Too narrow) → Eliminate

Answer: Option C is correct, as it reflects the nuanced tone of the passage.

Strategy 10: Practice Timed Reading

Purpose

In competitive exams, reading comprehension is not just a test of understanding but also of speed and stamina. Timed reading develops your ability to read, comprehend, and answer questions efficiently within limited time constraints.

How to Apply

- Set a timer and read practice passages of 400–500 words within 2–3 minutes.
- Immediately follow with 5–7 questions, allocating around 45–60 seconds per question.
- Use a reading app or stopwatch to track your progress.
- Keep improving your reading rate (target 200–250 words per minute).
- Focus on accuracy and adjust your pace based on difficulty level.

Benefits

- Builds reading speed under exam conditions.
- Improves time management across sections.
- Reduces last-minute panic and increases confidence.

Example Passage

The global decline of insect populations has become a subject of ecological concern. Pollinators like bees and butterflies are essential for agricultural productivity, and their decreasing numbers threaten both food security and biodiversity. Researchers cite multiple causes, including habitat loss, pesticide use, and climate change. A 2021 longitudinal study conducted across three continents showed a consistent decline in insect biomass over the past 20 years. Conservationists warn that this crisis may soon reach an irreversible tipping point unless immediate action is taken. Proposed solutions include creating insect-friendly urban spaces, enforcing stricter regulations on agrochemicals, and encouraging organic farming practices. While awareness campaigns have increased public engagement, policy response remains inadequate in many regions.

Application of Strategy

Read this 10-line passage in 2–3 minutes, then attempt 5 factual and inference-based questions under timed conditions. Practicing this repeatedly builds the muscle memory needed for timed tests.

TYPES OF READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Universal or Main Idea Questions – This question-type asks about the big picture, the passage as a whole.

- Which of the following best summarizes the passage?
- What is the author attempting to illustrate through this passage?
- What is the thematic highlight of this passage?
- Which of the following best states the central idea of the passage?
- The gist of the passage is:
- Which of the following is the principal topic of the passage?
- Which of the following best describes one of the main ideas ____?

2. Specific –This type asks about details from the passage. The correct answer is often a paraphrase of something directly stated in the passage.

- Which ____ has not been cited as ____?
- According to the author, what is ____?
- By a ____, the author means...
- According to the passage, ____?
- Which factor has not been cited ____?

3. Vocab-in-Context – This is a type of Specific question which asks about the use of a particular word or phrase.

- In the passage, the phrase _____ refers to
- In the sentence, _____, what is the meaning of _____?

4. Inference – Inference questions require you to understand what is implied by but not necessarily stated in the passage. The correct answer may rely on subtle phrases from the passage and be hard to find/less obvious than Specific questions.

- The passage uses _____ to imply that _____
- Which of the following cannot be inferred from the passage?
- What does the author mean by _____?
- What can be inferred when the author states _____?
- The sentence, _____, implies that

5. Context outside passage -Like inference questions, applying information questions deal with topics that are not mentioned explicitly in the passage. This type of question asks you to take the information given in the passage and apply it logically to a context outside of the passage. An applying information question could look like:

- Which of the following situations is most similar to the situation described in the paragraph?
- Identify a hypothetical situation that is comparable to a situation presented in the passage?
- Select an example that is like an example provided in the passage?

UNDERSTANDING THE MAIN IDEA

The main idea of a passage is its central message—the author’s primary point about the topic. It is not just a part or a supporting example; it is the core essence that connects all parts of the passage.

Think of the main idea as a thread that runs through every paragraph, connecting each point, example, or illustration to one central purpose.

TIPS AND TRICKS TO IDENTIFY THE MAIN IDEA

Tip 1: Read the First and Last Paragraph Carefully

Most authors start and end a passage with the central theme. The first paragraph usually introduces the subject and scope, while the last often reinforces the author's viewpoint.

Trick: If the conclusion sounds like a summary or a wrap-up, it's likely restating the main idea.

Tip 2: Eliminate Distractors — Too Narrow, Too Broad, or Off-Topic

Some answer choices may be true, but not the main idea.

- Too Narrow – It reflects just one part or example.
- Too Broad – It goes beyond what the author discusses.
- Off-Topic – It's related but not supported by the passage.

Trick: Summarize the passage in 1 sentence before reading the options. Then see which one matches.

Tip 3: Pay Attention to Repeated Ideas and Keywords

If a term or concept is used multiple times (directly or through synonyms), it is likely key to the central idea.

Trick: Underline or mentally note keywords that reappear. The central idea usually revolves around these.

Tip 4: Ignore Specific Data and Examples

Facts, numbers, quotes, and examples are supporting tools. They prove the idea but are not the main idea themselves.

Trick: After reading an example, ask yourself: "What is this proving or supporting?"

Tip 5: Identify the Author's Purpose and Tone

Is the author trying to:

- Inform (neutral tone),
- Persuade (assertive tone),
- Criticize (negative tone),
- or Celebrate (positive tone)?

Knowing the purpose and tone helps determine what message the author wants to leave you with.

Tip 6: Watch for Shift Words ("But", "However", "Although")

Transition words often indicate a change in direction or true opinion of the author. The main idea may follow or contrast earlier parts.

Trick: Highlight the part after contrast words. That might be the main focus.

Tip 7: Practice 1-2-3 Summary Method

After reading, pause and try to:

- Write what the topic is.
- Identify what is said about the topic.
- Decide what connects all the paragraphs together.

EXAMPLES

Example 1: Climate Change and Food Security

Passage:

Climate change is emerging as a critical threat to global food security. Rising temperatures, shifting rainfall patterns, and extreme weather events are reducing agricultural productivity in many regions. Smallholder farmers, who form the backbone of food supply in developing nations, are especially vulnerable due to limited resources and adaptive capacity. In some parts of Africa and Asia, frequent droughts and floods have led to recurring food shortages. While technological innovations like drought-resistant crops offer hope, large-scale adaptation remains a challenge. The international community is beginning to recognize the need for climate-resilient agriculture. Without significant intervention, climate change could destabilize food systems and exacerbate hunger worldwide.

Question: What is the main idea of the passage?

Correct Answer: Climate change poses a growing threat to global food security, especially for vulnerable farming communities.

Why this works:

This answer reflects the central focus: climate change's impact on agriculture and food security. Other options may mention droughts or new crops, but those are supporting details. The real concern is the overall threat and the need for action.

Example 2: The Rise of Online Learning

Passage:

In the last decade, online education has become a transformative force in global learning. Universities now offer full degree programs online, and platforms like Coursera, Udemy, and edX provide affordable access to high-quality content. Flexibility and cost-effectiveness make online learning especially appealing to working professionals. However, critics argue that it lacks the structure and social interaction of traditional classrooms. Technical issues, lack of internet access, and motivation gaps further hinder its effectiveness in some regions. Still, as digital literacy improves, online education continues to expand, prompting institutions to rethink traditional pedagogical models.

Main Idea: Online education is reshaping learning by offering flexibility and reach, despite concerns about structure and access.

Why: The passage balances both pros and cons, but its focus is the growing impact of online learning. Supporting points like “working professionals” or “internet issues” are details supporting this main idea.

Example 3: Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare

Passage:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing healthcare by enabling faster diagnoses, personalized treatment plans, and predictive analytics. AI algorithms can analyze massive datasets to detect patterns that would be invisible to human doctors. For example, machine learning has been used to identify early signs of cancer and predict patient readmissions. However, ethical concerns remain about data privacy, algorithmic bias, and the depersonalization of care. Regulatory frameworks have yet to catch up with technological advances. As AI becomes more integrated into medical systems, the balance between innovation and responsibility will be crucial.

Main Idea: While AI is transforming healthcare with powerful tools, its growth raises critical ethical and regulatory challenges.

Why: The passage is not just about benefits of AI or ethical issues—it covers both in a balanced tone. The main idea is the impact and complexity of integrating AI in healthcare.

Example 4: Urban Green Spaces and Mental Health

Passage:

Urban green spaces such as parks, gardens, and tree-lined streets play a crucial role in promoting mental well-being. Numerous studies have shown that regular exposure to nature reduces stress, anxiety, and depression. In fast-paced cities where noise and pollution are prevalent, these spaces act as psychological sanctuaries. However, urban planning often prioritizes commercial development over greenery. Socioeconomic disparities also mean that access to green spaces is uneven. As mental health becomes a global priority, incorporating nature into urban design is no longer optional—it is essential.

Main Idea: Urban green spaces are vital for mental health, yet they are often undervalued in city planning.

Why: The passage is framed around the importance of green spaces, with both scientific backing and urban design critique. The central idea combines both elements.

Example 5: Space Tourism – The Next Frontier?

Passage:

Once a domain of government agencies, space travel is now being reimagined as a commercial enterprise. Companies like SpaceX and Blue Origin are developing technologies to make space tourism accessible to civilians. Early missions have already included non-astronaut passengers. Advocates say this will inspire innovation and democratize access to space. Critics, however, raise concerns about safety, environmental cost, and inequality, as such trips remain affordable only to the ultra-wealthy. While the dream of civilian space travel inches closer, it opens debates about ethics, regulation, and sustainability.

Main Idea: Space tourism is becoming a reality, but it brings with it serious concerns about access, safety, and ethics.

Why: The passage presents both promise and concerns. The main idea isn't just about space tourism existing—it's about its emergence and implications.

UNDERSTANDING INFERENCE BASED QUESTIONS

What is an Inference?

An inference is an idea that is not directly stated in the passage but is logically deduced based on the information provided. These questions test your ability to "read between the lines" and draw conclusions that are supported by the text.

Common Inference Question Stems:

"Which of the following can be inferred from the passage?"

"The author implies that..."

"Based on the passage, it is most likely that..."

"What conclusion can be drawn from the information presented?"

CORE STRATEGY: How to Tackle Inference-Based Questions

1. Read What is Said Carefully Before Deducing What is Implied

Focus on understanding explicit facts first.

Only then try to connect them logically to form implications.

Inference is not imagination—stick to logic, not opinion.

2. Look for Context Clues, Not Just Keywords

Pay attention to tone, contrast words, and author's attitude.

Words like "but", "however", "although", and "thus" often signal deeper implications.

3. Eliminate Extremes and Unsupported Assumptions

Good inferences are subtle, not exaggerated.

Options with words like “always,” “never,” “completely,” or “must” are often traps.

4. Ask Yourself: “If this statement were false, would it contradict the passage?”

If it contradicts what’s stated or implied, it’s probably not a valid inference.

5. Use the Goldilocks Test: Not Too Broad, Not Too Narrow

Inference should match the scope of the passage—not jump beyond the facts.

Types of Inferences Tested:

Type	Description
Logical Consequence	What naturally follows from facts
Author's Attitude	What does the tone imply?
Hidden Relationships	Cause-effect or comparison in disguise
Likely Outcome	What might happen next?
Assumptions	What is pCvD but not stated?

EXAMPLES

Example 1: Inference from Contrast

Passage:

While most urban schools have embraced digital education platforms, rural institutions continue to struggle due to poor internet connectivity and lack of trained faculty. Although initiatives like Digital India have attempted to bridge this divide, implementation remains inconsistent. As a result, rural students are often left behind in accessing quality education, exacerbating the learning gap between urban and rural youth. Furthermore, the digital divide has become more apparent post-COVID, with urban students continuing classes online while many rural students had no access at all.

Question:

Which of the following can be inferred from the passage?

- A. Digital India has completely failed in its mission.
- B. Urban students do not face any educational challenges.
- C. The digital divide worsened after the COVID pandemic.
- D. Rural students prefer traditional education over digital learning.

Correct Answer: C

Explanation:

Option C logically follows from the explicit fact that rural students had no access during COVID, widening the gap. A is too extreme. B is not supported, and D is not mentioned.

Example 2: Inference from Author's Attitude

Passage:

The company's decision to implement a four-day work week was met with mixed reactions. Employees appreciated the better work-life balance, but middle managers were skeptical about meeting deadlines. Surprisingly, productivity remained steady, and employee satisfaction scores improved. The leadership, once hesitant, began to explore making this model permanent, citing improved retention rates and fewer sick leaves as strong indicators of its success.

Question:

What can be inferred about the leadership's view of the four-day work week?

- A. They believe it hinders productivity.
- B. They are considering it a long-term option.
- C. They have rejected the model.
- D. They introduced it due to public pressure.

Correct Answer: B

Explanation:

The author's tone shifts from hesitation to acceptance, backed by facts like improved retention and productivity. Option B is logically supported. A and C contradict the passage, and D is not implied.

Example 3: Cause and Effect Inference

Passage:

A recent study on smartphone addiction reveals that excessive screen time among teenagers leads to sleep disturbances, mood disorders, and a decline in academic performance. Researchers also found a correlation between screen exposure before bed and reduced melatonin levels. Although the study does not establish a direct causal link, it strongly suggests a pattern between increased digital use and mental health issues in youth.

Question:

What can be inferred from the study findings?

- A. Screen time is the only cause of mood disorders in teens.
- B. Smartphones boost melatonin levels.
- C. Limiting screen use before bedtime may improve teen sleep health.
- D. Digital devices help improve academic results.

Correct Answer: C

Explanation:

While not explicitly stated, the logical inference from "reduced melatonin" and "sleep disturbances" is that reducing screen time could help. A is too absolute, B and D are factually opposite.

Example 4: Hidden Relationship Inference

Passage:

Although AI has the potential to automate repetitive tasks in programming, many developers argue that true creativity and problem-solving remain uniquely human. Tools like GitHub Copilot have streamlined coding, yet developers still need to understand context, architecture, and user experience. Moreover, AI often needs significant human input to produce efficient and secure code. Thus, while automation can assist, it does not replace the core responsibilities of a skilled programmer.

Question:

What does the passage imply about the future of AI in programming?

- A. AI will fully replace human developers in a decade.
- B. Programmers will become irrelevant in the tech industry.
- C. AI is useful but cannot replace human creativity in programming.
- D. AI does not contribute anything to the programming industry.

Correct Answer: C

Explanation:

The passage suggests a complementary relationship—AI helps, but humans are irreplaceable for creativity. A and B are unsupported, D contradicts the tone and facts.

Example 5: Predictive Inference (What happens next?)

Passage:

The government has recently introduced a new environmental regulation mandating strict limits on industrial emissions. Companies failing to comply within six months will face heavy fines and possible suspension. While some industries welcomed the change, citing

corporate social responsibility, others warned that compliance might lead to short-term job losses and increased production costs. Several firms have already begun upgrading their systems to meet the new standards.

Question:

What can be inferred as a likely outcome of the regulation?

- A. All industries will shut down due to non-compliance.
- B. Environmental quality may improve as companies adopt the regulations.
- C. The regulation will be revoked due to protests.
- D. No company will make any changes to meet the standards.

Correct Answer: B

Explanation:

The inference is based on the actions already taken (upgrading systems) and the intent behind the regulation. A and D are extreme. C is not supported.

Additional Tips & Tricks for Inference Questions

Tip	Explanation
Read Slowly	Speed reading may miss subtle implications.
Think Like a Detective	Use evidence + reasoning, not guesswork.
Don't Fall for True-but-Unrelated Options	Only pick options that connect logically to the passage.
Stay Within the Passage's Scope	Don't infer outside topics not mentioned.
Identify Tone and Voice	Sarcasm, irony, or praise can imply deeper meaning.

UNDERSTANDING VOCABULARY-BASED QUESTIONS

What Are Vocabulary-Based RC Questions?

Vocabulary-based RC questions assess your understanding of word meanings as used in context, not just dictionary definitions. The goal is to identify the connotation, tone, or implied meaning of a word or phrase within the specific passage.

These questions often appear as:

- What does the word “X” most nearly mean as used in the passage?

- Which of the following best describes the meaning of “Y” in context?
- The phrase “A B C” suggests which of the following?
- Which meaning of the word “Z” is implied in the passage?

TIPS AND TRICKS to Solve Vocabulary-in-Context Questions

1. Read the Entire Sentence — Not Just the Word

The meaning of a word in RC passages depends entirely on its usage in the sentence. Even common words may carry technical, ironic, or figurative meanings.

Example Tip:

The word "charge" in general means “to impose a cost,” but in physics, it refers to electrical properties. In law, it can mean an accusation. So, context is king.

2. Look for Context Clues

Words surrounding the target word usually hint at its meaning through definitions, examples, contrasts, or cause-effect relationships.

Types of Context Clues:

Type	Example
Definition clue	"Ephemeral, which means short-lived, describes digital trends."
Contrast clue	"Unlike his usual acerbic tone, today he was quite kind."
Example clue	"Innovators, like Steve Jobs and Elon Musk, are often called visionaries."
Cause-effect clue	"Due to the resurgence of the virus, the lockdown was extended."

3. Use Substitution Technique

Mentally replace the target word with a synonym that fits the sentence. If the sentence still makes sense, you're on the right track.

4. Watch Out for Tone and Connotation

Words can carry positive, negative, or neutral connotations even if their definitions are similar.

“Stubborn” vs “Determined” – both imply persistence, but one is negative, the other positive.

5. Eliminate Out-of-Context Choices

Many answer choices might give valid meanings of the word, but not in that context. Pick the one that best suits the passage's tone and purpose.

6. Identify Figurative Language or Idiomatic Use

Phrases or words may be metaphorical (e.g., “hit the wall”) or idiomatic (“kick the bucket”). Interpret such words based on implied meaning, not literal translation.

Example 1: Passage:

The scientist’s hypothesis, though initially considered preposterous, eventually garnered acclaim when subsequent experiments confirmed its validity. Critics had earlier dismissed his theory as absurd, a fanciful idea with no grounding in reality. Yet, over time, as data piled up and patterns became evident, the scientific community began to see merit in his model. The initial skepticism had less to do with the science and more to do with the radical shift in perspective it demanded. After all, paradigm shifts rarely occur without resistance. The word “*preposterous*” reflects the discomfort of moving beyond conventional boundaries, not the actual merit of the idea itself.

Question:

What is the meaning of the word “preposterous” as used in the passage?

- A. Misunderstood
- B. Groundbreaking
- C. Ridiculous
- D. Theoretical

Correct Answer: C. Ridiculous

Explanation:

The context makes it clear that the scientist’s idea was initially dismissed and seen as absurd or fanciful, indicating a negative perception. Although the idea proved valid later, “preposterous” here means it was considered ridiculous or laughable at first. “Groundbreaking” might seem tempting but reflects the final opinion, not the meaning of the word in the original context.

Example 2: Passage:

Though she had only recently joined the company, Priya’s *alacrity* in taking on new assignments impressed her managers. While others hesitated or procrastinated, she eagerly volunteered for tasks, often completing them ahead of deadlines. Her energy and enthusiasm created a ripple effect, inspiring even the most jaded team members to step up. It wasn’t just

speed; it was her attitude—positive, focused, and full of initiative—that made her a standout performer.

Question:

What does the word “alacrity” most likely mean in the passage?

- A. Anxiety
- B. Enthusiastic willingness
- C. Arrogance
- D. Efficiency

Correct Answer: B. Enthusiastic willingness

Explanation:

The sentence clearly describes how Priya eagerly volunteered and had a positive attitude. This aligns with the meaning of alacrity—not just willingness, but a cheerful, energetic willingness. “Efficiency” is close but misses the emotional enthusiasm that is central here.

Example 3: Passage:

The judge’s decision to release the defendant on bail was seen as a *contentious* move by the public. While the defense argued that the individual had strong ties to the community and no prior record, many felt that releasing someone accused of a violent crime was irresponsible. Protests erupted outside the courthouse, and social media was ablaze with criticism. The judge later explained her reasoning, citing precedent and constitutional protections, but the backlash did not subside. In legal circles, the debate continued, with scholars divided on the appropriateness of the decision.

Question:

In the context of the passage, “contentious” most nearly means:

- A. Generous
- B. Uninformed
- C. Controversial
- D. Compromised

Correct Answer: C. Controversial

Explanation:

The release sparked public outrage, protests, and debate. These are hallmarks of something being controversial, not generous or uninformed. “Contentious” here means likely to cause argument or disagreement.

Example 4: Passage:

Although initially hailed as a revolutionary leader, the president's recent policies were labeled *draconian* by both political opponents and civil rights activists. New laws imposed severe penalties for minor infractions, curtailed media freedoms, and granted sweeping powers to law enforcement. The justification, he claimed, was national security and public order. However, international watchdogs condemned the measures, warning that the nation was veering toward authoritarianism. The people, once hopeful, now watched with fear as their freedoms slowly eroded.

Question:

What is the meaning of “draconian” as used in the passage?

- A. Mild
- B. Inflexible
- C. Excessively harsh
- D. Revolutionary

Correct Answer: C. Excessively harsh

Explanation:

The laws are described as severe, limiting freedoms, and causing fear. The word “draconian” implies overly harsh or strict actions, especially in governance or punishment.

Example 5: Passage:

During the presentation, the speaker's *equivocation* was evident. When asked a direct question about the company's layoffs, she responded with vague references to “strategic restructuring” and “employee reallocation” without giving any firm details. Her answers, though eloquent, were filled with ambiguity. It became clear that she was avoiding transparency, hoping to satisfy the audience with polished language rather than clear facts. Attendees left the meeting confused and unsatisfied, uncertain of what had actually been said.

Question:

What does “equivocation” most likely mean in this context?

- A. Direct communication
- B. Dishonesty
- C. Complete transparency
- D. Evasion through ambiguity

Correct Answer: D. Evasion through ambiguity

Explanation:

The speaker is described as being vague and unclear, using polished but evasive language. Equivocation refers to using ambiguous expressions to mislead or avoid committing to something clearly.

PRACTICE EXERCISES

PASSAGE 1: Artificial Intelligence and Employment

As artificial intelligence continues to evolve, debates around its impact on employment intensify. While some experts assert that AI will eliminate routine jobs and lead to widespread unemployment, others argue that it will create new roles requiring advanced cognitive and technical skills. Historically, technological revolutions such as the Industrial Revolution have displaced certain jobs but simultaneously created others. The key difference now is the speed of transformation and the scale at which AI can automate tasks once thought to require human judgment. This shift demands urgent re-skilling of the workforce, especially in sectors vulnerable to automation. However, the challenge lies not only in training individuals but also in adapting educational and corporate systems fast enough to keep pace with these changes.

1. What is the main idea of the passage?

- A) AI will completely replace human workers.
- B) AI's rapid development requires urgent workforce adaptation.
- C) The Industrial Revolution was more disruptive than AI.
- D) Educational systems are responsible for job loss.

2. What can be inferred about the role of education in dealing with AI-driven changes?

- A) It is irrelevant in the current context.
- B) Education is struggling to keep up with technological change.
- C) Schools are already adapting rapidly to AI.
- D) Corporations are more responsible than educators.

3. What does the phrase “displaced certain jobs” most likely mean?

- A) Promoted jobs to higher positions
- B) Removed or replaced existing jobs
- C) Ignored some sectors
- D) Reassigned employees to new companies

PASSAGE 2: Social Media and Mental Health

Recent studies suggest a strong correlation between excessive use of social media platforms and increased levels of anxiety, depression, and loneliness among young adults. While social media offers connectivity and entertainment, its curated portrayal of idealized lifestyles often leads to unhealthy comparisons and feelings of inadequacy. Moreover, the constant stream of notifications and the need for validation through likes and comments can create a cycle of dependency and low self-worth. Experts warn that while it is unrealistic to expect a complete disengagement from digital platforms, there is a pressing need for digital literacy and balanced usage to preserve mental well-being.

1. What is the central idea of this passage?

- A) Young adults are not intelligent enough to use social media.
- B) Mental health professionals should ban social media.
- C) Excessive social media use may negatively affect mental health.
- D) Social media improves social confidence.

2. What can be inferred about the way social media affects users' self-image?

- A) It boosts self-esteem in most users.
- B) It helps people stay grounded.
- C) It eliminates the fear of missing out.
- D) It can lead to self-comparison and insecurity.

3. What does the word "curated" most likely mean in context?

- A) Random
- B) Selected carefully to show a specific image
- C) Automatically generated
- D) Authentic and unfiltered

4. Why does the author argue for "digital literacy"?

- A) To enable informed and healthy online behavior
- B) To reduce screen time in schools
- C) To increase marketing and advertising potential
- D) To help users create better filters

5. In the context of the passage, what does "portrayal" mean?

- A) A legal claim
- B) A public display
- C) A representation or depiction
- D) A financial estimate

PASSAGE 3: The Digital Divide and Education Equity

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed and, in many cases, exacerbated the digital divide—particularly in the field of education. As schools across the globe shifted to online platforms, students from lower-income households faced significant challenges in accessing reliable internet, functioning devices, and **conducive** learning environments. While some students transitioned smoothly to virtual classrooms, many others were left behind, unable to participate effectively due to technological or infrastructural barriers.

Governments and institutions responded with emergency interventions such as distributing laptops, offering subsidized internet, or broadcasting lessons through television and radio. While these measures provided temporary relief, they did little to address the deeper, systemic inequalities that underlie the digital divide. Access alone does not guarantee meaningful engagement; factors such as digital literacy, parental support, and the ability to self-regulate learning also play pivotal roles in student success.

Furthermore, the digital divide is not solely a matter of urban versus rural location or rich versus poor. It intersects with issues of gender, disability, and language, making it a multidimensional challenge. For instance, in many communities, girls may be less likely to have uninterrupted access to digital devices due to household responsibilities or cultural norms. Similarly, students with disabilities may struggle with platforms that lack accessible design.

As education increasingly incorporates digital tools even post-pandemic, the imperative now is to reframe the conversation—from merely closing the access gap to ensuring **digital equity**. This means designing inclusive, sustainable educational ecosystems that recognize the diversity of learners and the multiple dimensions of digital exclusion.

1. What is the central idea of the passage?

- A) Online learning has completely replaced traditional education.
- B) The government failed to provide any support to students during the pandemic.
- C) The pandemic revealed deep-rooted educational inequalities driven by digital access and inclusion.
- D) The digital divide has now been successfully resolved.

2. Which of the following best summarizes the author's main argument?

- A) Television and radio should replace online classes.
- B) Digital equity involves more than just providing internet and devices—it requires inclusive and systemic changes.
- C) Girls and rural students are the only ones affected.
- D) Digital learning should be banned in low-income regions.

3. What is the meaning of “conducive” as used in the sentence: “...functioning devices, and conducive learning environments”?

- A) Supportive or favorable
- B) Noisy and crowded
- C) Highly structured
- D) Culturally diverse

4. What does “digital equity” most likely refer to in this context?

- A) Giving every student a tablet
- B) Equal number of hours on the internet
- C) Fair and inclusive access to technology, support, and opportunities for all students
- D) Charging all students the same tuition fees

5. "While these measures provided temporary relief, they did little to address the deeper, systemic inequalities that underlie the digital divide."

What is the most appropriate synonym for the word "underlie" as used in the sentence?

- A) Oppose
- B) Delay
- C) Eliminate
- D) Support

PASSAGE 4: Urban Migration and Cultural Identity

Urban migration, particularly in developing nations, has reshaped both physical landscapes and cultural dynamics in profound ways. As people transition from rural to urban areas in search of better economic opportunities, they are not merely relocating geographically; they are also navigating a complex cultural shift. Traditional practices, regional dialects, and deeply rooted communal ways of life are often left behind in favor of the anonymity and fast-paced demands of city life. While cities offer modern infrastructure, diverse employment prospects, and a promise of upward mobility, these benefits come at a cultural cost. The homogenization of urban spaces can erode distinct cultural identities, creating a monocultural environment that often favors globalized norms over indigenous traditions. However, all is not lost. Many migrant communities form tight-knit ethnic enclaves, where languages, festivals, and customs are kept alive amidst the urban sprawl. These enclaves serve as cultural sanctuaries, offering a blend of continuity and adaptation. The broader challenge for society lies in fostering inclusive urban growth that values cultural diversity while accommodating modernization.

1. What is the main idea of the passage?

- A) Rural traditions are better than urban lifestyles.
- B) Migration leads to immediate economic prosperity.
- C) Urban migration affects both cultural identity and community structure.
- D) Urban life eliminates all traditional values.

2. What does the word "dilute" most likely mean in context?

- A) To preserve
- B) To weaken or diminish
- C) To enrich
- D) To intensify

3. What can be inferred about ethnic enclaves in cities?

- A) They help migrants maintain cultural practices.
- B) They isolate migrants from economic participation.
- C) They prevent migrants from learning the urban language.
- D) They are discouraged by urban planners.

4. What is a suitable synonym for "assimilation" as used in the passage?

- A) Rejection
- B) Distortion
- C) Integration
- D) Withdrawal

5. Which of the following is the best antonym of "homogenized" in this context?

- A) Blended
- B) Diverse
- C) Unified
- D) Filtered

PASSAGE 5: Automation and Human Creativity

The accelerating development of automation and artificial intelligence has prompted widespread debate about the future of work and human purpose. As machines increasingly handle routine, repetitive, and even analytical tasks, a new horizon emerges—one where human labor might be redirected toward more creative, strategic, and emotionally intelligent endeavors. Optimists argue that automation will liberate individuals from the **drudgery of monotonous work**, enabling them to explore roles that demand imagination, empathy, and innovation. However, this hopeful narrative often ignores critical realities. Not everyone has equal access to education, resources, or platforms that nurture such creative potential. Moreover, current education systems, **still rooted in industrial-age paradigms**, may struggle to equip students with the agility, curiosity, and collaborative skills needed for the jobs of tomorrow. In this context, automation is both a disruptor and a catalyst—threatening existing livelihoods while offering a chance to rethink societal priorities and redesign institutional frameworks that support lifelong learning and inclusive innovation.

1. What can be inferred about the author's view of education?

- A) It may not be fully prepared to foster future-ready skills.
- B) It adequately trains people for the future.
- C) It emphasizes only automation.
- D) It is becoming obsolete.

2. What does "paradigms" mean in:

"education systems, still rooted in industrial-age paradigms"?

- A) Outdated machines
- B) Standardized schedules
- C) Physical structures
- D) Established models or frameworks

3. What is the main idea of the passage?

- A) Automation only creates unemployment.
- B) Creativity cannot be taught.
- C) Automation may free humans for creative work, but equitable access is crucial.
- D) The education system is flawless.

4. What can be inferred about the author's view on the emotional and strategic roles in future workspaces?

- A) They will decline due to technological advancements.
- B) They are undervalued and unnecessary.
- C) They will be outsourced to developing countries.
- D) They will become central as machines take over analytical tasks.

5. What does the word "drudgery" most likely mean in the sentence:

"will liberate individuals from the drudgery of monotonous work"?

- A) Repetitive and tedious labor
- B) Dangerous and physical labor
- C) High-paying work
- D) Freelance work

PASSAGE 6:

In the wake of rapid urbanization, cities have become epicenters of economic growth, innovation, and cultural exchange. However, this progress often conceals a troubling

paradox: the very urban environments that offer opportunity are also becoming increasingly unlivable for many. Congested roads, unaffordable housing, shrinking green spaces, and deteriorating mental health conditions paint a picture of cities struggling to sustain their populations. While urban planners tout the virtues of “smart cities” — driven by data, efficiency, and automation — critics argue that these visions often prioritize technology over the needs of the people who inhabit them. The failure to integrate inclusive design, affordable infrastructure, and genuine community participation threatens to deepen existing inequalities. A city may boast high-speed internet and automated traffic lights, yet still be inhospitable to those without digital access or stable income. The challenge, therefore, is not merely to modernize, but to humanize — to ensure that technological progress enhances rather than excludes, and that cities become not just smart, but also just.

1. What does the word “paradox” most nearly mean as used in the sentence: “this progress often conceals a troubling paradox”?

- A) A situation that seems contradictory but reveals a deeper truth
- B) A popular belief without evidence
- C) A commonly accepted principle
- D) A forecast based on statistics

2. What can be inferred about the author's attitude toward current “smart city” models?

- A) They are universally beneficial and promote equality.
- B) They are impractical due to technological limitations.
- C) They risk ignoring social issues in favor of technological upgrades.
- D) They are already solving most urban problems.

3. According to the passage, what is the major flaw in the current approach to urban development?

- A) Too much reliance on foreign investment
- B) Emphasis on technology at the expense of inclusivity
- C) Poor architectural design in city buildings
- D) Uncontrollable migration patterns

4. Why does the author mention “automated traffic lights” and “high-speed internet”?

- A) To show how technological development makes life easier
- B) To criticize the overuse of automation in villages
- C) To illustrate superficial improvements that do not address deeper issues
- D) To highlight features that should be removed from cities

5. What central issue is the author addressing in this passage?

- A) The danger of artificial intelligence
- B) The imbalance between urban growth and quality of life
- C) The increase of rural-to-urban migration
- D) The benefits of digitizing transportation systems

PASSAGE 7:

Throughout history, the preservation of cultural heritage has served as a mirror reflecting a society's values, identities, and evolution. Yet in recent decades, this heritage—be it tangible monuments or intangible traditions—has faced threats not only from war and natural disasters but also from globalization and commercial exploitation. While global connectivity offers unprecedented access to diverse cultures, it also accelerates homogenization, where local customs are diluted or replaced in the name of modernity. In many cities, **heritage buildings are razed to make way for malls**, and traditional crafts vanish as industrial goods flood the markets. Governments often cite economic development as justification, positioning culture as a relic of the past rather than a living, evolving force. But to reduce culture to nostalgia is to deny its role in shaping resilient, cohesive communities. True preservation requires more than safeguarding artifacts—it demands an appreciation of heritage as a dynamic resource that informs present choices and future directions.

1. What is the primary message of the passage?

- A) Heritage is only about ancient monuments and crafts.
- B) Economic growth must come before cultural preservation.
- C) Cultural heritage must be viewed as a dynamic force that guides the present and future.
- D) Museums are the best way to safeguard culture.

2. What does the word “raze” mean as used in:

"heritage buildings are razed to make way for malls"?

- A) Decorated
- B) Painted
- C) Renovated partially
- D) Destroyed completely

3 .What does the passage imply about the role of governments in cultural preservation?

- A) They are actively promoting all forms of heritage equally.
- B) They view cultural preservation as equally important as economic gain.
- C) They often sacrifice heritage in the pursuit of development.
- D) They fund grassroots cultural organizations generously.

4.What does the word “homogenization” most likely mean in the context:

"it also accelerates homogenization, where local customs are diluted or replaced in the name of modernity."?

- A) Uniformity or loss of distinctiveness
- B) Preservation of unique identities
- C) Strengthening of cultural differences
- D) The invention of new languages

5. Why does the author argue that culture should not be “reduced to nostalgia”?

- A) Because nostalgia is linked with emotional trauma.
- B) Because culture only belongs in textbooks.
- C) Because culture continues to shape communities and has relevance today.
- D) Because nostalgia leads to political instability.

PASSAGE 8:

Climate change is no longer a distant threat lurking in scientific models—it is a lived reality disrupting ecosystems, economies, and societies across the globe. Rising sea levels are displacing coastal populations, while erratic weather patterns are jeopardizing food security in regions already vulnerable to poverty. Yet, amid these growing crises, global responses remain fragmented, often shaped more by political convenience than scientific urgency. Developed nations, historically the largest emitters of greenhouse gases, have pledged

reductions but frequently fall short in implementation, shifting the burden onto developing countries that lack both the resources and the infrastructure to adapt. Meanwhile, international conferences produce lofty declarations but limited actionable outcomes. What complicates matters further is the tension between economic growth and **environmental stewardship**—governments fear that bold climate action might compromise national competitiveness. Still, ignoring the crisis could prove far more costly in the long run. The real challenge lies not in identifying solutions—many already exist—but in **galvanizing the collective will to implement them** equitably, swiftly, and with accountability. Without a shared global commitment, the window for meaningful intervention continues to narrow.

1. What is the meaning of the word “galvanizing” in the sentence:

"The real challenge lies not in identifying solutions... but in galvanizing the collective will to implement them"?

- A) Ignoring
- B) Criticizing
- C) Stimulating into action
- D) Slowing down

2. Why does the author mention that developed nations often “fall short in implementation”?

- A) To show that developing nations are more responsible
- B) To argue that wealthy nations face more natural disasters
- C) To suggest developed nations should stop climate agreements
- D) To highlight the gap between promises and action by major emitters

3. What is the central message of the passage?

- A) Climate change solutions are unrealistic and expensive
- B) Climate change is exaggerated by the media
- C) The world needs urgent, coordinated action to address climate change equitably
- D) Only developing nations are affected by climate change

4. What does the phrase “environmental stewardship” most likely mean in context?

- A) Protection and responsible management of the environment
- B) Ownership of land by the government
- C) Trade regulation involving eco-products
- D) Banning fossil fuels entirely

5. Why does the author say “the window for meaningful intervention continues to narrow”?

- A) Because current strategies are too expensive
- B) Because irreversible environmental damage is approaching
- C) Because renewable technologies are too limited
- D) Because only developed countries are acting on climate

PASSAGE 9:

In the digital era, the concept of privacy has undergone a profound transformation. Once considered a fundamental right tied to physical spaces and personal property, privacy now operates in a fluid, often ambiguous realm where individuals trade personal data for convenience, connectivity, and customization. Social media platforms, search engines, and smart devices harvest enormous amounts of user data—sometimes with consent, frequently without full understanding. While companies argue that data collection improves user experience and drives innovation, critics warn of a growing surveillance culture where behavior is tracked, predicted, and even manipulated. **The commodification of personal information has blurred the lines between user and product**, with algorithms shaping not just advertisements but opinions, emotions, and even political beliefs. Legislative efforts like the GDPR in Europe represent attempts to restore control to users, yet enforcement remains inconsistent, and loopholes abound. Ultimately, the challenge lies in navigating a digital landscape where **technological advancement continually outpaces ethical and legal safeguards**, forcing societies to redefine what it means to be private in an **age of perpetual exposure**.

1. What is the meaning of “commodification” in the sentence:

"The commodification of personal information has blurred the lines between user and product"?

- A) Legal regulation
- B) Destruction of information
- C) Treating something as a marketable product
- D) Deletion of personal identity

2. What is the central idea of the passage?

- A) Social media helps protect personal data
- B) The definition and protection of privacy are evolving and increasingly complex in the digital age
- C) Privacy laws are too strict and hinder innovation
- D) People no longer value their privacy

3. What does the word “perpetual” most likely mean in the phrase:

"an age of perpetual exposure"?

- A) Never ending
- B) Controlled
- C) Temporary
- D) Accidental

4. What is implied by the statement:

"technological advancement continually outpaces ethical and legal safeguards"?

- A) Tech companies are slowing down innovation
- B) Laws and ethics are deliberately ignored by users
- C) Governments invest more in tech than in education
- D) Technology evolves faster than societies can regulate it

5. What can be inferred about how companies justify data collection?

- A) They deny collecting personal data altogether
- B) They claim it enhances services and user satisfaction
- C) They admit it's for government surveillance
- D) They consider it a minor ethical concern

PASSAGE 10: The Paradox of Choice in the Digital Age

In today’s hyperconnected world, individuals are presented with an unprecedented array of choices—what to buy, what to watch, where to travel, whom to follow, and even what values to adopt. While this abundance of options may appear to signal freedom and empowerment, psychologists warn of an underlying paradox: the more choices we face, the more likely we are to experience anxiety, indecision, and dissatisfaction. Decision fatigue, a phenomenon whereby repeated decision-making depletes cognitive resources, is becoming increasingly prevalent. Furthermore, curated online environments, driven by algorithms and personalization, create an **illusion of infinite variety** while subtly steering users toward preselected content. This curated reality often reinforces existing preferences, limits exposure to differing viewpoints, and traps users in echo chambers. Critics argue that digital choice is not synonymous with true autonomy but rather a subtle manipulation of agency disguised as freedom. To navigate this paradox, experts advocate for developing digital **discernment**—conscious awareness of how platforms shape perception—and prioritizing meaningful choices over endless ones.

1. What is the main idea of the passage?

- A) Technology improves mental resilience
- B) Excessive choice online leads to empowerment
- C) Too many digital options can lead to dissatisfaction and reduced autonomy
- D) Online platforms discourage decision-making altogether

2. What does the word “discernment” most likely mean in the context of the last paragraph?

- A) Legal restrictions on digital content
- B) The ability to make informed and thoughtful decisions
- C) Avoiding all social media interactions
- D) Freedom from cognitive effort

3. The phrase “illusion of infinite variety” implies that:

- A) Apparent diversity in content is actually limited and controlled
- B) Platforms offer equal opportunities to all opinions

- C) Algorithms increase creativity
- D) Users never see the same content twice

4. What is a suggested solution to the paradox of choice?

- A) Rely more on algorithmic recommendations
- B) Avoid using technology completely
- C) Choose quantity over quality
- D) Practice conscious awareness and prioritize meaningful decisions

5. Based on the passage, what is a major consequence of decision fatigue?

- A) Increased curiosity and awareness
- B) Faster response times to choices
- C) Reduced ability to make thoughtful decisions
- D) Complete disengagement from digital media

PASSAGE 11

Seeking a competitive advantage, some professional service firms (for example, firms providing advertising, accounting, or health care services) have considered offering unconditional guarantees of satisfaction. Such guarantees specify what clients can expect and what the firm will do if it fails to fulfill these expectations.

Particularly with first-time clients, an unconditional guarantee can be an effective marketing tool if the client is very cautious, the firm's fees are high, the negative consequences of bad service are grave, or business is difficult to obtain through referrals and word-of-mouth.

However, an unconditional guarantee can sometimes hinder marketing efforts. With its implication that failure is possible, the guarantee may, **paradoxically**, cause clients to doubt the service firm's ability to deliver the promised level of service. It may conflict with a firm's desire to appear sophisticated, or may even suggest that a firm is begging for business. In legal and health care services, it may mislead clients by suggesting that lawsuits or medical procedures will have guaranteed outcomes. Indeed, professional service firms with outstanding reputations and performance to match have little to gain from offering unconditional guarantees. And any firm that implements an unconditional guarantee without undertaking a **commensurate**

commitment to quality of service is merely employing a potentially costly marketing gimmick.

1. Which of the following best captures the main idea of the passage?

- A) Offering unconditional guarantees is an outdated practice in professional service industries.
- B) Unconditional guarantees are universally beneficial and enhance client trust.
- C) Unconditional guarantees can serve as effective marketing tools in some contexts, but may be counterproductive or misleading in others.
- D) Professional service firms should always avoid making promises they cannot keep to preserve their brand value.

2. In the sentence “...a commensurate commitment to quality of service...”, which of the following is the best replacement for "commensurate" without changing the meaning?

- A) Equal
- B) Lavish
- C) Sporadic
- D) Conditional

3. Which of the following words is closest in meaning to the opposite of “paradoxically” as used in the passage?

- A) Surprisingly
- B) Contradictorily
- C) Expectedly
- D) Ironically

4. Based on the passage, which of the following can be inferred about firms with outstanding reputations?

- A) They rely heavily on advertising and promotional gimmicks.
- B) They typically do not need to use unconditional guarantees to attract clients.
- C) Their success primarily stems from unconditional service guarantees.
- D) They are more likely to fail in delivering consistent service levels.

5. Why might an unconditional guarantee appear contradictory or problematic in legal or healthcare services, according to the passage?

- A) Because clients may already have high trust in these professions.
- B) Because guarantees may lead clients to expect outcomes that cannot ethically or practically be promised.
- C) Because legal and health care services usually offer refunds as a norm.
- D) Because such industries rely solely on referrals and word-of-mouth for growth.

PASSAGE 12

The piranha is a much-maligned fish. Most people think that this is a deadly creature that swarms through rivers and creeks of the Amazon rainforest looking for victims to tear apart. And woe betide anyone unlucky enough to be in the same water as a shoal of piranhas. It takes only a few minutes for the vicious piranhas to reduce someone to a mere skeleton. The truth is that the **piranha is really a much more nuanced animal than the mindless killer** depicted in the media. In fact, piranhas are a group made up of approximately twelve different species. Each piranha species occupies its own ecological niche. One type of piranha takes chunks out of the fins of other fish. Another type eats fruit falling from trees into the river. Each piranha species plays a unique role in the ecology of the rainforest floodplains. So, what should you do next time you hear someone talking about the —deadly piranha? You can remind them that the piranha is not always the notorious killer fish that the tough, muscular heroes of popular nature television shows would have us believe.

1. What is the main purpose of the passage?

- A) To describe the various habitats of piranhas in the Amazon.
- B) To argue that piranhas are misunderstood and not as dangerous as commonly believed.
- C) To explain how piranhas attack humans and animals in packs.
- D) To support the media's depiction of piranhas as vicious predators.

2. What can be reasonably inferred from the author's tone and perspective on media portrayals of piranhas?

- A) The author believes media portrayals are scientifically accurate.
- B) The author respects the media's role in wildlife education.

- C) The author finds media portrayals of piranhas exaggerated and misleading.
- D) The author is indifferent toward how the media presents piranhas.

3. In the sentence “...the piranha is really a much more nuanced animal than the mindless killer depicted in the media,” which word could best replace "nuanced" without changing the meaning?

- A) Complicated
- B) Refined
- C) Dangerous
- D) Multidimensional

4. Based on the passage, what is the author likely to think about people who believe piranhas are mindless killers?

- A) They are well-informed about rainforest ecosystems.
- B) They rely too much on dramatized depictions rather than scientific facts.
- C) They understand that piranhas are vital to river ecosystems.
- D) They likely live in areas frequently attacked by piranhas.

5. What does the phrase “woe betide anyone” in the sentence “And woe betide anyone unlucky enough to be in the same water as a shoal of piranhas” most nearly mean?

- A) Serious trouble awaits anyone who is near piranhas.
- B) It is lucky to be near piranhas in the wild.
- C) People are encouraged to swim in piranhas.
- D) Scientists often study piranhas at close range.

PASSAGE 13

While delivering the Waheeduddin Khan Memorial Lecture on ‘Beyond India @75: Growth, Inclusion and Sustainability’ at the Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS) on Thursday, Prof. Dev said that there are issues like geopolitical challenges with a new bipolar world — USA/China — emerging in the recent past with old bipolar world — USA/Russia, and international trade and protection, and technologies like automation, robotics, 3D printing, digitization and Artificial Intelligence and increasing inequalities.

Explaining various issues that would impact the economic growth of India, Prof. Dev said that the government has mentioned that India would achieve \$ 5 trillion economy by 2024 but it would take another four to five years to reach that. Informing that export of goods has completely stagnated with annual growth rate of almost 0% during 2012-19 while the growth rate of service exports declined noticeably to 5.9%. “India accounts for less than 2% of the world export manufacturers while the share of China stands at 13%”, he commented.

Referring to credit in the national economy, he said that it was only 50% of GDP compared to 100% in many other countries. He stressed the need to keep credit flowing to all categories of economic agents – firms and households. On agriculture, he said that the current policies are still based on the ‘deficit’ mindset of the 1960s and the procurement, subsidies and water policies are biased towards rice and wheat.

“Diversification of cropping pattern towards millets, pulses, oil seeds and horticulture is needed for more equal distribution of water, **sustainable and climate resilient agriculture**”, said Prof. Dev, adding that agriculture should change towards high value production, better **remunerative** prices and farm income.

1. Based on the passage, what can be inferred about India’s current approach to agriculture?

- A) It is well-diversified and focused on high-value crops.
- B) It is modern, technology-driven, and climate-resilient.
- C) It remains dependent on outdated practices favoring limited crop types.
- D) It benefits equally from water and subsidy distribution across all crops.

2. In the sentence “...towards high value production, better remunerative prices and farm income...”, which word can best replace “remunerative” without changing the meaning?

- A) Symbolic
- B) Predictable
- C) Lucrative
- D) Modest

3. Which of the following words is closest in meaning to the opposite of "sustainable" as used in “sustainable and climate resilient agriculture”?

- A) Fragile
- B) Ecological
- C) Viable
- D) Long-lasting

4. What does Prof. Dev's comparison of India's credit-to-GDP ratio with other countries suggest?

- A) India's credit access is proportionate to global standards.
- B) There is insufficient credit flow in India's economy, which could hamper growth.
- C) India's economic agents are over-leveraged .
- D) High levels of credit are a threat to India's sustainability goals.

5. What is the primary concern highlighted by Prof. Dev in his lecture?

- A) Promoting rice and wheat as the backbone of Indian agriculture
- B) Outlining systemic and structural challenges that could hinder India's goal of achieving a \$5 trillion economy
- C) Emphasizing the role of Artificial Intelligence in economic growth
- D) Celebrating India's progress in global export manufacturing

PASSAGE 14

Any modern musical performance is **almost impossible to countenance** without the presence of an electric guitar. Most of the time it is a solid-body electric guitar, and while they seem ubiquitous and obvious now, that was not always the case. First invented in the early 1930s, the first electric guitar simply amplified existing guitars. No one thought of it as a new instrument, but merely a way to put a microphone inside of the guitar. Using electronic pickups that went straight to an amplifier, the sound of the guitar could be broadcast over loud jazz bands with drums and horns. At the time, most everyone believed an electric guitar still had to look like an acoustic guitar, and all models featured a hollow body acoustic shape that would resonate with the sound of the guitar strings. In all actuality, the only necessity for an electric guitar is an electric pickup to capture their small vibrations. An electric guitar does not, and never did, need a

space to resonate the sound of the strings. Instead, it could be a simple block, with the fretboard, strings, and a pickup attached to a piece of lumber. This method is exactly what the famous guitar player and maker Les Paul did with his “Log”, but Les was just one solid piece of wood, Paul would attach two wings to it that made the guitar look like a hollow body.

Despite Les Paul’s innovations, few manufacturers made a marketable solid-body guitar. Rickenbacker and Bigsby were both companies that made limited productions of solid-body electric guitars. Leo Fender was the first luthier to make a popular, mass-market electric solid-body guitar. Leo Fender started his career by working on radios and other small electronic devices but developed an interest in building guitars. Immediately after World War II, big bands were considered antiquated, and small honky-tonk and boogie-woogie combos wanted cheaper, sturdier, and better intonated guitars, that they could play faster and louder.

Leo Fender obliged with his Esquire guitar. Looking completely unlike any guitar made before, and being extremely thin, with no resonating panels, Fender’s guitar was revolutionary. While Fender continued to tweak it through the years, one thing remains the same: the general shape of the guitar. Renamed first the Broadcaster, then the more famous Telecaster, the silhouette of Fender’s Esquire is still a popular choice among musicians today

1. What is the central theme of the passage?

- A) Les Paul’s dominance in the electric guitar industry
- B) The transition of the electric guitar from hollow-body amplification to mass-market solid-body innovation
- C) The decline of jazz and rise of rock music after World War II
- D) The manufacturing process of electric guitars

2. What does the phrase “almost impossible to countenance” mean as used in the opening line of the passage?

- A) Hard to imagine or accept
- B) Inappropriate in modern culture
- C) Too difficult to replicate
- D) Highly desirable and necessary

3. What can be inferred about early attitudes toward solid-body electric guitars?

- A) They were embraced for their superior sound quality.
- B) They were viewed as aesthetically and functionally superior to traditional guitars.
- C) They were considered more expensive and luxurious than acoustic guitars. D)
- They were met with skepticism and required disguises to look more traditional.

4. Which word is closest to the opposite of “ubiquitous” as used in “they seem ubiquitous and obvious now”?

- A) Rare
- B) Notable
- C) Trendy
- D) Massive

5. Why did smaller musical combos after WWII prefer the guitars Leo Fender created?

- A) They were made of premium wood and had a traditional look.
- B) They were quiet and subtle, ideal for background music.
- C) They were affordable, durable, and better suited for loud, fast music.
- D) They mimicked the sound of brass instruments.

PASSAGE 15

In recent years, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has rapidly evolved from a theoretical concept into an influential force across industries—from healthcare to finance, and even creative arts. Proponents of AI argue that machines can outperform humans in tasks that require speed, precision, and data processing. Algorithms can now detect cancer in medical scans with remarkable accuracy, drive cars autonomously, and even compose music that is indistinguishable from that written by humans.

However, despite these advancements, many experts caution against **equating artificial intelligence with human intelligence**. While AI can simulate specific cognitive tasks, it lacks emotional awareness, ethical reasoning, and consciousness—traits deeply rooted in the human experience. Critics argue that AI operates based on patterns and predictions, not

understanding. For instance, a chatbot may produce grammatically correct responses, but it does not grasp the emotional nuance behind a user's distress.

The real question is not whether AI will replace humans, but how it can augment human capabilities while maintaining ethical safeguards. **As AI becomes more entrenched in decision-making processes**, from hiring employees to granting parole, there is a growing need to ensure transparency, accountability, and fairness. The challenge is not in the machine's intelligence, but in humanity's wisdom in deploying it.

1. What is the primary focus of the passage?

- A) To highlight the dominance of AI over human intelligence in all domains
- B) To explain how AI is replacing humans in emotional and ethical reasoning
- C) To examine the rise of AI, its capabilities, and the limitations compared to human intelligence
- D) To describe the technical architecture behind AI programming

2. Based on the passage, why is the author skeptical of AI being compared to human intelligence?

- A) AI is still in its early development stage
- B) AI does not have feelings or moral understanding like humans do
- C) AI is unable to perform complex calculations
- D) AI is too expensive to be adopted widely

3. What is the best replacement for the word "entrenched" as used in the sentence "As AI becomes more entrenched in decision-making processes..."?

- A) Evaluated
- B) Ignored
- C) Established
- D) Excluded

4. What can be inferred about the author's stance on the future of AI?

- A) AI should be used thoughtfully to complement, not substitute, human decision-making.

- B) AI is dangerous and should be stopped immediately.
- C) AI will likely replace human workers in every industry.
- D) AI will eventually gain emotional awareness and ethical reasoning.

5. **What does the phrase** “equating artificial intelligence with human intelligence” **most nearly mean?**

- A) Programming robots to think like animals
- B) Replacing human workers with machines
- C) Considering AI to be as capable and complex as human thought
- D) Measuring the speed of computers against the brain

UNIT 6

Group Discussions and Analytical Thinking



In today's fast-paced professional and academic environments, group discussions have evolved into more than just assessment tools—they have become dynamic spaces for exchanging ideas, solving problems collaboratively, and demonstrating one's analytical and interpersonal skills. Whether in a campus placement setting, a corporate brainstorming session, or a leadership workshop, the ability to speak effectively in a group, listen actively, and think critically is a vital competency.

This unit, Group Discussions and Analytical Thinking, explores the foundational and advanced elements of participating successfully in group conversations. While strong verbal communication is essential, it is not enough. Effective participants must also show emotional intelligence, clarity of thought, respect for others' views, and the ability to frame ideas logically and persuasively. The chapter provides insights into understanding topics, structuring responses, supporting viewpoints with evidence, and demonstrating leadership without overpowering others. It also introduces key techniques such as KWA, SPELT, POP

BEANS, VAP, and SCAMPER for idea generation, and frameworks like SWOT and PEST for structured analysis.

Furthermore, the unit emphasizes professionalism - handling disagreements with tact, summarizing discussions for clarity, and staying focused within time constraints. Group discussions offer a real-time platform to showcase your ability to think on your feet, contribute meaningfully, and work as part of a team. Through this chapter, learners will not only understand the mechanics of group discussions but also develop the analytical mindset and soft skills needed to excel in diverse professional settings.

1. Understanding the Topic and Framing Your Viewpoint

A successful group discussion begins with a clear understanding of the topic and a well-structured viewpoint. Participants must first identify the type of discussion - is it seeking opinions, evaluating a problem, or analysing a situation? Once the nature is understood, participants should take a moment to organize their thoughts and determine their position. A strong viewpoint begins with a concise stance and is supported by two to three clear arguments or examples. This initial framework helps participants present their thoughts confidently and coherently, setting the stage for meaningful contribution. The ability to frame a viewpoint demonstrates clarity of thought, preparation, and focus - skills that are highly valued in professional and academic settings.

Steps to Frame a Strong Viewpoint:

Read or listen to the topic carefully.

Clarify if it's fact-based, opinion-based, or a problem-solution type.

Ask yourself: What do I know? What do I think? What can I say about this?

Begin with a clear stance and provide 2–3 supporting ideas.

Example:

1. Topic: Should AI Replace Human Teachers?

Viewpoint:

No, AI should not replace human teachers, though it can assist them.

Support: AI lacks emotional intelligence and cannot adapt to students' moods or learning challenges the way a human can. Moreover, teachers build personal connections and motivate students in ways machines cannot replicate.

2. Topic: Is Climate Change a Bigger Threat Than War?

Viewpoint:

Yes, climate change is a bigger long-term threat than war.

Support: It affects every country, regardless of borders, and has the power to destabilize economies, cause mass displacement, and damage ecosystems permanently.

2. Active Listening

Active listening is an essential component of productive group discussions. It goes beyond simply hearing words—it involves giving full attention to the speaker, acknowledging their points, and responding thoughtfully. This can be done through verbal affirmations like “I agree,” “That’s an interesting point,” or non-verbal cues like nodding and maintaining eye contact. Paraphrasing or summarizing what another participant has said before offering your view shows respect and ensures that your response is relevant. Active listening also helps avoid repetition and misunderstandings while fostering a collaborative atmosphere. By listening attentively, participants can engage more effectively, respond more meaningfully, and contribute to a constructive dialogue.

Active Listening Techniques:

Maintain eye contact with the speaker.

Nod or use short phrases like “I see,” “That’s true,” to show engagement.

Summarize or paraphrase a point before responding to show you’ve understood.

Avoid interrupting.

Practice:

Listen to a peer’s argument and repeat the main point before adding your opinion.

3. Idea Generation Techniques (KWA, SPELT, POP BEANS, VAP, SCAMPER)

In time-bound discussions, the ability to generate ideas quickly and from various perspectives is crucial. Several frameworks help stimulate and organize thoughts effectively. The KWA technique involves identifying the Key words in a topic, expanding those Words into related themes, and using that to shape your Approach in the discussion. SPELT allows you to analyse a topic through Social, Political, Economic, Legal, and Technological lenses. POP BEANS is a creative method where you explore People, Objects, Places, Behaviours, Events, Activities, Nature, and Situations to draw out diverse ideas. VAP focuses on understanding the perspectives of all affected stakeholders, encouraging insight into their needs, concerns, and real-world impact. SCAMPER helps in innovation by prompting you to Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, put to another use, Eliminate, or Reverse elements of a concept. These techniques train the mind to explore a topic holistically and think on one’s feet—an invaluable skill in professional environments.

Generating ideas quickly and meaningfully during a group discussion can be challenging, especially under time constraints. The following five techniques are powerful tools that help participants think from different perspectives, organize their thoughts, and contribute original insights.

I.KWA – Key Words Approach

KWA stands for Key Words Approach. A simple yet powerful method to generate ideas, structure thoughts, and contribute meaningfully to Group Discussions. It focuses on identifying important words or phrases in the topic and using them as the foundation for your arguments.

Step	What It Means	How to Use It in GD
K – Key	Identify the key word(s) in the topic	Pick 2–3 important words that capture the core of the topic.
W – Words	Expand the key words into related themes	Think of associated terms, implications, and areas like economy, society, technology.
A – Approach	Build your viewpoint using the expanded words	Use the expanded meanings to form structured arguments, examples, and perspectives.

Example Topic: *Electric Vehicles in India*

- **Key Word 1:** Electric - Innovation, Battery, Charging, Sustainability
- **Key Word 2:** Vehicles - Transportation, Ownership, Affordability, Performance
- **Key Word 3:** India - Population, Infrastructure, Government policy, Urban-Rural divide

Sample Answer:

"Let's break the topic using key words. 'Electric' leads us to consider sustainability and technology - EVs reduce emissions and rely on battery innovation. 'Vehicles' remind us of ownership costs, performance, and comparison with petrol vehicles. And 'India' brings in the real challenge: infrastructure gaps, economic diversity, and public awareness. So, while EVs are promising, widespread adoption will depend on charging stations, affordability, and tailored policy implementation."

II. SPELT – Social, Political, Economic, Legal, Technological

This framework helps explore the broader impact of a topic.

Lens	Guiding Question	Sample Ideas
Social	How does the topic affect people and communities?	Changes in lifestyle, health, public opinion.
Political	What are the government's roles or responses?	Policies, regulations, party views.
Economic	What is the economic impact?	Cost, savings, job creation/loss, business growth.
Legal	Are there legal implications or laws involved?	Copyright laws, labor rights, bans, environmental regulation.
Technological	What innovations or technology are involved?	AI, automation, green energy, internet tools, surveillance.

Example Topic: Remote Work

Social: Work-life balance improved for some, isolation for others.

Political: Govt support for digital infrastructure.

Economic: Reduced office costs, internet expenses up.

Legal: Labor law reforms needed.

Technological: Dependence on Zoom, cybersecurity risks.

III. POP BEANS – People, Objects, Places, Behaviours, Events, Activities, Nature, Situations

A creative thinking tool, especially helpful for abstract or general topics.

Element	What to Explore	Sample Interpretation (Topic: Plastic Ban)
People	Who is affected? Who benefits or loses?	Shopkeepers, consumers, policymakers.
Objects	What things are involved?	Plastic bags, paper alternatives, carry baskets.
Places	Where is it happening or relevant?	Cities, rural areas, coastal zones.
Behaviours	How are people acting differently?	Shift to eco-conscious buying, protests, compliance issues.

Element	What to Explore	Sample Interpretation (Topic: Plastic Ban)
Events	What incidents or trends are linked?	Earth Day campaigns, public bans, clean-up drives.
Activities	What actions or jobs are changing?	Packaging, delivery, waste management.
Nature	What's the environmental link?	Marine life protection, microplastics, waste reduction.
Situations	What specific problems or conflicts exist?	Enforcement challenges, cost of alternatives, resistance from industries.

IV. VAP – Viewpoint of Affected Party

This model focuses on understanding the perspectives of all stakeholders who are directly or indirectly impacted by an issue.

Aspect	Description	Sample Application (Topic: Surveillance Cameras in Schools)
Identify Parties	Who are the stakeholders affected by the topic?	Students, parents, teachers, school management, local community.
Assess Impact	How is each group positively or negatively affected?	Students: feel safer but also under pressure; Parents: reassured about safety; Teachers: supported in discipline but under scrutiny.
Perspective Analysis	What are the viewpoints of each group based on their needs and concerns?	Students: privacy concerns; Parents: safety-first approach; Teachers: balance between safety and autonomy.

VAP helps participants consider the emotional, ethical, and practical implications from multiple stakeholder viewpoints, making discussions more inclusive and balanced.

V. SCAMPER – Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, Put to Other Use, Eliminate, Reverse

Originally a product design tool, SCAMPER is useful for generating **creative solutions** or alternatives in discussions.

Action	What to Ask	Example (Topic: Public Transport Improvement)
Substitute	What can be replaced with something better?	Electric buses instead of diesel.
Action	What to Ask	Example (Topic: Public Transport Improvement)
Combine	What can be merged to make it more effective?	Combine ticketing for metro and buses.
Adapt	What ideas from other areas can be applied here?	Use GPS tracking like food delivery for buses.
Modify	Can it be redesigned or altered for better results?	Redesign seating for more standing space.
Put to Use	Can existing resources be repurposed?	Old railway stations as transport hubs.
Eliminate	What can be removed to simplify or reduce cost?	Remove manual ticket booths to cut staffing costs.
Reverse	Can roles or processes be flipped to improve efficiency?	Instead of passengers waiting, buses notify users when near their stop.

Summary Table: Quick Reference

Technique	Best For	Focus
KWA	Framing personal knowledge and direction	Known facts, curiosity, assumptions
SPELT	Analysing broad societal impact	Structured analysis of external domains
POP BEANS	Generating ideas from varied real-world cues	Everyday entities, events, and settings
VAP	Considering perspectives of stakeholders	Viewpoint of Affected Party
SCAMPER	Creative problem-solving and innovation	Changing or improving existing models

4. Maintaining a Balanced Tone

Tone is the emotional undercurrent of your speech, and in group discussions, maintaining a balanced tone is critical. A calm, respectful, and confident tone helps convey ideas without appearing aggressive or dismissive. Even when disagreeing, participants should use polite and inclusive language, such as “I have a slightly different view...” or “That’s an interesting perspective, but I would like to add...” Harsh or sarcastic tones can create tension, derail the discussion, and damage group dynamics. A balanced tone reflects emotional intelligence, self-regulation, and professionalism, all of which contribute to more productive and inclusive discussions.

- Speak with clarity and calmness.
- Avoid sarcasm, mockery, or emotional outbursts.
- Respect differing opinions.
- Use neutral, diplomatic language:
Instead of “You’re wrong,” say “I see it differently because...”

Helpful Phrases for Polite Disagreement

You may use these templates to help rephrase your sentences:

- “That’s an interesting perspective, but have we considered...”
- “I understand your point, though I interpret it a bit differently...”
- “May I offer an alternative view?”
- “Perhaps we can explore this from another angle.”
- “Let’s revisit this idea with a few modifications in mind.”

5. Using Facts and Examples to Support Arguments

Arguments supported by relevant facts and real-world examples are more persuasive and credible. Facts add substance to your viewpoint, while examples help the listener visualize your point. Whether it’s data from a research study, statistics from a report, or an anecdote from your own experience, these supporting tools anchor your ideas. However, it’s important to keep them concise and relevant to avoid losing the listener’s attention. Citing sources or mentioning the origin of your data, when possible, adds further credibility. Well-supported arguments demonstrate not only preparation but also analytical depth and awareness of current issues.

- Back up claims with statistics, real-world examples, or credible studies.
- Keep examples short but relevant.

- Cite sources if possible: “According to a WHO report...”

Example:

Topic: "Is online education as effective as traditional classroom learning?"

Viewpoint:

Yes, online education can be as effective as traditional learning when designed and delivered properly.

Supporting Argument with Fact and Example:

According to a 2020 report by the World Economic Forum, students in online learning environments retain 25–60% more material compared to 8–10% in physical classrooms, mainly due to flexibility and self-paced learning.

For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, I took an online course in Python programming. The recorded lectures, instant access to digital resources, and ability to review sessions at my own pace significantly enhanced my understanding—something I found harder in time-bound classroom settings.

6. Managing Disagreements Professionally

Disagreements are natural and often necessary in group discussions, but they must be handled with tact and respect. The goal is to critique the idea, not the individual. Professional disagreement involves acknowledging another person’s point of view before presenting an alternative perspective. Phrases like “I respect your opinion, however...” or “That’s one way to look at it, but another approach could be...” help maintain civility. Avoiding personal attacks and keeping the conversation issue-focused fosters an environment of mutual respect. Constructive disagreement encourages deeper discussion and often leads to better collective insights.

- Stay calm; don’t take it personally.
- Acknowledge others' points before stating your disagreement.
- Focus on content, not the speaker.
- Use phrases like:

“I respect your point, however...”

“Another perspective could be...”

7. Summarizing Key Points to Add Clarity

Summarizing is a vital skill, particularly during and at the end of group discussions. It involves recapping the main points shared by different participants and organizing them into a coherent overview. A good summary highlights key arguments, acknowledges differing viewpoints, and occasionally suggests a conclusion or next steps. It shows that you've been actively listening and are capable of synthesizing diverse ideas. Summarizing not only adds clarity to the discussion but also helps steer it toward resolution. It can also position you as a thoughtful contributor who values structure and shared understanding.

- At the end or midpoint of the discussion, offer a quick recap.
- Mention major points raised, both pros and cons.
- End with a neutral or consensus-based statement, if possible.

Example:

“So far, we’ve discussed both the efficiency and the ethical concerns of AI in hiring. Most agree that it can improve speed, but fairness remains a concern.”

8. Demonstrating Leadership Without Being Overbearing

True leadership in a group discussion is not about dominating the conversation but guiding it constructively. This includes inviting quieter members to contribute, keeping the group focused on the topic, and helping maintain a respectful tone. Leadership also involves managing time, facilitating transitions between points, and ensuring that no one voice overshadows others. The best leaders know when to speak and when to step back, creating space for diverse opinions. They are assertive but not aggressive, confident but not controlling. Such leadership reflects collaboration, empathy, and the ability to manage group dynamics effectively.

- Guide the discussion subtly: invite quieter members to speak, keep the group on track.
- Suggest transitions: “Let’s now look at another aspect...”
- Don’t dominate or interrupt frequently.
- Show humility and openness to feedback.

9. Staying Focused on the Topic and Avoiding Tangents

In the pressure of group discussions, especially those with broad or abstract topics, it’s easy to drift off-topic. Staying focused means keeping your responses relevant to the main issue and avoiding unrelated anecdotes or opinions. If the conversation begins to wander, skilled

participants bring it back with phrases like “To tie this back to the topic...” or “Let’s refocus on the main issue...” Avoiding tangents shows discipline, respect for others’ time, and a clear understanding of the discussion’s objectives.

- Stick to the topic and its core issues.
- Politely redirect others if they stray:
- “That’s an interesting point, but let’s connect it back to our main topic...”
- Avoid personal anecdotes unless relevant.

10. Showing Critical Thinking by Questioning Assumptions

Critical thinking involves analysing not only what is said but also what is assumed. This means examining the logic behind arguments, identifying potential biases, and asking probing questions. For instance, if someone states, “Remote work reduces productivity,” a critical thinker might ask, “Is that always the case, or are there conditions where it improves productivity?” By challenging assumptions and generalizations, you elevate the discussion to a deeper level. Critical thinking demonstrates intellectual maturity, curiosity, and the ability to assess issues from multiple angles.

- Ask thoughtful questions: “Why is this considered a problem?”
- Challenge generalizations with specifics:
- “Is it always true that...?”
- “What’s the evidence behind that claim?”

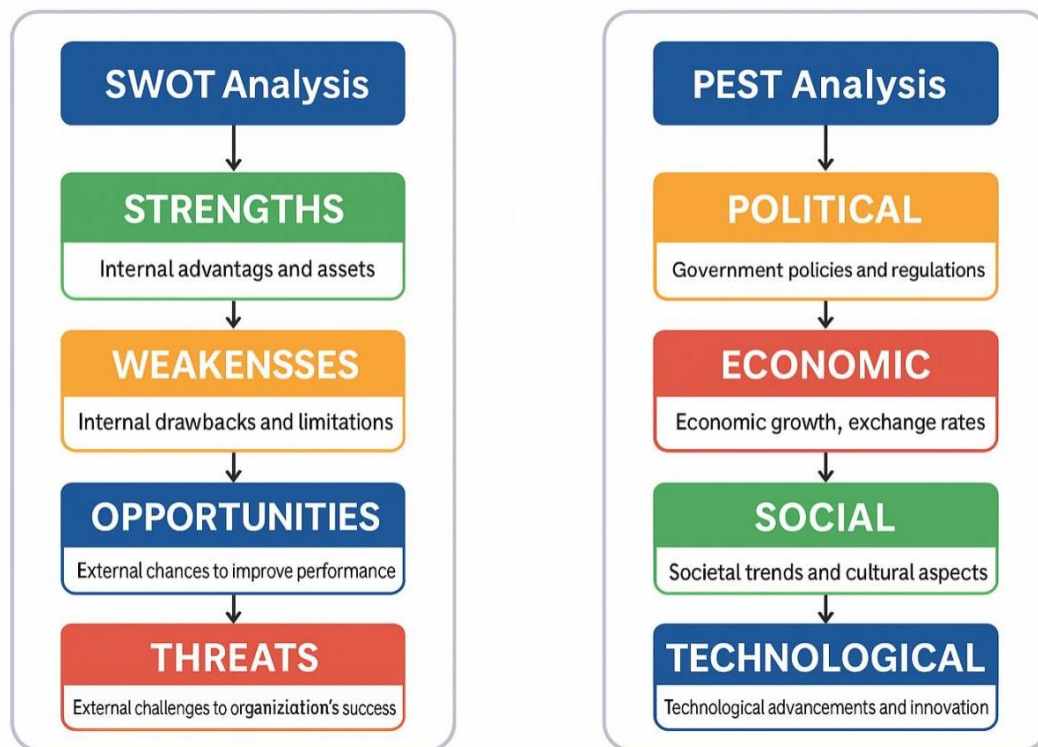
Practice Task:

Take the statement “Remote work reduces productivity” and list two assumptions you can challenge.

11. Using Analytical Frameworks to Break Down Complex Issues

Analytical frameworks like SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) and PEST (Political, Economic, Social, Technological) offer structured ways to examine multifaceted issues. These tools help participants break down complex topics into manageable parts, making discussions more focused and analytical. For example, using SWOT in a discussion on plastic bans can help examine both positive impacts (e.g., environmental benefits) and challenges (e.g., economic disruptions). Frameworks encourage

comprehensive thinking and prevent discussions from becoming one-sided.



SWOT Analysis Table

Category	Explanation	Examples
Strengths	Internal attributes that give an advantage over others.	Strong brand, skilled workforce, loyal customers
Weaknesses	Internal limitations or areas for improvement.	Outdated tech, high employee turnover
Opportunities	External factors the organization can exploit to its advantage.	Emerging markets, new tech trends
Threats	External elements that could cause trouble for the business or project.	New competitors, policy changes, inflation

PEST Analysis Table

Factor	Explanation	Examples
Political	Government influence, policies, regulations.	Tax laws, trade restrictions, political stability

Factor	Explanation	Examples
Economic	Economic conditions affecting performance.	Inflation, interest rates, exchange rates
Social	Social and cultural trends and demographics.	Lifestyle changes, education levels, population age
Technological	Impact of emerging or obsolete technologies.	Automation, R&D activity, new platforms

12. Providing Solutions or Actionable Insights

A good group discussion doesn't just analyse a problem—it also suggests ways forward. Participants should aim to offer practical, realistic solutions or insights. These could be short-term strategies, policy suggestions, or steps individuals can take. Structuring solutions logically (e.g., Step 1, Step 2) makes them easy to follow and demonstrates problem-solving ability. Offering solutions shows initiative and a forward-thinking mindset—traits that are highly valued in both academic and workplace contexts.

- Don't just describe problems—offer ideas to fix them.
- Structure solutions clearly (e.g., Step 1, Step 2).
- Show feasibility: Can it be done with current resources, policies, or technology?

13. Handling Time Limits Effectively

Time management is a critical skill in group discussions, where each participant is typically allotted a short window—often just 30 to 60 seconds—to contribute meaningfully. In such limited time, it's essential to get straight to the point, present your ideas clearly, and avoid unnecessary elaboration or repetition. Rambling not only eats into the time you're given but also makes it harder for others to follow your argument or respond effectively. It can disrupt the flow of discussion and reduce the overall productivity of the group.

Effective speakers stand out because they know how to prioritize what matters. They focus on one or two strong points, support them with quick examples or analogies, and then step back to allow others to contribute. This shows not only confidence but also team spirit and discipline. For instance, instead of giving a long speech on the advantages of remote work, a well-prepared speaker might say:

“Remote work offers flexibility and better work-life balance. However, without clear boundaries, it can lead to burnout. A hybrid model could provide the best of both worlds.”

Practicing this skill can be as simple as rehearsing with a timer, using bullet points or note cards, or mentally outlining your structure: start with a claim, support it briefly, and conclude. This mental preparation sharpens clarity and ensures you stay within your time frame.

Above all, handling time effectively in a GD reflects your **respect for others’ speaking time**, your **ability to think critically under pressure**, and your **readiness for real-world professional situations**- where time is always limited and communication needs to be precise.

- Prioritize key points; avoid long-winded explanations.
- Aim to make your core point in 30–60 seconds.
- Use time wisely for summarizing if you're the last speaker.

Tip: Practice with a timer. Begin with 1 minute answers.

EXAMPLES:

I. Using KWA to Focus Early Contribution

Topic: *Is a cashless economy practical in India?*

Situation: Opening speaker with 90 seconds to speak.

“Let’s look at the key words: *cashless, economy, and India*.

Starting with **cashless**, the focus is on digital modes of payment like UPI, Google Pay, Paytm which have grown rapidly in cities and towns. Even small vendors now use QR codes for transactions.

The word **economy** connects to broader issues like inclusion, efficiency, and financial systems. A cashless system may reduce corruption, but it also depends heavily on trust and access.

Finally, **India** adds complexity—urban vs rural divide, literacy levels, and tech infrastructure. While urban India adapts quickly, many rural areas still lack consistent internet access and banking literacy.

So, while the idea of a cashless economy is promising, its practicality depends on how these keywords play out across different regions and income groups.”

Why it works: The speaker uses the Key Words Approach to break down the topic, frame key issues, and raise critical points. This structure helps others build on focused themes while keeping the discussion relevant and balanced, all within a limited time.

II. VAP for Preventing Conflict and Wasting Time

Topic: *Ban on fast food near schools-fair or extreme?*

Time Left: 3 minutes, heated argument ongoing, intense disagreement.

Identify Parties:

Students – concerned about health or personal choice.

Parents – focused on safety, nutrition, and discipline.

Vendors – concerned about livelihood and business rights.

School Authorities – balancing student welfare and community relations.

Assess Impact:

Pro-ban viewpoint: Students' health is protected; schools promote better eating habits.

Anti-ban viewpoint: Vendors' income suffers; choice and convenience for students are reduced.

Perspective Analysis:

The conflict arises because affected parties view the issue through very different lenses—health and responsibility vs. economic freedom and personal choice.

Sample Intervention:

“I’d like to step in briefly. I think the disagreement here stems from looking at the issue only from our own side, rather than from the viewpoint of all affected parties.

Students gain health benefits but may feel restricted; parents want safety but also trust in their children’s decisions; vendors fear loss of livelihood; school authorities aim for discipline without alienating the community.

Instead of a strict ban or no ban, could we consider solutions that balance these viewpoints? For instance, restricting sales during school hours or introducing awareness programs. This way, each party’s concerns are acknowledged, and our remaining time can focus on constructive outcomes.”

Why it works: The speaker doesn’t side with one group but reframes the discussion around the viewpoints of all affected parties, reducing tension and encouraging a balanced resolution.

III. POP BEANS for Content Structuring Midway

Topic: *Influence of OTT platforms on Indian youth*

Time Remaining: 4 minutes; repetitive points emerging.

“I feel like we’re circling around the same points—addiction, screen time, and content freedom. To bring in fresh perspectives, can we try looking at it through a broader lens?

Let’s look at-

People: How are teenagers consuming content compared to working adults or even senior citizens?

Places: Are OTT platforms equally accessible in rural and tier-2 cities?

Behaviours: Are binge-watching and overnight streaming causing lifestyle shifts, less sleep, procrastination, etc.?

Events: Think about how streaming surged during the pandemic; OTT was a lifeline for entertainment.

Activities: Are OTTs replacing other pastimes like reading, playing, or socializing?”

“We could use this structure to divide our remaining time and each focus on one aspect.”

Why it works: The speaker refreshes the group’s energy by introducing new angles, preventing monotony and giving direction.

IV. SPELT Used to Wrap Up Logically

Topic: *Is electric vehicle adoption the future of Indian transport?*

Time Remaining: 1.5 minutes; team is unsure how to close.

“We’ve had a solid discussion, but I feel we’re still unsure about our conclusion. Let me try wrapping it with a structured perspective.

Socially, EVs are being positioned as a clean alternative, and that’s important given our urban pollution levels.

Politically, the government is encouraging EV use through subsidies and incentives, but the rollout isn’t uniform.

Economically, the initial cost of EVs is still a barrier for the average Indian household.

Legally, battery disposal norms and charging regulations are not robust yet.

Technologically, while innovation is strong, range anxiety and slow charging remain challenges.

So, to conclude: Yes, the future leans toward EVs, but success depends on affordability, awareness, and infrastructure.”

Why it works: A multi-lens summary allows the group to close confidently and shows depth without exceeding time.

V. KWA + Time Framing for Contribution Clarity

Topic: *Should remote work be the new normal?*

Time Remaining: 2 minutes; group has covered many points.

“Let me contribute quickly using the **Key Words Approach** and then suggest how we might wrap up.

The first keyword is **remote** - this highlights flexibility, digital tools, and geographic freedom. It allows employees to work from anywhere, saving time and resources.

The second keyword is **work** - and with it comes questions of productivity, collaboration, and evaluation. While tools exist, managing performance and maintaining team cohesion still pose challenges.

The final keyword is **normal** - this implies permanence. Are companies ready to adopt remote work as the standard? That depends on leadership mindset and system redesign. Since we’re short on time, may I suggest that each of us now quickly share **one advantage and one challenge** of remote work in 30 seconds each? It would help conclude with balance and clarity.”

Why it works: The speaker uses the Key Words Approach to analyse the topic clearly, ties ideas to essential terms, and helps the group manage remaining time with a structured close.

VI. POP BEANS for Redirection When Group Stalls

Topic: *Is climate activism becoming performative?*

Time Remaining: 5 minutes; conversation has stagnated.

“It looks like we’ve run out of steam. May I suggest we widen our lens using a few prompts?”

People: How are different age groups engaging with climate activism-do Gen Z and Gen X have different approaches?

Objects: Platforms like Instagram and Twitter have become tools and are they enabling activism or trivializing it?

Behaviours: Is posting about climate change enough, or does it need to be backed by personal action?

Events: Can we compare global movements like Greta Thunberg’s Fridays for Future with grassroots efforts in Indian cities?

I think we can each pick one of these to comment on quickly before we run out of time.”

Why it works: Revives a fading discussion and gives each member a chance to re-engage meaningfully.

VII. VAP to Reframe a Polarizing Topic

Topic: *Should English be the medium of instruction in Indian schools?*

Time Remaining: 4 minutes; arguments becoming personal.

Identify Parties:

Students – affected by learning efficiency and future opportunities.

Parents – concerned about academic success, cultural grounding, and affordability.

Teachers – balancing language proficiency demands with students' comprehension levels.

Policy Makers – aiming for national development and inclusivity.

Assess Impact:

Pro-English viewpoint: Students gain global opportunities, career mobility, and access to international resources.

Anti-English viewpoint: Risks loss of cultural identity, reduced comprehension in early education, and neglect of local languages.

Sample Intervention: Perspective Analysis:

The divide comes from deeply rooted personal experiences and beliefs about language's role in identity, opportunity, and learning.

"I think we're getting too caught up in proving who's right. Let's step back and look at this from the viewpoint of all affected parties.

Students benefit from English for global access but also need comfort in their mother tongue for comprehension. Parents want the best of both worlds—career readiness and cultural preservation. Teachers face the challenge of bridging language gaps without overwhelming learners. Policy makers must promote unity and progress while respecting diversity.

Instead of choosing one over the other, could we explore dual-medium systems or multilingual classrooms? That might acknowledge everyone's needs and help us focus our last few minutes on solutions."

Why it works: The speaker reframes the discussion by representing all affected parties, reducing tension and encouraging solutions that integrate multiple perspectives.

VIII. SPELT to Highlight Missed Angles Near End

Topic: Is India ready for a digital-only economy?

Time Remaining: 1 minute; conversation focused only on tech.

"Before we conclude, I just want to flag a couple of areas we didn't touch:

Legally, do we have enough safeguards in place for digital fraud and privacy breaches?

Economically, what about people who still rely on cash, like street vendors, senior citizens, or migrant workers?

We may not have time to unpack this now, but I feel these are important points we could keep in mind as we wrap."

Why it works: Adds final value without hijacking time, and signals critical thinking.

14. Practicing Team Dynamics and Collaboration Skills

Group discussions are not about outshining others—they are **collaborative platforms** where individuals bring diverse perspectives to reach a more nuanced understanding. True group effectiveness comes from how well members **support, listen, and build on each other's inputs**, not from how loudly or frequently they speak.

Practicing strong team dynamics means being **aware of the group's flow** and actively contributing to the shared goal of clarity and insight. A participant who listens attentively, nods in agreement, or strategically reinforces others' ideas contributes far more meaningfully than one who simply repeats points or argues for the sake of visibility.

Verbal Techniques to Demonstrate Collaboration

Using respectful and cooperative phrases shows that you're an engaged team player:

- **“Adding to what Aditi said...”**
Signals alignment and builds continuity in discussion.
- **“I see your point, Ravi, and I think it also connects with...”**
Shows you're listening and connecting ideas logically.
- **“That’s a useful insight, Priya. I hadn’t thought about it that way.”**
Acknowledges a peer’s contribution, building a positive environment.
- **“We seem to agree on most points. Can we now think of an example to wrap it up?”**
Helps steer the group collaboratively toward a conclusion.

Such phrases **create bridges** between participants’ thoughts and demonstrate emotional intelligence.

Non-verbal Cues and Body Language

Non-verbal communication plays a subtle yet powerful role in team dynamics. Your body language should reflect openness, interest, and respect:

- **Maintain eye contact** with the speaker to show attentiveness.
- **Nod slightly** when you agree or understand—this encourages the speaker and affirms that you're engaged.
- **Smile politely** when appropriate to create a warm, welcoming group atmosphere.
- **Avoid crossing arms**, fidgeting, or looking away, as these may signal disinterest or disagreement.
- **Use open hand gestures** when speaking to emphasize inclusiveness and clarity.

During online group discussions, these cues translate to:

- Keeping your camera on and posture upright.
- Reacting visibly when others speak (smiling, nodding).
- Avoiding multitasking or checking your phone/laptop.

Tone of Voice and Listening Behaviour

Collaboration also involves managing your **tone and listening habits**:

- Speak with a **calm, confident, and respectful tone**, avoid sounding aggressive or dismissive.
- Don't interrupt. **Wait for a natural pause** before adding your point.
- Paraphrase or reframe someone's idea to show you've understood:
"So what you're saying is that upskilling could balance job loss due to automation-makes sense."
- Use vocal variety to keep listeners engaged but avoid dominating through volume or speed.

Key Reminders for Practicing Collaboration

- Show openness to group synergies - see others as allies, not rivals.
- Support others' points to create cohesion and depth.
- Avoid one-upmanship or contradiction for its own sake.
- Use verbal affirmations ("Good point," "That makes sense," "Interesting angle").
- Match your non-verbal signals with your words—look interested, stay present.

In short, strong team dynamics are built on active listening, respectful responses, and cooperative intent. both in what you say and how you present yourself. These skills not only enhance your performance in group discussions but also mirror what's expected in any modern, team-based work environment.

EXAMPLES:

SCENARIO 1: Climate Change - Individual vs. Government Responsibility

Participant A:

"I believe individuals should take more responsibility, simple habits like using less plastic and saving electricity can go a long way."

Participant B:

"Absolutely. Building on what A mentioned, those small actions matter. But I'd add that governments should incentivize eco-friendly behaviours through policy, like giving tax breaks for using solar panels."

(Participant B uses open hand gestures, maintains eye contact with A, and leans slightly forward to show engagement.)

Participant C:

“True. To connect both points, public awareness campaigns can bridge that gap between personal responsibility and government initiative. People need to know how their actions align with larger policies.”

SCENARIO 2: Social Media – Boon or Bane for Teenagers

Participant A:

“I feel social media has negatively impacted teenagers’ mental health. The constant comparison and pressure can lead to anxiety and low self-esteem.”

Participant B:

“That’s a valid point. Adding to what A said, I’ve read studies that link excessive screen time with sleep disturbances in teens.”

(Participant B speaks calmly, avoids interrupting, and makes a note on their notepad to refer respectfully.)

Participant C:

“Good observations. But I’d also suggest that with proper digital literacy, teens can benefit from social media, like learning new skills or accessing motivational content.”

Participant A:

“Agreed. So maybe the real issue is guidance and moderation, not the platforms themselves.”

SCENARIO 3: Remote Work – Future or Fad?

Participant A:

“Remote work is here to stay. It’s cost-effective, reduces commute stress, and increases productivity for many.”

Participant B:

“I see your point. To add another layer, remote work also allows people from smaller towns to access global opportunities—so it’s more inclusive.”

(Participant B nods and gestures slightly toward A to indicate support and continuity.)

Participant C:

“Yes, that’s promising. However, adding a different perspective, it can sometimes reduce team bonding and innovation due to less face-to-face interaction.”

Participant A:

“That’s true too. Maybe a hybrid model would balance flexibility with collaboration.”

EXAMPLE SCENARIO (Collaborative Interaction)

Topic: Is Artificial Intelligence a threat or opportunity for employment?

Participant A: “I think AI will replace many low-skill jobs and that’s a huge risk for untrained workers.”

Participant B: “Yes, that’s an important concern. Adding to what A said, I believe AI is also creating new roles in data ethics and AI governance. So it’s not just a threat—it’s also a chance for reskilling.”

(Participant B nods slightly toward A while speaking, smiles gently, and maintains a respectful tone.)

Participant C: “Exactly, and building on that, I think we need stronger public-private partnerships to provide affordable upskilling programs.”

Key Techniques Modelled in These Scenarios

- **Verbal cues:** “Adding to what...,” “Building on that...,” “That’s a good point...”
- **Non-verbal cues:** Nodding, smiling, open gestures, note-taking
- **Collaborative thinking:** Acknowledging diverse views, bridging ideas, solution-focused dialogue

CONCLUSION

Group discussions are more than verbal exchanges—they are reflections of how individuals think, respond, and collaborate under pressure. This unit has unpacked the key dimensions of successful participation, from the importance of framing relevant viewpoints to the art of respectful disagreement and the value of ending with insightful summaries. By exploring techniques for idea generation and frameworks for breaking down complex issues, learners gain practical tools to enhance their contributions in any discussion.

Beyond technical skills, group discussions demand self-awareness, adaptability, and emotional intelligence. Demonstrating leadership without being overbearing, engaging in collaborative listening, staying focused, and offering real solutions all reflect maturity and professionalism. Whether the discussion is in a boardroom or a classroom, these skills prepare individuals not only to express themselves better but also to think with greater clarity and purpose.

Ultimately, mastering group discussions is not just about speaking well—it is about thinking critically, contributing constructively, and fostering mutual understanding. As learners continue to practice these skills, they position themselves as effective communicators and thoughtful professionals ready to lead, collaborate, and inspire in any context.

PRACTICE EXERCISES

Exercise 1: Topic Breakdown

Choose any one topic from the list below and answer the following:

- *What type of topic is it (factual, opinion-based, issue-based)?*
- *What do you already know about it?*
- *What is your viewpoint?*

Topics:

- *Should social media be banned during exams?*
- *Is remote work the future of employment?*
- *Can AI replace teachers?*

Guiding Questions	Your Response
What type of topic is this?	
What do you know about it?	
What is your viewpoint?	
Why do you hold this viewpoint?	

Exercise 2: Listen & Summarize

Pair up: One person speaks for 2 minutes on a topic

The listener must:

Take notes.

Summarize the speaker's viewpoint in 3 sentences.

1. The role of communication in team success
2. Can introverts be effective leaders?
3. Diversity in the workplace: Why it matters
4. Dealing with failure in professional life
5. Importance of empathy in leadership

Exercise 3: Maintaining a Balanced Tone

Rewrite Aggressive Responses Politely

Convert the following sentences into balanced responses.

Aggressive/Harsh Version**Balanced/Professional Version**

"That's a terrible idea; it'll never work."

"You clearly don't understand the topic."

"Your suggestion is completely unrealistic."

"This is the worst plan I've ever heard."

"That doesn't make any sense at all."

"You're wrong, and here's why..."

"Stop talking, you're just repeating yourself."

"Your logic is completely flawed."

"You've missed the point entirely."

Exercise 4: Critical Thinking – Questioning Assumptions***Instructions:***

For each of the following statements:

Identify the assumptions being made (explicit or implicit).

Evaluate whether these assumptions are valid, overly generalized, or need further evidence.

Reframe the statement more objectively or inclusively.

1. Statement: "Online learning is more effective than classroom teaching."

What assumptions are being made?

Are they valid for all students or contexts?

Could the statement be reframed more objectively?

2. Statement: "Working from home increases productivity."

What assumptions are being made (about environment, personality, job roles)?

Are they universally true?

How might the statement be reframed more accurately?

3. Statement: "All college students should be required to take entrepreneurship courses."

What is assumed about students' interests, goals, or skillsets?

Is this a one-size-fits-all recommendation?

How would you rewrite this statement to allow for flexibility?

4. Statement: "AI will take over all human jobs."

What technological and economic assumptions are implied?

Are all industries and roles equally affected?

Can you frame this with a more nuanced or evidence-based outlook?

5. Statement: "Leadership is an inborn quality—you either have it or you don't."

What psychological or social assumptions are present here?

Is leadership only nature, not nurture?

How would you rephrase this to reflect growth or learning?

6. Statement: "People who read a lot are automatically smarter."

What assumptions does this make about intelligence and reading habits?

Is this a fair or measurable claim?

How can it be reframed to reflect diversity in learning styles?

7. Statement: "Technology isolates people from real human connection."

What assumptions are made about how technology is used?

Are there counterexamples?

How would you phrase this more objectively?

8. Statement: "Group discussions always lead to better decisions."

What assumptions are being made about collaboration and decision-making?

Are there situations where this might not hold true?

Can you suggest a balanced rephrasing?

Exercise 5: Idea Generation Techniques

Apply the Frameworks

Choose a topic and use the following templates to generate ideas.

- **Digital Detox for Students**
- **Replacing Exams with Project-Based Evaluation**
- **Use of Augmented Reality in Education**
- **Rise of Electric Vehicles in India**
- **Ban on Facial Recognition Surveillance**
- **Impact of Social Media Algorithms**
- **Adoption of Blockchain in Banking**
- **Solar Energy for Rural Electrification**
- **Ban on Fast Fashion**
- **Rainwater Harvesting in Urban Housing**

5.1 KWA

Keywords-

5.2 SPELT Analysis

Social	Political	Economic	Legal	Technological

5.3 POP BEANS

People	Objects	Places	Behaviours	Events	Activities	Nature	Situations

5.4 VAP Framework

Identify Parties (Who is affected?)	Assess Impact (Positive/Negative Effects)	Perspective Analysis (Their Viewpoint)

5.5 SCAMPER

Substitute	Combine	Adapt	Modify	Put to Use	Eliminate	Reverse

Group Discussion Topics:

- 1) Will AI replace your job inevitable
- 2) Do hackathons really help students become better engineers?
- 3) Is AI Boon for Tech
- 4) Data Privacy is a myth or real
- 5) College degree is important or skills
- 6) Skilled education vs. Degree education
- 7) AI is threat for job or opportunities
- 8) Social media is curse or blessings
- 9) Do influencer have more power nowadays
- 10) Mental health vs. Physical health
- 11) Should caste system be mandatory in election
- 12) Social media impact on mental health
- 13) Robots Vs Humans
- 14) Are algorithms making us biased?
- 15) Should India invest more in indigenous tech development (like Make in India for tech)?
- 16) Internship vs. Full time employment
- 17) Digital currency is safe move or a threat
- 18) Robotics vs Automation
- 19) Are coding skills more important than theoretical knowledge?
- 20) How corporate world life affect your mental health and physical health
- 21) Warehouse automation
- 22) Data is a new oil at what cost on industry
- 23) What if machines have emotions

- 24) Is the Traditional Education System Still Relevant in the 21st Century?
- 25) Bug free software is a reality or myth
- 26) Face recognition and eye recognition system
- 27) Linux vs. Window
- 28) Is cybersecurity a shared responsibility or a personal one?
- 29) Electric vehicles Pros and Cons.
- 30) Smart work vs. Hard work