

7 C's of Communication

The 7C's of communication are :

1. Consideration
2. Courtesy
3. Clarity
4. Conciseness
5. Concreteness
6. Correctness
7. Completeness

1. Consideration

When we talk of communication in corporate / education / government sector we need to use certain words that exude respect. The following are examples:

1. This is to bring to your **kind** notice that.....
2. I would like to draw your **kind** attention towards the fact that.....
3. I wish to inform your **kind** self that.....
4. **Most respectfully / Most Humbly** I wish to state that.....
5. Use **Sir / Madam** in addressing the other person if you do not know the person's gender (this happens in written communication)

What is that person's gender (not sex) ?

2. Courtesy

Courtesy also means respect. When we are talking to some one we need to keep the other persons feelings in mind. There are many ways in which we can show courtesy.

- a) Developing a “You” attitude
- b) Using gender neutral / free words
- c) Use positive words
- d) Respond to messages promptly

Words of courtesy “Excuse me”, “thanks “ , “sorry”, “no problem”

“doesn't matter”, “don’t mention it please” , “welcome”

Person slightly on the heavier side / dark complexioned / short statured

a) Developing a “you” attitude

Empathy – means imagining yourself in the receiver’s position. Even in written communication, apply the same tact that you would use if you were talking directly to the receiver.

I / We attitude

We will issue a ₹ 50000 credit to
you once we receive the papers.

We will provide free event shirts for
volunteers to wear at the race.

We require a ₹ 3000 minimum balance
in order to issue the cheque book.

You / Your attitude

You will receive a ₹ 50000 credit once
you submit the papers.

All volunteers can expect to get free
event shirts at the race.

You need to maintain a minimum
balance of ₹ 3000 for the cheque

book to be issued.

We will not give you hostel accommodation
If you do not score A grade.

You can expect to get hostel
accommodation if you score A
grade.

We will not make the payment if the goods
are not received on time.

With your timely supply you can expect
payment on time.

Sometimes you cannot avoid using “We” as in case of annual report of the company.

b) Use Gender neutral / free words

Gender free terms grant both genders status and respect. Terminology that stereotypes or indicates bias against either men or women is called sexist language. The words that stereotype people may offend readers and lessen opportunities to create goodwill.

Sexist	Gender Neutral
policeman	police officer
bellman	customer service assistant
craftsman	craft worker
fireman	fire fighter
foreman	supervisor
mailman	mail carrier
waitress	server
Chairman	Chairperson
Man-made	Human- made
Mankind	Humanity

Businessman Businessperson

Stewardess Flight attendant

Use Ms for communication with ladies and not Mrs or Miss

We can also use gender-free pronoun

Sexist

Gender –Free

The doctor should listen to his
patients

The doctor should listen to their
patients

Treat the customer courteously so she
will continue to shop in our store.

Treat customers courteously so they
will continue to shop in our store.

c) Use positive words

Courtesy messages use positive words. Positive words show respect for the reader and reflect the you attitude. Both word choice and sentence structure can change a negative tone into a positive tone. Structure the sentences to state what can be done rather than what cannot be done.

Negative Tone

Positive Tone

Never allow customers to shop
without first greeting them.

Always greet customers as
soon as they arrive.

We do not make exchanges
for purchases without receipts.

With your receipt, you may
exchange any purchase.

You cannot succeed if you do not

Only hard work will bring

word hard.

success for you.

It is impossible to repair your laptop
today.

Your laptop can be ready by
tomorrow.

d) Respond to messages promptly

Corporate etiquettes require that you respond promptly to business communication. If you receive a communication from your client regarding defective components supplied by you then you need to take action at your end. You also need to acknowledge the email or letter so that the client is assured that you have received the communication and are taking action. If you are not the right person to whom communication has been addressed that you need to inform the sender.

3. Clarity

Clarity means writing easy to understand and easy to read messages. The message should focus on expressing a thought and not on impressing the reader.

The following are the ways to bring clarity in your communication:

- a) Select proper words
- b) Place words in an orderly sequence
- c) Position phrases correctly
- d) Position clauses correctly
- e) Keep sentence short

a) Select proper words

Word	Meaning	Example
a lot	many , much	He had a lot of anxiety
alot	not acceptable usage	
(allot means to grant something / give something)		
to	in the direction of	Move your chair to the right
too	very	The holidays ended too quickly
accept	to take or receive	She agreed to accept the trophy.
except	to leave out	Read all the notes except those on page 22.
affect	to influence	Changing chairs did affect his posture.
effect	to result	We cannot see any effect of the new medicine

advise / advice

Please advise us, we look forward to your advice. (advise – verb , advice – noun)

b) Place words in proper order

Unclear word order	Clear word order
Enclosed is your cheque.	Your cheque is enclosed.
Burned was the toast.	The toast was burned.

Felix called his agent while he was reading the script.

(who was actually reading the script ?)

Pronouns should not be used in definitions because they may have unclear meaning.

(They could refer to pronouns or to definitions)

While Felix was reading the script , he called his agent.

Definitions containing pronouns may have unclear meanings.

c) Position phrases properly

Incorrect positioning

Victor ordered rugs for the new apartment of various colours.

Dr Zayas wrote the letter while flying from Mumbai to New Delhi on the back of an envelope.

Correct positioning

Victor ordered rugs of various colours for the new apartment.

While flying from Mumbai to New Delhi , Dr Zayas wrote the letter on the back of an envelope.

Dr Zayas wrote the letter on the back of an envelope while flying from Mumbai to New Delhi.

d) Position the clauses correctly

The words which and that frequently introduce the clause.

Incorrect positioning

Please place your donation in the jar,
which is appreciated.

Julia returned the support cast for her
injured leg that she had bought.

Correct positioning

Please place your donation, which is
appreciated ,in the jar.

Julia returned the support cast that
she had bought for her injured leg.

Other examples (the correct version is in red font)

There is a large fountain at the end of the garden carved in marble.

There is a large fountain carved in marble, at the end of the garden.

I gave a table to my uncle made of wooden legs.

I gave a table made of wooded legs to my uncle.

Flitting gaily from flower to flower , the wrestler watched the bee.

The wrestler watched the bee flitting gaily from flower to flower.

As a kid I used to live with my grandfather. At the age of eight, my grandfather died.

As a kid I used to live with my grandfather. When I was eight, my grandfather died.

Having eaten my meal , the waiter gave me the bill.

After I had eaten my meal, the waiter gave me the bill.

The car was finally sold by my father which is old and rusty.

The car which is old and rusty was finally sold by my father.

Blown away by the tornado, the family could not find the roof of the house.

The family could not find the roof of the house blown away by the tornado.

The policeman found a child crying for his mother who was forty years old.

The policeman , who was forty years old, found a child crying for his mother.

4. Conciseness

Conciseness means saying what needs to be said in as few words as possible.

a) Eliminate unnecessary words

Wordy

You will quickly come to the conclusion that unless you communicate in a consistent manner, you will jeopardize your relationship with your coworkers / subordinates.

Concise

Communication consistency builds trust with coworkers /subordinates.

The wordy version contains 23 words. The concise version eliminated unnecessary words and reduced the word count to six words.

You cannot be concise with Business Proposals and in exams

b) Use necessary modifiers

Select a word or phrase only when it serves a purpose. Avoid unnecessary modifiers and doublet phrases- phrases that say the same thing twice such as

“ the honest truth “

Unnecessary Modifiers

Follow the road west in direction until you see our facility on the right.

The team leader suggested a very unique solution.

Revisions

Follow the road west until you see our facility on the right.

The team leader suggested a unique solution.

Unique means rare

c) Write in active voice

Passive construction add unnecessary words, usually in the form of prepositional phrases. Changing from passive to active voice makes the messages more concise.

Passive voice

Active voice

The old car was painted by the technician.

The technicians painted the old car.

The overgrown trees were trimmed by the power company.

The power company trimmed the overgrown trees.

Make an impact with few words and make it effective

5. Concreteness

Vague modifiers

Precise Expressions

Our storage facility offers large Climate controlled units.

Our storage facility offers 15 x 15x 20 foot climate controlled units.

Our new product will arrive soon.

Our new product arrives October 1

Take advantage of the very lowest prices you'll ever find anywhere.

Take advantage of the 50% discount off our regular prices.

Many companies offered big salary packages to our students.

Average salary needs to be mentioned

Our faculty is highly qualified.

80% have PhD, 15% are doing PhD.....

6. Correctness

Correctness means the details of the message are accurate.

- a) Verify spelling
- b) Select correct words or phrases
- c) Check punctuation
- d) Check dates, salutation, places and amounts

It is better to write Ms rather than Mrs.

b) Select correct words and phrases

Take care of the homonyms, homophones and the homographs

	Meaning	Spelling	Pronunciation	Example
Homonyms	Different	Same	Same	bank / bank
Homophones	Different	Different	Same	blue / blew
Homographs	Different	Same	Different	minute / minute

c) Insert appropriate punctuation

No punctuation

Sprouted grain bread said the
Nutritionist can be traced to

Proper punctuation

“Sprouted grain bread”, said the
Nutritionist , “ can be traced to

ancient times.

ancient times”.

For her research, Celia consulted with the architect, Corrine, Mr Jeffries, the builder and Stacy, the interior designer.

It appears that Celia consulted 5 people

For her research, Celia consulted with the architect, Corrine ; Mr. Jeffries, the builder; and Stacy , the interior designer.

Celia actually consulted 3 people.

7. Completeness

A complete message uses sentences to answer the questions who, what, where, why and how.

Who ?	Who is the intended receiver ? Is the content appropriate for the intended receiver ?
What ?	What is your objective ? Will the reader know what to do ?
When ?	When should the reader respond? Have you included complete, accurate details ? (Report to be submitted to GM ..when)
Where ?	Where should the reader respond ? Have you identified names, postal and electronic addresses, telephone and fax numbers ?
Why ?	Why should the reader respond ? Have you stated the benefit for the reader ?
How ?	Have you encouraged a positive response ? Does your message promote goodwill ?