

Principles of effective communication



At the end of the class, In their business messages, the students will be able to bring:

- 1. COMPLETENESS**
- 2. CONCRETENESS,**
- 3. CONSIDERATION**
- 4. COURTESY**

The Seven C's of Effective Communication

- To compose effective written or oral messages, you must apply certain **communication principles**. These principles provide guidelines for **choice of content and style of presentation**, **adapted** to the purpose and receiver of your message. Called the “seven C’s,” they are completeness, conciseness, consideration, concreteness, clarity, courtesy, and correctness.
- The 7 Cs provide a **checklist** for making sure that your meetings, emails, conference calls, reports, and presentations are well constructed and clear – so your audience gets your message.

1. COMPLETENESS

Business message is said to be complete when it contains **all facts** the reader or listener needs for the **reaction** the sender desires.

As you strive for completeness, keep the following guidelines in mind;

1. Provide all necessary information. Otherwise it will create suspicion.
2. Answer all questions asked.
3. Give something extra when desirable

1.COMPLETENESS

Provide All Necessary Information

Answering the **five W's** helps make messages clear: Who, What, When, Where, and Why.

Answer All Questions Asked (W & H, Implied, stated)

Look for questions: some may appear and some are buried within a paragraph.

Locate them and then answer precisely.

Give Something Extra, When Desirable

Use your good judgment in offering additional material if the sender's message is incomplete.

COMPLETENESS: Tips

1. If you want your client to book a hotel accommodation for you, you should tell him/her **what** your **needs** are, **where** you want it; **when** you want it and **how** you are going to pay for it etc.
2. When you tell your subordinate to go to the airport to receive someone, you should tell him/her at **what time**, **who the person to be received** is, and **where he should be taken** to etc. This is completeness.
3. Completeness prevents the need for further communication, amending, elaborating and expounding (explaining) the first one and thus saves time and resource.

EXAMPLES FOR COMPLETENESS

Incomplete:

1. I did not receive any response for the complaint I lodged.

Complete:

Incomplete;

2. I want a room booked at your hotel for three days in the first week of the month of July.

Complete;

EXAMPLES FOR COMPLETENESS

Incomplete:

1. I did not receive any response for the complaint I lodged.

Complete:

I made a complaint to the Branch Manager on June 23, 2003 on the inordinate delay at the cash counter. Can I get a response please?

Incomplete;

2. I want a room booked at your hotel for three days in the first week of the month of July.

Complete;

I will be arriving on July 3rd morning by Pandora Express. I want a single room accommodation for three days from 23rd Feb 2021, morning time. I want a room with attached toilet, running hot water facility and telephone (if available). Kindly do the booking in my name. My details are as under:

Bad example:

Hi all,

Let us meet tomorrow to discuss the product launch event. Please be there on time.

Thanks

A.B.C.

(There is no mention of the time of the meeting scheduled for, or the location, neither is there any set agenda. The recipients of the email would have to write back or call back to Chris to clarify).

Good example:

The best way to have written this email is:

Hi all,

Bad example:

Hi all,

Let us meet tomorrow to discuss the product launch event. Please be there on time.

Thanks

A.B.C.

(There is no mention of the time of the meeting scheduled for, or the location, neither is there any set agenda. The recipients of the email would have to write back or call back to Chris to clarify).

Good example:

The best way to have written this email is:

Hi all,

Let us meet tomorrow at 11am at Conference room 3 to discuss the product launch event. We will have to decide the keynote speakers and complete the event invite draft tomorrow. Please be there on time.

Thanks

A.B.C.

COMPLETENESS: Sample questions

Use the five W,s method to complete the given tasks.

► **Task 1.**

- Write an email to the admin officer of the ABC Banquet to reserve it for your brother`s marriage. Keep in mind the requirements of completeness while requesting.

► **Task 2**

- Write an email to request/order merchandise (goods) for your ABC mart. (Mention when you need it, how and when it would be transported and to whom it would be delivered and how the payment will be made)

COMPLETENESS: Sample questions

You are the president of an industry association and have received the following inquiry from an out-of-town member, “I think I would like to attend my first meeting of the association, even though I am not acquainted with your city. Will you please tell me where the next meeting is being held?”

How would you reply to this letter keeping in mind **Completeness** of the message?

CONCRETENESS

Communicating concretely means **being specific, definite, and vivid** rather than **vague and general**. Often it means using **denotatives** (direct, explicit) **rather than connotative** words (ideas or notions suggested by or associated with a word or phrase).

CONCRETENESS

The following guidelines should help you compose concrete, convincing message;

1. Use **specific facts and figures, and precise words.**
2. Put **action in your verbs.**
3. Choose **vivid, image building words.**

CONCRETENESS

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Use Specific Facts and Figures

It is desirable to be precise and concrete in both written and oral business communication.

Avoid vagueness. **Commercialese (Business Jargon), cliché now.**

Vague, General,
Indefinite Students'
GMAT scores have
risen.

Concrete, Precise

In 1996, the GMAT
scores averaged 600; by
1997 they had risen to 610.

CONCRETENESS

- **Cut the deadwood**
- **Replace dead words with more effective and precise words.**

Do not say the following:

1. I am slightly unwell. (You can be unwell or not. How can any sickness be slight?).

2. Interest rates have been marginally reduced. (Say precisely the quantum of reduction).

What is marginal to the finance minister may be huge to a person depending on interests.

CONCRETENESS

➤ Use active voice.

You should say “our team won the match”, rather than “The match was won by our team”.

Do not say “We expect daily reports,” but say “You should send daily reports”.

In rare cases, where you do not want to sound authoritarian, you may use the passive voice. i.e. “Smoking is prohibited.”

CONCRETENESS

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Occasionally, to achieve concreteness you can use idioms / phrases to project a vivid image.

The following sentences provide concrete images.

“Our Foreman is a human dynamo”.

“He treats brickbats as bouquets”

“John is the Casabianca of our group

Exercise

- ☐ Rewrite the following in concrete form as the sentences are too general and vague.
- ☐ This printer prints campaign letters fast
- ☐ Our product has won several prizes.
- ☐ These brakes stop a car within a short distance.

Exercise

Put action into the words by using active instead of passive voice.

- ☐ Tests were made by us
- ☐ A full report will be sent to you by the supervisor.
- ☐ Consideration to the report will be given by Mr. Singh

Concreteness Bad Example

Bad Example

Consider this advertising copy:
The Lunch Box Wizard will save your time every day.

A statement like this probably won't sell many of these products. There's no passion, no vivid detail, nothing that creates emotion, and nothing that tells people in the audience why they should care. This message isn't concrete enough to make a difference.

Good Example Concreteness

How much time do you spend every day packing your kids' lunches?

No more!

Just take a complete Lunch Box Wizard from your refrigerator each day to give your kids a healthy lunch and have more time to play or read with them!

COURTESY

- Be aware of **perspectives and feelings** of others.
- Hold a **sincere you-attitude**. Hidden insults and aggressive tones cause troubles and result in reduced morale and productivity.

Following are the suggestions for generating a courteous tone;

1. Be sincerely tactful, thoughtful, and appreciative.
2. Use expressions that show respect.
3. Choose nondiscriminatory expressions.

Be Sincerely Tactful, Thoughtful, and Appreciative

- Though few people are intentionally abrupt or blunt, these negative traits are a common cause of discourtesy.

Tactless, Blunt

Stupid letter; I can't understand any of it.

Clearly, you did not read my latest fax.

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Tactless, Blunt

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Clearly, you did not read my latest fax.

More Tactful

It's my understanding...

Sometimes my wording is not precise; let me try again

DON'T USE FOLLOWING EXPRESSIONS

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Omit Irritating Expressions

Following is a consensus list; that is, it includes a list of expressions many people find irritating. Avoid these expressions, particularly used with “you” or “your”:

contrary to your inference
delinquency (delinquent)
I do not agree with you
if you care
I'm sure you must realize
inexcusable
irresponsible
obnoxious
obviously you overlooked
owing to your questionable
credit we are unable to
simply nonsense
surely you don't expect

you are delinquent
you are probably ignorant of
the fact that
you claim that
you did not tell us
you failed to
you forgot to
you have to
you leave us no choice
you neglected to (overlooked)
you say
you should know
you surely don't expect

Choose Non Discriminatory Expressions

- Use nondiscriminatory language that reflects equal treatment of people regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin, and physical features.

Questionable

Freshman

Manpower

More Desirable

**Entering students; first
year student.**

**Workers; employees;
work force personnel**

Exercise

Bad example:

Hi Drew,

I really do not appreciate how your IT team ignores the requests of my team alone. My team is an important function in this organization too and we have our own IT requirement. Can you ensure that your team responds promptly to my team's requests hereon?

Regards

Stanley

This email is condescending, judgmental, and disrespectful. Drew might now order his team to not respond to your team's requirements entirely. Try to write it with courtesy instead.

Exercise

Good example:

Hi Drew,

I understand that the IT team is swamped with work and gets requests from every department in the organization. My team, however, is working on a high-priority project and I would greatly appreciate it if you could ask your team members to respond to my team's queries promptly and help us complete this project on time. Please do let me know if you need anything from me.

Regards,

Stanley

As a result of the polite request, it is likely that Drew will feel appreciated and important and he will definitely ask his team to help your team out. Work gets done and everybody is happy too.

Exercise

Use gender friendly substitutes

- ☐ Mankind
- ☐ The best man for the job
- ☐ Manmade
- ☐ Manpower
- ☐ Businessman
- ☐ Sales man
- ☐ Chairman

CONSIDERATION

- ❖ Consideration means preparing every message with the message receivers in mind; try to put yourself in their place.
 - ❖ Do not lose your temper. Do not accuse and do not charge them without facts.
 - ❖ The thoughtful consideration is also called **“you-attitude”**.
-
1. Focus on “You” instead of “I” and “We”.
 2. Show audience benefit or interest in the receiver.
 3. Emphasize positive and pleasant facts.
 4. Visualize readers` problems, desires, emotions and response.

Focus on “You” Instead of “I” or We”

- ❖ Using “**you**” does help project a you-attitude. But overuse can lead to a negative reaction.

Example

We-Attitude: I Am delighted to announce that we will be extending our hours to make shopping more convenient.

You-Attitude: You will be able to shop in the evenings with the extended hours.

Show Audience Benefit and/or create Receiver`s interest.

- ❖ Reader may react positively when benefits are shown to them.
- ❖ Benefits must meet recipients needs, address their concerns, or offer them rewards.
- ❖ Most important is that these must be perceived as benefits by the receivers.

Exercise

Rewrite the following with a “you” attitude; it shows consideration.

- ❖ I want to send my congratulations for ---
- ❖ We will ship soon the goods of your May 4 order—
- ❖ We pay eight percent interest on -----

Emphasize positive, pleasant facts.

Negative- Unpleasant	Positive - Pleasant
It is impossible to open an account for you today.	
We do not refund if the returned item is soiled and unsalable.	
When you travel on company expense, you will not receive approval for first class fare.	

Emphasize positive, pleasant facts.

Negative- Unpleasant	Positive - Pleasant
It is impossible to open an account for you today.	As soon as your signature card reaches us, we will gladly open an account
We do not refund if the returned item is soiled and unsalable.	We refund when the returned item is clean and resalable.
When you travel on company expense, you will not receive approval for first class fare.	When you travel on company expense, your approved fare is for tourist class.

CONCISENESS

- Conciseness is saying what you want to say in the fewest possible words without sacrificing the other qualities.
- A concise message is complete without being wordy.

To achieve conciseness, observe the following suggestions;

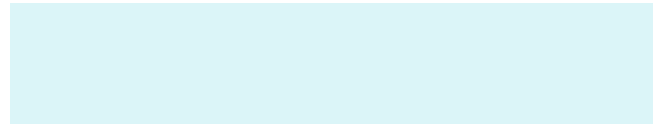
1. Eliminate wordy expressions/ avoid Circumlocution.
2. Include only relevant material.
3. Avoid unnecessary repetition.

Eliminate Wordy Expressions

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- Use single words in place of phrases.

Example



WORDY	CONCISE
At this time	Now
In due course	Soon
Due to the fact that	Because

Include Only Relevant Material

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1. Stick to the **purpose** of the message.
2. Delete irrelevant words and rambling/confused sentences.
3. Omit information obvious to the receiver.
4. Avoid long introductions, unnecessary explanations, excessive adjectives and prepositions.
5. Get to the important point tactfully and concisely.

Include Only Relevant Material

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Example

Wordy:

We hereby wish to let you know that our company is pleased with the confidence you have shown.

Concise:

Wordy: At this time I am writing to you to enclose an interview card, which has been post-paid, for the purpose of arranging a convenient time when we might get together for a personal interview.

Concise:

Include Only Relevant Material

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Example

Wordy:

We hereby wish to let you know that our company is pleased with the confidence you have shown.

Concise: We appreciate your confidence.

Wordy: At this time I am writing to you to enclose an interview card, which has been post-paid, for the purpose of arranging a convenient time when we might get together for a personal interview.

Concise: Please return the enclosed interview card to set up a convenient time for an interview.

Avoid Unnecessary Repetition

1. Use a shorter name after you have mentioned the long one once. Instead of the “North Central Company,” use “North Central”
1. Use Pronouns or Initials rather than repeating long names.
1. Cut out all needless repetition of phrases and sentences.

Exercise: Find the substitutes

- Find single word substitutes for the phrases
 - Along the same lines
 - At this time
 - Consensus of opinion
 - Due to the fact that
 - During the time of the day
 - During the year of
 - Few and far between
 - For a price of

Exercise

Bad example:

Hi Suzanne,

I think we need to talk about the CSR campaign, I mean the one which we need to do as a quarterly exercise. I think it is a great way of enhancing our brand image. Basically, it would just be a visit to an orphanage but we can sort of do other things too. For instance, we could take the kids out for a short trip to a nearby park or zoo. Let us sit and talk tomorrow.

Regards,

Jennifer

The mail is full of fillers and extended phrases wherein she could have finished the email in just three sentences. Try it now

Exercise

Good example:

Hi Suzanne,

I need to discuss the quarterly CSR campaign with you. Let us take the kids out this time to a nearby park or zoo instead of just visiting them. This will help enhance our brand image. We'll talk in detail tomorrow.

Regards,
Jennifer

Make the following sentences concise:

- If we plan on showing an improvement of 20 percent, we will need to advance forward in our outlay and productivity.
- The students and the faculty cooperated together to devise and develop a totally unique forum for discussion.

Task: Find single word substitutes for the phrases

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- I. afford an opportunity
- II. as a means of
- III. at this point in time
- IV. due to the fact that
- V. during the period
- VI. has a requirement for
- VII. in a timely manner
- VIII. in accordance with

- IX. in advance of
- X. in regard to
- XII. in the amount of
- XIII. in the event that
- XIV. in the near future
- XV. no later than June 1
- XVI. pertaining to
- XVII. with reference to
- XVIII. with the exception of

Instead of

afford an opportunity
as a means of
at this point in time
due to the fact that
during the period
has a requirement for
in a timely manner
in accordance with
in advance of
in regard to
in the amount of
in the event that
in the near future
no later than June 1
pertaining to
with reference to
with the exception of

Try

allow, let
to
now
because
during
needs
quickly, promptly
by, following, per, under
before
about, concerning, on
for
if
shortly, soon
by June 1
about
about
except

CLARITY

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- “A good style is first of all clear,” said Aristotle.
 - Getting the meaning from your head to the head of your reader accurately is the purpose of clarity.
 - It is difficult because we all are idiosyncratic- we hold our own unique interpretations, ideas, and experiences associated with words.
1. Choose **precise, appropriate, concrete, and familiar words**.
 2. Construct **effective** sentences and paragraphs.
 3. Avoid vagueness and confusion. Don't make **errors of run-ons and modifiers**.
 4. Every sentence or even paragraph should carry **only one central idea**.

In short, clear writing means use of familiar words or expressions, and avoidance of jargons and unknown acronyms. It also means sentences and paragraphs of optimum length, having unity, coherence and emphasis.

1.Bad example:

Dear James,
I would like to talk to you about the new client's project which the engineering team had discussed yesterday. I might need the help of John from your team.
Regards,
Kevin

James might not even know who the new client is or what the project is about. He probably was not part of the meeting with the engineering team. Furthermore, there might be more than one John in James' big team. The time for the meeting is not mentioned

In short, clear writing means use of familiar words or expressions, and avoidance of jargons and unknown acronyms. It also means sentences and paragraphs of optimum length, having unity, coherence and emphasis.

1.Bad example:

Dear James,
I would like to talk to you about the new client's project which the engineering team had discussed yesterday. I might need the help of John from your team.
Regards,
Kevin

Sabeen Amjad

This email has all the information James needs to know. He can be well prepared for the meeting and also check on John's availability and have an answer for Kevin when they meet the next day – in whichever time slot both the men are free.

Good example:

Dear James,
As you may know we have signed up XYZ as our new client. I had a meeting with the engineering team yesterday and had discussed the campaign requirements for this project. John Redden from your team had done a pretty good job last time doing the social media campaign for ABC and so I would like him to work on the XYZ campaign too. Would you be available sometime tomorrow to discuss this further?
Regards
Kevin

3/27/2022

Construct Effective Sentences and Paragraphs

□ At the core of clarity is the sentences. This grammatical sentence, when clearly expressed, moves the thoughts within a paragraph. Important characteristics to consider are **length, unity, coherence, and emphasis.**

□ **Unclear:** Being an excellent lawyer, I am sure you can help us.

□ **Clear:** Being an excellent lawyer, you can surely help us.

Features of Correctness:

- ▶ You need to ensure that you address people the right way and spell their names correctly.
- ▶ Additionally, you need to ensure that the reader has sufficient knowledge and education to understand the technical terms that you use in your communication.
- ▶ Check and proofread the content. Spell check will not be able to catch it if the wrongly spelled word is in fact another word in the English language.

CORRECTNESS

- At the core of correctness is proper punctuation, grammar and spelling.
- However a message may be perfect grammatically and mechanically but still insult or lose a customer.

Correctness, as applied to business messages, also means the following three characteristics:

1. Use the right level of language.
2. Check accuracy of figures, facts, and words.
3. Maintain acceptable writing mechanics.

Correctness Bad example

Bad example:

Dear David,

Further to our conversation today, I am attaching the plan for the first stage of the project. Hope the one week deadline is okay with you and your team.

Regards.

Use the Right Level of Language

- Formal language is more a characteristics of business writing.
- Avoid using contractions.
- Avoid Run-ons, fragments, errors of reference, subject verb agreement, punctuation, parallelism etc.

More Formal

Participate

Procure

Endeavor

Less Formal

Join

Get/get/produce

Try/ attempt

Check Accuracy of Figures, Facts, and Words

A good check of data is to have another person read and comment on the validity of the material.